



BEFORE, DURING & AFTER THE BREATH

A companion for activating breathwork

SOULBODY BREATH®

Welcome

Whether this is your first breathwork experience or your fiftieth, I'm so glad you're here. Activating breathwork can be a deeply supportive practice. It has the potential to help us slow down, reconnect with ourselves, explore our inner world and build a more trusting relationship with our body.

Like any meaningful practice, it also asks something of us.

Not perfection.

Not performance.

Simply presence.

This guide has been created to help you understand what activating breathwork is, how to prepare for your session, what you may experience along the way and how to care for yourself afterwards.

You'll also find important health and safety information, so you can make informed decisions about whether this practice is right for you at this time.

My hope is that these pages help you arrive feeling informed, supported and more connected to yourself before we even begin.

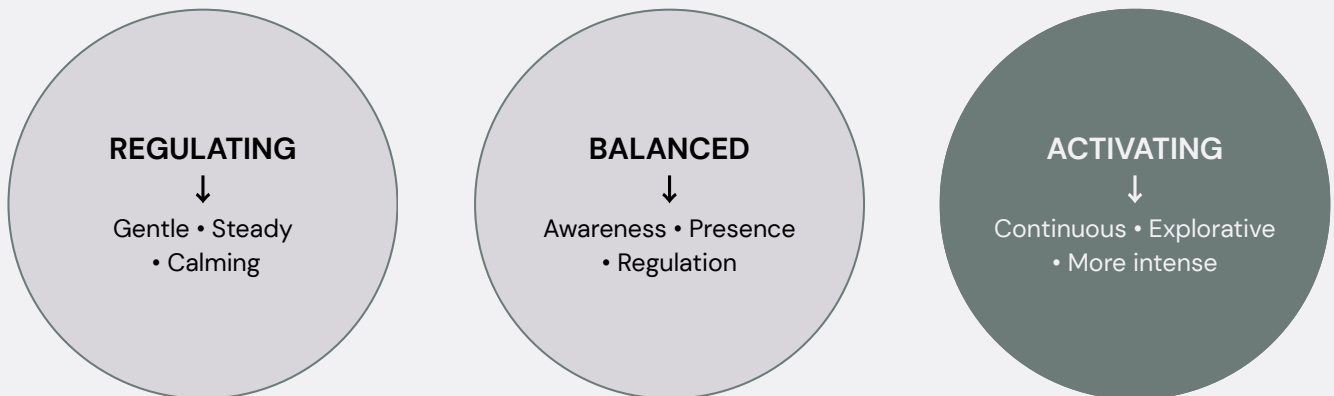
Welcome.

I'm honoured to breathe with you.

Jenni Turner

Founder, SOULBODY BREATH®

Understanding activating breath



Breathwork is not one thing

The word breathwork is used to describe many different breathing practices, but they are not all trying to create the same experience. Some techniques are slow and gentle, helping to calm the body and support relaxation. Others are designed to improve focus, increase energy or support physical performance.

The style of breathwork you'll experience in a SOULBODY BREATH® session is known as activating breathwork.

Unlike slower breathing practices, activating breathwork uses a continuous breathing pattern that may create noticeable changes in your body, emotions and awareness. For some people, the experience feels energising. For others, it feels deeply emotional, peaceful or quietly reflective.

There is no "right" way to experience the breath. Every body responds differently, and every session is unique.

The breath and your nervous system

Your breathing and nervous system are in constant conversation. Every moment of the day, your body adjusts your breathing in response to what is happening around you and within you. When you intentionally change your breathing pattern, you're also changing some of the signals your body receives and responds to.

This is one of the reasons breathwork can feel so powerful.

As your breathing changes, you may notice physical sensations, emotions, thoughts or memories becoming more present. Sometimes these responses are part of your body's natural physiology. Sometimes they reflect what is happening in your inner world. Often, it's a combination of both.

You don't need to work out exactly what every sensation means while you're breathing. Instead, simply notice what is happening with curiosity. The goal isn't to force an experience. It's to stay connected to yourself as the experience unfolds.

Remember

- Breathwork is not one single technique.
- Every experience is different.
- Intensity is not a measure of success.
- You can slow down, pause or stop at any time.



One of the reasons activating breathwork can feel so different from your everyday breathing is that it changes the way you're breathing for a period of time.

As your breathing pattern changes, your body may respond with a variety of physical, emotional and psychological sensations. Many of these are temporary and settle once your breathing returns to its natural rhythm.

Every experience is unique.

You may experience several of these sensations, only one, or none at all. None of these responses determines whether you've "done the breathwork properly."

You may notice:

Physical sensations

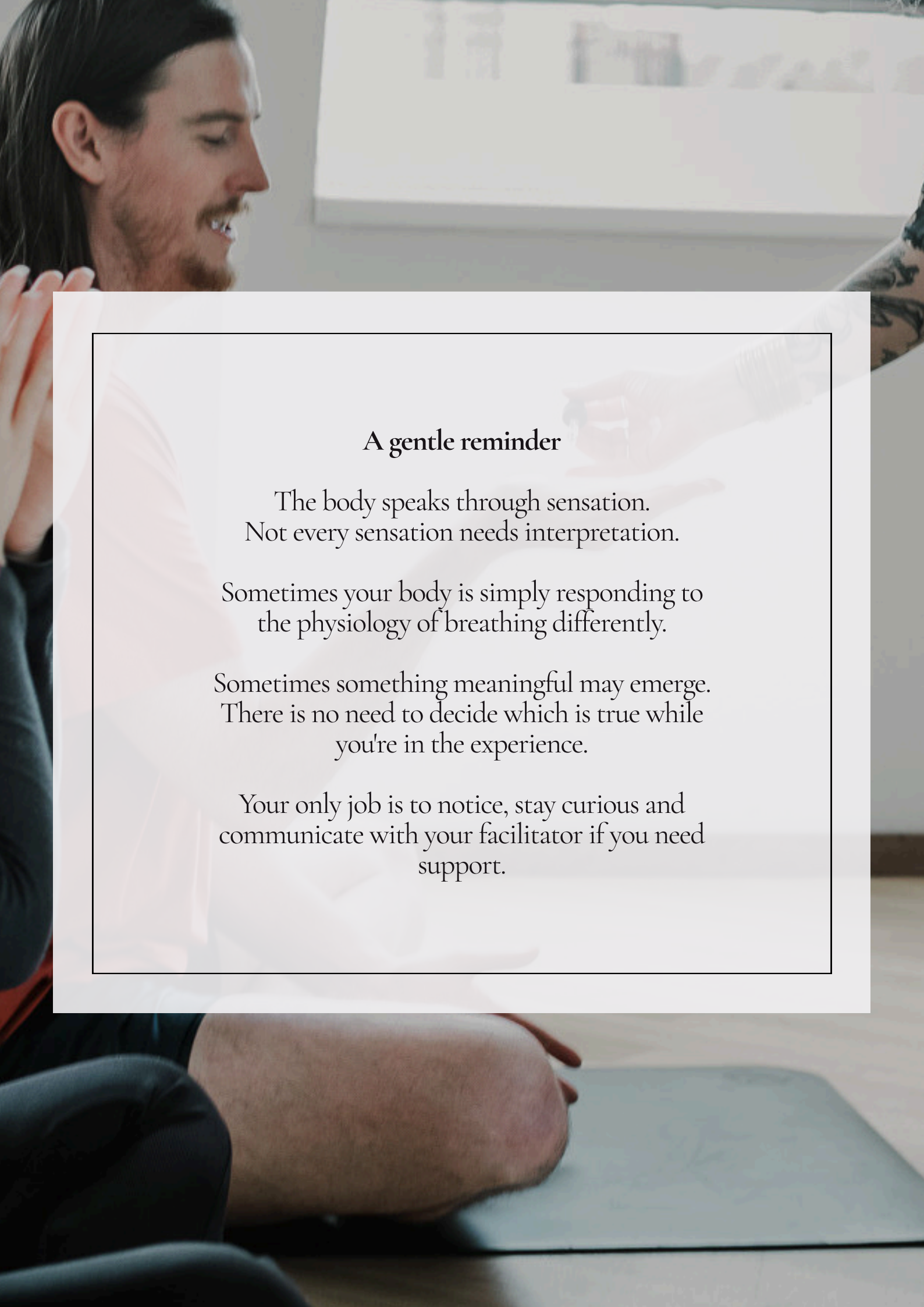
- Tingling in the hands, feet or face
- Feeling warm or cold
- Light-headedness or dizziness
- Muscle tension or tightening in the hands, jaw or feet
- Trembling or shaking
- Changes in breathing
- Dry mouth
- Feeling heavy or light
- A sense of deep relaxation

Emotional experiences

- Calm
- Joy
- Sadness
- Relief
- Frustration
- Fear
- Gratitude
- Laughter
- Tears
- Unexpected emotions

Changes in awareness

Some people notice vivid imagery, memories or new perspectives. Others simply feel more present, more connected to themselves, or deeply rested. You may also experience very little. A quieter session is not a lesser session. **The breath meets you exactly where you are.**



A gentle reminder

The body speaks through sensation.
Not every sensation needs interpretation.

Sometimes your body is simply responding to
the physiology of breathing differently.

Sometimes something meaningful may emerge.
There is no need to decide which is true while
you're in the experience.

Your only job is to notice, stay curious and
communicate with your facilitator if you need
support.

Is Activating Breathwork Right for You?

Activating breathwork can create temporary changes in breathing, circulation, body sensations and emotional intensity. This means it may not be appropriate for everyone – or it may need to be adapted with additional support. The following list is not exhaustive. It is designed to help you decide when a conversation with your facilitator or healthcare professional may be needed before participating.

Speak with your doctor first if you:

- are pregnant or have recently given birth
- have epilepsy or a history of seizures
- have cardiovascular disease, uncontrolled high blood pressure, a previous heart attack or stroke
- have an aneurysm, history of blood clots or another significant vascular condition
- have glaucoma, a detached retina or another serious eye condition
- have a significant respiratory condition
- have recently had surgery or sustained a serious physical injury
- have osteoporosis or another condition that may be affected by intense breathing, tension or movement
- have any medical condition that could be affected by changes in breathing, blood pressure or physical activation
- are unsure whether a medication or medical treatment could affect your participation

Medical clearance does not replace informing your facilitator. Please share any relevant health information with them before the session begins.

Speak with your therapist or mental-health professional first if you are currently experiencing:

- psychosis, mania or a recent psychiatric crisis
- severe or frequent dissociation
- intense or destabilising post-traumatic symptoms
- frequent panic attacks
- active suicidal thoughts
- a recent traumatic experience that still feels overwhelming
- difficulty staying present, oriented or connected to your surroundings

Having a mental-health diagnosis does not automatically mean that you cannot participate in breathwork. What matters is the type of practice, your current stability, the support available and whether activating breathwork is appropriate for you at this time.

Contact your facilitator before the session if:

- you are unsure whether anything in your health history is relevant
- you have previously felt panicked, faint, dissociated or overwhelmed during breathwork
- you require physical or accessibility adaptations
- lying down is uncomfortable or unsuitable for you
- you have boundaries or concerns around touch
- you are participating online and may need additional support
- something in you simply feels uncertain about taking part

When in doubt, ask

You do not need to share every detail of your personal history, but your facilitator does need enough information to help you make an informed decision.

Choosing not to participate, or choosing a gentler breathing practice, is not a failure. It is an act of listening to yourself.

PREPARING FOR YOUR SESSION

A little preparation can help you arrive feeling more comfortable, present and supported.

You do not need to create the perfect conditions. The aim is simply to give your body and mind the best possible chance to engage with the practice safely and honestly.

Prepare your body

- Eat normally, but avoid a very heavy meal immediately beforehand.
- Stay normally hydrated.
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs before the session.
- Wear comfortable clothing that allows you to breathe and move freely.
- Bring water, warm layers and anything else that helps you feel physically supported.
- Let your facilitator know about any relevant medication, illness, injury or change in your health.

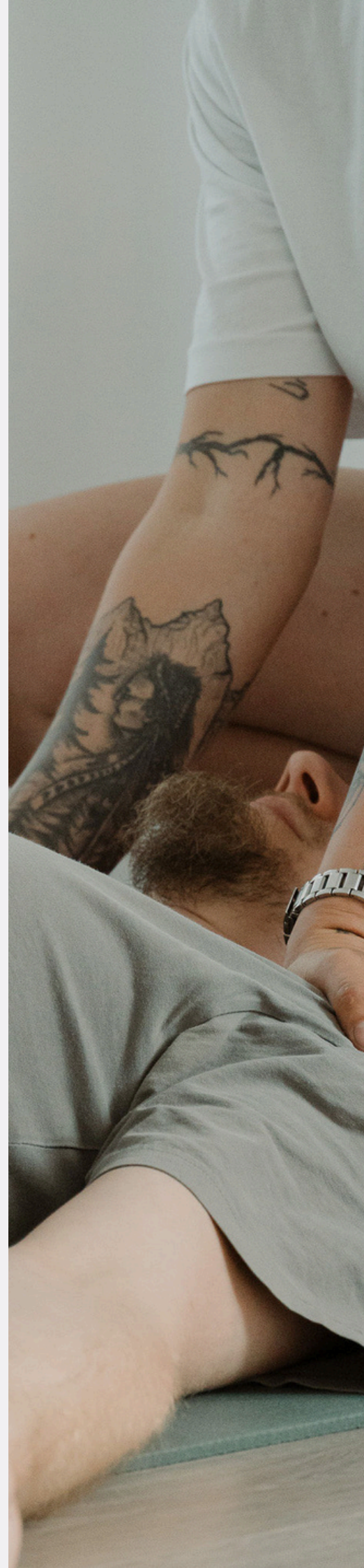
Prepare your mind

- Arrive without needing a breakthrough.
- Let go of the idea that the session has to look or feel a certain way.
- Notice how resourced you feel that day.
- Decide what would tell you that you need to slow down, pause or stop.
- Remind yourself that you are allowed to change your mind at any point.
- Share anything important with your facilitator before the active practice begins.

Prepare your time

Where possible, avoid rushing straight from the session into another demanding commitment.

Give yourself a little space afterwards to rest, eat, walk, journal or simply notice how you feel.



*Before you begin,
ask yourself*

How is my body today?

What support do I need?

Is there anything my facilitator should know?

What would help me remain connected to myself
during the session?

One final reminder:

Preparation is not about making yourself perfectly calm.

It is about arriving with enough awareness to recognise what you
need.

Preparing for an online session

Online breathwork can be just as immersive as an in-person session, but it requires a little more preparation because your facilitator is not physically in the room with you. The goal is to create a space where you can participate comfortably, remain connected to the session and access support if needed.

Prepare your space

- Choose a private place where you are unlikely to be interrupted.
- Lie or sit somewhere stable and comfortable, where there is no risk of falling.
- Clear away sharp objects, candles, drinks or anything you could knock over.
- Keep water, tissues, a blanket and an extra layer within reach.
- Make sure the room is warm enough, with some fresh air available.
- Let anyone nearby know that you should not be disturbed unless necessary.

Prepare your technology

- Charge your device or connect it to power.
- Test your internet connection, camera and sound beforehand.
- Position your camera so your facilitator can see you clearly.
- Keep your phone nearby and switched on.
- Ask what you should do if the call disconnects during the active practice.
- Headphones may help you feel immersed, but only use them if you can still remain aware of your environment and remove them easily.

Prepare for support

- Prepare for support
- For a more activating online session:
 - make sure your facilitator knows the address where you are participating
 - provide an emergency contact if requested
 - know how to reach the facilitator privately during the session
 - consider having someone nearby if you have concerns about participating alone
 - tell your facilitator if you feel uncertain, unwell or emotionally unsettled before beginning
- Never participate while driving, bathing, operating equipment or in any environment where becoming light-headed or deeply relaxed could place you at risk.

Remember:

A beautiful space can support the experience, but safety comes first.

You do not need candles, incense or a perfectly curated setting.

You need somewhere secure, comfortable and easy to return to when the breathwork ends.

During the breath

During activating breathwork, you may notice physical sensations, emotional changes or shifts in awareness. Some may feel pleasant. Others may feel unfamiliar or uncomfortable. You are never required to push through an experience to prove that you are doing the practice properly.

If the experience feels manageable

You may choose to:

- stay curious
- soften any unnecessary tension
- notice where you feel supported
- allow emotions to move without forcing them
- keep communicating with your facilitator
- return to your intention without clinging to it

If the experience becomes uncomfortable

You can:

- reduce the depth or speed of the breath
- return to your natural breathing rhythm
- breathe through your nose
- open your eyes
- move your hands, feet or body
- change position or sit up
- look around the room and orient to your surroundings
- tell your facilitator what is happening



If you feel overwhelmed, panicked or far away

Stop the active breathing pattern.

Then:

- return to an easy, unforced breath
- feel the floor or surface beneath you
- name a few things you can see
- say your name and where you are
- move slowly and deliberately
- ask your facilitator for support
- leave the practice if continuing no longer feels right

Stop immediately and alert your facilitator if you experience:

- chest pain
- severe or unusual difficulty breathing
- fainting or feeling close to fainting
- a sudden severe headache
- loss of awareness
- a seizure
- confusion that does not settle
- new weakness, numbness or difficulty speaking
- severe pain
- anything that feels medically concerning

*Your body is not
something to override*

The breath is an invitation.

You are allowed to slow down.

You are allowed to stop.

You are allowed to choose what feels right for you in each moment.

After the breath

The active breathing may have ended, but the experience does not always end with it. **Integration** is the process of allowing what you experienced to settle, physically, emotionally and mentally, without rushing to explain it, recreate it or turn it into something meaningful.

There is no perfect way to integrate. The invitation is simply to notice what you need next.

In the first hour

Where possible:

- return to your natural breathing rhythm
- move slowly as you sit up or stand
- drink water according to thirst
- eat something nourishing if you are hungry
- allow time for quiet, rest or gentle movement
- avoid rushing straight into work, conflict or a demanding environment
- take care before driving if you still feel light-headed, tired or disoriented

You may feel peaceful, energised, emotional, tired or completely ordinary. All of these experiences are possible.

Over the next few days

Support yourself with simple, familiar things:

- regular meals and hydration
- sleep and rest
- gentle walking or time outside
- journalling or creative expression
- calming practices you already trust
- less stimulation if you feel sensitive or tired
- connection with someone safe and supportive

Try not to make immediate, life-changing decisions based solely on something you felt, saw or understood during the session.

Give the experience time to settle before deciding what it means.

Integration is not another performance

You do not need to:

- analyse every sensation
- uncover a hidden message
- force yourself to feel differently
- repeat activating breathwork because the session felt incomplete
- turn the experience into a breakthrough
- share anything you would rather keep private

Sometimes integration brings clarity.

Sometimes it brings questions.

Sometimes it simply means returning to your life with a little more awareness.

Ask yourself

- *What did I notice?*
- *What do I need now?*
- *Is there one small way I can honour this experience?*

When to reach out

Most breathwork experiences settle naturally with time, rest and gentle integration. However, support is available if something feels unresolved, confusing or concerning. You do not need to wait until an experience becomes overwhelming before reaching out.

Contact your facilitator if:

- you have questions about something that happened during the session
- you continue to feel unsettled, disorientated or emotionally activated
- you are unsure whether a physical sensation is expected
- you experienced panic, dissociation or a loss of connection with your surroundings
- you feel confused, ashamed or pressured by part of the experience
- a boundary was crossed or something did not feel right
- you would like guidance around integrating what emerged

A breathwork facilitator can help you reflect on the experience and identify appropriate next steps, but they should not diagnose medical or psychological conditions unless they are separately qualified to do so.

Contact your therapist or another mental-health professional if:

- difficult emotions or memories continue to feel unmanageable
- panic, anxiety or dissociation persists or becomes more frequent
- trauma-related symptoms have intensified
- you are struggling to sleep, work or manage everyday life
- the experience brought up something beyond the facilitator's professional scope
- you feel psychologically unsafe or unable to reconnect with yourself

Contact your doctor or seek medical support if:

- physical symptoms are severe, unusual or do not settle
- you experience ongoing chest pain, breathing difficulty, fainting or severe dizziness
- you develop a sudden or severe headache
- you experience new weakness, numbness, confusion or difficulty speaking
- you are concerned that a medical condition may have been affected by the practice

Seek urgent medical or crisis support if you believe you are in immediate danger, experience a medical emergency, or feel unable to keep yourself safe.

Reaching out is part of integration

You do not have to understand or manage every experience alone. Asking for support is not an indication that you failed at breathwork. It is another way of staying in relationship with yourself.



BEFORE YOU GO

Activating breathwork can be powerful, but it does not need to be dramatic to be meaningful. You do not need to breathe perfectly. You do not need to push beyond your limits. You do not need to have the biggest experience in the room.

The invitation is to stay connected to yourself before, during and after the breath.

Before your session

- Check whether any contraindications apply to you.
- Speak with your doctor, therapist or facilitator when needed.
- Eat normally and stay hydrated.
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs.
- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Prepare a safe, private space if joining online.
- Give yourself time to arrive and settle.
- Let your facilitator know about any concerns, boundaries or support needs.

During your session

- Remember that you can slow down, pause or stop.
- Return to your natural breath if something feels uncomfortable.
- Open your eyes, move or change position when needed.
- Tell your facilitator what you are experiencing.
- Do not measure the value of the session by its intensity.
- Stop immediately if you experience severe or medically concerning symptoms.

After your session

- Move slowly and give yourself time to reorient.
- Rest, eat and hydrate according to your needs.
- Avoid rushing to interpret the experience.
- Delay major decisions until you feel settled.
- Reach out if physical or emotional symptoms persist.
- Let integration be simple.

A final reminder

Breathwork is not about forcing transformation.

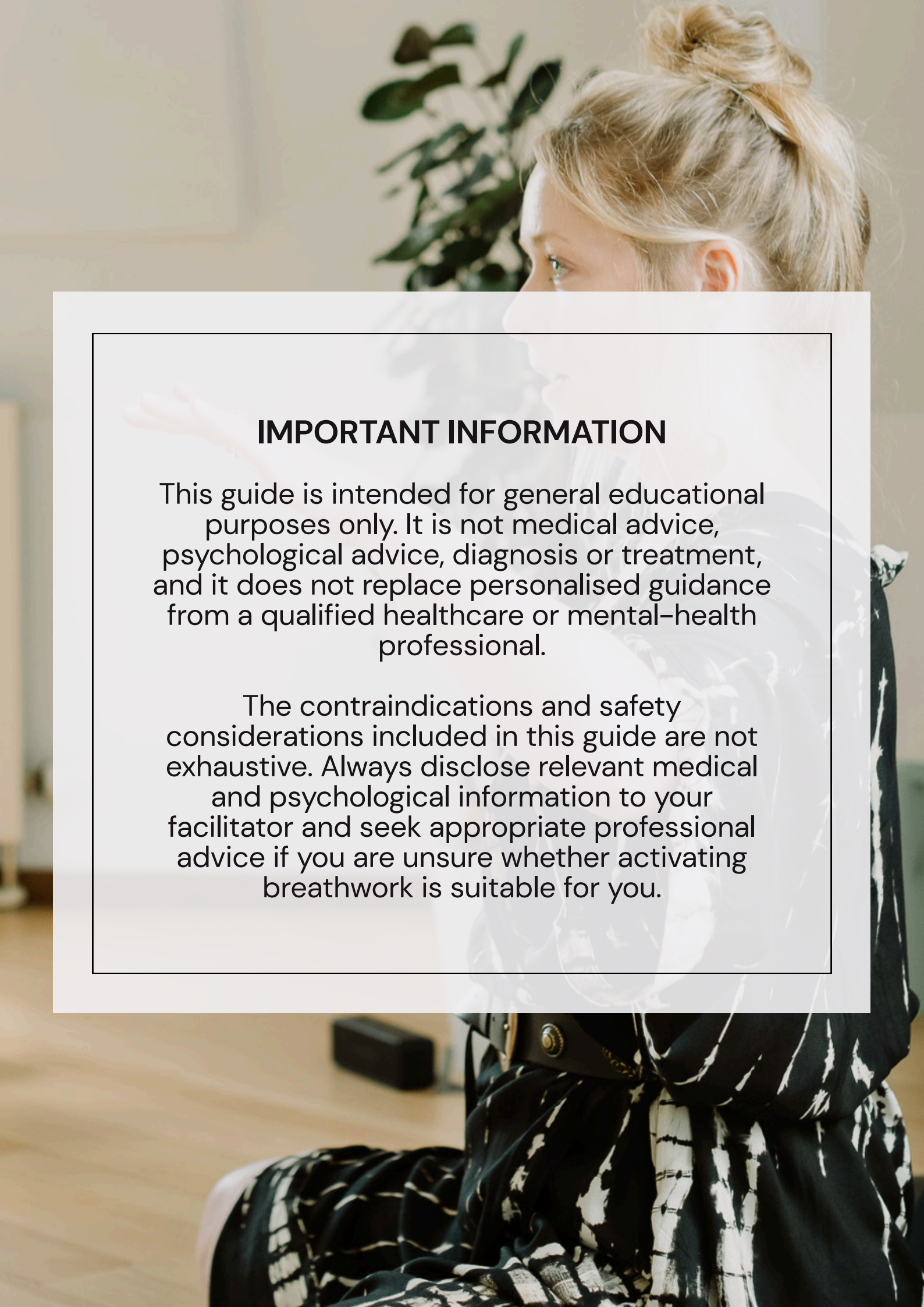
It is not about leaving yourself behind in pursuit of a breakthrough. It is an opportunity to listen, respond and remain in relationship with yourself, one breath at a time.

The facilitator offers the practice.

You remain the authority on your participation.

About SOULBODY BREATH®

SOULBODY BREATH® offers activating breathwork experiences and trauma-informed facilitator education grounded in science, spirituality, ethical practice and respect for the wisdom of the body.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This guide is intended for general educational purposes only. It is not medical advice, psychological advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not replace personalised guidance from a qualified healthcare or mental-health professional.

The contraindications and safety considerations included in this guide are not exhaustive. Always disclose relevant medical and psychological information to your facilitator and seek appropriate professional advice if you are unsure whether activating breathwork is suitable for you.