

Relax & Reboot

*Simple Exercises to Balance Your
Nervous System and Boost
Immune Function*

Disclaimer

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Tom treats some of the sickest, most sensitive patients suffering from chronic Lyme disease and other environmentally acquired illnesses. He focuses on optimizing the body's self-healing systems in order to achieve optimal health with simple, natural interventions; utilizing more conventional approaches when needed.



Each individual is a unique unity of body, mind and spirit. Successful treatment strategies are patient-centered and address all three levels. The true source of radiant health is within each of us. Dr. Tom's goal is to empower each of his patients to get in touch with their inner source of health so they can experience optimal health.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. TOM

So many of us are chronically in Fight, Flight or Freeze, totally stressed out, just in response to our busy daily routines and go-go-go world. If you're suffering from chronic Lyme disease, Co-Infections, Mold illness or any other chronic condition, you are likely stuck in Fight or Flight most of the time, never getting a break. This leads to increasing fatigue and brain fog, depressed immune system function, hypersensitivity and an increasing sense that you'll never get better.

The good news is, there's something you can do about it, at home, for FREE!

Here's a collection of 4 simple exercises to help you chill out, improve detoxification, support your immune system, and just get a chance to truly rest. While these do not take the place of evaluation and treatment by a qualified healthcare professional, they are easy to do for almost everyone and you can start experiencing their benefits immediately.

Heart-Centered Breathing

TIPS ON TAKING ACTION

Find a quiet place. It would be best to be not disturbed for 5-10 minutes. Sit or lie in a comfortable position. I generally recommend starting this exercise in a seated position so that you don't end up falling asleep, however, once you get the hang of it, this may be something that can really help if you're having difficulty getting to sleep.

Now, just notice your breathing. Do you notice the breath going in and out of your nostrils? Do you feel it in the back of your throat? Or maybe you feel the rise and fall of your chest. Focus on whatever aspect of the breath that catches your attention. If your mind wanders or gets distracted that's OK. Just come back to the thing that you noticed before.

Once you get comfortable with this part, then start thinking about breathing into your heart. Feel as if every breath is going into your heart. There's no need to worry about the exact placement of the heart muscle in your chest, so no need to scour the internet looking for anatomy pics. It's the experience of filling the heart space in the middle of the chest. If you get distracted, that's OK, come back to breathing into your heart.

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Once you become comfortable with breathing into your heart, now start to think of an experience that was amazing, something that was wonderful, full of joy and love. Maybe this is a loved one. Maybe this is a particular day in your life. Maybe this is an activity that you love, something that brings joy and love into your heart. Continue breathing into the heart and really feel this experience allow it to fill your heart. Continue to breathe into your heart and feel this positive emotion of love and joy.

Do this for 5-10 minutes or more. Congratulate yourself as you've allowed yourself to relax. You've improved detoxification by breathing fully and calmed down your nervous system so your whole body can begin to rest and rejuvenate. And through all of these endeavors you've supported your own immune system, so you've taken those next steps in healing.

consistently done overtime will help you develop greater and greater nervous and immune system reserves and boost your overall health and sense of well-being.

Half-Salamander

The next exercise is the Half-Salamander. This may be a funny sounding thing, but it's an awesome exercise. It comes out of the book *Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve* by Stanley Rosenberg. This is an awesome book and I highly recommend it. Mr. Rosenberg talks a lot about how to heal things such as anxiety, depression, trauma, autism and basically any kind of situation where we have a disconnect between how the brain, heart and gut are working together. The book is written in a very straightforward manner and the great part is you can flip to the back and dive right into the self-help exercises

These exercises help release physical tension the neck, chest and ribs, but also improve the function of the Vagus nerve, which is critical for healing.

Before we get started with this exercise, there's a preliminary exercise that is critical to experience before moving to the half salamander and can, in and of itself, lead to tremendous relief of symptoms. In fact, you can often find me doing this exercise at my desk to help relief physical and mental stress throughout a busy day.

These exercises rely on the reflex you have between your eye movements and your upper neck muscles. They are very powerful and generally quite safe. But use common sense and don't overdo it. As the old saying goes, start low and go slow. A little goes a long way!

STEP 1

Start by lying down. Yes, I know, in the pictures I'm standing. Once you get the hang of it, you too can do this exercise standing or seated, but definitely start lying down. The truth of the matter is, I was both model and photographer on the day these photos were taken, and it was a bit easier to get the details to come across standing.

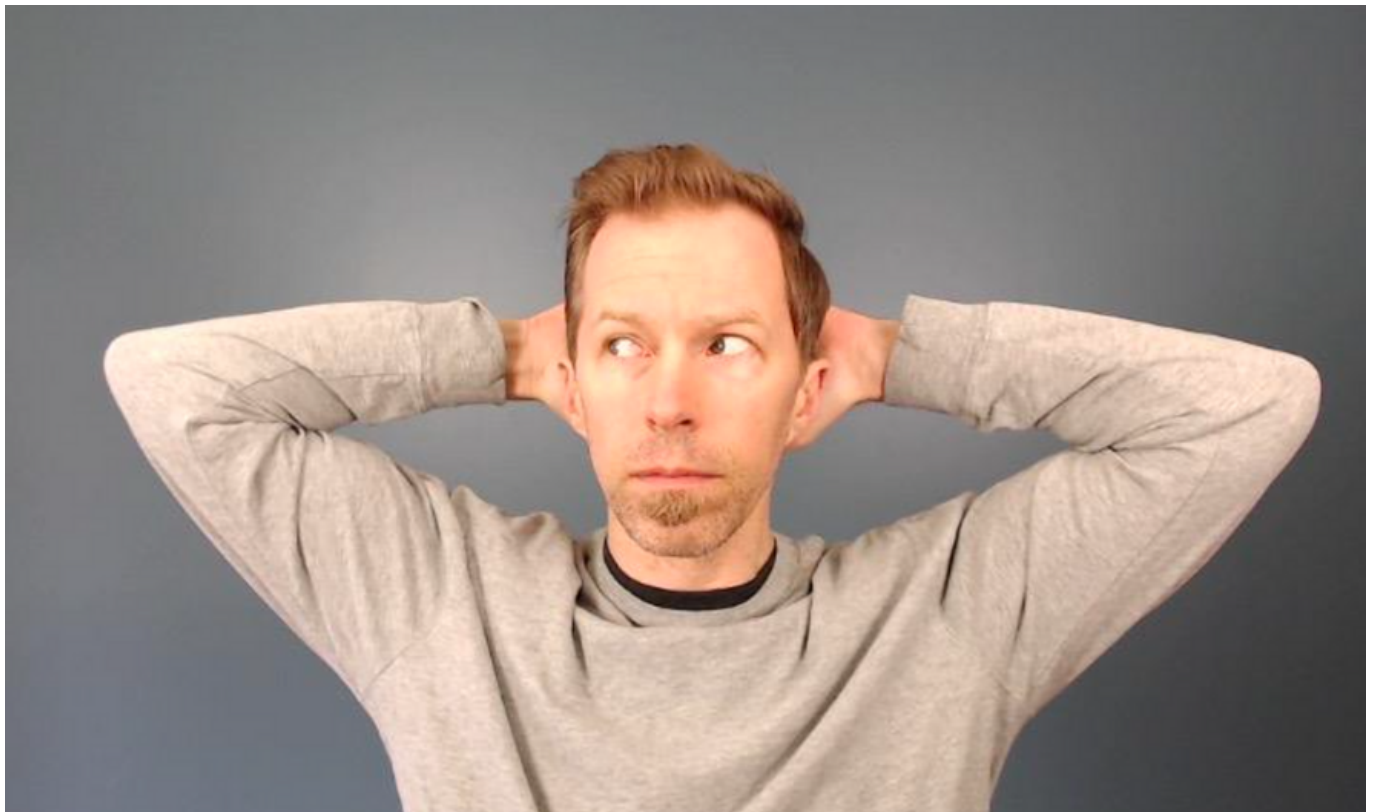
Interlace your fingers and place them gently on the nub on the back of your head. Let the weight of your head sink backwards into your hands. If your shoulders can't handle this, roll up a hand towel and use it instead of your fingers. The idea is to give your body a place to pay attention to. Just a place to be aware of.



STEP 2

Keep your nose pointing toward the ceiling (or forward if doing it seated or standing, but don't rush to this point, the key is to teach your body the exercise before getting fancy).

Turn your eyes to one side and hold them there for 30-60 seconds. You may feel the urge to take a deep breath or two or feel saliva pooling in your mouth. This is a good sign that your head positioning and eye movements have led to an improved alignment of the first and second cervical vertebrae (bones of your neck) and more room for the Vagus nerve to function properly.



STEP 3

Return your eyes to the middle and repeat on the other side. You can do this several times a day to help release tension in your neck and release tension around the Vagus nerve so it can more optimally talk to the heart and gut.

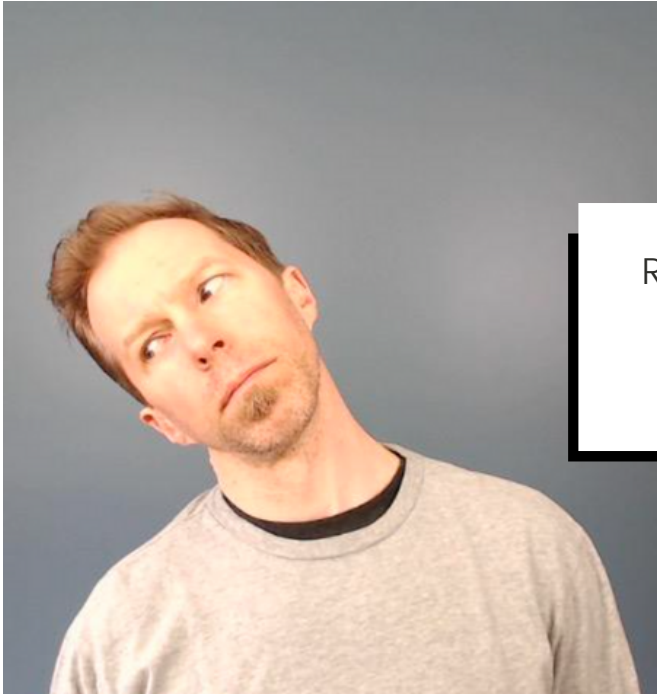


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Now it's time for the Half-Salamander. This exercise helps release the neck muscles and the cervical vertebrae, and might even start to release some ribs (but to get down that far you really need to read Mr. Rosenberg's book and learn about the full Salamander). Start in a seated or standing position. Keep your nose pointed to the front of the room and look to the right. After looking to the right, dip your right ear towards your right shoulder while still looking to the right.

Again, you're going to hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds. During this time, you may feel an urge to take in a nice deep, relaxing breath. You may also experience increased saliva in your mouth. Just as before, both of these are suggesting that the exercise has been effective. And once you get to that point or you reach 60 seconds, lift your head back up into a neutral position and then bring the eyes back to the middle.

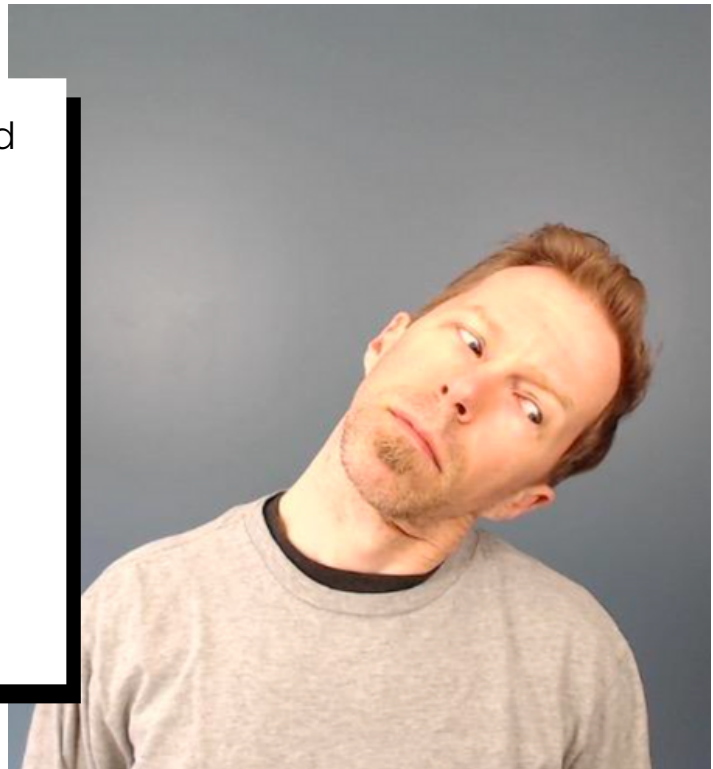
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Repeat on the other side in the same manner.

This can be repeated as necessary throughout the day.

Generally, I recommend starting one or two times a day and slowly working up over the time.



Cradling the Nervous System

The next exercise was created by Robert C. Fulford, D.O. I'm not sure he actually gave it a name, but I have decided to call it Cradling the Nervous System, so we have something to refer to it by and because that's what it does.

Dr. Fulford realized the importance of balancing the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of our being. This simple exercise will help energize your entire body, including your immune system, and help get you out of that fight or flight/high stress mode. It helps open up the entire parasympathetic nervous system, specifically relaxing the back of the head and neck so that the Vagus nerve can be free to do its healing work.

To do this exercise, it is best to lie on a firm surface, such as the floor with some soft padding. If you can't get down on the floor, start out on your bed with a goal of being able to do this exercise on the floor.

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Rub on the back of your head and feel for the ridge with the little nub on it, the same spot where you placed your hands in the half salamander. Right at that nub is where you're going to put the books under your head and allow the weight of your head to rest on the books, putting just a little pressure right on that nub. Now relax and allow gravity to do the rest of the work for you.

As a quick side note, just in case you started to wonder, the little nub is called Inion or the external occipital protuberance. Never know when a little random anatomic factoid might come in handy!

With your head gently resting on the books, bend your knees up. Place your feet a little wider than your hips so your knees can gently rest on each other. Your knees are pointing towards the ceiling and your chin is gently tucked, being gently held in this position by the books and gravity.

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Now relax and breathe. This is a great exercise. Ridiculously simple, yet so effective! Start for about five minutes, then work up to about 15 minutes. This can be done twice a day.

Once you get comfortable with this exercise, I find it's really helpful if you can go back and combine this with heart centered breathing. Combine these two for an amazing immune and nervous system reboot.

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I hope you enjoy these exercises. I personally use all of them. Usually not all at the same time, but I rotate through them, using the one that feels best for what's going on in my body on any particular day. And, realistically, I don't use them every day, but most days I do. Regular practice is key. Don't beat yourself up if you miss a day here or there. You don't need to go ninja monk and do them for hours a day, just a few minutes every day. Regular practice IS the key to great results. Don't be fooled by their simplicity. Each of these exercises stimulates the natural healing processes in your body and helps calm your mind. Natural medicine at its best.

Enjoy!

To your health!

Dr. Tom

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