

## ***Breathing is our On-Off Switch***

- Breathing is by far the most important, yet underrated, function in our human operating system
- Breathing is the only function that we do both voluntarily and involuntarily
- We can use breathing to actively influence our body's involuntary systems – nervous system, endocrine system, circulatory system, digestive system...
- We can live without food or water for weeks, but we can't survive more than several minutes without the ability to breathe

## ***Breathing resolves stress in three ways***

- Deep breathing sends oxygen into the bloodstream which then triggers the brain's relaxation response, along with a whole host of the physiological processes that calm the body and the mind
- Breathing brings us into the present—out of uncertainty of the future or rumination about the past
- Breathing is a tool for increasing self-awareness and awareness is the first step in managing stress

## ***A few notes***

- Breathing promotes mental clarity and focus. Deliberate breathing at regular intervals throughout the day keeps you emotionally stable, clear and calm.
- The exhale lengthens the inhale. If you feel anxious or unable to breathe, exhale first, then inhale.
- Breathe before and during any stress provoking situation—organizing your work, negotiating with opposing counsel, prior to an interview, on your commute

## ***HOW: Full-torso breathing***

- a. Exhale
- b. Inhale slowly and evenly through your nose, fully expanding your torso and chest, guiding your breath all the way into your head (counting six or eight may help)
- c. Pause for a count of three once you've fully inhaled
- d. Exhale slowly and evenly until you are completely empty of air (imagine a deflated balloon)
- e. Pause for a count of three once you've fully exhaled
- f. Repeat 4-6 times