

THE COCOON METHOD

# How to keep *going*

Your companion for the days and weeks after a session or circle.

*Nina Hinterschitt*

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CHAPTER ONE

# Welcome

This book is for the time after our work together: the morning after, the first days, and the weeks after, when the real change happens in ordinary life. You can read it from front to back once, and then keep it on your phone and open the chapter you need.

A session or a circle is a strong, held experience. It can open something, soften something, or simply let you rest in a way you haven't in years. What it can't do on its own is change the habits your body has practised for decades, the way you brace when the phone buzzes, the breath you hold while you type, the shoulders that live near your ears. Those habits live in **implicit memory**, the part of memory that runs things without words, the way your hands know how to tie your shoes while you're thinking about something else. Implicit memory changes through repetition, a

little every day, much more than through one big moment. So this book is mostly about the small daily things.

Everything here has passed what I call my truth filter: other traditions agree with it, research supports it or at least doesn't contradict it, it's safe for people who carry trauma or shame, and it works in a modern life with emails and kids and traffic. Where something is my own experience under my hands rather than research, I say so.

**How to use it.** Chapters 2 to 9 walk with you through the first days and weeks. Chapters 10 to 15 bring it into your life, your people and the bigger picture. Chapter 16 is your four-week tracker, chapter 17 your journal, and chapter 18 shows where to go next. The six body practices of the Somatic Toolkit live on their own free page: thecocoonmethod.life/toolkit. You don't need all of it. Pick one practice and do it for a week before you add another.



CHAPTER TWO

# Your page from Nina

This page is yours. At the end of a private session we fill it in together, or I write it for you the same evening and send it with your aftercare. It holds what I noticed under my hands and the one thing I'd love you to take home. Everything else in this book is for everyone; this page is only for you.

### WHAT I NOTICED UNDER MY HANDS

## YOUR ONE PRACTICE FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

## WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN YOUR BODY

## WHEN I'D SUGGEST WE MEET AGAIN

A SENTENCE TO KEEP

After a circle there's no personal page, so this one is for you to fill in yourself: what you noticed, what you want to keep, and what you'd like to ask me.



CHAPTER THREE

# The morning after

Whether you came to a circle full of people you mostly didn't know or to a private session, you breathed differently than you usually let yourself, maybe let hands find the places where the breath gets held, and then rested for a long while in the cocoon while the sound kept moving around you. However you woke up today, light or raw, tired or strangely clear, a bit flat or full of feeling, it belongs to what happened and it will settle.

The next chapters walk with you for the next weeks. It tells you how to look after yourself in the first two days, gives you a simple way to check how you breathe, and teaches you the five minutes a day that turn one strong evening into something that stays.

## Two practices, two different jobs

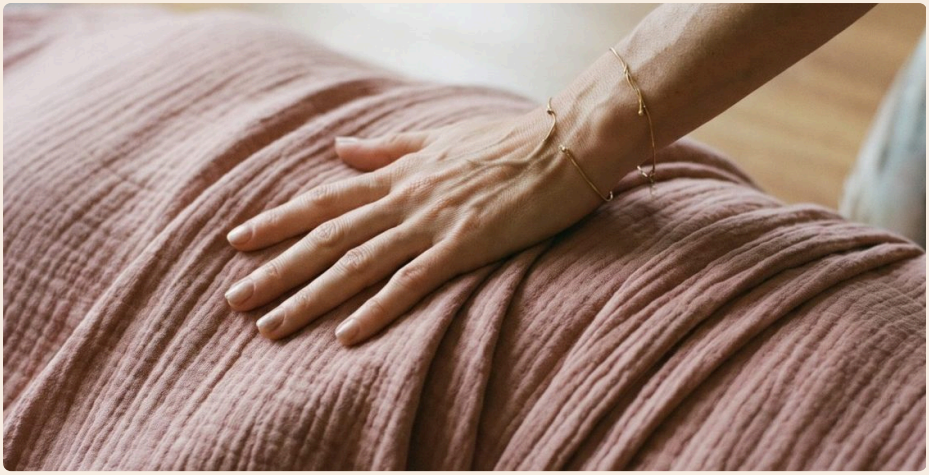
### THE CIRCLE

About 25 minutes of fuller, connected breathing through the mouth, bodywork and live sound, then about 45 minutes resting in the wrap. A strong experience, held in a group. It works on tension, and it gives whatever comes up a safe room to be met in.

### YOUR DAILY LIFE

Breathing repatterning: quiet, slow, through the nose, ribs widening, neck and shoulders resting. A few minutes every day, on your own, so the body slowly learns a new everyday way to breathe.

Whatever came up last night was met with safety, and that is how old feelings slowly change: a little more each time your body feels safe in a place where it used to brace. The daily practice works on something else. Your breathing habits live in **implicit memory**, the part of memory that runs things without words, the way your foot finds the brake in the car before you have thought the word "brake". Understanding doesn't reach that kind of memory. Repetition does. So the circle shows your body that another way is possible, and the quiet daily minutes are how that way becomes the one it chooses by itself.



CHAPTER FOUR

# Before words

The morning after, people often try to explain to themselves what happened, and the words don't quite fit. That's normal. A strong experience in the body is stored first as sensation, image and feeling, and the part of you that turns it into a story comes later. If you force the story too early, you tend to squeeze the experience into something you already know. So begin before words.

In the breathwork tradition Stanislav Grof started, people draw a simple circle picture, a mandala, right after the session, and therapists who work with strong experiences find that shapes and colours let people come close to what happened without having to understand it yet.

## Ten minutes with paper and colours

0 to 2 min

## Arrive

Sit with a sheet of paper and a few colours, pens or pencils, whatever is in the house. Put one hand on your lower ribs and take three small, quiet breaths through the nose.

---

2 to 6 min

## Draw your body

Draw a simple outline of a body, a gingerbread shape is perfect. Colour in where you felt something during or after the session: warmth, tingling, tightness, numbness, a lump in the throat, a wide open chest. Choose colours by feeling, not by logic.

---

6 to 8 min

## One image

Next to it, draw one shape or image that the session leaves in you. A wave, a door, a seed, a scribble. It doesn't need to be beautiful or make sense.

8 to 10 min

## Three words

Only now write three single words underneath. Not sentences. Then put the paper away and look at it again in a week.

### WHAT MAY COME UP

Sometimes tears come while you colour, or a memory. Let it be there, keep your feet on the floor, and come back to the paper when you're ready. If it gets too much, stop, look around the room and name three colours you can see. The paper will wait.

There's room for your drawing on the next page.

YOUR BODY · YOUR IMAGE · YOUR THREE WORDS



CHAPTER FIVE

# The first 24 to 48 hours

Treat today like the day after a long swim in the sea. Drink more water than usual, eat something warm and simple (soup, rice, porridge, something cooked), and give yourself an early night. A slow walk outside helps more than a workout. Keep big decisions and big conversations for later in the week: the clarity you may feel this morning is real, and it will still be there once things have settled.

## What can come, and is normal

Strong feelings that seem to arrive out of nowhere, tears in the supermarket, a short temper or a lot of tenderness. Vivid dreams. A tiredness that sits in the bones. Sore muscles where we worked, around the upper belly and lower ribs, the neck and shoulders, the

hips. Being more sensitive than usual to noise, screens and people, or the opposite, feeling buzzy and wide awake. All of this is common after a circle and usually fades within a day or two. If it helps, write three lines in the evening: what I felt in my body, what came up, what I need tonight.

**PLEASE KEEP THIS ONE**

Don't practise strong or fast breathing on your own in the next days, and never in or near water (bath, pool, sea), while driving, standing up, or anywhere a faint could hurt you. Strong breathing can make people faint, and in water that can happen without warning. The daily practice in this guide is gentle nose breathing and is safe to do on your own.

## When to reach out to Nina

Write to me if something from last night keeps coming back and you'd like to talk it through, if your sleep is off for more than a few nights, if you feel shaky or far away and it isn't fading after two days, or if you just want to tell me how you are. You reach me at WhatsApp +62 813 3065 1009. I answer as soon as I can.

## When to get medical help straight away

Call your local emergency number (112 across Europe) or go to a doctor if you have chest pain or pressure, faint, feel numb or weak

on one side, get a sudden very bad headache, have a seizure, or if breathing stays hard even after sitting down and breathing slowly through the nose for a few minutes.

If you feel unsafe with yourself, or overwhelmed in a way that scares you, contact your local crisis line or emergency number now and tell someone you trust who is near you. Please don't wait for my reply for this.



CHAPTER SIX

# When it comes back days later

Many people feel wonderful the day after, and then on day three or four something surfaces: a dream that stays with you, tears in the supermarket, irritability with your partner over nothing, an old memory, or a heavy, flat day. This doesn't mean the session went wrong. It usually means your body is still digesting, and old material that has been held for a long time is moving closer to the surface where it can finally be met.

The way through is to go back and forth, without diving in and without pushing it away. In somatic work this is called **pendulation**: you let your attention swing gently between something that feels hard and something that feels okay, like a pendulum, so your body learns that it can touch the difficult feeling and come back. Each swing teaches your nervous system,

the part of you that decides whether you're safe, a little more capacity.

## The pendulum, about ten minutes

**Before**

### Your way back

Sit or lie where you feel held, a blanket over your legs. Eyes can stay open. Agree with yourself that you can stop at any moment.

---

**0 to 2 min**

### Find the okay place

Look for one spot in your body that feels neutral or pleasant: the weight of your hands, your feet on the floor, the warmth of the blanket. Stay with it until you can feel it clearly. This is your anchor.

---

**2 to 3 min**

### Touch the edge

Now let your attention go just to the edge of what's hard: the tight throat, the heavy chest, the feeling that came up. Not into the middle. Ten or twenty seconds is enough. Notice it without needing to fix it.

3 to 4 min

## Swing back

Return to your anchor. Let a long, slow out-breath go, as if fogging up a window. Wait until the okay feeling is there again.

4 to 10 min

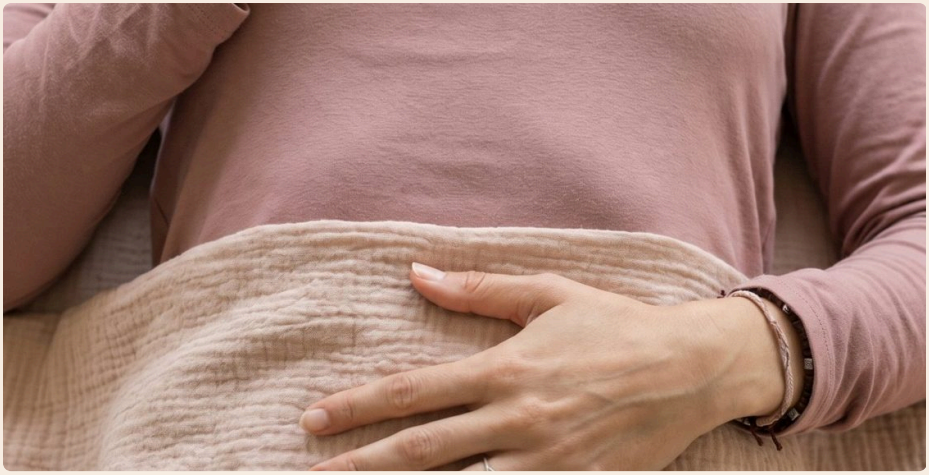
## Three or four rounds

Go back and forth a few times. Often the hard place softens a little, or the okay place grows. Finish on the okay place, every time.

Going slowly like this, a little at a time so the body can keep up, is called **titration**. It's the opposite of pushing through, and it's what makes change stay.

### PLEASE REACH OUT

Write to me on WhatsApp (+62 813 3065 1009) if something keeps coming back and you'd like to talk it through, if you sleep badly for more than three nights, or if you feel far away from yourself and it isn't fading. If you feel unsafe with yourself or have thoughts of harming yourself, please call your local emergency number or a crisis line straight away, and then tell someone you trust.



CHAPTER SEVEN

# Ribs or shoulders? Your breath self-check

Do this lying on your back or sitting, at a moment when nothing much is going on. Breathe the way you normally do. You're meeting your everyday pattern, so there's no good breath to perform here. Put one hand on your lower ribs and the other on your belly, and watch for a minute.

1

## Ribs or shoulders?

As you breathe in, do your lower ribs widen sideways into your hand, or do your shoulders and upper chest lift toward your ears? Your neck and shoulders have

**accessory breathing muscles**

, helpers built for emergencies like sprinting for a train. Most people I meet use them for every single breath, around twenty thousand times a day, which is a lot of sprinting for someone sitting at a laptop. Also notice if only your belly pushes out while the ribs stay still. Belly breathing is still only half the movement, and it pushes pressure down onto the pelvic floor, the muscles that hold everything at the base of your pelvis.

2

## Silent or noisy?

A resting breath is almost silent. If you can hear yourself breathe while you're doing nothing, you are usually moving more air than your body needs right now.

3

## A pause, or a rush?

In a calm body the rhythm goes in, out, and then a small natural pause before the next breath comes by itself. If you find yourself grabbing the next in-breath straight away, your body is breathing as if something is about to happen.

4

### Is the nose enough?

Close your mouth and breathe through your nose. Does it feel easy, or do you feel you're not getting enough air?

5

### Mouth, sighs and yawns.

Do you catch your mouth open at the laptop, wake up with a dry mouth, or sigh and yawn a lot during the day? Lots of big sighs can be a sign of a habit of breathing a little too much.

Recognising one or two of these is very common, and it's exactly what the daily practice works with. If you recognised most of them, and especially if breathing through your nose feels like panic, read "When daily breathing feels hard" in chapter 9 as well.



CHAPTER EIGHT

# Your daily five minutes

### THE REPATTERNING PRACTICE

Your **diaphragm** is a dome-shaped muscle under your ribs. When you breathe in, it tightens and flattens downward, your liver and stomach slide down a little to make room, and the lower ribs swing out and up to the sides like the handle of a bucket being lifted. The small muscles between the ribs work with it. You can't aim air into one part of the lungs, but you can change which parts of you move, and that is what we train: more movement in the lower ribs and the back, less in the neck and shoulders. Each in-breath like this also helps pull blood and lymph back toward the heart, which is one reason it feels so good to the whole body.

## Before you begin

Choose one moment of the day and keep it, just after waking or just before sleep work well, but not straight after a big meal. You need a floor or a bed, a pillow for your head, maybe one under your knees, and something warm over you. If you have asthma, keep your inhaler close. If you are pregnant, practise sitting or lying on your side.

For some people, about one in twelve, turning inward feels unsettling at first, and more so if childhood was hard. If that's you, you're allowed to go slower: keep your eyes open, look at one thing in the room, sit instead of lying down, and do two minutes instead of five. Going slowly is part of the practice.

## The practice

**0 to 1 min**

### Arrive

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat, hip-width apart, chin softly down. Lips together, teeth slightly apart, tongue resting on the roof of your mouth behind your front teeth, which makes nose breathing easier. Let the floor take your weight. Don't change the breath yet, just feel where it is today.

1 to 2.5 min

## Hands on the ribs

Place your hands on the sides of your lower ribs, fingers to the front and thumbs around toward your back, as if you are holding a big ball. Breathe in quietly through your nose and feel the ribs widen into your hands, to the sides and into the back. The belly can soften outward a little, it just shouldn't be the only thing moving. Let your shoulders melt toward the floor and your jaw hang loose. Keep the breath small and quiet, smaller than you think.

2.5 to 4 min

## The soft pause

Let the out-breath fall out by itself, the ribs sinking back under your hands, nothing pushed. At the end of it, wait a moment, one or two slow counts, until the next breath arrives on its own. You aren't holding the breath, you are simply not rushing it. A slight wish for air is fine and even useful, it teaches your body that a little less air is safe. If it gets strong or panicky, take one easy breath and come back to small and quiet.

4 to 5 min

## Let go

Take your hands away and let the breath do whatever it wants. Notice what's different from when you began.

## What to notice

Warm hands or feet, more saliva in your mouth, a gurgling belly, a yawn, a body that feels heavier, thoughts that slow down. These are signs your body is moving toward rest and digestion. Some days you'll notice very little, and that counts too: you are still training the pattern.

## What may come up, and how to meet it

Restlessness, an itch, a strong urge to take one huge breath (swallow instead, more on that below), a tight chest, tears, a memory from last night, or the feeling that you're doing it wrong. If you feel dizzy or tingly, you are breathing too much, so make the breath smaller and slower. If a feeling comes, name it quietly, "there's sadness", and keep one hand on your ribs. Often a part of us is scared of slowing down, because staying alert has kept us going for years. You can greet that part, "I see you, we're only breathing", without arguing with it. If it gets too much, open your eyes and come back using the way back below.

THE WAY BACK

Open your eyes and look around the room. Name three colours you can see. Press your feet into the floor, move your fingers and toes, roll onto your side and stay there for a few breaths. Sit up slowly and drink a sip of water.

## Why this works

In a large trial with people who have asthma, a few sessions of breathing retraining plus practice at home improved their quality of life more than usual care. In one of the most careful trials on slow breathing, people who practised it felt better, and so did people who breathed at their normal pace with the same daily attention. So the daily ritual of paying attention matters a lot, and the pattern makes that attention easy to come back to. That's why I promise you a habit, not a cure. Daily practice trains your breathing muscles; it will not make healthy lungs bigger, and it doesn't need to.

### BUSY DAY? THE ONE-MINUTE VERSION

Wherever you are, put one hand on your lower ribs. Close your mouth, drop your shoulders, and take three small, quiet nose breaths, ribs widening, with a soft pause after each out-breath. Finish with one hum on a long out-breath. That's it, and it counts.

## Week 1 to week 4

### WEEK 1

#### Just notice

Lying down, hands on the ribs, nose breathing. Only feel the ribs move, and skip the soft pause step for now. Nothing to achieve. Five minutes, or two if that's what you have.

### WEEK 2

#### Add the pause

Same position. Let the out-breath fall and add the soft pause. Let the breath get a little smaller and slower. Do the one-minute version once during the day.

WEEK 3

## Sit up

Practise sitting on a chair, feet flat, back supported. Finish with three hums on long out-breaths. Do the one-minute check at the laptop twice a day.

WEEK 4

## Take it with you

Keep the five minutes in the morning, and add nose breathing on a walk, plus a breath check before emails, in traffic, at the dinner table. The goal is for this to become how you breathe when you aren't thinking about it.



CHAPTER NINE

# Small habits for the day

**Swallow instead of a big sigh.** When you feel the urge for one huge, "satisfying" breath, swallow instead, then breathe out gently through the nose. That urge is often a habit of breathing a bit too much, and each big gulp of air keeps the habit going. Swallowing breaks the loop, and after a few days the urge comes less often.

**Nose breathing while walking.** On your next walk, keep your mouth closed and slow your pace until the nose is enough. If you need to open your mouth, walk slower. Over the weeks your pace will come back up while the breath stays in the nose.

**A breath check at the laptop, in traffic, before an email.** These are the moments the shoulders creep up without asking. Pick one trigger, for example every time you press send, and check: mouth closed, shoulders down, ribs moving. One breath is enough.

**Hum on a long out-breath.** Breathe in through the nose, then hum on the way out, letting the sound go on a little longer than feels natural. Humming slows the out-breath down by itself, which is why it feels so calming. Kids at the dinner table tend to join in, which is a bonus.

## When daily breathing feels hard

If breathing through your nose feels like panic or like not getting enough air, if you constantly need big breaths, sigh and yawn a lot, or get dizzy, tingly or tight in the chest without a clear reason, you may have a **breathing pattern disorder**. That means your body learned a way of breathing, often too fast, too high in the chest and a bit too much, and kept it long after the reason for it was gone. It's common, it is nothing you did wrong, and it can be retrained.

A **breathing physiotherapist**, a physio who specialises in breathing, can assess how you breathe and guide you step by step. Please see your doctor first to rule out other causes, such as the heart, lungs, thyroid or low iron.

For you, the right next circle is a gentle nose-breathing one, like our online Deep & Open, rather than another strong evening of mouth breathing. Start with the one-minute version on its own, eyes open, and grow from there.



CHAPTER TEN

# Your day

Small moments spread through the day change more than one long practice you keep postponing. Here is a simple rhythm. Take what fits. Push the wall, self-holding, becoming the earth, floor movement and walking as your parts are explained step by step in the free Somatic Toolkit (thecocoonmethod.life/toolkit).

## Morning

Before you reach for your phone, stay lying down for two minutes. Notice the weight of your body on the mattress, then three slow, quiet nose breaths with your hands on your lower ribs. When you get up, look slowly around the room once, letting your eyes land on something you like. It tells your body the day can start at a human pace. If you feel heavy or foggy, a minute of shaking out

your arms and legs, or tapping lightly up and down your arms and chest, wakes you up gently.

## At the laptop

The moments your shoulders creep up without asking are the ones to catch. Pick one trigger, every time you press send, every time you open a new tab, and check: mouth closed, shoulders down, ribs moving. One breath is enough. Once an hour, stand up and push the wall (from the free Somatic Toolkit on thecocoonmethod.life/toolkit) for three breaths, or turn your head slowly left and right and look out of a window.

## After lunch

A short walk with your mouth closed, slow enough that the nose is enough. If you need to open your mouth, walk slower. Digestion is one of the jobs your body does best when it isn't bracing.

## Evening

If the day left you stiff or numb, five minutes of floor movement. If you're wired, self-holding or becoming the earth in bed. In the shower, stand under the warm water for a minute and feel it run down your back and shoulders, and let your out-breaths get a little longer. Then write three lines: where I felt tension today, what helped, what I need tomorrow.

## Weekly

Once a week, walk as your parts and notice who has been running your week. Check the boundaries and values pages (chapter 13) and ask the five questions at the end of this chapter.

## Five questions to ask yourself

Where do I notice tension in my body during the day, and what helps it let go? How does my breath feel when I'm stressed, and what changes when I slow it down? What do I want to put first this week, and do my decisions match that? Which boundary needs a little more strength right now, and how can I say it clearly and kindly? Where could I let a little more pleasure in, without guilt and without rushing it?



CHAPTER ELEVEN

# From insight to one small change

A strong session can make everything look clear for a few days: this job has to go, this relationship has to change, I have to live differently. Sometimes that clarity is true. But it's wiser to let it settle before you act on it. The meditation teacher Jack Kornfield described this well: after the moment of opening comes the laundry, the ordinary life where the insight either becomes a habit or fades.

**My suggestion:** no big decisions in the first two weeks. Write them down, keep them, and look again when your nervous system is back to its everyday rhythm. What still feels true then is worth acting on.

## Turn one insight into one tiny step

1

### Write the insight in one sentence

For example: "I never let myself rest."

2

### Make the step almost silly small

"Two minutes lying on the floor after lunch, phone in another room." Small enough that a bad day can't stop you.

3

### Tie it to something you already do

After lunch, after brushing your teeth, after closing the laptop. The existing habit becomes the reminder.

4

### Do it for fourteen days

Tick it off in your four weeks on the tracker later in this book. Missing a day doesn't matter; coming back does.

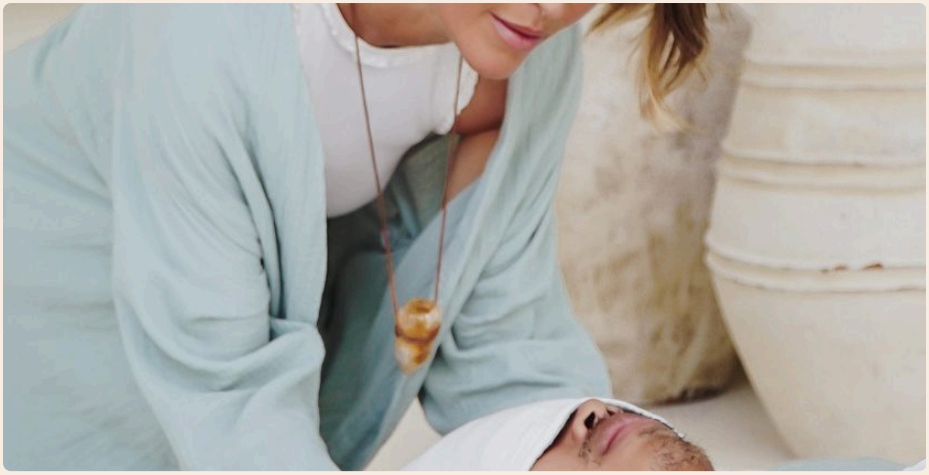
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### Notice what changes

In your body first, then in your days. Often the small step changes more than the big decision would have.

MY INSIGHT IN ONE SENTENCE

MY TINY STEP, AND WHEN I DO IT



CHAPTER TWELVE

# The people around you

You may come home softer than you left, and the people around you are still in their normal speed. That's a tender moment. You don't owe anyone an explanation of what happened inside you, and you don't have to protect it in silence either.

A sentence you can use

*"I did a deep breath and body session. I might be a bit tender for a day or two, and I'd love some quiet."*

Choose carefully who you tell more. Share with people who listen without fixing, and keep the deeper parts for a friend, a journal, or

our next session until they feel steady.

## Calm is contagious

Our bodies calm down next to a calm body. This is called **co-regulation**, and you know it from the friend whose voice alone makes your shoulders drop. After a session, notice who leaves you calmer and who leaves you wired, and spend a little more time with the first.

## With your partner and your children

Invite your partner to do the daily five minutes with you, lying side by side, hands on your own ribs. For children, make it a game: a hand on the chest, "let's see if we can make our breath as quiet as a mouse". Children learn their breath from yours far more than from anything you say.

## When you feel alone with it

After a strong experience it's common to feel a little separate from everyone, as if you saw something they didn't. You're not alone with it. Our WhatsApp community and the online circles are there for exactly this: people who know what a breath journey is.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# Boundaries, values and pleasure

Breath and body work change how much you can feel. Once you feel more, you notice more clearly where your life fits you and where it doesn't. These three practices come from my workshops and help you turn what you feel into how you live.

## Boundaries

A boundary is where you end and someone else begins. In the body you can often feel a crossed boundary before you can name it: a tight jaw, a clenched belly, a smile that comes too fast, the "yes" that's out of your mouth before you've checked. Many of us learned early that being easy to be around was safer than having needs.

**The practice.** For one week, notice each day one moment when you felt uncomfortable, tense or suddenly tired around someone or something. Ask: was a boundary crossed, by them or by me? Then practise one small no: a "let me think about it" instead of an instant yes, a "this doesn't work for me", leaving a conversation five minutes earlier. Push the wall (from the free Somatic Toolkit on thecocoonmethod.life/toolkit) is the body version of this practice; do it before a conversation where you need to hold your ground.

**Questions for your journal.** Where in my life do I need clearer boundaries? How can I say what I need in a way that's both loving and firm? What happens in my body when I say no?

## Values

Your values are what you care about most, the things that guide your decisions when nobody is watching: honesty, freedom, family, beauty, learning, courage, kindness. When we live far from our values, the body often tells us first, with tiredness, restlessness, a low mood that doesn't make sense.

**The practice.** Write down your three most important values. Then look at your last week: where did you live close to them, and where far away? Choose one small intention for this week that brings your days a little closer to one of them. At the end of each day, notice one moment when you lived your values, and stay with how that feels in your body for a few breaths.

# Pleasure

Pleasure is a regulation practice. When you savour something, a cup of tea held in both hands, the sun on your face, the smell of rain, a song you love, your body gets a strong, simple signal that right now is safe enough to enjoy. Many people I work with are very good at functioning and have almost forgotten how to receive.

**The practice.** Once a day, choose one small pleasure and give it your full attention for one minute. No phone, no multitasking, no earning it first. Notice where in your body you feel the enjoyment. If guilt shows up, notice that too: that's a part of you that learned pleasure had to be deserved, and it's welcome to watch.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

# Food, water and rest

Your body does the processing after a session, so looking after it is part of the work. I keep this chapter simple on purpose, because wellness talk around food is full of claims that don't hold up.

**About "detox".** You'll often hear that breathwork or bodywork releases toxins that you then need to flush out. Your liver and kidneys do that job every day, and there's no good evidence that a session releases a special load of toxins. What is true is that after a strong experience you're often tired, a little dehydrated from breathing through your mouth, and more sensitive than usual. So the advice is the same, and the reason is honest: look after a body that has worked hard and opened up.

**Water.** Drink more than usual for a day or two, little and often. Fuller mouth breathing dries you out more than you'd expect.

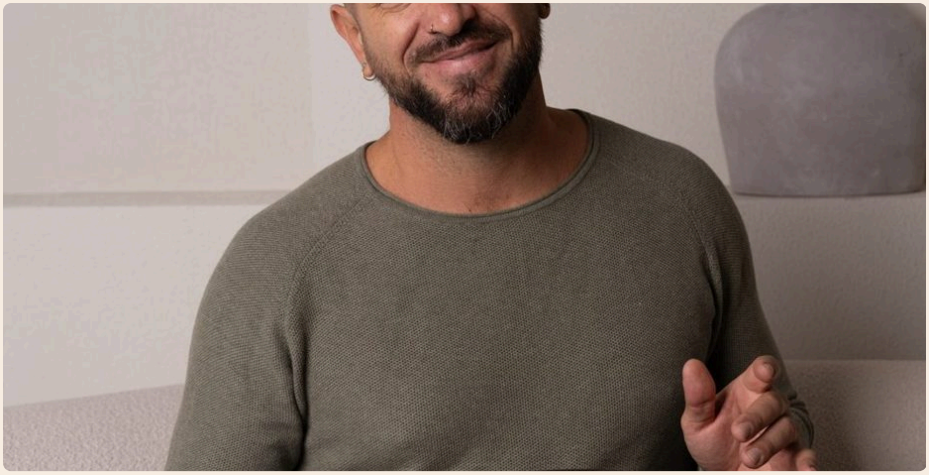
**Food.** Warm, simple, easy to digest: soups, stews, rice, porridge, cooked vegetables, eggs, lentils. Regular meals help your blood sugar stay steady, and steady blood sugar makes it easier to stay inside your window. Eat slowly when you can. Sitting down for a meal, even ten minutes without a screen, is one of the simplest regulation practices there is.

**Coffee and alcohol.** Coffee keeps your alert system switched up, which isn't a problem in itself, but in the first days after a session

or when you're working on sleep, less helps. Alcohol makes you feel relaxed but breaks up your sleep in the second half of the night, so it works against the rest your body is asking for.

**Sleep.** Sleep is when the brain sorts and stores what happened during the day. After a session, give yourself an early night. If you lie awake, don't fight it: hands on your heart and belly, small slow breaths, and let it be rest even if it isn't sleep yet.

**Movement.** Gentle movement helps more than intense training in the first days: walking, swimming slowly, gentle stretching, the floor movement in the free Somatic Toolkit (thecocoonmethod.life/toolkit). Your breath is also a pump: each in-breath helps pull blood and lymph back toward your heart, so slow, full breathing while you move gently is good for the whole body.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

# The deeper layer

Most of this book is about the body and everyday life, because that's where change becomes real. But many people tell me that a session also touched something bigger: a sense of being part of something, a peace that didn't depend on anything, or a question about what their life is really for.

Almost every tradition has a word that links breath and life: prana in yoga, qi in Chinese medicine, ruach in Hebrew, pneuma in Greek. Research can neither prove nor disprove this. People across the world have simply used these words for the same experience. Take from it what rings true for you and leave the rest. You don't have to believe anything to benefit from this work.

## Three questions for a quiet evening

- What did I feel in the session that I don't usually allow myself to feel?
- If my body could ask me for one thing this month, what would it be?
- What is my life asking of me now, and what am I ready to let go of?

## Your chart as a mirror

Some people like to look at these questions through astrology. Mariano reads the birth chart as a mirror for the story you're living: where you come from, where you're growing and what helps you feel safe. It's a language, never a fixed fate, and it often gives words to what the body already showed you. You find his sessions at thecocoonmethod.life/sessions.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

# Your four weeks

Change shows up slowly and then suddenly. This tracker lets you see it. Tick the boxes each day, and once a week score four things from 0 to 10. If you have a private reflection journal online, the same four scores make a little chart for you there.

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week 1 · five minutes | | | | | | | |
| Week 1 · tiny step | | | | | | | |
| Week 2 · five minutes | | | | | | | |
| Week 2 · tiny step | | | | | | | |
| Week 3 · five minutes | | | | | | | |
| Week 3 · tiny step | | | | | | | |
| Week 4 · five minutes | | | | | | | |
| Week 4 · tiny step | | | | | | | |

## Once a week, 0 to 10

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Calm | | | | |
| Body tension (10 = very tense) | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sleep | | | | |
| Connection to yourself | | | | |

At the end of the four weeks, look back at your drawing from "Before words". Notice what has changed.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

# Your journal

Change is often quiet. You don't wake up one day transformed; you notice one Tuesday that you didn't snap at the kids, or that you slept through, or that the email from your boss didn't sit in your chest all afternoon. Writing things down helps you see those quiet changes, which keeps you going when it feels like nothing is happening.

## After a session

What did I feel in my body during the session? What came up: feelings, images, memories, thoughts? What felt helpful, and what was difficult? What do I want to take into my week?

## Weekly check-in

What shifts have I noticed in my body or mind this week? How did I meet moments of stress? Which practice did I actually do, and what happened? What strengths am I discovering in myself? What do I need more of next week, and less of?

## Monthly

Read back through your notes. What has changed since the first page? What hasn't changed yet, and what might help? Is it time for

another session, a circle, or simply more of the same small practice?

## Gentle goals

Make your goals small enough that you'd be embarrassed to fail them: three breaths before getting out of bed, one minute of orienting before opening your laptop. Small goals done every day change your body. Big goals done twice change your guilt. And celebrate the small wins out loud, even if only to yourself. Your nervous system learns from what you notice.



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

# Keep going with us

## Keep the circle with you

### Practise with me on YouTube

Short breath practices and longer guided journeys, to rest with in the evenings or to follow on the days you want company.
youtube.com/@Thecocoonmethod

### My voice for your five minutes

A recording of me guiding you through the daily practice, so you can close your eyes and just follow. It's also what opens when you hold your phone to the intention stone.
courses.thecocoonmethod.life/gift

### The long sigh

This is a different thing from the big gulps of air in chapter 9. Take a small, easy breath in through the nose, then let a long, slow out-breath go through soft lips, as if you were fogging up a window. All the length is in the out-breath. Do it once, on purpose, at the end of your five minutes or at the end of a hard day, the way we closed the circle together.

*Wherever you breathe from today, you were held last night, and you can come back.*

## Your next step

When you're ready, here is where we meet again. I only ever share real dates.

NEXT ONLINE CIRCLE

### Live on Zoom, with live sound

The full evening again: the intention round, the breath, the bodywork, live sound and the cocoon.

See the next date and book

ONLINE · DEEP & OPEN

### Saturdays, 11:00 Lithuania time (10:00 Germany)

About two hours, donation-based. Gentle nose breathing that slowly builds and settles, then 35 minutes wrapped in a blanket at home with live sound. All about breathing repatterning, so it's the natural next step after this guide.

See the next circle

PRIVATE SESSION

### Two hours, one to one

Breath, bodywork and sound, chosen for you. Good if you want to go deeper with what came up, or if breathing feels hard and you'd like to be guided.

See sessions and journeys

All sessions: thecocoonmethod.life/sessions

PRACTITIONER TRAINING

## Learn to guide others

For those who felt last night and thought: I want to learn this properly. It begins with your own breath, on yourself, before you give it to anyone else.
thecocoonmethod.life/breathwork-training

*With you,*

*Nina & Mariano*



*Wherever you breathe from today, you were held, and you can come back.*

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This book supports your own practice and doesn't replace medical or psychological care. If you have a health concern,

please speak with your doctor.