

# Calm & Resilient: Nervous System Mastery

LEARN THE SCIENCE AND DAILY  
HABITS TO MOVE FROM SURVIVAL  
MODE TO CALM, GROUNDED LIVING



# Module 2:

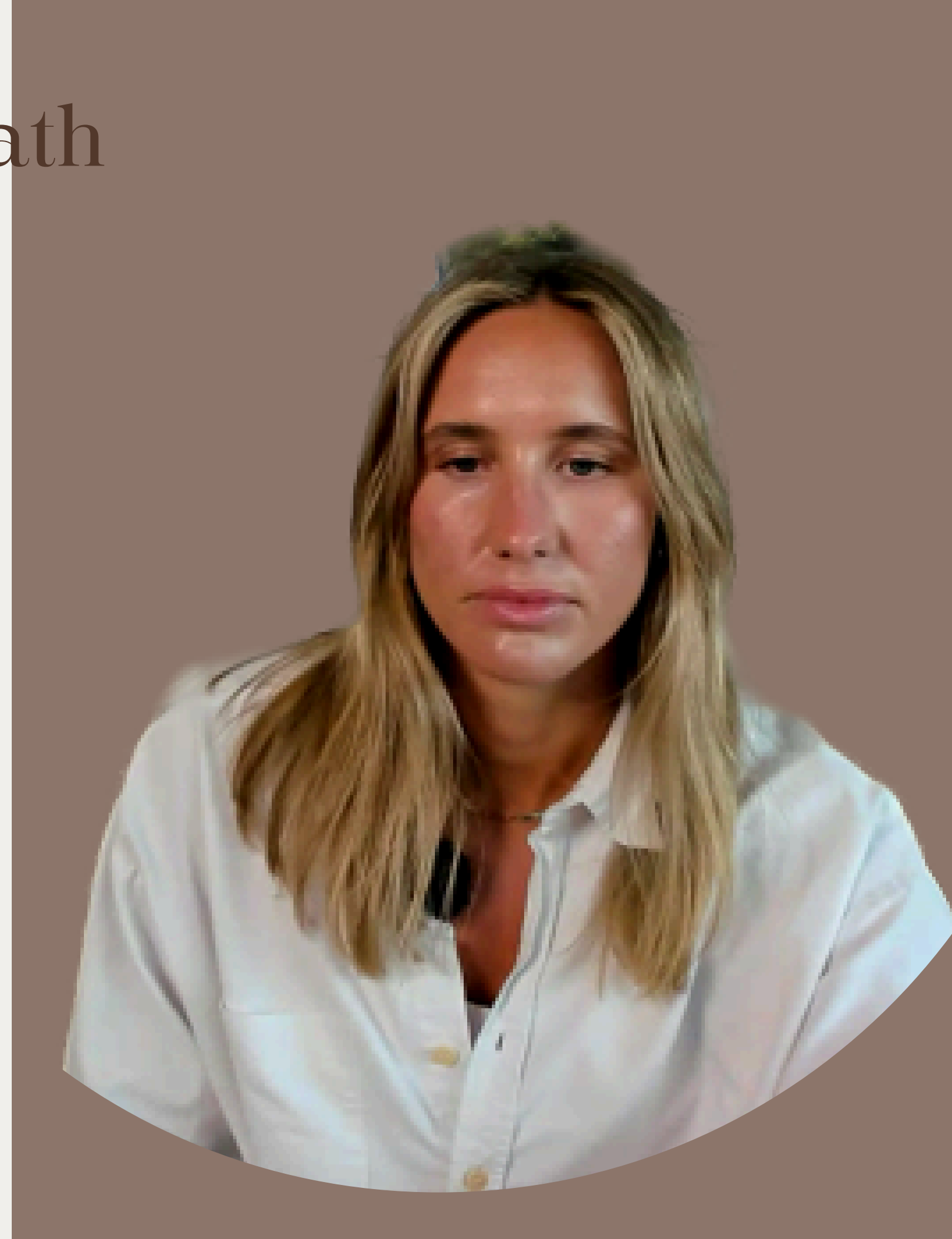
## Lesson 1.

# Assessing Your Breathing Behavior



# Observe Your Breath

- Where do you feel movement?
- How fast is your breath?
- Nose or mouth?
- Smooth or jerky?
- Do you notice the pauses at the top and bottom?
- Do you notice that little reflex at the end of your exhale - encouraging you to take another inhale?
- Do you allow or control your breath?



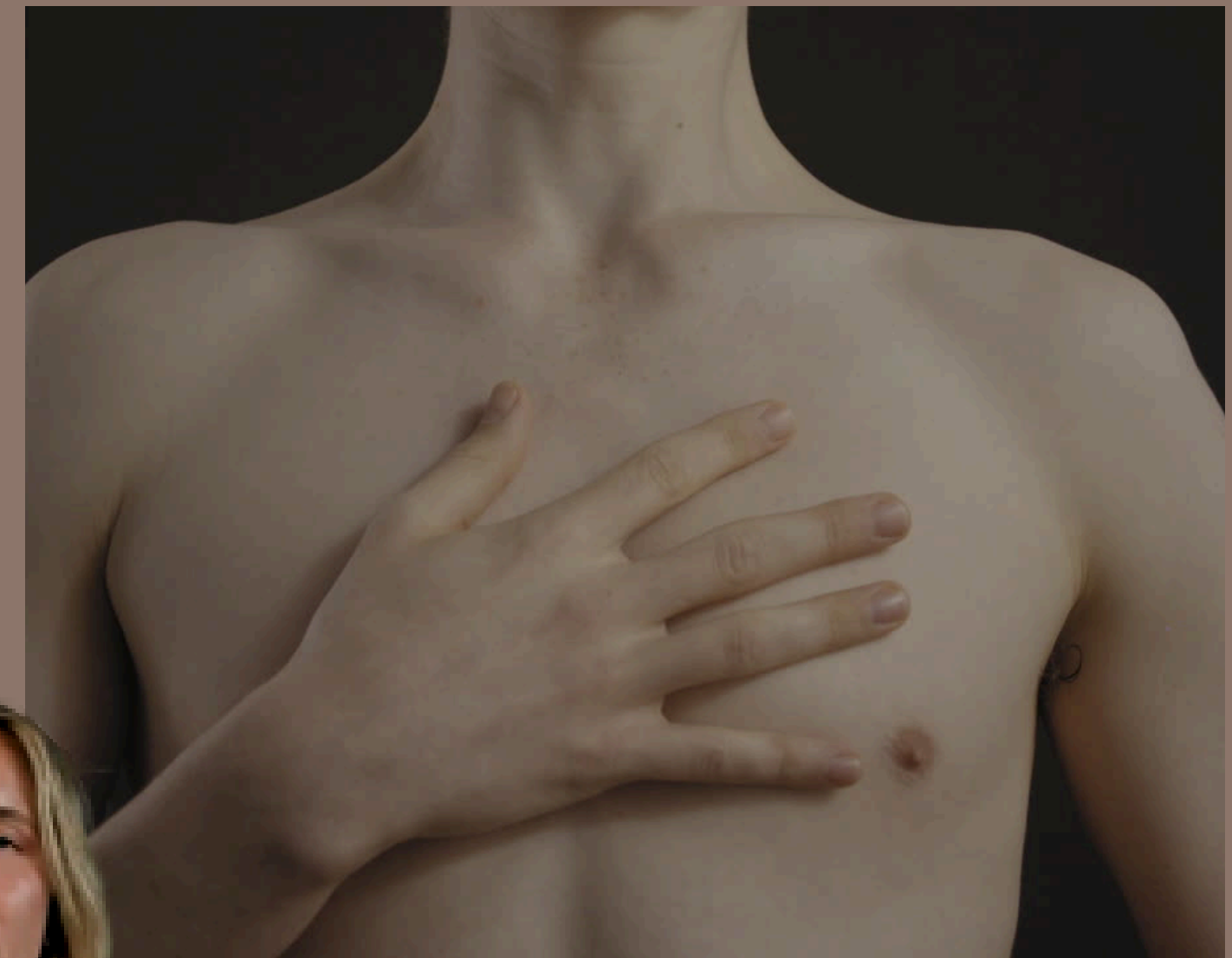
“Your breath mirrors the state of your nervous system – and vice versa”

- **Breathing = window into your nervous system**
- **Fast + shallow = stress**
- **Slow + deep = calm**
- **Stress and anxiety = the same thing physiologically**



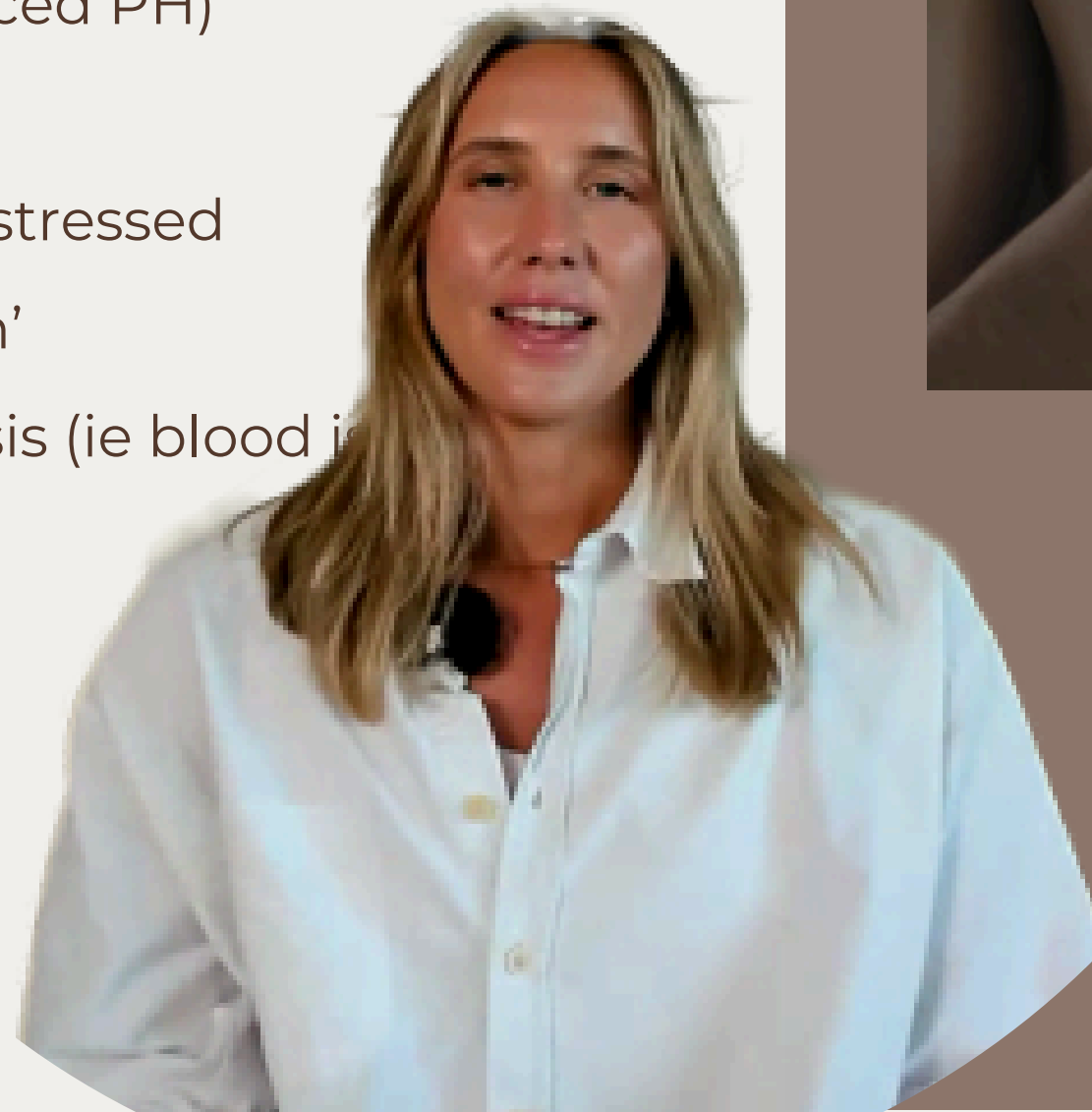
# Shift your breath – shift your state

- Stress is a response to an alteration of PH-levels in the blood when gas-exchange occur (breathing)
- Ie - Oxygen in - CO2 out.
- Body wants balance 'homeostasis' (balanced PH)
- When stressed, we breathe too much
- When breathing too much - we become stressed
- Overbreathing = 'chronic hyperventilation'
- Not in balance, state of respiratory alkalosis (ie blood is alkaline)



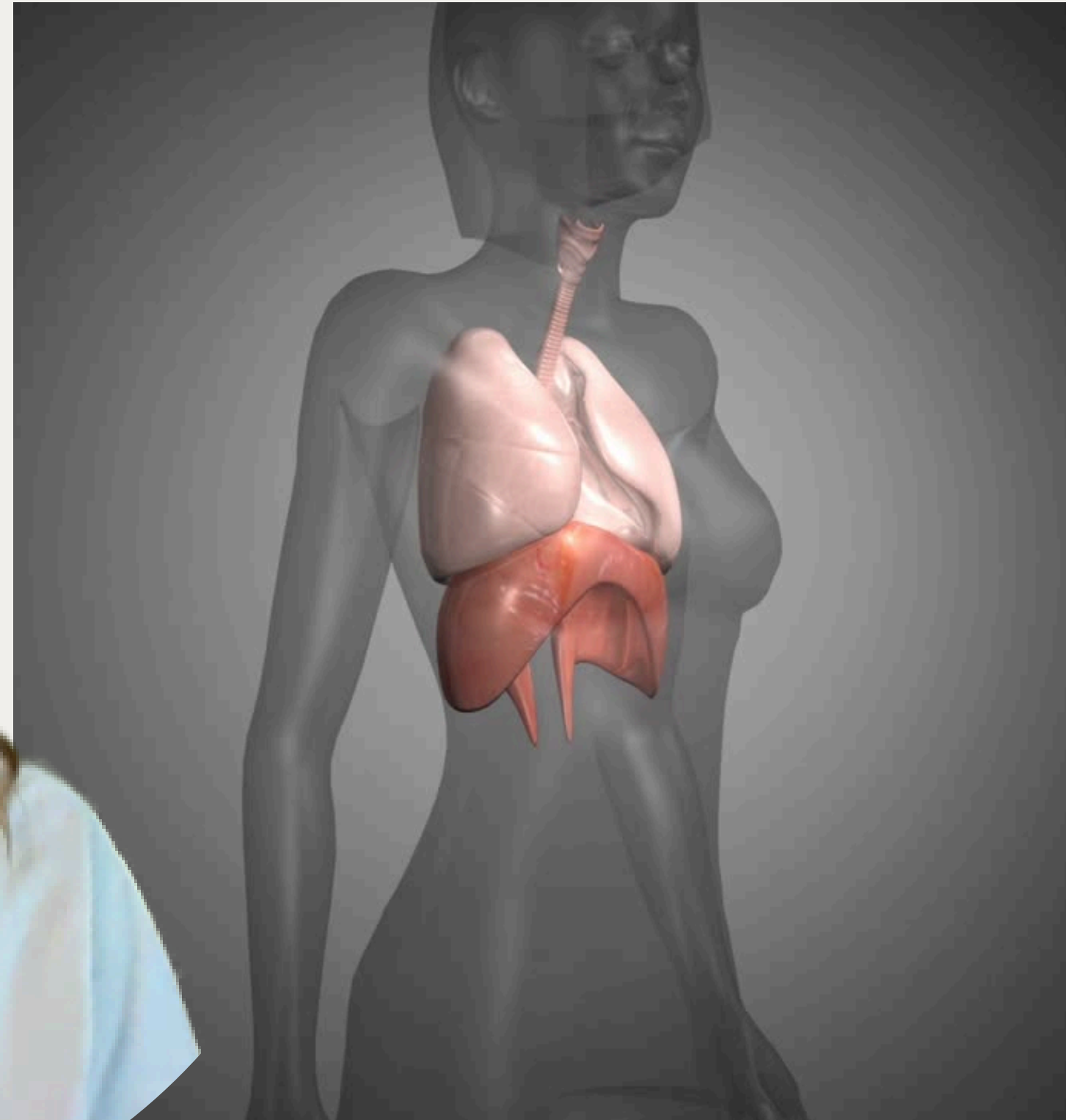
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# What Functional Breathing Looks Like

- ✓ N - Nasal
- ✓ G - Gentle
- ✓ S - Slow
- ✓ E - Expansive



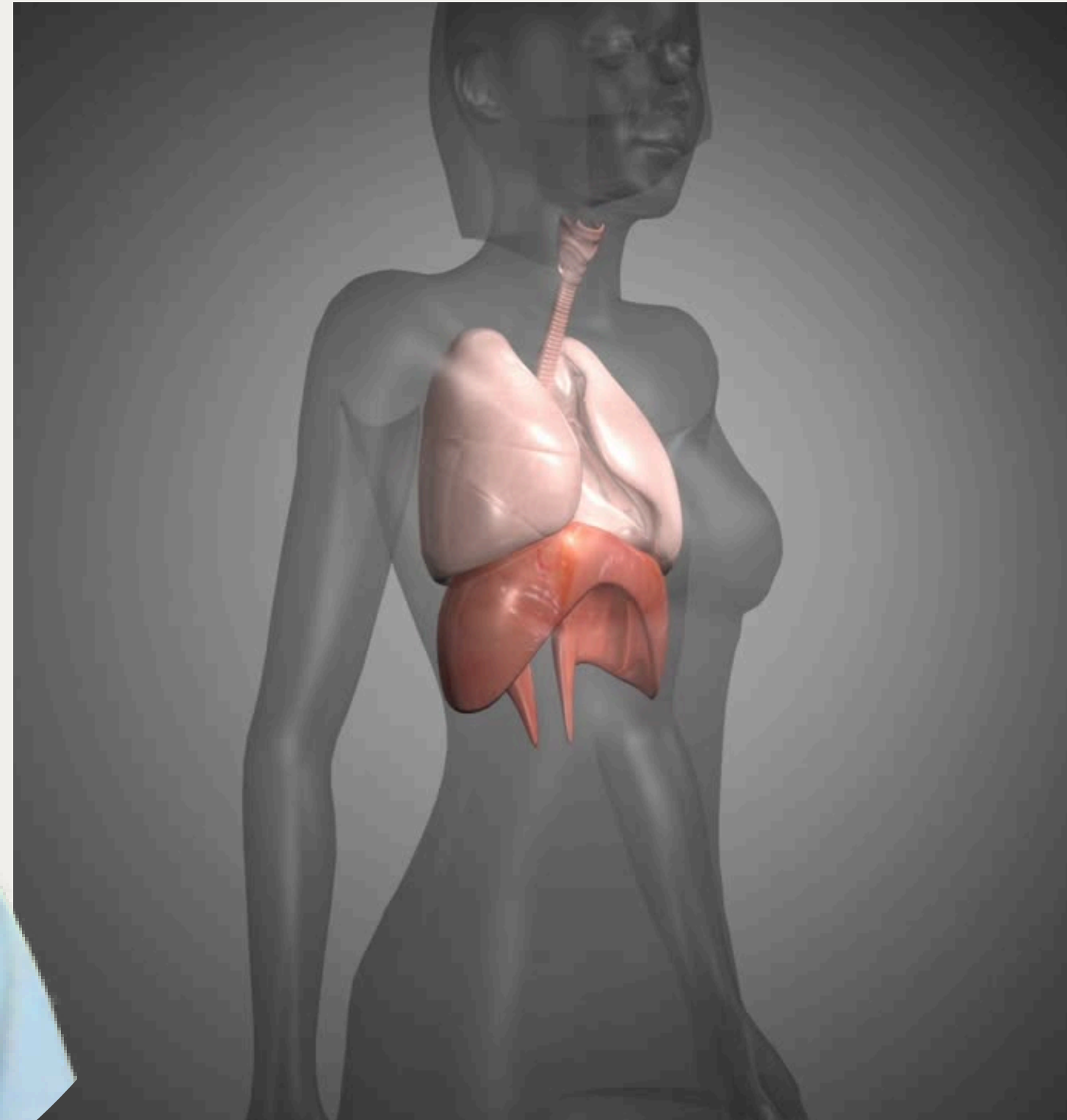
## Signs of Dysfunctional Breathing

- ✗ Mouth breathing (more on this later)
- ✗ Shallow, Fast
- ✗ From chest rather than lower ribcage/diaphragm
- ✗ Loud & with Effort
- ✗ Huffing, Puffing
- ✗ Subconscious breath holds
- ✗ Frequent Sighing

**\*\*\*when not engaging in intense exercise**

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# The BOLT Score



- **BODY Oxygen Level Test**
- **Measures tolerance to CO2 build up in the blood - stress**
- **Sit up right - long spine**
- **Take 3x conscious breaths**
- **After a normal exhale (3rd) - hold breath on empty**
- **Time until first urge to breathe**
- **Record your seconds**
- **First inhale after should be calm & gentle (otherwise you held too long)**

# The BOLT Score Interpretation

- **<10 = low stress tolerance,  
breathing dysfunction very likely**
- **10–20 = moderate stress tolerance,  
likely dysfunctional breathing**
- **20–40 = good breathing  
mechanics, good stress tolerance**
- **40+ = excellent breathing  
mechanics, great stress tolerance**



# The Exhale Max Test

- **Measures Breath Control and Parasympathetic tone**
- **Stress tolerance**
- **Sit up right - long spine**
- **Take 3x conscious breaths**
- **After your 3<sup>rd</sup> inhale - start exhaling as slow as possible through your nose**
- **Continue exhaling until your lungs are empty**
- **A gentle inhale after (otherwise you pushed too far)**



# The Exhale Max Test

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- **Stress tolerance**
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- **Continue exhaling until your lungs are empty**
- **A gentle inhale after (otherwise you pushed too far)**



# The Exhale Max Test Interpretation

- **<10 = very low breath control, breathing dysfunction very likely**
- **10–20 = low breath control, likely dysfunctional breathing**
- **20–40 = ok breathing mechanics, likely some dysfunctional breathing present**
- **40-60 = good breathing mechanics, good stress tolerance**
- **60+ = great breath control, high stress tolerance**



# Reflect

- What do your numbers tell you?
- Do you recognize yourself in these numbers?
- What can you do, to start listening to the signs your body is sending you?
- Awareness → the start of change



# Summary

- **Hot to assess your own breath**
- **What the BOLT score and Exhale Max test is, and how to perform them**
- **What overbreathing is**
- **How imbalance of blood gases causes stress**



# Homework

- Track results weekly & note habits affecting breath

