

Breath Energy Exercises

CD #2: Transcript

Welcome Back!

Right now we are going to practice the Basic Series. The Basic Series are the basic breathing exercises that are presented in the context of the Breath Energy Training.

The three first exercises actually comprise The Formula For Transformation. And you would be best to absorb that information and practice those basic skills, which are presented on a different program. The three first exercises which comprise The Formula For Transformation:

- Breath Watching, or Insight Meditation
- Engaging the Exhale, or the Relaxation Response
- Charging the Heart. Energy Breathing

So, again, I advise you to practice those three core exercises before you begin playing with these. But, playing with the Basic Series here...even without the benefit of the Formula For Transformation-those basic three exercises... You will find that you can still derive quite a bit of benefit from the exercises that follow.

But, again, knowing those three core skills [taught as the *the Formula for Transformation*] will help you to get more out of the exercises presented here. That having been said, let's get on with a basic skill in The Breath Energy Series, which is Belly Breathing or Diaphragmatic Breathing.

Diaphragmatic Breathing is taught in most yoga schools. And most martial artists learn belly breathing if they want to derive the most... or if they want to reach any level of skill... diaphragmatic breathing is very important.

It is also important to any athlete, or in any athletic endeavor; for singers and performers it is very important. Any activity that requires balance, grounded-ness, calmness or a sort of serene power... [those are times when you need to breathe].

Belly breathing is a good place to start. And to reach any level of mastery in any of those areas, you pretty much have to get belly breathing down. So, belly breathing is really quite simple. You can watch a baby and see how active their belly is when they breathe.

And it seems as we grow, and as get older, we get more and more "uptight." This uptightness is reflected in the level of the breathing: that is, the center of the breathing seems to move higher and higher up into the chest. And when you become very afraid, the breath moves very high up into the chest, and it is quite visible.

But you can also notice it in very subtle ways in just about everyone. You can notice high-level breathing or breathing high up in the chest. You can notice that in people by the activity in their shoulders and their neck as they breathe.

Good belly breathing requires absolutely no involvement of the muscles up around the chest and the shoulders, neck, or the upper back. Those muscles are simply not required for breathing.

When there's a grave demand for breath, and you can see this in runners and athletes especially recovering after they have run a distance, or you can also see it in emphysema patients, and people with COPD, and asthma, and so on: struggling to breathe. And you can see that the accessory muscles are involved in the breathing.

These accessory muscles, which include muscles around the shoulders and the upper back and the chest, they come into play in breathing when extra demand is put upon the breathing

system. But they are not normally used for breathing. In emergency cases they will come into play to support. Using those muscles requires quite a bit of skill and coordination, and without the foundation of good diaphragmatic breathing it is very likely that the breath, the breathing mechanism will get quite uncoordinated.

What happens is one muscle begins to fight against the other and the breathing gets all jammed up. Another thing that happens is that the natural sense of the flow of breath is lost. And when we deliberately begin to force ourselves to breathe or to breathe deeper or quicker, we artificially begin to manipulate the breathing mechanism, and we cause it to get even further out of balance.

For good practice or good understanding of this “coordinated breathing” you can look into the work of Carl Stough, who has a method called SIMBIC: the Stough Method of Breathing Coordination. He had over 30 years or more of work on the mechanics of breathing. Also, Michael White, and a number of other people who teach diaphragmatic breathing.

Sometimes you can hear the same thing over and over again and suddenly you hear it for the fourteenth time and you get it! Sometimes you hear it in a certain way and you suddenly get it! You have to “get” Diaphragmatic Breathing if you are going to get anywhere in Breath Therapy. It is a real foundation skill.

So, here we go. You can begin this practice by laying down flat on your back, and putting your hands right over your belly button. And as you breathe in... with the inhale... you should feel movement under your hands... As you pull the breath in, as you pull the breath in, your belly should rise up.

What is happening is, as you breathe in, the diaphragm moves down, popping the belly out. The diaphragm is that huge muscle that separates... it's the ceiling of the abdomen and the floor of the chest.

As you breathe in, the diaphragm flattens and sort of moves downward, although it is anchored, it really doesn't move, we use just that as an expression. The diaphragm moves downward, displacing the organs in the abdomen and causing the abdomen, the belly, to pop out. So, as you breathe in, the belly pops out. As you breathe out, the belly flattens.

So, take in a breath now. Your hands are on the belly. And it is as if you are breathing into your hands and moving your hands with the inhale. Don't use your belly muscles. Send the breath low into your belly. And feel your belly expanding. As you exhale, your belly flattens. It is, as if, your lungs are in your belly. And as you breathe in, your belly expands. And as you breathe out, your belly empties or flattens.

A good image is given in Nancy Zi's book, *The Art Of Breathing*. She talks about a bellows, you know, that old piece of equipment, used to fan the fire. It's got two handles on it, a little spout at the end and you sort of pump it [like an accordion], and you fan the flames in a fire. Well, you can imagine that the bellows... the handles of the bellows... are down, one is at your belly button and the other is at your spine.

As you exhale, the bellybutton moves toward the spine. As you inhale, the bellybutton moves away from the spine and your belly pops out. So, practice that. Breathing in, the belly pops out. Breathing out, the navel, the belly button moves towards the spine, the belly flattens. And, if you exhale completely, as you blow the breath out, as you exhale, the belly button gets closer and closer to the spine. The belly flattens more and more until you are completely empty. Then when you inhale your belly begins to pop out.

It is very much like you fill a glass. If you fill a glass with water, it fills from the bottom up. The same thing with breathing, the first bit of breath that enters you should go very deep, all the way down ...low, into the belly. So, you begin to fill the lungs from the bottom up.

As you breathe in the diaphragm moves down and the belly pops up. As you breathe out, the belly flattens, the diaphragm moves up. This is the natural cycle of diaphragmatic breathing. Very important to learn, very important to practice and should be a natural, automatic reflex. It should be the normal way that the breath flows.

So, if you don't have this habit, begin to practice so it becomes natural and becomes a habit. It doesn't require effort. It requires awareness and practice.

It is also useful to lay on your back and put a heavy book on your stomach, and as you breathe in, you lift the book with the inhale. As you breathe out the belly seems to empty and the book gets lower and flattens your belly.

You can also play with the small of your back and your sides around your waist. You can put your hands on your waist, for example, sort of standing arms akimbo, one hand on each side of your waist. And as you breathe in you feel the expansion happening around you waist, as if your belly is filling with air. This expansion should take place front to back, side to side, and you feel the expansion in all directions. Making the belly a very lively place as you inhale and exhale.

In many people the belly is frozen, because of our need to look good, to look like the magazines look, the old-fashioned military posture, the idea of sucking in the belly and popping out the chest. Nothing screws up the breathing more than that posture habitually held.

So, here, the idea is to relax and soften the belly. Allow the breath to move into the belly, and enliven and awaken that place, so the belly responds easily, effortlessly, as the breath comes in. There is no interference, there is no rigidity in the belly, there is no holding of the abdomen to prevent those lower spaces in the lungs from filling.

So, now we have diaphragmatic breathing, very simple, very basic fundamental breathing exercises, upon which all of the other breathing exercises are built, without which you won't have balance, you won't coordination, and you will make very little progress in the end. So, that's the first exercise in the basic series. I wouldn't suggest going on to anything else until this feels easy and smooth to you.

Now for the next exercise we are actually going to jump to a more advanced technique, actually, quite an advanced technique. It is taught in Chi Kung. It's taught in other methods. It is called **Reverse Respiration or Paradoxical Breathing**. And believe it or not, some people actually breathe this way out of habit. Those people are sort of stuck and really need to unravel this.

As you practice this, if you've gotten the fundamentals down in the first exercise (belly breathing, normal diaphragmatic breathing), this is a good way to simply gauge how your progress is with diaphragmatic breathing... how your coordination is going.

Can you consciously apply this next technique and feel the difference between normal diaphragmatic breathing and this reverse or paradoxical breathing? In reverse or paradoxical breathing, as you inhale the bellybutton moves toward the spine and as you exhale the belly pops out. As you can see, this is the exact opposite of normal diaphragmatic breathing. So practice this just a couple times now.

As you breathe in, suck the belly in. As you breathe out, pop the belly out. As you breathe in, suck the belly in. As you breathe out, push the belly out. You practice that a couple of times.

Then let the breath go, and go back to normal diaphragmatic breathing. Does your breathing respond normally? Does it settle back into a normal flow, where on the inhale the breath moves low into the belly... and as you inhale the belly pops out and as you exhale the belly flattens? Just, as if your belly is where your lungs are, and as you fill the lungs with breath the belly seems to

fill. As you empty yourself of breath the belly empties and flattens.

So, we threw in that little quick advanced exercise, Paradoxical Breathing or Reverse Breathing, just to give you a sense of the difference; to give you a sense of where the normal habitual breathing flow, how it should go.

The normal, habitual, automatic, reflexive breathing should be normal diaphragmatic movement. That is, as you inhale the belly pops out, as you exhale the belly flattens. As you inhale the diaphragm moves downward displaces all of the organs in the abdomen causing the belly to pop out. And as you exhale the diaphragm moves back up and the belly flattens behind it. This is the normal diaphragmatic movement to breathing.

The second exercise is paradoxical breathing. And this is actually... in some people... how they breathe normally... which is a difficult problem, because they are stuck in an unnatural movement to breathing.

We use paradoxical breathing or reverse breathing [in the beginning] to develop more breath control, and also to gauge how smoothly we can flow from conscious deliberate control of the breathing mechanism to settling back into the normal automatic flow of the breath. Watching and feeling and sensing the difference between the two...

Now, back to the regular progression. The second basic exercise we are going to teach after belly breathing or diaphragmatic breathing is called **Equalizing the Flow**. I originally was very happy to find a book called Kum Nye Relaxation written by someone, by the name of Tarthan Tulku.

When I found the book I was so impressed that here was a technique, it was his core technique for creating this Kum Nye Relaxation... Here was this technique that I had been playing with as a diver in the Navy, and further in the years that followed

as I began to play with my breath more and more. I got so much out of this technique and then one day I stumbled upon this book and here was this exercise. It was such a wonderful confirmation of an intuitive development that I had experienced.

Equalizing the Flow: what is that exercise? It is a beautiful method of gaining more awareness about the subtle details of breathing. It is a wonderful technique for developing subtle control of the breath and the anatomy of the breath in a way...

How to do this equalizing the flow... One way of looking at it, is it's the technique for "finding the valve." Now the valve I am talking about is... it's the little trap door that you open and close when you want to switch from breathing through your mouth to breathing through your nose.

So, right now, with your jaw relaxed, and your teeth separated slightly, and your mouth a little bit open, you can breathe through your mouth. Then in the back of your throat somewhere, you can make a little adjustment so that the breath now goes in and out your nose.

Without moving your teeth or without moving your jaw without closing your mouth, make a tiny adjustment somewhere in the back or the roof of your mouth, the back of your tongue... There is a place where you can just click something closed and begin to breathe through your nose.

The top of the tongue just moves up slightly and hits the roof of your mouth, closing off the passage so that the air can no longer go in and out the mouth and it automatically flows in and out the nose.

So, find that little valve. Take a few breaths in and out your mouth. And find that little way to block the mouth off using the back of the tongue and the roof of the mouth, and switch to breathing through the nose without closing your mouth.

Then back to the mouth. ~~~~~ ~~~~~
Then back to the nose. ~~~~~ ~~~~~

So, the only adjustment that is being made is with the tongue [against the soft tissue of the entrance of the throat]. The mouth stays open, the teeth stay separate and you are switching back and forth breathing a few breaths through the mouth and then a few breaths through the nose. Find that valve. Find that way to switch passages back and forth between the mouth and the nose. Once you have done that you are ready to equalize the flow.

Equalizing the flow means that you divide the stream of breath that is going in, going out. You divide it into two passages: half of the breath going in and out the nose and half of the breath going in and out the mouth. You divide the stream of breath so that half of the breath goes in and out the nose, and half of the breath goes in and out the mouth.

So what you have done is... once you have located this little valve sort of movement... to switch from the mouth to the nose... and you keep it half open. So that now the breath goes in and out both the nose and the mouth [at the same time].

Now, some people can use their tongue, their teeth to... what you are doing is you are making the hole that the breath is going in and out through the mouth smaller... to equal the size of the hole that the breath uses when it goes in and out the nose.

So, in other words, the mouth is a much bigger hole and the breath is going to want to go through the mouth more than the nose. So, you very carefully narrow the passage in the mouth so that it comes very close to the passage, the size of the passage of the nose. That will automatically allow half of the breath to go in and out the nose and half of the breath to go in and out the mouth.

In order to find this you have to get very quiet, very still. Focus on the sensations of the breathing and feel what it feels like to

breath through the nose, and then feel what it feels like to breath through the mouth. And then find a little adjustment that allows the breath to go with half of the stream in and out the nose and half of the stream in and out the mouth.

The speed of the breath, the depth of the breath, really doesn't matter. You pick the speed and the depth according to your ability to sense the flow, and to equalize that flow, so that exactly half of the air goes in the nose and half of the air goes in the mouth. Then when you exhale half of the air goes out the nose and half goes out the mouth.

At the same time, both passages are open, and the stream of breath is dividing so that the air goes in and out both the nose and the mouth at the same time.

You adjust the flow so that it is exactly equal. Half of the breath is going in and out the nose and half of the breath is going in and out the mouth. Both the nose and mouth are open, and the air is flowing through both the nose and the mouth, and the stream is divided up so that half goes in and out the nose and half goes in and out the mouth. And this is equalizing the flow.

You can put your hand over your nostrils under your lips and you can feel the air as it comes out. And just see... is the air coming out the nose at the same time it is coming out the mouth? When you breath in can you feel the air coming in through the nostrils and over your lips at the same time? So that both the nose and the mouth are receiving the breath... And then as the breath comes out, the breath exits through both the nose and mouth at the same time, in equally divided volume.

It's a very important exercise. It develops quietness and it increases your ability to sense the subtle details of breathing, which are very important to these exercises. You know, doing these exercises without awareness will not get you where we want to go. Awareness is key here.

Again, I remind you of that Formula For Transformation. The first element in the Formula For Transformation was awareness: developing this meditative awareness, this ability to sense, to feel, to listen and to watch the details of your inner experience, to heighten your awareness.

And the other was relaxation, the second element, the second bit of The Formula For Transformation was relaxation. The Kum Nye exercise, this equalizing the flow will heighten your awareness, it will refine your awareness to subtle details, it will cause you to become very quiet and still and it will increase your breath control.

So, we will move onto the next one. But you really should practice these and gain mastery over them. Those that are easy, move right through them. Make sure that you have got them down, so that they are easy, and you can accomplish them at will. With those that are difficult, you need to spend more time and practice.

The next exercise in the Basic Series is **Connected Breathing**. It is the circular rhythm, also called the Rebirthing Technique. It is my core exercise. It is an extraordinarily powerful breathing technique. Everyone should experience it at one time or another.

Connected Breathing, what does connected breathing mean? What is circular breathing? Connected breathing is circular breathing. It's connecting the inhale to the exhale and the exhale to the inhale in a continuous rhythm, so that there are no pauses or gaps between the breaths. You don't stop between the inhale and the exhale. You don't stop or pause after the exhale or before the inhale.

So, the breath is like a circle. The breath comes in and immediately turns around and becomes an exhale. Now, the speed or the volume is optional in this. The quality that we are looking for is a continuous breathing.

You know the old... the most ancient writings in yoga: Pantajali's Sutras, he talked about something called "beneficence." The goal of yoga, to achieve this state. Originally he said there were two ways to achieve this beneficence. One was to extend the pause between the breaths. And the other was to eliminate the pause between the breaths.

Most yoga immediately went off in the direction of extending the pause. If you pick up any yoga book, you will find [for example], that you [are to] inhale for the count of four, exhale for the count of eight and then hold a pause in the breath for the count of sixteen, or something like that.

Many yoga practitioners immediately get into the breath holding or practicing these pauses. It's sort of been handed down over the years, and it's become an automatic part of yoga. Another bit, the essence of yoga, has been lost over the years. That is the ability to eliminate the pauses between the breaths. That is what the rebirthing techniques is, and that is what this connected circular breathing is.

So, how do you do this? I'll do it in a very quick, short rhythm so you get a sense of it.

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So, you see, they are short, quick breaths. They need not be short, quick. The thing I am trying to demonstrate is there is no stopping, no pausing between the in and the out. You are either breathing in or breathing out at all times, and there is no hesitating, there's no gaps, there is no pause in between the breaths. It is a continuous rhythm. As soon as the breath goes out and breath comes in. As soon it is finish coming in it goes out. In and out continuously with no hesitation or pauses between the breath.

It can be a smaller rhythm and still have that quality of connectedness like this: [~~~~~]

So, you see, one breath connects to the next. The inhale merges with the exhale. The exhale blends with the next inhale. The inhale turns around and becomes an exhale. As soon as the exhale is finished, the next inhale begins right away. And it is a continuous, connected, circular rhythm.

The breath seems to go round and round instead of in and out.

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You choose the speed; you choose the depth and the volume in order to practice this connectedness.

You can hear it when a dog is panting, when the happy dog is being itself.

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So, you see, one breath connects to the next. The speed can change. The volume can change. But what doesn't change is the connectedness, the circular quality of the breathing. That's the exercise.

Now, Leonard Orr who is the father of Rebirthing, teaches a very simple exercise called **20 Connected Breaths**. It is the best way to learn this connected breathing. 20 Connected Breaths are done, it is very simple: there are twenty breaths and you count them. You do four short breaths and one long one, four short one long, four short one long, four short one long breath. Twenty breaths all together.

You can count and use your fingers if you like. But it sounds something like this? You can breathe through your nose or through your mouth. I am breathing through my mouth so that it is easier to hear. But you can do it through your nose or through your mouth: whatever seems most interesting, whatever seems most comfortable, or whatever is most difficult, or whatever is most easy.

So, here you go, 20 Connected Breaths. It sounds something like this.

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So there you have 20 connected breaths. Now the speed can vary again; the twenty breaths can be done in a cycle like this.

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Again, that was twenty breaths, four short and one long, four short one long, four short one long, four short one long. It can be like that.

Or it can be done in a much slower cycle

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So, you see, I only did ten that time. The point is that the speed or the volume, you can make it whatever is comfortable or interesting.

The idea is to make the quality of the breathing circular and connected. So that each inhale merges with next the exhale. Each exhale connects with the next inhale, the inhales and the exhales following each other immediately without the slightest pause or hesitation between the breaths. So it is a continuous, circular, connected rhythm.

You can play with that. Maybe you can do eight or ten short breaths and two or three long ones. Maybe you can do two or three short breaths and a long one. The idea is to play with different speeds, different size breaths, always with the focus on the quality of the connectedness; the eliminating of pauses or gaps or stopping or holding, or hesitating between the in and the out, or between the out and the in. This is connected breathing. This is circular breathing.

So we will move on to the next exercise. The next exercise is called **Quadrant Breathing or 4-Corner Exercise**. It is a very

important technique for developing breath control and for developing the ability to direct the breath to the portion of the breathing cavity that you choose. So you divide the breathing cavity into four quadrants: top left corner, top right corner, bottom left, bottom right. So you see you have four sections or four quadrants in the breathing. And the game or the exercise is to focus on one of those quadrants.

For example, begin with the top left. And you focus all the breath up towards your left shoulder, and allow everything else to remain passive and untouched. And ‘think’ the breath as you inhale, ‘think the breath’ into that upper left quadrant... as if you are aiming the breath into your left shoulder

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Imagine that your left shoulder is your lung and you are aiming the breath into that one place. Everything else remaining untouched, unmoved. Focusing, directing the breath into that upper left quadrant.

Then shift to the bottom right quadrant. Aim the breath down towards your right hip. Aim the breath down toward your right hip. Aiming the breath, directing the breath very low into the right, bottom corner of your breathing mechanism. Everything else remaining passive and untouched, all of the breath being directed, guided, thinking the breath into that bottom, right corner.

You know, if you have a partner, one person can put their hands on that section of the body, and you breathe into the person’s hands. And the other person can feel for movement, feel activation in that area. Then switch. Go back up to the right upper quadrant. Breathe into that corner and then breathe down into the left, bottom corner. So, you go around and you breathe in the upper left corner, and then maybe, possibly breathe into the lower left corner. Then move over to the right lower corner, and then up to the right upper corner.

Go back and forth. Crisscross. Perhaps you can breathe in both bottom corners. Breathe in the lower quadrants only. Breathe in the upper quadrants only. Breath just on the left: the lower left and the upper left, as if you are trying to fill just one lung. Then breathe on the other side, breathing just in the lower, in the right lower and the right upper. Breathe in the two right quadrants or you can experiment. Or breathe in the lower left and the upper right.

You understand, you see what I am getting at. The breathing is divided up into four corners and you are aiming the breath into each of those corners separately, and then in combination, and then finally you send the breath into all four corners; expanding in all directions at the same time.

Practice this and develop this control. You should feel the breath in the back, in the side and in the front. You should feel the movement as you place your hand low around your waist. Put your thumb behind you and your fingers in front of your pelvic bone or your hip bone and breathe into that area.

Do the same thing with your shoulder. Put your hand up on your shoulder. Breathe into that hand. Get the breath out into those four quadrants. You will discover as you practice this exercise, you can begin to ‘think the breath’ out into your arms, because as you move your breath into your shoulder... There is an ancient Chinese saying that says, “Where consciousness goes, energy flows, chi flows.”

So, as you begin to aim your breath into these four quadrants, you are going to begin to move energy into those directions. Then it is a very short step to moving the energy out into your arms, or down into your legs, using breath awareness and originally using the movement of the breath, the sensation of movement caused by breathing, to awaken your awareness of those corners.

And then from there you can begin to move the energy out into your arms and hands, and down into your legs and feet. But that is another exercise. In this exercise, the four-corner exercise or quadrant breathing, you are aiming the breath into those four corners.

Let's move quickly into the next exercise, which is a very traditional yoga exercise called **Alternate Nostril Breathing**. A very important, very basic exercise, used in Prana Yoga. If you look in a yoga book you will find that there is actually a certain way to use your hands and your fingers to accomplish this exercise. The exercise is very simple. You are breathing in and out of one nostril at a time. To do this, you block one nostril. Begin by blocking either one, whichever you want. Let us say you begin by blocking the left.

If you use your left hand, you are going to use your thumb, and close off your left nostril with your thumb. And maybe your middle finger is resting on your forehead between your eyes. And your thumb is on your left nostril.

Blow the breath out. The breath will come out the right nostril, because the left one is closed. You blow out the breath through the right nostril--exhale through the right nostril keeping the left nostril closed. Then inhale through the right nostril. When you are done inhaling close the right nostril. Open the left nostril and the breath now comes out the left side. Breathing out the left nostril, and then breathing in the left nostril with the right nostril pinched closed with your ring finger.

And then switching again, close the left nostril. The breath comes out the right nostril and then back in the right nostril. Pinch the right nostril off closed. Open the left nostril: out comes the breath through the left nostril, in goes the breath through the left nostril.

Close the left nostril. Pinch it with your thumb. Open the right nostril. Out the right nostril comes the breath, in the right nostril

goes the breath again. Close the right nostril and open the left nostril. Out the left comes the breath, in the left goes the breath again. Alternating back and forth this way. A very good exercise to do.

A lot of subtle benefits, obvious benefits. Practice this for ten or fifteen minutes. Again, you choose the rhythm, you choose the speed, you choose the depth, you choose the volume. Let that be your selection, your choice. What's interesting? What's comfortable? What's pleasurable? And also, what is difficult? Don't avoid what is difficult. You always want to be moving towards expanding your comfort zone. Get out to the edge of your comfort zone and stretch it gently. So that your breath... you get more comfortable with slower and slower breathing, and you get comfortable with faster breathing. Expanding the range.

In the beginning go for comfort, go for pleasure, go for what is most interesting. Choose a rhythm, choose a speed, choose a volume and a depth that allows you to focus on the idea of the exercise. In this case, alternating the nostrils.

So, that is typical Pranayama: prana yoga breathing. A very basic exercise. Practice that and see the benefits you get from it.

The final exercise we will practice here is called **2-Phase Breathing**. It is an exercise that actually I developed in Russia in working with some very accomplished breathers, martial art people, yoga breathers, very accomplished Rebirthers, Breath Therapists, and athletes.

2-Phase Breathing takes a bit of a description, and it is very difficult to teach without a hands on sort of guide, without another person who knows the technique to help you really get a sense of it. But in a nutshell this is two-phase breathing: What you want to do is notice that there are two phases to the inhale and two phases to the exhale. By phases I mean this, there is an active phase and a passive phase. For example, if you start out by

being completely empty. Blow all the breath out of yourself. Empty yourself completely.

Squeeze all the breath out, so you are totally empty. Then when you relax, a certain amount of breath comes in all by itself, simply in response to the relaxation. That is the passive inhale. Now a certain amount of breath will come in and then it will stop. But then you can add to it, which is the beginning of the active phase of the inhale.

So, starting again with the exhale, empty yourself completely. Blow all the breath out, squeeze it all out, squeeze it out, squeeze it out, squeeze it out, squeeze it out. And then relax, and a certain amount of breath comes in by itself. Feel that, notice that. That is the passive phase of the inhale.

As it [the passive inhale] starts to peter out, add to it. Start to pull the breath in and then fill yourself. Fill yourself completely. Try to pull in a little bit more... a few last sips... until you are totally full. Then when you relax. And a certain amount of breath happens by itself, the passive phase of the exhale occurs.

Then a certain amount of breath will come out, and in order for more breath to come out, you have to get more active, so you start to squeeze the belly. Start to blow the breath out. Now you are into the active phase of the exhale.

It becomes very, very active. You get very, very empty. Squeeze it all out. Then relax. Passive phase of the inhale happens. Then add to it... fill yourself completely... get the last few sips in... until you are completely full... Then relax, and the passive phase of the exhale occurs. Now add to that. Blow the breath out... Squeeze it all out... until you are totally empty. Then relax... and you trigger the inhale. The passive phase of the inhale happens. Then you add to it with the active phase.

And you see what is happening here. You let the body do the first half of the inhale, that is, it's just response to the relaxation.

Then you take over, like in a [relay] race, where one runner passes the baton to the next. When the body is done doing its passive phase, you take over and get active. Then when you get completely empty or completely full, it triggers the next phase: the passive phase. And then again, when a certain amount of air comes out by itself, or comes in by itself, you take over and take it further... all the way into the active phase. And then switch again.

This is two-phase breathing. I don't know if it is very clear to you yet. If it is not, call me on the phone and I'll go over it with you. Or come to one of the seminars and learn it. It is very powerful because both of those points are very important.

Everyone should experience this reflex at the end of the exhale where a passive inhale occurs. Also to experience it at the end of the inhale, when a passive exhale occurs. And everyone should experience the ability to take over and continue with what the body is doing. To sort of take over what happens naturally, and take it further without causing any interference, just smoothly taking over and taking it further.

Now you have the Basic Series Of Breathing Exercises. Go over them, practice them and give me a call if you have any questions or problems with them. As you practice these exercises remember that the practice of Breath Therapy is about exploring, playing with your breath, developing more range, more flexibility, more control, more relaxation, more awareness, more mastery. Breath Mastery is Self Mastery.

Remember: "Every Breath is a Prayer! And Every Breath is a Blessing!"

For more information:

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