

## **FROM STAN GROF AND HOLOTROPIC BREATHWORK “BASIC PERINATAL MATRICIES”**

Breathwork often awakens us to unconscious memories of the womb. During times of undisturbed life in the womb, conditions are ideal. But physical, chemical, biological, emotional and psychological factors can interfere with this ideal state.

One Can re-experience the different stages of birth and moments in the womb physically, emotionally, or through images: symbolically. One can experience their own personal events, and one can also tap into the collective human consciousness. One can access the cosmos, and the consciousness of nature: animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms.

### **BPM I: From conception to the beginning of birth.**

This matrix is the home of feelings of unity and oneness. Fetus and mother are one, indivisible continuum. This matrix is the source of feelings of cosmic unity or mystical union. We can experience this sense of no boundaries and a feeling of deep reverence and love for all of creation.

### **BPM II: The onset of birth and delivery.**

In this stage, chemical changes and then physical contractions disturb the original harmony and bliss of the womb. This is the basis of “no exit terror.” The cervix is not yet dilated, the forces are pushing the child out, but there is nowhere to go! Paranoia is born. Life is turning against them. Heaven is becoming hell. Pleasure is turning into pain. Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness are born.

### **BPM III: Second clinical stage of birth.**

In this stage, contractions continue but the cervix is now dilated. The journey through the birth canal begins. The struggle for survival against overpowering, crushing forces, and suffocation begins. The earlier feeling of helplessness and hopelessness are transformed into struggle, control, or violence. This matrix forms the basis of human experiences of torture, sadomasochism, etc.

### **BPM IV: Third stage of clinical birth: emerging into the world.**

The struggle comes to an end. There is sudden release and relaxation. But emerging from darkness, one faces for the first time the bright lights of the world, and the unfiltered sounds. The umbilical cord, the connection to the mother is cut. It can be an experience of “the end of the world:” (life in the womb). The experience of death and rebirth: coming out into the light.