



***Breathwork in the
Prana Gardens***

BREATHWORK

In The

PRANA GARDENS

With Dan Brulé

This Breathwork Seminar and Guided Breathing Session was recorded on Feb 21, 2014 at Baja Bio Sana in Los Cabos, Mexico. It was transcribed and edited into this powerful resource for students and practitioners.

Through his unique, irreverent, and entertaining style, Dan has managed to distill nearly forty years of breathing study and practice into a three-hour transformational experience.

Read, listen in, and breathe along as Dan reveals the secrets, applies the principles, and demonstrates the benefits of Spiritual Breathing with those who gathered “under the palapa” that night.

Take notes as he presents a clear and simple protocol and as he gives specific step-by-step instructions for guiding one’s self or others thru a Conscious Breathing Session.

If you are new to Conscious Breathing, this 60-page training manual” will give you a unique and comprehensive introduction to the Art and Science of Breathwork.

If you are an experienced Breathworker, it will give you new insights, cutting edge techniques, practical tips, and added inspiration on your Path of Breath Mastery!

Welcome to the Adventure!

Testimonials

I definitely feel reborn and renewed. I have tried very hard for so many years to reach this point of being. And finally, I feel loose, soft, and open. It feels wonderful to experience Peace and Enlightenment, and the emotions of Love and Gratitude. I have practiced breathwork since you coached me, and every time I did, I was able to relax more and to go deeper. I think I really got it... I was SHINING like a STAR today... I am happy and joyful, loving and kind, merciful and creative. Dan, I 'm still shocked, I can believe this has happened to me! Thank you so much! (T.W. Student)

I am very grateful to you. I feel that something turned, something changed in my life. Seems to me that I stopped being afraid. And I like this state very much. Everything you said was very important for me. I thought that everything you said was for me. (Lida, Lithuania)

The Breath work sessions that Dan facilitated opened for me the hidden places where the feelings of grief resided, and gently and lovingly gave them the space and the energy to move and open and transform- Thank you for a truly liberating experience. (Linda, USA)

Dan Brulé is the greatest Rebirther since Leonard Orr himself. He has inspired me more about breathing than anyone in 25 years. I've gone from knowing the 'scales' to feeling in charge of an orchestra of power and ease through my own breathing and being. (Liah Holtzman, author of "Forgiveness Equals Fortune".)

As a Buteyko trainer and a philosopher, I enjoyed every moment of Dan's lucid discussion of breathing and spirituality. My personal experience at Dan's workshop has only strengthened my determination to practice various techniques, and explore the lively potentials of Conscious Breathing." (Milan Hosta, PhD; Slovenia)

I was free from thought, in pure exaltation and beauty, full of joy. This experience helped me to realize that I have much to be thankful for, and that I have worked through many problems to be here in happiness... Indescribably wonderful! (D.L. University Professor)

I participated in your course. It was so simple and applicable, easy to put into practice. That was the greatest advantage. I still do some of the exercises. This morning, I felt that the breathing follows me, and wakes me up. It invites me. (Finally, not me inviting it!) It is a real life dance and a joy! Thanks again for showing me how me how "to swim." Thanks for sharing your path! (Giedre, Lithuania)

Dear Dan, Thank you for all the "Ah ha!" Moments, and for showing me a new way to invite spirit into my body! (Kristijan)

There are not many people who have made such an impression on me: particularly because you didn't even try to make an impression. Sharing your living experience and principles with us was refreshing and did not leave people unaffected. I've seen a lot of techniques and methods that offer a path to myself. But until now I had not met one so simple yet effective. I practice breathing regularly now and I'm excited because every time is different. The uniqueness fills me with a feeling of making progress and offers me hope to reach all corners of myself one day. To all those at your seminars who will enter by coincidence, as I did, I wish good timing and openness of heart, to take away from the seminar as much as I did. Thank you very much. (Marko)

I felt wonderful tingling energy, mostly in my legs... I felt the urge to sing. And I felt free to do that. And at that moment I felt my throat chakra was opening... There was the feeling of outgoing circling energy... I feel I am in better physical, mental and emotional condition. More in my own energy... In one word: "An Experience!" (Min Ja)

Very Powerful! My body and the breath knew exactly what part needed attention. My first chakra felt very warm. I could connect this place with my heart and that was special. My whole body tingled, especially my feet. I felt bigger, expanded... I felt a diminishing of negative thoughts. In one word: "Wonderful!" (Hanneke)

The breathing took me on a journey. I was in a boat going with the waves... I went through my body and felt every part alive and breathing. It became very quiet in my head... Space and no thoughts anymore... just light! When you change your breathing you change your life, and become more conscious! Super! (Hild, Holland)

I had tingling feelings... The emotion of aloneness came up; I relaxed into it and afterward there was a lot of peace. I felt energy in my whole body, from my toes to my head. Relaxing into what is... So nice! (Yvonne)

My feeling after the workshop was first of all a revelation; you think how good you have your feelings sorted out, but then with a simple breathing exercise, they burst out in an unexpected manner. And you realize you should take better care of them: feelings, emotions... more particularly, you should mind them more often than once or twice a year, with such breathing exercise... As we all know things happen for a reason... This would be my quick testimonial... of a moment where everything was just the way it should be, the love for life and for everything and everyone was stronger than usual; the clarity was greater, the feeling and sensation bigger... Thank you again! (Marjia, Slovenia)

My experience of the workshop was that it really opened me up to what it means to make every breath a love making experience. The experience reminded me of the wisdom of simplicity and the power of it. Something as simple as the breath, we take for granted and yet breath is life. Breathing is living. Spiritual breathing opened up the possibility of experiencing every breath as love. (Sakina, South Africa)

Dan Brulé opened a door for me, and on the other side was my destiny. I'll be forever grateful! (Tom Sotis: The Sotis Group)

A main realization was for me when you said that I was blocking impulses coming from my higher being with a mental process of "shoulds" and "shouldn'ts". This realization helped me open the blocking point between the chest and the belly that I have been aware of for many years now! During the session I was able to have what I would call an "open" movement of breathing (which I still have now). I feel I opened a door of communication within my body and my being. I felt more serene and relaxed after the session.

Another big thing for me was to feel for the first time my power, as I was breathing and feeling all the tingling in my hands and then all over my body. I am very grateful you guided me so as not to stop this energy filling me up! In the past, whenever I used to feel the energy filling me I would fear it and stop it. This time, during the session, I was feeling safe and guided which allowed me to feel something very special, I felt extremely powerful 😊 or maybe I allowed myself to receive more and more of the energy surrounding me without any fear of "losing it" or "getting out of my body" or other thoughts I could have had. This all transmuted beautifully and I felt myself going "up and up" and I found myself in a space that is difficult to describe... BEAUTIFUL! I wanted to stay there 😊 (Hana, Spain)

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PART 1

The Practice Of Conscious Breathing

We will start from the beginning, assuming that no one here knows anything, including me. We'll go one step at a time... and if you put them together, something really powerful happens.

I feel my responsibility is to give you those first few pieces, so you have a good foundation: and then you can be creative on top of that.

So to keep things really simple... If you get confused at any point, and you wonder: "Am I doing this right? "What should I be doing?"

Keep Your Breath Moving!

It's not something you can hide; and anybody close to you can hear and see whether your breath is moving or not.

That means you are either inhaling or exhaling, at all times. One of those two things is happening at all times. If you want the simplest shortcut, that's it.

Start right now.

As long as your breath is moving... It doesn't matter how... Fast, slow, deep, up in your chest, down in your belly... Start to become aware of your breathing; and invite it to just keep moving.

The inhale turns into the exhale, the exhale turns into the inhale. There are no pauses or gaps. There's no resting in between breaths. There's no pausing. There's no stopping.

You are watching that: riding the curve of the breath as it comes in... it comes around and immediately becomes the exhale without the slightest hesitation of pause.

Then as soon as the exhale is finished, the inhale starts right away without the slightest hesitation or pause. You are bringing the inhale and exhale together so that there is nothing in between, and the breathing is basically continuous.

So if you get lost or confused, that's the first thing you check: "Is my breath moving? If not, move it.

A Healthy Person Should Be Able To Breathe Quickly... for as long as they want, without any difficulty, without getting a dry throat, without getting a headache, without getting dizzy, without spacing out.

You should be able to breathe quickly... like a dog panting. That's one way to play with your breath: really quick, shallow, fun, light breaths.

A Healthy person should be able to breathe slowly. (I am making sounds so that you can hear. Sounds are optional. You can play with them. You can use your intuition...

So, fast breathing, slow breathing, and everything in between.

You should be able to breathe high in your chest. You should be able to feel your collarbones rising up when you breathe.

You should be able to breathe low in your belly. You should feel a bulge in your perineum when you inhale. Your belly button should pop out when you inhale. You want to breathe down into your hips.

You should be able to breathe into your back. Half of your lungs are in your back, not just the front, so you should be able to feel expansion in the back.

So, you should be able to breathe fast, to breathe slow, to breathe high in your chest and breathe low into the belly, breathe into the back. That's just basic stuff. Now the better you are at all those things...

If you can work thru your limitations on any of those basic levels, then a certain power and energy can come into your breath.

But as long as you have physical blocks and obstacles to breathing fast or slow or high or low, then you are handicapped. And you are going to miss a lot of juicy benefits.

So on a basic level, that's just what practice. What's your limit? How fast can you breathe and still stay comfortable? How slow can you breathe without panicking?

And be honest with yourself. Find those limits; then back off on them a little bit, and work them, expand them.

If you are keeping your breath moving, then that means you have infinite choices of how to keep it moving, where to keep it moving. You can keep it moving slowly, you can keep it moving quickly, shift the location of it, and so on.

So, if you get lost, just keep the breath moving, period. And so connected breathing or continuous breathing—if that's what you want to call it—is the first skill.

The second skill is a "cleansing breath," or a sigh of relief: some kind of a big luxurious, releasing breath, where you "engage the exhale."

The better you are at snapping the exhale loose, the quicker you can recover from things, and the more benefits you can get in general, from just about anything.

The ability to snap the exhale loose means to let it go quickly and completely: to set it free. That's not the same as controlling the exhale.

A good relaxation technique is to do a long slow exhale thru pursed lips for example, which asthma patients learn...

A long slow exhale can have a calming effect, it can have a grounding effect. It's relaxing up to a point. But what are you not doing? You are not letting the exhale go.

You are actually controlling the exhale. You are letting some of it out, but you are holding some of it back. If you let go of the exhale go, it's like sticking a pin in a balloon.

Pop! It's out, it's over. End of story. That is what you want to get as close as you can to: is the ability to set your exhale free, to let the exhale go quickly and completely.

And so, if at any point you want to practice something, practice snapping the exhale loose.

Now, if you have a little tiny opening, even though you would like to release all the breath at once, it's going to take some time for all that breath to come out. So you want to give the exhale a big opening.

That means you need a space between your teeth, and you need a big opening in your mouth so that there is a lot of room for the air to come out quickly and completely.

If you take a balloon and you blow it up and then you pinch it as you let the air out, that tight opening makes noise and it doesn't allow the balloon to empty.

So you want to be able to empty yourself quickly and completely. Because that skill is what you can then apply in a million ways. You can let go of pain, you can let go of fear, you can let go of rigid opinions, you can let go of anything.

But if you can't let go of your breath, don't be surprised if you have to struggle to let go of anything else. Learn the art of letting go, and use the breath to develop that ability, and then apply that ability when necessary, to any other level.

So, the basics are continuous breathing: one breath connected to the next, no pauses or gaps between them.

If you think about it, the inhale and the exhale are about as yin and yang as you can get! You're talking positive and negative; you're talking opposites, extremes.

And if you can bring those two things together on any level, well, that opens you to a mystery.

That's something really sacred: bringing together opposites, merging them, blending them: making two into one. So, by practicing connected breathing, you are merging the exhale and the inhale, and it becomes one thing.

The second basic is those sighs of relief. And it's a good idea to exaggerate them. Make them luxurious. Make them theatrical. Make them dramatic.

Make them Shakespearean, because you want to send a very powerful signal to your lizard brain.

There's an ancient part of your brain that monitors every single breath that you take, whether you take it consciously or unconsciously. The most ancient part of your brain is monitoring every breath you take.

The quality of every breath represents a signal to that ancient part of your brain. It represents a message. It gives it information.

And so if you are unconsciously holding your breath, you are sending an emergency signal to that part of your brain.

And so if a thousand times during the day, you hold your breath, and everyone here does that: a thousand times a day, you hold your breath., just for a moment...

Bending over, putting a key in a door, trying to remember something, getting up from a chair, trying to think of something, trying to hear something...

There are lots of times, for just a moment, you are holding your breath. While you may not notice it, that ancient part of your brain notices it. And it can only mean one thing to that lizard brain: danger.

Think of a brain of a frog. It's very simple: do I eat it or will it eat me? It basically boils everything down to that. Maybe there is one other thing: do I eat it, will it eat me, or do I mate with it?

You have to wake up and realize that you have the most ancient part of you, from which all of your emotions arise, from which all of your thoughts arise, all your actions, all your beliefs, all your feelings, all your illnesses, all your greatest gifts...

They come thru, they funnel thru that most ancient part of your brain. And if that ancient part of your brain is getting emergency signals continuously, then it is not going to let you open up and allow a flow.

So that is a crucial thing. When you are working and when you are playing, start to pay attention to when you are holding your breath, and get the breath moving in those moments. Catch yourself.

The sigh of relief is the opposite. When you give yourself a sigh of relief, it sends a very powerful signal to that ancient part of your brain—a very different signal.

And that ancient part of your brain has no choice but to think: “Wow! I must be ok!” “Everything must be beautiful!” “I must be safe!” “Everything must be perfect in the world!”

And it is going to open, it is going to soften, it’s going to relax. And it’s going to allow some higher energy to come thru.

But as long as that ancient part of your brain keeps clamping up—out of fear, out of habit, out of unconscious breath holding, you can’t grow or change, or spiritually evolve...

As consciously and deliberately as you would like to be spiritual, your system itself is going to sabotage you, because it hasn’t been trained out of that old survival reaction.

And the only way to do that is to give it a thousand signals a day: a thousand times a day, give yourself a sigh of relief.

Try that! That’s a lot for most people. But you breathe twenty thousand times a day, so you are only talking about a very small percentage. And if you boil it down to a hundred times a day, that’s a tiny percentage of the breaths you take.

If you are not willing to apply one tenth of one percent of the breaths you are given toward your spiritual evolution, then you need another job! Zip it up! But that’s actually a lot: to consciously give yourself a sigh of relief a hundred times a day?

You see, everyone already knows how to do that. You don’t have to take a course; you don’t have to learn anything. You have been programmed to take sighs of relief.

So all you need to do is get conscious about it and begin injecting those sighs of relief every chance you get—into your work, into your art, your arguments, your bowel movements—everywhere!

Anytime that you can give yourself a sigh of relief, you neutralize and emergency signal. And at some point, the scales are going to tip, and a lifetime of conditioning is going to snap and flip.

We need to be ready. When that amount of energy suddenly pours thru... the next game in this process is getting comfortable with intensity. Because when things accelerate, they get intense.

And when things get intense, your system clams up, shuts down, freezes, blocks... All of your defenses come up.

Your ancient programming is thwarting the acceleration that everyone is dreaming of, the ancient obsolete survival programs that everyone is walking around with, still running in your system.

So, every time you give yourself a sigh of relief, you neutralize that fear programming, that everyone is constantly being bombarded with.

The next connection to that is the yawn. Yawning is yoga. You already know how to yawn. You don't need to take a class on it. You just need to start to do it more consciously, to do it more deliberately.

Do it on purpose. Don't wait till your body demands it. Start to use it as a primer, a trigger, as a priming, opening technique—a way to bent, release, recharge, loosen, soften, let go, shift, reboot.

Yawning does all that stuff! And so you want to get good at yawning.

And now we bring it together into a yawn and a sigh. What would that be? Let's practice that right now.

If you were to yawn and sigh at the same time, how would that look, how would that feel, how would it sound? There's no right answer: you invent it.

When you yawn, something opens up in the back of your throat, something opens up in the back of your jaw; and it changes the quality of the breath. It removes friction; it removes static and stress.

Your throat opens. Your heart opens under that. Your belly opens under that. It's a chain reaction.

The muscles in your jaw are the first muscles you learn to use: sucking muscles. The muscles in our jaw control communication, expression, what comes out of us.

Jaw muscles also control what comes into us: food, what we eat. And so those muscles in the jaw, although they are small, they are extremely strong. They are the strongest muscle you got.

You can bite down ten times harder than you can grip with your fist. Very powerful muscles, small muscles, and they've been conditioned and programmed.

When you want to hold back crying, you tighten your jaw and your throat. When you want to hold back laughing, you tighten your jaw and your throat. When you want to hold back a communication, you tighten your jaw and your throat.

Nobody had to teach you that; it is hard wired into us. And so you want to start unraveling that. Relax your jaw whenever you think about it. Make yourself yawn.

Sound is a useful thing, and it's also a blocking device. It's a distraction device. It's very useful. The vibrations that you produce in your body are very useful, very healing, and very valuable.

But if we are talking about trying to open the system... In order to make a sound, you have to tighten your throat in some way, so it's a narrowing, a constricting.

Sounds are ok. Don't stop them. But don't make them on purpose. Don't go over... Well, you can make them on purpose, if the quality of them is such that that ancient part of your brain is going to go: "aaaahhhh!!!"

"Ahh" is the sound of letting go. If you are going to make sound now, mix breath with it, so that you are not substituting anything else for the breathing. So you can mix the sound with the breath.

So... connecting a yawn and a sigh, and inventing that... Advanced yawning is you do the connected breathing thru the yawn.

Notice that when people yawn, they freeze. The mouth open, they are stretching, but there is nothing moving: there is no air flowing.

That is an art: to circulate the breath while you are yawning. If you are doing the circular breathing, trigger a yawn. There is something that you can do with the back of your jaw, and your throat to trigger a yawn.

You can fake a yawn. You can pretend you are yawning. You can act like you are yawning. But when a real yawn comes, you know it. And when a real yawn comes, you're not doing it. It's a happening.

You can do something to cause a happening, and when the happening is happening, you can do something to support it, or expand it, or build on it.

When a yawn gets triggered... and that's all you can do... you can trigger a yawn. But once you trigger it, is it you doing it anymore? No, it takes over you.

So that's what you want. And when it takes over you, this is what you can begin to do: breathe. Circulate the breath.

So if a yawn comes [demonstrates], I could do a classic yawn like that. Making those pleasurable yawning sounds. Or I could do a poor yawn [demonstrates freezing and holding the breath]

So cancel those two options, and bring in a third possibility and that's this: [demonstrates circular breathing while yawning].

I am circulating the breath; I am spinning the breath like a wheel, while the yawn is happening.

If you are circulating the breath like a wheel, try to trigger a yawn. And if a yawn comes, try to circulate the breath. Try to spin the breath like a wheel.

I have been studying, practicing and teaching breathing for 35 years, and if there is one thing—the most important and powerful thing I have ever learned—I just told you.

That is the absolute best thing I got! After almost 40 freaking years of practicing everything you can imagine!

Think about that for a minute. We are working with our nature; we are working with natural reflexes. A yawn is a natural reflex. A sigh of relief is a natural reflex.

And all we are doing is bringing the light of consciousness down into that primal animal level. We are allowing some light to come thru and transform that basic ancient lizard brain.

Because until you do, it doesn't matter how spiritual you want to be, when you are pressed, when you are pushed, you are going to default to whatever that brain has been trained to default to.

In my case, it was anger and violence. You scare me and you are in a lot of freaking trouble! Don't scare Dan! Because he's dangerous when he gets scared! And it took me a long time to figure that out.

I thought it was anger, and it took me a long time to figure out that underneath the anger was really a fear. And the moment my fear got triggered, I didn't even recognize it as fear, and I made damn sure nobody else recognized it as fear.

And it took a long time before that lizard softened enough to allow me to see that it was fear.

Now everyone has their own thing happening, and you will awaken to it, if you do this simple thing: yawn and sigh. Give yourself luxurious sighs of relief, bring it together with a yawn, and practice continuous breathing. That's it! That is it!

So, start now. Breathe.

I am going to keep talking, and I am going to move around while you breathe. If you need help, look helpless. Well, it's dark, so maybe make some panic sound! Just do anything that shows you are in crisis.

But if you are in crisis, you can bet your life this: you are not sighing with relief in that moment. You are not continuously breathing in that moment. That's what's missing.

And so before you try anything else, get back to that, ok? Now the other piece of all of this and I take it for granted, but it is a conscious deliberate art; and that is relaxation.

If relaxation is not part of your breathing practice, you are in for a long hard road. It is going to take you lifetimes to get to where you could get in a week if you integrate total relaxation into your breathing

Anybody can breathe deep and powerfully, but you get tired. Why would you possibly get tired from breathing deeply, if by breathing deeply you are relaxing yourself and you are charging yourself? It is irrational. It is not logical. It's impossible to do.

If you get tired from breathing, it's because you are using too much effort, and you are not relaxing while you breathe. So you have to bring in relaxation.

You bring in relaxation. When? With every single breath. Every single breath is a sigh of relief. Every single breath is a sigh of relief.

When you let go completely and relax, you let go of the breath, and then you find something to let go of at the same time. Let go of your jaw.

Snap the exhale loose. Dump the exhale out. Set the exhale free. You let the exhale go quickly and completely. That is a basic skill in breathwork. Learn that. Master that.

Don't go very far forward with any other stuff until you get really good at that, because if you are not good at that, you are going to end up in a crisis, and you won't have any way out. Because when you are in a crisis, there's only one way out: you have to let go.

But try to tell a drowning person to relax! As much as they would like to relax... “I ‘ll relax as soon as I am out of the water!” But you can’t get out of the water till you relax. So you are stuck.

So, if you haven’t trained yourself to relax, at those moments when your system takes over in a panic, you’re stuck. You are going to need a long process; you are going to need counseling and coaching, and support from other people.

And you’re going to need a few hours to get over and recover, or a few days or weeks or months, or whatever. But if you develop the ability to let go of your exhale quickly, completely, totally, in a flash: you are free. End of story.

Then you begin to connect that letting go of the exhale to muscles. So now, when you let go of the breath, you can let go of a muscle. You let go of your jaw; you let go of your neck; you let go of your shoulders; you let go of your spine; you let go of your hips, of whatever.

And when you master letting go of a muscle at the same time that you let go of the breath, guess what? You’ve just developed the ability to let go of pain! That is a really cool life skill!

To be in pain, and to be able to take a couple of breaths and be out of pain! That is what I would like everyone to learn to do! And it’s a skill that anyone can learn. But it starts with the ability to let go of your breath.

You could have a partner who just watches you and listens to you, listens and watches. Anyone can see if you let it go, you let it go. Listen to this. It’s dark, you can’t see, but you can hear:

It doesn’t matter how big the inhale is, the exhale takes one, two seconds, maximum. So listen to this.

[Demonstrates 2 second inhale and 1 second exhale].

You see, the exhale is over in a second or two. If I take a long inhale...

[demonstrates 5 second inhale and 1 second exhale]

The exhale is still over within a second or two.

[Repeats demonstration: comparing a long versus a short inhale, yet the exhale takes the same length of time].

It doesn’t matter how big the inhale is, if you let go of the exhale, it’s over with. So you can test yourself and gauge your progress, check each other and check yourself.

You can't cheat. The exhale is either over with—you empty yourself completely and quickly—or not.

And if you don't, it's because you or your system is holding on to something somewhere.

Maybe your chest doesn't relax and release; maybe your throat won't relax and open; some chronic unconscious holding, or you have some unconscious fear that is not letting your system open and relax.

That's what breathwork is about: burning thru that stuff that keeps your system from releasing pain and fear.

My wrist may be quite relaxed and soft and free, but I am holding on to something in my core. I may be able to relax my shoulders, but my anus is somewhere up around my solar plexus!

And so it has to be a systemic letting go, not partial, not isolated, but total.

And you have to observe for yourself where you need to let go and where you can't... what you can relax and what you can't... what's easy to open and soften and what takes real focus.

And you need someone else outside yourself to point out those things that you are not conscious of. "Hey, notice you jaw right now, and check your neck."

Have someone wiggle your neck gently while you breathe, to make sure your neck is soft and relaxed. Have someone wiggle your shoulders while you breathe to make sure your shoulders are loose and relaxed and hanging.

That's one way into the process: start with total relaxation. And then you turn the breath up notch by notch by notch—until you trigger some tension—then you go back to the practice of relaxation. Find that relaxation, restore it, and then turn the breath up again.

Keep practicing that until you are able to breathe in the most powerful way you can, and be totally relaxed at the same time. Do you want a goal for breathwork? There it is: total systemic relaxation and powerful continuous breathing.

[Demonstrates]

There is nothing subtle about that breathing. There is nothing lazy about that. It is conscious active powerful breathing. And yes, you are going to get dizzy. Yes, your system is going to react.

A few breaths like that and you think: “Oh, already I am getting dizzy, I had better stop breathing.”

No! Don't stop breathing. Relax! Adjust the breathing. Come in to a fine breathing rhythm, but keep the breath moving. And when you regain your comfort, turn the breath up again.

We're working with our energy. And energy covers the spectrum from so subtle and refined that you can't even feel it, to so powerful and intense that you don't want to go near it!

And you are living with that energy. You are permeated with it, surrounded by it, infused with it. You ARE that energy! And so you have to work thru it, and you have to get comfortable with the whole range, the whole spectrum, in order to be whole, to be fully alive!

And what we are doing is training our system to do that, because the spirit is willing, our heart is willing, and even consciously, we can decide: “Yes, I want to awaken my Buddha Nature. I want my Christ Consciousness to express itself.”

And you can be very sincere about that, but if your system, which is running on these ancient programs, and it hasn't come up to speed with the energy, then it is going to get in the way. It is going to block.

How does it do that? It causes distractions. It causes discomfort. Or, it causes amazing wonderful pictures and fascinating images, amazing feelings. And all those things, what do they do? They cause you to stop breathing.

They give you an excuse not to relax. They give you a way to interrupt the flow of life and to subvert your healing and growth and transformation. So that is what you are playing with. You are playing with relaxation...

As I teach breathwork, there are three convergences.

If you want to summarize for yourself, your own practice, get this: three things come together in breathwork:

1. Consciousness and breathing
2. Consciousness and relaxation
3. Relaxation and breath control

Consciousness and Breathing: That's a no brainer. It's an obvious one. Think about it: 99% of the time, you are not thinking about your breathing. You are not conscious of your breathing. There are 99 other things you are focused on, and the breath is happening by itself outside of your awareness.

But what if you could become just five percent more conscious of your breathing? Your Buddha Nature will awaken! It doesn't take much! So, bring together consciousness and breathing.

Usually, your breathing is happening but your consciousness is everywhere else. It's on "good" things, and it's on "bad" things. It's on your work. It's on your thoughts. It's on your relationship. It's on your pain. It's on your dreams. But it's not on your breathing.

And there is something freaking magical that happens when consciousness and breath merge. The king and queen of the spiritual universe is consciousness and energy.

When you become conscious of your breathing, you are bringing together energy and intelligence, energy and consciousness. So that is the first convergence.

You can begin your own practice: "How do I creatively bring together breathing and consciousness?" Well, when I am walking, I can breathe in rhythm to my footsteps. If I am shoveling, now and then I can link my breathing movements to my body movements.

I can breathe in rhythm to music, instead of tapping my feet. Or I can simply be aware of my breath. That is the first convergence: bringing together consciousness and breathing.

And nobody can do it for you. But the more often you do it, and when it becomes a habit... Wow! Now you are into something!

The second convergence is bringing together consciousness and relaxation. That sounds like a simple thing, but here is a fact of life: In the most relaxed moments of your day, of your life, guess what you are doing?

Sleeping! Literally! Think about that. The most profoundly relaxing moments of your life are happening, and you are dead unconscious sleeping! That means you are not even there to experience that profound relaxation...

You are missing something huge, something vital, something sacred and powerful, if you have not had the experience of being totally relaxed and wide awake at the same time!

If you can accomplish that, you will turn into light! You will be a radiant Buddha! And everyone will be kissing your feet! Because it is that powerful: to be completely relaxed and wide-awake. That is very rare! Very rare.

So there is something to practice: bringing together relaxation and consciousness.

And know this: no matter how relaxed you are, you can always relax more. No matter how many muscles you relax, there is always a little place you can open and soften and loosen.

There is always some way you can become more relaxed. So, be looking for that edge that limit in consciousness, and get good at it.

And as you progress in your practice it, certain parts of you will begin to automatically relax more. You won't have to think about it, or tell those parts to relax: they will already be relaxing.

That is the second convergence: bringing together consciousness and relaxation. First convergence: breathing and consciousness. Second convergence: relaxation and consciousness.

The third convergence is bringing together breathing and relaxation: conscious breathing and deliberate relaxation.

There is an art! If you can bring those two things together, you will surprise yourself with Siddhi powers, yogic skills, mystical, magical, saintly, holy, divine abilities!

It is that simple! But it doesn't seem to be easy for people. Because when they breathe powerfully, they don't relax. And when they relax completely, they don't breathe.

There is the work. There is the task. That is the quintessential art, the ultimate skill that you must develop. So I see breathwork divided into those three basic convergences.

Another way to look at the practice of breathwork is in terms of two fundamental aspects—like yin and yang aspects: active and passive aspects.

The first is the passive aspect. It is Breath Awareness. You don't do anything to the breathing. Just let the breaths come and go by itself: but you are 100% there for it, with it...

Consciously observing your breath coming in and going out. If there is a pause, you are aware of the pause. Breath coming in and going out... 100% moment to moment practice of breath awareness.

And it doesn't matter how you are breathing. It is not your job. The body is breathing itself; the breath is reacting how it's reacting... you are practicing simply being the watcher.

That's very hard to do. Because if you are naked in the shower, singing, and suddenly you realize that 20 people are watching you... do you sing the same way?

And so your breath is just like that. Your breath is moving and living its thing, but as soon as you turn your attention to it, it changes. It took me a long time to get how important that is—and how important it is to fix that!

We need to develop the ability to observe our breathing without disturbing it. Right now, that is impossible for everyone here.

If you are not paying attention to your breathing, and you suddenly go: "Oh yeah, I want to pay attention to my breathing." Guess what? It just changed. Your breathing has already changed!

And you have no idea what it was doing before then; and now that you are watching it, it is not doing what it would have been doing, had you not turned your attention to it.

Your consciousness will disturb the breath until you develop the kind of consciousness that doesn't disturb the breath.

And you can call that kind of consciousness unconditional love, or unconditional acceptance: all inclusive unconditional acceptance and love.

Now if you put that kind of pure attention onto someone who is naked and singing in the shower, it doesn't affect them. They don't feel any embarrassment or shame—because it is not coming from anywhere.

That is the kind of consciousness we need to develop, so that when we turn our awareness to the breath, when we focus on the breathing, the breath remains undisturbed, it can continue to be how it is. And we can learn something from it in that moment.

So, "Breath Awareness" is one aspect, and the second fundamental aspect is "Conscious Breathing."

That's where you do the breathing. You give it a certain intention, you give it a certain quality, you give it a certain rhythm, you deliberately breathe in a certain way. You are in charge.

So those are the two aspects of Breathwork or Spiritual Breathing. You want to get comfortable with both of them. And when you practice, you want to go back and forth between the two.

So, practice that. Stay with it. And watch what happens in you. After doing this work and being with tens of thousands of people, I have no doubt that miracles can happen thru this simple practice of breathwork.

PART 2

The Secrets Of Breath Mastery

I haven't heard that Sigh of Relief a lot. It's something that you have to teach yourself and train yourself to do. In a group this size, we should hear someone taking that sigh of relief. In any given moment, at least one of us should be taking that breath.

And if you listen, and don't hear anyone taking that sigh of relief... Then guess what? It is your turn! And when you do it, you are going to remind someone else.

It's just like yawning. When someone yawns, someone else always yawns. Well, when one person breathes, someone else's breath always opens up.

When one person relaxes, other people always relax. When one person becomes afraid, other people start to get nervous. That's energy. That's how it works.

So let's put it to use for ourselves. Let's work with that lizard brain and let it start to train it to support us in our evolution.

Now if you want to give yourself a big sigh of relief, you need a big inhale in front of it; otherwise you are going to be blowing and pushing, which is the opposite of a sigh of relief.

So what you do is you use the inhale to create some stretching, some opening, some expansion—and then the elastic tendency of your muscles, atmospheric pressure, gravity—will do the exhale for you.

In that moment, you can totally relax. You don't have to do the breathing because you have stretched yourself open with the inhale, and when you stop inhaling the breath just comes out. You don't have to do anything.

That's a moment where you can get out of the way: get out of the way of your Self, of life, of the breath. It's a chance to get out of the way and let life pour out of you—not thru your head, not thru your ego, not thru your personality—but just a pure release. And you are out of the way.

So you are in charge of getting out of the way. You create the expansion. You actively pull in. That's why the rebirthing process, the rebirthing technique is so powerful: it is putting into practice divine, universal principles.

Active inhale and passive exhale.

Active inhale and passive exhale.

You do the inhale and the breath does the exhale.

You do your inhale and your body does the exhale.

You do the inhale and life does the exhale.

You breathe the breath and the breath breathes you.

You breathe the breath and then the breath breathes you.

You are coming into harmony on a very deep and profound level.

Most of the benefits of breathwork are really deep and powerful, and they are obvious. But people overlook them; and they make it much more complicated than it needs to be.

Right now, it's dark here and I can't see everyone; I can't always hear everybody. I don't know, maybe you have been listening to me, and you forgot to breathe.

But I can hear when a big sigh of relief comes. I can hear if a person's throat is open. I hear this:

[demonstrates tight scratchy throat noise]

Or I hear this:

[demonstrates soft open breath sound].

Well, guess which one is soft and open? So, you can use breath sounds as a gauge to recognize how relaxed your throat is.

You can be checking your muscles as you breathe. Without realizing it, you could be tightening your neck and your shoulders. Your jaw can be tight. And so you keep monitoring yourself as you go.

And at some point, the shit is going to hit the fan. At some point a critical mass is going to be reached, and some energy is going to get unlocked. Maybe it will erupt in the form of emotions, maybe in the form of visions, maybe in the form of physical feelings... vibrations, sounds.

It doesn't really matter. At some point some pure and natural energy is going to begin to move. And that's when it gets really difficult because that's when we forget the process that got us to that point.

And we start doing everything else except what we did to get to that point. So that's when you have to start from the beginning. You have to start right from the beginning: just a sigh of relief, a gentle continuous rhythm.

Come back to this beginning point. Then you will start a beautiful upward spiral, a gorgeous event. And it can be intense.

Even if it is intense, if you have these two skills: the sigh of relief and the continuous rhythm, and you are doing your best to relax: you are going to get thru that intensity.

It's a good idea to think of it simply as intensity. Because here is a fact of life, here is a fact about this ancient part of our brain and our body-mind system: beyond a certain point it does not know the difference between pain and pleasure.

If something is intense, the body-mind system doesn't care whether it's intensely painful or intensely pleasurable: it's going to react in exactly the same way.

Intense pain will trigger contractions, will trigger all of the defenses: holding, blocking, running, escaping, violence, fear, paralysis.

As soon as things get too intense, painfully you get totally jammed, locked up; or you are like a chicken with your head cut off: just flailing and doing useless stuff.

Guess what? The same thing happens with intense pleasure! If you begin to experience intense joy, your poor system is going to react as if it's pain, because it's intense.

Your system doesn't care if it's intense love or intense joy or intense peace: it's intense! And unless you have trained your system to relax into intensity, it will not allow you to experience that joy and that ecstasy.

You might want it with every cell in your body, but your system is going to trump your conscious desire, until you train it to be comfortable in the middle of intensity.

You keep the breath moving. That tells that ancient part of the brain that "I am ok." As soon as you hold your breath, the ancient part of your brain says: "Oh-oh!" Fear! Danger! Careful! Watch out!"

And so now you are in a catch 22. Now you have to unlock that part of your brain before the breath can move, or you have to move your breath before that part of your brain will relax.

That's the skill. You have to put yourself in the fire, and practice it often enough so you actually develop that ability to relax when it's the last thing you would think to do; to breathe when your breath is totally jammed up and locked up.

In simplicity, that's the game. But you work up to that. And if you are relaxed and if you are conscious and if you are breathing, you will start to feel when stuff comes up, and you will apply these basic principles: keep the breath moving and relax.

And the main thing, or the thing that gets everybody stuck is the third element, and that's consciousness. And here's my understanding of consciousness:

You go to a circus and you see those circus mirrors. When you stand in front of one of them, you seem tall and skinny with a little pinhead. And when you stand in front of the other one, it looks like you are short and fat with a big fat butt.

Because the mirror is warped, what you see is a certain thing. Now if someone was standing in front of that mirror and they were miserable, and they believed what they were seeing was true, you would laugh at that person.

You would say: "Don't be silly, that's not how you look! It's the mirror stupid! You are not tall and skinny with a little pinhead! You're not short and fat with a big butt! It's the mirror!"

You'd have no problem setting a person straight in that situation; but that's exactly the problem with consciousness. And you're all... we all believe... we are looking thru this warped consciousness and we think that what we are seeing is really there. But it's not. It's a problem of consciousness.

Patanjali, who is one of my favorite teachers, he comes to me: he comes and goes. And the Buddha: my two favorite cousins... Interesting, those two guys are like bookends for my practice, if you want to know. And Yogi Rammacharaka, who was a westerner, another guy, from the turn of the century... He wrote a bunch of stuff...

Anyway, so these two guys-Patanjali and the Buddha—really cool... They never met each other, lived in different times and different places, but they had the same purpose in life: they wanted to know the cause of suffering, and the end of suffering.

They each developed their own system. And by God, if you lay them on the side of each other, Jesus it looks like they consulted with each other!

If you look at the list of causes of the suffering that Patanjali came up with, and compare to the list of causes of suffering that the Buddha came up with: they are the same!

If you look at the list of what to do to end suffering that Patanjali came up with, it's exactly the same as what the Buddha came up with.

Now, when two teachers from two different times and cultures and places come up with the same thing, man that's important! That tells us something really valuable!

Here's an even cooler thing about those two guys: they were both teaching consciousness and they both came up with the same analogy in trying to tell their students what the work was about the level of consciousness.

They both used the same analogy, the same metaphor. Now that to me is mind-boggling. That is really cool, right?

They used the metaphor of a perfect jewel, a flawless gem, a perfect diamond. They said that our consciousness needs to be like that.

And when your consciousness is like that, then with consciousness, or thru consciousness, reality will be revealed. And thru consciousness, self-realization will emerge.

But as long as you have a gem or a jewel—consciousness—that is cloudy and not perfect, then you cannot trust it to give you a perfect image, a perfect view of life or yourself.

One of Patanjali's students came up with an even better metaphor, an even better analogy...

Better than the Buddha or Patanjali?

Yes! And that is the analogy of water.

Water has two very interesting properties—we are talking about consciousness.

Water has two interesting properties. It is transparent: you can see thru the water to the bottom. And it's reflective: you can see yourself reflected in the water.

We are talking about consciousness. Now if the water is not calm, what happens to the reflection? If the water is not pure, what happens to the transparency?

So there is the work in consciousness. And here is the game when you bring it together into Breathwork.

Every thought is a wave in consciousness. So as soon as you think something, you have a wave in consciousness, and now what happens to that reflection?

Can you trust it? Can you trust the image that consciousness gives you when it has waves on the surface?

You might see something, but it is probably not real. Every emotion is a wave in consciousness. Every feeling and sensation in your body is a wave, a particle, in that water.

Both the Buddha and Patanjali said this is what we need to practice. They said the same exact thing.

See if you recognize this: “Non-attachment.” That’s the Buddha’s teaching. “Non-resistance.” That’s the Buddha’s teaching. “Non-judgment.” That’s the Buddha’s teaching. And guess what? That’s exactly Patanjali’s teaching!

How can that happen? They are on to something. That’s how it happens! They both nailed it! They both worked out a system that works. And you can practice either one and get free. “Non-judgment, non attachment, non-resistance.”

Now catch yourself a thousand times a day. A thousand times a day, guess what you do? You judge, you attach, and you resist.

And no matter how spiritual you want to be, if your system has the habit of a thousand times a day, judging, attachment, and resistance: you are banging your head against a wall.

And you are going to do it forever until your system changes, and starts to get with the program. So here is my short cut.

I was meditating one day in Russia, and I had been teaching this little thing over and over. Wherever I go, I am like a freakin broken record. And one time I was in the middle of sharing it, and it just came thru.

I realized: “Hey wait a minute! Judging is a reaction of the mind. Attaching is a reaction. Resisting is a reaction. There’s the simple solution: practice **“non-reaction!”**”

So I don’t even practice non-judgment, non-attachment, or non-resistance anymore: I practice non-reaction. Because every one of those three things is a reaction.

If I get good at non-reaction, then I can get free in any moment. I can get free of my system. I can get free of my reactions to the system. I can get free of any negative energy that comes into me.

If I can let go completely, I don’t have to worry about protecting myself against negative forces. The negative forces come into me, and they go right back out. No problem!

Now if they come in, and they trigger thinking and resisting and attaching and judging, and they trigger tension: well now I have a big complicated thing, and it might take me a long time to unravel it all, to get free and to recover from it.

However if my system automatically lets go in that moment: end of story! No process required; nothing to work thru. No complex of stuff to deal with. You don’t need an expert.

This stuff is too simple. That's the problem with it. It's too simple. And the mind is like a dog: it likes to chew on bones.

If you give a person a simple solution to life's problems, they don't want it! They want a problem. They think it must be more complicated than that. They think it's got to be more difficult than that. It's got to take more time than that.

I'm going to have to study more; I'm going to have to be smarter than I am. I'm going to have to be stronger, faster. The ego gets us all caught up in a whole bunch of bullshit that is totally unnecessary and not required.

All that is required is to pull in energy, to open and invite the divine, and to let go and relax. If you can do that, it's all you need to do. In any given moment, it's as simple as that.

And this isn't just talk for me, because I have been working with this; and I have been working with really serious broken blown out knees, and serious injuries. And if it is working on that stuff, it can work on our everyday crap.

But it takes what Patanjali taught. When they asked Patanjali: "How long is it going to take us to get to be like you? How long until we are self-realized?"

He said: "It depends on the intensity of your practice."

If you put every single moment of every single day into your awakening, how long do you think it will take you?

It took the Buddha twelve years. Twelve years. But he was working on it every day, with everyone he met, everyone he talked to, everything he did, everywhere he went. He gave it everything.

He was 100% involved, and it took him twelve years. So how long do you think it will take people who put in an hour a day? Good luck!

But what if you put in every breath you take? What if every breath you take is aimed at your awakening? What if every breath you take is put into service to your higher self? How long do you think it will take you?

We can beat the Buddha, big time! He did it in twelve years, with no one else on the planet to support him. But right now we have literally millions of Buddhas on the planet!

People forget that. People haven't woken up to realize that! We are so concerned with the "1%." All this talk about the "one percenters:" the greedy one percent who control the whole world and own everything...

Well, if there are seven billion people on the planet... Who does math here? What is 1% of 7 billion? I'll tell you because we have done the math: seventy million!

One percent of the people on this planet equals seventy million people!

Now you mean to tell me that out of those seventy million people in the one percent, that there are not a couple of nice guys?

And that's how many Buddhas we have! At the least, there must be one percent of the population that is awake! That's seventy million awakened beings!

The Buddha didn't have that going for him. We do. It's getting easier and easier to wake up because more and more people are awake. And it is going to reach a point when everything accelerates.

And when it accelerates, things are going to get so freaking intense, that even good-minded people are going to turn into animals.

Even loving people are going to get totally jammed up, because their systems will not allow that intensity, won't allow that power to flow thru them. Even with the best hearts and the best intentions, in the nicest people... their systems are going to jam up and close up.

So we have to teach our system to open and relax into intensity. There's the shortcut to breathwork. If you want to learn breathwork, or apply breathwork to something, apply it to the ability to relax into intensity.

That means you can use your breath to create intensity inside of you, to whatever degree you are ready to train. And then you practice relaxing into the intensity.

You can use your breath to activate the intensity, and then you use the breath to relax into the intensity.

You stay wide-awake. You stay relaxed. And you see how much power you can invite to flow thru you.

And it's not a race. You don't have to push yourself. But you want to be close to the edge. You want to be conscious. You want to be honest with yourself.

You want to see when you back down out of fear, when your own feelings and sensations cause you to panic! And you want to be able to breathe thru that or relax beyond that or be able to talk to yourself in some way that allows you go into it and thru it.

And if you can't do that, then you get someone to sit on the side of you, who says: "Just keep relaxing. Just keep breathing." And who feeds you positive thoughts: "You're ok. You can make it. You're safe. You can do it. Go for it!"

If you can't do that for yourself, then invite someone to do it for you. And push yourself thru, or gently move into your limitations. Get comfortable with them, and then go beyond them. Actually, the going beyond happens automatically.

One of the best breathworkers in the world, and I know a lot of them, is Sergei Vsyechsvyatski. He's a Russian. He's really hard to get to now because he is really wealthy. He's got a big company.

He's hard to get to, but he is one of the best breathworkers I know on the planet. Sergei Vsyechsvyatski. He's got a great model for working with breathwork.

Imagine three concentric circles. The small circle in the middle is your comfort zone. The big circle on the outside is your discomfort zone. And then you create a circle in the middle, called the working zone.

Now, if you stay in the middle of your comfort zone, you're never going to grow. You are never going to evolve. You are going to be comfortable. But your comfort zone is going to get narrower and narrower, until you shrivel up and die!

If you go too far outside of your comfort zone, all of your programs and conditioning and survival instincts—they are all going to get triggered, and it's going to cause you to shut down.

So, what you have to do, is you have to get out to the edge of your comfort zone, into what he calls your "working zone." And you know what that is, and where it is. And every time you get out to the edge of your comfort zone and you manage to breathe and relax, you've just made your comfort zone bigger.

You do that until pretty soon, your comfort zone is bigger than that second circle, and even bigger than that third circle. And then you will be able to be comfortable in times and places when you could never be comfortable before. And you are able to be comfortable in times and places when no one else can be comfortable.

That's a skill that we can all use. Because when everyone else starts to lose their mind, and when the shit hits the fan, you need people who can stay calm and stay clear in the middle of the chaos.

No matter how intense things get, they can still breathe, they can still relax; they can still keep an open loving heart. That's all that's needed in those moments; but that's the hardest thing to do in those moments—unless you have trained your system to do it.

And so for me, that is what Breathwork is about: re-patterning our mind-body system, so that it supports us instead of getting in our way.

Pull in energy with the inhale. Snap the exhale loose and give yourself a sigh of relief. Then do it again right away. And then do it again right away.

Now I like to use an “ooh” shape on the inhale, and an “aah” shape on the exhale.

The “ooh” shape is like you are sucking thru a straw. It’s like you are feeding yourself, you are charging yourself.

And that “ooh” shaped breath goes all the way down to your root chakra. That’s a “root” “root” chakra noise! “ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh” That “ooh” shape goes really deep.

If you have an “ooh” shape on the inhale, you are inviting that energy to go to the deepest part of you. It doesn’t have to be a verbal sound: it’s the shape of an “ooh” as if you are sucking thru a straw.

The exhale needs to be an “aah” shape. You don’t want an “ooh” shape on the exhale. That’s going to hold back energy. You want an “ahh” shape on the exhale.

Now as soon as we start talking about this “ooh” on the inhale and “aah” on the exhale—it’s not a vocal sound—it’s a shape [demonstrates].

That takes practice, because in no time, many people turn it around and they end up doing this: “aah on the inhale and “ooh” on the exhale [demonstrates].

It’s funny to watch, but I’ve been with thirty thousand people and ninety percent of them will do that within a few minutes. And when they get in crisis, when the session gets intense, that’s what they are doing.

They are going “hah hoo, hah hoo” instead of “hoo hah, hoo hah.” They are trying so hard, but they’ve got it completely backwards.

So, “hoo” on the inhale: like you are sucking thru a straw, like you are feeding yourself, like you are sucking on a breast.

You don’t suck on the breast with an “aah, aah, aah. You suck on the breast with an “ooh. ooh, ooh.” Your lips are together like you are sucking thru a straw or on a nipple.

So, you want a nipple-sized opening on the inhale! If you have a nipple-sized opening on the inhale, you can have a long inhale.

Lengthen your inhale, which is a good skill in breathwork. Lengthen your inhale: that's the controlling part.

And then on the exhale, it's an "aah" shape. You just set it free, you just let it go.

The long "aah's" are soothing to certain parts of us. [demonstrates toning "aah."]

That's soothing to a certain part of us; but it doesn't allow the system to let go. It doesn't allow a quick, total, complete release.

And this is the thing: when you are in pain, do you want a long slow process to get out of the pain? No. You want out now. Right now! So, you develop that ability to let go of your exhale quickly and completely.

Let your system be satisfied with those other things (controlling the exhale, lengthening the exhale) at some other time. Now, practice letting the exhale go quickly and completely.

Get this skill under your belt, because there is no substitute for it. [demonstrates]

Now it's ok if the "ooh and aah" turns into an "oh." An "oh" is like half way between an "ooh" and an "aah." [demonstrates]

If you start making sounds, listen to where the sound is coming from. Make sure you are not making tight throat noises. If you are making tight closed throat sounds, pretty soon: [demonstrates choking sounds]

That's what's going to be happening. So you have to be conscious of keeping your throat soft and open.

That's what the yawn does. When you yawn, your throat opens up like a stovepipe. Your jaw stretches open, wide and open.

That's the best time to invite or allow energy to flow thru. That's the best time to circulate the breath. [demonstrates]

There are lots of ways to move into a process. You can power your way in [demonstrates].

You can turn up your breathing like that, and just power your way into the process. But you are not going to be able to keep that up very long, unless you have done a lot of practice.

The other way to move into a session is to relax into the process [demonstrates].

But very soon, what's going to begin to happen is: you are going to forget to breathe, you are going to be spacing out; you will literally be sleeping.

So you've got to find the middle ground. You've got to put them together or go back and forth between those two things. You have to keep both of those things alive. Powerful breathing and complete relaxation: you keep both of them alive.

And you do that by adjusting your breathing. You make it quicker, you make it slower; you move it down in your belly, or you move it up into your chest.

Just keep adjusting the breathing to maintain the energy—the power of the breath—and to remain in the relaxation.

I am going to breathe, and so if I come to you and breathe into your ear, it means that I am trying to give you a way to breathe. You are free to copy it or not. It doesn't really matter to me. If I get an intuitive hit when I get near you, I'll share it.

If I am not breathing right into your ear, it's probably not meant for you. It's either meant for me or it's meant for the group.

But if I am touching you and you hear me breathing, aiming my breath at you: I am trying to give you a rhythm or a quality of the breath. I'm trying to communicate something to your breathing, and you can follow it or not.

(A question from one of the participants: *Why is my body becoming tense and tight?*)

It's like a fire hose. A fire hose is made of rubber or canvas, it's soft and loose, right? It flops around. But when you put a charge of water thru it: "Bam! It's like steel; it's like a hard frozen thing.

The hose is still soft and relaxed. It's not tension. It's charge. It's the confusion between muscular tension and energetic charge.

When energy comes into the body, the body reacts to it with tension, and now it's a mix. It's a mix of energy and the body's reaction to the energy. So that's what tetany is.

And you can train your body to have a different reaction to the energy, so that you don't get tetany anymore. The body is very alive and so it still reacts, but it reacts in a different way. It reacts by opening and relaxing instead of closing and contracting.

When too much energy is coming in, your system, that lizard brain, and your unconscious fears, the need to stay in control: it all comes up, and tetany is the result. That's one way of looking at it.

Another way to understand it is that you have simply not mastered enough relaxation, so you have an imbalance. You are pulling in more energy than you are letting go. It's just a slight imbalance.

So we have "prana" and "apana." Apana is the energy when it is flowing out; and prana is the energy when it is flowing in.

If you start to get those symptoms of hyperventilation, it's because you are not letting out as much as you are pulling in, and your system is building up with apana. That's another way to look at it.

And another way to look at it is pure chemistry. You are talking about the acid-base balance in your body. You're talking about the whole pH thing. And by hyperventilating, you are triggering that chemistry reaction.

Depending on which of those beliefs you are holding on to, you can move yourself out of the process, or you can move yourself thru it.

So, there are three breathing rhythms. If you want an easy way to get into the process and manage yourself thru the session, just think in terms of three breathing rhythms.

Let's make it easy: Fast and full, slow and full, or fast and shallow.

Play with those three possible rhythms: fast and full, slow and full, or fast and shallow. If you get bored or if you get confused, or stuck or tired, just try a different rhythm.

But, remember, those are directions. One person could say, "This is fast:" [demonstrates]. Someone else could say, "That's not fast. This is:" [demonstrates a faster rhythm].

So it's a direction. There's no real "what's fast, what's slow." We are talking about a direction.

And when I say fast and slow, I am only talking about the inhale. Why? Because what do you do with the exhale? You just let it go.

You are not making the exhale faster or slower. You are making the inhale faster or slower. [demonstrates]

Play with your breath. It's not rocket science. It's not serious. There's nothing dangerous. You can't hurt yourself. Breathing is absolutely safe. So just play with it.

What's dangerous is your reactions. Somebody steps on your toe so you pull out your gun and you shoot him! The problem isn't someone stepping on your toe: the problem is your systemic reaction to that.

So that's what we are training. We are training our system to open and expand, to relax and let go—when right now, the conditioning, the training is to contract, control, push, force, hold, block... whatever.

You are training your system to open and expand, to relax and let go, when it's the last thing you would think to do. When the old program has taken over, that's good, because you have a chance to re-program it.

You are using the breath to activate feelings and sensations and thoughts; and you are using the breath to move thru them, to move past them, and not react to them. Don't react. Turn every reaction into another breath: inhale and let go.

Whatever other urge you have... if you start thinking: turn that into another breath. You have an itch. Practice with simple things. Let's say you have an itch; and without even thinking, you just scratch it.

But if you are awake, you will realize: "Oh, I had an itch and I just scratched without thinking." Then you can slow it down: "Oh, I have an itch, and I choose to scratch." Or, "I have an itch, and guess what? I choose not to scratch it. I am going to breathe and relax instead."

I let myself feel that itch, and I channel that urge into my breathing. It's a very simple practice, and you can play that same game with any other urge. The urge to slap somebody... the urge to run away... the urge to criticize... the urge to blame... whatever... Once you get it, you can apply it to anything else.

You are trying to use the inhale to create more room inside of you: that's a big part of breathwork. You are using the breath to create more space inside of you. You are using the inhale to open and stretch and create room and space inside of you.

The breath is perfect for that. You take longer inhales or more expansive inhales, and you are opening up your system. You are inviting it to expand and stretch. And then you let go, and invite your system to relax and release.

Expand and stretch, relax and let go. No matter what you think, no matter how you feel, no matter how it looks: keep breathing and relaxing. Because how it feels and what you think, and how it looks: guess what? That's that circus mirror! That's that consciousness that's full of waves.

You cannot trust your consciousness if it's full of thoughts and feelings and emotions and sensations. It's not you: it's just reactions. So, don't react. Turn every reaction into another breath.

Expand and relax. Pull in and let go. Make it very very simple. Your mind gets activated very quickly; and so you return to your breath as soon as the mind gets activated.

Here's the problem: I am working with people who talk about energy all the time. You don't want to be in the same room with me when we start to have a conversation about energy, because here's where it goes:

When a boat moves thru water, the boat makes waves. If you feel those waves, are you feeling the boat? Do you even know the boat? Do you even know for sure that the boat exists? All you know is the waves that the boat makes.

Here's the thing: when energy moves thru you, it makes waves. You feel those waves and you call it the boat. It ain't! When you say you feel energy, you don't feel energy: you are feeling your body's reaction to the energy. You are feeling the waves that the energy makes when it moves thru you.

And until your mind stops reacting and your body stops reacting, you will never touch that energy. You will never know that energy because you've got a middle man interpreting that energy, turning it into something, and you have no choice about it.

Energy is like electricity, right? Energy comes into a washing machine and you wash clothes, Energy comes into a computer, and it does that. Energy comes into a toaster and it does that. It says nothing about the energy: the toaster, the washing machine, the computer—you don't know anything about energy if you are relating to it on those levels.

So, energy moves into your mind, and it cause thoughts. Energy moves into your body and it cause physical sensations. Energy moves into you and it causes emotions. And then you think that it's the energy.

It's not until those reactions stop happening that you can really contact the energy. And that's a very rare thing. And when it happens, you are a Buddha. You are a Patanjali, because now you are in a direct relationship with life. You are the energy; the energy is you. There is no duality thing.

So, when you start thinking about energy, think about that, because that's what happens in a breathing session. Energy moves into your system, and it makes waves. Those waves are feelings and sensations, and thoughts and emotions.

And then you get caught up in those thoughts, feelings and emotions, and you get caught or lost in the energy. And so you have to step back and start over.

Just breathe and relax, and you will start to touch the energy before it becomes a thought, before it becomes a feeling or sensation, before it becomes an emotion.

And now it feels like pure electricity. It feels like pure tingling and vibrating. It's electrical. You know, we have an electric body, and breathwork wakes up that electric body. And then people are afraid of that electric body.

And that electric body sets everything off. The toaster, the computer, the washing machine; all the lights go on. All this crap is happening and it distracts you from the purity of the energy.

Then you either need a coach or yourself to bring you back around to the simplicity and the purity of the process.

Be patient with your system, but be persistent. Keep coming back to the simple thing: expand and relax (inhale and exhale).

"But I'm afraid!"

That's ok. Pull in and let go.

"I see God!"

Good. Pull in and let go.

It doesn't matter what comes up: turn everything back around into the breath. Keep it very pure, very simple.

You can pull in energy, and you can always pull in more energy. You can relax, and you can always relax more. Go out to your edge. Hang out there, until you have a breakthrough. And then your comfort zone is bigger.

Now all of the religions come into play here. If your consciousness is going to be active, at least direct your consciousness in a way that supports you.

If you start to feel something intense, you could go: "Oh my God! I am going to die!" Or you could say: "Oh, God is healing me."

So, you can choose your thoughts, which is really useful: especially in a breathing session! It's like giving it a spin that serves you. Don't just believe every thought that comes up in your head by itself.

Watch your thoughts go by just like the breath goes by. Thoughts come and go, just like the breath comes and goes.

(Participant asks a question: “Do we breathe thru our mouth?”)

Yes, in the beginning, it’s a good idea. You can make more noise, you can get more energy, you can sigh, you can yawn.

Wiggle yourself a little bit. Check to make sure that everything is loose. But invite some power with your breath; invite some energy with the breath. We are afraid of our own power. People are afraid of their own infinite nature. And we have to get comfortable with it.

That’s why the Buddha had “right livelihood” and all those other things, because if you receive an infinite amount of energy and you are still a jealous, angry, reactive being, you are a threat to the universe!

So we have to do our inner work, and as we do our inner work, more energy comes to us, because we are safe—it is safe with us. You wouldn’t give a gun to a little kid. And so God doesn’t give power to people who have not worked out their shit, or who still react like animals.

We do our inner work, and more energy comes. We invite more energy, and it stimulates our inner work. The whole thing comes together quite nicely. You can go as far as you want, as fast as you want, as deep as you want...

[Dan tunes into one of the participant’s breathing rhythm.]

That’s a really great working rhythm!

[He copies it. He mirrors it.]

There’s no reason on earth why people should not be able to breathe like that for twenty minutes. And if you can’t breathe like that for twenty minutes, then you’ve got work to do.

If you can’t breathe like that for twenty minutes, you will start to see why. “Oh, my throat gets dry.” Or: “Oh I get dizzy.” Or whatever. And then you start making a list of all the things you have to be ok with. You start making a list of things you have to be able to relax with. And you direct your own process.

You don’t have to hide from yourself or your feelings. What stops you will become very obvious. It comes up very quickly. You decide to breathe and relax, and the first thing that stops you, you note it. What is it? And then you work with it, so that the next time it doesn’t stop you.

(Dan turns his attention back to the person he was breathing with.)

He is ready for a cleansing breath.

[demonstrates big sigh of relief]

You are ready for a cleansing breath. Yup. Maybe another one. “Aaaahhh...”
Then you go back to the rhythm.

If you are in a rhythm like that... Peter is the best breather here; I have to admit it. So, when you get good at breathing, if you can get into a rhythm like this, then the only thing you need to do is “shift gears” from time to time.

You take a long inhale; you give yourself a big sigh of relief. And then when you come out of that cleansing breath, the rhythm is slightly adjusted intuitively. It is slightly adjusted naturally.

Now the process starts to take on its own life, and you’re not even doing the breathing anymore. Something breathes you. Who you thought was doing the breathing, takes a back seat, and the breath itself starts to breathe you.

And then you’ve got nothing to think about, nothing to do, because now spirit is breathing you! But you have to prime it, you have to open to it, you’ve got to relax into it, and you’ve got to invite it.

Spirit isn’t going to force its way into you; you actually have to actually show that you want it. You have to actually invite it; you have to be opening, expanding, relaxing and letting go. This is the message, the signal to energy that it can move, that it can flow.

You demonstrate that with your breathing.

[demonstrates an active rhythm].

You could pick any rhythm:

[demonstrates a different rhythm].

But it’s not subtle. It’s not imperceptible. It’s energy breathing. It’s real breathing. It’s visible. You can hear it, you can see it, you can feel it. Someone else can feel it, hear it, see it.

If you breathe in the same way you always breathe, you will remain the way you always are. If you breathe in a way that you have never breathed before, you are going to feel things you have never felt before.

Here, now, you have an opportunity to get somewhere you never got before! And all you have to do is maintain a rhythm for just a few minutes. Decide. Set a clock and say: “ok, for three minutes I am going to breathe like this.”

[demonstrates]

And see if you can go a lousy three minutes. Pick any rhythm and see if you can stick with it no matter what you feel, no matter what you think, no matter what comes up, no matter what happens: just stay with it.

Adjust the breath. Relax around it. You can tweak the rhythm a little bit. It might want to change slightly, but keep going in the same direction of more and more energy and of more and more relaxation.

[demonstrates]

(One of the participants asks Dan about the tightness on his face and around his mouth.)

Yes, that’s normal. Let it happen. You’re lucky. I’m jealous. Don’t do anything about it. You know we have a social mask. Practice non-reaction.

I’m like a broken record. No matter what you think, no matter what you feel, no matter what happens, guess what? Just breathe and relax. It’s just a feeling. Don’t react to it.

Remember, if you have one wave in the water, and you react to that wave, now you have two waves. And those two waves crash, and you have a third wave. And pretty soon, you are totally unconscious.

You are going in the opposite direction of becoming that flawless gem. You are going in the opposite direction of becoming pure, still, clean water. That’s what you want in your consciousness.

If a feeling comes up, watch your mind react to the feeling. Watch it, and breathe and relax. Let those reactions run their course without you getting tangled up in it.

If you see yourself thinking, turn it into breathing. If you see yourself reacting, turn it into breathing. Make it simple. And whatever wants to happen, say “yes!” Invite it.

Go in the opposite direction of resistance. Welcome it. If something wants to happen inside of you: who are you to question it? Life is trying to make something happen. Don’t get in the way. Don’t try to stop it. Welcome it.

Say yes. Every breath can be a big yes: a big yes on the inhale, a big yes on the exhale.

(One of the participants asks: "What is the relation between meditation and this breathing? It's the same, right?)

This is meditation. Breathing is meditation if you focus on every single breath, if you focus on the details. If I breathe in, I am focusing on the sound, the feelings, the expansion, the sensations: I am meditating.

And then I let go. I drop my mind. I fall into a state of meditation, just like that, when I release the exhale. Breathing is a form of dynamic meditation. It's a dynamic meditation.

Here's a little technique. Let's focus on a basic technique: one inhale on top of the other. It sounds like this: [demonstrates] I could turn the inhale around after the first one: [demonstrates]. But instead I add an inhale [demonstrates].

I am adding a little extra stretch to the end of the inhale and then I exhale. I put one inhale on top of the other and then I exhale. You are inviting a little extra stretch. You are inviting a little extra expansion [demonstrates].

Very beautiful, powerful device: two inhales then an exhale. You add that little extra stretch on the inhale, and then let go. [demonstrates]

(Participant asks: "Nose or mouth?")

Mouth. You see, you can make the "ooh" and the "aah" sound if you use your mouth. You can't really do it if you use your nose. Nose breathing is a really good idea.

We don't have a lot of time, and I'm only with you once, and so I'd say breathe thru your mouth while you can.

Use any excuse to keep your breath moving. Breathe in whatever way you need to breathe, to keep the breath moving.

Shamanic breathing (using throat sounds): we can do that. [demonstrates]

Heeya, heeya, heeya, hah
Heeya, heeya, heeya, hah

inhale "heeya" -- exhale "heeya"
inhale "heeya" -- exhale "hah"
inhale "heeya" -- exhale "heeya"
inhale "heeya" -- exhale "hah"

There are a thousand breathing games you can play... Whatever it takes to keep breathing!

Do a Sufi technique:

“hoo, hoo, hah”

“hoo hoo, hah

“hoo hoo, hah”

[demonstrates]

Inhale “hoo hoo,” exhale “hah.”

Inhale “hoo hoo, exhale “hah.”

Inhale “hoo hoo, exhale “hah.”

Most people can only do that for a minute or two before that have to stop. You need to be able to do that for an hour! Pick any random breathing rhythm, and breathe with it for an hour. If you can't, you've got work to do!

Start with something that's easy, and see if you can do that for an hour. And even that you can't do! If you find the most beautiful comfortable breathing rhythm, I'll bet you can't do it for a whole hour—even though it feels wonderful and you love it!

That's because of your system. So, you practice; you play with it; you seduce your system into relaxing. You cajole it. You deliberately poke at it: you activate it, and then you practice relaxing.

Relax past the reactions of your system: relax and breathe thru the reactions of your system. Whether it's a mental reaction: “Oh this is good.” Oh I like it.” “Oh I agree with it.” Or: “Oh this is bad. “Oh this reminds me of this.” Oh I know what this is.” Breathe and relax past those reactions.

“Oh I have a pain in my knee.” “Oh my hands are getting tight.” “Oh my throat hurts.” “Oh I'm getting dizzy.” Those are reactions. They are not a reason to stop. They are not a reason to react to the reactions!

Turn everything into another breath. Turn everything into a sigh of relief. Expand and open; relax and let go. It's so simple. Do it on a moment-to-moment basis, and it becomes a powerful spiritual purification.

(Comment from a participant in process: “You're a fucking genius Dan! This is amazing!”)

Yes, It's very simple. Just stay with it.

[Laughter]

Give yourself a sigh of relief. Everyone right now, give yourself a big juicy luxurious sigh of relief. And when you do, shake something loose inside yourself. And then invite some rhythm.

What's an interesting rhythm? What's a fun speed, or rhythm, or pattern of breathing? Trust your intuition. Nature wouldn't fuck with you! If something is interesting or enjoyable: that's not an accident. Go there. Follow that urge.

You are breathing fast or slow, high or low. From time to time you give yourself a big cleansing breath, a big sigh of relief, and then go back into some rhythm, some continuous pattern. It's a creative process.

Keep the breath moving. Forget everything else if you want, but keep the breath moving, in any way you can manage!

[Dan tunes into one of the breather's and coaches him.]

Ah, this is excellent! Remember the relaxation. You don't want to use any muscles you don't have to. It is possible to breathe very powerfully, and yet don't use any muscles. Ah, good! Ah good!

It's a balance between breathing and relaxation. It's a balance between peace and power. Now you can get creative.

When you are pulling in, you are pulling in light. You are pulling in light when you breathe in. You are pulling in life. You are pulling in love. Be conscious about that.

And the breath is going to every cell of your body. You can invite that light, that life, to permeate every cell of your body.

[Dan coaches another participant]

Relax your neck. Baby breaths can help us. Taking little baby breaths helps: this helps you to get thru. Big sighs of relief help us. Something in between can help us. From time to time... "aaahhh..." start over.

What's the most beautiful thing you can imagine? Focus on it while you breathe. Embody it.

Watch and notice when you space out, and then come back into the breath with a vengeance. Watch when you begin to go unconscious, and come back. Wake yourself up with the breath.

The breath not only wakes up our highest and most beautiful thoughts and feelings, it also wakes up all the blocks to them. So keep the breath moving.

[Demonstrating various breathing rhythms]

You can be quite playful, quite creative: whatever it takes to keep your breath moving.

Stay out of your head, and don't get distracted by the feelings and sensations that get activated. Observe them. Let them be. Don't do anything about them. You don't have to think about them. You don't have to do anything about them.

Here's a liberating thought: "I don't have to do anything about what happens inside of me!" "I don't have to do anything about my feelings!" "I don't have to do anything about the sensations!"

It's so liberating. You don't have to do anything. And then the feelings go away by themselves; and that's a great lesson. "Wow! A problem came and the problem went away, and I didn't have to do anything at all!"

Phew! That's very liberating! Just keep returning to the breath, in one way or another, in one form or another.

(Participant asks: "Do I wiggle the parts that are tense? What do I do with the physical parts of my body that feel harder now? My hands are harder.")

Yeah, let it be. Relax what you can relax, and be patient with the rest. Just find something that you can loosen and soften, keep the breath moving, and be patient.

Everything that comes up will pass. You don't have to do anything about it, except stay in the process. Keep breathing and keep relaxing.

Be curious. Explore the details of the feelings and sensations. Where's the edge of it? Your hands can get so tight that they blind you to other parts of yourself. So you want to expand your consciousness.

"What's happening in my toes right now?" "What's happening in my throat right now?" "What's happening with my eyelashes?" Spread your attention out. Don't let one part of your system dominate your consciousness or your energy. Keep it free.

Focus on expanding and focus on relaxing. And be patient. Let your system go along at whatever pace it likes. It will catch up. It will come around. Be patient with it.

So, we feel a feeling and we notice our reaction to the feeling. We can witness ourselves trying to shake off the feeling, or thinking about it, or doing some healing work over it. Guess what? You don't need to do any of that! The process will take care of itself.

Listen, we're not smart enough to heal ourselves! Do you know how to manufacture chemicals in your brain? Do you know how to keep your heart beating twenty-four hours a day?

You don't know how to do that stuff. Get out of the way! Another part of you knows that. So just keep expanding and relaxing. And let your system go thru whatever it needs to go thru.

Whatever feelings come, they come. Whatever emotions come, they come. Whatever thoughts come, they come. Don't do anything about it. It doesn't mean anything. Just keep breathing and relaxing.

PART 3

The Art of Spiritual Breathing

[Breathing]

Whatever you feel—let it remind you to breathe more. Whatever you feel—let it remind you to relax more. Whatever happens—let it remind you to breathe and relax more. Turn everything into another breath.

The same thing that stops you in a breathing session, it stops you in life. It stops you in money, it stops you in romance, it stops you in business; it stops you everywhere.

And if it doesn't stop you in a breathing session, it can't stop you anywhere else. But as long as it can stop you in a breathing session, it's going to stop you on all those other levels.

All we are doing is practicing breathing thru those points where we get distracted, when our system reacts, when our mind gets activated, and when feelings and sensations and emotions take over our system. All we are doing is using the breath to practice getting thru that stuff. Popping out the other side of it.

And you will. And when you pop out the other side of it, ahhhh... it's ecstasy! You know, that word, I think it comes from the Greek: "ex stasis" which means "to stand apart."

When we stand apart from our mind and body, from our feelings and sensations, we are in ecstasy! The breath keeps us anchored to who we really are, regardless of what's happening in our mind-body system.

So stay connected to the breath, and let everything else happen by itself. Whatever wants to happen, let it happen. You are in charge of just keeping the breath moving, and keeping relaxed while everything is happening.

You can put passion into your breathing, to tell your subconscious that you mean it about growing, evolving, getting free. You can express those sighs of relief as if they are luxurious, Shakespearian, juicy, delightful moments.

[demonstrates]

If you flood your system with those breaths, one after another, after another: it's going to purge everything out of you that doesn't match that frequency. That beautiful sigh of relief is the unmistakable language of the soul.

Have you ever seen a person who is in pain breathe like this? [demonstrates sigh of relief] No! Have you ever seen anyone who is in a panic and afraid breathe like this [demonstrates]? No!

But if you could breathe like that when you are in pain or fear, guess what would happen to the pain and the fear? You cannot breathe like that when you are in pain and fear: and you cannot be in fear or pain when you breathe like that! It's that simple!

You just have to train your system to breathe like that! [ecstatic laughter] Waves of emotions come. Waves of sensations come. Waves of visions come. Those are waves in consciousness. They are beautiful. They are natural.

When you throw a stone into water, a wave happens. There's nothing wrong with waves. But listen to this about water: it doesn't over-react, and it doesn't under-react. When you throw a stone in the water, the wave that occurs is absolutely perfect.

You can't say that about your mind. Your mind over-reacts and it under-reacts. Same thing with your body: it over-reacts and it under-reacts. So we are training it to have a pure reaction. We want a body and a mind like water. When a stone goes into the water, a perfect reaction occurs.

(Question from a participant: What happens when we under-react? How does the system under-react?)

Oh, you block it. You deny it. You say it's not important. You avoid it. You just don't feel it. Blah, blah, blah... Whatever. Over-react: "Oh my God we're going to die! We have to do something right away!"

And your body is doing that. You don't hear it. You hear it when you think it. But your body is habitually doing it. It blocks some things: it doesn't allow the flow. Or it exaggerates the flow. And we are training our system to come back to a pure, natural living organism that reacts perfectly.

We are trying to replace all the miscellaneous unconscious reactions with a consciously chosen response: "open and expand, relax and let go." That's the best thing you can do in a crisis: open and expand. You don't want to block what's happening, you don't want to close yourself to what's happening.

You want to be totally aware and present. This is it. This is happening. What's the point of trying to block it or deny it or hide from it? Open to it. Open yourself and allow it fully. And then let go and relax.

Then the next thing you do is literally "inspired." And it's not you doing it. It's Spirit moving you, because you got out of the way. You are training your system to cooperate in that process. You will say the right thing and do the right thing at the right time without trying to, without planning on it, or anything.

Liberate your breath! When you inhale, you should feel yourself expand from front-to-back, side-to-side, top-to-bottom. Take your time on the inhale. Track those sensations. Enjoy those sensations.

Make the inhale as long as you can. And feel every little detail as you are opening and expanding, stretching and opening. And when the exhale comes, just snap it loose, dump it out, set it free.

[demonstrates]

You can link a prayer to every breath. Every breath is a prayer. Every breath is a blessing. All it takes is consciousness.

So, when you breathe in, what do you want to fill yourself with? What do you need more of? What do you want to welcome? What do you want to embody? What kind of energy do you want to fill yourself with?

Find a word or a phrase or an image for it, and breathe it in. What kind of energy do you want to put out into the world? Focus on that as you exhale, and see that light and energy going out into the world. Every breath is a prayer. Every breath is a blessing.

You can be blessing the world with every breath. You have a thought; you tag the breath with that thought; you release that breath out into the world; and you make a difference.

You have an intention, you put that intention on to the incoming breath, and you manifest, you materialize, you crystalize that energy into something real. You are bringing together consciousness and energy.

[Dan is coaching one of the participants]

Mmm.... Good! Don't use any muscles you don't have to. Try to keep that same breath going, but don't use as much effort. Good. Good. Take your time.

(Participant: My throat is dry)

Yes, it's ok to pause to wet your whistle, swallow, moisten your throat a little bit... and then go back to the breath. No problem.

(Participant: I usually breathe thru my nose. I am not accustomed to breathing thru my mouth.)

Yes, good idea. The nose is meant to breathe thru. It has hairs that filter dust; it has channels that spiral the air, tissues that condition the air—warms it, cools it. The nose is definitely meant to breathe thru.

But did you ever try to breathe thru your nose when you were laughing or crying? Or having an orgasm? It's good practice actually (to breathe thru your nose during orgasm).

When a lot of energy moves thru us, we need to be able to help that energy move, and we use the breath to do that. We use the breath to teach our system to flow with the energy when it moves, and not contract and block, or try to control it: but to open and expand, to relax and let go.

And you know when you get into your head; you know when you forget the breathing, and when you get into your thoughts. So you have to keep coming back, keep coming back to the breath.

Ooh! I found the group rhythm. It took me a long time.

[demonstration / breathing practice]

Try to catch that rhythm: that's a really good universal rhythm for this group at the moment. You can support everyone around you if you can get into that rhythm. We can create a symphony here.

[breathing]

There's a rhythm that wants to come here. You can feel it in your breath. Catch it with your breathing. There are a lot of individual rhythms that can spin off from that, and still hold that.

[breathing]

Everyone's breath can be like a drum. You can do various things and still stay syncopated with the group rhythm.

[breathing]

If people do nothing but breathe for one hour: every single time, people are healed. Every single time, something is dropped, something is gained, something is purified; something is overcome: something is healed. Every single time. I have never, ever—in thirty-five years—not seen that happen!

But who can keep breathing for an hour? That's all you've got to learn to do. And you can breathe any way that you want. Just do it for an hour, without stopping and starting, without spacing out and zoning out; without getting distracted; without clamming up. It's that simple!

[Dan tunes into various participant's breathing.]

Ooh nice! Beautiful! Yeah!
Can you breathe in your belly too?
Good! Ooh, lovely! Beautiful!
Ooh, that was a good one!
Hey you got it! Keep playing with that. You got it!
Focus on your exhale... Just a sigh of relief.
That's it. Focus on relaxation. Gentle...
Let everything be open, let everything be soft,
let everything be loose, everything relaxed.

So, it's really easy to get out of balance: to breathe too much and not relax enough; to relax too much and not breathe enough. It's like learning to ride a bicycle. It's perfectly normal: you lose your balance in one direction; you lose your balance in the other direction.

[demonstrating sigh of relief with exaggerated "ahhh" sound]

If you keep your attention on keeping the breath moving, your intuition will do the work of guiding the breath: fast, slow, in the chest, in the belly: whatever is needed.

You have to keep inviting it, relaxing into it, keep surrendering and relaxing, expanding and relaxing. That's what a breath is: open and expand, relax and let go.

Do that instead of anything else at any time: instead of a thought, instead of a movement, anything. Turn it into another breath. Open and expand. Relax and let go.

If you can do that with the breath, you can do that with thoughts, with the past, with pain, with fear, anxiety, anger: you name it! You can do it with anything if you can do it with the breath: because everything is energy.

Every now and then, you want to pull past what feels full, create an extra stretch, and a big sigh of relief; then go back to whatever rhythm you were playing with.

[demonstrating different breathing rhythms]

When you are done breathing, don't stop. When you get up and start walking, breathe in rhythm to your footsteps.

[breathing]

You can start to move your body in rhythm to the breath. You can start to get freer and freer. Let your intuition take over. Make it a dance; make it a play. It's breath-centered. Everything else is gravy. Everything else is dessert.

Make it fun. Make it enjoyable. Make it powerful. Make it subtle. Make it sublime. Make it dramatic. You are in charge of all that stuff.

[Dan coaches one of the participants]

Let it morph. Let it become what it wants to become. Keep the breath moving. Relax around the breath. Relax into the breath. Yes. Perfect.

Basically, you need to be able to breathe in a powerful way for about an hour, without any reactions coming, without any uncomfortable feelings, without going unconscious: that's your gage.

If it takes you three months or six months or a year, whatever it takes: do it. Pick a rhythm and then stick with it and keep breathing past whatever comes up. Such a simple thing.

(Participant asks how long it has been since the session began.)

About two hours, I don't know. What time is it now? It depends on when you started breathing.

(Participant says: I am so grateful.)

"I am so grateful." That is a very powerful emotion: a very high frequency emotion—gratitude. Breathe that.

(It's all because of you.)

Well, thank you very much. It doesn't matter who it is towards. If you generate gratitude, you are the first recipient of that energy. Any excuse is a good excuse to feel grateful.

How does a grateful person breathe? Invent a breath that says: "I am grateful." There is no right answer: you just make it up. What is a "grateful" breath?

You can experiment in any direction you like. What's interesting? Just breathe in the most interesting way. Breathe in the most enjoyable way. Make interesting noises, breathing noises.

What's the most enjoyable breath? Invent it for yourself. How much pleasure can you give yourself with each breath? There's a game: how much pleasure can you give yourself with each breath. How much pleasure can you tolerate?

(Participant: I'm in some kind of automatic mode... I don't think I can stop this breathing!)

[Laughter] Let it stop itself. Keep going till it stops itself. It's like a fire. How do you know when to put the fire out? You just let the fire go out. The fire goes out by itself.

A breathing session is just like a fire. It has the same life as a fire. You start with a spark. The flames get bigger. It reaches a peak, and then the flames get smaller. And you end up with glowing embers. It's a perfect template for a perfect breathing session.

Just look at the life of a fire and you have a perfect template for a breathing session. You put more wood in the fire and what happens? The flames get bigger. You take wood out, and the fire goes away.

(Participant: I got to the point where I thought: "Should I go back in? Do I want to end the session here? Do I want to go back in?)

Yes, you are free! You decide. You can choose. (more conversation) That's right. We are in charge of our own process. We can go whatever way we want, whenever we want.

[Breathing, demonstrating different patterns and rhythms]

It's fun to play with extremes. Make yourself as empty as you can make yourself; as full as you can make yourself—as fast as you can breathe; as slow as you can breathe. Playing with extremes is very useful.

Watching your reactions is most useful.

(Participant shares: I now know what you mean by those three circles. I can feel them.)

Ah yes: the comfort zone, the discomfort zone, and the working or growing zone. Good.

[Modeling different breathing rhythms]

Remember the yawn. We started with yawning. It's always good to go back to the beginning, back to the basics: yawning and sighing.

You can make wind noises; you can make ocean noises. [Demonstrating breathing sounds]

Connecting movement of the body to movements of the breath. You can move your hands as you move the breath. You can move your head as you move the breath. You can move your limbs as you move your breath.

Bring together movement and breathing, movement and breathing. Any movement that feels nice. Do something with your spine while you breathe. Do something with your neck while you breathe.

[Demonstrating and recording various breathing rhythms, methods, sounds]

(Participant: I notice that as I breathe and relax, I can disappear just like that! I just go blank.)

Yes, you have to keep bringing yourself back: keep waking yourself up with the breath again and again.

[Breathing]

(Participant: I thank you for everything. It was amazing! I just want to tell you that I am going and that I feel amazing.)

Good. Thank you. Good night.

[Breathing Practice Continues...]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dan Brulé is a modern day teacher and healer—an innovative, unorthodox, irreverent, creative, game-changing entrepreneur. He is a master of Prana Yoga (the Hindu Science of Breath), and of Chi Kung/Qigong (Chinese Medical Breathing Exercises). Dan is a world-renown pioneer in the field of Breathwork, and leader of the worldwide Spiritual Breathing Movement, He is one of the originators of Breath Therapy, and was among the first group of Internationally Certified Rebirthers.

More than 100,000 people in over 50 countries now apply Dan's breathing exercises and techniques in their work and in their lives. Among his students and followers are Olympic champions and elite martial artists, leading psychotherapists and medical experts; monks, meditators, hospice workers, yoga teachers, performing artists, personal trainers, substance abuse and pastoral counselors, health practitioners, life coaches, and business executives.

Dan is the author of: "Just Breathe", "Shut Up And Breathe: Exploring the Art and Science of breathwork," "A Formula for Transformation," "The Principles of Breath Therapy," "Zen and the Art of Breathing," "Stress and Breathing," "A Brief Introduction to Chinese Medical Breathing Exercises," and "Spiritual Breathing."

He originally trained as an X-Ray Technologist at New England Medical Center (University Hospital) and Northeastern University. He served in the US Navy during as an independent duty hospital corpsman, Deep Sea Diver, and Emergency Medical Rescue Specialist from 1971 to 1976. Then he worked as a CPR, First aid, and Emergency Medical Technician instructor trainer.

Dan is a life long student and practitioner of the Healing Arts, Zen, and Meditation. He majored in Human Development and Learning at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and graduated in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Education. In 1985, he designed and completed a Masters Program in the Healing Arts at Lesley College in Cambridge, called "The Breath as A Tool for Health Growth and Change."

He founded The Growth Center, Inc.: one of New England's first Alternative Education and Holistic Healing Centers. He developed the first-in-the-nation "Stress and Coping" program for American Red Cross workers, and was the founding president of the Massachusetts Self-Esteem Council and served as the Director of Youth Education for the Council on Alcohol.

In 1980, Dan traveled to India where he was personally initiated and given the name "Guchu Ram Singh" by the legendary immortal yogi master Babaji (described in Pramahansa Yogananda's book: "Autobiography of a Yogi."). He continues to guide spiritual pilgrims to India on a regular basis.

Dan lived in the Osho community in Oregon, and took part in the original Breath Therapy Program at the Rajneesh International Meditation University. He learned Prana Yoga from Swami Rama and did biofeedback training at the Himalayan Institute in Pennsylvania.

He studied “Breathing Coordination” with Carl Stough in New York City. He has studied and traveled extensively with Leonard Orr, the founder of the Rebirthing movement; and he learned Holotropic Breathwork from its founder Stan Grof. In 1985, he was invited to China by Master Hu Bin to study and practice Medical Chi Kung at the Academy of Chinese Medicine in Beijing.

In 1990, Dan founded One Sky International Life Skills and Healing Arts Institute to foster cultural exchange between the USA and the USSR. He presented at the First International Free Breathing Conference in Moscow. The response was so strong and enthusiastic that he moved his practice to Russia during the collapse of Communism in 1991.

He took part in a ten-year study of Breathwork with the Russian Academy of Science, and worked with world champion Greco-Roman wrestler Alexander Karelin, as well as members of the Olympic judo, triathlon, rowing and tennis teams. In all, he has trained over 10,000 people in Russia, including more than 500 medical doctors, psychiatrists and psychologists.

From 2001 to 2003, he served as Chairman of Cardiovascular Health Committee and Youth Risk Behaviors Task Force for the South Coast Hospitals Group, helping design and implement science based health promotion and disease prevention initiatives.

Dan is a frequent local and national radio and television guest, and has done seminars, workshops and trainings in such diverse locations as the Open Centre in London, Aurora College in the Northwest Territories of Canada, the National Conservatory of Music in Estonia, the San Pedro Federal Penitentiary in Bolivia, the Bashkir State Medical Institute in Ufa, and at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Cancun.

In 2007 Dan co-founded Baja Bio Sana (www.bajabiosana.org). This is a 28-acre intentional community and nature reserve near Los Cabos, Mexico, where his home, office, studio, and Training Center are now situated.

For more information about Breathwork and the International Training Center: Visit www.breathmastery.com. Email danbrule@breathmastery.com.