

About Breathwork

For thousands of years, indigenous peoples have practiced ways of accessing non-ordinary states of consciousness, or NSCs (Grofs Holotropic realm) for the purpose of obtaining guidance and information not readily available in ordinary states (Grof's Hylotropic realm). In the West, we have generally acknowledged, and perhaps overemphasised, the value and reality of ordinary consciousness alone. As breathworkers, we feel that balance and wholeness is achieved through the integration of both realities. Methods used to enter NSCs have included, but are not limited to, trance induction, the practice of austerities, i.e., fasting, sensory deprivation, meditation, drumming, and various forms of breath alteration.

The form of breathwork you'll be doing has been greatly influenced by Drs. Gay and Kathlyn Hendriks and Dr. Stanislav and Christina Grof. Both models (Radiance and Holotropic) are based on a philosophy that individuals have both the capacity and the responsibility for their own healing and personal evolution, and that each of us can connect with an Inner Healer that will guide us in this process. Jerry and Ester Hicks and the teachings of Abraham suggest that following the guidance of our "Emotional Guidance System" is fundamental to our wellbeing and the ability to manifest the life we desire.

All of our experience is recorded in the body on a cellular level. The gateway into this "memory" is through the Unconscious which is easily accessed through the breath. Our history is imprinted in our bodies and these imprints influence our patterns of behavior and our experience of life. One of the things that appears to happen with accelerated, deep, full breathing is that it creates a biochemical situation in the body that allows old or new emotional and physical tensions associated with unresolved psychological and physical experience to surface. It then, can be expressed wherein the breather will feel a sense of relief at one end of the continuum and potentially move all the way to a complete resolution of the issue(s) at the other end of the scale.

Breathwork assists us in bypassing the intellect, which is somewhat overemphasised in Western culture, thereby allowing Psyche to breathe into the creative realms of unconscious material. The Ego, in collusion with consensus reality, regulates how much we will let ourselves feel and express. Dr. Hendriks writes, "When we expand beyond what is familiar and predictable, sometimes we hit an upper limit and we sabotage our progress." As we journey toward wholeness, we discover and then expand past the boundaries of our self-limiting beliefs, retrieving lost parts of ourselves; we begin to re-pattern our lives. Our primary emotional 'come from' or 'set point' determines the quality of our expression and therefore what we attract into or repel out of our lives. Breathwork helps you get in touch with the wide spectrum of possible emotional states in a safe and supporting space. By becoming more sensitive to and in touch with your emotions

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without judging them, you amplify and integrate the power, healing and guidance they offer you.

In breathwork, an authentic honest response, complete with sound, words, feelings, and movement is fully encouraged. In this way, we are liberated from unconscious constraints by "moving through" the experience, in a safe environment, rather than avoiding it. The benefits of breathwork are directly related to your commitment to experience and work with whatever material arises. As we heal ourselves we also contribute to the healing of the world, (Carl Jung's Collective Conscious).

Physical or psychological trauma causes us to hold our breath and tense our muscles which in turn cause us to disassociate from our body's needs and truths. We then travel away from our core essence, or Authentic Self. When we respond to trauma in this way, our experience is cut short of fullness and completion and we hold the fragments in our bodies. These "unexperienced experiences" create unconscious patterns of behavior that confuse us, cause us to suffer, keep us stuck in ways of being that no longer serve us and diminishes our aliveness in one way or another.

Through the breath we are able to access several "bands" of consciousness, including the perinatal (birth oriented), the biographical, and the transpersonal. Even under ideal conditions, the ordeal of birth is traumatic and trauma associated with each phase of the process tends to manifest in patterns of behavior. For example, Caesarean and breech births, or the use of anaesthesia during delivery, give rise to certain characteristics and behaviours that may manifest in adult life. Or the fact that a child was "unwanted" originally, may manifest in an adult as ambivalence about life in the form of exhaustion or mistrust.

Your facilitators use non-forceful ways of supporting your journey and you regulate the depth and pace with your breath. It is common for a new breather to feel concern that if they let go fully, they may "go crazy", hurt someone, die, never come back, or never stop crying. Our experience is that within well prepared, 'sacred space' such as the container created for a breathwork session, the psyche never offers more than the individual can handle. Spirit illuminates the path and when we allow ourselves to open, though we may be challenged by the opportunity, we are guaranteed a full and rich experience. In partnership with the body's natural wisdom, Psyche's inherent tendency is to move toward wholeness and healing; it does not attack, trick, or manipulate!

It is not uncommon for a new breather to be concerned that their material or emotional release will shock, scare or hurt the facilitators or other participants. Please know that your facilitators have worked with thousands of breathers and are prepared to safely accommodate any experience that might arise within your healing process. They are

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committed to your journey; it is the work they love and cherish. They are in service to you and invite you to take advantage of the opportunity by not shying away from your truth or experience.

Through this work one is able to 1) access and express the full pallet of human emotions and open to the guidance they offer 2) heal the past and the future and finally live in the present 3) complete incomplete energy cycles and 4) heal "stuck", or unresolved experiences thereby becoming a conscious, liberated creator in this precious present moment.

Your facilitators will provide structure and support, and agreements will be made that enable effective communication and safety. They hold deep respect for participants' defence mechanisms as well as their life affirming, healing processes. The primary role of the facilitator is to support and nurture the breather as they do their inner work, and to serve as compassionate witness for both contractions and expansions.

The Hendriks write of the analogy of turning on an old faucet. At first the water is rusty and even though it would soon clear, we often see the initial dirty water and turn off the faucet! When we choose to let the water flow, its clarity promises the sweetness of self-love and a deepening compassion for others.

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