

Chapter Two

SPECIALIZED BREATHING

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Detailed, how-to procedures on a specialized 3-part breathing technique involving (a) the complete breath, (b) unilateral forced alternate nostril breathing and (c) rhythmic-timed breathing.
- This breathing technique decreases stress, anxieties, heart rate, blood pressure. It can also decrease the incidence of cancer and slow down the rapid aging process. It maintains youthfulness and increases longevity.

The specialized breathing technique.

In 1994, I conducted a research study (which is now published and available to the public) using a specialized three-part breathing technique which investigated the effect of specialized breathing on human health. This study measured subjects' heart rate, blood pressure, skin conductance response (SCR), muscle tension (EMG), and finger temperature (before and after the two week specialized breathing sessions). It was found that healing mind/body changes occurred as a result of using this breathing technique. These changes were all in a health-producing and stress-reducing direction.

The breathing technique consisted of three parts: (a) The complete breath: (upper) thoracic, mid, and *diaphragmatic* breathing, together with (b) unilateral alternate forced nostril breathing (channel cleansing), and (c) rhythmic breathing (timed inhalations and exhalations)—*all done with focused attention*. **Diaphragmatic breathing is extremely important** because the diaphragm is the principal muscle for respiration and provides for the movement of more than two-thirds of the air that enters the lungs. **Diaphragmatic breathing also assists in the flow of lymph fluid along the lymphatic ducts and lymph nodules.** This is particularly important for maintaining a healthy immune system. **(This is why the wearing of tight clothes, girdles etc. is not a good idea, as it prevents proper diaphragmatic breathing.**

In this new meditative intonation research with the pineal gland and melatonin, this specialized breathing technique was used, but the (b) unilateral alternate forced nostril breathing portion was left out. Proper breathing is critical to good health and to ensuring the correct functioning of our nervous, endocrine, immune, bioelectric and cellular systems. The following is a summary of the essential points from my previous publication on the psychological, physiological and spiritual aspects of breathing.

The oriental/mystical view:

In Eastern philosophy and Western mysticism, the breath and proper breathing have always been considered to be of considerable importance to life and to a person's mind-body and

spiritual well-being. One scientist stated that "breathing therapy is one of the most effective health maintenance techniques that the orient has ever produced." Moreover, in addition to basic important physiological functions, breathing circulates "Ki" throughout the body. This energy stimulates and balances the activity of the parasympathetic (PNS) and sympathetic nervous systems (SNS). These systems regulate the activity of the glands and organs in the body (see Table E in section B).

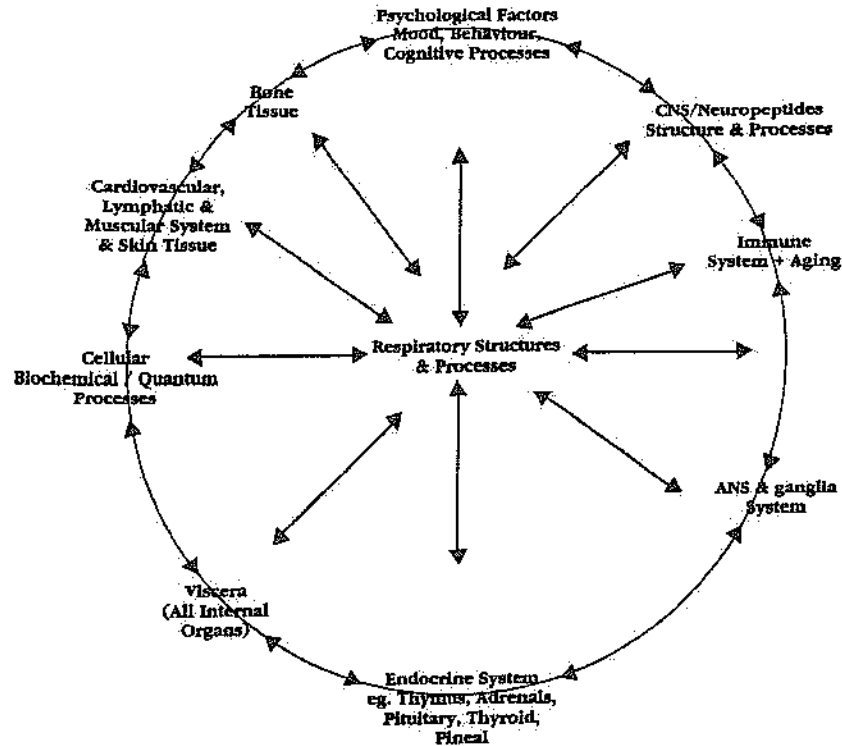


Figure 2. *There are intricate networks, inter-relationships and interactions among the respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular systems, CNS, ANS, immune, and endocrine systems. (Author's model.)*

In particular, it is important to concentrate this "Ki" in the solar plexus. Another researcher found that abdominal breathing (rather than thoracic or chest breathing) with long expiration, is the preferred technique for favourable psychosomatic adjustment and the development of higher states of consciousness. He discussed the importance of proper breathing as it relates to meditation, "Ki" circulation, and peak experiences. Iyengar, one of the foremost authorities on Yoga, taught that not only is the yogic science of breath (Pranayama) exalted knowledge, but specialized breathing techniques also arouse the Kundalini (a concentration of bio-energy at the base of the spine), **and the proper activation and control of this energy enhances spiritual development.** Furthermore, he claims that inhalation is the act of receiving the primeval cosmic energy in the form of breath. In inhalation, one attempts to transform both the Central Nervous System (CNS) and the Autonomic Nervous Systems (ANS) into receiving and distributing centers for Prana, causing this Ki energy or vital life force to permeate and suffuse all cells of our body.

Other researchers found that in addition to basic physiological functions, certain breathing techniques can serve as a powerful instrument for inducing higher states of consciousness, and for minimizing cardiovascular and anxiety problems. **It was proposed that specialized breathing is a direct starting point for control of the ANS and CNS, mind, for chakra stimulation and for spiritual evolution.**

Mystical doctrine has always believed that the breath, health and spirituality are related. The Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC)²⁹¹ teaches that the vital life force (VLF) which accompanies each breath is the positive A polarity of a cell, while nutritive products are the negative B polarity, **and that all disease begins with an imbalance between these two polarities.** They propose that healing and health can be re-established by balancing the polarities through proper breathing and nourishment (see Figure 3).

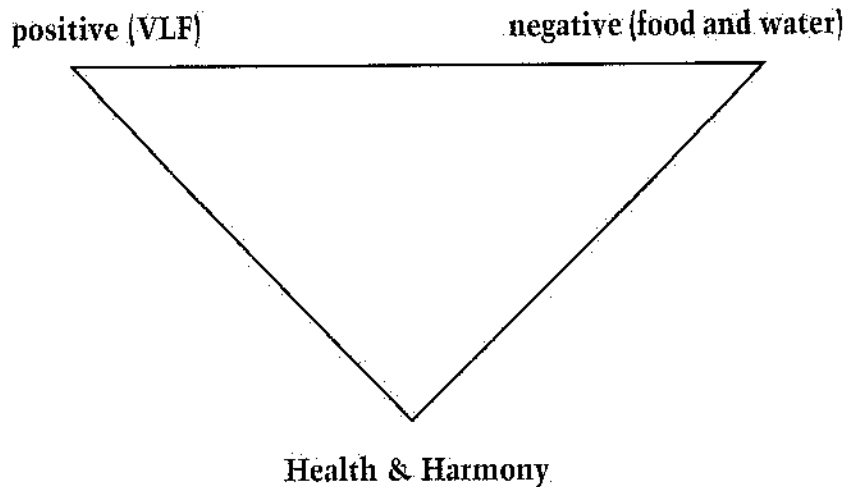


Figure 3. *The combination of the breath (VLF, prana, ki) and nutrition in correct ratios engenders the third completed point of health and harmonium in a cell, organ and body.*

It is interesting to note that this esoteric principle has always been a fundamental and important part of certain philosophies and mysticism. Moreover, it was used extensively by some members of the Scientific Royal Society and the Renaissance mystics over the centuries.

The energy field perspective:

Wirkus, a psychic healer, has used a specialized breathing technique with imagery to focus on the solar plexus and etheric field (aura) for healing purposes. Mystics claim that specialized breathing can positively stimulate a person's chakras or psychic centres and assist in health, healing, and in evolving our consciousness.

Some scientists claim that *the human body is actually an electromagnetic field, and that certain diseases are caused by chakra dysfunction and lack of resonance in one's bioelectric field or aura*. They too propose that proper breathing can be an important therapy for correcting chakra and energy field imbalances and for re-establishing cellular resonance, overall good health and well being.

The mind-body perspective:

Considerable research provides evidence that stress *negatively* affects your health, psychophysiology, central nervous system (CNS), Autonomic nervous system (ANS), the immune and endocrine systems.

Proper specialized breathing has now been medically proven to cause health-producing effects in the following manner: [see fig. 4].

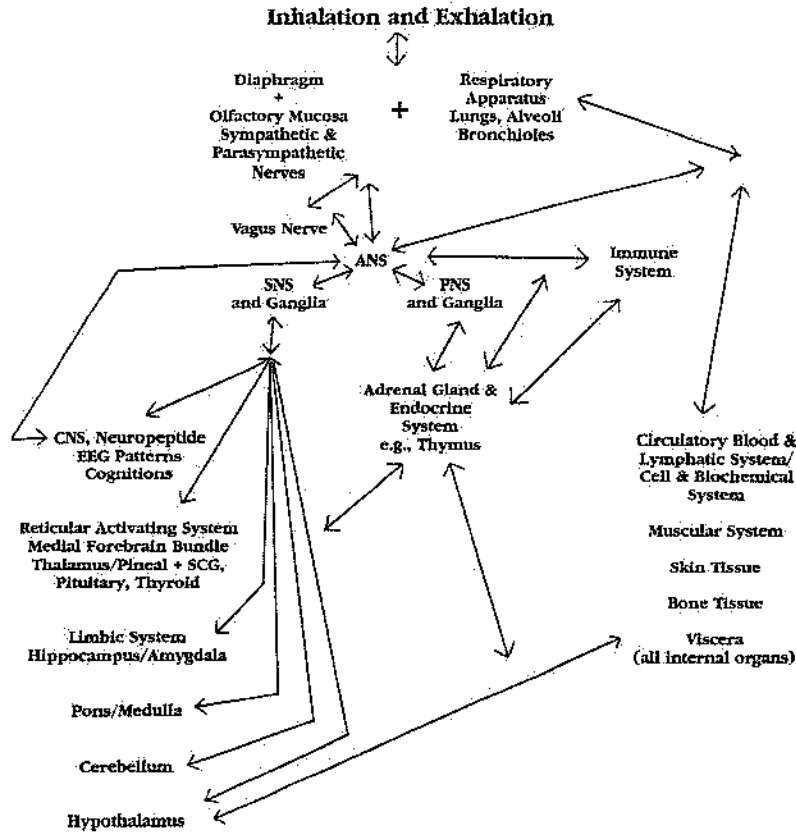


Figure 4 Proper breathing stimulates the olfactory mucosa and apparatus which stimulates and interacts with all structures shown in the diagram. Full treatment breathing profoundly influences the entire CNS, ANS, important ganglia eg., Superior cervical ganglion (SCG), immune, endocrine, cardiovascular, and muscular systems. Quite important are the SCG influences on the pineal, pituitary and hypothalamus, and the SCG is in turn influenced by the ANS which is influenced by the breathing through a vast system of nerves, neuropeptides, hormones, and enzymes. (Author's model.)

- It significantly decreases stress and anxiety levels.
- It decreases heart rate, blood pressure, and skin conductance (a measure of anxiety) levels.
- It decreases muscle tension and increases relaxation.
- It improves mood, and decreases the risk of psychological depression.
- It positively stimulates the brain-immune-hormonal systems and causes an increase in Natural Killer (NK) cell activity; these cells kill cancer cells.
- It increases our brain's endorphin and enkephalin levels—for better moods and improved thinking ie: we become more alert and creative.
- **It is extremely useful in the treatment of panic attacks, anxiety, hyperventilation, asthma, and idiopathic epilepsy^{105,106,107}.**
- Diaphragmatic breathing can rapidly warm our hands and finger tips by improving overall blood circulation. It is a known excellent treatment for migraines.
- It decreases your autonomic arousal and reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases.
- It stimulates the left and right hemispheres causing (EEG) brain wave changes.
- It positively influences certain brain and nerve centres: amygdala (for emotions), hippocampus (for memory and states of consciousness) and the medulla oblongata (for controlling heart rate, blood pressure, and respiratory rate). It also positively influences our autonomic nervous system (ANS) which controls the activities of all the organs and glands in our body. The ANS is made up of the parasympathetic nervous systems (PNS) for relaxation and the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) for activation. See again Table D, Section B.
- At the cellular level, proper breathing maintains correct acidity and alkalinity of the blood. It ensures that all cells get oxygen. In fact, correct levels of cellular oxygen are now known to play a protective role against cancer. Some studies have suggested that *“hypoxia (insufficient oxygen)— caused by shallow and improper breathing may play a role in predisposing cells to neoplastic diseases, ie. cancer.*

- It plays a very important role in **increasing longevity**.

One researcher²⁴² has provided some excellent scientific data which indicated that *respiratory functions*, especially a person's vital capacity and tidal volume, **dramatically decrease with increasing age**, and we have already noted the decrease in cell energy production capabilities with increasing age. He stated that "by way of example using the average figure for eighteen to twenty-year-old men as an index of 100, vital capacity [VC] per square meter of lung surface was found to decline to 70% for ages 56 to 60 and to 56% for ages 75 to 80. This is **evidence for considerably poorer breathing capabilities with increasing age**. It is therefore most important for middle aged to older people to master these breathing techniques which are necessary for maintaining optimal respiratory capacity and health and longevity for as long as possible.

I am suggesting that this full treatment three-part breathing technique described in this chapter should be used to ensure good emotional and psychophysiological health. To improve performance and to minimize the possibility of disease, and to substantially **increase one's longevity and youthfulness**. Even more importantly, it is now known that "over 50% of all cancers occur in those who are over 65." It is generally well accepted that *increasing age is the single greatest risk factor for cancer development*. We have already noted the relationship between poor oxygen supply conditions, eg. poor breathing and increased cancer risk. The Nobel prize winner Szent-Gyorgi has further confirmed a link between impoverished (poor) oxygen conditions at the cellular level and cancer. Taken together, these factors suggest that **this specialized breathing technique could both slow down the aging process, improve all cellular activities and decrease the incidence of cancer in humans**.

The 10 Minute Breathing Techniques You Should Use Daily:

NB: Please confirm with your physician that it is fine for you to engage in this procedure.

The specialized three-part breathing (A, B, & C types).
(3 minutes per part).

You should perform this series of breathing exercises while sitting comfortably or lying down with loose clothing. The exercises should cause you to feel more relaxed or cause you to doze away in reverie. Should you feel dizzy or uncomfortable at anytime during these breathing exercises, please stop immediately, and revert to your regular breathing style. You should do this breathing (A, B & C) twice per day, (preferably around 6:00 - 6:15 am and 10:00 - 10:15 pm). Always inhale through the nose and exhale through the nose. **Proper breathing** is not only a physical process but involves a focused attention on the breath and proper imagery. During the breathing exercise, observe any distracting thoughts, and gently redirect your awareness to the breathing process. Feel and visualize each breath flowing in and out, as though the air you inhale has a special **magnetic** energy which stimulates each and every cell of your body. Imagine each breath (inhalation) causing a special energy to travel along up, and through the spine from the coccyx (lowest back region) to your brain, then focus it a while at the solar plexus, then, to all internal organs and muscles in your body. Your breaths must be deep during inhalation and exhalation, slow, and rhythmic for each of the three breathing exercises you will be doing.

The first type of breathing will be:

(A) The complete breath. For this exercise you must do the following: breathe slowly down your abdomen, then to your midribs, and then to the upper part of your chest. Begin by placing one hand on your abdomen and the other on your chest to feel the expansion and contraction of the torso which accompanies the breathing. Breathe down to your belly through the nose so that it rolls down and out, and the air fills it as it does a balloon. Now let the midribs swing out and up a bit, filling the mid lungs with air. Now let the upper chest expand. **Hold it for a mental 6 count.** Now exhale, reversing this process—contracting first from the upper chest, then from the midribs, and then from the belly. **Stay out of air for a mental 6 count.** Then continue, letting all three parts of your body become one smooth-flowing unit as you breathe in and out. Do this type of deep abdominal breathing for 3 minutes. Lengthen the exhalation as compared with the inhalation so that you

breathe out all the stale air held in your lungs. The breathing is long, smooth, slower and even. Now you will perform two more breathing exercises *incorporating the complete breath*.

(B) Alternate unilateral forced nostril breathing—also called channel cleansing. Place the right thumb over the right nostril, closing off the right nostril, and breathe slowly and deeply through the left nostril in and out. Reach out for the air with your lungs. Imagine that, on the inhalation, you are ***breathing in a silvery light*** from the nose to the base of your spine. ***Envision this light as moving out*** of the body on each exhalation, carrying with it all tension. If you are distracted by thoughts, just notice them, and then gently shift your attention back to this breathing. Exhale tension and distracting thoughts, inhale relaxation (one minute). Now inhale deeply, imagining a coolness or light at the forehead. Exhale (20 seconds). Let the warm pleasant or tingling feeling of the breath spread and expand as tension is flowing out of your body. The mind is clear and serene.

Now reverse sides. Place your left thumb over your left nostril and begin the complete breath through your right nostril (one minute). You can think of breathing through the left side as activating your calming, right side of the brain and breathing through the right side as activating and energizing your left side of the brain.

You want to balance the activities in these two sides. Allow your thoughts to occur without resistance, since trying to discourage thought intensifies the difficulty. Merely observe your thoughts and if distracted, return to breathing **in** relaxation and breathing **out** tension. Breathe in, feeling an influx of energy and fancying that this energy is a light before you, shining on your forehead. With every breath, this light grows stronger and stronger. ***Manoeuvre the exhalations to be longer than the inhalations.*** Pause. Now inhale deeply. ***Hold (20 seconds).*** Exhale gently. Relax totally. Feel that you are relaxing more than you have ever relaxed before. Just envision yourself sinking into a couch. The mind is clear and calm, without a ripple, like a still mountain lake. Let the sensation of relaxation spread throughout the body more and more. Every

cell and pore is becoming more and more relaxed. This exercise should last for about 3 minutes with at least 3 inhalations and exhalations for each nostril side.

(C) The third breathing exercise. Finally, you will inhale a full breath deeply and mentally count to six while doing so. Then **hold** for a mental twelve count while visualizing all the oxygen and electromagnetic energy flowing through each and every cell, nerves, blood vessels of the body, beginning from the toes in each leg, then the trunk along the spinal cord, organs, fore limbs, and hands, and work your way up to the skull and brain. Then fully exhale *slowly* with a twelve count; stay without air for a six count and repeat the process again. Total time should be three minutes for at least three cycles.

Note that while retaining the breath for a twelve count you may be able to work up from the toes to thighs of the left side only, but in the *next* retained inhalation you may do the other side, then on the third inhalation, do the part from the ground to your waist etc., and with each retained inhalation you can continue to work your way up. Then after you have completed 9 minutes of specialized breathing you may continue to lie down for another 1-2 minutes, and revert to your regular type of breathing. During the day, however, continue to be conscious of the breath, and try to inhale and exhale more slowly and deeply.