

Breathing Into The Now

by Judith Kravitz

In this modern era, it is becoming increasingly important to find our innate peace and joy. As the hubbub and rat race of human competition and modern technology takes its toll on our human psyche, many have found it difficult to find any sense of harmony or balance, let alone reach expanded states of awareness.

Fortunately, reaching higher, more enlightened states of consciousness is now a realistic and attainable goal. There are beings on this planet who are fully conscious, guiding us and showing us the ways and means of taking that evolutionary step from human to spiritual perception. Throughout the ages, spiritual teachers have realized the value of expanding our awareness beyond the mind and ego as the key element in attaining this shift.

In his best-selling book, *The Power of Now*, Eckhart Tolle emphasizes over and over again the importance of stopping the mind to enable us to reach those higher states. He declares, "The way to Being is beyond mind and obtainable only when the mind is still."

Byron Katie, a most honored and respected visionary and author of *All War Belongs on Paper* and *Loving What Is*, insists it is our mental "story" that keeps us from finding peace. Through a process she developed called "The Work," she shows how to effectively move beyond thoughts by examining and inquiring into them. This process has proven to be a precise tool to examine and play with our thoughts to release the mind from limiting beliefs.

You might ask, what does any of this have to do with breathing? Breathing is the greatest tool we have to assist us in mastering our minds and resolving unpleasant emotions, past and present. Frequently, it is not enough merely to *understand* what needs to be done-somehow we must learn to *embody* it and *live* it. For example, it is fairly clear that when we detach from and transcend the ego mind, we find peace and joyful, harmonious states.

But how do we stop the constant chatter and mental tapes that rule our minds? How do we move through and heal the feelings that can overcome us at the drop of a pin?

Mr. Tolle in his book has wonderful insights as to how the mind and emotions keep us in limitation and bondage. He gives mental exercises to deal with these states. However, this process of examining our thoughts still utilizes the mind to reveal them, thus keeping us in our mind.

There are times we may need a powerful assist to take us from the tumultuous throes of the human mental condition, which in turn produces layers upon layers of unfelt and unresolved emotions. This continues to produce never-ending cycles of strongly rooted mental tapes and suppressed emotions-what Tolle refers to as our "pain body". Certainly, when we find ourselves in an uncontrollable mental process or our emotional pain body, we may not be able to shift our state by observing it, questioning it, or talking it down. However, through specific breathing techniques, we can quiet our "uncontrollable" mind, clear activated emotions, and uncover our innate peace and joy.

With Transformational Breath® we introduce you to your most powerful healing tool-your own breath! We show you how you can use conscious breathing not only to quiet your mind and liberate yourself from unpleasant emotional states, but also to heal and integrate all areas of your life into a joyous, fulfilling experience.

Breath is the connecting link between our mind and body, and the key to opening the doorway to our mystical [spiritual] nature. Our open, full breathing brings these parts together to work in harmony and balance. We will show you how to utilize that link so you can fully enjoy and express the blending of these aspects of your nature.

The key to a healthy body lies in the oxygenation of its cells; yet this process will not happen unless you are breathing fully, utilizing the whole respiratory system in a relaxed way. Most people use only a small amount of that capacity and therefore limit their health and energy levels greatly.



Through Transformational Breath® we help you diagnose your own unique breathing pattern, give you insights as to what those patterns represent in your life and expression, and describe new areas awakened by improved breathing.

As we help you adjust and open your breathing, you begin to regain all the cellular and energetic benefits full breathing has to offer. Your breathing is the vehicle to enter the joyous NOW. We give you

ways to cruise along with your breath and park at those enlightened spaces between thoughts. We show you how breathing stimulates the release of endorphins, neuropeptides, and other beneficial chemicals into the bloodstream to create blissful and euphoric states, unencumbered by expensive costs and negative side effects. In the days to come, breathing will be known as the fast-track method to enlightenment, health, and peace. Already we are seeing hyperbaric oxygen chambers, ozone therapy, and hydrogen peroxide for the effective oxygen treatment of diseases. Oxygen bars where people buy and drink oxygen for the latest "high" are becoming popular, especially in cities where the quality of oxygen is compromised.

We prepare you for the important self-discovery of finding the true deeper Presence of who you are-through the journey of your own breath! How ironic that the most powerful, positive tool we can use to gain our own mastery and enlightened states has been within us all along. Our own breath! Simple, free, accessible, self-empowering, it is literally right under our noses!

For eons we have looked for the Kingdom of Heaven outside ourselves, exploring everything, searching the entire globe and even space to find the pieces that would lead us to the awareness of our wholeness and feelings of joy and well-being. Where else would a playful and benevolent Creator keep the key to these expanded states except within each one of us, in life and breath itself?

How could simple ol' breathing take us across the threshold of human consciousness, lead us to the greatest awareness of life and self, and fill us with more abundant life energy? You may rightfully wonder!

There are many concrete explanations for these amazing results with breathing-physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual-and we explore them in this book...(Joy For Life! The Journey of Transformational Breath) As you begin to discover and play with your breath in a new way, you will feel internal changes take place, such as feelings of lightness and peace, thereby causing significant outer changes as well. A new breath could mean a new life!

Let's begin with now. How are you breathing right now? Let's check it out.... As much as possible, continue breathing as you were before you shifted your awareness. Place your hands on your abdomen. Does it rise as you inhale? Now place your hands on your chest. Does it expand as you breathe in? Notice what happens to your mid-section. Is it tight and contracted, or does it fill up like a balloon?

Now as you take another breath, shift your awareness to your exhalation. What happens as you breathe out? Do you release it all at once, or do you blow it out? Perhaps you let it out in slow, small, controlled increments, or maybe your breath just drops out with no effort or control. Do you notice any pauses during or between breaths?

Now do this exercise again, purposely taking in full, deep breaths. What do you feel or notice this time? Does the breath move in and out as it did before, or has it changed? Where does the breath pause now? There are no "correct" answers to these questions. Each of us has our own unique way of breathing. Simply feeling and noticing our breath are important first steps.

This exercise may be the first time you have really ever paid attention to your own breathing and how and where it flows. How strange it seems that the most important function for keeping us alive and healthy is so grossly neglected in our education. We are never taught the importance of proper breathing or the profound physical, emotional, mental, and, ultimately, spiritual benefits that lie within the mastery of our own breathing.

The good news is, we do not have to beat ourselves up for our past ignorance and breathing failures, for right now we can quickly change our restricted breathing patterns and experience the many benefits that lie in breathing deeply and experiencing Joy for life and living fully present in the Now.

Breathing Now

Sit or lie on your back in a comfortable position. As fully as possible, become aware of yourself within the present moment. Let each breath you take be your entire focus. Pay attention to how it feels and how you can direct and free your breathing.

Now take three deep breaths. Hold each one for a count of ten (or as long as you can); then allow it to release and drop from your chest quickly and easily. Good. Next, take three more deep

breaths, this time placing your hands on your lower belly. Begin each breath in the lowest part of your respiratory system, so that your belly and abdomen rise and expand as you inhale. Again hold the breath in for a count of ten, feeling the expansion in your lower belly. Then feel it drop and "deflate" into a soft, flattened ball as you let your breath go.

Now take three more deep breaths, and exhale immediately in the same relaxed manner (do not hold your breath); then go right into the next in-breath and our-breath without pausing. Look inside and pay attention to how you feel as you continue to breathe. Repeat this breathing pattern for twenty or more breaths.

What has happened to your mind? Were you thinking during breathing exercise?

Chances are, you weren't. The movement of energy caused by the breathing and your awareness of your breath more than likely pulled you out of the normal continuous flow of thoughts. If you did continue thinking, do the breathing exercises again, until you notice a change in your internal state. How did it feel to be free of your thoughts for a while? How would you like to feel that way on consistent basis? You can, and your breath is the key to that state.

We are just beginning a breathing journey that can free you from the bondage of limited ego-mind. This in turn allows you to experience greater streams of peace that lie in the spaces between your thoughts and brings you to a place of fulfillment, peace, and joy in life.