

## Recommendations for working with Transformational Breath during COVID-19 conditions

In addition to the advice issued by the International Breath Foundation (IBF) recently, the Transformational Breath Foundation (TBF) wishes to issue a set of recommendations on how to deploy the re-opening of Transformational Breath in person accessibility as countries are opening after lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition to this document, we refer to the advice issued by the IBF. Please read it, as it contains important background information.

It is paramount that priority is given to the principle of 'no harm'. This means, that the safety of our clients must have the highest priority in everything we do, where the priority lies in not bringing harm to any of our clients through our actions.

### Positioning of Transformational Breath sessions

Although it may feel logical to place our work under the profession of therapists, there is a very big difference between open mouth diaphragmatic breathing and other therapies, where deep breathing is not a part of the technique, such as massage therapy, osteopathy, etc.

The increased emissions of virus particles by open mouth breathing and toning creates a high viral load in enclosed spaces and poses a great risk of infection to everyone present, as minute virus particles continue to float in the air for hours. This cannot be cleared by cleaning surface areas.

Remember: the higher the viral load, the higher the risk of being infected.

Our work with Transformational Breath is therefore best positioned between the professions of sports (where people breathe heavily) and singing (where the uses of voice creates greater propulsion of viral particles, much further than with normal speech).

We therefore recommend to follow the guidance of your country pertaining to sport schools and/or singers with each phase of re-opening your community.

### Timeframe of these recommendations

These recommendations remain in effect either until the situation with COVID-19 changes towards a treatable or preventable disease, or until new recommendations are issued by TBF.

## Recommendations

### Individual sessions

The safest way to prevent infection and spread of COVID-19 is not to work in-person with your clients and to only offer online sessions. Should you, however, choose to work in-person with your clients in individual sessions, please follow the following guidelines:

1. TBF recommends not to work in-person AT ALL with clients with conditions impairing the immune system (such as, but not limited to: cancer, auto-immune diseases, people receiving chemotherapy or other medication which depress the immune system like high doses of systemic corticosteroids, etc.) or clients in the vulnerable

groups. These clients should only be supported through online Transformational Breath sessions.

In-person work with these clients should only return to normal once your local government indicates it is safe for these groups to participate fully in society.

2. For all other non-immune compromised or vulnerable clients, TBF recommends to follow your local governments' regulations relevant to sports and/or singers and follow the guidelines for hygiene and social distancing relevant to these professions.
3. In addition to point 2., follow the hygiene guidelines for individual therapists. These guidelines are generally issued by the professional therapist associations. Make sure to work together with your colleagues to secure these guidelines if you are not a member of an association. Guidelines should include items such as:
  - Guidelines on COVID-19 testing for you as a therapist and your clients.
  - A questionnaire before the client comes to check for COVID-19 symptoms or contact with someone with COVID-19, travels abroad, etc.
  - Guidance on how to clean your practice and everything that has been touched by the client before and after the session.
  - Hygienic rules and protective gear for yourself as a therapist.
  - Liability release forms for clients and staff to sign

#### Additional hygienic guidelines specifically for TBr sessions

1. When your local government is providing COVID-19 tests, the preference is to have your clients be tested in accordance to the local guidance. Do not work in person with clients who have a positive test result. You can work online with them, if their condition allows. Be aware that a negative test is only 70% accurate. You will need to conform to the hygienic rules even when there is a recent negative test.
2. Do not touch your client unnecessarily. Refrain from holding and hugging the client unless strictly necessary.
3. When working in close proximity with your client, at least wear a professional face mask (covering both nose and mouth). A cloth mask is not effective. **DO NOT TOUCH** the mask once you have put it on. If you touch it inadvertently, make sure you disinfect the body parts (except your face) which touched the mask immediately. Do not touch anything else until you do!
4. Working indoors is not permitted until local government has permitted sports (such as yoga schools, group sports and gyms) and singers to work inside. Working outdoors under the above protective conditions is possible. In general, working outside is thought to pose much less risk than working inside.
5. Have your client breathe through the nose as much as possible. Turn your client on the belly when belly breathing is proving to be difficult.
6. Make sure you have a garbage bag handy before and during the session. Throw all used tissues directly into this bag. Do not have them touch any other surface before they go into the bag. Tie up the bag airtight and throw away directly after the session is over. Do not touch the content once it has gone into the bag.
7. Make sure to face away from your client when demonstrating toning. Do not do this indoors.
8. At all times, have your client tone into a folded towel or any other thick cloth which can be washed at 60 degrees Celsius/ 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Do not use a pillow, as

these cannot be cleaned properly. Make sure only your client touches this towel. Make sure all surfaces this towel has touched is thoroughly disinfected after the session. This means you need to be diligent on where it goes after the toning. After the session, have the client throw the towel or cloth straight into a plastic bag, together with all the other washable items the client has touched (pillow cases, sheets, blankets, etc.). Tie up the bag airtight and only open it to dump the contents straight into a washing machine. Do not touch the contents. Wash the contents at 60 degrees Celsius/140 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 30 minutes. If you cannot wash it at 60/140 degrees C/F, wash it for more than 30 minutes at 40°C/100°F and use a heated dryer program to dry the laundry.

Use a new towel with every client for each session.

9. Clean and disinfect all other surfaces you or the client have touched throughout their visit with you (mats, chairs, door handles, light switches, toilet, etc).
10. Wrap used mouth pieces in a plastic bag after it has been used and close it until you can get it cleaned. Boil the mouth piece (without the bag) for 20 minutes or wash in the dishwasher at 60°C/140°F. Wash and disinfect your hands after touching the mouth piece. If at all possible, gift the mouth piece to your client to bring along for each session.
11. Think to clean your hands before touching your music device during the session. Disinfect your music device after the session.

### Working with groups

1. Once your local government has approved working with groups for sport schools (such as yoga schools, group sports and gyms) and/or singers, follow the specific guidance for these two professions, as well as local guidance for individual therapy sessions. This may mean that you will need to breathe your groups outside for a while, until indoors sports activities and singing with groups are allowed. Obviously, this would mean you need to cancel your group if the weather is not favorable.
2. In addition, follow the [Additional hygienic guidelines specifically for TBr sessions](#)
3. All regulations and guidance for the therapist in the individual session section above and local regulations apply to all staff members, including the trainer or senior trainer.

This document was created in consultation with Dr. Nadja Benschop, TBF Medical Liaison. We are so grateful to have her as a Breath Family resource to advise and answer medical questions.