

Positive Breathing

Liberating Repressed Emotional Energy with Transformational Breath®

by [P.J.S. Dougherty](#), health writer

Ours is an emotionally congested society. Rather than processing the extremes of negative emotions such as anger, sorrow and frustration, many instead deny their feelings. While innumerable vices and avoidance behaviors are widely used to dull the pain, there is a far more insidious method of avoiding emotions: the way we breathe.

"Breathing is the best way for people to disconnect from their feelings," explained Lorna Tobin, a Facilitator of Transformational Breath, a practice of conscious, connected, super-oxygenating breathing that works to liberate repressed negative emotions. By holding the breath and breathing shallowly—common respiratory patterns of the stressed-out masses—Tobin asserts that emotions are stored deep in the body as negative energies.

"When you don't allow yourself to feel emotions, you hold on to them," continued Tobin, who leads breathing workshops at Wild by Nature stores in Hampton Bays and Setauket and the Ross School in the Hamptons. "You start thinking about negative emotions over and over again ... when these emotional energies are held in the physical body, they become dense, and they manifest as disease."

Instead of venting anger at a boss or loved one, for example, many will repress the emotion and play it on a mental loop, breathing more and more shallowly with each replay. At best, these stored emotional energies might manifest as tension knots in the neck and back; at worst, the negativity accumulated over years might become linked with the onset of more serious disease associated with chronic stress.

An energy medicine modality, Transformational Breath uses the high vibrational frequency of oxygen to shake negative vibes loose from the cells, so they can be released through exhalation. Freed of psychological bonds, respiration then opens up, cellular oxygenation is restored, and profound physical, emotional and spiritual benefits follow.

In terms of physical healing, Transformational Breath's scope is vast—in addition to its elusive spiritual and emotional benefits, it is used therapeutically for chronic fatigue, detoxification, asthma, allergies, panic attacks, addictions and depression, to name a few disorders. Since oxygen deficiency is associated with illness, Transformational Breath's super-oxygenating activity also holds promise as a preventive measure against disease.

The Session

After an in-depth consultation during which Tobin spoke openly of how Transformational Breath empowered her to overcome personal emotional struggles and achieve true health, it was time for me to experience a session. After a brisk aerobic warm up, I settled in to the pillows-and-blankets recliner Tobin had carefully arranged on the floor during the consultation. I began to breathe.

The core transformational work involves breathing through a wide-open mouth, which brings in a greater volume of oxygen. The active, up-tempo breaths are conscious and connected, with no pauses between inhale and exhale. "You want to create an energy current; have a continuous flow," explained Tobin. "Your inhale represents the good you allow yourself in life; the exhale represents what you do with negativity." Tobin coached me to inhale with enthusiasm, welcoming the good, and let go of the negative energies through my exhale.

The repetitious breathing was surprisingly challenging, but its benefits were immediately palpable. I sank into deep relaxation. For several minutes I simply breathed, heeding Tobin's soft-spoken instruction. I occasionally felt her touch on my jaw, reminding me to open my mouth wide, or on my abdomen, reminding me to breathe from my diaphragm. Throughout, Tobin spoke affirmations, encouraging me through the increasingly challenging exercises. As I sank deeper I heard the rattle of beads and felt Tobin anoint my temples with lavender essential oil. We drifted from the physical realm to the outer reaches. My body tingled with energy at Tobin's gentle touch.

Tobin next coached me on to "vocalization," in which exhalation was accompanied with sound. With this exercise, the session intensified—physically, my body was straining, but mentally, the struggle was even greater—though I was noticeably "lighter" after completing each exhalation. The negative energies were moving out. I quietly realized that I was in the midst of a childhood regression, having last vocalized in this manner when I was an infant in my crib.

"It's OK to cry," Tobin suddenly murmured. I fought back a grin, and tried to bring my focus back to the breathing exercises. Besides the fact that boys don't cry, I was only doing research; not seeking any deep epiphanies.

Minutes later, tears were streaming down my face. One deep breath had caught me by surprise, blindsiding me with unexpected emotion. "I can tell all about someone's personality just by how they breathe," Tobin had hinted earlier. She had read my breathing perfectly, accurately predicting my release. I found myself in the midst of an emotional dam burst—finally processing feelings that had likely been stuffed down and ignored for years, fermenting as unhealthy negative energy.

The session quietly concluded. Soft music played in the background, accompanied by the rhythmic crashing of waves on a beach. In my mind's eye, the lapping ocean waves advanced and receded, beautifully matching my own breath's coming and going. As I lay basking in the afterglow of my emotional outpouring, epiphanies washed over me like so many crashing waves.

Having purged my negative emotions, I now floated in blissful serenity, musing upon life's beauty. Breathing is life, and yet now I recognized how disconnected I had become from both breathing and life. For someone who is dying, each breath is precious, well worth even the most arduous struggle. But for the living, all too often distracted with the world's petty nonsense, breathing is often ignored.

I rose, vowing to not wait until my deathbed to value each breath. I inhaled deeply, tasting life's sweetness. After one short introductory session, I had already experienced the mysterious healing power of Transformational Breath. The transformation had begun.