

Respiration Consciente n°6.

Rubrique Articles : "Rebirthing, Respiration Consciente".

Version anglaise de l'article des pages 12 à 14.

Hello Bô !

Thank you so much for your contribution to our next issue "Respiration Consciente" which will be sent in March. However, to precise certain points, we would like to ask you a few more questions.

One of the important things you speak about is the notion of « containment ». You explain it this way : "So containment means that you are still aware of what is going on and can be with it without overwhelm. This is done best with Conscious Breathing, using the diaphragm instead of the intercostals muscles, in a controlled way". You present this as essential. Would you please accept to develop a bit more about this and give samples ?

- The ancient yogis have always focused on controlling breath. They say it is **essential** for you to control your breath if you want control over your life. However, one who can never lose control can never release any psychophysical tensions from past and then has to contain those. So even if control by using diaphragm breathing does not mean suppression and tension, it takes some energy to do it. So Rebirthing Breathwork added a psychodynamic dimension to the breathwork history and it was a great demand for that in the western world in a post-freudian time.

Like psychoanalysis it was made in a therapeutical setting with a client lying down and a guide sitting by the side, offering a psycho-emotional container during the session. Freud was freeing the mind using free associations, rebirthers was freeing the breath and thus took the personal process to a much deeper level. So nowadays everybody can benefit from the experience that sometimes it is safe to totally let go of control, to trust and experience that nothing bad is happening. That is really building a new relationship to life itself.

But here comes the Rebirther dilemma ---. We rebirthers have all experienced the greatness in letting go and allowing life to flow free. We do not want to control any more. We want to stay sensitive and alive. But practically speaking it is **essential** to realize that it's not always safe to be without control in any situation. I think anybody can imagine many of these situations. So how do I solve this as a rebirther ? Do I stay away from people that I do not consider clean enough ? Do I start to analyse my mind on what I might be thinking wrong since I ended up feeling uneasy ? Do I have to avoid any situation that causes my body to contract or do I give up my illusion that it is possible to live with an open energy and go back to suppression and denial ? The solution is the art of containment.

By learning containment you do not need to avoid people, places and situations. By slowing down and deepening your breath into the lower part of the body you will get a healthy distance to your emotions in stressful situations, staying fully aware without suppression and denial. So Rebirthing Breathwork added a powerful dimension to breathwork history but it did not make all earlier and later breathwork-techniques obsolete. That is really *essential* for Rebirthers to realize.

You also speak of "guided breathing meditation around the five elements" and "vitality breathing". We do not know this kinds of breathing. Could you explain what these two kinds of breathing are ?

- The « five elements breathing meditation » is from the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition. It takes about an hour and is divided into five parts. One for each element ;- earth, water, fire, air and ether(time/space). Each element has a certain breathing characteristic, in and out through mouth, in mouth out nose, in nose out mouth, etc. While breathing in the characteristic way of one element you also meditate on it's quality and what it can do for your personal process. Water washes your aura, fire can burn any impurities from your heart, etc. The elements are the basic necessities for life, at least on this planet, and the breathing meditation is about forming a conscious relationship to them and to direct the energy generated by your breath with your mind in a consciously cleansing way.

Vitality Breathing is a very old way to raise the level of oxygen intake from the air and to enhance your immune system. Start with taking a few deep breaths. Then rest your breathing after the last exhale when there is no more air in the lungs. Do not hold your breath. Put a hand on your stomach to notice if you start to hold any muscles. Wait until you can't rest it any longer. Then take a slow and long breath and breathe normally for a while. Repeat the exercise several times and try to prolong the resting time with your mind only and no muscle tensions at all. If you do it as a daily 15-20 minutes exercise you will strengthen your immune system and absorb the oxygen in the air much more efficient. Good for sportsmen.

Last question : about the way you work with groups, you say : "When it comes to group work I use also other breathing techniques, like Sufi breathing rhythms, Buddhist breathing meditation or a guided breathing meditation on the five elements. How and when to use what is depending on what is happening in the group and/or what theme we are exploring. I have trained myself to intuitively feel the needs of the group. Since I have explored the different breathing methods and thereby "know" the effects, I can ordinate the right form of breathing for the present situation. However, this has very much to do with being in the moment, since the needs are changing". Could you illustrate this with one or two samples ? We would like to know more about this !

- To illustrate your intuition is not so easy but let me try with some examples as you suggest.

To do Sufi breathing with a group is something I do when I want to illustrate the power of relating yourself to the power of heaven and the power of earth. This is best done when the group energy is open and receptive for this. Both mentally and energetically. To do it immediately without any Rebirthing Breathwork first is usually putting people in a dizzier cramp situation, which is not so favorable since I do it standing most of the time. So I have to feel that the relaxed openness is there before I do it.,

To do the Buddhist breathing meditation, were you just observe your breath for a longer time without influencing it at all, will lead to sleep if the energy and awareness of the group is not really there. But when the energy is really high and people are alert you can really sensitise people with this breathing and to give them an experience of how the breath and the energy is moving when you do not influence it. So I wait for a moment when I feel that the group is really getting into some higher energy and alert awareness.

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