



Blue Star
Canada

Total Well-Being

NEWSLETTER

BLUESTARCANADA.ORG

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It is a joy to bring you this issue of Total Well-Being that puts the heart and love front and centre for a healthy, vibrant you!

Dr. Bernie Spiegel, a retired pediatric surgeon and author of *Love, Medicine, and Miracles* wrote, "Unconditional love is the most powerful stimulant to the immune system."

Every month, Blue Star Canada's online Wellness Workshops present a variety of subjects directed at providing useful information and practices to help maintain our total well-being. Our last two workshops; HeART Making and the healing value of Compassion and Community inspired the theme for this newsletter. Here we explore the idea of heart coherence, a balance of heart and mind, engaging in a unique Qigong exercise, and many more heartwarming practices to stay healthy.

Guruji, Sri Vasudeva has always encouraged us to capitalize on all the information that is readily available on the internet so that we may broaden our perspective and learn from all. This issue provides references to many sources, such as the American Heart Association, the HeartMath Institute, Paul Brecher, Mona Warner and others.

As we begin the season of many joyous celebrations; Divali, Hanukkah (Chanukah) and Christmas, this year with the physical restrictions of the pandemic, we are called upon to find creative ways of sharing our love, sustaining our friendships, and supporting our community.

"Let us use our collective energy to flow into our community, and finally send out to the world community... Let us all stay well and continue to support those who are challenged. It is one world, one energy, one humanity. Let us channel it to our world together."

[An inspiration by Sri Vasudeva.]

We wish you happy holidays! Stay blessed,
Editors



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Love Is the Solution for a More Healthy Body

Sri Vasudeva

“Love is the solution for a better world. Love is the solution for a more healthy body. Love is the solution for more harmonious relationships. Love is God. Love is Light. Love heals. Love inspires. Love is not a biological experience in the human being; it is an experience in the soul Consciousness. When it comes there, there is this marvellous experience of compassion.”

We cannot solve the world's problems unless we solve our own. It begins with us. So when we begin to come into the inner space, opening up to the love consciousness, observe what happens to your own physical body, because we start with the physical. As we come more into love consciousness on the inside, we come into more harmony and energy in the physical body.

Heart is a nurturing organ

The energy centre of love in the human being is at the heart, the chest, [a centre that is common to all of us. It is a powerful place for immunity. It influences the thymus gland, the physical heart, the lungs, and all the cells.]* The heart pumps blood through the whole body, nourishing it, and the lungs that bring the air and oxygen into the body.

Open to love consciousness

When we bring that love energy from the quantum space, the soul, into the body, look at what happens: the whole area is fired up. The thymus gland prepares the killer T-Cells in the immune system to fight away infection and disease.



When we do not open up this love consciousness and operate in darkness, observe what happens to the breathing, to the heart, and to the immune system. Observe. We have all kinds of issues. But when we open up this space, there is such a beautiful energy in there. It inspires unity in the outer space. It inspires more appreciation of the world, more compassion, more kindness, and more forgiveness.

It is the Consciousness that provides the Light to enter and to fire up the body. So when we open up to it, observe what is happening within the body, and in the space; we inspire peace. All our relationships improve because we are so much more harmonious with our world.

Observe the quality of love

How do we know if we are manifesting more love? There is more openness in the Consciousness—no judgment toward another. There is more healing in our Inner Being. There is more integration in our Inner Being. There is no conflict on the inside because love inspires unity, understanding, tolerance, and



acceptance. When it is not there, observe the conflict that is within and the experience of conflict; we are never truly happy.

The more we embrace the love, the more we get into the Divine Consciousness of love. That is expressed so wonderfully by those souls who have united the Consciousness once more with the Higher Self, and we see their

expressions of love. If we want to see the love of the Divine, we need to look at those noble souls who have transcended duality. Observe them in the human experience and see a marvellous quality of love. Even when they are serious, we can still feel that their intention is totally noble, and that is a magnificent quality.

[Adapted from 40 Days 2014]
[*From Healing Circle, 40 Days 2020]

Loving Kindness

Guided Meditation with Sri Vasudeva



click on the image above for the video recording

In this meditation, Sri Vasudeva guides us first to be in total harmony with all the energies in our field, with the goal of letting the Divine Presence of our being predominate... Observing the extent of the playground, the seven chakras... seven levels of Consciousness. Holding your entire field in that space of peace, harmony. Just breathe out slowly and breathe in slowly.

In the mental field, there is peace, intuitive awareness, acceptance of everything that is... Observe the vast silence in the space... One way of blessing negative thoughts is to use a mantra in the mind: the Om. See the beauty of the Om.

Let us follow the Buddhist way of “Metta Bhavana,” loving kindness towards all. Loving kindness, compassion, friendliness towards all sentient beings; all forms of life. In this process, the whole field is blessed, all adversaries, all sentient beings, all living beings, in every direction. Metta Bhavana, the cultivation of friendliness and compassion towards all. What a marvellous gift from the Buddha. Open up the field of love. In this field you can visit all those who challenge you in the Play, blessing and thanking them for coming on your stage of life. And breathe into the heart, that the prana may come to open up the heart centre.

But in the Metta Bhavana, we start with loving ourselves before we can even love another. The technique is to love yourself; come into that space of harmony within your own being. Open up to your own being: mental being, emotional being, physical being, and see how much easier it is to open up to the field outside of you.

[Adapted from 40 Days 2014]



Compassion and Community

Virtual Wellness Workshop with Ramaa Devi

Brenda Hookey



Early in the morning on October 31st, I was driving to the grocery store and had to stop my vehicle quickly when another driver drove through a red light in front of me. Despite feeling frightened and upset, I was grateful to have avoided a collision.

A couple of hours later, the emotional impact was still very much with me as I began the wellness workshop, "Compassion & Community." It began with many insightful definitions and ideas about compassion. The idea that our degree of compassion toward others is equal to the degree of our self-compassion was an impactful one for me. Also impactful was hearing that even the notion of "other" takes us away from unity consciousness.

Next, we participated in a guided meditation by Sri Vasudeva where he spoke about receiving and giving compassion to our world. He spoke about forgiving when it's needed. I brought the other driver to my mind and offered, as best I could, my compassion and forgiveness. Tears were flowing during the meditation as I processed the fear of the morning's event.

After the meditation, we were given 10 scenarios on which we were instructed to rate our level of compassion on a scale of 1-10. This exercise showed me that there is a tendency to feel more compassion for those in closer relationships rather than distant relations, and to feel more compassion for others than for myself. We discussed how we can often experience greater compassion for those in situations that we have also experienced.

The next topic was about compassion and healing. We heard that trying to fix others did not result in healing, that healing happens when a non-judgmental presence is offered with an open heart creating a space of mutual compassion for both the recipient and for the healer.

The last aspect of the workshop was the presentation of three personal practices to grow compassion. The first came from an exchange between the Guru and Madhavi (one which she had shared in a blog). She asked him how she would know if she's making progress. He told her to look at the quality of all of her relationships and if she was growing then they will improve. He also told her to repeat a mantra when the mind was idle and during free time. Since then I've been practicing the mantra repetition when I can bring it to my mind, and it does help to bring me into present moment and breath awareness.

For the second practice we participated in a guided breathing exercise from the Buddhist tradition. With every in breath we were asked to receive the love from the collective space and with every out

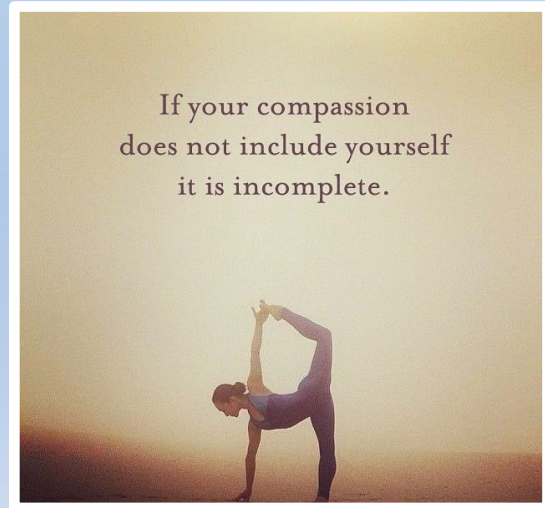


breath we offered our love to the collective space. It was a reminder that the ability to receive from others is an important part of growing in self-compassion. It also demonstrated our ability to positively affect shared spaces with our energies alone.

The third practice was from a teaching of Guru's on social well-being where he tells us that we share a common world of mental energy and emotional energy. He said that our relationships are an opportunity to grow in self-awareness and the more we grow the more we inspire growth around us.

The near miss with the car that morning presented an opportunity for me to extend forgiveness and compassion to another traveller. It was an opportunity for me to be reminded by the Divine that caution while driving is required at all

times. It was an opportunity for me to remember that I too have rushed through a traffic light and that we are all on a karmic journey. It was an opportunity for me to see how I am divinely protected. By the end of the workshop, I felt safe, loved and just a little more compassionate toward my world and myself.



Exploring the Self through HeART Making

Virtual Wellness Workshop with Nalini Cerasela

David Spence

On the morning of Saturday, September 26th, I had the pleasure of participating in this wellness workshop exploring art making as a tool on our spiritual journey. Nalini offered the workshop over Zoom from her home in Nanaimo, British Columbia and ten people including viewers from Holland, Michigan, Ottawa, and Toronto participated in the session.

When I first noticed the title about "HeART," I thought it must have been an ART class for men only. Actually, it turned out to be quite the opposite as I served as the sole, token male for the event. In



any case, I enjoyed the time spent very much.

The class name, as I now understand, actually refers to expressing our artistic self (and Self) by opening our heart and



allowing a sense of joy and play to infuse the creative process.

I felt, as did others attending, that Nalini did an excellent job. Given her academic and work background, her knowledge of Sri Vasudeva's teachings, and her impressive talents as an artist, Nalini was well qualified to lead the class. Through a very fun and light-hearted approach, she showed us how to step out of our adult roles and responsibilities, and tap into that care-free, inner three-year-old. By seeing things through the eyes of a child, Nalini explained how we are able to express ourselves more freely, with compassion and non-judgment.

Sri Vasudeva has reminded us on a number of occasions of how important it is to "become like a child, observing with curiosity and adventure... and (to) stay with those qualities that take (us) into a limitless experience." (40 Days 2017, Day 11 Guided Meditation).

On a spiritual level this can help us to be more mindful, see things from the perspective of the Witness and in doing so, connect more deeply with that infinite, limitless energy.

To help us find that childlike state of play, Nalini offered a PowerPoint presentation and then walked us through several

creative exercises involving art journaling, scribbling, drawing, writing, tearing, and pasting. All of these were designed to help us break through our restrictive thinking patterns and be more open and spontaneous.

There was something liberating about ripping through paper with abandon and regluing it in a different, more inspired way, although I must say that at one point I observed myself taking extra care to fold back a few of my ragged edges before reattaching them in a neat and tidy form, which may suggest I could still possibly benefit from other ART therapy in the future.

Fortunately, as rumour has it, Nalini may be offering another virtual workshop with BSC in the new year.

The session did encourage me to "play" a little more and to loosen up and not take things as seriously... something we can all probably relate to.

I wanted to extend my thanks for a job well done to Nalini, and Ramaa Devi our excellent facilitator, as well as the Board of Blue Star Canada. It was another great example of our Blue Star members coming together in support and service, over distance and during challenging times.

"Although the pandemic and global protests have created unprecedented levels of stress and anxiety, an awakening of the heart has also taken place. More people are realizing we cannot return to the old normal, rather we need to co-create something new. There are many levels of awareness and perceptions throughout collective humanity. Our minds may be different based on beliefs, upbringing and life situations, but our hearts can find harmony with each other in a shared existence, if we desire this."

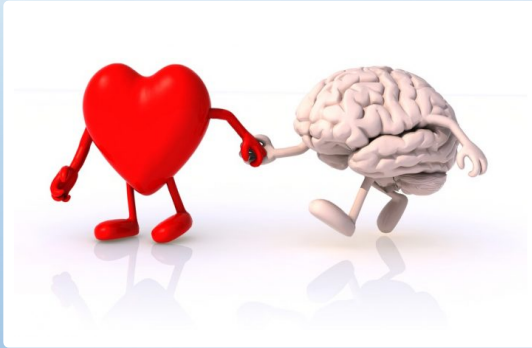
[Doc Childre-blog/HeartMath.com]



Heart and Mind Connection

A Source of Health, Wisdom and Intuition

Brahmi Devi



Sri Vasudeva speaks about the “heart brain” which is the nervous system of the heart, operating with an intelligence of its own. It allows the heart to independently sense and inform the cranial brain. It produces various hormones, one being Oxytocin, the love hormone that affects brain and body function. These positive emotions also help to build our immunity. In healing meditations Guruji affirms, “I love you, my body, you are God's gift to me. I love you my cells, you are so precious to me.”

There is a saying, “A heart without the mind is blind, and a mind without the heart is lame.”

According to the HeartMath Institute, “the age-old associations of the heart with thought, feeling, and insight may have a basis in science. The heart actually sends more signals to the brain than the brain sends to the heart! Moreover, these heart signals have a significant effect on brain function— influencing emotional processing as well

as higher cognitive faculties such as attention, perception, memory, and problem-solving. In other words, not only does the heart respond to the brain, but the brain continuously responds to the heart.”

Heart Coherence is when the heart, mind and emotions are aligned and working together harmoniously. It is when a clear intention is coupled with an elevated emotion causing a change in our energy field and in our patterns of behaviour. We are better able to understand ourselves and others and deal with stressful situations when we cultivate higher Self qualities like gratitude, kindness, compassion, and love.



Negative emotions and stress affect our ability to think clearly and make effective decisions, causing us to act irrationally and unwisely. Positive emotions increase heart rhythm coherence, bring healing to our entire body, and can also change how we perceive, think, feel, and act.

[Source: <https://www.heartmath.com/science>]



Oral Health Tips from our Dentist

Healthy Gums, Healthy Heart

Dr. A. Lafkovic

Oral health and heart disease are connected by the spread of bacteria from the mouth to other parts of the body through the blood stream. The bacteria infecting the gums called "gingivitis," travels through the blood vessels causing inflammation and damage: and a risk of heart attack and stroke. Other heart conditions such as atherosclerosis (clogged arteries) and stroke have also been linked to inflammation caused by oral bacteria according to American Heart Association



A recent study suggests:

"Rather than bacteria causing the problem, it's the body's immune response—inflammation—that sets off a cascade of vascular damage throughout the body, including the heart and brain. The connection between gum disease and heart disease is the reason they may occur together. Other potential factors include poor access to healthcare and lack of exercise. People who don't take good care of their overall health are more likely to have poor oral health and heart disease."

So maintaining good oral health can help protect overall health.

People with chronic gum conditions such as gingivitis or advanced periodontal disease have a higher risk for heart disease. Poor oral hygiene and accumulation of plaque are a risk for gum diseases.

Symptoms and warning signs according to AAP (American Association of Periodontology) of early gum disease:

- red gums, swollen, tender to the touch,
- bleeding gums while eating, brushing, flossing,
- the presence of infection (pus collection, fistula, around gums or teeth),
- bad breath or taste in the mouth,
- loose or shifted teeth.

To avoid this keep brushing, flossing and try to make oral health a priority.

Also, respecting a heart-healthy diet with wholesome food, fruits, vegetables, beans, and unsaturated fats such as olive oil, would help to protect your heart, prevent diabetes and many cancers, and maintain optimal health.



Healthy Mouth, Healthy You



A Nurturing Ayurvedic Recipe

A Warming Drink

Mona L. Warner

Ayurvedic Yoga Therapist (AYT) & Certified Ayurvedic Practitioner (CAP)

According to Ayurveda, "ojas" is the subtle essence responsible for strong immunity, vigour and overall well-being. The blood takes this essence, the ojas to the rest of the body, and it nurtures the flesh. As a force of immunity, it acts as the glue that binds together body, mind, and spirit in your being.

Sattvic food is simple. It is a diet of absolute quality, freshness, and life force. There are certain foods and herbs in nature that literally build ojas. Eating these foods in combination with a more balanced lifestyle will support immunity, sleep, vitality, complexion, mood stability, and longevity.

The following recipe can be taken before bed to boost ojas and support sleep. This is about as yummy a drink you will ever have!

OJAS MILK RECIPE

1. Add small amounts of each to 1 cup of milk (un-homogenized cow, goat, almond, coconut, or oat milk) as you slowly bring it to a light boil:



- Chopped dates (1-2 dates)
- Chopped almonds (2-3 almonds)
- Coconut meat or flakes
- Saffron (pinch)
- Ghee (clarified butter)
- Ginger + cardamom and/or cinnamon and/or turmeric = 1/2 tsp to 1 tsp of herbs total

2. Once the milk, ojas-building foods, and spices are cooked and off the flame, add a tsp of raw honey.

Drink one cup of the ojas-building warm milk each night for three months to rebuild ojas levels and support sleep,

immunity, and overall health.

NOTE: Please do not eat or drink any foods or herbs that you are sensitive or allergic to. If one of these is in the recipe, simply omit the allergen.

Environmental Corner

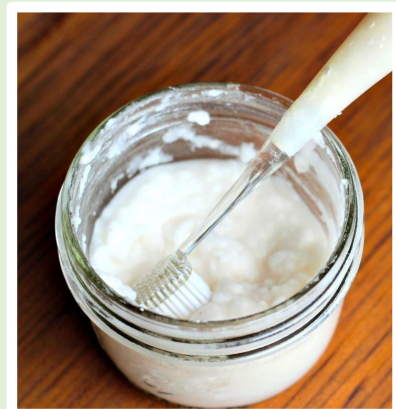
DIY Eco-Friendly Healthy Toothpaste

In a jar combine

- 1 c white clay
- 1 tsp baking soda
- A few drops of mint essential oil (optional)

Moisten toothbrush and put mixture on it.

Recipe shared with the kind permission of the Environmental Health Association of Quebec.





Notes on Nutritional value:

Almond has a slightly warming nature, sweet flavour, lubricates the intestines. It is the only nut to alkalize the blood. Eating the skin of the nut may irritate the gut lining, affecting digestion, however, the bitterness is beneficial for resolving moist lung condition.

Coconut is a good source of saturated fat for vegetarians, but should not to be used in excess. It is warming, sweet, and clears the effects of summer heat.

Ghee is clarified butter made from cow's milk, a good source of energy and

may be used as a mild and effective remedy for constipation.

Spices: Ginger is also warming and helps with digestion, circulation in the body, and flow of prana. Turmeric, a relative of ginger, is used for treating inflammation, both inside and out. It is good for most skin diseases. It has protein, fiber, and minerals. Turmeric contains curcumin that is known for treating cancer. Cardamom is an aromatic spice that is a good source of potassium, known to have antioxidant and healing properties. Cinnamon is also fragrant and antioxidant, known for lowering blood sugar levels.

Circle of Care

Our Local Monthly Healing Circle

Ramaa Devi

Over the past few months, inspired by the Guru, we have had the opportunity to gather virtually, sharing the company of spiritual friends, as we make time for self-care.

Practicing conscious awareness of the care of this physical body supports us on our spiritual journey and is a key component in sustaining our ability to care for others.

In following the model of the Guru's healing circles we take time to share practices that revitalize body, mind and spirit with exercise, inspirational readings or talks and a variety of meditation practices.

Sri Vasudeva tells us of the importance of tending to body, mind and spirit to maintain total well-being and optimal health.



"The body needs to be energized into activity by light exercise and deep breathing. It must be fed the right diet that will bring about vitality in our activities and not fatigue and laziness.

The mind needs to be energized by positive and powerful thoughts of prayer and the deep peaceful silence of meditation. In this way it will not be



affected by the negative thoughts of the environment.

The spirit must be kindled with feelings of divine love and joy. Chanting, meditation or prayer done with deep feelings of devotion can make this happen.

Blue Star Canada members have generously shared practices, knowledge and time to lead these sessions, offering a safe, loving space for revitalization and building resilience. In the last two sessions alone we have had the wonderful opportunity to have fun and learn about “face yoga”, the restorative power of pranayama and the relaxing benefits of

Ayurvedic self-foot massage in support of a restful sleep.

Each time we come together, opening our hearts and minds to the oneness of being, invoking the light of the masters, lovingly inviting and welcoming the presence of our beloved Sri Vasudeva into the space it is an amazing opportunity for healing.

If you haven't had a chance to join the circle yet we look forward to seeing you soon. If you have a suggestion or would like to offer something to a session please let us know.

“Each day create a desire to live life in a healthy body so that you can fulfil your divine purpose of living in oneness with God”

– Sri Vasudeva

Bone Breathing

A Qi-gong Practice Engaging the Heart and Mind

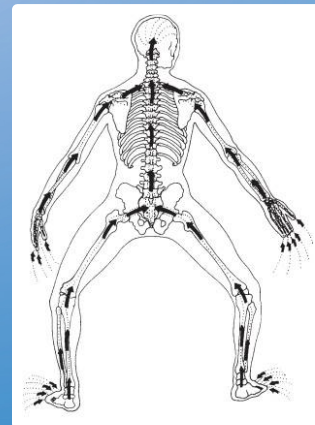
Sourced From Sri Vasudeva's Healing Circle, Forty Days 2020

In meditation, Sri Vasudeva introduces an energetic practice for healing of the skeletal body. We do this by exploring the subtle energy field with our attention on our bones.

GUIDED MEDITATION PRACTICE

Breathe into the belly with a heart and mind connection, engaging the three powerful brains: the heart brain, the gut brain, and the cranial brain for total body management. Then begin to observe how your mental field can permeate the entire body so that through the mind you can experience the skeletal part of the body and actually feel the bones.

- Every time you breathe in, bring your attention out from the bones to the skin, the periphery of the body.
- Every time you breathe out, take your attention down from skin to the bones.
- It is energetic so your mind is totally engaged on the prana of the breath.





This practice is adapted from The Secrets of Energy Work by Paul Brecher in which he explains: "The idea is to use all the bones in the skeletal structure. When you are doing this correctly, the whole skeletal structure starts to vibrate and every bone in your body buzzes, which is a very pleasant sensation. The compression of chi into the bones makes them denser and regenerates the

marrow, a major part of the body's blood production system, so this exercise is good for general health and essential for those who are practising chi kung for longevity.

Imagine the chi travelling from the bones to the skin's surface as you inhale and chi rushing back to the bones as you exhale."

Pure Being

A Sharing

A Devoted Blue Star Member

Last night I hugged my frail, beautiful mother tightly, and I felt like I was hugging myself; I kissed my cherished, sweet mother, and I felt like I was kissing myself; I breathed the air that she was breathing, while she breathed the air that I was breathing, and all seemed whole, perfect, and complete with the world; I touched my head to her head, and I felt like I was her and she was me; I felt our bodies merge and then seem to melt away and what was left was perfect, "Pure Being" merged as One; At that moment I knew that nothing, not illness, not dementia, nor anything – not even death can keep us from "being" who we truly are. And I understood that this miraculous experience was also my unconditional love of my mother reflecting back to me.





My Wellness Practice

Attitude Breathing

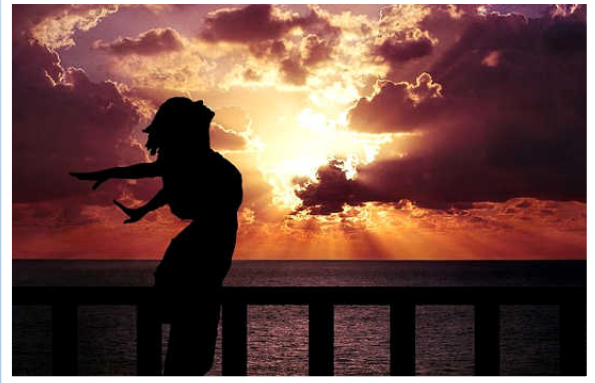
Attitude Breathing® is a tool to help you shift out of an emotional draining state and back to a balance state of care. By practicing this you will learn to clear and replace the over-care with a more balance and positive emotion and gain a more intelligent perspective.

Step 1. **Recognize** a feeling or attitude that you want to change and identify a replacement attitude.

Step 2. **Focus** your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).

Step 3. **Breathe** the feeling of the new attitude slowly and casually through your heart area.

A Few Examples:



<u>UNWANTED ATTITUDES</u>	<u>REPLACEMENT ATTITUDES</u>
Feeling isolated/lonely	Breathe being connected & appreciated
Feeling anxious	Breathe ease and peace
Feeling judgemental	Breathe tolerance
Feeling fatigued	Breathe increased energy
Feeling self-pity	Breathe a feeling of dignity & maturity

- If you are not clear on the new replacement attitude, remember: A neutral attitude works to stop the energy drain, which is especially important during an emotional storm. Remember to breathe slowly and casually. Do this for a while to get the full benefits of the technique.
- For some deeply ingrained attitudes, you may need to breathe the new attitude earnestly for a few minutes before you experience a shift. Have a genuine “I mean business” attitude to really move your emotions into a more coherent state and shift your physiology.
- Consider keeping a personal log of any shifts you experienced, making a note of successes and challenges you had with your practice:



Date	Situation	Depleting Attitude	Replacement Attitude	Observations after Practice

[Source: <https://asdn.org/wp-content/uploads/4-Class-Attitude-Breathing-HMI-worksheet-08-08-17.pdf>]

Upcoming Events

Building Respiratory Resilience

December 12, 2020 - 10:00 a.m. on Zoom

Mark your calendar today! Join us for this exciting and informative workshop addressing an aspect of total well-being that is very pertinent in current times.

Our presenter, Kathy Aubry with 25 years in Clinical Kinesiology, Aquatic Rehabilitation and Yoga will share information, insights and practices, including; food choices, herbs, asana, mudra and more.

Hope to see you there!



Contact Us

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Transform Self. Transform World.