

HOW CONNECTING TO MY BREATH HELPED ME RECONNECT WITH MYSELF

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What if I told you that you could live more intentionally and love yourself more by simply becoming more aware of your breath? Seems too good to be true, right? Well, it's more than possible my sweet friend so stay with me on this one-- unclench your jaw, relax your shoulders, and take a nice deep inhale and exhale while you're at it ;)

Breathwork has become the latest edition to my self-care routine since it came into my life 6 short months ago when I truly needed it most. My anxiety was at an all-time high, it felt nearly impossible to focus on the most basic tasks, and I found myself repeatedly pushing down any sort of emotions that surfaced. Overall, I was feeling completely disconnected from myself. At this time, I had practiced different forms of meditation before but struggled to quiet my mind long enough to feel like what I was doing was making any sort of a difference. I was continuously frustrated and found myself reaching for my phone yet again as a way to numb out (sound familiar?). One morning when I was having this same experience, I coincidentally came across an Instagram profile by the name of *PAUSE Breathwork* which is an online community founded by Samantha Skelly for others starting or continuing their own journeys with breathwork. I felt myself drawn to her most recent IGTV which was a guided morning breathwork practice hosted by one of her facilitators. I then decided to press play and see what this was about—what's the worst that could happen?

The best way to describe how I felt was... uncomfortable (trying something new always is though, isn't it?) but after completing the 15-minute session I already found myself craving more. I came to realize that coming across this page was indeed no accident (thank you, Universe) and the researching began.

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"SO... WHAT EXACTLY IS BREATHWORK?"

Breathwork involves a variety of exercises that teach you how to consciously control the rate and depth of your breath (the only part of the autonomic nervous system that we can actually control!). By doing so, the parasympathetic system, the opposite of our "fight and flight" response, activates allowing our body to go into relaxation mode even when stressful emotions arise.

A typical breathwork practice can last anywhere from 5 minutes to 2+ hours of sustained, circular and rhythmic breathing, and can be done sitting up or more formally lying down flat. Breathwork has been referred to as "emotional hygiene" as it allows us to tap into and move any repressed/trapped/blocked or stored emotions in the body by breathing life force energy into them. This energy exchange can be in the form of an actual physical sensation in the body such as tingling, a change in temperature, or an uncontrolled emotional release. As referred to by founder of Pause Breathwork, Samantha Skelly describes breathwork as a practice that allows us to "unhook the mind" so that we can have deeper access to not only our emotional body but to our own intuition or inner knowing. Practicing daily intentional breathing can therefore become a powerful tool in facilitating self-healing and transformation as it benefits the mind, body, and spirit through a holistic process.



"THROUGH BREATH, WE ENLIVEN
THE LOST PARTS OF US AND
RETURN THEM BACK INTO
WHOLENESS."

- SACRED BREATH ACADEMY

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BREATHWORK?

- Decreases anxiety and manages stress levels
- Helps you work through negative thought patterns
- Allows you to tap into deeper creativity
- Assists with pain management
- Allows you to release stored trauma in the body
- Can increase your self-confidence and decrease self-limiting beliefs
- Trains you to breathe slower & deeper, which can lower blood pressure
- Increases levels of alertness and helps keep you focused
- Allows you to enter a deeper state of consciousness during meditation

WHAT WE DONT FEEL, WE DONT HEAL

Once I was able to push through the initial discomfort of controlling my breath in that first session, I was surprised by how quickly the noise in my head subsided, the unexpected emotions that surfaced, and the sensations I felt throughout my body that I never had before. As I began to practice more and become more familiar with it, I slowly began to feel safe again in my own body. Safe to feel. Safe to heal. Safe to let go of what was currently holding me back and reclaim my power. For me, breathwork has become my new favourite self-healing tool and I have zero doubts that a long-term, deeply committed practice could radically transform my life as I continue on my path to greater fulfillment and alignment.

JUST IN CASE YOU NEEDED THIS REMINDER TODAY:

Whenever you feel disconnected from your body, connect with your breath. Allow yourself to open up to the energy within you and remember that you are loved and infinitely supported. You are safe to be in your own body. You are safe to feel. You are safe to heal. Just remember to *breathe*.

The journey of breath is a journey of true self-love,
Of higher compassion and multifaceted awareness.

By breathing into the unknown and un-met, we bring life and energy to that which is buried or stagnant.

We integrate our stored experiences into deeper understanding.

We let our emotional body speak. We breathe with it. We claim what we lost.

And we set free what is ready to shed or transform.

In this precious place, we re-remember our fullness.

We remember who we are

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I'm a 20-something wellness enthusiast born and raised in the prairies. Prior to becoming a student in the first cohort through *TheCIINDE*, I was working as a Registered Nurse in a private clinic that left me feeling unfulfilled and out of alignment. Now that I have completed this program, I aim to pursue my passions within holistic health to connect with and inspire others on their journey to healing and uncovering their true authentic selves.