



# ELEMENTAL RHYTHM

**Elemental Rhythm  
Breathwork Fundamentals  
Coaching Program**



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# Elemental Rhythm

## Breathwork Fundamentals Coaching Program

### 1. Intention

The Intention of this workbook is to give the certified instructor tools to help improve daily breathwork fundamentals which will in turn help their clients and community breathe better all the time.

Breathing quality has an incredible correlation to health. We can go weeks without food, days without water but only minutes without air. The average human takes about 20,000 - 25,000 breaths per day. Is each breath helping you or causing you more problems? Don't worry if you or your client is a horrible breather, the important thing to know is breathing can be corrected and improved at almost any point in one's life no matter their age or health condition.

### 2. Program Outline

The following program can be used for 1 on 1 clients, in a day or weekend workshop or in a group learning session in person or online.

Once certified each facilitator will be able to:

- a. Assess where someone's breathing level is at and what their personal objectives are.
- b. Give feedback on how they currently breathe.
- c. Provide some measurement tools to track progress.
- d. Provide exercises to work on over time.
- e. Offer coaching sessions that go beyond the physical breathing practices to improve functional breathing and transition into Breathwork Breakthrough Coaching in circumstances where it applies.
- f. Accountability & Support - the most value you can give a client.

### 3. Client Objectives

It is important to assess client objectives when you are approached as a coach to help someone work on their breath. We always suggest starting a relationship by inviting someone to one of your classes or a private session.



It is always good practice either before or after (or both) facilitating an ERBE to inform your participants of the following:

“ Although the Elemental Rhythm Breakthrough Experience (ERBE) is a powerful experience in and of itself it should be viewed as a high intensity workout or training session. It's important to know that if we worked out at a high intensity all the time we would actually do more harm than good and burn out. The same goes for the way we breathe, and we've found that even those who have done many ERBE's may still have very poor breathing mechanics and can still gain a lot in the overall physical, mental and emotional wellbeing by making some simple corrections.”

Here is a Short List all Coaches Should Know:

**Poor/Improper Breathing will:**

- 1. Decrease Cellular Oxygen** - Limits the body's ability to deliver Oxygen to the cells
- 2. Lower Energy** - You will have less energy and also not create energy optimally (aerobic vs anaerobic energy production in cells)
- 3. Nervous System Irregularities** - improper breathing sends wrong signals to always be in fight or flight.
- 4. Overworked heart / Cardiovascular** - faster breathing increases heart rate and BP.
- 5. Poor Circulation** - due to constriction of blood vessels (low CO<sub>2</sub>).
- 6. Facial Structure** - Can affect teeth and face structure (especially in adolescents).
- 7. Restricted / Weakened Airways** - mouth breathing can cause nasal and other airways to atrophy or weaken.
- 8. Poor Lung Function** - shallow breathing can lead to inefficient lung function and lung damage over time.
- 9. Protein Performance Declines** (enzymes, antibody, hemoglobin) due to changes in Ph (acidic) which is mainly regulated by breathing.
- 10. Increased Stress and Inflammation** - Stress leads to fight / flight, which dumps adrenaline to widen airways (also leads to inflammation of airways) cortisol released to reduce inflammation and creates a vicious cycle which can become chronic if not addressed.
- 11. Reduce Sleep Quality** - snoring, apnea, frequent urination.
- 12. Much Much More** - There many other symptoms and side effects related to poor breathing.



**Correcting / Improving your breathing can reverse / improve any / all of the above.**

Once you have done a bit of education on how breathing fundamentals can help them to improve their quality of life you can inquire about what their personal objectives are:

**Less Stress**

**Increased Libido**

**Clearer Mind**

**Reduce Anxiety**

**Improve Immune System**

**Reduce Inflammation**

**Better Sleep**

**Feeling Calm**

**Athletic Performance**

**Increase Happiness**

**Reset Nervous System**

Almost anything they want to improve on from the above list can directly or indirectly be improved through improving their breathing mechanics and function.

#### **4. Coach Objectives**

It's important once you are starting to work with a client or are starting to take them on, you get very clear on what your role is as a coach and instructor. You are there to teach them and hold them accountable to do the work, but not babysit and hold their hand. We will suggest coaching styles for you but ultimately you need to step into your own power and style as a coach that your clientele and students will resonate with.

As we move more into the Elemental Rhythm Breathe to Life Coaching Program (Level 3) we will train you on tools how to be an effective listener, how to ask the right questions and empower your clients to gain insights into their own life and use breathing as a tool for introspection and discover (EBE) as well as integration (Fundamentals) and daily routine/rituals.



## WORKING WITH A CLIENT

### 5. Initial Coaching Session

#### a. Observing Your Client in Session

In the first 1 on 1 with a client, once you have brought them on as a client and you are explaining the objectives above and also doing their intake and assessment it is a perfect time to observe them. When someone is aware we are taking note of what they are doing they will almost always consciously change their pattern. When you ask someone to show you how they normally breathe they will usually change that because they are bringing awareness to their breath and the majority of people breathe unconsciously. So BEFORE you start to educate them this is the perfect opportunity for an initial observation and you can start taking notes on your intake form on anything you notice in the charts below. Try to look for any noticeable breathing habits (good or bad).

#### Optimal Breathing Habits

- Nasal breathing
- Slow Breathing
- Rhythmic and regular breathing
- Good posture
- Mainly diaphragmatic
- Mouth closed when not speaking
- Deep breathing
- Quiet almost silent
- Relaxed

#### Poor Breathing Habits

- Mouth breathing
- Fast breathing
- Chest breathing
- Lots of sighs, yawns or holding breath
- Tense shoulders
- Short forced exhalation
- Anxious, poor focus
- Mouth open most of time
- Shallow breathing
- No rhythm (irregular)
- Noisy breathing
- Poor posture (hunched)
- Upper chest movement only
- Tapping, twitching, nervous

At this point just take note of anything that stands out from the list above and make sure we don't want to scare the client to say they are breathing poorly but more encourage them as to the areas where we can see a big different and improve their overall wellbeing. We will be observing them simultaneously as we start doing our initial session overview.



## **b. Session Overview**

The initial session is probably one of the most important sessions with your new client/student. We want to get to know who we are working with and build some trust. Ask them about their life, what they do and why they were drawn to work with you. Here is also an opportunity to tell a bit about your story and how you got into breathwork.

During the first session once you have started with some assessments as outlined above we want to set an objective. Ask the client how they want to feel? Who are they becoming and why is that important? What are their current problems or pain points, and you need to show them how working with you may help them to relieve those problems. Get them to envision what that would mean for them to have less stress and anxiety, be happier, perform better, increase focus, have better sleep and so on.

You want to fix/improve (pain point) so you can (how they want to feel or perform) and why that matters (so they can now do what?)

E.g. I want to improve my sleeping so I can be more rested in order to perform better at work.

## **c. Commitment (Ours and Theirs)**

Ask them what their level of commitment is and make sure that you also have a high level of commitment. As a coach you agree to Educate, Support, and hold them Accountable and invite them to be a part of our community for additional support ([Elementalrhythm.com](http://Elementalrhythm.com))

How will you keep them accountable? What is the method of communication and follow up? What boundaries will you need to set and uphold between you and your client?

## **d. Intake Measurements / Assessments / Baseline Tests**

- i. Breathwork Questionnaire** - Simple questionnaire to give a baseline and get feedback and score to see where they are at. We will retake this assessment in the future to assess progress over time. Every month or so we can retake this questionnaire to see how their score has improved out of a total possible score of 150. It is a self assessment so it may have some drawbacks but is definitely a good directional measurement tool for progress.





See Appendix At End of workbook for sample questionnaire.

- ii. **Max Breath Hold** - on inhalation, take score and track progress over time. From a relaxed state, take a deep breath and measure the time before taking a second breath. Have your nose plugged to ensure there is no breathing occurring during the hold.
- iii. **Control Pause (CP)** - Measuring someones control pause score is probably one of the best measures of overall breathing function and health. This will be our Northstar Metric to measure how they are improving over time. See Below for Details.
- iv. **Breathless Step Test** - A simple test where someone is at resting and takes a normal breath in and exhale normally through the nose. The client begins to walk at a normal pace and counts steps. The goal is 80 - 100 or more. Anything less than 60 is an indicator of significant potential for improvement.
- v. **Other Measurement tools** - SPO2 device (pulse oximeter) check resting heart rate, also if they have HRV tracking devices get them to check baseline and also track over progress of sessions.

#### **Control Pause Instructions and Score Interpretation:**

1. Sitting down, close your mouth and breathe normally through the nose for 30 seconds
2. Take a normal breath in through your nose
3. Allow a normal breath out through your nose
4. Gently close your nose with thumb & finger and start to count the seconds on the clock or stop-watch
5. When you first feel the need to breathe, release the nose and take a breath through the nose – remember to keep your mouth closed throughout. The first breath after the hold should be similar to the breath before the hold. If you are struggling or need to take a deep breath then you held too long and should retake your score.

#### **Important Things to be Aware of:**

- The timer starts after an exhale and stops at the first urge to breathe. This is not a maximum breath hold test but a test to help give you input on progress to correct your breathing and specifically tolerance to elevated Carbon Dioxide levels.
- Another way of looking at the control pause is the comfortable breath hold time. As we improve we should see this increase over time. A small increase in this



measurement may result in massive improvements to overall mental and physical wellbeing.

- The best time to measure is upon waking in the morning (before your first daily breathwork practice). Stay consistent and measure at the same time daily.
- Goal is to reach a 40 second control pause over time.
- Throughout this course you will learn various exercises to help increase this score and other measurement tools you can use to track progress.

**Scores Results:** (reference: <https://buteykoclinic.com/test-your-breathing/>)

**Less than 10 seconds:**

- Usually feel out of breath or difficulty breathing most of the time, even while resting.
- Usually breathe through their mouth, into their upper chest and at an elevated rate.
- Potentially have severe asthma.
- Breathlessness, wheezing and/or coughing will be frequently present throughout the day and at night.
- High likelihood of chronic over-breathing or chronic hyperventilation.
- High likelihood of poor overall health and chronic health conditions.

**10 - 20 seconds:**

- Breathing volume and rate slightly less than someone with a 10 second score.
- Breathing rate is usually between 15-20 breaths per minute.
- High likelihood of frequent symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, breathlessness, exercise-induced asthma, colds, chest infections and fatigue.
- The lower your breath hold, the greater your symptoms.

**20 - 40 seconds:**

- Breathing is generally calmer, effortless and quieter the closer it gets to the 40 second mark.
- Anywhere from 10-15 breaths per minute is expected breathing rate.
- Natural pause between each breath lengthens.
- Main symptoms will have gone, but you may develop symptoms if exposed to a trigger.
- The effect of a trigger is proportionate to your CP.
- Reduction of exercise-induced asthma.
- Frequency and severity of colds and chest infections will have decreased significantly.

**+ 40 seconds:**

- Breathing is effortless, calm, gentle, quiet, soft and minimal. Almost imperceptible.
- 6-10 breaths per minute at rest with 4-5 second natural pause in between breaths.
- No asthma symptoms are present.
- You will feel very well with good energy, clarity and breathing.



- To ensure a permanent physiological change, it is necessary to attain a morning CP of 40 seconds for at least 6 months.

*Goals for increasing CO2 score should be slow and steady over time. A good goal is a few seconds every two weeks but individual results will vary. Make sure you have ample rest time in between tests as back to back tests will not produce an accurate score.*

## 6. Log Sheets

Create a log sheet or file for each client, write down or keep track of the following things in the list below. Over time you will resonate with a few you really like. We recommend tracking as many as possible to start. You will then periodically check in to track some of these markers to see how our clients progress over time. See appendix for SAMPLE LOG SHEET.

## 7. The Breathing Basics

After the first session we want to leave them with some of the basics and most powerful breathing tips.

So now we want to educate them on the basic rules and set up a game plan for the next 8 weeks. (or whatever cadence you agree with your client for their coaching program. As change takes time 6 weeks should be the minimum to see meaningful results.)

Before talking about optimal breathing we should bring some awareness to incorrect breathing patterns.

### a. Incorrect Breathing Patterns

**Overbreathing** - happens when we breath too fast (15+ breaths per minute) and too much volume.

**Hyperventilation / Chronic Overbreathing** - usually occurs up high in the chest as shallow breaths and 20+ breaths per minute.

**Chest Breathing / Stationary Breathing** - people who sit a lot and breathe into their chest even if breathing 15-20 times per minute may compensate and actually over breath by sighing a lot, yawning or taking deep gulps of air.



**Chaotic Breathing** - breathing quickly with stops and starts, loud breathing, wheezing etc fall into this category

**Stuck Breathing** - many people forget to breathe when concentrating, working, watching tv, on the computer and then overcompensate by overbreathing. Also other forms could be snoring and sleep apnea.

Things that lead to incorrect or suboptimal breathing include: stress, overstimulation, disease, poor diet, poor air quality, increased temperature, overexertion (too much High Intensity Training), over talking,

### **b. Proper / Optimal Breathing - Breathing Fundamentals**

There are many factors that contribute to optimal breathing that we can break down into 5 main categories: Rate, Rhythm, Diaphragm, Depth, and Nasal. (R2D2N)

#### **Rate & Rhythm**

The absolute first thing we want to show/teach them is what optimal breathing looks like. An optimal breathing rate is 8-12 breaths per minute and would have a 1-3 second inhale, a 3-5 second exhale and a 1-3 second pause in between breaths effectively making the exhale and the pause roughly twice as long as the inhale.

For simplicity and ease of remembering I use 3 by 3 or 3 by 2. 3 second inhale, 3 second exhale and 3 second pause. This optimal breathing pattern will result in just under 7 breaths per minute. If we switch it to 2 seconds (2 sec. inhale, 2 sec. exhale, 2 sec. pause) each it would be 10 breaths per minute also a great rate of breath (slightly dependent on volume).

When it comes to Rhythm it should be relaxed. Relaxed breathing results in a relaxed mind and emotional state. The opposite would be tense and fast breathing. Your breath can be compared to a song, or almost everything in nature, it should follow a Rhythm, and when we get into a breathing rhythm we find comfort, flow and ease.

#### **Depth & Diaphragm**

You want the air to reach down to the lower part of the abdomen. The diaphragm is a parachute shaped muscle that lines the rib cage (attached to the lower ribs, sternum, and the back of our spine at the tip of our navel) It should be responsible for 70 - 80% of our



breathing. As you engage the diaphragm it lowers and creates a vacuum and allows for more air to enter your lungs and on relaxation easily and effortlessly allows you to exhale. This ensures we circulate stagnant air and also gets air into the deepest part of the lungs where there is more blood flow and more efficient oxygen exchange.

### **Benefits of Diaphragmatic Breathing:**

Improved Gas Exchange

Organ Stimulation

Moves Lymphatic Fluid, (engages back and shoulders) - minimal effort for maximum return.

Depth also has to do with volume, we don't want to confuse depth with big breaths, breathing should be quiet and volume reduced, slow and deep.

### **Nose / Nasal**

Breathing through the nose reduces Pressure in Chest and Heart

Uses less energy to breathe vs chest breathing (engages chest)

This is probably the most important change to make if someone is a mouth breather. This simple change can quickly produce significant changes in many areas of your life. The nose is designed for breathing. It warms, moistens, filters and delivers the air in the most optimal way.

It also allows air to travel deeper into the lungs, combined with deep slow diaphragmatic breathing it will make sure you are getting the most out of each breath. Breathing through the nose filters the air through not only its design but also by adding Nitric Oxide which helps improve blood flow and is antimicrobial in nature.

The nose is actually quite advanced and yogis have been studying breathing techniques for thousands of years called pranayamas, which modern science is finally catching up to.

The yogis discovered (now confirmed by science) that breathing through the left nostril calms and cools us (feminine energy) while breathing through the right nostril stimulates and energizes (masculine), with alternate nostril breathing (see appendix) activating both energetic aspects to achieve balance.

About 20 years ago, scientific research proved the theory behind nadi shodhana: breathing through the left nostril increases the activity in the right side of the brain while breathing through the right nostril stimulates the left side of the brain. The right side of the brain is



responsible for processing our emotions and influences our creativity while the left side governs the logic and language aspects of our life.

Even if you struggle with nose breathing now, you can significantly improve your ability to nose breathe with practice. It can go so far as to even help improve facial structure and potentially even straighten your teeth especially in developing children. If you can't breathe through your nose at all try the nose unblocking exercise in Appendix.

### **Breath Awareness**

Beyond these 5 main pillars of breathing general breath awareness is very important especially as you are relearning how to breath. Awareness is the base foundation for growth in all areas of life. When we can be aware in real time as things arise in the present moment we can change the pattern and create new habits (physical, mental, emotional etc)

When we are born almost all of us breathe deep into our bellies, inhale through our nose and will have consistent rate and rhythm. Over time different patterns will begin to take form due to many factors including stress, the external environment, diet and more. When working with clients it is very important to teach them to have more breath awareness, to check in frequently with themselves to see how they are breathing and it would be a good idea to always start your first session with a client by going through a breath awareness guided meditation. Check the drive for a meditation template or you can find it on [www.elementalrhythm.com](http://www.elementalrhythm.com)

#### **c. Breathings Effect on the Nervous System**

As most people have experienced, when you're worried, upset, or anxious, you can feel it viscerally — your heart starts to beat faster and faster, you can feel dizzy, and blood rushes toward your heart and your brain. The system responsible for this is known as the **sympathetic nervous system** otherwise known as the fight or flight response. When your body over time (or immediately) starts to fill with all that adrenaline and cortisol you won't feel so great, especially if you continue with the breathing pattern. You can directly try to deal with the stressor OR use your breath to stop the response.

Slow conscious breathing (as described above) is a way of interrupting that stress response by turning on the vagus nerve, which in turn powers up the parasympathetic nervous system



Breathing deeply, with a slow and steady inhalation to exhalation (or extended exhalation) ratio, signals our parasympathetic nervous system to calm the body down. Long, deep breaths can also manage our stress responses to help decrease anxiety, fear, racing thoughts, a rapid heartbeat and shallow chest breathing. These responses can directly impact our physical, mental and emotional health, and longevity.

Fight or flight is designed for us to escape Danger however the modern day stressors (and mental stressors) have put our system in overload. If you can teach someone to take control of their nervous system they can quickly transform their life.

#### **d. CO2 Tolerance**

One thing most of us were taught growing up that CO2 is a waste gas. This is quite far from the truth. In fact it is just as important as oxygen in order for you to do all the things you love doing, and without it the body wouldn't function at all! Every single human being has a unique response to the level of CO2 in their body that they can tolerate and the level of CO2 that you can tolerate is what actually sends a signal to the body to breathe (has nothing to do with oxygen levels).

A strong response to CO2 levels (poor tolerance) will indicate intense and heavy breathing.

A reduced response to CO2 levels (good tolerance) will indicate light and optimal breathing.

Improving CO2 tolerance can do many things. One major thing that applies to many people is to help **reduce anxiety** - Research conducted by HHP-Foundation found that those with a higher CO2 tolerance had lower in-the-moment anxiety. This suggests that building up your CO2 tolerance for anxiety can help you maintain a sense of calm during everyday life. In addition to this it can also help reduce symptoms of depressions, improve athletic performance, decrease inflammation, increase energy and much much more



## 8. Breathwork Fundamental Coaching - A step by step Approach

*Below we give a brief outline in order of how we suggest working with a client however every client is different, will progress differently and will have different needs and commitments. There is no timeline. You can jump forward and back any time to an exercise you think would help your clients.*

### Tier 1 - Basic Exercises to Practice with a client

- a. **CP Test** (or you can use the CO2 tolerance test)
- b. **Optimal breath Sequence** - 3-3-3 to 2-2-2 for some people it may even look like 1-2-1 to 3-5-2.
- c. **Nose Unblocking Exercise** - if someone has trouble breathing through their nose introduce them to this exercise. (see appendix for exercises)

### Tier 1 Integration - (homework/practice to integrate to daily life)

**Daily CP/CO2 test, keep track of daily results.** First thing in the morning is the best time to do it upon waking.

**Tier 1** is all about awareness. Have the student focus on the above items in section 8. Be aware of when they are experiencing poor breathing habits, and start to shift toward optimal breathing. Encourage them to set a reminder in their phone to go off multiple times throughout the day to check in with how they are breathing. When the alarm goes off do the following:

#### Awareness Alarm

- a. Take a moment to reflect on what you are grateful for today.
- b. Take a few deep, slow breaths through the nose and into the diaphragm and say a little mantra to yourself. I am powerful. I am strong. As I continue to breathe better I become stronger, happier and healthier. Pick whatever you like.
- c. We reprogram and build habits through repetition.
- d. We also reprogram the subconscious mind through repetition plus emotion.

**Follow up** - In subsequent sessions always start by asking how their week went. What did they observe? What challenges did they have in regards to breathing? Did they notice their breath change based on situations they were presented with (stress, fear, emotions etc)?

### Tier 2 Reduced Breathing - Slowing down the breath, and nose breathing.

Practice with client/student 5-10 minutes each.





- a. **Balanced breath - 5-6 Seconds**
- b. **Double Exhalation**
- c. **Box Breath**
- d. **4-7-8**
- e. **Mouth Taping (at night)**
- f. **Consistency - setting up a daily routine/ritual/practice**

**Tier 2 Integration/Accountability** - continue with the daily alarm prompts to reflect and bring awareness to proper breathing techniques.

**Daily Routine / Breath Ritual** - We can introduce here a few new exercises and encourage them to start a daily routine. 10-20 minutes per day as follows:

1. **Gratitude**
2. **Intentions**
3. **Breathing Practice** - choose one from above, you can change or keep the same daily
4. **Reflection / Affirmations**
5. **Journal**

**Accountability** - in a group you can set accountability partners to check in daily with a text or whats app message when they complete their daily routine OR get them to send you a text as their coach.

**Tier 3 - CO2 Tolerance - starting to feel into the feeling of higher CO2 levels in the body.**

Practice with client/student 5-10 minutes each.

1. **5-5-10**
2. **3-6-9**
3. **Double - Double**
4. **Counting Steps**

**Tier 4 - Diaphragm Exercises (Stretch, Strengthen, Release)**

These exercises can be done anytime actually, if you see a client with really poor breathing mechanics we may want to introduce some of these earlier.

#### **Exercises**

1. Diaphragm Pressure Exercise
2. Diaphragm Release Massage Exercise
3. Full Body Breath Stretch / Laying Hip Holder Stretch Exercises
4. Sitting/Laying Full Posture Expansion Exercise



5. Cow and Cat (yoga postures)

### Integration

- a. Morning daily CP/CO<sub>2</sub> test
- b. Continue daily practice and insert new breathing exercises
- c. How are you holding them accountable? How is their routine working for them?

**Tier 5 - Breath Holds and Acute Intermittent Hypoxia** - these exercises will really help us to increase our CO<sub>2</sub> tolerance and also calm our mind as a form of meditation. The more you can relax and not even think you will conserve more energy. Remember a thought that creates stress in the body will use up more energy than a clear mind.

### Exercises

1. Max Breath Hold
2. Apnea Tables
3. Acute Intermittent Hypoxia

### Additional Exercises

- a. Buzz Breath (Brahmari) - increase NO<sub>2</sub> production for energy and circulation (vegas nerve stimulation)
- b. Amp Up Breath (or breath of fire) - increase energy
- c. Alternate Nostril Breathing - balance the mind and create calm in the body

## 9. Breathing Exercises - Appendix

***For any breathing exercises you always want to make sure you are practicing in a safe space. It should be a space that if you pass out or get dizzy you won't harm yourself or others (driving, operating machinery, using sharp objects etc) and NEVER do it in water because there is a risk of drowning.***

### Normalized Breathing

- a. **Nose Unblocking Exercise**
  1. Sit comfortably
  2. Take a small breath in, followed by a small normal breath out.
  3. Pinch Your nose and hold your breath
  4. Gently nod your head back and forth
  5. When you feel a strong urge to breath take a small breath in through your nose



6. You should focus on normal breathing and not gasping for air
7. Take 1 minute rest and repeat
8. To build up more CO<sub>2</sub> and help the unblocking you can pace back and forth as you hold.

**You should notice after a few rounds that your nose may open up significantly.**

**b. Mouth Taping**

1. Before bed place a small piece of tape over your lips to hold them together. You can use a paper tape which is breathable and not too adhesive. A small 1 inch strip is more than enough to tape your top and bottom lip together.
2. You can start by doing this for 10 – 20 minutes and eventually falling asleep with the tape on your lips
3. This will train you to keep your mouth shut at night and force nose breathing.

**c. Optimized Breath (2-2-2, 3-3-3, 3-5-2 etc)** - ask the student to find a cadence or rhythm that feels good to them. Play with different inhales and exhales in the range 2 sec inhale, 2 second exhale and 2 second pause. The pause should not be a hold but rather just a pause before inhaling again. Let them do this for a few minutes at different combinations to practice. Breathe in through the nose, to diaphragm and relax. Count for a while and then stop counting to let it become automatic.

**d. Balanced Breath** - Research has shown that many of the ancient mantras, scriptures and prayers followed a breathing cadence of approx 5.5 second inhale with a 5.5 second exhale which equaled 5.5 breaths per minute. Have the student close their eyes, as you watch a timer or play a guided track (coming soon). Think of yourself as the training wheels, helping them to get into a natural Rhythm, an Elemental Rhythm.

**Destress Breath**

Slowing down the exhale and calming the mind and nervous system.

**e. Double Ex** - This one is simple and one of the most effective for getting people to relax. Start with a low count and work your way up. Over time people will get accustomed to a count they like to get them into a relaxed state. Remember on exhale we slow down our heart rate and the nervous system relaxes, so extending the exhale over time has a great calming effect on the body. Start with an inhale of 2 seconds and an exhale of 4, after a few inhales at this cadence, increase the inhale to 3 seconds and exhale to 6 seconds and so on. Over time we can increase this until the extended exhale becomes too



challenging to maintain and then take a step back to the previous cadence. Stay here for a few minutes.

- f. **Box Breathing** - Visualize a box, at the top left corner you start the inhale, you can make your box any size you like, 3 second edges to 6 second edges are a good place to start, the goal is not to push too long but rather to relax. Inhale along the top edge of the box for 5 seconds, hold along the right edge for 5 seconds, exhale along the bottom for 5 seconds and then hold along the left side for 5 seconds. You can keep repeating as you make your way around the box over and over again until the box disappears and the breathing pattern becomes automatic.
- g. **4-7-8** - another classic breathing Technique - You can imagine a triangle here with 3 different sides . On the first side you inhale for 4 seconds, then you hold for 7 seconds and finally exhale for 8 seconds. On exhale you can make a whooshing sound as you slowly exhale which may also increase relaxation. Repeat the triangle as many times as necessary.

### **CO2 Tolerance Building Exercises**

The above exercise can also help to improve CO2 tolerance. Once the client is familiar and comfortable with those they can move on to some of these more advanced breathing practices. These exercises will focus on different breathing tempos and extend the breath holds (after exhale) causing your CO2 levels to increase. Over time your body adapts and you will find yourself being able to push these further and further. A word of caution is to slowly increase as you may experience some side effects like a pressure in the head or mild headache. Increasing CO2 in the body too much for too long is not healthy. Slow gradual increases are best. You know you are doing it right when you feel a hunger for air towards the end of each hold.

- a. **5-5-10** - this breathing technique will result in 3 breaths per minute. An equal inhale and exhale followed by a hold equal to the length of the inhale and exhale added together. You can also change this to 4-4-8 or 3-3-6 but 5-5-10 is a great sweet spot to aim for. Continue until you get into the CO2 zone.
- b. **3-6-9** - simple and effective sequence for increasing CO2 where you inhale for 3 seconds, exhale for 6 seconds and then hold for 9. The hold matches the inhale and exhale and the exhale is double the inhale. After doing this for a few rounds you should feel your CO2 levels increase. We know that CO2 (not O2) is what triggers us to breath. It's important to get to know this feeling and try to sit with it for a bit to allow your body to adapt.



- c. **Double Double** - Take an inhale, double the exhale length, then double the hold length again. With the example above of 3-6-9 you would increase the hold to 12. (3 inhale,  $3 \times 2 = 6$  exhale  $\times 2 = 12$  hold). Every second we increase the inhale we will dramatically increase the exhale and hold exponentially)
- d. **Breathe Light - Hungry for Air** - Inhale and exhale as slowly as possible. Try to resist the urge of taking a big or deep breath as long as you can as you feel the air hunger build up in your body. Take a rest if you need it and start again. Another version is to cup your hands over your face and do the same as it will allow you to breathe in more CO<sub>2</sub>. You can do this with walking to intensify the effect. Go slow and if you feel light headed take some normal breaths to reset yourself.
- e. **Breathless Step Counting** - Inhale for 2 steps, exhale for 4 steps. As you walk see if this is comfortable and if not extend the exhales until you feel strong air hunger. Modified you can add a hold after an exhale. Slowly increase and take breaks as needed for safety.
- f. **Buildup Breathing** - this is a simple exercise (but can also be very challenging and uncomfortable). In a nutshell you reduce your breathing until you start feeling a noticeable urge to breathe (increase in CO<sub>2</sub> levels). The goal here is to reset your bodys tolerance level to tolerate higher amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. The best way to do this is to sit in front of a mirror and just observe your breathing movements.

Sit up Straight, relax your shoulders, try your best to keep a straight spine and feel your ribs expand slowly. Place one hand on your chest and one hand above your belly button. Feel your diaphragm slowly moving as you inhale (an option here is to apply a little pressure to restrict your breathing further using your hands on your belly and chest with a bit of pressure)

Each inhale focus on take a smaller inhale than the last (and definitely less air than you feel you would like to inhale) until you feel a strong urge to breathe.

Each exhale feel yourself relax until you are not able to notice any movements on the inhale or exhale.

By using a simple exercise like this, you can reduce unnecessary breathing movements and train your body to breathe optimally.



If at any point your stomach muscles start to contract or jerk or feel tense, if you feel dizzy or your breathing gets out of control it is a sign the CO2 levels may be too intense and it is recommended to take a break for 15-30 seconds or until you feel back to normal.

Remember we are slowly building tolerance and not trying to do it all in one day. Initially you may feel uncomfortable after a few seconds. Ultimately you should be able to get up to 3+ minutes or more. Practicing this for a few minutes a day is a great way to gradually build up your tolerance and reset your CO2 baseline.

As you increase CO2 levels in the body you may notice some bodily reactions including:

- A feeling of increased warmth (increased circulation due to dilation of blood vessels)
- Redness in the face (increased blood flow)
- Increased saliva in the mouth, which is an indication that your body is going into relaxation mode and activating the PNS (parasympathetic nervous system) rest and digest.

If at any point you feel dizzy or too uncomfortable take a break or stop doing the exercise completely. Always trust your intuition and never force yourself.

## Pranayamas

- h. Buzz Breath** - take a deep breath in through your nose and make a humming noise as you slowly exhale. Try to exhale as long as possible. Feel the vibration in your nasal cavity right through to space between your eyes. Momentarily pause at the end of the exhale and take a deep breath in through your nose again deeply into the belly. This type of breathing will increase Nitric Oxide Production up to 15x. Some optional add ons to this exercise is using your index fingers to plug your ears by pushing your cartilage (tragus) toward the ear canal. You can also press your tongue to the roof of your mouth.
- i. Alternate Nostril** - this breathing technique brings the body and brain into balance. Helps to relax the nervous system, reduce stress and anxiety. Sit comfortably, exhale completely and use your right thumb to close your right nostril. Inhale fully through the left nostril, plug your left nostril and then exhale through the right nostril. Inhale back through the right nostril then plug it and exhale through the left. Continue this pattern for 5 minutes or until you feel balanced and relaxed.



## Energizers

- j. **Amp Up Breath** - sharply inhale through the nose 4 to 5 times in a second then exhale with a “ha” sound for 1 - 2 seconds. Do this for a minute, ending with a big inhalation and a slow full exhalation.
- k. **Double In** - this is the opposite of Double Ex, inhale for twice as long as exhale, this will energize you and can increase adrenaline and cortisol levels, as you breathe this way, feel yourself getting stronger and more powerful. Stay centered.

**Flow Sequences** - The following sequence 10-20-30 ties it all together. Deep diaphragmatic breaths, followed by holds, and exhales. Best done with music to get you in the zone, and perfect to precede a meditation as it will help to clear your mind.

- 1. **10-20-30** - take 10 deep full breaths (in for 2 seconds and out for 2 second), followed by 20 deep breaths in for 1 second and out for 1 second and finally 30 quick sharp inhales and exhales. You can also try this sequence in reverse starting with quick breaths and moving to slow. I would always end with two or 3 full deep breaths.
- 2. **After the rounds you can play with different endings as follows:**
  - a. **Buzz Breath** - inhale and hold for 10-15 seconds and exhale with a buzz breath.
  - b. **Exhale and Hold on Empty (start with 30 seconds and work to max hold)**
    - i. You can add part a. After the max hold on exhale.

## Breath Holds

**Max Breath Hold** - A maximum breath hold is a great sign of overall health and longevity. The key to this exercise is to do it first thing in the morning to find a baseline. Breathe normally for about a minute. Take a full deep breath in and hold. Try to focus your awareness on your body and totally relax. As you feel the feeling of discomfort toward the end try to remain calm. When you finally exhale do your best not to gasp for air but to normalize your breathing as naturally as possible.

**Acute Intermittent Hypoxia** - 1-5 rounds of elemental rhythm (either style) followed by max breath hold. This style of breath helps push the participant into a state of hypoxia for a short period of time. As they breathe they release CO<sub>2</sub> (remember CO<sub>2</sub> levels are what signal us the urge to breathe) as CO<sub>2</sub> levels drop lower it will take longer to feel that urge and when we hold on an exhale we have less oxygen in our system thus moving us into a deeper state of hypoxia. This will stimulate stem cell production, the creation of new capillaries and blood vessels, increase longevity, increase red blood cell production and more.



**Apnea Tables** - Apnea tables designed to improve the body's tolerance to CO<sub>2</sub> will decrease the rest time between successive breath holds in an attempt to slowly build a residual concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the lungs. An O<sub>2</sub> table will do the opposite by holding rest times constant and increasing the duration of each breath hold.

**Designing a CO<sub>2</sub> table** - start with finding out your max breath hold. Let's say it's 2 minutes. We will set our breath hold at 50% of our max so 1 minute. You will need a stopwatch for this exercise.

1. Start breathing for 2:30 and then hold for 1 minute.
2. Each round, reduce breathing time by 15 seconds followed by 1 minute hold.
3. Last 2 rounds should have 1 minute of breathing each. See Example:

**Rd 1.** Breath 2:30 Hold 1min

**Rd.2** Breath 2:15 Hold 1 min,

**Rd 3.** Breath 2:00 Hold 1 min

**Rd 4.** Breath 1:45 hold 1 min

**Rd 5.** Breathe 1:30 Hold 1min

**Rd 6.** Breath 1:15 Hold 1 min,

**Rd 7.** Breathe 1 min Hold 1 min

**Rd 8.** Breath 1 min hold 1 min.

Stop.

Recover.

**Designing an O<sub>2</sub> table** - similar to CO<sub>2</sub> but instead of decreasing breathing time we increase hold time and keep breathing time constant at 2 minute. As a rule of thumb we will work up to 80% of your max breath hold. Lets say its 2 minutes, we will work up to a 96 second hold (80% of 120seconds) in 15 second increments. Work you way back from round 8 (96 seconds) with a minimum starting hold of 20+ seconds. If your max breath hold is 2 minutes you would use the following table. Last two rounds are at 80% of max breath hold. You will need a stopwatch for this exercise.

4. Start breathing for 2:00 and then hold for 1 minute.
5. Each round, increase hold time by 15 seconds.
6. Breath for another 2 minutes. Repeat hold with 15 second increase according to your personal table.
7. Last 2 rounds should have 80% of max breath hold. See Example:

**Rd 1.** Breathe 2 min Hold 21 sec

**Rd.2** Breath 2 min Hold 21 sec,

**Rd 3.** Breathe 2 min Hold 36 sec

**Rd 4.** Breath 2 min hold 51 sec

**Rd 5.** Breathe 2 min Hold 66 sec

**Rd 6.** Breath 2 min Hold 81 sec,

**Rd 7.** Breathe 2 min Hold 96 sec

**Rd 8.** Breath 2 min Hold 96 sec.

Stop.

Recover.





## Physical Diaphragm Exercises

### 1. Diaphragm Pressure (front and sides) - (see video)

- a. breathe in deeply through the nose and expand your diaphragm with one hand over the chest and one over your belly.
- b. The upper hand should not move.
- c. After a few breaths add some resistance to your lower hand pressing your belly down as you counter by trying to expand your diaphragm.
- d. Now place both hands one your sides thumb towards your lumbar spine and pointer finger towards your belly button just under your rib cage on each side of your torso.
- e. Try to expand your diaphragm out to the sides.
- f. One you feel the expansion give some resistance with your hands. Do a few rounds of each exercise.

### 2. Diaphragm Release massage - (see video)

- a. take your index and middle finger, point them out together, and slightly curve them.
- b. Now reach under your rib cage and slowly massage the tissue, starting from your lower rib cage all the way up to your breastbone and back down again.
- c. You want to try to feel the underside of your ribs.
- d. Go Slow and steady back and forth as you release the tissue. Breath in and out through your diaphragm as you massage

### 3. Diaphragm Stretches (see video)

#### 1. Hip Holders

- a. Lay on your back
- b. Knees bend, feet flat on the floor.
- c. Put your hands on your upper thighs where they connect to your hips.
- d. Fully exhale while pushing your hips away
- e. Try to pull your belly button up and under your ribcage (on empty lungs) feel the stretch

#### 2. Side Body Full Stretch

- a. Lay flat on your back and fully extend your feet.
- b. Extend your hands above your head
- c. Exhale fully, engage your glutes (butt) and again pull your belly button up under your ribs.
- d. To extend this stretch make a moon shape with your body without twisting. Push out your hip to one side with your hands and feet going the opposite way.



#### 4. Slow internal Stretch Expansion (see videos)

- a. You can do this sitting standing or laying down. For either position have good posture, flat back, chest up, shoulders back.
- b. Start to inhale into your belly, when that fills move to your chest, then up into your clavicles.
- c. Once completely full take a few extra sips of air and hold for a few seconds.
- d. Very slowly exhale and feel the air slowly leave your lungs as they go back to resting position.
- e. Where do you feel this in your body? Any pain or stiffness?
- f. Once you are very comfortable with this in a static position you can slowly move your body intuitively when full. Feel the sensations and extra stretch.

#### Breathing Practices for Athletes

Always start gradually and work your way up by doing everything above. Also when competing its important to breathe normally. The following is for practice / training sessions to slowly improve breathing performance. Improving CO<sub>2</sub> tolerance has also shown to improve VO<sub>2</sub> Max.

VO<sub>2</sub> Max refers to how much Oxygen your body can absorb and use during exercise.

**Nose Breathing** - the first step when training is to simple start changing your breathing to bring awareness to how you breathe when you train. If you can switch to nose breathing (as long as you don't have any nasal restrictions or injuries) this will help improve performance as you adapt.

Go slow and as you feel CO<sub>2</sub> levels rise see if you can stay in that zone for a little while without going too far and making sure you can recover your breathing normally without gasping for Air.

Also for maximum intensity training nose breathing should not be forced but most athletes can perform at close to maximum (once they have trained and adapted) while only nose breathing.

**Step Counting** - While exercise (never while training in water) Athletes can count their normal rhythm of inhale and exhale. An easy example is while walking or running. How many steps on inhale and how many steps on exhale. Then they can extend the exhale for an extra step, and alternatively can inhale hold then exhale. For example if normal walking inhale is two steps and exhale is 3, they can try in 2 and out 4. Keep this going until you feel CO<sub>2</sub> tolerance increasing then recover. Next they can extend the exhale even further for a few minutes and recover. Finally you can inhale for 2 hold for two and exhale for 4. This should be done gradually and



over time. Always give yourself time to recover. If you can when in recovery don't gasp for breath unless you need to. Always try to slowly recover through the nose if possible.

More advanced athletic breath training is available but is beyond the scope of this course.

## 10. FAQ

For all health related FAQ we always advise a client checks with their Doctor or Healthcare provider prior to working with a coach as we are not certified to assess or diagnose conditions of our clients.

**Asthma** - exercise induced asthma can be improved with proper breath training over time. People with asthma usually are mouth breathers or resort to mouth breath to help them feel like they are breathing better. Over time with practice these exercises can help to alleviate system and correct breathing.

**(as we continue to get FAQs we will update this section)**

## 11. Coach Launch / Business Tools

- A. Email Lists** - keep contact with everyone you breathe.
- B. Social Media** - different platforms, online classes, pros and cons. Testimonials, lives, story etc.
- C. Consistency** - build a community and a following by being consistent and showing up even when it's hard, that 1 student that shows up can be the turning point in your business, or you can change their life.
- D. Community** - you are the leader, hold space, be humble, don't make it about you, setting boundaries.
- E. Costs (standard costs you can promote online)**
  - a. Single Class \$25-40
  - b. 1 on 1 \$150 for 60-90 minutes
  - c. Semi Private (divide by \$150/ hour)
  - d. Retreat / Corporate \$250/session minimum recommended \$500 (multiply out a. by # of people)
  - e. 8 Week coaching program \$999 - \$1500 (advertise at \$1500 and you can discount to \$999 for private or group coaching)
- F. Referrals** - Certification program, your community. Always ask, if you know anyone who might benefit please connect me with them.
- G. Elemental Rhythm Network / Online**



## 12. Glossary in relation to Breathing

**Oxygen** - main source of energy production in body / cells

**CO2** - increased CO2 important for proper delivery of oxygen to cells. Vasodilator.

**NO** - Nitric Oxide antimicrobial, vasodilator, created through nasal breathing.

**Bohr Effect** - a decrease in the amount of oxygen associated with hemoglobin and other respiratory compounds in response to a lowered blood pH resulting from an increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the blood. When we overbreathe we release excess CO<sub>2</sub>, and the hemoglobin holds Oxygen and it doesn't get delivered to the cells.

**Adrenaline** - prepares body for flight or fight, physical activity can increase 10x, stress 50x. Increases heart rate, widens airways, increases blood flow to arms and legs, decreases blood flow to abdominal organs.

**Cortisol** - released under stress (when airways inflamed usually due to over breathing), anti-inflammatory, increases blood sugar (helps energy production fight/flight), reduces formation of skeletal bones.

**Dyspnea** - Definition. By Mayo Clinic Staff. Few sensations are as frightening as not being able to get enough air. **Shortness of breath** — known medically as dyspnea — is often described as an intense tightening in the chest, air hunger, difficulty breathing, breathlessness or a feeling of suffocation.

**Hypercapnic** - elevated CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the blood

**Hypocapnia** - very low levels of CO<sub>2</sub> in blood

**Hyperoxia** - a state in which there is excessive supply of oxygen

**Hypoxia** - when the body or an area of the body goes into a very low oxygen state. In small amounts (intermittent hypoxia) has shown many potential benefits to the human body.

**Hormetic Stress** - good stress in small amounts that allows the body to respond and adapt.

**Chronic Stress** - a consistent level of stress that is always there slowly breaking down the body and causing long term damage/inflammation.



**Sample Client Intake Form**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Age:**

**Health Status (ask client): 1-10**

**Client Intentions:**

**Life Story (History and Current Situation):**

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**As you take notes above on things about their story that stand out make sure they feel comfortable, whatever they want to share. Listen, have compassion. Also see if they do any of the following:**

**Optimal Breathing Habits**

- Nasal breathing
- Slow Breathing
- Rhythmic and regular breathing
- Good posture
- Mainly Diaphragmatic
- Mouth closed when not speaking
- Deep breathing
- Quiet almost silent
- Relaxed

**Poor Breathing Habits**

- Mouth Breathing
- Fast breathing
- Chest Breathing
- Lots of Sighs, yawns or holding breath
- Tense shoulders
- Short Forced Exhalation
- Anxious, poor focus
- Mouth open most of time
- Shallow Breathing
- No Rhythm (irregular)
- Noisy Breathing
- Poor Posture (hunched)
- Upper Chest movement only
- Tapping, twitching, nervous

**Client Objectives:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CP/CO2 Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Self Sleep Score 1-10:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Max Hold(in)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Resting Heart Rate:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Any other Biomarkers they Use? HRV, Blood Sugar ETC?**



## Breathing Assessment / Questionnaire - Retake every Month

Scoring Key= 1- Very Often   2 - Often   3 - Sometimes   4 - Rarely   5 - Never

Score yourself from 1-5 with which option best describes your situation in the past 30 days

1. I have health challenges \_\_\_\_\_
2. I have a dry mouth and lips \_\_\_\_\_
3. I breathe through my mouth \_\_\_\_\_
4. I suffer from stuffy, runny or itchy nose \_\_\_\_\_
5. I have constant colds \_\_\_\_\_
6. I have difficulty swallowing (lump sensation in throat) \_\_\_\_\_
7. I breath in my chest, trouble breathing into my belly \_\_\_\_\_
8. I experience chest tightness and trouble breathing \_\_\_\_\_
9. I sneeze, sigh, yawn \_\_\_\_\_
10. I take a lot of big breaths when speaking \_\_\_\_\_
11. I hold my breath for no reason (stop breathing) \_\_\_\_\_
12. I am a noisy breather, cough, clear throat, congested, snuffle etc. \_\_\_\_\_
13. I have a forward leaning or slumped posture \_\_\_\_\_
14. I have poor restless sleep, snoring, sleep apnea \_\_\_\_\_
15. I grind my teeth at night \_\_\_\_\_
16. I have low energy, very tired in the morning / day, poor concentration \_\_\_\_\_
17. I experience heart palpitations or irregular heart beats \_\_\_\_\_
18. I experience sugar cravings, addictive tendencies \_\_\_\_\_
19. I am always thinking, or overthinking brain in overdrive \_\_\_\_\_
20. I feel anxious, depressed, scared/worried \_\_\_\_\_
21. I am afraid of conflict, have low confidence, people pleaser \_\_\_\_\_
22. I am irritated, impatient, conflict oriented, over ambitious \_\_\_\_\_
23. Indigestion, overeating, poor digestion, constipation \_\_\_\_\_
24. I experience headaches \_\_\_\_\_
25. I have muscle stiffness in back shoulders, neck, jaw, tension in head/face \_\_\_\_\_
26. I have low endurance and shortness of breath when exercising \_\_\_\_\_
27. Poor vocal clarity, hoarseness, squeaky, strained \_\_\_\_\_
28. I have trouble relaxing or doing nothing \_\_\_\_\_
29. I have low sex drive, poor sex performance \_\_\_\_\_
30. I suffer from panic attacks/lose control in high stress situations at home/work \_\_\_\_\_

Score out of 150: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_