

Ecstatic Breath Workshop

by Suzanne SxySadist

Intro to Conscious Breath Work –

Our respiration is the only life sustaining bodily function that we have any great degree of voluntary control over. We can exert this control by bringing our awareness and focus to it and choosing to breathe faster or slower, shallowly or more deeply, in rhythmic patterns or completely erratically. In so doing we can shift our emotional, mental and physiological states. Or we can let our respiration simply run on auto pilot and biology will take over and keep our bodies breathing completely on its own, barring any outside influence of course.

Conscious breathing (voluntarily altering normal breathing rhythm) has been used for centuries in numerous modalities & by a wide variety of people for as many reasons. For example: yoga, meditation, psycho therapy, martial arts, massage, bodywork, childbirth, tantric / Taoist sex practices, running and other athletic sports, etc. Breath exercises have the amazing ability to be relaxing and calming or very energizing, depending on the speed, and focus.

Health & Relational Benefits to Conscious Breathing -

Many of us have adopted restricted breathing patterns through societal, environmental or other outside influences and do not fully breathe in our “normal” state of being. I feel that as a result most of us carry a lot more stress and anxiety in our bodies than we need to, and that learning to consciously breathe even 20 mins a day can reduce many of the negative effects of stress on our bodies.

I have learned that how we breathe and how we feel are always connected. If we are anxious or frightened we will tend to breathe far more shallowly and faster than when we are relaxed. Bringing our awareness to our breath when we feel strong emotions can help us to shift negative emotions and the effects they have on our bodies. For example, when you recognize that you are feeling anxious, simply focusing on breathing more slowly and deeply will help your body to relax and ease the emotional tension as well.

It has also been proven that that the body is designed to release 70% of it's toxins through breath but most of us do not breathe deeply enough to facilitate this so we end up storing it in the tissues of our bodies. When that happens, other systems of your body, such as your liver and kidneys, must work much harder. This added stress and strain can set the stage for a number of other illnesses.

I learned much of what I know about breath from my massage teacher: Chester Mainard. The following is taken from the notes he gave us during a 2 day breath workshop: “When we gain control of our breath, we greatly increase our ability to focus and be present. When we are aware of breath and have competency in helping others to become aware of theirs, we greatly enhance our abilities to relax and / or heal tension. Breath work expands our abilities to know ourselves, to be able to focus our intentions and stay relaxed and open. It develops presence, which is an ability to perceive, feel and respond from an open, relaxed and supported position. Breath work also has much to teach us about intimacy by helping us to see and feel directly the ways in which we are all connected to one another.”

Breath work and BDSM / Sex

Let's expand upon the concept of using breath to build intimacy for a moment. By staying fully present and in the moment, (not "checking out") conscious breathing can help a person stay more grounded and connected with his / her self, and the experience they are having. From there it is far easier to get or remain more connected and in tune with a partner either simply by "being with them" while you each breath deeply on your own or you can use a connected breathing pattern.

During a scene or sexual encounter, if a top is holding her/his breath, frequently the bottom will be holding his/her breath as well. While, the focus in many of my scenes is to make certain that the bottom is using breath, it is equally as important that the top uses breath as the bottom will entrain to the top when a connection is developed.

Breath can also be used to help people to get through very challenging situations such as the experience of heavy pain play. Many people tend to hold their breath and brace against pain, resisting it rather than trying to breathe into the sensations. Holding one's breath blocks a person from fully experiencing emotions, pleasure, pain and life. Learning to use your breath (or learning to help a partner to use their breath) to carry you through the "rough spots" in BDSM play can help you eroticize or transform pain and there by extend the duration, intensity and spiritual depth of your scenes. Heck, if breath work can get a woman through child birth, a caning or heavy flogging or even caning should be a cake walk, right?

As mentioned earlier, breath is also widely used as a tool in Tantric and Taoist sex practices. It can also help to delay ejaculation in men by shifting focus and spreading erotic energy. The use of breath this way can help men to achieve full body orgasms with out ejaculation. Breath can also intensify, lengthen, and increase the intensity and power of an orgasm in both sexes.

More Breath Wisdom:

The focus of conscious breathing the way that it was taught to me, is to bring more air "deeply" into the body. Oxygen is fuel for the body's fire and we want to take deep breaths that bring sensation and awareness all the way down to the pelvic floor. This will cause your belly to expand and the pelvic floor to become engaged. By deep. I mean the depth to which the breath & movement can be felt in your body. When we take full breaths we are increasing our capacity for air. A deep breath does not have to be a full breath but a full breath will always go deep.

Some modalities teach that breathing in through the nose & out through the mouth is preferable but I was taught that it is easier to take deep relaxed breaths in through an open mouth. Relaxed breathing is important because when our muscles are actively engaged their elasticity is diminished.

I have also discovered that if you clench a muscle it hurts more when you hit it. The more relaxed the body is... the greater breath capacity it will have and I believe the better it will be able to process strong sensation i.e. pain.

Let's make some noise!

I have also been taught by another amazing breath guru: Sherri Winston, that making noise during the exhalation can be useful to release built up tension, move energy through the body and make your orgasms last as long as you keep the noise coming while you're cumming.

However, we as a culture are incredibly sound phobic and it can be quite difficult to overcome our shyness and aversion to making sound in private let alone in public. I would strongly encourage you to work on “getting over it” and experiment with making sound with your breath and increasing your capacity for pleasure. Trust me when I tell you it is worth it!

I myself do still struggle with this in some settings (public speaking engagements are still a bit challenging for me) but I have far less difficulty with “finding my voice” in a scene setting or in private sexual encounters. I have quite often found that deep full breaths, combined with some timely roaring and other feral sounds, can help me to process far greater amounts of sensation than I would have believed possible. Also, she taught me that sending your breath and sound out ahead of your arousal brings on ecstatic states much faster.

Is this the same as Breath Play & is it dangerous?

Many people hear the terms breath work and think “breath play” which is widely known to be an extremely edgy and dangerous realm. Although there are many forms of “breath play” what I am discussing in this class should not be confused with edge play.

Conscious breathing involves one person voluntarily altering their breath pattern either on their own or under their partner’s direction. For example: the dominant can tell the submissive / bottom how & when to breathe or even order them to hold their own breath for short periods of time. Or he / she can have the submissive follow his or her own breathing pattern or use breath patterns for desired results such as: relaxing breath, charging breath, “Big Draw” breath.

I feel this is relatively the safest way to “play with breath”, but it can cause hypoxia (low oxygen in the blood) if done incorrectly, hyperventilation (dizziness, spasm in the muscles of the hands or feet (tetany), and loss of consciousness. If any these occur, simply returning to normal breathing usually fixes it pretty quickly.

However, Jay Wiseman says that, the main danger of having the submissive hold their own breath is that when they do so they are probably also performing what’s called a Valsalva maneuver, (forcibly exhaling against closed lips and pinched nose, forcing air into the middle ear). Something similar happens during straining during a bowel movement, and this can also stop the heart via vagal stimulation. I am told that the risk of this is higher in “older” people, but there is no clear line between “older” and “younger” people.

I have been involved in conscious breath work or one form or another for over 10 years and have yet to see anyone have any symptoms or difficulties more serious than a dry mouth or cramping. A bit of dizziness is also fairly normal but I personally think that is half the fun. ☺

When doing conscious breath work; if you start to experience unpleasant light headedness (as opposed to blissful subspace) slow down the breathing to a normal pace for a while and take a break. If you begin to feel tingling, cramping or pain in your fingers, toes or lips, slow down & breathe normally for a little while. This often occurs when people hold tension in their bodies during the breathing process or when they force the exhalation. If you wish to resume try and place less emphasis on the out breath. Do not to force the breath out, just let it simply “fall away.”

Yawning is quite normal as well and is the body’s way of dumping extra CO2 and toxins. Just go with it and return to the breath. Also, you will probably get pretty thirsty at first so have some water handy but this often gets better on its own once your body adjusts.

Experiential Breath Exercises –

- Chester’s “Anal”, “5 Step” & “Charging” breaths
- “Sip sip ahh” breath
- Sheri’s “Elevator” breath
- Pain management thru breath demo – time heavier strokes with the “out” breath!
- The “Big Draw” exercise: build energy through breath movement and touch then breathe in, breathe in, breathe in, CLENCH (especially the pelvic floor) & HOLD as long as possible and surrender to the exhalation!! This technique is great at the pinnacle of a scene or sex

Favorite Breath Quotes:

“To our ordinary consciousness, breathing only serves to maintain our body, but if we go beyond our mind, breathing can open up a completely new foundation for our life. With practice, we can develop our breathing into an eternal movement that “opens up” every cell in our body and fulfills our life with never ending joy.” Ilse Middendorf “The Perceptible Breath”

“Most people breathe enough to survive but not enough to really live” Dave Allen

“Releasing your fear to breathe freely and liberally in the presence of others creates the safety for others to do the same.” www.awakeningpathways.com

Resources & Links 🌀 🌐

Suzanne SxySadist - is a lifestyle switch, professional dominant, Body Electric trained Sacred Intimate, kink / sex educator and professional life coach My main site: www.sxysadist.com and some of my others: www.ShibariLover.com, www.SMCoaching.com & www.EroticExplorations.com You can email me at: Mistress@SxySadist.com

The Body Electric School – although Body Electric has recently changed hands and some of the courses I knew and loved so well are not currently being offered, I still believe they do great work and are a tremendous resource. <http://www.bodyelectric.org>

Sherri Winston – A fabulously knowledgeable sex educator and a really cool lady! Check out her site at <http://www.wholisticsexuality.com>

In Memorial – I would like to dedicate this class, hand out and many deep, loving anal breaths to the memory of Master Teacher **Chester Mainard** who was the greatest healer and teacher I have ever known and the man that taught me to “get my head in my ass” and breathe. His memory, legacy and love will live on through his students as we carry his message to all we touch.

My handouts take me quite some time, effort and love to prepare. Please do not duplicate, copy, repost or otherwise “rip them off” without my permission. Thanks!

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