

**Shamanism, Shamanic Healing and Journeying and Breathwork**

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## **Introduction**

When I began training to be breathwork therapist I knew what I wanted to compare, what I wanted to examine and was eager to explore. The morning of my oral presentation I went for a walk to think about my presentation. There was a feeling of something missing in my write-up and in my research. I walked; I consulted with my spirit helpers. I reviewed my experiences and observations searching for the information that would complete the circle.

My first conclusions that I drew were that shamanic journeying and breathwork experience were very similar but the roles of all involved were different. But something continued to nag at me. It was what I had read several times in various sources and credited to Stanislov Grof. When the thought and the trail of proof supporting my idea followed I thought I must be crazy to propose that I disagree with him and could prove it. I pondered, reviewed the countless pages of literature, the long lists of healing songs, stories and my experiences in Siberia and found that I had the missing link. This completed the circle.

What follows is a skeleton version of something that I plan on writing on in more depth and length and when more time allows.

I have been involved in shamanic healing for twenty years. My whole life has been centred on animism, although for much of the time I didn't know what it was called. I have been making disciplined shamanic journeys for twenty years and working/teaching shamanically for over fifteen years. Although I have worked with breathe because of singing all my life, my involvement with breathwork experience has been for a year during the training. In both regions there is still much to learn (experience).

The literature as well as internet is full of many references to shamanic breathwork. Joy Manne talks about Shamanism and the Breathwork Process, in Breathe. Manne also has a book Conscious Beathing: how Shamanic Breathing can Transform Your Life which apparently covers all forms of breathwork and how to use it (kundalini, shamanic, past life...). The title seems to use the word shaman just to get attention. Why not use Buddhistic? Star Wolf has her trademarked Shamanic Breathwork which seems closer to the point. Ortiz has Integrative/Shamanic Breathwork; Tantric Shamanism Breath Work; The Shaman's Breath; The Shamans (vocalizations)...the list goes on. Everyone has their own version. And all of them are far from shamanic.

## **Shamanism**

Shamanism (SHA-man) is a coined word by anthropologists and ethnographers for delineating certain behaviours and world view of a specific person: the shaman. The -ism ending is applied to demonstrate that it is a religion, and classified along with Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism as well as Christianity and Islam, to name a few.

However, it is not a religion if compared to others eg. written texts, hierarchy of servants with a triangular form of power. Shamanism is based on oral tradition. There is no hierarchy of servants except perhaps shaman and the apprentice. It is a world view based on **animism** with the shaman being a person or persons who go between this ordinary reality and non-ordinary reality / the spirit world, returning with information, knowledge, healing for person(s), creatures, places and community through the use of the shamanic journey and is always working with spirits. The central points are the shaman as a healer, moving between the worlds\*, animistic world view, does healing FOR OTHERS, and the shaman's spirits.

\* In very general terms, there are three worlds: upper, middle and lower. However, this view is culturally and individually defined. Each shaman/people/tribe/ethnic group has their own world view and the worlds vary greatly in number.

Animism is the belief that all is alive and has a spirit: TV, rocks, valleys, mountains, streams, trees, dis-eases, food, animals, etc. Shaman is one who sees, knows and is a word westernized from the Evenki “sá man”. The shaman is the go-betweenner.

### **Shamanism is a form of democratic anarchy**

The shaman works with his/her spirit helpers to do the healing work for/to/on others. Without spirit helpers there can be no shaman. The spirit helpers are the ones who Know. The shaman is a cooperative partner. Without a community or clients, there is no shaman.

Shamans work in many different ways. There are no formal set rules of how to work but there are certain distinguishing features, some of which are: client asking for help, setting up ritual/healing space, calling in spirit helpers, communicating with them through the use of sound. Over 80% of cultures in the world with shamanic traditions using sound while a small percentage use hallucinogens. They have one or more of their helping spirits with them while they travel to non-ordinary reality / the spirit world with the problem of the client(s)/community; gather power, information; return with this to ordinary reality; heal the client(s)/community, relating of the journey to client/community. They remember what has happened during the entire journey (difference between channelling and possession). They may even work on the client while in this altered state before returning.

The anarchy enters because each shaman works according to how their spirit helpers and teachers (ordinary reality and non-) have taught them and imbued them with healing abilities. In Tuva they say shamans get their power (kraft, germ.) from earth, alby, Sky, Bear, ancestors, for example. Their culture, language, physical locale, to name a few, also greatly influences their style. No one is right and everyone is right. There is no school, there is no Guru, and there is no diploma. Very, very

simply, if the person who claims to be a shaman has no spirit helpers, nor community that says you are a shaman it means literally that you are not a shaman.

### **Breathwork experience and Shamanic journey experience**

In essence they are very similar what happens to the client. Brain waves change. Chemical changes take place. Endorphins are produced. States of great relaxation can be produced. Insights into Self and Other, the Cosmos, the Greater Good are common.

In breathwork, the breath is used to initiate these changes. In holotropic breathing (Grofs') external stimuli of music is also added to assist these changes. The client experiences entering another place, time, culture, receives information and definitely an experience but does not necessarily understand what it is all about, and also can receive healing but not understand the reason or context of it.

In shamanic journeying the intent (question) of the client, the aid of spirit helpers known and unknown, the drumming/singing/dance/other external auditory stimuli guide or carry the journeyer to non-ordinary reality where they can experience entering another place, time, culture, receive information and healing. The experience is always related back to the question.

The breathwork therapist and shaman work in different and somewhat similar manner but there are more differences than commonalities. Researchers are still unable to define or discover what exactly happens to the shaman when in flight.

#### **A short-list of comparisons.**

##### **Shaman**

ritual clothes/decorated  
drums/instruments

##### **Breathwork Therapist**

varies-but usually "normal" clothes  
instruments/recorded music optional

voice, song, words	affirmations (optional), soothing comments, safety reassurance, physical intervention all optional
runesongs, power songs	
Animism	Depends on therapist
Spirit world/Spirits	More Jungian/Reichian/ me-myself-I centred with a bit of Cosmic consciousness/Higher Thought
Feeding of the Spirits with incense, food, drink, plants, etc.	
Ritual space/sacred space	Safe space
Does work ON or For the patient/ community	Observes and supports the client who is doing the work
Optional physical touching for healing because it is dependent on the client and what is wrong and what needs to be done	Same
Intervening, physical removal of illness	
Finding the root cause of illness and what caused it	
Doing the work on behalf of another	Supporting through pre- and postdiscussion
Taking on the burden of illness, etc on behalf of the other	

This comparison can go on, but it is not the point of this paper at the moment.

Shamans around the world do much psycho-pomp work with souls of the dead, lost souls, extraction healing, blessings, returning lost souls, returning power, divination also. These are essential parts of shamanic healing work. Language and song are key elements of the work. *This is the cultural, environmental and continuity connection for the people.*

Differences are subtle. From the literature and gathering of own experiences and others I find one difference that has prejudiced me from the beginning of my training as a breathwork therapist: where are my spirit helpers when I do this work on my Self? Why am I doing this breathwork on my self when my purpose is to heal others and through healing others, if I have any sense, I also heal myself?

Traditional shamans spend their time working with their helpers, with their community, their culture, with their local environment. Many shamanic practitioners/shamans currently do the same. In researching and working with shamans in Tuva for two years never once did any of them talk of breath or doing “work” on themselves. Everyday life, receiving patients was the healing and work.

In shamanic healing work the shaman is the person to go-between the worlds. They do psychopomp work. All persons have a connection to the spirit world because it is experienced through their local environment. Animism is the guiding principle. But the shaman is the one with the blessing of the Spirits, ancestors, their God(s) to do the sweaty work, risk their life. Some would argue a form of control, use of power (macht) but this also could be said of therapists, even breathwork therapists!

Shamanic journeying and breathwork give the client a connection. Shamanic journeying is safer. There are no restrictions, no limitations to whom can receive healing. In rare occasions there are exceptions. There is no need for any special breathing to get on the journey although the client’s breath may change while journeying. When I pick up my drum I don’t think about breath.

While sitting with another who is breathing I have noticed that one can do shamanic healing work at the same time: cleaning, removing that which doesn’t belong, and bringing in extra power for the client, for example. Always this is done AFTER I have consulted with my spirit helpers because they know best from the standpoint of unadulterated Truth and Love. I have “my own shit in my rucksack” and they don’t need that too! They are my supervisors. I may journey also but I do so if that is what is best for the client. My presence is needed. I need to be grounded and focused on them. Afterwards we can compare experiences.

Shaman's in general don't use conscious breathing techniques, be they Circumpolar arctic, Native American Indian, South Korean, Australian or Maori. However they experience conscious breathing techniques, circular breathing, rebirthing breath, etc when doing shamanic healing work. The simple reason is that through sound, voice, language, spirit talk, the words, the intent, the purpose of healing/the work produces this Breath, inspirare, inspire, expire, henki/hengitys, love langeen, the song sings you. Song is the Voice.

Breathwork is not rooted in religious or western interpretations. Its form was born through the work of the community, village shamans/healers, the tietäjä, the noiade, the bo, the curandero, the angakkoq, Mudang, etc. Their purpose was to heal, return soul, find, bless, escort the dead, find the dead, work with weather, search out hunting, find missing objects, extract intrusions, just to name a few of their duties.. This was done through their language and their culture. Stories, traditions the people's culture was passed down through song and dance; community song for supporting the shaman; through the shaman and his/her assistants; through the people accompanying them on instruments. The focus was not on breath. Shamanism is without culture/language, but Shamans have culture/language.

The shaman always knows why they do what they do because they have spirit helpers to show the way; they have their own cultural roots. Cultural means language, communication of history, physical locale, ethics, and ways and means of expression as well as religio-magical context. *Shamans are carriers of their cultures', history, mythology, world view, ethics, and language!* Also there is an active and real belief/trust in Spirit(s). These are the regions where the roads between shamanic journeying and shamans and breathwork sessions and breathwork therapists split. So-called "shamanic breathwork" or any phrase that uses "shaman" as part of its "breath"-title becomes null and void and just a marketing technique.



Stanislov Grof has been quoted as stating in various sources that he developed holotropic breathing based on the shaman changing their breath to reach altered states of consciousness. Based on long years of experience, of following the field, of doing research, working with traditional shamans, and the basic roots of shaman's work I say that his statement is *false*.

This is not an argument against holotropic breathing or of any breathwork. Breathwork is fantastic! I want to teach the world to breath!

But shaman's rarely if ever consciously change their breathing to reach this altered-state of consciousness. I have not been able to find a direct source where a shaman states that is what they do. I have not found a source that reports what they have had reported to them by shamans that they change their breath in order reach the spirit worlds.

Castenda, with all critics of his reliability and number of sources put aside, has often been quoted that changing ones breathe can change the reality. But, perhaps he is the original breathwork therapist? Unfortunately, he is not working with shamanism but a warrior's path. This is a different way of working and handling power and worth another paper.

**Shaman's change their state of consciousness through words- language- and their use of sound.**

They sing, dance/move, drum or play another instrument to help carry them into the Spirit World.

**The PURPOSE of their using words is to heal others.**

Words have long been known to have an effect. Rhythm and tones of instruments, movement/dance are known to effect breath. *It is through the use of language, phrasing, and word play that their breath changes.* Through out the world, healing songs are sung by the shamans, by the people supporting them and the healing ceremony. These literally drive the shaman into the spirit world, keep him/her rooted there until the magic has been sung, the spell cast, the healing performed, the spirits met and returned.... *The side effect is the change in breath.* Perhaps this is a central part to change to an altered state. But it is not the focus.

The shaman uses their words for healing. They carry in their words world view, ethics, teachings, language preservation. The breathwork therapist may use affirmations, ethics perhaps their world view, perhaps teachings may be transferred but the depth and level of it is no possible way comparable to the shaman's work. But they do not transfer language in all its nuances, heights and depths. They do not transfer stories, mythology. They do not keep their culture alive.

I fantasized at one point that if we all are breathing, our language will slowly become limited. More esoteric-minded will say then that we have evolved where words are not necessary.

Grof is wrong in his discovery. Shamans have not used breath to change their consciousness. They have used other tools and especially sound, movement, language and its patterns and rhythms to change their consciousness. The other central point is Shamans DO NOT change their consciousness. A part of their soul leaves them to the Spirit World.

Breathwork relies on the client doing it themselves with the therapist hopefully having some knowledge in the area to understand what happened to the client as well as assisting in integrating.

In working with breath from my background I can find that it could be a part of doing shamanic healing work. One of my goals when doing shamanic healing work is to get the patient/client re-connected to this reality through being connected to the living-beings of this reality. Returning soul parts to a client I find that within two weeks the returned part is present, making all its wants/desires known. This is the point for breathwork, talk therapy: integration. If a part of me left while my uncle was sexually abusing me or when my spouse died, the shaman returns the missing part. The feelings and experiences associated with this period may arise. Breathwork might be helpful in working these things out. But as well so can another journey to get advice, more information from the spirit world.

Breathwork without conscious intent seems to be a loaded gun that will fire off in any direction: don't know what will come up or out. Will it be related to birth trauma? Current physical illness? Breath sessions need a direction. For this reason the discussion between therapist and client prior to breathing is critical. One common shamanic journey made is asking for what is the best for me to focus on right now/this season? This opens the gate to many possibilities. The discussion taking place before breathing is essential to create the intention. Just as in shamanic journeying.

The shaman does not change their breath consciously in order to reach the Spirit World. They use other elements with sound being one of the more favoured. Words-some prewritten by tradition, some freely created on the spot, some in a culturally defined rhythm and form are the movers. The words are related to the purpose of the healing. The healing is the main reason for the meeting between shaman and patient. Spirits and shaman fly, swim, wander between non-ordinary reality and the spirit world serving their community. Remembering all that happens. They find the plants to help heal. They communicate directly with everything when needed. They use words, song, sound. Breath is not the focus.

The current claim of different breath techniques to be shamanic is a marketing catch phrase. Anything that smacks of non-ordinary reality, nature spirits gets the label shamanic. This is wrong and only confuses the consumer.

My version of breathwork therapy will include shamanic healing. My supervisory therapist asked why do I wait to do a breath session with my client? The client wants to have an experience! she states. Yes, but I am not here to give “experiences”. I am here to heal. And first will be shamanic work followed with breathwork, teaching journey to the client. I will find my own way, but I won’t talk of shamanic breathwork. They are two separate things.

Grof’s claim I refute. Language and words, understandable or not, as well as other auditory/visual stimuli are the key elements for the shaman’s change in breath. Shamans do not change their breath. And in shadows is the reason why they are doing it: healing others. Without the shaman’s song, traditional cultures will die.

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Field notes, Hi-8 recordings during 1994 & 1995 during research trips in Republic of Tuva, Russia.

Miscellaneous films from various sources on shamanism.

The following are internet sources. All give some claim to shamanic breath. In some of the descriptions of the work, experience or course offering there is no mention of shamanism-just in the title. Otherwise they all claim to be shamanic.

[http://www.breathworks.org/html/shaman\\_s\\_breath.html](http://www.breathworks.org/html/shaman_s_breath.html)

<http://shamanicbreathwork.org/shamanic-breathwork>

<http://bloggertize.blogspot.com/2011/01/transformational-shamanic-breath-and.html>

Transformational Shamanic Breath & Sound Healing

<http://www.shamanicconnection.com/retreat.htm> • Shamanic Breath Work for Creative Energy

Movement

<http://www.canberrabreathwork.com/shamanic-breath-retreat.html>

<http://sites.google.com/site/creativebody/chandra/shamanic-breath-work>

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=106400919418397> shamanic breathing

<http://shamanicbreathoflove.com/> Nothing on the pages.

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[rney.htmlhttp://www.journey2theheart.com/breathwork.shtml](http://www.journey2theheart.com/breathwork.shtml) Beyond Pleasure and Pain:Through

Integrative/Shamanic Breathwork

[http://www.oshoafroz.com/view\\_program.php?id=50](http://www.oshoafroz.com/view_program.php?id=50) SHAMANIC BREATH JOURNEY

<http://www.breathinecstasy.com/what-is-a-cacao-ceremony.html> In each journey we will

combined the gentle heart opening qualities of ingesting raw cacao paste from ecuador, mixed with warm water and cayenne pepper, with shamanic breath work and sound. Ceremonies can be meditative, deeply transformative or sensual in nature depending on our intentions. As we weave together various ways integrative shamanic breath, sound , meditation and intimate connection, the devas will guide us into deep personal transformation.

<http://www.bridgeofstars.co.uk/shamanic-breathwork-session.htm>

### ***Shamanism and the Breathwork Process***

Breathwork has its own process which tends to develop as follows:

Most clients, and certainly all who have never had any experience in therapy before, come to us 'loaded'. They are loaded with their emotions, pain and suffering, and usually these come pouring out in the first conscious breath: Breathwork is conscious breathing. I ask a new client, 'Put your attention on your breathing and tell me what happens,' and immediately the tears that were uncried in childhood or other traumatic experiences flow, and the sorrows that were unfelt then become to conscious, felt and integrated. ...

**Joy Manné PhD**

Breathe Issue 85

## What Is Shamanic Breathwork™?

The Shamanic Breathwork™ Process is a powerful healing process that inspires individuals to remember and reconnect with their own inner healer. As old wounds and dysfunctional patterns are released and transformed, individuals begin to regain lost soul parts and remember the magic of who they truly are. Empowerment brings wholeness and healing back into their own lives, to the lives of those they love, and to the world at large. This process is highly experiential and the wisdom and healing gained comes from each individual's inner experience. Shamanic Breathwork™ honors and blends the timeless wisdom of ancient traditions with the emerging new paradigm methods of healing and teaching. It functions as the rainbow bridge between these two worlds honoring the best of both worlds while creating a bridge for body, mind, heart, and spirit.

## Beyond Pleasure and Pain Through Integrative/Shamanic Breathwork

by Ernesto Ortiz, LMT, CST

[Primary facilitator for Journey to the Heart](#)

I have done dozens of Breathwork sessions and it never ceases to amaze me...These were my thoughts as I was moving toward the end of my Breathwork session. In my mind, I was comparing the sensations of breathing to being as pleasurable as anything I had ever experienced in my body, I was using my body to connect, connect with my mind, my spirit. What a revelation! Bliss was not about attaining anything from outside oneself-it was as simple and obvious and present as breathing and giving myself permission to feel and explore my emotions, breathing was blissful because I was healing!

In my path toward personal illumination, healing and understanding I have spent more than 25 years meditating and doing spiritual practices, I'd had many wonderful experiences with bliss and breath. The difference this time was that my only goal in this session was to be totally with myself and with whatever surfaced in my awareness from within I was ready to totally surrender.

I wasn't looking for God or enlightenment or transcendence. I was bringing a lot of energy into my body with the breath and I was just being present to all of it. Trusting it and flowing with it. Feeling everything fully with no judgment about the feelings (grief or joy, fear or guilt) and-at the same time-watching myself feel.

At one point I was crying intensely - feeling my mother's pain and fear during my birth and my own feelings of guilt and inadequacy not being able to do anything at all and for having caused it. I struggled I felt as if I was being pushed shoved inside a small and tight tunnel, I was experiencing my own birth. From a dark space, all of a sudden I emerged into the most beautiful green - as if I were in a lush tropical rainforest, everything still wet and iridescent from a recent storm. But there were no distinct shapes-only this color that was vibrating and healing. I was floating being cradled and comforted by this warm beautiful environment.

I seemed to relax completely at this point and ride the breath home - almost like a riding a wave into the shore. I was experiencing total bliss.

### Releasing Emotions/Healing the Past

Integrative/Shamanic Breathwork is one of the most effective ways to release repressed



emotions. Our cultural habit has been for generations to repress and deny emotions, I remember as a young boy my mom telling me big boys don't cry, you don't want your friends to see you like that! And I always questioned what do I do with my feelings now? What do I do with my emotions? And my sensitivity.

I grew up with the teachings that to "keep a stiff upper lip" and "suffer in silence" was the correct way to deal with anything as messy as an emotion. My mom used to tell me you cannot show your emotions if you are going to be a successful businessman.

An image that came to me in one session was of myself inside a mini submarine that was filling up from the inside with water. I saw that if I didn't start releasing that water (my feelings), I was going to drown and sink. Learning to release and express my feelings during breathwork sessions allowed me to begin to see how this works. I have learned that emotions are stored in disorganized patterns and are held in the soft tissue of our body, trauma causes this and we all have suffered trauma in our lives. I call this disorganized cells "cookie cutters". The cookie cutters are holding a pattern filled with emotion from the experience, and if our emotions are not released through expression, these particles can become trapped as energy in the spaces between the atoms and molecules, and the cycle will continue again and again...

When we are under a great deal of stress, we stop breathing and breathe more shallowly, which traps the energy of our emotions in our bodies. Conscious connected breathing helps us release the imprisoned emotions and to break the cookie cutter by over-oxygenating our cells and forcing the trapped energy out. Along with the energy and emotion, some of the old beliefs or decisions we made out of fear, pain or anger from the past begin to surface. Sometimes we see how these decisions have been running our lives from the unconscious level. As we become aware of them, we can release them and make new decisions-in present time-based on safety, trust and love.

### **Experiencing the Presence**

Breathwork is Sacred, the natural gift of life - we can live for days without food and water but only minutes without the breath. Our breath connects us to our present reality. Breathing consciously and with the awareness that we are actually breathing brings us right to experience the present, to be here now. Jacquelyn Small, author of *Embodying Spirit*, talks about the state of "cosmic consciousness" facilitated by this process.

My own experience and that of my clients have included such beautiful and holy moments full of ecstasy and connecting with the Divine that I have emerged from many sessions feeling absolute awe and immense gratitude, again and again. I am reminded of what I wrote a few years ago: "We become whole, healed, by making the invisible visible and bringing the darkness to light." We merely have to release the obstacles within us that block our awareness of love's eternal presence.

Eight years and dozens of sessions later, as both voyager and facilitator, I am still in love with this process. As Mathew Fox said, "We are at this moment participating in one of the very greatest leaps of the human spirit to... of our own deep inward mystery." As a tool to help us probe these mysteries and make that leap of spirit, Breathwork is invaluable. It teaches us through our own experiences about moving past pains of living and breathing out what is painful and constricted and, as the Sufi poet Rumi wrote, about finding that "breath of love that takes you all the way to infinity."

*Ernesto Ortiz LMT, CST is the primary facilitator for Journey to the Heart, he has been in the healing field for more than 20 years, has facilitated workshops and seminars in the US, Canada, Australia, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Ernesto has been licensed as a massage therapist in Florida for 13 years, and has certifications in Neuromuscular therapy, Cranio Sacral therapy, Integrative Breathwork, GIM (Guided Imagery and Music), Hypnotherapy, Hot Stone Therapy and Trance Dance.*

*Ernesto has spent many years studying and facilitating Indigenous Shamanic practices, and has studied with many teachers. From his early childhood he was exposed to shamanism and shamanic practices in Mexico, he continued his studies with indigenous teacher throughout South America. He has had the good fortune to study with some gifted teachers such as Michael Harner, Frank Natale, Robert Ghost Wolf, Starr Fuentes, Berret Eagle Bear, Mary Parker, Hellen Bony, Jackie Small, Linda Wolf, Marcel Vogel and more.*

## Rebirthing

Rebirthing-breathwork, also called Intuitive Energy Breathing and Conscious Energy Breathing, is a form of alternative medicine that mainly consists of breathing techniques that are said to connect the subject to cycle of birth and death.

Breathwork is a process that increases our ability to feel and resolve the effects of our past. It involves breathing in a full, free manner guided by a trained breathworker. The result is an increase in the level of physical and spiritual energy in our body, thus cleansing the many tensions held there. By learning to breathe consciously and fully, we discover and release the core issues now held in our mind and emotions

**rebirthing-breathwork is the ability to breathe not only air, but Divine energy as well.**

I have had the pleasure of recently returning from Virginia this year where I took my training personally from the founder Leonard Orr and Heiki and found it to be the best healing modality I have worked with to date. It gets through to the deep core issues we all struggle to find and relate to and also does so in a most gentle way that is like no other.

I had a transformational awakening through conscious breathing ( rebirthing). I got up from a conscious breathing session one day with so much love and peace and joy in me This is one of the reasons I decided to further my studies and become a trainer in this particular field.

You can expect to become more and more aware and more conscious of their inner and outer world. You will experience a growing sense of freedom and safety, of wholeness and oneness. You can expect to get really good at relaxing, de-stressing, and re-energizing. You can expect to find more potential for comfort and pleasure, for enjoyment, even in the most difficult of circumstances and situations. As you develop more control and mastery of the breath, you will naturally gain more control and mastery of your mind and body.

The point is to experience a deeper or higher aspect of ourselves; to get in touch with our inherent creative energy and natural healing abilities. People feel freer and safer in their bodies, more alive and more aware, more energized and calm, more relaxed and at peace.

The simplest things are the most powerful! Breath is the link between mind and body. It bridges the sub-conscious, conscious, and or "higher conscious" mind. It represents our connection to life, spirit, our source, to the world and each other. So naturally, it is a very powerful process and practice.

When your state of mind changes, your breathing changes. Change your breathing, and you change your state of mind. It's that simple.

We all have an inner healer, an inner teacher, a higher self... and a breathwork session is meant to awaken it. When we are breathing consciously, we are not doing what we usually do in the moment, and so a space for something new is created. Healing and growth are natural things waiting to happen in us when we get out of the way, when we get free of our own dysfunctional habits.

By focusing on breath and breathing, we get out of our own way. Without even focusing on our problems, they seem to dissolve, disappear, or resolve themselves!

Breathwork always leads to resolution, integration, and healing.

**I continue to do this each day as well as other spiritual purifications that are taught a long with the rebirthing and compliment it very well.**

**I am available to do this in your home or at my home if need be. We will work together to dissolve your personal law and also affirmations and mantra yoga as well in these sessions.**

**To make an appointment to discuss this please call me at 501-594-5591 or you can email me at [mollyparkes@gmail.com](mailto:mollyparkes@gmail.com) and we can set up a phone consultation and go from there. I charge \$120.00 per session and this is for at least two hours if not more. If you have a financial situation and can not afford this you will not be turned away. I am always available to negotiate on this as I believe everyone should learn this beautiful form of breathing I would be honored to do this with you.**

*Om namaha shivaiya*

In truth. Simplicity, and love

### **History of Rebirthing-Breathwork**

Leonard Orr developed rebirthing-breathwork as a series of breathing techniques that would enable the subject's memories of birth to come to the conscious mind. He believed that by connecting to the trauma of birth, he could, in fact, heal the after-effects that this trauma causes through life. He worked on modifying this technique through 1962 to 1974 and found that these modifications brought about improvements in general health and mental well-being.

Development of this breathing technique for therapeutic purposes began in 1974 and has gain popularity worldwide. It is estimated that since the use of rebirthing as a therapy session, more than ten million people have learnt the technique and more than a hundred thousand people have gone on to become certified practitioners.

### **Technique for Rebirthing-Breathwork**

Rebirthing is a gentle, yet conscious breathing technique. The main breathing technique is a connected breathing, wherein there are no pauses between inhalation and exhalation. This causes a build up of oxygen in the blood, and the proponents believe, a build up of life energy or "prana" as well. Breathing sessions are done lying down and may take up to three hours.

### **The Belief System Behind Rebirthing-Breathwork**

The practitioners of rebirthing-breathwork believe that human birth is traumatic and the memory of it is repressed in the subconscious. In addition to the cerebral memory, they believe that humans also possess cellular memory, where the recollection of trauma is distributed through the body's cells and tissues. The belief is that the specific nature of the trauma caused by birthing leaves a marked impression on the psyche and shapes one's perception of life and it's experiences.

But then what is rebirthing? As Leonard Orr would define it, 'it is breathing air and breathing energy' and 'it is

breaking the birth-death cycle'. Let us stay with the first definition. In rebirthing one does not just learn to breathe a particular way, by following the instructions of the teacher, as say, with pranayam or many yoga techniques. Rather one learns from one's own breath. And unlike vipassana one does not simply observe the breath as it is and learn from that. But, one follows a certain pattern and observes the emotions / issues / thoughts that come up and one just breathes through those too. Other names for rebirthing are 'conscious connected breathing' and 'divine energy breathing'. Rebirthing can, and often does, result in a biological experience of God.

The pattern of connecting the inhale to the exhale tends to bring up sub/unconscious issues to the fore, that then can be breathed away. 'But then why bring them up, let them lie buried and unconscious', you might well say. Yes, that would make sense if it were not for the fact that those unconscious issues are influencing our lives and creating the problems that we have to deal with in our everyday life! Our thoughts, our beliefs and our imprints create the universe we live in. Very often these beliefs have been imprinted into our consciousness at birth and even during our conception and prenatal life. The conscious connected breathing of rebirthing helps us to access these early imprints and we can change them by breathing through those feelings and through the use of affirmations. Affirmations are positive thoughts that help us to create the universe of our choice.

Rebirthing is one of the fastest growing natural healing modalities available at this time. It is a safe and powerful breathing process that releases tension from the body, freeing it so that you may be your true self and reach your unlimited potential.

The breath is a sublime healer. It is the umbilical cord to the Divine. By using a variety of smoothly connected breaths; energy which may be called prana, chi, ki, or the life force is taken into the body where it dissolves and brings up anything that is unlike itself. When this takes place, blockages that have been holding us back at the psychological, spiritual, or cellular source surface and a deep inner transformation occurs.

Rebirthing focuses on birth and the thoughts or imprints which affected us at that time which guide our life. As a child we received many negative messages from the time of conception through adolescence from well-meaning parents, relatives, teachers, the media, etc. The nine months spent in utero and the next two years until a child learns to set boundaries and say "no" are crucial. Many of our core beliefs about ourselves and the world are formed during this period. The natural response to birth or childhood trauma is to create defense mechanisms which go on to become unconscious habitual patterns. As we grow up these patterns can manifest as addictions, self-sabotage, phobias, anxiety attacks, and other self-defeating patterns which cause us to act unconsciously or negatively.

### **If one is learning to breathe from one's own breath why is the rebirther needed?**

Rebirthing is different from many other alternative modalities because the emphasis is on letting the breath release the trauma or unexpressed emotions, rather than re-experiencing them. The breath by-passes the mind thus control is broken down and we work purely on the spiritual and physical level.

The mind may not have easy access to early memories but the body doesn't lie. Once the breathing begins the body has to tell the truth about what it has been storing. What comes up for integration is meant to. Also, whatever we don't heal we pass on. Therefore, some of the clearing may not even be ours, but has been passed on through the cells from our ancestors for generations.

Most people benefit from being rebirthed by a professionally trained rebirther. When one begins the process the intense emotions, or vivid memories, can be dispelled by the presence of the rebirther.

The rebirther is there to gently guide you to the pattern whenever you stray from it. The rebirther notices the intricacies and subtleties of the breath and can help you deal with emotional issues as and when they arise by guiding the breathing. The rebirther can help you formulate the affirmations that are likely to work best for you. Most people feel reassured by the presence of a gentle, compassionate soul and feel the safety and security to allow repressed memories to come up. They like to have someone to talk to, to share their experience and insights with. But, in say ten sessions, the client having experienced the benefits learns this pattern of breathing. The client is encouraged to connect to their intuitive breathing pattern and thus to become independent, emotionally and at all other levels, in ten sessions.

# Tantric Shamanism Breath Work with Sylvia Brallier

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## **Date & Time:**

Ecstasy is a divine gift that lifts us out of ordinary reality and into a direct experience of the sacred. The transformative fires of ecstasy burn away the blocked energy held in our shadow selves and transmutes it into pure energy that may be used for the healing of our world and ourselves. This ceremony is a profound opportunity to drop away what has been binding you and move forward towards your bliss.

This breath experience is not merely a way to move some energy. It is a powerful initiation of the light body that will open the way for powerful positive change in your life. If you ever felt you were looking for a major shortcut to a more healed, awakened, spiritually aware way of being, this is it.

This form of tantric breath work is done within the context of a circle. You do NOT need a partner to participant in this work. This tantric work rarefies, refines and awakens your own energy body, which can empower every aspect of your life. Any questions? Feel free to contact Sylvia at: [sylvia@sylviabrallier.com](mailto:sylvia@sylviabrallier.com) 510-417-2457

Arjuna was an heroic archer in Hindu legend. His name means 'bright' or 'shining' and he was such a skilled warrior that he was nicknamed "the undefeatable".

He symbolizes the qualities of "clear vision", "focus" (on a target, personal goal or direction) and potency (personal effectiveness).

"Breath of Arjuna" is a simple dynamic yoga movement connecting breath, body, mind, spirit and imagination (visualization of results). It can be done sitting, but is most powerful in the standing position. It comes from "Dru Yoga" (yoga of the heart).

The shamanic version of this practice consists of 3 successive phases:

1. Shedding what is not needed at the present time;
2. "Drawing-in" desired qualities, feelings and power for our personal "next step";
3. Radiating our shamanic persona or power animal - personal spiritual qualities that we wish to bring to the world.

## **Sacred Breathwork Shamanic & Jungian Context**

**Crow's Nest Sacred Breathwork (TM)**

By Mikkal

I have developed Sacred Breathwork as a form of sacred ceremony to connect deeply with the Sacred through powerful non ordinary states of consciousness, for purposes of worship and renewal, healing of old wounds, exploration of the visionary and archetypal realms of the collective unconscious. It is creative expression of the Sacred through breath, dance, art, poetry and chant.

Sacred breathwork is rooted in shamanism and the soul psychology inspired by C.G. Jung. It has been synthesized from numerous other sources originating with the holotropic technique developed by Stanislav Grof, M.D. and Christina Grof in the early 1980s. This procedure is rigorously modified in the light of my own thirty years of practice in shamanic healing and breathwork, clinical psychological practice, and concurrent medical anthropological research into powerful healing systems across-cultures, as published in my books *PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE SACRED* [1995], and *JUNG AND SHAMANISM IN DIALOGUE: RETRIEVING SOUL / RETRIEVING THE SACRED* [1997, 2007].

The method and setting of sacred breathwork is comprised of 8 major elements which work together in concert: 1) connected breath, 2) ritual context: and ritual leadership protocol (for the facilitator), 3) a safe sacred space/time module with attention to low numinal-ambient lighting, "allowing" space, physical comfort, and natural location (where possible) 4) profound music selection based on numinous & nonspecific evocative qualities, and ritual phase-specific criteria, using high quality sound technology 5) artistic expression of the process, 6) group-community processing, 7) on-going heart-centered and earth-honoring, personal practices that support post-breathwork integration. 8) An introductory talk covering the theory and practice, the responsibilities of participants, benefits and risks of the sacred breathwork, and assessments for medical and psychiatric exclusions. Safety is the paramount rule

Sacred breathwork is a process done in group retreat workshop or individual sessions. Participants alternate in roles as a Journeyer (breather) and an Ally (sitter). The Ally's job is to support, hold space, and protect the space and process of the journeyer above all. So they are Guardian as well as Ally. The Ally's focus as compassionate witness does not interfere with the Journeyer's process unless safety is at stake. The same is true for the facilitator as Ritual Elder.

This Sacred Breathwork is blended with classic shamanic journeying, sweat lodge ceremony, active Toltec work to root out and dissolve long standing problem patterns and lachak heart theory with its protocol of highly active practices and very direct core questions for inner work. Focusing on a felt-sense as developed by Eugene T. Gendlin, Ph.D. may also be incorporated. Even our cellular memories in our bodies can open and pour out pertinent wisdom. It is a sacred ceremony in which the Sacred/Divine is intentionally invoked and entered into deep relationship with, for purposes of worship & renewal, and for healing, liberating-insight, or personal transformation.

See Calendar of events for workshop dates in USA and Europe. Most workshops offer two sacred breathwork sessions.

The Sacred Breathwork unquestionably has holotropic (moving towards wholeness) qualities, tending to arouse the quest for healing, individuation, union of opposites or whole making. We owe a great deal to Grof for refining this concept and showing us how it can be aligned with in breathwork. We accept it with deepest gratitude. The powerful experience is not for everyone, however, and there are many ways of having deep spiritual experiences through non ordinary states. Some medical and psychiatric conditions make it unsafe, such as cardiovascular problems, pregnancy, recent surgeries, glaucoma, serious seizure disorder. At this time there is not a safe container for individuals who suffer paranoid and bi-polar disorders. although with a safe and extended care model that is adequate, it may become so in the future. Before attending a sacred breathwork event, all participants fill out a medical and psychiatric exclusions questionnaire to insure safety.

## The Shaman's Breath

[Description](#)   [Contraindication](#)  
[What To Bring](#)   [Registration Form](#)

If you are interested in staying updated on this workshop send us an email at [info@breathworks.org](mailto:info@breathworks.org)

The Shaman's Breath features a unique blend of ancient shamanism and deep, circular breathing to journey into non-ordinary states of consciousness. This powerful modality can offer fresh insights, foster healing and awaken new creativity.

This half day program combines shamanic intention and ritual practice with a powerful, natural way of shifting consciousness using the breath. Participants will learn how to "move between worlds,"

activate the "inner healer" and a simple method of shamanic journeying which can be used on a daily basis.

The workshop is facilitated by [Scotty Johnson](#) and [Jannelle Weakly](#). Scotty and Jannelle are both certified Grof Holotropic Breathwork facilitators with many years experience of teaching, speaking and facilitating workshops. Scotty has spent two decades studying and experiencing non-ordinary shamanic states. As a married couple they strive to provide an effective, structured and joyous environment for participants of all ages.

A deposit is required to hold space and these events usually fill up quickly. We recommend early registration to reserve a space. [Download a registration form](#). Spaces fill up quickly and early registration is recommended.

Some contraindications apply. Please review these on the registration form and contact us if you have questions.

For more information contact [info@breathworks.org](mailto:info@breathworks.org) or call the Breathworks Institute at 520-617-0364

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## CONTRAINDICATIONS

Deep, circular Breathwork is a safe and effective means of using the breath to achieve health and transformation. However, some contraindications do apply. Please look over the list of these below. Having one of the listed contraindications does not necessarily preclude your participation, but each will need to be discussed before you participate. If you have any of these, please contact one of the workshop leaders at 520-617-0364 or [info@breathworks.org](mailto:info@breathworks.org)

Pregnancy  
Epilepsy  
Recent Injuries  
Recent Hospitalization  
Asthma  
Heart Disease  
History of Mental Illness  
Glaucoma

