

April 2006 Breath & Breathing Journal

Hello Breathers!

It's hard to imagine that so much can happen in just one month. I ended the month of March with another wonderful training in Lithuania, and then visited the Ukraine for the first time. I can say that Kiev is definitely one of the most beautiful and classic cities in the world. The conference in the city of Kharkov drew over 600 participants. (Kharkov is home to one of the biggest central squares in the world, second only to Tienamen Square in Beijing.)

So many bright and talented psychologists, students, practitioners and self-improvement enthusiasts took part in the 4 day event there. The theme was "Extreme and Control." And so, many people pushed themselves to the limits of their experience, and went beyond old barriers. The breathing sessions were very powerful. It was a blessing to see so many people breakthrough to new levels of love, joy, peace and power.

Nearly 150 people did the firewalk after our closing ceremony. (That poor fire was stomped into the ground in 20 minutes flat!) But we had the most profound moments as we gathered around the roaring fire. The atmosphere was one of celebration. Everyone was so animated. There was so much talking and laughing. And so at one point, I asked everyone to be quiet and simply listen to the fire. As the group became quiet and we all listened, a silence like no other came over us.

We suddenly realized that the fire itself was also becoming quiet! The quieter we became, the quieter the fire became! Though the flames were over 6 feet high, the roaring, popping and crackling completely stopped. Silent flames reached to the sky as the fire joined us in utter silence! We felt a sacred presence descend onto the group. And after some time, we began to feel the fire calling us, inviting us. Then the magic began! People walked, danced and stood in awe on the burning coals. There were tears of laughter and joy as ecstasy filled the air.

Thank you so much to Tatiana Putyatina and her team for organizing and coordinating such a large event, and for giving me and so many others such a remarkable and unforgettable experience.

On the 10th of April my first book was finally published (in Russian). It's called "The Art of Conscious Breathing: Selected Articles." Luba Bogdanova delivered the first copies to me in Minsk on April 11. Endless gratitude goes out to Natasha Kovalenko, Oleg Maslov, Jenya Karev, Guzel Daukayeva, Svetlana Pavlova, and most of all to Luba for making it all happen. It's been such fun signing books, doing interviews, and receiving

such wonderful feedback.

It is a bit surprising that my first book would be in Russian and not English: but it is perfectly fitting considering the deep connection and the long history I have with my Russian family, friends, associates, and students. (You can see the book at www.alltao.ru .)

Now that the ice has broken and the flow has begun, more books will follow. By this time next year there will be several other books in print: in French, Spanish, Lithuanian, Estonian, and yes in English too! If you'd like to support these publishing projects in any way, or if you'd like to contribute any articles or suggestions, I welcome you. (By the way, in the coming books, I will include a list of recommended teachers. If you are a breathworker, rebirthing practitioner, or spiritual breathing teacher, you can apply to be on this list.)

Another delightful experience for me this month was visiting Kazakhstan for the first time. The weather was so warm. Peach and apple and apricot blossoms were everywhere. Tulips and daffodils abound. And the mountains were breathtaking (or should I say breath giving!) What a beautiful country! And what beautiful and loving people! Thank you so much to Nina Nastich for keeping me so busy! The 7 days flew by. I saw four people each morning for individual sessions. Then we offered two seminars each day: one from 2 to 6pm, and another from 6:30 to 10:30pm.

I had little time to eat or sleep, and only got one morning to be a tourist. I got the chance to go up to Chimbulak, a ski resort in the mountains near Medeo Stadium. The weather was perfect and you could touch the sky! The air was so pure and clean and crisp. Each breath was like drinking cool heavenly nectar! Just a few sips and I was completely renewed. It looks like we will organize a spiritual breathing school in Alma Ata. So I plan to go back several times in the next year. And on those visits, I hope to get a chance to explore more of this amazing country. It's a wonderful place to breathe, so let me know if you'd like to join me on the next training adventure there.

Now I am in Bashkortostan. I'll visit three cities here: Ufa, Salavat and Neftekamsk. After that, it is on to Estonia from May 4-14. And finally I'll return home to my shining flower Gulnur! (She recently visited her family and friends here in Russia. It was a welcome break from her grueling schedule in the pediatric department at the Northwest Texas Hospital.)

The breathing lessons this month have been so clear and so powerful. The breath is like a thread. We can follow it to our source, to our core, to our essence. Of course this thread winds its way thru all kinds of

thoughts and feelings, sensations and emotions: some glorious and luminous, some dark and painful. But they are all part of the healing process. And as Jalaluddin Rumi writes and Peter Makena sings: “when we make friends with these gifts, with all comings and goings; we are at home in the moment, embracing it all...” and “when you don’t fight with life, life simply helps you, it takes you on its shoulder...”

The big lesson for many of us this month was this: “Why turn to the mind to solve your problems when you can turn to the source of the mind to solve them?” It has taken me a long time to quiet my mind enough to hear the voice of spirit. It seems that I had more obstacles to overcome than others. But now that it has become my natural habit, suffering is practically impossible, and always voluntary! Compassion seems to be my only reaction to those who are still struggling on their way toward peace.

People at every stop on this tour have come to know that we can choose peace and freedom. We can experience peace and freedom in any moment—in every moment. Whenever energy and consciousness come together, something is created. In fact, this is the creative process: bringing energy and consciousness together. Breath gives the mind its power. Whatever we think about while we breathe becomes our reality. Energy becomes what it thinks about.

And so our focus during the seminars continues to be: “What is important?” “What is the most important thing?” When you ask this question in every moment, with every breath, in every relationship, in every situation, at every turn, then something remarkable begins to happen. The mind begins to go in that direction all by itself, all the time, automatically: even when we forget to think about it! And once our mind has this habit of always moving toward what is most important, doubt and confusion fall away. Choices are more easily made. Our life flows along its divine path easily and effortlessly.

The exercise of the month is what I call the “coming home breath.” After a long journey, or after successful completion of a difficult project, a certain kind of breath comes to us. We don’t think about it; we don’t “do” it. It comes by itself. The wonderful feeling of coming home triggers a certain natural breath in us. In such moments peace and joy, a beautiful breath arises and naturally expresses itself in us. We all know this feeling: “At last I’m home!” “Finally all the work is done!” “Success!” These thoughts, these feelings bring a sigh of relief, a breath of joy, of gratitude, of aliveness.

The point is why wait for an accident of life or a rare situation to trigger this beautiful breath? Why not invite it? Why not practice it? When we choose to breathe this way, the wonderful feeling of “coming home”

is naturally awakened in us. And the experience it brings leaves no room for doubt that we are truly “the captains of our ship and the masters of our fate.”

And for my part, I have only the Angel of Breath to thank! The Breath of Life has become my closest friend and teacher, my constant companion and my inner lover on this journey. Regardless of the changing situations or circumstances around me, and in spite of the unconscious thoughts and feelings that arise within me, the breath is always present, simply waiting in grace... like a gate... like a garden... open and inviting...

So, remember to keep turning to the breath. Use the breath. Be grateful for every breath. Celebrate the breath! And in turn, every breath will bring you freedom and joy. Every breath will awaken you to the consciousness of what is most important!

Good luck in your practice!

With love and blessings,

Dan

PS: Please visit www.breathmastery.com for the current training schedule and travel plans; and to search the archives for past newsletters and reports.