**[Breath Mastery Fundamentals Day 2](https://www.o2collective.com/products/breath-mastery-fundamentals-2/categories/553614)**

Module 15 **The Three Convergences of Breathwork**

We call this the three convergences. You know convergences? I love when that original, what was it called, convergence. Anyway I love that word, convergence, that this coming together of forces of dimensions of people and so on.

So there's three convergences in breathwork and you're going to recognise them.

The first is bringing together consciousness and breathing. Letting consciousness and breath converge.

The second is, bringing together consciousness and relaxation. And you could say, tension.

And the third convergence is bringing together conscious breathing and conscious relaxation.

So when you are practicing breathwork, be cognisant of these things. You are bringing together consciousness and breath. They converge in you. You're bringing together consciousness and relaxation.

See the average person's reaction to relaxation is sleep. There's something not quite right about that. If I relax and relax and relax, [snores] it leads to sleep. Why shouldn't relaxation instead of leading to sleep, lead to more and more awareness more and more waking up more and more? It's almost as if the body has to put us to sleep at night so that it can rejuvenate and recover right? It shuts us off. Thank god that guy finally shut up so I can recover and relax and rejuvenate. Our consciousness is so busy, that the body cannot relax in the presence of it. That's why a quiet mind is so important.

When you are in the most relaxed moments of your life, you are literally sleeping. And so you have never had a waking experience of total profound relaxation. That happens when you are unconscious, fast asleep. And so we're missing something. And the first time that someone is completely awake, wide-awake, and completely relaxed, it's a religious experience. It's a peak religious experience. It is so profound and so powerful people have to grasp at spiritual vocabulary to try to describe it. And sometimes, there's even no words for it. You've had a taste of it in your sessions if you're starting to get this technique, where you are wide-awake and yet completely relaxed and it's stunning in a way. And you don't even know how to describe the experience.

We start to feel heavy. Ah ok, you're so relaxed you're actually feeling gravity. Wow, good! You're getting conscious of a force that is on you all the time. We're not conscious of gravity, but it's on us all the time and when you relax you can actually feel the weight of gravity. If you're laying down you can feel you surrender your face to gravity. You surrender the weight of your body to gravity. You allow your joints and you know, you're just surrendering to that force of gravity and you're relaxing more and more and more. Because we're fighting gravity all the time and it's so automatic and unconscious and constant that we don't even realise we're doing it. Until you stop doing it and then this relaxation dawns on you.

So this is the magical final convergence. First you get really good at breathing consciously, you get really good at relaxing consciously and then you bring those two things together. And magic happens.

So if you want to guide yourself during the session, just remember these basic convergences. And any time you can come into them more fully, more consciously, more deliberately, you are progressing on that path.

And as a sitter, as a helper, guess what you're doing? You're reminding the person to be conscious of how they're breathing, to breath consciously. You are helping them to relax, in whatever way, maybe testing them. You know, if you're laying still, you may not even realise you're tense until somebody tries to move you. So you can help people to relax and then this happens. And so you know little ways to summarise and make simple what it is you want to try to remember when you're practicing the breath.

Audience member: Dan, before we move on, I'd love to get your thoughts on what consciousness is?

Speaker:

You know the most conscious people I have ever met have been the most spiritual. And the most spiritual people I have ever met have been the most conscious. So for me consciousness, spirituality, it's the same thing.

And so the game of expanding consciousness, refining consciousness, that's the game. We already have this aptitude, this ability to be conscious, it's part of our essence. It's really an essential aspect of our nature, it is consciousness. And so, the more conscious we become, the more of who we really are we become. And the more spiritual we become. You can't separate the two I think.

Audience member: My perception of consciousness is like a vine. So like a vine from a seed will grow and then just know to grow towards the sun. And when it actually grows up the tree, it knows where to put those little bits that attach to it. And so that's a really nice analogy of what consciousness is. But after yesterday with the breath, especially with the yawning and the sigh, and how the body naturally does that, it's like our body is coming back to consciousness. So if we pay attention to that, that's actually what consciousness, is. And I thought it was funny because everyone talks about expanding consciousness and doing all these things, and really it's like, pay attention to what's happening now, it's like right here.

Speaker:

Yeah, natural intelligence and inherent infinite intelligence.

There is a model, we can go a little further into this consciousness thing. Two of my favourite teachers, the Buddha and Patanjali. These guys never met, they didn't know each other. They lived in different times and in different places. But they had the same purpose in life; what is the cause of suffering and what is the cure for suffering? And if you look at the list that Patanjali made and the list that Buddha made of the causes of suffering, they are the same list. And at the top of each of their list is confusing a real self with a false self. And then you go down the list and they match, it's as if they traded notes. And you look at their strategy on the things to do to cure suffering, it's the same list!

Now when two teachers from different times and places arrive at the same insights, wow, we should, that's important! And they even used the same metaphor to describe the work that we need to do. And so on the level of consciousness, they both identified that as, where is the work, the inner work, and inner work has to do with consciousness. And they use the same metaphor, the same analogy. What are the odds of that? You know, we could have picked any example. And they both picked the same example of a flawless gem, a perfect diamond, a perfect jewel. That's how consciousness needs to be, pure, clear, perfect. And I thought that that's pretty cool that they both used the same analogy of a gem, of a perfect diamond.

They only differed in one, two ways maybe, and even maybe in one way because it's linked. The Buddha understood consciousness and awareness to be basically the same, to be synonymous. To be conscious is to be aware and to be aware is to be conscious. And if you look up consciousness in the dictionary, it will say awareness and if you look up awareness, it will say consciousness. We make them pretty much synonymous.

But Patanjali said no, they are very, very, very, very different, could not be more different. He said consciousness is subject to the same laws and dynamics as everything else in nature. Everything else in the phenomenal world is ruled and controlled by certain forces and dynamics, the law of gravity and so on. And he said that consciousness was part of that. Consciousness is actually subject to the same rules and laws and dynamics as everything else in nature. Awareness on the other hand is outside of that, totally outside of that, completely unaffected by that.

And so it's a little subtle thing and maybe it's just in the language where they seem like they differed. If they could have gotten together and had a conversation, they probably would have arrived at the same language-ing. But they never had the opportunity.

One of Patanjali's students, I like to think it was me, came up with an even better analogy. It was the analogy of water. Instead of using the analogy of a perfect gem, a flawless jewel, he used the analogy of water. Water has two very important properties. It is transparent; you can see through the water to the bottom. And it is reflective; you can see yourself reflected in consciousness.

But, that's only if your consciousness is pure, that's only if your water is calm. If there are waves on the surface, the image I get of myself is warped. And if there are currents and movements and particles in the water, it's not clear, I can't see through to the bottom. So the work of consciousness is purifying that water. Having it become calm so there are no currents and movements and particles in our consciousness and that the surface is still and clear. And when our consciousness becomes like that, we see who we really are, reflected in consciousness. And we see what is actually real, through consciousness. But as long as our consciousness has these waves and particles and movements and currents, we can't trust it, it's not giving us pure information. So that's the work we need to do on the level of consciousness.

Every feeling, every sensation in my body is a wave in consciousness. And if I have a feeling or sensation in my body, and I react to that feeling and sensation, I just made another wave. And my reaction to that wave is going to cause another reaction. And pretty soon, the whole surface of the water is nothing but waves and impossible to see who I am, to know who I am. My consciousness will not reflect back to me the truth of my being. And I cannot see to the bottom to reality, there's just too many movements and currents and stuff in the water.

So a good analogy in our time, to use Patanjali's metaphor, would be a T.V screen. What's happening on the screen is consciousness. But a T.V cannot watch itself; it requires an external awareness to observe what's happening on the television screen. And that in Patanjali's view, is who we really are. Is that awareness of what's occurring in consciousness.

So think about a circus mirror. Like the kind of mirror where it makes you look tall and skinny but with a little pin-head. Or short and fat with a big, giant butt. Imagine someone standing in front of that mirror and suffering because they believe that's how they look. I mean any one of us would say, "don't be stupid, don't be silly, that's not how you look! The mirror is warped, it's an effect of a warped perception. Straighten that mirror out, clean it, make it clear and you will see how you really look."

So there is the problem in consciousness. We are looking out into the world and we are seeing sadness and suffering and evil and pain and disease. Is it really there or is that a factor of our perception, our consciousness. We're using a circus mirror and we're believing what we see. And you look at yourself and you believe you have limitations and you have this and you have that. Somebody needs to go, don't be silly, that's not who you are, that's not reality. That's because of your consciousness. Fix that and the world changes, and you seem to change.

But that's really difficult to make that transition. And it's in a traditional way and it requires a lot of work. But every breathing session we do, is an opportunity to do that cleaning and clearing of our perception and the quieting of the water, the stilling of the waters. And you have moments, in a breathing session, you're probably already starting to have them, where everything gets clear, everything gets still and you have this direct experience of who you are. It happens and the more we practice, the more often it happens, the longer it seems to remain, the gaps between those moments of being awake get fewer and fewer and until ultimately, we're living in a self-realised state. And we're able to see the truth and the perfection of our own being and of everyone in the world in life and we're looking past those illusions. We have moments when we see past the illusion, but how do you live from that? That's a routine, that's a practice, that's the intention, that's the inner work.

Think of a movie theatre and how that whole phenomenon works. First, everyone has to be in the dark for the whole game to work right? So first you're in the dark, and you're watching what's on the screen. And it's real. It shakes you, it surprises you, it makes you cry, it makes you laugh, it's real. There's no arguing that you're lost in that movie and it's affecting your physiology or emotions, it's a real thing what's happening on that screen. But everything that's happening on that screen is coming from that little window over in the back of the theatre, that little window of light. Call that your mind.

And so everything is passing through your mind and that's all you can be aware of. If somebody opens the movie theatre door and the light comes in, it makes the screen a little fuzzy. If somebody opens all the doors and all the windows and you take the roof off the building ...

[glitch or break in video]

Through a place other than our mind, right now all the light that's coming to you is coming through your mind. And so when you open the door of your heart, when you open the doors of the cells and when you're being, you open other levels of you and light starts to come in from other places, it gets more and more difficult to be caught up in what's happening on that screen. But we resist, we complain when someone opens the damn door of the movie theatre, because it shines the light on the screen and it's hard to see.

And so, think of the middleman in business; I know where to buy this [pen] for a dollar and I sell it to you for ten dollars. Am I going to tell you where you can buy it for a dollar and put myself out of business? No! Our mind is like a middleman and it doesn't want us to know its source. Because if you know the source of this [pen], you don't need me, you don't need the middleman any more. So the middleman calls this intellectual property, you know, this is my little secret and you can get the benefits of it, if that's what they are, but I'm not going to tell you.

Your mind doesn't want you to know its source. It doesn't want to put itself out of business, it likes the position it's in. It likes the position of authority. It likes the position of dominance. It likes you depending on it. It likes being the one in charge of your life and your experience. And it's not going to give that up easily, it's going to fight with you. In the same way you try to take a bone away from a dog, you know it will attack you. Your mind will attack you if you try to put it out of business.

If you had a choice, say we want to solve a problem, it seems, and it makes so much sense, it seems so obvious; you turn to your mind to solve the problem. You work it out. You use your intelligence, you talk it out, you put up this and you put up that and you show how hey, this is better than that. We're using our mind to solve a problem. And it makes perfect sense and that's what everybody does because it works. The mind can help us solve problems.

But what if the mind is the problem? And if you had a choice, to use your mind to solve a problem, to turn to your mind to solve a problem, or to turn to the source of your mind to solve a problem, which would you choose, if you had the choice? Now if you're not in touch with the source of your mind, then there is nowhere else to turn to except your mind. But once you get in touch with the source of your mind, then that becomes where you turn to solve problems.

Breathing connects us to this source. It's at least a bridge to it. it's a tool that we can use to break out of the mind, connect to another source of light, an infinite source of light. But for most people, their mind is like an untrained rottweiler.

I used to watch people walk their dog, and you wonder who's walking who? The dog smells something and it pulls you this way, or hears something and all of a sudden it pulls you that way. And I think, who the hell wants a dog like that? You live with a dog like that? Did it ever occur to you to train your damn dog? I never had a leash on our german shepherds, not once did we ever have a leash. I would just look at the dog and he sits down if he knows that I want him to sit down. If I look at him and I want him to stand up, he stands up. And that should be it, your mind should be just like that. You just turn to your mind when you want it and it goes, ok I'm here, what do we want to do? The ears come up you know, and it wants to help you and it serves you. But it's not barking at every damn car that goes by. You know when you go visit somebody at their house and you knock on the door and on the other side you hear this [loud] bark bark bark, and the dog's screaming and clawing at the door and you gotta wait five minutes whilst they drag the dog into another room and shut the door. Fuck, you live with a dog like that?

Or you know, "oh, be careful with the children". Be careful with the children? I'd shoot that fucking dog if I had to worry about him with a child. You live with a dog that you'd have to worry about if a child comes around? Not in my world!

But people live with a mind like that. And they think it's normal. Your mind thinks something and it drags you this way. Your mind wants something and it drags you that way. And you think that's normal! And you're living with a mind that's like an untrained rottweiler.

Well no wonder it's hard to wake up. No wonder it's hard to find peace. No wonder it's hard to relax. No wonder it's hard to feel safe. You're living with something that could turn around and bite you at any moment. And you think that's normal!

[end of video 15]