[**Breath Mastery Fundamentals Day 3**](https://www.o2collective.com/products/breath-mastery-fundamentals-2/categories/553754)

**Module 21 Vivation Breathing Technique**

Alright, so for our deep-dive session, we're going to use this style of our rebirthing called vivation. Developed by Jim Leonard and Phil Laut, it was originally called 'integrated rebirthing' because the integration factor was something that they zeroed in on and really got. So everything was around integration. So a couple of really beautiful concepts from Jim Leonard and vivation. It was also called the skill of happiness. So first it was called integrated rebirthing, but then they felt like it was so different from rebirthing and the focus of rebirthing and what all the other rebirthers were doing, that they decided we needed a whole different name all together, So they used the word vivation. Vive based on the word life, vitality and so on. And they called it the skill of happiness. And one of the basic concepts was that there's one way we can achieve happiness, I know what I want, I figure out how to do it, how to get it, I get it, I feel happy. And we kind of got that skill. The other was finding a way to be happy with what is as it is. So as Jim starts to explore this, he arrived at his kind of idea that hey, happiness, or joy, whatever you want to call it, is inherent in existence. And the only thing you need to be happy is to exist. And since we exist, if you were not experiencing that happiness that is inherent in existence, you must be doing something to block it. So this was his kind of ahah moment. Hey if, just the fact that we're alive should come with a continuous stream of joy and happiness because it's an essential aspect of existence itself, and so if you are not happy, you must be doing something to block that experience of happiness that comes with being alive. If the only thing we need for happiness is to exist, and since I exist, so what is it? So he coined this term 'make wrong' and make wrong is just what it says; you're making something wrong. Something that exists, you are deciding should not be there, should be different. You're making it wrong. And when you make something wrong, you cannot help but withdrawal your awareness from it. You don't want to be associated with it, you don't want to experience it. And so you pull, you withdrawal your awareness from it.

He also identified this really beautiful model of the difference between content and context. Every experience has content and context. And my experience is what it is, what it is. I can't change what is in the moment. In the next moment, maybe I can change it, maybe with work I can change it, but the content, if we're relying on being able to change the content of our experience in order to be happy, that could be a real challenge.

Context on the other hand is how we look at it, what we think about it, what we make it mean, the way we perceive it. That, you could change in the moment. And so happiness is actually a factor of changing context and not content. So everything has some potential for enjoyment. Now obviously some things are easier to enjoy than other things. But every single thing has some potential for enjoyment and it's up to us to identify that and maximise it. And you know we have these kind of people where a hundred things are happening. 99 of them are absolutely perfect and wonderful and one of them is not, guess which one they focus on? And you have people in the other direction; 100 things happening, 99 of the horrible, painful. But one sweet thing is happening and they have this ability to focus on that.

That zen story of the guy whose being chased by the tiger and the tiger follows him up in the tree and he goes out on the branch and the tiger follows him on the branch and he climbs down the vine and now he's hanging over a cliff on the vine and a mouse is chewing on the vine, and he's on the edge of this cliff. What does he do? He looks over and he sees a wild strawberry and he eats the strawberry. So it's finding that, whatever minute potential for joy is, and harvesting it, focusing on it and training yourself to be that kind of person. Because in every situation there is something beautiful.

Here are the, content, context. So i mentioned very quickly about this, this is happening, "oh my god, I'm going to die" context. Oh my god I'm going to die is context. Content, "Oh God is healing me", context I've changed it. And so of course my experience is going to be different, I just changed the context, I didn't have to change the content.

So there are five elements in vivation.

The first is circular breathing. You've already got that. This is connected breathing. He is not so concerned with active inhale, passive exhale. He kind of mentions it but just so the breath is circular, that's enough. And there are three breathing patterns in circular breathing; fast and full, slow and full and fast and shallow. There is no such thing as slow and shallow in vivation. Three possible, and these are directions. Breathing in the direction of fast and full. He does mention that when you 're talking about fast or slow, you're talking about the inhale. So not the exhale. So the exhale is, you're just letting it happen. SO these are the three rhythms and when you go through your vivation session, you're doing conscious, connected, circular, continuous breathing and you keep adjusting the breath in one of these three directions; fast and full, slow and full, fast and shallow.

You would use fast and full breathing to activate a lot of energy. So somebody says, what are you feeling right now? You say nothing. Ok breath fast and full. You'll feel something, that's the point. And you also use fast and full if you have a tnedancy to keep going unconscious. You breath fast and full to keep yourself awake, keep yourself in the process.

Slow and full, you use slow and full breathing when you are experiencing something really wonderful, and you want to take it into every cell of your body. You want to maximise the pleasure. Slow and full.

And you use fast and shallow when it's just too intense, you can't integrate it, it's too big. You take your little breaths. Fast and shallow to integrate something intense. Or just for the fun of it, like a happy dog.

So the skill of happiness, is a subtitle of what vivation is and the purpose of vivation, how Jim developed this, is he would just see in the early rebirthing days, everybody was just going through this trauma and drama and working through their childhood miserable events. Can't this just be fun? Can't this just be enjoyable from the very first breath, right through the whole session, every minute enjoyable? Why not? The only reason is nobody made that the focus, made that the invention! So all it took was the decision to say, ok, this is about enjoyment. So then now I need to decide should I breath fast and full, slow and full or fast and shallow? Should I breathe through my nose or should I breathe through my mouth? The answer is which one do you enjoy more? Which one is more enjoyable? That's the right way. So here's the first element.

The second element is, complete relaxation. So this is already familiar. Circular breathing, complete relaxation.

Third element, awareness in detail, is what he called it. And the awareness in detail is focused on the physical sensations in your body. What are you aware of, you are aware of the physical sensations in your body. And the details of that. And so you track the subtle changes in your energy, and you breathe into the strongest feeling. That's vivation.

The fourth element is the key that's what makes this different than rebirthing, is integration into ecstasy. And so you don't need this fourth element unless you find that you're not enjoying yourself. If you are not enjoying yourself, you must be blocking the natural enjoyment that comes from existence. You must be making something wrong. So then you engage in the fourth element, and there are a number of fourth element techniques. I think he had a 101 ways to integrate something. And then you could call them affirmations. Humour was a really good one, curiosity, gratitude. You know, at least I'm not driving a car right now. Or this is easier than a root canal. You know, just bringing in like that.

If you are not enjoying yourself, maybe you're not relaxing, maybe you need to adjust the breathing. Because this first element is the thing that gets us into the process so you have to breathe enough to get into that tingling and the vibrations and the buzzing and the bubbling and that boiling kind of sensation, electrical energy. That needs to be happening. It's like listening to music. I fyou are not enjoying your favourite piece of music, it has to be loud enough for you to hear it, you got to turn it up enough to hear it. So you got to turn your energy up in your body enough to feel it. That's why he used the breathing. But even if it's your favourite music, if it's too loud, it's hard to enjoy. So vivation allows you to kind of regulate and modulate that energy, so it's strong enough for your to feel it, but not so strong that it's becoming a process and difficult and all that stuff. So you choose the intensity with vivation. You regulate the energy by adjusting the breathing pattern.

The fifth element, kind of sets people free. The original idea was willingness is enough. Do whatever you do, willingness is enough. If you want to enjoy something, if you are willing to enjoy something, you'll figure out a way. But if you're waiting to know how to do something, before you're willing to do it, you'll never do it. Willingness comes first. And a lot of people are waiting until, "are you enjoying this?" "I can't". "Are you willing to enjoy it?" "I can't". I didn't say whether you could or not, are you willing to? Are you willing to enjoy this? "I don't know how!" "I didn't ask if you knew how, I asked if you were willing?" So the willingness is very powerful, and it's probably enough. if you're willing to enjoy something, you're going to enjoy it. I'm on a plane sitting between two fat, smelly people for an eight hour flight, not an enjoyable situation in general terms alright, and I can find lots of ways, and I guess what really hit me when I started practicing vivation is, I may not be able to enjoy certain situations, but I can enjoy myself in that situation. Nobody is stopping me from enjoying myself, except me, it doesn't matter what situation you're in. And it's kind of fun to sit on a plane between two fat, smelly people. You know to get back at them, you can fart. All kinds of ways to enjoy yourself. If you're willing, you can make it an amazingly fun and enjoyable thing.

And I'll tell you, ok it will come to me... She wrote a book called Impossible Human, she's written 30 books. Her name will come to me at some point in the story. She was visiting a concentration camps in Poland some place, and she ended up at, Gene Houston, thank you. Gene Houston, amazing woman. Her mentor was MARGARET MEAD, famous anthropologist, archaeologist. and Gene Houston's father was an actor, writer, comedian and she's a great,great story teller, she's written 30 books. And she told this experience of going to this, what is now a museum, but it was a place where they kept children and did, who knows what kind of experiments on children and horrendous, nightmare kind of situation. And when she was walking through the dormitory where they stayed, she found someone had drawn a butterfly on the wall. So some child in the middle of that hell, found a way to create something beautiful. When she told me that story, I said "what the hell is my problem"? How dare I ever bitch and moan again. How dare I ever allow myself to like, be miserable. If a little child, in that environment, can muster up something beautiful, what is my fucking problem? And shame on me if I can't find out what that is. And if I can't be that way.

So we have this ability to create and generate joy, regardless of what's happening. And we can use everything that's happening, to generate joy, appreciation, gratitude, all those good things. It's just a matter of making your focus and then doing it. It's pretty easy when you get right down with it.

So this is vivation.

You can recognise the pieces pretty easily. So minus the talking, this is a vivation session, because you're not going to be narrating your session.

Circular breathing.

Complete relaxation; ooh as soon as I focused on relaxation, I took a bigger breath. Just an observation.

Awareness in detail.

I relax my throat, I breathe into that feeling. I just pictured my mother, so now it seems I'm in my mind, I'm visualising something that's a head thing. So where in my body, when I picture my mother's face, where in my body is the feeling connected to that?  My solarplexes, around my navel, my heart area. So I can find where those thoughts live in my body. So Jim would often do that, if someone was thinking about something, he would say where in your body does that thought live? I feel angry; where in your body do you feel angry and what is the physical feeling and what is the physical place where that feeling lives? I'm conscious of my fingertips, I'm conscious of the heat in the palms of my hand. I can feel energy streaming in my arms. I'm very conscious of heat in my heart. And as these feelings arise in my awareness, I send the breath, I breathe into them, and I bring relaxation into them. And when I do, maybe I'll intuitively adjust my breathing to help me develop this rapport with the feelings and sensations that I am conscious of. My sitting bones have strong feeling again. It's my vivation session, the sitting bones, I can do something, I can change my position, and sure enough those feelings go again. But now I have to start my session over again and look for some other feeling. And when the next feeling comes up, if I make an adjustment, then the feeling goes away. But we're wasting an opportunity. We should and can allow those feelings to get stronger and stronger, breathe into them until they dissolve and integrate into my experience of my whole self. So I breathe until they kind of smooth out and they're not standing out any more. I have a whole sense of  my whole body, I can feel everything from me head to my toe. I just shifted to full and slow breathing, it's automatic now, if I want to enjoy something. As I'm focusing on the feeling, I make my breathing full, slow and full, to maximise the pleasure. I'm starting to notice a little tingling in the back of my neck. I could rub my neck and the energy just, kind of, something happened to it. Or I could just let that feeling, I can find a way to breath to actually make that feeling stronger. Ah, I found it. And now this tingling is a very familiar feeling. and now my mind kicked in, ahhh I know what that feeling is, I know what that means. Oh, I just remembered a time, when that was important, so now my mind is taking over the session. And I'm not really focusing on the feeling any more, I'm thinking about the feeling. I'm not doing vivation. I'm in my head, I'm not relating to my feelings. I'm doing something else. Which is O.K. But it's not really vivation.

And since it's my session, I can turn the music up really loud, I can turn it down and make it subtle. What's the way to enjoy it the most? If I need the fourth element, I always use rap music as an example. I don't even know why they call it rap music, to me it's not even music, where's the melody? And the words and the lyrics, you kill the cunt and fuck the cops and, oh God! I don't like it, I want to get away from rap music. If it's on the radio, I want to shut it off. So when I was driving with Jim one day, and sure enough a rap song came on, and I just turned the station. He goes, "damn", I said "fuck I hate rap music". He said, "Wow, maybe you should vive?" You can integrate that, you can integrate rap music. So alright, we turn the rap music on [breathes] and then he coached me. He said think of something you feel really grateful for. Oh that's no problem I can think of this, I can think of that. Ok so think of that, and imagine that thing focus on, the rap music is playing, focus on something that gives me gratitude, gives me pleasure. He said, "now just breathe and expand that gratitude, until the rap music is included in." So now I am feeling grateful and I am listening to rap music. I've integrated it. I'm not uncomfortable listening to rap music. I'm actually feeling grateful, I'm actually feeling wonderful whilst rap music is playing. So I've integrated it. The one thing about vivation is circular breathing, the breathing never stops. And you're relaxing at every opportunity, you are intensely aware of the details. And as you lock onto a detail and you change the breathing, you can feel how you can, you can modulate the level of energy.

So here's a question. In vivation, should you breathe through your nose or through your mouth? Which one is more enjoyable? That's it.

So, make no mistake about it. This element in vivation is always present, always obvious, always upfront. If someone walked in here whilst you were doing vivation, the very first thing they would notice is that you were breathing differently, more, actively, than usual. It's unmistakable. The active breathing, Jim was a very active breather. Obvious circular breathing. Because you're activating energy, you're generating energy, you're waking up the energy, which causes the feelings and sensation which now you can breath into and vive with.

Audience member: [inaudible}

Speaker:

Yeah, he didn't talk much about the exhale. He wanted relaxation during the inhale and the exhale. And he was trying to peel away what he thought is not absolutely necessary and so he didn't stress like they did in rebirthing, active inhale, passive exhale, active inhale, passive exhale. He said just keep the breath circular.

So I can play, I can keep adjusting the rhythm, maybe every single breath, is different to the last one, is constantly changing, constantly alive, continuously active. That's the major thing of vivation. And when people started to get into real subtle breathing. Ok the breath is moving, but how much energy are you really generating? Maybe you're hiding from something, and you're afraid of intensity. Maybe you can only reach a peaceful state when everything is quiet and you're warm and comfortable and you're in the right place wiht the right person and the moon is in the right phase and you've lit the candle and the right music is playing. And then, you can relax. Well, what good is it? So relaxing into intensity, turning the energy up in your body and celebrating it and enjoying it and integrating it, that's vivation.

The other thing about vivation is you don't lay down. You can lay down. You can sit up, you can stand on your head, you can walk around. We did eye gaze rebirthing, eye gaze vivation. So looking into someone's eyes and the feelings that's coming up in me, and I'm processing those feelings with the breath. Looking into a mirror and watching myself morph into creatures and weirds, and watching the feelings in your body and processing those feelings. Ambulatory vivation, walking around in life and viving. So he took the rebirthing process out of this lay down, go into your trauma stuff, and he just lightened it up, charged it with this notion of enjoyment and it's ok, take it, go forth and vive.

Audience member: How would you choose whether to vive or whether to do a rebirth.

Speaker:

It's a style of rebirthing, so it's integrated into all of my, these principles in vivation is integrated into my style of breathwork.

Audience member: So when you work with a client, you don't choose, you just do your thing [inaudible]

Speaker:

Yeah if I'm working with a client and it's early sessions, we're pounding on the basics. We're just getting the skills under your belt, getting comfortable with the breathing, getting good at relaxing, maintain the rhythm, let's focus on that for the first few sessions. and once you've got that down, now you can have an intention for the session. And you can breath to resolve some issue, breathe to heal something, breathe to solve a problem or whatever. But the first few sessions are about basic skills, getting good at them. And then applying those skills to, if you have an argument with someone, you have an issue, you have a disease, you have a decision you need to make, whatever. Then you're breathing session is about that and you can use it for that. But that's after you've done a few sessions. You know, let the spirit of breath, where your session goes, and don't try to direct it and steer it from the beginning. Just go for the ride a few times until you're comfortable with the process and then start to take over. And with vivation, what you're doing is just regulating the energy to the taste of your enjoyment. Some people love ice baths. Other people like warm baths. Some people like to just dive into the ocean, other people like to get their toes work, gradually go into their knees. So in a vivation session you get to honour that, you decide, you choose. And during the session, everything is enjoyable and it should start to get more and more enjoyable, and more and more enjoyable. Then you're enjoying every little thing that happens, every little feeling that comes up, even if it's painful, you find you're enjoying it. Even if it's frightful, you find you're enjoying it.

Vivation is a way of transforming energy. For example, fear is excitement plus a no. Excitement, the energy of excitement, plus a no, equals fear.

Fear plus a yes, equals excitement. The same energy, same exact energy. Saying yes to it is one experience, saying no to it is another experience, but the energy is the same.

And the same thing with sadness. If you say yes to sadness, it transforms into gratitude, sweetness. I lost my son 42 years old this summer in June, two weeks before his 43rd birthday. The most difficult thing of my life I could say, the biggest shock, the most painful thing, without a doubt. But in the sadness, there's a sweetness, there's this joy, there's this gratitude, there's this appreciation. And it's not painting over a painful feeling with a pretty, sugar-coating. There's genuine sweetness and genuine gratitude when you allow yourself to feel sad, the energy transforms into a sweetness, into gratitude.

And the same thing with anger. Anger becomes determination. This will never happen again [growls]. So the same energy, you can transform it. So, vivation is really, it's a way to transform energies in the direction, in a higher frequency. Celebration, gratitude, appreciation, wonder, curiosity. Deliberately breathing those energies in. Experiencing something in an atmosphere of appreciation, in a state of relaxation and a welcoming. If it's sadness, welcome it. Whatever it is. There it is, it's the content, what are you going to do, fight with it, try to pretend it's not there, distract yourself from it? No, you [breathes].

And the one thing I really learned is the quicker we are, the more willing we are to totally feel pain, the quicker we recover from it. The recovery time is accelerated amazingly by our willingness to feel fully and allow ourselves to feel whatever we feel. And I watched myself go through the typical, you know, get the phone call at 2 o’clock in the morning and I'm in Moscow, and Louise's mother is telling me what happened, and the first thing is just denial. I want to talk to the doctor, I want to hear him. Why is it hopeless, why did he arrive in a hopeless condition, what's happening here? I need to know. And maybe I'm going to argue with it...

[speaker's story continues].

And that ability to channel emotional energy through the breath, relieves the body of a lot of stress. And it speeds up recovery time and it reduces the wear and tear on the psyche and on the body itself.

And so you know, when you can hold something, whether it's rap music of a horrible event, when you can hold it in your awareness and feel ease in the breath, and feel relaxation and feel sweetness and love and joy, you have integrated something, you've healed something. You're learning from it. And that wave of emotion that just came was when I realised how beautiful his eyes were. I never realised how beautiful his eyes were.

You know, in times like that, nothing helps. [Speaker's story continues].

To be able to breathe fully and freely, to be able to relax and not avoiding the situation, not trying not to think about it, but having it sit on your lap like a brick. This is it, there isn't any pretending it ain't so, there isn't any wishing it wasn't so, there isn’t any trying to paint a pretty picture about it to make it more palpable. It's sitting with the fullness of it and allowing your system [breathes].

So I notice now that when I talk about this, that sadness that's locked in other people's bodies, gets activated. And I feel myself, processing it. Sadness that you don't let yourself feel, because it's too painful. Sadness that if you touch it, you're afraid that you'll just sink into it forever. Same thing with anger, same thing with rage. To feel the fullness of it is very dangerous, is very scary, and so we touch it, it's like a fire, and we pull away from it. And when you pull away from it, you withdrawal energy from it and you become dis-integrated. And in vivation, it's about integration. Bringing those parts that you pushed off and separated and didn't want to feel, bringing them back into your sense of self, and becoming more whole and more integrated.

So that's the healing power of vivation. So let's start. Start with the breath, you don't have to change any position. You've got something to do? So start the breathing, and then breathe when you walk. So just start right here, circular breathing.

Complete relaxation.  Awareness in detail. If you get up, what muscles do you use to get up, what does gravity feel like? Where is the weight when you shift your weight from one foot to the other. Awareness and detail, breathing, circular breathing, complete relaxation. Fast and full, slow and full, fast and shallow; your choice. Activating energy. The energy will activate feelings and sensations. Feel into those feelings and sensations, breathe into them. Relax into them. Enjoy them. And if something starts to happen that you don't find enjoyable, then you need to stop making it wrong, you need to embrace it, celebrate it, be grateful for it, be curious about it, invite it in.

[End of video 21].