



A Step Above

Personal Training Concepts

Learn to relax. Your body is precious, as it houses your mind and spirit. Inner peace begins with a relaxed body.

~ Norman Vincent Peale



Jinjer's Thoughts:

No Breath, No Life!

*The time came when the Lord God formed a man's body from the dust of the ground and **breathed** into it the **breath of life**. And man became a living person*

Genesis 2:7, Living Bible

Why is the **breath** so important? Because it affects virtually every part of the body. It oxygenates the body, revitalizing organs, cells and tissues. If you stop breathing, your bodily functions will systematically shut down from the least important to the most vital until it ceases to function. We can live a long time without food, a couple of days without drinking, but life without breath is measured in minutes. That's why any effort to increase the supply of oxygen to our bodies, especially to the brain, will pay rich dividends.

Stress can do some really weird things to our mental, emotional, physical and spiritual state. When our bodies experience stress, it can feel like the world is closing in on us -- as if someone is holding us down, covering our faces with a pillow and suffocating us. Some

say it literally feels like they are dying.

Under stress, our breathing patterns change. Typically, we feel tense and tend to take rapid, shallow and irregular breaths (referred to as shallow chest breathing). When this happens, the body doesn't get enough oxygen causing the body's respiratory rate to increase and leading to breathlessness. Consistent shallow breathing has been found to cause fatigue, emotional tension, severe headaches and forgetfulness, in addition to other health related issues. Rapid and shallow breathing increases neck and shoulder tension and raises the risk of hyperventilation. Because the body uses more energy during stress, hyperglycemia can occur and blood vessels may end up blocked.

When our bodies are **not** under stress, we feel calm, cool and collected in thought. We are more relaxed. Breathing patterns become smooth, deep and rhythmical (referred to as diaphragmatic or abdominal/stomach breathing). A 1996 *Prevention* magazine survey, supported by The American Institute of Stress, found that an estimated 75 - 95% of all visits to primary care physicians are due to stress-related issues. According to the American Heart Association (AHA), hypertension or high blood pressure killed 56,561 people in the United States in 2006. This "**silent killer**"

occurs in 1 in 3 adults. Sadly, the AHA reports that the cause of high blood pressure is **unknown** in approximately 90-95% of all cases.

In an article written by Michael White on "Clinical Studies about the Importance of Optimal Breathing," the Framingham study, performed over a 30-year period and focused on thousands of participants, presents convincing evidence that the most significant factor in peak health and longevity is how well you breathe. Stress relief is not about escaping the stress in your life -- the key to relieving stress is creating a sense of calm inside you.

So what are some things that we can do to help decrease stress and, for some, lower blood pressure? We already know that diet and exercise are important -- and for some, prescribed medications can make a difference in stress levels and lower blood pressure. There are, how-ever, other alternative methods that can do the same thing. The most powerful of all



NO BREATH, NO LIFE! Continued)

the “**stress management**” techniques is literally right under your nose. Understanding the use of breath control and learning to breathe properly can be useful tools for those suffering from high levels of stress and hypertension. By learning how to control your breathing, you’ll find that your fitness level will increase immensely. Therefore, learning to take deep, long, slow breaths can allow the body to calm down, triggering a relaxation response. Research has shown that just 10 to 15 minutes a day focused on breathing is a great combative for stress and can help lower blood pressure. Because they’re simple and free, **breathing exercises** are an ideal way to relieve stress.

Natural breathing should come from the stomach not the chest. Don’t force it, but let your breathing become natural and relaxed. When inhaling through your nose,

your stomach should expand (filling the lower lungs) while upper chest remains still. As you breathe in, imagine that “relaxation” is coming into your body, reaching every part of you, and flowing through your limbs. After a few minutes, you should feel ‘full’ of peace, and the stress in your body should be reduced. As you exhale calmly through your nose, imagine that all the stress from your body is being exhaled. You will notice a more relaxed attitude after shifting your focus to your breathing and not your stressors.

Below you will find an exercise for individuals suffering from high amounts of stress and panic attacks. It can be done by anyone, anywhere and at anytime. Some people even set their watch for a certain time a day and when the alarm goes off regardless of their workload they discipline themselves to focus on and train their breathing in order to reduce stress.

**Breath-Control
(Feeling Panicky or Anxious)**

*Sit or lay down comfortably

*You can rest your one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach

*Take a deep, long, SLOW breath filling the lower lungs (stomach expands) then you will fill the upper lungs (chest will rise).

*After inhaling hold your breath and count to 3

*Slowly exhale via pursed lips while at the same time relaxing the muscles in the jaw, face, shoulders and stomach

*After slowly releasing all the air through your lips, breath natural breaths for about 5 seconds, then take another deep long slow breath. Try this about 5 to 10 times.

***IMPORTANT:** Try to focus on saying a word to yourself (*relax*); or, using imagery (i.e., sitting under a tree with a book in a meadow), think about a place you would like to be that calms you; or even shift your focus to what your body is doing, not allowing your thought patterns to influence your breathing.

Mixed Fruit Tart

The crust can be made a day ahead and refrigerated.

Total time: 20 minutes, plus chilling ● Makes 8 Servings

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|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 Tbsp gelatin | 1 cup sliced strawberries |
| 2 Tbsp water | 1 cup sliced ripe peaches |
| 1 cup fat-free, low-sugar vanilla yogurt | 1 cup blueberries |
| 1/2 cup low-fat granola | 3 Tbsp confectioners’ sugar |
| 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs | Olive oil spray |
| 3 Tbsp canola oil | |



Mix gelatin & water together in sm. glass mixing cup, set aside●Allow yogurt to come to room temp.●Place granola, graham cracker crumbs, & canola oil in bowl of food processor●Process until oil is mixed into dry ingredients●Coat a 7- or 8-inch pie plate with olive oil spray & press crumbs into place●Refrigerate while preparing other ingredients●Place mixing cup with gelatin in a saucepan●Fill it with water to reach 3/4 of the way up●Heat water to dissolve gelatin, abt. 2 min.●Once gelatin is clear, stir into yogurt●Remove pie plate from frig & spread yogurt mixture over bottom●Return to frig for 5 min.●Remove from frig & spread strawberries & peach slices over yogurt●Sprinkle blueberries on top & refrigerate●Remove abt. 15 min before serving. Sprinkle sugar on top and serve.



**Welcome Back Cadets
2010 Fall Boot Camp and
Aerobic classes**

Summer is coming to a close and fall is in the air. I hope everyone has had an awesome and blessed summer and is ready to get back to working out and having fun. Missy and I would like to thank everyone for their enrollment at *A Step Above Personal Training Concepts*. We have a lot of new faces this fall. Don’t forget about our new **Rise & Shine** aerobic strength/conditioning class on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 6:00-7:00 a.m. Class begins **September 8th**. We want to welcome Elaine Smith to our ASA staff. She has been working diligently this summer, training and preparing to instruct the morning class. Elaine has been a boot camp member for two years. We have teamed-up and designed the morning class to best fit the needs for beginners in exercise.

The Tuesday & Thursday (6:30-7:30 pm) night boot camp is NOW FULL. If anyone is interested in joining, please have them call me to be added to the waiting list. We really appreciate everyone’s cooperation, and we’re excited about coaching your fitness needs. If there are any questions prior to class, please call me at 228-5776 or 620-5309, or email astepabove@centurylink.net.

God Bless! And be ready to “get your sweat on!” Hoorah!

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