BREATHE

HANDOUT #4

I want you to start paying more attention to your breath. Before you begin Phase 2, start breathing more consciously in your busy life. Stop & take the time to pause for 5 deep breaths right before you eat your lunch & dinner.

If you are serious about reversing aging, you need to make space in each day to relax and breathe (even if it's only for 2 minutes at a time). Turning your attention to your breath moves you naturally toward relaxation and meditation which can:

- help in balancing brain chemicals and hormones
- improve emotional and physical well being
- improve the ability to make a decision
- break negative thought patterns

3 BREATHING EXERCISES

Practice quieting your mind and "just breathing" once or twice each day for 2-15 minutes.

BASIC

1) Take a comfortable sitting position. Close your eyes gently and loosen up your body, keeping the spine straight.

2) With eyes closed, take a few slow, deep breaths. Survey your body and adjust your position so you are not feeling any tension in your muscles.

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3) Observing your breathing, follow the cycle of its inhale to exhale – note the points at which one phase changes into the other. Simply observe your breath and do nothing other than follow its cycle, without trying to influence it in any way.

4) If your mind wanders off, gentle shift it back to focus on breath.

5) Treat interruptions of thoughts or noises with an inner attitude of "whatever happens is ok" and allow yourself to enjoy your breathing meditation. There is no wrong way to do this. ;o)

WITH MANTRA

You may find a mantra (repeating a word or sound) can make it easier to focus on your breath.

1) Take a comfortable sitting position. Close your eyes gently and loosen up your body keeping the spine straight.

2) With eyes closed, take a few slow, deep breaths. Survey your body and adjust your position so you are not feeling any tension in your muscles.

3) Once settled, introduce the thought "So" on each inhalation and the thought "Hum" on each exhalation.

4) If you realize you have stopped thinking about the mantra, gently shift your attention back to it throughout meditation.

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BEFORE BED EXERCISE

It will take barely five minutes. This practice will leave you refreshed and free from daily tension. It will help you release negative energy and restore positive energy. With continued practice, you will begin to notice positive changes in yourself. You will stay happier & your skin will appear fresher and more glowing.

- Take a comfortable sitting or lying position in bed. Close your eyes gently and loosen up your body and muscles.
- Focus on the rhythm of your breath for 10 seconds, slowly allowing your body to relax. Inhale deeply through your nose, letting out long, slow exhales through mouth. Repeat the process several times.
- As you slowly breathe out, imagine any negative thoughts, (stress and anxiety you may have) following your breath out. Imagine they are exiting your body in the form of dark clouds. Imagine them breaking lose from your body. Everything that makes you feel stressed and tense is leaving your body. It can be something long term or something that happened in the course of the day. Imagine the negative going out, then smile and say goodbye to those smokey negative clouds.
- Now, keeping a focus, slowly breathe in and imagine pulling in bright colored positivity, strength and happiness from your surroundings, or the sky above.
- Imagine a light of any color. It can be any color you feel peaceful around. For example, imagine yourself surrounded by yellow or soothing lavender from all directions. You are sitting in a circle of this light. Imagine the light penetrating through your body, entering it from every direction and from every part. Imagine it passing from your head to your toes. Imagine it

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seeping into every cell, tissue, and organ of your body and ending at your feet.

- Imagine yourself free, free from everything negative, whether it's people, things, or thoughts.
- Now that you have freed yourself from everything negative, imagine being surrounded by positive energy. Imagine it passing through your body. Imagine the positive energy being bathed by the peaceful light that was surrounding you. This peaceful light will act as a filter to remove any negative energy and negative thoughts from your mind and soul.
- Notice a feeling of lightness and refreshment. As you start feeling refreshed, imagine another color of light passing through your body, perhaps white. Imagine the white light passing through your body starting from your head and moving to your feet. Bathe yourself in the soothing light. Feel this light strengthening the positive energy field of your body and relaxing your mind.
- Repeat a positive affirmation to yourself until you fade off to a peaceful sleep:

✓ My mind is at peace and ready to rest
✓ I am looking forward to waking up well-rested
✓ Tomorrow is full of wonderful possibilities
✓ I choose relaxation over stress
✓ I will wake up with my mind and body recharged
✓ I am letting go of every worry and going to bed
✓ My body is relaxed and ready for sleep
✓ I love and accept myself as I am
✓ I nourish my mind by getting restful sleep
✓ I am grateful for tomorrow's opportunities
✓ I value mindfulness and well-being

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