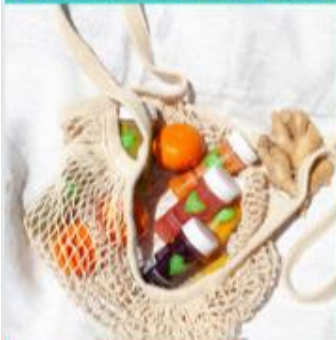
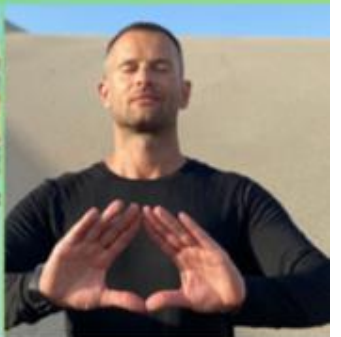




GLOBAL WELLNESS
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The FUTURE of WELLNESS 2021



Just Breathe!

Breath goes from woo-woo wellness to a powerful health tool

By Sandra Ballentine

INTRODUCTION

Breathwork used to sit squarely on the woo-woo side of the wellness spectrum, but in recent years, clinical studies conducted at schools like Harvard, Stanford¹ and Johns Hopkins² have put modern science and real data behind something we've actually known for centuries—the way we breathe has profound effects on our mental and physical health and abilities.^{4 5}

"I think a lot of people have ignored breathwork because it's so simple and it's free—it costs nothing," says James Nestor, author of *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art* (and a 2020 Global Wellness Summit keynote speaker). "But there is so much research out there, and so many people are discovering for themselves how transformative it is, that I think it will keep growing. I certainly hope so because we need it now more than ever."

Breathwork may be simple, but it can seem daunting to the uninitiated. While it's true that elite athletes, adventurers and soldiers harness

their breath to achieve seemingly impossible things and beat incredible odds, the beauty of breathwork is that it's something all of us can access. Even the simple act of reciting a Shakespearean sonnet can put you in a therapeutic zone, according to Dan Brulé, a pioneer in the spiritual breathing movement.

"Reading certain poems and prayers out loud slows your breathing to somewhere between four and eight breaths per minute, which lowers blood pressure and decreases cortisol levels," says Brulé. "Breathwork training is very powerful for high-stakes situations where lives can be lost, but all the amazing abilities of the warriors and the gurus and the yogis and the masters and the saints—well, the average person can access those very same high states and extraordinary abilities just by breathing."

What follows is a curated compendium of the people, places, techniques and tech developments pushing the practical magic of breathwork into exciting—and important—new directions.



Anicca's patent-pending Companion device aids in regulating the wearer's emotions by amplifying the sensation of their breathing as a calming vibration on their body.

Cal-A-Vie Health Spa in Vista, California, offers private sessions of "Peaceful Breath and Rejuvenation" and "Breathe, Flow, Restore," which teaches Pranayama breathing techniques.

In Mexico: Guests at **Chablé Yucatan and Chablé Maroma** often start their day with a 60-minute Energetic Breathing Practice, while in Tulum, breathwork offerings can be found at **Habitas** and **Nomade**.

In addition to collaborations with corporations and festivals, the London-based breathwork studio **Breathpod** brings breathwork seminars and pop-ups to hotels like **Landmark Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, Blakes London and Birch** (a country hotel in Hertfordshire).

Miraval Arizona's popular **Breathwalking meditation** involves synchronizing your steps to two different breathing techniques, the "Wave" and the "Stairs," while hiking in nature. Guests who book Miraval Austin's Pranayama-Dina experience are swaddled in a weighted blanket and suspended in a silk sling while a "guide" leads them in breathwork and massages them from below using a foot technique.

The rustic **Troutbeck In Amenia**, New York, just opened The Barns, a bijoux wellness center that offers private yoga and breath coaching.

Shou Sugl Ban House, a chic, wabi-sabi-inspired wellness hotel in East Hampton, New York, offers dedicated breathwork sessions like "Body Awakening and Breathwork" and "Breathwork Journey."

Sangha Retreat by Octave Institute in Suzhou, China, offers breathwork training in various wellness programs.

THE TECH

Breathwork apps and YouTube videos have been a thing for a while. Gaining traction are handheld devices that track air quality and fitness trackers and other wearables that incorporate breathing-related metrics like breathing rate, pulse oximetry, heart-rate variability and habitual breathing patterns. Some interesting examples include:

HeartMath and **Lief** use wearable sensors to help users track and increase their heart-rate variability, which is said to reduce stress.

Israel-based start-up **Anicca** is in the testing stage of its patent-pending Companion device, which aids in regulating the wearer's emotions by amplifying the sensation of their breathing as a calming vibration on their body.

Another device developed in Israel, **CalmiGo**, helps users regulate breathing to reduce anxiety.

Muse 2 Brain Sensing headband incorporates breath metrics to aid in meditation.

Aimed at athletes, military personnel and first responders, RTM Vital Signs is developing a watch-like **RTM R3 fitness monitor** that can measure an ambulatory person's respiratory rate (RR) and tidal volume (TV), body temperature, hemoglobin oxygen saturation, activity level and body position.

While not wearable, **Field**, a multimedia, AI-driven, "life transformation" experience that takes place in a cocoon-like pod, incorporates breathwork into its brain-training protocols.