

Notes by Linda Quinn

Dr. Wesley Smith
ACSA Executive Director



Balance = Alignment = Engagement = **SUCCESS**

Full engagement requires drawing on 4 sources of energy.

Red-eyes, Racquetball, and Life/Work Balance

Focus...

on your breath, on the tip of your nose, on cool air coming in, or warm air going out.



Breath is a powerful way to control the mind as well as the body.

SUCCESS

Navy Seals know the importance of breathing.

- Navy Seals
- set manageable goals.
 - visualize success.
 - use positive self talk.
 - practice rescue breathing. (4x4x4)

demands we are physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and spiritually aligned with a purpose beyond our immediate self-interest



We identify our own North Star by realizing our purpose and defining our values.

"He who has a why to live for can bear with almost any how."
Friedrich Nietzsche

What brings you the greatest joy in life?

What gives your life meaning?

Who are you at your best?

How do you want to be remembered?

Breath is a tool for self-regulation, both to energize and to relax. Oxygen is essential, and the scientific benefits of intentional breathing are many.

However, most of us rarely focus on our breath.

Dr. Smith's Story

Dr. Smith is Executive Director of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the largest school leadership group in the nation. Before ACSA, he served in a variety of administrative roles, including principal and superintendent. For years, he was a hard-charging school leader, focusing all of his time and energy on doing this important work, traveling all over the state and nation to support other leaders doing the work as well.

One morning when Dr. Smith was about to board another airplane, he began feeling ill. His first thought was that he didn't want to have to use the little white bag in the seat pocket in front of him. Quickly the symptoms grew more severe, and he realized he couldn't make the trip. He drove himself home instead. As the day progressed, he felt worse and worse until finally he went to the emergency room, where he learned he had been having a heart attack all day.

Dr. Smith was treated for the heart attack, and he recovered. In fact, the doctors cleared him to start playing racquetball again.

At the gym, on the court, Dr. Smith suffered acute cardiac arrest. He actually died for a few moments. He was rushed to the hospital.

Later he was told that only 13% of people who experience cardiac arrest away from a medical facility survive. "People just don't come out of an experience like that the way you have."



BALANCE

2 Values
Fuel Purpose

and values also provide the roadmap for



What are your HOW VALUES? How do you live them?

Dr. Smith shared some of the ways he lives his values.

- ◆ When you're there, be there. Be present in the moment.
- ◆ Find, make, and/or protect quiet time. to breathe, reflect, create, define and crystallize, just be.
- ◆ Strengthen the physical... breathe right, eat right, exercise
- ◆ Strengthen the emotional... self-confidence, self-control, interpersonal effectiveness, empathy
- ◆ Strengthen the mental... the key supportive mental muscles are preparation, visualization, positive self-talk, effective time management & creativity.
- ◆ Strengthen the spiritual... spiritual energy is sustained by balancing a commitment to purpose beyond ourselves with a adequate self care.

No more trying to thrive on chaos

Avoid Multi-tasking

STRESS is not the enemy. **DISTRESS** comes from not being able to periodically disengage.

"There must be a plan for your life."

"My mission is serving kids."

"Then start doing a better job of it."

- Positive Self Talk
- Effective Time Management
- Preparation
- Visualization
- Creativity

Mind-Body Wellness Commitment

What brings me the greatest Joy?

What gives me the greatest sense of passion and meaning?

What is my purpose?

What are my core values?

List 3 positive affirmations.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List 3 ways I am going to strengthen my physical energy.

- 1 (Nutrition).
- 2 (Cardio).
- 3 (Other).

When am I going to focus on my breathing?

- 1.

When am I going to schedule quiet/meditation time?

- 1.
- 2.

How am I going to disconnect and engage?

- 1.
- 2.

What am I going to do this week that brings me joy? When?

- 1.

How am I going to serve/benefit others this week?

- 1.
- 2.

Name: _____



THE SCIENTIFIC BENEFITS OF BREATHING

*For Greater Health &
Happiness*



Breathing is the single most important act that we do every day.



We cannot go even 3 minutes without breathing.



However, we do not pay much attention to breathing since it happens automatically.



There is a lot more to the breath than we know. In particular, it is a powerful way to control the mind.



We intuitively know this: it is why we commonly use expressions like "take a deep breath" when people are anxious or angry is common.



Scientific research is showing that breathing may just be the secret to better health and a more peaceful and productive mind.

HOW THE BREATH HELPS YOU CONTROL YOUR MIND



Neither in school, at work or at home have we been taught how to deal with strong emotions like anger, anxiety or fear.



We can try to "talk ourselves" out of these states but think about how successful you are at talking yourself out of a state of rage or nervousness. It's hard!



Research shows that the breath, however, can help! Since it is so difficult "talk" our way out of our feelings, we can learn to "breathe" our way through them.



One study showed that different emotions are linked to different patterns of breath and that, conversely, changing the breath can change our emotions! In other words, breath is a secret to regulating and gaining control over our emotions! We can change how we feel using our breath.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT BREATHING PRACTICES ARE POWERFUL



Decrease anxiety and depression



Increase happiness and optimism



Improve sleep



Strengthen our ability to regulate emotions



Improve trauma symptoms



Reduce impulsivity, cravings & addictions.

Why? The breath is linked to our autonomic nervous system. Daily breathing practices activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which is associated with resting and digesting i.e. a more peaceful mind and body.

Research shows that breathing practices also benefit the body:



Decrease stress & regulate our body's level of cortisol: the stress hormone.



Strengthen our immunity by altering genes responsible for stronger immunity.



Reduce pain and activation of pain centers in the brain.