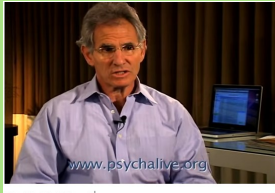




LIVING SAVIOUR
Lutheran Church

Special points of interest:



Listen to Kabat-Zinn
<https://tinyurl.com/4uuzew5>

<https://tinyurl.com/wx8d9k3s>

<https://tinyurl.com/pez346s>

- **Practice:**
- G— greens & grains
- R— rest/ relax
- A— activity & exercise
- C³— cease smoking, control drinking, contact people
- E— emotional centering with contemplative mindfulness practice

In this issue

Breathing: God's CPR	p.1
Practice GRACE	P.1
Pondering the Sacred	P.2
Practicing G.R.A.C.E. at Living Saviour	P.2



You are the salt of the Earth

Ministry of Health and Wholeness

A Breath of Fresh Air: Breathing in the Breath of God

Volume III: Issue 9

September 2023

Breathing as Divine Therapy

Mindful Breathing History:

- Early in human history -at least by 1000 BC the world's great Wisdom Traditions began to recognize the connection between breathing and a 'vital principle' that flows through the body.
- The Tao religion of China called this energy *qi*, the Shinto faith of Japan -*ki*, the Hindu faith of India - *prana*, the Hebrews -*ruah*, the Greek or Christians *pneuma*, and the Latin term was *spiritus*.
- This vital force was thought to be connected with a Higher Power or God and could be encountered through breath meditation.
- Meditation was practiced by the **early first century Christians** as a means of connecting with God.
- This understanding of Vital Force was also the basis of early medical practices.
- With the discovery of the microscope and single cell organisms, Vital Force Theory fell out of favor.
- The Enlightenment ushered in new scientific understandings of how life originated and is supported.
- The need for, a Vital Force, a Higher Power, or God as a source of life was no long-

er considered necessary.

- Wikipedia states, "Vitalism has become so disreputable ...in the last fifty years that no biologist alive today would want to be classified as a vitalist."

Vitalism Revived:

- In 1979, after studying with Tich Nhat Hanh, Jon Kabat-Zinn, with a Ph.D in molecular biology from MIT, founded the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Mass Medical School.
- At the Clinic, Kabat-Zinn taught mindfulness meditation along with an intentional mindfulness of the breath.
- The research from his work showed startling success with conditions of psoriasis, pain, anxiety, brain function, immune function, cardiac function.
- The success of his work became the foundation for many Integrative and Holistic Health practices which support health.
- With this success mindfulness meditation has become one of the fundamentals, along with diet and exercise, as part of a healthy lifestyle practice.
- A study in the prestigious scientific journals, *Cell Reports Medicine*, and *Journal of the American Medical Association Psychiatry* showed that just 5 minutes of breathwork each day for about a month

- could improve mood and reduce anxiety, matching the benefits of medication
- "That's not bad for 5 minutes per day."

What is Mindful Breathwork?:

- Paying attention, on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmentally.
- Most of us spend the majority of time reliving the past, or anticipating the future. We totally miss the rich blessings of the present moment.
- Beathing is always NOW, and the quality of our breath impacts bodily function, our experiences, and behavior.
- Mindfulness breathing is a good place to begin with mindfulness practices.
- Other mindfulness practices include meditation, mental body scans, and yoga postures.

Mindful Breathing Benefits :

- Coping in Stress: Controlled breathwork practices have emerged as tools for stress management *and* wellbeing.
- Physical Health: Slow breathing practices affects the autonomic system which regulates heart rate, blood pressure, & breathing improving many chronic disease conditions.
- Improved Mental Health
- Enhanced Cognitive Function
- Increased Energy an Vitality



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Health in the Headlines:

COVID Update:

- * Mecklenburg/Union Counties covid rate surging
- * Get updated vaccine
- * Test for COVID when feeling sick.
- * Check with your doctor for treatment when positive
- * Wear a mask in public if vulnerable.

Fruit and vegetable 'prescriptions' lead to better heart health (Washington Post)

- * "When doctors and health-care providers "prescribed" fruits and veggies patients lost weight and experienced significant reductions in blood pressure."
- * " 'Produce prescriptions' are a growing effort to treat obesity, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure.

Ministry of Health and Wholeness: Pondering the Sacred

"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And when he said this he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" John 20:21

In teaching on the Holy Spirit, Franciscan Priest Fr. Richard Rohr says "what we need to do is "mind the gap"—because the Holy Spirit *fills the gaps of everything*. First, we need to be aware that there is a gap." God is Present in that space and as available to us as our breath. (Please See: <https://tinyurl.com/3dsx2w6n>)

"The Holy Spirit within us is the desire inside all of us that wants to keep connecting, relating, and communing. It isn't above us. It isn't beyond us—it is within us. It's as available as our breath, and that's why the Risen Christ gives the Holy Spirit by breathing upon the disciples. He's saying, in effect, 'Here it is! Here it is! Can you breathe in what I have breathed out?'"

"As we grow on the journey, we'll begin to experience that breath, that Spirit, as if it is the very air. It's everywhere, all the time, and we can't live one minute without it. Isn't it amazing that air, the thing that's most essential, most invisible to most people is the one thing that's everywhere all the time and free? The Holy Spirit likewise has been given to us freely. "

"Our very first inhalation at birth and exhalation at death, which is the very sound of the sacred. It is the literally unspeakable Jewish name for God, *YHWH*. It cannot be spoken but only breathed: inhaling and exhaling with open lips. It is the first and last "word" you will ever utter—most likely without knowing it. Breathe in YH— Exhale WH."

Jennifer Tucker in *Breath as Prayer* states, "Breath prayers combine deep breathing exercises with prayers of meditation on God's Word. Slow, deep breaths help activate the parasympathetic nervous system, slowing the heart rate and calming the body, while prayer turns the heart toward Christ, focusing the mind on truth and calming the soul."

Breath prayers can be done at any time and anywhere you are able to slow down, be still and breathe. The steps she describes are as follows:

1. **Breathe:** in deeply and slowly through your nose. Feel your lungs fill completely. Focus on filling your lower lungs (your diaphragm) so that your stomach expands while your upper chest remains still. Breathe out slowly. Empty your lungs fully. Repeat a few times as you bring your breathing into a slow and steady rhythm.
2. **Pray-** Inhale: Continue breathing slowly as you pray. Fill your lungs slowly as you say the "inhale" part of the prayer. Exhale: Empty your lungs slowly as you say the "exhale" part of the prayer. Meditate on the words as you breathe to the rhythm of the prayer.
3. **Repeat:** the breath prayer, inhaling and exhaling slowly, for at least one minute. Try to work up to five-minutes. (Prayer Example: Inhale—"You are with me" Exhale: "Wherever I go")

Opportunities to Boost Health and Practice G.R.A.C.E. at Living Saviour

Monday 6:30 PM – Beginner/Intermediate Yoga

Class provided by Lori Walker of Yoga for You Studios (LSLC member discount)

Tuesdays 9:30 AM- Beginner/Intermediate Yoga

Class provided by Lori Walker of Yoga for You Studios (LSLC member discount)

Tuesdays 10:30 AM –**STEPPS to Wellbeing: Start to Experience Peace, Potential and Serenity.** Peer engagement based on 12 Steps Models to foster holistic wellbeing.

Thursdays 9:30 AM- Beginner/Intermediate Yoga

Class provided by Lori Walker of Yoga for You Studios (LSLC member discount)

Thursdays at 11:00 AM Chair Yoga-

Class provided by Debbie Mangeney of Feel Good Yoga Girl

Saturdays at 9:30 AM Aerobic Exercise –

Class provided by Lyn Addy, Certified Group Fitness Instructor (LSLC Donation)

Saturdays 10:00 AM- Beginner/Intermediate Yoga

Class provided by Lori Walker of Yoga for You Studios (LSLC member discount)