

**Vibrant Health**

*Change Your Habits, Change Your Life!*

## **HABIT 4**

### **DEEP BREATHING**



***22 Key Habits to Transform the Health & Wellbeing of Your Mind, Body & Spirit***

Devised by  
**Stephen Kirkbride  
& David Orrey**

**[www.VibrantHealth.me.uk](http://www.VibrantHealth.me.uk)**

## Quick Guide

Habit 4 is entitled ~ **Deep Breathing.**

**The gateway to relaxation and rejuvenation.**

When you regularly breathe deeply through your nose, you automatically activate the nervous system responsible for restoration and repair.

This will help the stresses and strains of everyday life melt away and put you in a more relaxed that your body us designed to operate in most if the time.

**This will bring more calmness and serenity into your life 😊!**

### Disclaimer

All the information and recommended action steps provided in this publication are with the sincerest intentions to genuinely help and inspire you to enhance your health and general wellbeing. It is the culmination of thousands of hours of research into published medical studies and health/wellness/success related publications. The authors accept no liability for the results of any actions the reader takes following the information contained within. We strongly advise you to do your own research prior to adopting any of the suggestions and consult a medical, health or competent professional if in doubt with any aspect of it.

## Habit No 4 ~ Deep Breathing

*"You can go 3 weeks without food, you can go 3 days without water but if you go 3 minutes without breathing, you're in TROUBLE!"*



### 11 Essential Habits Jigsaw ~ so far...

- 1 - You're optimally hydrating and powering your system with the essential fluid of life.
- 2 - **You're energising your body with the incredible healing power of mother nature.**
- 3 - You're adopting a disciplined eating routine for a multitude of health benefits.

### Deep Breathing

We all take breathing for granted and most of us are what I call shallow breathers. What I mean by that is we are mainly using the upper part of your lungs and not your full lung capacity like we're meant to, it's what I call sub-optimal breathing.

I believe breathing this way is akin to fast food for your lungs when you consider the benefit of optimal breathing. As we on average take around 23,040 breaths every day, this can have a big impact on your health.

I'm going to go a little technical here so that you understand what is actually happening in your body when you adopt this habit.

### Heart Rate Variability (HRV)

Did you know a healthy heartbeat contains healthy irregularities?

Let us say your resting heart rate is 60 beats per minute, you could be forgiven for assuming that it beats 60 equal beats at one per second, like a clock.

However, there is a variation in the intervals between your heartbeats. The interval between your successive heartbeats can be, for example, 0.85 seconds between two succeeding beats and 1.35 seconds between another two, depending on what bodily function/system is being used at the time.

HRV is measured in milliseconds, and you can feel the difference, try this;

Place a finger gently on your neck or wrist and find your pulse. You should feel that the longest intervals take place when you exhale, and the shortest intervals when you inhale.



Your HRV tends to be higher when you are fit and healthy, and your breathing has a direct link to it.

Just hold that thought for a second!

### **Let's now talk about your autonomic nervous system**

This is a little technical but bear with me.... you have two sub-systems which operate different functions. There's the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS) and the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS).

Put simply, your SNS is always looking for emergencies or what we more commonly refer to as the **'fight or flight'** response.

Now your PNS is what I would term your 'rest and restore' response system because it wants you to relax whilst it repairs and restores your bodily systems to their optimal working state.

Now in an ideal world we would be relaxed most of the time with only occasional spiking from the SNS when dealing with high stress or an emergency. Sadly, most people aren't living in an ideal world (too much negative stimulation!), and this leads to an unhealthy imbalance between the PNS and SNS.

Emotions at the lower end of the spectrum such as worry, anxiety, fear, anger, and depression are sure fire ways to unbalance the two systems and release cortisol which is the stress hormone.

Recent studies have found that when your fight or flight response (SNS) goes into overdrive and too much is produced over a prolonged period, it can cause the following health issues;

- Acid reflux
- Muscular pain
- High blood pressure
- Rapid weight gain
- Lack of sex drive
- Mood swings (which often show as depression/anxiety)
- Osteoporosis

So, **getting a good balance between your PNS and SNS is very important for both your physical and mental health.** Too much stimulation of your SNS over the long term will start to manifest as major disease/illness as the body is not designed to operate in this mode for prolonged periods.

### **Back to HRV and Breathing**

You've heard the saying **'take a deep breath'** when confronted by a stressful situation or been told to calm your breathing?

This is very sound advice as it automatically activates your PNS which has a good effect on your HRV.





In a nutshell, by improving your breathing with slower and deeper breaths, you stimulate your PNS which improves your HRV and subsequently puts you more into rest and restore mode, which is very good indeed for your health 😊.

### **Relaxed breathing scientific study**

The Indian journal of medical research carried out a breathing study in 2013.

Pranayama meaning breath-control is an ancient technique involving slow and rhythmic breathing.

The study found that regular practise of pranayama activates the PNS and decreases/deactivates SNS activity. It also improves cardiovascular and respiratory functions and decreases the stress and strains on the body.

Regular practise of pranayama has also shown to reduce blood pressure.

All the subjects in the study were asked to do was to take 6 nasal breaths per minute for a 20-minute period. This equates to a deep breath (inhale/exhale) every 10 seconds.

The researchers found that the subjects bio markers changed (positively) almost immediately when they started the relaxed breathing.

### **Nasal breathing**

In the summer of 2018, I read a book called Chi Running by Danny Dreyer.

Chi running is a relaxed way of running during which you breath only through your nostrils.

My first thoughts about it were, how on earth do you do that when your body naturally wants to breathe through the mouth to take in more oxygen?

I tried it a few times but wasn't able to run far with my mouth closed. Anyway, intrigued by this, I then attended a workshop in 2019 and what I learned was incredible and led to me becoming a regular nasal breather for the amazing benefits.

In 2020, I then discovered a ground-breaking book called 'Breathe' by James Nestor. In the book I discovered many of his followers were taping up their mouths before going to sleep, so they were nasal breathing all night.

So, amazed by what they experienced I tried it myself and was very impressed...

My energy levels increased along with a heightened sex drive, my whole body seemed to operate more efficiently.

### **The science behind nasal beathing**

These benefits can be put down to the role of **nitric oxide** as more is created in your system when you just breathe through your nose.



Nobel prize winner Dr Louis Ignarro discovered that nitric oxide functions as widespread signalling molecule throughout the body. The main benefits include;

- ✓ A lowering of blood pressure and improving blood flow to organs.
- ✓ A healthier heart and arteries.
- ✓ Good for learning, memory, and recall.
- ✓ Aids the digestion process.
- ✓ Promotes erectile function and sexual arousal.
- ✓ Protects the skin against ionising radiation from the sun.

Men suffering erectile dysfunction were found to have low levels of nitric oxide.

**Bad news** – high sugar and/or highly processed foods lower nitric oxide levels in the body. Also, Dr Ignarro says don't use mouthwash as it wipes out essential friendly bacteria within the mouth which affects the processing of nitric oxide.

**Good news** – both root and leafy vegetables raise levels of nitric oxide in the body.

So, in essence, having more energy from a better functioning system along with a better memory and sexual arousal capacity is all in your hands through nasal breathing and a decent diet!

### **Start right now**

As you've been reading this section you've probably been paying attention to your breathing to check if you automatically breathe through your mouth. Yes?

If it's something you're not familiar with, I recommend your just start slowly for a few minutes each day and then build it up over say 3/4 weeks to 20 minutes a day.

After a few months you'll be able to sleep overnight with your mouth taped up (if you wish 😊).

Nasal breathing is also a great way to relax and lead you into a meditation (habit 9) and enter some very blissful states, we highly recommend combining the two habits daily.

You'll find that when you need to concentrate very carefully, for example: threading a needle, you instinctively start breathing through your nose as it calms your system and makes the task easier.

The increased air resistance through nasal breathing increases the vacuum in the lungs and helps us draw in 20% more oxygen giving the heart and lungs a further workout too 😊.

### **Recommended habit & technique**

I wholeheartedly recommend you start a relaxed breathing habit every day for 20 minutes if you can or for as long as you can. If you're pushed for time, why not combine it with meditation habit (No 9).



The technique I recommend as follows;

- Sit in a comfortable position (where you won't be disturbed) and close your eyes.
- Breath in deeply through your nose (fill your lungs) for a period of 4 seconds,
- Hold it for 2 seconds,
- Breath out through your nose for a period of 4 seconds.

If you are uncomfortable with nasal breathing, it's fine to breathe through your mouth. This habit will help you become mindful of your breathing, something we often take for granted.

**Warning**, there are unavoidable side effects, you won't be able to stop yourself feeling good and very relaxed 😊!

### Recommended books

[‘Chi Running’](#) ~ Danny Dreyer

[‘The Oxygen Advantage’](#) ~ Patrick McEwan

[‘Breathe’](#) ~ James Nestor

### Study References

Indian Journal Medical Research 2013,  
PMCID PMC 3734683  
PMID 23760377

A V Turankar, A D Joshi, S Jaint, B N Vallish, S B Patel, P R Mane, S R Sinha, S A Turanka.

Article: **‘How to breathe your way to better memory and sleep’** – Caroline Williams, New Scientist 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2020.

### Final word

Conscious breathing, especially nasal breathing does wonders for both your physical health and mental wellbeing. Just like meditation, this is a beautiful way to feel better, relax and connect with who you really are.

### Recommended habit action steps

- ✓ Practise the recommended technique (4 seconds in, 2 seconds hold, 4 seconds exhale), experiment and find out what works best for you.
- ✓ Get into a daily routine of conscious nasal breathing as often as you can, if even if it is just the odd deep nasal breathe, throughout the day.
- ✓ Consider combining it with meditation (habit 9).





# The Rules for Being Human

## 1. You will receive a body.

You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for life.

## 2. You will learn lessons.

Life is a constant learning experience and everyday provides opportunities to learn lessons.

## 3. There are no mistakes, only lessons.

Your development towards wisdom is a process of experimentation, trial, and error. Compassion is the remedy for harsh judgement of ourselves and others. Forgiveness is not only divine, it's also 'the act of erasing an emotional debt'.

## 4. A lesson is repeated until learned.

A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. What manifests as problems, challenges, irritations, and frustrations are more lessons. They will repeat until you learn them, then you go on to the next lesson. To blame anyone or anything else for your misfortune is an escape and a denial; only you are responsible for you and what happens to you.

## 5. Learning lessons does not end.

While you are alive, there are always lessons to be learned. Surrender to the rhythm of life, don't struggle against it. Be humble enough to always acknowledge your weaknesses and be flexible enough to adapt from what you be accustomed to.

## 6. "There" is no better than "here."

When your "there" has become a "here", you will simply obtain another "there" that will again look better than "here."

## 7. Others are merely mirrors of you.

You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects something you love or hate about yourself. Be tolerant; accept others as they are and strive for clarity and self-awareness. Strive to truly understand and have an objective perception of your own self, your thoughts, and feelings.

## 8. What you make of your life is up to you.

You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. Take responsibility for yourself. Learn to let go when you cannot change things. Don't get angry about things.

## 9. Life is exactly what you think it is.

You create a life that matches your beliefs and expectations. You get what you think about and dwell on most of the time, it is a precise universal law called the 'Law of Attraction'.

## 10. Your answers lie inside you.

The answers to life's questions lie inside you. All you need to do is trust your instincts and your innermost feelings, whether you hear them as a little voice or a flash of inspiration.

## 11. You will likely forget all this...but you can remember it whenever you want 😊.

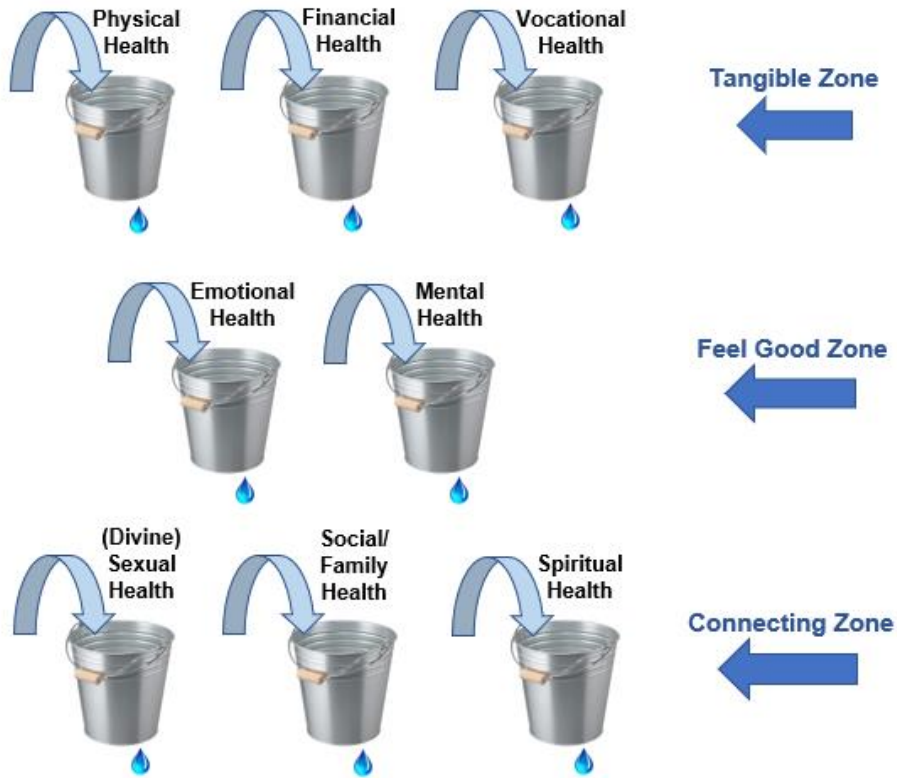




## Key Charts & Visual Aids

### Your 8 Health Buckets

(each has a continual, very small leak)



### OMEGA

