I'm human



Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art by James Nestor is an international bestseller that sheds light on the importance of breathing for human health and wellbeing. The book delves into the hidden science behind ancient breathing practices, exploring how humans have lost the ability to breathe correctly and the consequences that follow. Through his research, Nestor reveals the fascinating history of breathing, from the natural state of nasal breathing to the shift towards mouth breathing due to processed foods. Breathing is a crucial aspect of human health, and research has shown that proper nasal breathing can have a significant impact on an individual's overall well-being.[1][2][3] After ten years of extensive study, James Nestor wrote the book "Breath", which was published by Riverhead Books in May 2020. The book gained popularity through various promotional appearances on popular podcasts and news shows, including The Joe Rogan Experience and CBS This Morning.[6][7] The book debuted at number seven on The New York Times non-fiction best-seller list for the week ending May 30, 2020, and went on to spend 18 weeks on the list in its first year of publication. It has been a bestseller in several countries, including Germany, Spain, Croatia, Italy, and the UK.[10] By February 2022, the book had sold over one million copies worldwide, while as of April 2023, it has surpassed two million copies sold globally.[12] "Breathe" received widespread critical acclaim, with reviewers praising Nestor's ability to explain both the basics and more complex aspects of breathing properly. However, some reviewers expressed skepticism about certain claims made in the book, including those related to the benefits of ancient breathing exercises. The book won the award for Best General Non-fiction Book of 2020 by the American Society of Journalists and Authors[13] and was a finalist for the Royal Society Science Book Prize of 2021.[14] Reviews from various publications, such as Kirkus Reviews and Publishers Weekly, described the book as a "welcome, invigorating user's manual" and a "fascinating treatise" on breathing. Other reviewers praised the book's ability to tap into its resonant audience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The book has been compared to other potentially life-changing books, including Matthew Walker's Why We Sleep and Shane O'Mara's In Praise of Walking. James Nestor's book "Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art" reveals that the way humans breathe has been lost over time, having grave consequences for our health. Despite being essential to our well-being, we've forgotten how to breathe correctly. Journalist James Nestor traveled the world to uncover what went wrong and how to fix it. He discovered that ancient breathing practices like Pranayama, Sudarshan Kriya, and Tummo hold hidden secrets. By teaming up with experts in pulmonology and other fields, he scientifically tested long-held beliefs about breathing. The results are astounding: making slight adjustments to our breathing can boost athletic performance, rejuvenate organs, halt diseases like snoring and asthma, and even straighten scoliotic spines. This is contrary to conventional wisdom, but the science supports it. The book draws on thousands of years of medical texts and recent studies in pulmonology, psychology, biochemistry, and human physiology to challenge our understanding of breathing and its impact on our lives. This book has been turned on its head, leaving readers breathless. With 19.6k people currently reading, James Nestor's work has garnered significant attention. As a journalist who has written for prominent publications like Outside magazine and The New York Times, Nestor's credibility is notable. However, upon closer examination of the book's reviews, concerns arise regarding its scientific validity. One reviewer criticizes the book for making overzealous claims without substantial data to support them, undermining actual researchers and physicians in the process. The author allegedly suggests that breathing exercises can cure a wide range of diseases, including scoliosis, strokes, and asthma, which seems implausible. The use of unsubstantiated claims and unaffiliated associations with reputable institutions like Stanford raises suspicions. Furthermore, the reliance on anecdotal evidence from self-proclaimed "pulmonauts" rather than rigorous scientific studies is troubling. While breathing exercises may have some benefits, such as calming effects, the book's grandiose assertions are dubious at best. The lack of peer-reviewed research and statistically significant data makes it difficult to take these claims seriously. Perhaps this book would be more suitable in the fiction category, as its scientific basis appears tenuous. Another reviewer echoes these sentiments, stating that the book is light on science and heavy on anecdotal evidence, failing to provide deeply researched double-blind studies to support its claims. The observation of individual cases, such as a yogi who can control body temperature, does not constitute conclusive evidence for humanity at large. Ultimately, the book's credibility hinges on the author's willingness to subject his claims to rigorous scientific scrutiny and peer review. The author seems to be suggesting that nasal breathing and yoga-style exercises are harmless and might even have health benefits. However, the scientific evidence supporting this claim appears to be as unreliable as diet recommendations, which frequently change. The book in question has received mixed reviews on Goodreads, with one reviewer describing it as "4 parts good info and 1 part crackpot." Despite its flaws, the author found it to be a game-changer, noting significant improvements in their breathing patterns, sleep quality, and overall health after implementing the techniques described. They emphasize that their experience is anecdotal, but encourage readers to consider the book's potential benefits before dismissing it entirely. The audiobook version of the book has also received praise for its engaging narration and informative content. Given article text here Audiobook Review: The Profound Effect of Breath on Health and Well-being The audiobook is an engaging and accessible exploration of the significance of breath in our health and well-being. Narrated by Nestor, a skilled storyteller with a clear passion for the subject matter, the book delves into ancient breathing strategies and cutting-edge scientific discoveries. Nestor's narration makes complex scientific concepts easy to understand and fun to listen to. The audiobook is full of surprises and practical information, including tips on how to breathe correctly and improve overall health. The author's journey takes listeners back in time to explore the historical development of breathing techniques and their impact on our modern lives. With a focus on nasal-breathing being preferable to mouth-breathing, the book offers valuable insights into the benefits of slowing down breathing and the role of carbon dioxide in health and well-being. Through his own personal experience with severe breathing problems, the author shares how he benefited from implementing the exercises outlined in the book. The audiobook is a hopeful and practical guide for anyone looking to improve their breath and overall health. Some useful tips are presented in the book, but it's not worth reading if you've already tried breathing exercises before. The author emphasizes the importance of nasal breathing and its effects on overall health. A crucial aspect is that human facial structures continue to grow until around age 70, allowing for improvements in breathing and overall well-being at any age. The writer shares their personal experience with mouth tapping during sleep, which led to positive results, but recommends consulting a doctor before trying this method. Some reviewers have expressed skepticism about the book's scientific validity, criticizing its reliance on anecdotes and cherry-picked data. However, others claim that the author provides valuable insights and practical advice for improving breathing and overall health. One reviewer credits the book with helping them overcome respiratory problems, while another dismisses it as "New Agey" and lacking in scientific rigor. Despite these mixed reviews, some readers have found the book's suggestions helpful in promoting better breathing habits and overall well-being. This book peddles pseudoscience and quackery, promoting potentially hazardous practices under the guise of "better breathing." While it contains some interesting anecdotes, they are largely unverifiable. The author's descent into New Agey tropes starts on page 60, where he makes unsubstantiated claims about emphysema being caused by poor breathing rather than smoking. He also implies that COPD can be cured through breathing exercises, which is a misrepresentation of medical facts. As the book progresses, the author becomes increasingly vague and evasive, hinting at cures for various ailments through proper breathing techniques. However, he carefully avoids making direct statements. The text takes a turn for the worse when the author discusses yoga, equating prana with chi and other esoteric concepts without acknowledging their differences. He also extols the benefits of acupuncture, despite its gradual decline in China due to Western medical advancements. Furthermore, his discussion on the spiciness of Chinese and Indian food is riddled with inaccuracies, as Szechuan pepper is not "hot" and many Southeast Asian dishes are actually quite mild. The author's reverence for Swami Rama ignores the scientific consensus that yogis have never been able to stop their heartbeats permanently. He also glosses over Swami Rama's questionable behavior, including a lost lawsuit for sexual assault. The book's pseudoscientific leanings continue with its discussion on energy levels in rocks and electrons, which is marred by the author's attempt to downplay the significance of radioactive elements. Additionally, his characterization of the Aryans as "black-haired barbarians from Iran" is an oversimplification of historical records. Nestor’s breathing technique, promoted as an effective way to reduce stress, is not without its flaws. The author questions the validity of this method, specifically focusing on the exact duration of breaths (5.5 seconds) and the benefits of alternate nostril breathing. While some research supports the benefits of deep breathing exercises, the majority of studies are from yogic-influenced alternative medicine, which has limitations. The author also expresses concern over Nestor’s reliance on unverified sources and his failure to acknowledge potential risks. Moreover, Wim Hof's records have been matched by others, casting doubt on the uniqueness of this method. This book seems to be a mix of solid research and new age fluff, but overall it was worth the read for me as I've incorporated some of its exercises into my daily routine with positive results. The author's compilation of various sources is commendable, and I'm looking forward to seeing more research emerge from this work. However, others might find it hard to swallow due to its sensationalized tone and lack of scientific rigor. The book's high ratings and accolades are puzzling, given the author's limited expertise in conducting proper scientific research. Perhaps it was just not written for me, as I don't struggle with nasal breathing issues. Nevertheless, I found the content replete with unsubstantiated claims and an overemphasis on how humans supposedly suffer from poor breathing habits due to agriculture. This might exacerbate existing anxieties about one's body. The author often cherry-picks facts to support their narrative while dismissing opposing views and healthy criticism from experts. The final chapter is somewhat more grounded in reality, acknowledging that breathing is just one aspect of overall health. Still, I'd recommend exploring other sources on this topic, like "Light on Pranayama" by Iyengar. Some key takeaways include: using your diaphragm when inhaling through the nose, chewing food thoroughly for oral cavity development, and slowing down your breathing in general. And don't trust GoodReads ratings too much. Breathing exercises can be beneficial for minor health issues but shouldn't replace allopathic medicine. Practicing Breathing to Improve Oxygen Intake The practice of "OM-ing" or spiritual breathing in extreme conditions is often romanticized, but what about everyday breathing? While some may have natural talent for optimal breathing, most of us need guidance. James Nestor has spent years studying the art of breathing and collaborating with modern-day doctors, gurus, and experts to uncover its secrets. A key aspect of effective breathing lies in understanding individual needs. What works for one person may not work for another. However, by practicing specific techniques and incorporating self-reflection, it's possible to improve oxygen intake. This can be as simple as slowing down or speeding up breathing patterns, holding breaths (though with caution), or expanding lung capacity. Nestor has shared his journey of discovering breathing techniques in a comprehensive book, offering insights into the importance of autonomic breathing and its impact on overall well-being. According to Nestor, our heads have evolved in ways that both help and hinder us when it comes to breathing. For instance, the growth of the brain has left less space for our tongues, which can affect breathing patterns. In reality, overbreathing is a common issue that affects many people. This phenomenon stems from using rapid, shallow breaths that leave us feeling breathless and struggling to catch up on oxygen. Ideally, deep, measured inhales followed by exhales should take approximately 5-6 seconds each. By adopting this technique, individuals can begin to notice improvements in their breathing and overall health. It's essential to remember that breathing is only one aspect of our well-being. However, with a daily commitment of practice – even just 10-20 minutes – it's possible to experience tangible benefits. For those interested in exploring further, James Nestor offers an extensive collection of videos, Q&A sessions, and expert interviews on his website (. A person's breathing is not just about taking air in and out; it can be a life-changing experience that impacts every aspect of their being. According to Nestor, who has studied this topic extensively, the key to good health lies not in the speed or frequency of breathing, but rather in its quality. He discovered through his own journey from struggling with breathing issues to achieving better health that conscious breathing can be a powerful tool. Nestor talks to researchers and mystics worldwide to gather knowledge on both modern research and ancient teachings, such as those found in The Upanishads. He emphasizes that while there is much to explore in this field, it's essential to acknowledge the limitations of breathing alone in addressing severe health issues. No amount of deep breathing can fix an embolism or stage IV cancer, which require immediate medical attention. Despite these limitations, Nestor stresses that conscious breathing can have a significant impact on overall well-being. By slowing down and controlling one's breathing, individuals can reduce stress, alleviate anxiety, and even enhance their athletic performance. The book provides practical exercises and techniques that can be applied in daily life to maximize the benefits of conscious breathing. With its accessible approach and credible research backing, this self-help guide is highly recommended for anyone looking to improve their health and quality of life. The author delves into personal health struggles, having pneumonia and asthma. Despite not being a scientist, they explore how to get healthier by trying various breath-based strategies. Key takeaways from the book include: breathing through your nose instead of mouth; slowing down and reducing breaths per minute (5-6 BPM); spending more time exhaling than inhaling for improved health; holding one's breath periodically to expand lung capacity; and using pure oxygen tents is not beneficial, but proper breathing technique can be. The author also notes that rapid breathing can be beneficial with conscious control. The book suggests the lungs play a crucial role in overall health, including weight loss, sexual health, posture, bone density, and heart health. The author expresses skepticism towards the idea of "clean up your breathing," which sounds like an overhyped fad akin to colonic cleanses or extreme diets. They mention Grof's Holotropic Breathwork, but are unsure about its effectiveness. The author recommends reading the book for more information, but suggests that those already familiar with breathwork may not learn anything new. The text also discusses the importance of breathing, which is a concept that has been valued in various cultures throughout history. The author notes that modern Western society often neglects the significance of proper breathing techniques and their impact on overall health. They highlight the benefits of nasal breathing and abdominal expansion, as well as the potential drawbacks of mouth-breathing. Some readers have expressed criticisms towards the book, labeling it as "pseudoscience" due to its inclusion of unproven claims and anecdotal evidence. One critic points out that Katharine Schroth's case study was misrepresented in the book, making it seem like she cured her scoliosis solely through breathwork when, in reality, physical therapy played a significant role. On the other hand, some readers have found the book to be enlightening and engaging. They appreciate the author's writing style, which incorporates humor and relatable case studies. One reader even reports having increased their conscious breathing while reading the book, stating that it has had a lasting impact on their approach to health and wellness. The text also mentions the importance of full exhales and proper nasal breathing, even during exercise or sleep. It highlights potential issues associated with mouth-breathing, such as dental problems and erectile dysfunction, which have been recognized for centuries in various cultures. Eating soft foods like smoothies, avocado's, and banana's can lead to losing jaw strength. It's okay to consume these foods but you need to also have hearty ones that require chewing to maintain a strong jaw. Breathing methods exist for improving health or getting rid of snoring and sleep apnea; it's all about conscious, strong breathing for short periods. Holding one's breath can improve diaphragm strength by raising carbon dioxide levels. Breathe in for 5.5 seconds and exhale for the same duration. James Nestor discusses Wim Hof's breathing methods, who was featured on Gwyneth Paltrow's TV show "The Goop Lab". This book makes sense, especially regarding anxiety, but gets somewhat repetitive by chapter ten when discussing yoga and animal experiments. The author provides basic steps to healthful breathing: breathe through your nose, exhale thoroughly, chew harder foods, breathe more occasionally for a short intense time, hold your breath slowly, and maintain conscious strong breathing with a 5.5-second inhale-exhale cycle. Looking back on my journey with Nestor's book, I must admit that a captivating tale of self-discovery unfolded before me. We embarked on an extraordinary odyssey to master breathing techniques, which not only enhanced our physical well-being but also allowed us to tap into a profound sense of control over our bodies. From alleviating snoring and ADHD to astonishing feats of wellness, the "Tummo" technique seemed almost magical. Throughout my reading experience, Nestor's engaging narrative kept me enthralled, as he skillfully wove together an array of captivating case studies that shed light on the vast scope of human potential. His journalistic charm proved infectious, leaving me eagerly anticipating each new chapter and descriptive passage. However, one persistent concern nagged at the edges of my mind - pseudoscience. While I acknowledge the limitations of scientific institutions, Nestor's tone suggested a flirtation with alternative medicine, which resonated particularly with those drawn to unconventional approaches. Some passages, though intriguing, bordered on outdated concepts and pseudoscientific mumbo-jumbo, such as the "reptilian brain" and left-brained vs. right-brained dichotomy. Furthermore, Nestor's proposal of nasal cycles influencing logical thinking versus creativity was unconvincing, given that both nostrils lead to the same sinus cavity. In conclusion, while I found the book an engaging read, its problematic scientific inaccuracies and attempts at appeals to ancient wisdom made it unsuitable for a layperson like myself. As someone who values critical thinking and scientific rigor, I couldn't endorse this book's potential influence on the alternative medicine community. Nestor's efforts towards scientific rigor were admirable, but ultimately fell short of creating a more substantial work. I still find myself drawn to tiny homes, and I've grown fond of the You Tube channels showcasing these spaces. The people who inhabit them also fascinate me, as they embody a unique lifestyle that blends simplicity with freedom. A chance encounter with someone from this community reading Nestor's book sparked my interest in exploring the intersection of wellness and minimalist living. So after reading around this book, I decided to get it because I’m curious about how meditation relates to breathing and I appreciate the art of meditation. The author says something like "no matter what we eat or exercise, our genes don’t matter unless we breathe correctly". This resonated with me because I’ve found that when I'm feeling anxious, putting my hand over my heart helps calm me down. I like the idea of using breathing as a way to heal and prevent illness. The book seems to focus on helping readers learn how to breathe properly, which is supposed to cure many health issues. I was really interested in the appendix where the author provides different breathing techniques, which I thought was the most helpful part of the book. As someone who practices meditation and yoga, I wanted to see if this offered anything new or revolutionary. While some parts were a bit far-fetched for me, like the claim that our mouths got smaller because we started eating soft foods, I think the author makes a strong case for breathing as a form of meditation and healing. This is definitely something I can get behind, especially since it's been practiced in so many cultures. I would love to see more scientific evidence backing up some of the claims, but overall I think this book does offer valuable insights into the power of breathing. Breathing has become a newfound awareness, realizing it's more vital than food or sleep, yet often taken for granted. The book's greatest asset is its mindfulness focus. The author conducts experiments on himself, providing visceral descriptions (though you might not want to try the 10-day mouth-breathing test). The writing is vivid and engaging, though sometimes marred by the author's assumption that everything old is wise. This leads to holes in his argument. However, paying attention to breath is fascinating. Interesting facts abound on nearly every page, leading you to breathe longer and more deeply through your nose, emphasizing a complete exhale. You'll discover how shallow your breathing often is. Any book revealing such shortcomings is worth reading. When waves crash, they wash over you, then recede; similarly, the breath inhales, transitions, exhales, and repeats. As a cardiopulmonary rehab professional, I was skeptical but became fascinated by the topic. The author's decade-long research journey and participation in scientific studies led to intriguing discoveries. He explores why humans have unique dental issues, like overbites and underbites, unlike other mammals. The book also reveals surprising facts about the human body, such as how a single breath can pass millions of air molecules through your nose. Mouth breathing is often seen as unattractive; if possible, it's recommended to breathe only through your nose for better health. If you enjoy learning about the human body, inner balance, or longevity, this book is an easy recommendation. The title is engaging and appeals to fans of evolutionary psychology, offering a mix of accessible information, a personal narrative, spiritual undertones, and practical tips.

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