

THE
BREATH
COACH[®]



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Thank you

Thank you again for joining the *Breathwork for Health and Performance Workshop* at the Museum of London Docklands.

We covered a lot in a short space of time and this recap is here to keep that momentum going. Inside, you'll find the core tools and techniques we worked on. Science-backed, practical, and ready to use.

These are here to help you breathe better so you can feel better, think clearer, and perform at your best, whether you're in the field, presenting, creating, performing, or simply trying to recover well and stay balanced.

If you have any questions or want to continue the conversation, please feel free to reach out. I would love to hear from you.

Thanks again,
Thomas



Resting Respiratory Rate (RR)

- Count your breaths over 60 seconds.
- Target: 6–12 breaths per minute.
- Why it matters: Over-breathing = less oxygen to the tissues, muscles, organs and brain.

BOLT Score (Body Oxygen Level Test)- For everyone

- Goal: 40+ seconds.
- Why it matters: Higher CO₂ tolerance means better focus, deeper sleep, improved health, more energy, stronger performance, greater stress resilience, and a more balanced nervous system.

Maximum Breathlessness Test (MBT)- For Athletes

- Count how many steps you can take after an exhale.
- Goal: 80–100 steps.
- Why it matters: A strong measure of respiratory and metabolic efficiency that improves oxygen delivery, delays fatigue and lactic acid build-up, supports calm under pressure, enhances sleep and recovery, reduces injury risk, promotes better posture and mobility, and supports overall health and wellbeing.

	RR	BOLT	MBT
Dysfunctional Breathing	12+	10	20–40
		20	40–60
		25	60
Functional Breathing	6–12	30	60–80
		40	80–100

BOLT Score

1. Sit down and breathe calmly for a few minutes.
2. Inhale gently through your nose, then exhale gently through your nose.
3. Keeping your mouth closed, pinch your nose, hold your breath and start a timer.
4. Hold your breath after exhale until you feel the first distinct urge to breathe. This could be a throat twitch or diaphragm movement. It's subjective, so practice it daily first thing in the morning.
5. Release your nose, stop the timer and resume normal nasal breathing.
6. Your time in seconds is your BOLT score.

Maximum Breathlessness Test (MBT)

1. Relax and sit for a few minutes whilst breathing calmly. Then stand up.
2. Inhale normally through your nose, then exhale gently through your nose.
3. Pinch your nose, hold your breath, and start walking at a moderate pace.
4. Count the number of steps you take until you feel a strong urge to breathe (strong air hunger).
5. Release your nose and resume nasal breathing.
6. Your step count is your MBT score.

Waking with a dry mouth? It's a sign your body may be under stress which stalls optimised recovery. Try sleep tape (3M Micropore or Myotape) to encourage nasal breathing overnight. If your nose feels blocked, do gentle breath-holds after exhaling while lightly nodding your head for up to 30 seconds. Once clear, a nasal strip (B-Yond Performance) can help with nasal airflow.

Benefits: deeper sleep, better recovery, calmer mornings, and more energy.

Awareness

Before we can change anything, we have to become aware first. With breathing, awareness creates choice and that's where improvement begins.

Bring peak awareness to your breathing for the next couple of weeks. Notice what needs to change.

- Are you breathing through your mouth?
- Sighing frequently?
- Upper chest breathing?
- Yawning or sighing often?
- Holding your breath?
- Breathing noisily?
- Snoring or experiencing apnea during sleep?

The more you notice, the more control you have. Awareness is the first step towards lasting change.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is a game changer for health and athletic performance.

CO₂ helps release oxygen from your blood into your tissues, where you need it most.

Training your breathing and CO₂ tolerance improves:

- Physical, mental and emotional resilience when under pressure.
- Ability to be calmer in stressful situations
- Sleep.
- Nervous system balance.
- Stress and overwhelm resilience.
- Energy.
- Anxiety.
- Menstruation and menopausal symptoms.
- Movement and mobility.
- Oxygen delivery and blood flow.
- Lung capacity and recovery.
- Breathlessness (asthma and exercise-induced asthma).
- Red blood cell production (via natural EPO).
- Aerobic endurance and VO₂ max.
- Efficiency and lactate tolerance.

Breathwork isn't work. It's Freedom.

Breath is the foundation of life. Before movement, focus, recovery or performance comes the breath. It is the first thing you do when you arrive in this world and the last thing you do when you leave it. How you breathe in between shapes your health, mindset, and ability to perform under pressure.

Poor breathing habits limit energy, increase stress and reduce resilience. But with awareness and consistent practice, you can shift to breathing patterns that support calm, strength and recovery, anytime, anywhere.

Here's how to breathe well:

- Breathe through your nose, not your mouth. Do this during the day, during sleep, and during recovery.
- Rest your tongue on the roof of your mouth and just behind the front teeth. This supports nasal breathing and airway stability.
- Feel cool air at the back of the throat as you inhale. A sign you're breathing lightly and quietly.
- Breathe into your lower ribs and diaphragm. Aim for 360° movement, not upper chest effort.
- Light, slow and deep breathing creates balance, calm and control.
- Breath control supports nervous system control. Physical, mental and emotional.

Modern life doesn't make it easy to stay calm. Notifications, pressure, and pace keep many of us stuck in a constant state of stress. But your nervous system doesn't have to stay on high alert.

Your breath is how you reset. It's how you shift gears, recover between demands, and create space between stimulus and response.

- Light, slow and deep breathing helps signal safety and bring the body back to balance.
- Fast, shallow breathing tells the brain to stay alert and on edge.
- Learning to switch states with intent means you don't default to stress, you respond with control.

Better breathing means a calmer baseline. You get focus without the tension, clarity without the chaos. In short, you get a not so nervous system.

Knowing what to do is a start. But doing it, consistently, is what creates real change. Here's how to make improved breathing part of everyday life:

- Breathe through your nose, not your mouth all day, every day, even during sleep.
- Slow it down. Aim for 6 to 12 breaths per minute when you're at rest.
- Ensure when breathing with intention and control that you extend the exhale by a second or so. Try 4 second inhale and a 6 second exhale.
- Add a hum to the exhale to activate the vagus nerve and optimise nitric oxide 15 fold.
- Aim to achieve air-hunger. This is the feeling of wanting to take a bigger breath after the exhale. This is CO₂ building up and is healthy and good for you!
- Train with your mouth closed, especially in lower heart rate zones.
- Shift your state when things get overwhelming remember: LSD.
- Use short breath-holds after exhaling, to improve CO₂ tolerance and train your nervous system to stay calm under pressure.

Start small. Stay consistent.

Your breath is your most powerful tool and it's always with you so learn to use and control it.

Ready to take it further?

I work with individuals, teams, athletes, and organisations to improve health, energy, focus, and resilience through breathing.

Planning an event, looking for tailored athlete performance support, or ready to go deeper?

Let's connect.



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Music Playlist

Music awakens emotion in the body, mind, and nervous system, making it a natural partner for breathwork - a sensory thread that carries us inward, weaving sound and sensation to support neuroplasticity, deepen awareness, and gently reshape the patterns of the brain through experience rather than effort.

Entering and sitting

Loud Places by Jamie xx, Romy
Family by Jordan Rakei

Upregulation @ 20 breaths per minute

Heat Miser by Massive Attack

Breath-hold

Movement 3 by Floating Points, Pharoah Sanders

Downregulation @ 6 breaths per minute

Tayos Caves by Ecuador ii, Jon Hopkins
17th December 2020 (Waterloo Station) by Fred Again

Q&A

Between by Vraell
Pockets of Light by Lubomyr Melnyk

Departure

Fake Empire by The National
Ceremony Live by New Order



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