

Soul Breathing Exercises

Dennis Klocek

Editor's Comment: In this brief article, Dennis Klocek offers a short, practical contribution to the inner, meditative practice of teachers. His is the first of what is hoped will be a series of regular contributions from him and from others in support of this all-important aspect of Waldorf education.

Soul breathing exercises are useful tools for transforming belief structures in your soul that may be preventing growth. The first of these two sets of exercises addresses issues in your past that have served to form beliefs in the present. These forces in your life constitute your spirit biography. They are dimly-sensed impulses that form an energetic platform for your beliefs and actions. The second set addresses issues in the present that continue to aggravate or irritate you. This is your present biography. The goal of these exercises is to see how your spirit biography and your present biography are linked. This gives insight into karma.

Spirit Biography

Bring to mind the image of a loved one who has departed. Set yourself to wondering about what this person is doing now in the dimension where he or she now exists. This should be done just as if the person were alive. In this exercise we are wondering about the spiritual biography and evolution of the individual's I Am or True Self. Contemplating the person's life after death in this way can help to inform us about the life lessons to be learned across the threshold of death. Our wondering about this individual's ongoing spiritual biography creates forces of wonder in our souls that engender trust in the processes of life and soothe any fear of death.

Next, imagine a situation in which you were involved in a strong trial. Recall the feelings around the trial and focus on one of them. Then imagine the good things that have come about as a result of being tested by the issue that generated the strong feeling during the trial. See if you can feel just how anxiety turns to awe as you realize how the wisdom of the cosmos provided you with precisely the trial needed to get you to move in a particular direction. Next, see if you can recall a similar trial in the life of a departed loved one. Try to imagine how that person faced the trial. Compare how you faced the trial with the way you imagine your loved one might have faced the trial. Take these images into sleep for seven days in succession and write a few sentences about any dreams that seem related to these exercises.

Recall someone who is departed who provided an example of forgiveness for another during life on earth. Select a situation in your life now where someone has done something to you about which you still feel soul sore. Ask the departed to show you how to turn your soul towards forgiveness for the misdeed. Your feeling of harmony for the departed and the way in which they are membered into the world soul allows them to participate in your soul life in a creative and productive way. The feeling of harmony for them eventually can be transferred to another person whom we are struggling to understand.

Present Biography

Pick someone in your present life about whom you have the feeling that the way this person acts in a certain situation makes you upset and confused. You wonder to yourself: "How can someone do that? How can such a person be like that?" Try to imagine that you

are leaving your own body and walking and gesturing in the manner of this other person when he or she is undertaking the activity that causes you to be upset. You may want to actually move your hands the gestures this person makes while speaking, for instance. Then imaginatively dissolve these movements and reduce your inner dialogue to silence. Repeat this activity daily until sooner or later the person's soul configuration appears in your imagination simply as a gesture or intention towards activity without the movement of the hands to make the intention manifest. This exercise puts you into the mood of the karmic relationship between your self and the other person.

Now take the same person and situation as the object of the next exercise. Imagine that the thought pattern of the other person could be a geometric drawing. When this person answers a question, would it look like a spiral, a square, a set of interlocking rectangles? Would the person's thinking processes look like a jagged point, a set of curved lines, a tangle of wire? Would they look like interlocking triangles or more like a river delta of flowing and branching lines. Try to imagine the person's pattern of thought during the times when his or her thinking is upsetting to you. Then think the pattern away systematically. That is, if a triangle represents the person's thinking, pay attention to how you draw the triangle. Try to observe the order of the sides of the triangle as you draw them. If it is a tangle of lines, repeat the tangle drawing until you can attempt drawing it in reverse. If that is too much to remember, then trace the tangle in reverse. The important part is to reverse the drawing process of the symbol. This is because in the next part of the exercise you will dissolve this symbolic representation of the person's thinking process in reverse. When you dissolve it imagine it disappearing as if you were erasing a drawing in reverse. This empties your imagination. Bring your emptied imagination to complete silence. This allows

you to breathe into the thought processes of the other person without forming strong responses and judgmental opinions about the person or yourself and puts both of your souls on an equal level so that a healing feeling can arise between you.

Dennis Klocek lectures internationally on topics in the natural sciences and on self development through inner work. He has taught adults for thirty-five years in a wide variety of subjects. He has written seven books, the latest of which, *Climate, Soul of the Earth*, presents his thirty years of climate research based on planetary motion. He is the Director of the Consciousness Studies program at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, CA, and the founder of the Coros Institute for the promotion of inner work as a path of self development. His website <dennisklocek.com> is a source of downloadable audio lectures on many topics.