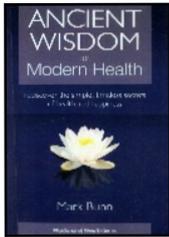


Conscious spirituality in search of truth...



MARK BUNN: ANCIENT WISDOM FOR MODERN HEALTH

Ayurvedic medicine is one of the world's oldest holistic (“whole-body”) healing systems developed more than 3,000 years ago in India. Primarily, Ayurvedic practice is based on the belief that health and wellness depend on a delicate balance between the mind-body-spirit. Mark Bunn, is an Ayurveda clinical practitioner and his seminal book “Ancient Wisdom For Modern Health” provides a readable expose on Ayurveda practice, in particular the focus deep breathing techniques.

Among Bunn’s clients are football players and athletes who have benefited from adapting controlled breathing techniques to their sport. The above book was given to me by a former neighbour, Bill Saunders in 2016. Of particular interest to me was the literature associated with effective breathing techniques. Whilst already practising mindful breathing because of singing-acting performance, the additional information regarding breath control associated with walking was especially relevant. I have osteoarthritis in both feet and Bunn’s suggested breathing techniques has enabled me to experience less pain when walking. Encouragingly, Bunn’s book is recommended reading in for maintaining a healthy mind-body-spirit. An extract follows

—Philip Crouch, Tasmania, 2020

MARK BUNN: “ANCIENT WISDOM” FOR MODERN HEALTH

THE LITERATURE IN THIS BOOK DEMONSTRATES HOW TO...

- regularly experience your natural state of happiness, vitality and flow
- nourish the most important factor in your lifelong health - your emotional health
- understand ‘food intelligence’ to make healthy eating as simple as A, B, C
- transform your exercise from ‘no pain no gain’ into a mind, body and spirit high
- lose weight naturally (as proven by cultures who have remained healthy and slim for thousands of years) in ways that have absolutely nothing to do with counting calories, analysing fats or doing difficult exercise

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- eliminate mental lethargy** and reduce depression
- reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, autoimmune disease, and bounce out of bed each morning feeling light, clear and energised**
- maintain a healthy weight**, enjoy sound sleep and delay the ageing process by understanding Nature's cycles
- enliven your inner spiritual source** to improve every area of your life
- make staying healthy and happy SIMPLE** (not complicated like modern-day health advice)
- If you want to remain youthful in mind, body and soul**, experience more contentment and joy in life, and make good health simpler, this book will show you how.

MARK BUNN: EXERCISE IN WAYS THAT UNITE *MIND- BODY- SPIRIT*

[PP:184-186] LOW BREATHING

‘As we breathe more deeply and slowly through the nose our diaphragm has time to contract fully. In what Yogis call ‘*low breathing*,’ the nasal breath is as if drawn deep into the belly. This creates a vacuum like sucking of the air deep into our lungs where it meets with a most abundant blood supply. With upper chest mouth breathing the air floods in so quickly it goes mainly to the upper portions of our lungs where there is far less blood supply.

In the West we think of oxygen as the critical component of the air we breathe. This is true on the gross physical level of the body. **However, just as with the food we eat, on a deeper level, the ancients understood that that is the subtle life force or prana that is the key ingredient.**

While oxygen nourishes our blood and muscles it is prana that fundamentally nourishes our mind and nervous system. As opposed to mouth breathing, when we nasal breathe, the life-force energy is brought directly into our brain stem via our receptors for smell.



This instantaneously enlivens our entire brain and nervous system.

Most importantly, when we nasal breathe we heighten the communication between left and right hemispheres of our brain and holistically integrate mind and body. This results in improved focus and clarity of mind, enhanced decision making and greater psychological resilience.

MARK BUNN: A DO IT NOW BREATHING EXERCISE ...

NASAL BREATHING

Deep nasal breathing also eliminates the possibility of over-breathing or over-ventilation, which some science now links to increased ageing. One possibility as to why people who regularly meditate or do yoga-related practices commonly live healthier, longer lives is that they have significant lower oxygen intakes and thus subject themselves to less free radical damage.

(Most free radicals are oxygen based.) The fact that nasal breathing is associated with our body's relaxation response rather than our stress response would also help. This is why many natural health sciences promote proper breathing to effectively treat stress based conditions such as anxiety, insomnia and asthma.

Aerobic exercise is commonly associated with keeping our heart and lungs healthy, and resistance training for strengthening our muscles and bones. Unfortunately, what we often overlook in our Western view of exercise is exercising our vital internal organs.

MARK BUNN: PROPER BREATHING –EXERCISE FOR THE ‘INTERNAL ORGANS

HEALTH AND INTERNAL ORGANS

In many health magazines today, a ripped sixpack, toned arms and sexy legs are often flaunted as the epitome of being fit and healthy. However the Eastern masters tell us that these aren't particularly important if our kidneys are functioning at half capacity, our liver is clogged or our bowels are blocked.

The ancients understood that the **health of the internal organs –our heart, liver, spleen, kidneys, intestines—is far more important than having a washboard stomach, bulging biceps, or a taut butt.**



They also new that the way to keep these organs healthy was through exercise –internal exercise. Specific yoga postures know as ‘*asanas*’ and deep, diaphragmatic breathing were routinely recommended as they were both understood to softly massage, tone and increase blood flow to our vital internal organs.

Both practices also promote the efficient elimination of waste products from the body while simultaneously exercising the rib cage and upper spine to prevent them from becoming stiff and inflexible. Combined they represent a key component of the ancient formula for maintaining peak health and inner balance.

COMPLETE BREATHING EXERCISES

Correct breathing that can improve your quality of life, help combat the effects of ageing and provide the foundation for your most effective exercise is based on what the yogis call ‘Yogi complete breathing.’

- Right now, sit upright, close your eyes, put your hands on your abdomen** and take you your awareness to your breathing. Breathe slowly and comfortably through your nose.

- With each inhalation, rather than raising your shoulders to fill your upper chest**, allow your abdomen to relax and feel as if you are breathing deep into your lower abdomen.

- Feel your diaphragm (the muscle under your rib cage)** massaging your abdominal organs and notice your abdomen comfortably finish begin to rise slightly. As your abdomen comfortably finishes its expansion, extend your inhaling breath to first fill your middle chest and then your upper chest.

- Allow these areas, including your whole rib cage, to expand.** Don’t try to extend the duration of your inhalation unnaturally or hold your breath. Just keep it natural and comfortable.

- For the first few breaths, notice the momentary pause between the end of the ‘in’ breath and the start of the ‘out’ breath.** Like the in and the out flow of tides and seasons, this junction point between the inflowing and out flowing breath is representative of the natural cycles of life.



- Just being aware of the gap between your breaths**—the ebb and flow of your breathing is a powerful way to reconnect your body with the universal rhythms of Mother Nature.

- Taking your attention to your abdominal area for a few more breaths**, notice how you can eliminate more air by contracting your abdominal muscles slightly as you exhale ... also through your nose. After these breaths, just exhale naturally and, using your attention, **allow the exhalation to extend as long as is comfortable**. Feel the old, impure air being released from your body as you pave the way for a new, fresh batch of life-giving oxygen and prana to enter.

- Spend a minute or two breathing this way now and practice it** at least a couple of times a day. Good times may include while driving, watching TV or sitting in a seminar. It can also be used as a stand-alone remedy when feeling stressed or anxious, experiencing tension headaches, or if unable to sleep at night due to an over excited or restless mind.’



Suggested resources:

Ancient Wisdom - Mark Bunn, for Modern Health, 2010, Enlightened Health Publishing, NSW, Australia. ISBN: 978-0-09807597-0-9.

<https://markbunn.com.au/about>

<https://www.bookdepository.com/Ancient-Wisdom-for-Modern-Health/9780980759709>

Meaning of Ayurved:

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ayurved>

