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# Breath into your soul

An insight into Holotropic Breathwork

## **What is Holotropic Breathwork?**

Holotropic Breathwork is a simple but deeply transformative approach to self-healing and self-discovery. The breathing technique and powerfully evocative music work together to help participants access a non-ordinary state of consciousness.

Non-ordinary states of consciousness are nothing strange; we experience them when we dream, fall in love, witness awe-inspiring beauty, or give birth. These states are very much a part of being human.

We each have a cellular memory that records all our life experiences, including spiritual experiences and those that take place while we are in the womb. Even though we may not be conscious of these experiences, they can influence and shape our perceptions of the present.

In this expansive state, people are open to allowing their Inner Healers to work on unresolved issues. It is very important that this takes place in a safe environment under the care of certified facilitators.

## **History**

Dr Stanislav Grof is a Czech psychiatrist and a pioneer of psychedelic psychotherapy. He is also considered a founding father of Transpersonal Psychology. In his career, which spans over 60 years, his primary interest has been research into non-ordinary states of consciousness.

Grof was one of the leading researchers studying LSD's effects on the psyche. In 1967, LSD was banned and Grof looked for alternative approaches to achieve non-ordinary states of consciousness.

Dr Grof and his wife Christina Grof developed Holotropic Breathwork in the 1970s. Their work is based on deep experiential psychotherapies, several mystical traditions and consciousness research.

## **Benefits**

- Release past trauma
- Alleviate chronic pain
- Relieve depression
- Gain powerful life insights
- Remove negative thought patterns
- Let go of fear of death
- Find newfound meaning and purpose
- Increase creativity
- Experience mystical states



A LIGHT  
THAT NEVER  
GOES OUT



Holotropic means moving towards wholeness. This breathwork helps people reclaim and integrate lost or disowned parts of their psyches and experience themselves as they truly are beyond the constraints of space and time.

While the experiences encountered in any breathwork session may vary, they sometimes include themes of death and rebirth; of struggle and eventual transcendence; and of a deep sense of connectedness to others and to the universal whole. A session may shift the participant's focus from personal suffering to concerns with things beyond the self. There may be a reduction in anxiety and tensions in the body, as well as an increase in the sense of the participant's self-worth and connection with others.



## **Is it comparable to some psychedelic-assisted therapies?**

While sacred plant-based ceremonies also help people access non-ordinary states, people who have significant experience with both have said that they find sacred plant-based experiences more visual, while Holotropic Breathwork is more cathartic. Some would lean towards one modality over the other.

Where Holotropic Breathwork stands apart is the support provided around fully integrating the experience. In Holotropic Breathwork, equal importance is given to preparation, the actual experience and integration after the experience. Some types of plant medicine therapies have a reputation for skipping the integration part, which may leave participants ungrounded and troubled by re-entering 'ordinary' reality. Because there is no pharmacological substance in Holotropic Breathwork, there is more ease of negotiation between the non-ordinary states entered via breath, music and holding space.

## **What happens in a session?**

A Holotropic Breathwork session typically includes an introductory talk that explains the breathing technique and the types of experiences that may arise; a breathing session; expressive artwork; and a sharing session in which the participant has the opportunity to discuss what arose.

The facilitator serves as a Sitter watching over the Breather and responding to any requests. The breathing session takes up to three hours to complete. The music that is played during the session is incredibly potent and escorts the Breather through their journey.

One question that is frequently asked is how to breathe in the sessions. Stan and Christina Grof did considerable research into different ways of breathing. In the end, they concluded that a particular breathing technique is much less important than inviting the participant to breathe faster, deeper and fuller than usual, with the Breather's full focus on and awareness of their inner process.

If the Breather requests support towards the end of the session, focused bodywork is offered to shift blocked emotional or physical energy. Another frequently asked question is whether people can do Holotropic Breathwork alone. This is not recommended.

Holotropic Breathwork facilitators go through extensive training and personal experience with non-ordinary states to support participants unconditionally with whatever they are experiencing and to remain unperturbed.

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[Explore more and find a facilitator.](#)





# Roguo

A black and white photograph of a person's legs from the knees down, wearing high-heeled shoes. The person is walking, and the image is slightly blurred to convey motion. The background is dark. The word "Roguo" is written in a large, white, serif font across the upper portion of the image, partially overlapping the person's legs.

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