

THE BREATH GUIDE

12 BREATHING
EXERCISES TO
TRANSFORM
YOUR LIFE

A photograph of a man wearing a dark beanie and a dark jacket, with his eyes closed and a serene expression, suggesting a state of meditation or deep breathing. The background consists of out-of-focus tree branches. The entire image is overlaid with a teal color filter.

BY RYAN COSTELLO

INTRODUCION



So, it's the end of the round, and I head to my corner. My team is screaming at me. "Do more; it's close." I don't feel like it's close. I go into the final round, and the air feels nonexistent. I can't seem to get enough oxygen in; the movement or flow, isn't there anymore. It's another gruelling round of Thai boxing; at the end of it, the decision doesn't go my way, and I take a humble loss.

After a loss in competition and a reflection on my performance, the only thing that was very noticeable to me and my team was my cardiovascular health. It just wasn't firing as it should have. This led me to research how I could improve my cardio

performance without over-stressing my joints and muscles. The answer I came to was, "breath work."

As a professional coach and sports therapist, I have seen first-hand the transformative effects of incorporating breath work into training routines. After struggling with my cardiovascular performance as a boxer, I began to explore and study the nature of performance breathing and how it could be applied to my training and that of my clients. Through processes of testing and experimentation, we found that engaging the breath properly and utilising oxygen efficiently required proper breathing techniques, specifically diaphragmatic breathing and nose breathing.

The results were impressive. These benefits were not just limited to our training sessions but carried over into our daily lives as well. Not only did our cardiovascular strength and endurance improve, but we also experienced added benefits such as stress and anxiety relief, better sleep, better posture, and increased energy.

Through our studies, we also learned that the breath has a direct relationship with our nervous system and that by breathing in a certain way, we can engage either the sympathetic (fight or flight) or parasympathetic (rest and digest) nervous system. By incorporating breath work into our training, we were able to tap into both systems at the appropriate times, improving endurance, reducing stress and anxiety, and enhancing overall performance

Breathing is something that we do automatically and often take for granted, but the way we breathe can have a huge impact on

our overall health and performance. When it comes to physical activity, proper breathing can help us optimise our oxygen intake, increase endurance, and reduce fatigue. It can also help to regulate our heart rate and blood pressure, making it a necessity for overall well-being. By focusing on the breath and incorporating techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing and nose breathing, you will see what a difference it can make.

In this book, I will share with you the techniques that we learned and demonstrate how you can incorporate them into your own life with step-by-step instructions. By learning to breathe correctly, you can tap into the power of the breath helping you to live, perform, and peak better.