

## Sacred Breathwork Shamanic & Jungian Context

### Crow's Nest Sacred Breathwork (™)

By Mikkal

I have developed Sacred Breathwork as a form of sacred ceremony to connect deeply with the Sacred through powerful non ordinary states of consciousness, for purposes of worship and renewal, healing of old wounds, exploration of the visionary and archetypal realms of the collective unconscious. It is creative expression of the Sacred through breath, dance, art, poetry and chant.

Sacred breathwork is rooted in shamanism and the soul psychology inspired by C.G. Jung. It has been synthesized from numerous other sources originating with the holotropic technique developed by Stanislav Grof, M.D. and Christina Grof in the early 1980s. This procedure is rigorously modified in the light of my own thirty years of practice in shamanic healing and breathwork, clinical psychological practice, and concurrent medical anthropological research into powerful healing systems across-cultures, as published in my books *PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE SACRED* [1995], and *JUNG AND SHAMANISM IN DIALOGUE: RETRIEVING SOUL / RETRIEVING THE SACRED* [1997, 2007].



The method and setting of sacred breathwork is comprised of 8 major elements which work together in concert: 1) connected breath, 2) ritual context: and ritual leadership protocol (for the facilitator), 3) a safe sacred space/time module with attention to low numinal-ambient lighting, "allowing" space, physical comfort, and natural location (where possible) 4) profound music selection based on numinous & nonspecific evocative qualities, and ritual phase-specific criteria, using high quality sound technology 5) artistic expression of the process, 6) group-community processing, 7) on-going heart-centered and earth-honoring, personal practices that support post-breathwork integration. 8) An introductory talk covering the theory and practice, the responsibilities of participants, benefits and risks of the sacred breathwork, and assessments for medical and psychiatric exclusions. Safety is the paramount rule

Sacred breathwork is a process done in group retreat workshop or individual sessions. Participants alternate in roles as a Journeyer (breather) and an Ally (sitter). The Ally's job is to support, hold space, and protect the space and process of the journeyer above all. So they are Guardian as well as Ally. The Ally's focus as compassionate witness does not interfere with the Journeyer's process unless safety is at stake. The same is true for the facilitator as Ritual Elder.

This Sacred Breathwork is blended with classic shamanic journeying, sweat lodge ceremony, active Toltec work to root out and dissolve long standing problem patterns and lachak heart theory with its protocol of highly active practices and very direct core questions for inner work. Focusing on a felt-sense as developed by Eugene T. Gendlin, Ph.D. may also be incorporated. Even our cellular memories in our bodies can open and pour out pertinent wisdom. It is a sacred ceremony in which the Sacred/Divine is intentionally invoked and entered into deep relationship with, for purposes of worship & renewal, and for healing, liberating-insight, or personal transformation.

See Calendar of events for workshop dates in USA and Europe. Most workshops offer two sacred breathwork sessions.

The Sacred Breathwork unquestionably has holotropic (moving towards wholeness) qualities, tending to arouse the quest for healing, individuation, union of opposites or whole making. We owe a great deal to Grof for refining this concept and showing us how it can be aligned with in breathwork. We accept it with deepest gratitude. The powerful experience is not for everyone, however, and there are many ways of having deep spiritual experiences through non ordinary states. Some medical and psychiatric conditions make it unsafe, such as cardiovascular problems, pregnancy, recent surgeries, glaucoma, and serious seizure disorder. At this time there is not a safe container for individuals who suffer paranoid and bi-polar disorders. although with a safe and extended care model that is

adequate, it may become so in the future. Before attending a sacred breathwork event, all participants fill out a medical and psychiatric exclusions questionnaire to insure safety.