

# Relationship in the Breathwork Experience

Close is Enough

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Brightman offers case examples of family and intimate relationships enhanced by Holotropic Breathwork.

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I have been continuously offering Holotropic Breathwork since January 1990, and [as of 1994] I have facilitated Breathwork for 700 clients. One of the more rewarding aspects for all involved has been progress in developing intimate relationships with self and others.

One couple prepared separate lists of what they wanted to do to celebrate their wedding anniversary. The top item on each list was to do a Holotropic Breathwork session as partners. Another couple chose to spend the last four days of their honeymoon doing a Breathwork at my retreat center.

Three generations of one family breathed over three years. In one session the grandmother, two daughters, and two grandchildren were all in the same session. Children from ages 10 to 18 have used the process with outcomes that were personally fulfilling.

A psychiatrist brought his daughter and they chose to Breathe during the same session (with other partners) to protect the confidentiality of their processes. Therapists and clients do the same. It has been possible for some helping professionals and clients with a therapeutic relationship to be in the same workshop with useful results.

Today's family takes many forms and each has its benefits and challenges. A father encouraged his two sons from separate marriages to use Breathwork to deepen their awareness of each other. Another parent used the process to work on enhancing his relationship with an adopted child. I have had many mother and daughter combinations doing workshops together.

Friends, males and females and mixed, use the process to expand their friendships. Even former spouses, who have divorced and married others,

have done very effective work by being in the same Breathwork room with their former partner. They say they were able to achieve an intimacy outside of marriage that eluded them during marriage.

One father and son Breathed together in a particularly memorable event. While the son was Breathing and the father was his Sitter, a spontaneous comment by the father opened a door between them that had been closed for many years. At the very end of the session, the son was still holding in emotions that wanted to erupt. As I worked with the son in the closing of his process, he began to cry, and I motioned a suggestion to the father to lie beside his son. I did not ask the father to speak, but he whispered to his son, "I'm sorry that I wasn't there for you when you were growing up." Those words triggered a deep emotional release by the son. All that he had been holding in came out.

Later, in the closing circle, this is what the son chose to share with the group. "My father apologized for abandoning me as a child." You will notice the difference in the expressed perception of the father and the son. There is a definite difference in their point of view. However, close was enough, and this breakthrough allowed the son to live once again in the same house with his father.

One 77-year-old man called me and said that he had spent his life asking for help and then proving that those who offered could not do anything for him. I said, "Why do a Breathwork session if that is what you do?" He answered, "I want to change, I'm not going to do that anymore." He did Breathe and he now calls Holotropic Breathwork his "Open Heart Therapy". He is in quite a new relationship to himself and to the world. I have many such memories from the relationship interactions that Holotropic Breathwork catalyzed over these nearly five years of service.