

# 4<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CHINESE MEDICINE, YOGA & MENTAL HEALTH CONGRESS

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## **Pranayama & Breathwork, a journey with breath**

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When I was first inspired by western yoga to teach the difference between pranayama and Breathwork my rough draft title read: Pranayama vs Breathwork. I can be very competitive and aggressive at times. In this corner, we have the western lightweight on the average two-minute pranayama verses the one to three-hour conscious connected breathing heavyweight Breathwork. In my five hundred plus hours of yoga training only a very small percentage of it was devoted to pranayama. So, I personally dove into pranayama, the fourth limb of yoga, disciplined myself with a daily practice and I changed. Forty-five minutes of any one of the pranayamas changed my ignorant attitude and I softened my approach with a new understanding, experience and appreciation of the ancient art of pranayama. I love my breath. It has been one of my main entertainments since I was a small child. Even in the mid-years of my life, conscious breathing exercises are still revealing sub or superconscious pieces of my total self. As I breathed each of the pranayamas without much expectation my ego was caught off guard. It had learned how to defend itself against my regular Breathwork practices keeping its-small-self intact. The extended pranayama practice was surprisingly pleasant and gave me a new appreciation and respect for the power of our breath. It is my hope that this workshop/talk shines a loving light on the wonderful practice of conscious breathing and the healthy benefits pranayama and Breathwork have to offer. Enjoy the journey. Life is an adventure.

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