



Newspaper: **JOURNAL STAR**

Date: January 21, 2004

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Photographer:

## **Learning to Breathe**

### **Yoga teaches proper inhaling, which helps restore and maintain health**

Even more important to health than proper diet may be the simple act of breathing correctly, and some professionals think most of us don't measure up.

Rapid, shallow breathes barely oxygenate our minds and bodies, they say. On the other hand, retired Peoria Pulmonologist Stan Bugaieski thinks rapid, shallow breaths are OK as part of a normal breathing cycle.

Alternative health guru, author and professor of internal medicine Dr. Andrew Weil of Arizona has spent a career advising patients about proper breathing to restore and maintain health.

"If I had to limit my advice on healthier living to just one tip, it would be simply to learn how to breathe correctly," Weil said.

He prescribes breathing exercises for patients, and he reports those exercises get more favorable responses than anything else he teaches.

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Bugaieski agrees that in situations of stress that result in holding your breath, concentrating on a different breathing pattern may be beneficial. But as a rule, Bugaieski said the body functions well with a normal pattern of shallow breaths altered by a sigh which creates a deep breath.

"A sigh doubles your air," he said. "Deep breathing on a regular basis might be a good way to practice meditation, but you'll hyperventilate if you do it on a regular basis."

Helen Cox, executive director of Options Center for Health & Education, 4316 N. Prospect Road, said, "Depth of breath brings more air, more oxygen and more energy. Deep breaths have health benefits."

Cox traces the problem of shallow breath to lack of training in childhood, tension, poor posture and inadequate exercise.

"Exercise expands the lung capacity. Deep breathing can release anxiety and stress and help avoid panic attacks," she said.

For more information....Options can be reached at 685-7721.