



## The Oxygen Enrichment Program

The Oxygen Enrichment Program, also known as CO<sub>2</sub> rebreathing or ‘masking’, aids in increasing oxygen supplies to the brain by the simple act of re-breathing carbon dioxide, the natural by-product of respiration, for a short period of time, using a mask or bag into which the client breathes.

By rebreathing one’s own breath, two responses happen in the body. The first is that masking is a respiratory stimulant that encourages the diaphragm to descend more deeply, opening up the alveoli in the lungs and resulting in deeper breathing, not only during masking but also by training the body to breath more deeply throughout the day.

The second benefit of oxygen enrichment via this means is that CO<sub>2</sub> serves as a vasodilator, dilating blood vessels of the brain so that when the mask is removed, the blood vessels of the brain uptake 40 – 70% more oxygen.

Increased oxygen to the brain as delivered in this manner will 1.) energize the mitochondria, 2.) support the circulation and reuptake of neurotransmitters and 3.) reduce oxygen free radicals in the brain that are neurotoxins.

CO<sub>2</sub> rebreathing has been used to prevent seizures and to eradicate certain types of migraines. Ask your practitioner directly about these issues. Getting more oxygen to the brain may be a factor in preventing some kinds of dementia, and has been known to aid in concentration. Masking cannot be described as curing any specific deficit or disorder, but can be seen as a general tonic for the brain.

### How to do Masking

- 1.) The ‘mask’ can be one that is specific to the activity, provided by your practitioner, or can be as simple as a paper bag.
- 2.) Breathing normally, leave the mask or bag on for up to one minute. Do not leave the mask on for more than one minute.
- 3.) Take the mask off for at LEAST one minute. Five minutes between masking is considered by some practitioners to be optimal.
- 4.) A ‘set’ of masking involves leaving the mask on for one minute then off for at least one minute. Repeat this cycle ten times.
- 5.) You must leave at least ten minutes between sets of masking.
- 6.) As with any new activity, start where you can. If one minute is overwhelming, begin with as many seconds as you or your child can tolerate, then take it off for a minute or longer. The body quickly becomes more efficient and soon you will be able to leave it one for one minute. If you are unable to get to one minute, consult with your practitioner.
- 7.) This activity can take place while you are doing other activities, such as watching a video. For children, distracting them often makes it an easy assignment.