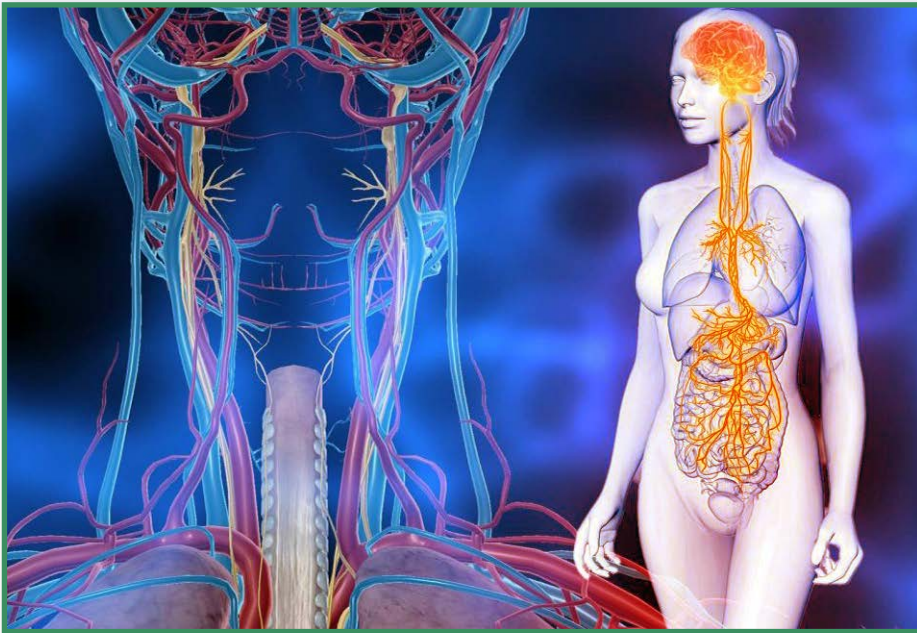


Regulated with Bowenwork & Breathwork



THE VAGUS NERVE is the longest and most complex of the cranial nerves in the human body. It is a pair of nerves that originate in the brainstem and extend down through the neck and chest to the abdomen. The vagus nerve is part of the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps to regulate a variety of bodily functions, including heart rate, digestion, and breathing.

In the last article, I wrote about how crucial the Vagus Nerve is, what it is, the divisions of it, HRV, HPA, and more. We wanted the reader to know just how important the Vagus Nerve is to the overall health of the body, which includes the CNS and the gut/brain connection. Be sure to go back and read the article so you will better understand this one. In this article, we will learn more about what the Vagus nerve does, and two things that can help increase vagal tone: Bowenwork and Breathwork.

While I was researching how Bowenwork can help, I came across a Bowenwork practitioner and Instructor, John Wilks from the UK. I use his book *Understanding the Bowen Technique*, to educate my clients on the basics of Bowenwork. He wrote an article called “The Vagus,” in the Dec. 2022 issue of

Bowen Hands, a magazine for Bowenwork Practitioners such as myself.

He talks about a man named Stephen Porges, who developed Polyvagal Theory over 25 years ago. The basis of his theory is that our nervous system has developed in response to our needs for survival. He describes how our autonomic nervous system has three parts;

- 1) **Dorsal Vagus or Old Vagus**—which is unmyelinated and was primarily designed to regulate our gut and digestion.
- 2) **Sympathetic Nervous System**—so called because the little ganglia on either side of the spinal cord were thought by early anatomists to be “little brains” that worked in sympathy together.
- 3) **Ventral Vagus**—so called because the nuclei that control

Turn your hands into powerful healing tools with Bowen therapy.

Intro to Bowenwork with Crystal Maceira, CBP

Bowenwork is a gentle, effective, noninvasive touch therapy that stimulates the body's ability to heal itself. It is safe and appropriate for all.

CLASSES IN YOUR AREA.

Go to [AmericanBowen.academy](https://www.AmericanBowen.academy) “Find a Class” for more info.

it are slightly anterior to the dorsal vagus in our brain stem and is referred to as our “social nervous system.” The ‘new’ vagus works closely with other cranial nerves such as the trigeminal, the facial, the accessory, and the glossopharyngeal.

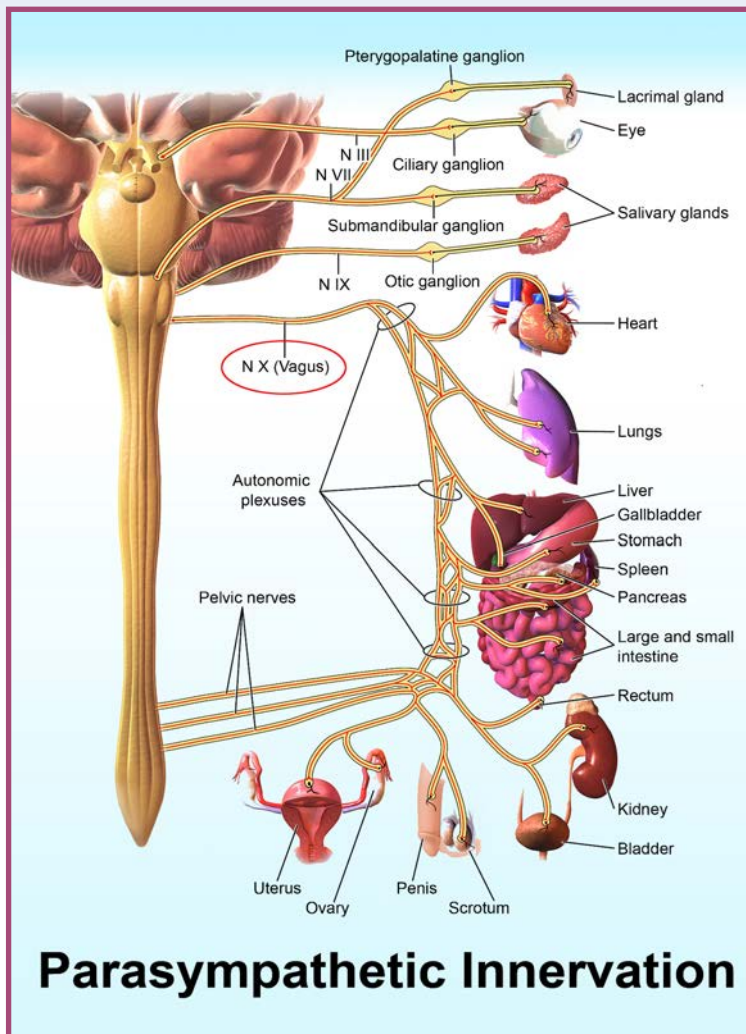
John Wilks has listed a number of things that can affect the vagus nerve:

- Nerve entrapment
- Stress and trauma
- Bacteria (e.g., Lyme’s Disease)
- Viruses (often a trigger for M.E. (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis) or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome)
- Cranio-cervical instability (e.g., whiplash)
- The microbiome and the gut

REGULATING THE VAGUS NERVE THROUGH BOWENWORK

The moves utilized in Bowenwork address two types of receptors in the fascia which have a powerful effect on the vagus when stimulated: the Ruffini receptors and the Interstitial receptors (or free nerve endings). Research has shown that this kind of stimulation has a direct effect on the anterior lobe of the Hypothalamus resulting in lowering muscle tonus and a strong increase in vagal tone.

I would recommend for further study *Accessing the Healing Power of Your Vagus Nerve*, by Stanley Rosenberg (he worked with Porges). It includes a useful overview and great exercises to stimulate the vagus which are simple to do. John Wilks also has courses on “50 ways to Activate the Vagus” at Therapy-Training.com.



Parasympathetic Innervation

I hold two classes on Bowenwork. One is called *Intro to Bowenwork—Put Wellness into Your Hands*, which is a 4-hour class that will give you a basic knowledge of Bowenwork, including learning some moves that you can use on yourself, your family and friends. The other is a set of classes that will give you the skills to become a Bowenwork practitioner.

What is great about this course of learning is that you do not have to be a licensed massage therapist. This class is for those that are in the healthcare field, such as midwives, physical therapists, chiropractors and those who want to have a career change. I am NCBTMB certified to provide Continuing Education Units in both classes.

Contact me or go to [American Bowen.Academy](http://AmericanBowen.Academy) to sign up for the next class held in Helena. If you want to host a class in your area, I need at least six people to register and attend.



CRYSTAL MACEIRA is a Certified Bowenwork Practitioner, practicing in Helena. She has been a massage therapist for 23+ years. She is also a Master Herbalist and certified IIPA Iridologist. She prepares her own single and formula-blend herbal tinctures. Find out more on her website at: PositiveLifeChange.info. Call Crystal at 406-616-2599 Email: crystalclearhealth@gmail.com

REGULATING THE VAGUS NERVE THROUGH BREATHWORK

In the life-changing, half-day, Integral Breathwork Seminar, the first thing that breathworker Denis Ouellette checks on people is whether or not they are diaphragmatic breathers. “Place one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest,” he prompts. “Now take a deep breath. Which one moves first? As your lungs fill with air, it puts pressure on your diaphragm to flatten and descend, which naturally looks like your belly is extending out. And it’s not just the belly in front—it’s the sides, the low back area, and even your pelvic floor.”

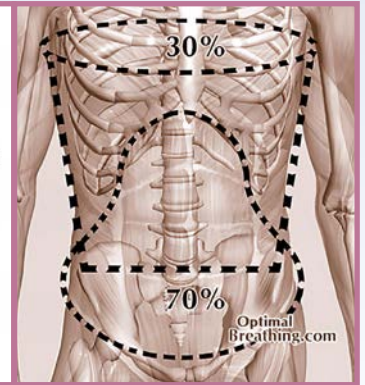
This lower-torso expansion, he explains, should be the first 70% of your inhale, before it rises up to expand your ribs sideways and your chest slightly upward. What’s the main benefit of breathing this way?

“The vagus nerve passes through the diaphragm in a small passageway that also includes your esophagus. You are massaging and activating your vagus nerve with each diaphragmatic breath, which looks much like the action of polishing the barrel of a rifle with a rag.

An optimal deep breath starts with the lungs filling and the diaphragm descending. The lower torso expands in all directions (70%), then the ribs and chest expand (30%). The inhalation is fuller and slower, engaging the entire torso in an upward wave-like motion. The exhalation is simply about relaxing and deflating, followed by a brief pause before the next breath begins.

----- Inhale (lungs full)

IntegralBreathwork.com



This sends the signal to your autonomic nervous system to calm down and relax, moving all your body systems out of ‘fight-or-flight’ stress mode, into ‘rest, digest and heal’ mode.”

And it works both ways, he continues, “You can consciously breathe this way to calm yourself down, and when it’s time to ease up on a stress reaction, your body will naturally breathe this way to assist in that process. By contrast, when you’re in some kind of stress (real or imagined), your body reacts with high-chest breathing, along with a host of other physiological and hormonal reactions.”

Denis’ point is that, through breathwork, you can regulate the vagus nerve and help heal your body from the chronic stress situations we so often find ourselves in. A guided breathwork session can even go back in time to address the “backlog” of stress and trauma that is still lodged in the nervous system, in the subconscious, and even in the cells (i.e., “cellular memory”).

That’s just one reason—not to mention oxygenation and detoxification—why conscious breathing is such a common and vital part of mindfulness exercises, yoga, and many healing practices. ■

See ad on next page for Denis’ upcoming Breathwork Seminar on October 13th.



POSITIVE LIFE CHANGES!

Crystal Maceira, CBP, LMT, MH

IIPA Certified Iridologist, Master Herbalist & Licensed Massage Therapist, Trained in many modalities including: Bowenwork, Pregnancy Massage and Sports Massage. *Quiet home studio.*

POSITIVE LIFE CHANGES, LLC ~ PositiveLifeChange.info
406-616-2599 ~ crystalclearhealth@gmail.com
1st Massage only \$55.



Sun, Oct. 13, 12:30–6 pm

IN **BOZEMAN, MT**

Integral Breathwork™

with **Denis Ouellette**

35+ Years Experience • Certified Breathing Specialist



“I learned a lot and felt incredible.”

“This seminar changed my life!”

Double Your Vitality!

in a 5 1/2-Hour, Experiential
Breath-Activating Workshop

OPEN TO EVERYONE

\$60 ~or~ 2 for \$100
bring a friend, save \$20

~ INCLUDES ~

- ~ “HEAL YOURSELF” SEMINAR WORKBOOK
- ~ PERSONAL BREATHING ASSESSMENTS
- ~ BREATH CORRECTIONS & EXERCISES
- ~ BREATHING PHYSIOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGY
- ~ TRANSFORMATIONAL BREATHWORK SESSION

~ LOCATION ~

EMERGENCE MOVEMENT & WELLNESS

521 E. Peach St., Suite B, Bozeman
Between N. Wallace Ave. & N. Church Ave.

PRE-REGISTRATION & INFO PACKET:

Contact **Denis Ouellette**

(406) 333-4103 • deniswo333@gmail.com

More Info & Testimonials at:

IntegralBreathwork.com

NCBTMB Approved Provider • 5.5 CEU Hours

What's a Breathwork Seminar?

Breath-work? Breathing isn't work—it's *auto-matic—right?* Why attend a Breathwork Seminar? This seminar focuses on the most important, yet most neglected, activity you do to provide yourself with life and vitality! At the Integral Breathwork Seminars, we measure, assess, and work on improving your breathing function first. Then we lie down for a breathwork session that will likely be one of the most life-changing experiences you've ever had.

After the breathwork session, it's hard to describe how you feel, but some have tried. Here are some actual words that participants have used: *I feel...*

*Happy... Relieved... Alive & free... Expanded...
I feel like myself again!... Peaceful...
Warm & tingly... Strong... Connected to life...
Radiant... Aerated!... Drained & refilled...
Comfortable... Effervescent... Clearer...
More present... Phenomenal!*

I've spent a lifetime studying and sharing about the breath and have worked with many of the world's experts in this field. I've taught this seminar 100+ times. I guarantee that you'll benefit from it, and you'll learn take-home tools to use the rest of your life.

Is this seminar for those with breathing dysfunctions? Absolutely! You will improve significantly and learn how to keep getting better. Is this work for those who feel their breathing is fine, but “feel stuck” in other ways? YES, this work will get you unstuck and give you tools to adjust better to, and flow with, all of your stressors. You'll LOVE this seminar!

I hope to see you in Bozeman for some great breathwork on Sunday, October 13th from 12:30 to 6 pm. Please call or e-mail me to preregister, as space is limited and these classes will fill up. You'll also want to see the six-page *Information & Registration Packet*. ■

—Denis Ouellette, Seminar Leader