

Day 5: Caring For Yourself And The Planet

Eli Bay: Unleashing The Power Of The Relaxation Response

This class is NCBTMB approved for one continuing education credit

Website: <http://www.elibay.com/>

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I am your host Melanie Hayden, along with my world massage partner and co-host Scott Dartnall who will be monitoring the chat room for this presentation and be presenting the questions asked by our attendees during the live broadcast of this presentation.

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In this presentation we will feature: Eli Bay: Unleashing The Power Of The Relaxation Response

You'll have a deep understanding of the way stress impacts individuals, companies and even society as a whole. You will have a whole new appreciation for the valuable contribution you make each day through your massage and your ability to initiate a powerful relaxation response in your clients.

I would like to introduce you to our presenter Eli Bay,

Eli is recognized as a leading authority on stress control as he delivers his practical skill trainings and workshops in some of the world's largest and most discerning corporations, governments, hospitals and professional associations. Eli's practical approach is viewed as one of the most effective and accessible programs in the growing stress control field.

The Globe and Mail newspaper refers to him as "Canada's Stress Guru". He has been in The Canadian Who's Who since 1986. Two educational television series, "Well Being" and "Beyond Stress", introduced millions to a natural and easy-to-do compliment to medication for a wide range of medical and psychological issues caused by stress. They also present the importance of releasing stress as a proven way to enhance mental and physical health and well being, build resilience to pressure and strain, and emphasize the importance of controlled breathing to manage body-mind states.

Eli welcome to the World Massage Conference, it's wonderful to have you presenting,

Well, I'm primarily an experiential trainer and this format really doesn't give me the opportunity to deliver what I'm really best at, which is delivering an experience of relaxation. But what I'd like to do, in this short format, is just give you a little overview of what relaxation is and what it's not. And I think the best way to discuss the relaxation response is to look what stress is, because unless you understand what stress is, you won't really appreciate the strategy of unleashing the relaxation response.

And in my 30-plus years of working in this field, I am constantly amazed at the

general public really does not understand what stress is. They think that stress is just the bad stuff: the pressures, the worries, the uncertainties, the financial conditions, weather conditions. It's always seen as kind of the "heavies." But, in fact, really what stress is If you really want to understand what stress is, it's just. If you ever seen that cat with its back arched, ready to fight or to run, I mean, that is essentially what stress is. When that same reaction happens in the human body, that's what stress is. In fact, Dr. Walter Cannon, one of Nobel Prize-winning physiologists, described stress as the "fight-or-flight reaction." Again, when you see a cat with its back arched, the whole body is mobilized to fight or to run. Hans Selye, a researcher at the University of Montreal, called the same phenomenon stress. And I'm sure the people who on this broadcast know the physiology: that stress is really the turning on of the sympathetic nervous system, or technically the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system. And it's a reaction to a potential threat, real or imagined. The body mobilizes to fight or to run. The blood pressure, heartbeat speeds up, muscles tense up, metabolism speeds up, brainwaves speed up. The body literally is, you know, like, ready to run or to fight. [The] blood sugar, insulin levels go up; sex hormones, digestion slow down. It's a survival mechanism. And we need a certain amount of stress.

This mechanism, I mean, you wouldn't want to leave home with out. I mean, if you're driving down the highway and a truck suddenly swerves in front of you, you want to be awfully thankful this is an automatic reaction, where the body will literally kick in (the stress mechanism kicks in) and the body is able to react to a potential threat, real or imagined, and avoid an accident. After the near-accident, [he] feels a sigh of relief and then the body returns to normal.

Alas, this fight-or-flight reaction is not just there when we need it. The problem is that this fight-or-flight reaction, this stress mechanism, happens to be chronically turned on in the body of just about everybody living in this culture at this time, whether they like it or not or whether they know it or not. The reality is that our bodies haven't changed in any real noticeable way, according to the physiologists in the 30-50 thousand years. So, we're walking around today in bodies that are virtually indistinguishable from our ancestors who were cave-dwellers and were hunter-gatherers. And when you were a hunter-gatherer, it was very advantageous to be able to react to change as [if] it were a threat. I mean, if you were out on the hunt or foraging for food as a hunter-gatherer in a world that really didn't change from generation to generation, children grew up in the same world as the parents, grandparents, and great grandparents, things didn't change for a very, very long time (for tens of millennia), things stayed the same. And our ancestors who were hunter-gatherers literally could react. Suddenly, if something out of the corner of their eye, there's a change, something brown and large is running through the bushes, well, our ancestors, who were able to react to the change as if it were a threat, were able to fight or to run, and live on, have children. And over evolutionary time, the ability to react to change as a threat became a distinct advantage, and over time became hardwired into the bodies of

everyone, and it became the natural default position whenever a change occurred. And, again, it's served us well for a very, very long time.

But then change began to change and suddenly we entered the modern world. I mean, about 300 years ago, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, change began to accelerate, and certainly the 20th century, there was awesome change. I mean, I look at the world through the eyes of my grandmother, who was born 10 years before Wright brothers flew the first airplane, and who passed away after Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon. Literally the entire history of aviation took place during that one lifetime, with a decade on either side to spare. Of course, I don't need to tell you that our time is making my grandmother's time look like [it is at a] standstill. And the reality that people have to appreciate, is that the time which we are living is demanding levels of adaptation from us that are totally unprecedented. Our bodies haven't changed since we were hunter-gatherers, then, suddenly, we're living in a world of exponential change. And what "exponential" means, is that each time there's a doubling of activity anywhere that encompasses all of the changes that have happen in the past For example, a metaphor would be [to] imagine a lily pond, and there's a lily growing in the pond and it doubles everyday for 30 days. At the end of the 30 days, the lily fills the entire pond. On what day does it fill half the pond? Well, actually, it fills half of the pond on the 29th day. And on the 30th day, it fills the whole pond. And, in fact, in that last day, it encompasses all of the changes that preceded it.

So, you have to understand this concept to appreciate what I'm about to say. It seems that we went through more change during the last ten years than all of the changes that have happened in all of previous human history, from the beginning of time until 10 years ago. And we were warned about this acceleration that was coming some 40 years ago, when an American social historian, Alvin Toffler, identified the phenomenon as "future shock." Well, folks, it's here and it's now and you can't escape from it. And one of my basis theses, is that just by waking up in the morning and living in this culture at this time, we are all having to absorb this demand to adapt that may indeed be greater than that which our bodies are built to handle. And one of the few certainties in a very uncertain world, where no one knows what it will even going to look like in 10 years; the reality is that the one certainty is that accelerated change and the accompanying stress is going to continue for everyone. And if we're going to healthfully survive in this new world (And it really is a new world. We're living in experiment right now and it's still questionable whether we're going to yet be a successful experiment.) But we really need to learn how to unwind, manage ourselves, and unwind from this accumulated strain, because, actually, Hans Selye, in his latter years, as the medical researcher at the University of Montreal [and the one] who coined the term "stress"), said that he felt he had made the mistake in using the engineering term "stress" to define this fight-or-flight reaction. He said he would have probably been closer to the mark if he would have labeled it "strain," because that's how we have to think of it: Our bodies are constantly straining, and just by living in this culture at this time.

Now, I could spend the rest of this hour and several other hours talking about additional stressors in our culture and our time, but just [let it] suffice: Just living in this culture keeps our body in a chronic low-level stress and where we need a certain level of stress to be at our best, as stress gets us out of bed in the morning; it's essential to enhance our productivity, creativity, motivation, vitality. We need stress. The problem is when it's turned on all the time and we don't shut it off.

And the work that I do and the work that you do, is that you teach, or you allow people or permit people to experience a state where the stress is reduced. The medically defined state in the body and mind that is opposite to that of stress was label the "relaxation response" by a cardiologist at the Harvard Medical School almost 40 years ago. And I teach people how to do it with a variety of techniques, and massage therapists do it through your manipulation. But both of us introduce people to the state in which the stress is demobilized. Technically, what we're doing, is that we're turning on for people the parasympathetic nervous system (or, technically, the parasympathetic branch of autonomic nervous system). You have to understand that stress is the sympathetic branch; what we call the relaxation response the parasympathetic branch. They're equal but opposite. When the relaxation response is engaged, heart rate, blood pressure, metabolism, brainwave frequency, all are reduced. At the same time, digestion is reduced, sex hormones rise. It's the exact opposite of the stress reaction. And this is something that's hardwired into everybody, but it has to deliberately engaged. And what we need are our periods where we can literally disengage from the stress reaction and allow the body to go into deep healing states of rest. In fact, that's what the relaxation response. At the Harvard Medical School, they identified the relaxation response. They discovered that just five minutes into the relaxation response, we are producing a state of rest in our bodies and minds that would be equivalent to Well, the equivalent of that state of rest could only be achieved after sleeping roughly four to five hours. Now, it doesn't replace four to five hours of sleep. It just means that within a very short time, we're able to achieve a profoundly restful state, as measured by oxygen consumption and carbon-dioxide elimination--which are considered the best indicators of a state of rest.

So, when we introduce people or evoke the relaxation response, we are invoking a state of deep healing rest, where we kind of get out of our own way and the body's healing restorative mechanisms come to the fore. I use a metaphor in my presentations of: Imagine a steam boiler, and imagine that there's no safety valve on that steam boiler and that as the stream pressure continues to build, and build, and build, eventually the boiler will explode. In a similar way, we have this strain of the fight-or-flight reaction, low-level but chronic, from the time we get up in the morning usually until the time we get to sleep, and for many of us, even when we're sleeping. So, it's an ongoing, low-level, chronic strain that builds over time. I mean, stress problems don't emerge overnight. They emerge over

years, over decades. It's an accumulated strain that builds. And along the way
....

The point I want to make is that we need to break out of it. We need a safety valve to get out of our own way and let our body heal, let it restore, let it replenish, let the natural healing mechanisms of the body come to the fore. And it's important to do it on a regular basis, as I'm sure most of you tell your clients, that: "This is a massage." And my self-induced relaxation should be done regularly, because the body needs opportunities to break out of the cycle, and recuperate, and replenish, and heal, and balance. And that's what's missing in our post-modern world. We're a Type-A culture. It's all about doing, doing, doing. People give very little value to just being. And I think that this is what is going to be certainly one of the most important survival skills for life in the 21st century, is that we need to unwind, we need to allow ourselves to *be* and to heal.

And the relaxation response can be evoked in many different ways. I mean, I teach people techniques of muscle relaxation, where they can tense up and let go. I teach people how to quiet the mind through mind-focusing meditative mind exercises, work with imagery. But, really, the secret to triggering the relaxation response on one's own is to find ways enable you to focus your mind with one point of attention--again, whether it's focusing on one's breath, or internal states, or focusing on different parts of the body. But one point of attention is absolutely critical to helping people shut off the stress mechanism and go into these deep, healing states of rest. But, you know, there are many ways to do it. I mean, massage is certainly a way that you're familiar with, but many of you are also familiar with yoga, meditation, Tai Chi, self-hypnosis. All of these methods evoke the relaxation response, literally shutting down the body's stress reactions.

And I know that certainly one of the most powerful ways that individuals can evoke this on their own is through a technique as simple as breathing as if one is relaxed. It's interesting. I tell my clients that I'm not even going to teach you this technique. I'm going to remind you of it, because children do it naturally. We started breathing out regularly diaphragmatically down into the bottom third of the lungs. If you have exposure to infants or toddlers, you will discover that most of them are diaphragmatic breathers: When they breathe, their tummies go up and down. Most adults, when they check themselves, have become chest breathers. They breathe in the upper two thirds of their lungs. When someone tells me "Oh, I don't have any stress," (I hear that with some frequency.), all I can say is, "Well, if you're a chest breather, don't tell me that, because you don't understand what stress is," because if you're a chest breather, you're living with a chronic low-level stress constantly.

And one of the ways that one can break out of that stress cycle is to deliberately breathe as if one were relaxed. And you can do that. In fact, I'd like to just take thorough a very, short, simple technique. And although many of you may be familiar with it, many are not. And it's something you can do when you're driving,

when you're walking, even when you're probably doing a massage, you can do it when you're cooking, you can do it lying in bed, you can do it on the golf course. You can do it just about anywhere and no one would know that you're doing it. And yet, if I had time and teach only one of the many, many relaxation techniques that I know--If I had to teach only one--it would be the simple diaphragmatic breathing. It's simple but not simplistic, because when you breathe as it you are relaxed, you are literally affecting the flow of hormones throughout your whole endocrine system; you are literally changing the acid/alkaline ratio in the body. In other words, you're changing the internal chemistry in your body with something very, very simple, that anyone can do. And it's as simple as breathing in through your nose.

And I invite you, listeners, right now to inhale through your nostrils and guide the air down into the bottom third of your lungs, so that when you inhale, your abdomen (or your tummy) rises, and when you breathe out, your tummy falls. Now, some people like to put one hand on their chest and one hand on their upper-abdomen (on their tummy), and it enables them to literally sense [or] feel the breath going down into the bottom third of the lungs. And I just invite you to just continue that. You breathe out through your nose or out through your mouth--whatever you prefer (but it's always advisable to breathe in through your nostrils, [as] those clean, warm, humidify the air)--and guide the air down into the bottom third of your lungs (into your tummy), so that, as you inhale your tummy rises and as you breathe out your tummy falls.

Now, this is not complicated, but it's profound in its effect. I've seen this simple exercise literally transform lives. (And I don't throw the word "transform" around loosely.) So, I just invite you: Close your eyes, and just breathe in through your nose, and literally guide the air down into the bottom third of your lungs so that as you inhale your abdomen rises and as you breathe out your abdomen falls. And just get a feel for that. (Some people can do it immediately and some people find it a little more challenging. But if you just stay with it even for a couple of minutes, most of you will find that you can do it; or when it's appropriate, maybe if you're having difficulty doing it sitting, try doing lying down.) Literally guide the air down into your tummy (into your tummy). And just get a feel for that. And do it for a minute or so, through the nose, taking the air down into your abdomen, letting your abdomen rise ... and let it fall, with each breath. And just do that for a few times and just get a feel for deliberately guiding air into your tummy.

And when you finish the breath that you're doing, I want you to share a simple variation of this. We can make it even more powerful. And what I invite you to do now, is to continue to breathe in through your nose, as before, taking the air down into your tummy, but then slowly fill your lungs, pushing up your abdomen, pushing up your ribs, filling your chest, filling your lungs from the bottom right to the top--a long, slow, deep, satisfying breath that fills your lungs from the bottom to the top. And just do this with full concentration. Each time you breathe out, just allow your muscles to unwind a little bit (to let go). And just stay focused,

guide the air through your nose right down into your tummy, letting your tummy rise. Continue to breathe in, pushing out your ribs, and filling your chest--slow, deep, satisfying, full breaths. And each time you exhale, allow your muscles to loosen (to let go). (The word "relax" in Latin literally translates as "letting go." In ancient Rome, they used to relax prisoners from jail after they had served their term.) So, I invite you, each time you breathe out, let go of the tightness, the holding, the tension in your jaw, in your stomach, in your shoulders--wherever you catch yourself holding; and just do this with full concentration, filling your lungs from bottom to top--filling your whole torso with air, from your hips right to your neck. And each time you exhale, let you muscles relax just a little bit more. Do this with concentration.

Just for a few minutes You're going to feel in a just a few minutes of this slow, concentrated breathing [how it] can have a really profound effect on changing your mental state, your emotional state, your physical state. And, again, you can do it anywhere. And a minute, or two, or three, or ten, or fifteen, or whatever, you can shift out of anger, a depression, a bouncing-off-wall stress. It enables you to gain an internal control very simply. I mean, there are many, many ways to engage the relaxation response, but certainly the slow, deep, full, satisfying breathing can just work so well almost anywhere.

So, just get a feel for it. [Take] just a few more breaths; just deep full breaths filling your lungs from bottom to top, filling your torso right from your hips right to your neck. And with each out-breath, just allow your muscles to unwind. And it's very important go give yourself permission just to let go into this deep, relaxed state. Your mind stays alert. You just want to release the holding in the muscles. And most of the holding is unconscious. It's so-called "normal." It just comes with the territory. We're used to it. We don't recognize it. And yet, with just the awareness, you will discover that we were walking around with this holding. Often it becomes an "Ah-ha!" experience after people do a deep relaxation on their own and to realize that they have been chronically tight for so long. Again, it's not even noticed until it's released.

But I'd invite you: just another couple deep, full breaths. And just allow yourself to get into a quiet, centered state: Your mind is alert, your body's relaxed. And just to know that.... You can do this anywhere and take responsibility for regulating your own internal states. I mean, yes, your clients will come to you so that you can help them to regulate their states; but yourself, you can do this with ease just about anywhere. And it works. And, again, I always tell people: "Don't believe me. Do it. The proof is in the pudding." And this could be done as a preview to other practice: If you're a meditator [this could be] to do some breathing prior to meditating; or [it can be done] prior to playing tennis, or golf, or whatever your sport is.

It's simple but profound in its results. And I have seen this simple technique [*Inaudible, 30:27*] really makes a dramatic difference in the qualities of the health

conditions of countless people. I've been doing this work since 1978 and I've seen people drop blood sugar levels (diabetics drop their blood sugar levels) [and] serious diabetic conditions [return] to normal within just two or three weeks by doing primarily the breathing. I've seen people with chronic sleeping problems--some cases, 20 or 30 years, people who've been to sleep clinics without satisfaction [and] in hospitals, [cured] just by doing the breathing within, in some cases, one or two weeks, literally sleeping through the night. It's not magic. It strikes at the Achilles' heel of stress. And we all have this dormant capacity hardwired into the nervous system. And with just simple techniques, like breathing, or muscle relaxing, or meditative mind focusing, everyone can be and *should be* empowered to manage themselves in a world that, I can state with absolute certainty, is going to become more stressful every passing year. And I've been saying this for 30 years and watching every year as the stress levels had ratcheted up year after year after year. And this is a trend that is not going to stop, and it becomes very important for us to manage ourselves. And you can even share these simple techniques with your clients between appointments. It's not complicated, but you have to do it. As I tell people, it's not a pill; it becomes a skill. But you have to make choices in your busy life to do it.

Now, I could keep going, but I'm wondering if it may not be an appropriate time to throw it open to questions, because I have lots of information I can share. And I'm just kind of [wondering if] maybe it will be better to just respond to whatever questions you may have.

Melanie Hayden:

Sounds like a good plan there. Can you hear me, Eli?

Eli Bay:

Yes.

Melanie:

Okay, great. I just want to make sure that I'm on here.

I have a question myself. [*Chuckle*] Actually, it's more of a comment, because you mentioned at the beginning that you're used to doing experiential work. And I would say that we had a pretty good experience there [*Chuckle*], when you led us through that breathing exercise.

Eli:

You know, I like to take people through *hours* of exercise. And by the way, for those of you who are listening, on my website, I have free a 25-minute guided breathing exercise. And I invite people to go to www.EliBay.com, and I invite you to go in and do the full 25-minute exercise when you have the time, and won't be disturbed, and can really allow yourself to let go into really deep relaxation, because, I mean, this is just what I did in five minutes, is just a taste of a taste of a taste. And even the 25-minute exercise that's on my website is really just the

surface. In my workshops and courses, I take people through three, four, five hours of similar exercises, each one teaching people so they can do it on their own. But there's a cumulative effect, where one exercise builds on the relaxation of the previous one. And I've even had meditators of 25 years tell me that they've never achieved such deeply relaxed states as in my sessions. But, again, five minutes is a taste of a taste of a taste.

Melanie:

Well, it was a very good taste. *[Laughter.]*

Eli:

And I invite people to do it when you're lying in bed (can't sleep), or before you go into a meeting, or an interview. I mean, it's practical.

Melanie:

Yeah, it's a great idea and it really, like you said, calms the nervous system down. It also kind of brings you back into your body and out of all the chatter in the mind.

Eli:

And into the present.

Melanie:

Yes. *[Laughter.]* Absolutely.

So, I'm going to turn it over to Scott Dartnall and he's going to ask all the listener questions that are coming in.

Eli:

Okay.

Scott Dartnall:

Good morning, Eli.

Eli:

Hi.

Scott:

Thank you, very much.

Our first question comes from Fran. And she says:

Do you have any recommended readings for massage therapists for their clients?

(To suggest to their clients, with regards to relaxation?)

Eli:

Well, you know, there's a classic book Now, it depends how academic people are. But there's a book (it's almost 30 years old) that is, I think, still a classic that remains one of the best: *Mind as Healer, [Mind as Slayer]*. I don't even know if it's still in print: *Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer* by Dr. Ken Pelletier (As a Canadian, I would say "Pelletier," but he's an American and it's "Pelletier" [*Pronounced as spelled*]). *Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer*. Absolutely wonderful book. I mean, I'm very familiar with the literature in this field. And I still think that [it], even it came out in the 70s, still remains, I think, one of the very best, and, of course, Herb Benson's work at Harvard. But, you know, I would refer people also to my website. I wrote many, many articles. I have research studies that have been done. Even one of the most (I'm trying to think of the term) Michael Murphy, who was one of the founders of the Excellence Institute in California, did a compendium of all the research on meditation. And a copy of it is on my website. But, you know, depending on how academic someone is But I have some very simple but insightful articles on my website at EliBay.com.

Scott:

Well, I'll tell you, Eli: The first person I ever heard use the words "relaxation" and "wellness" together was you, and it was well over 20 years ago in Toronto, when I was a student here. So [*Eli laughs.*], you're a great inspiration to me.

I have another question--I think, a really interesting one. It comes from Sue Barrett, and she's in Connecticut. And it says:

Can stress be contagious to others?

Eli:

Oh, yeah. I mean, there are people [*Chuckle*] who are stress carriers and just being in their presence can set people off. Absolutely. There's no doubt about it. I mean, we're "energy beings." We're sensitive. If you're with someone who's bouncing off the wall, you're obviously going to be effected. I would say, "Absolutely."

Scott:

I have another question. It comes from *Annez [37:57]*, and she's in Selenas, California. And she asks:

Are there people who subconsciously resist relaxing because they fear losing control? Any idea on helping them control resistance?

Eli:

That's certainly true. One of the reasons why in my work I offer people It's a process. I tell people, "It's a skill, not a pill," because even with people working with my instructional CDs, I know it'll take them often a couple of weeks to *really*

allow themselves to go into relaxed states because they stop themselves. You start to unwind and suddenly people go, "Ooh!" Suddenly, they're heading into unfamiliar territory and they stop themselves. It is a Type-A culture, where going inside is not encourage or supported. And when people do venture inside, again, it's new, it's unfamiliar, and they stop themselves. And one of the reasons my sessions are fairly long, is that I gently get people through and past these resistances, because resistances will come. There's a fear of letting go. People think they're going to go crazy or lose it in some way, or lose their edge. I mean, this is something, too, that I find really interesting: the Type-A personalities that are the majority in our culture. You're not born a Type-A. (And by the way, for those of you who are familiar with term "Type A," Type A is the characteristic; it's a value system that we learn from our teachers, and parents, and employers. It's rewarded behavior. It's all about achieving, doing. Type-As are high-achievers, they have a high need to achieve, they're competitive, they're at war with time, they value themselves by how many things they've accomplished, how many things they've ticked off on their to-do list. And what happens is that they fear that if they're not always on the verge, [they will] heat up. I mean, some people who feel they'll lose their edge if they don't worry. But Type-As are very afraid of losing their edge. They think that if they unwind, they're going to be passed by their competitors.) And yet once they learn how to put some balance into their being, they discover that they become more productive, more effective, they get more done with less effort, and it enhances their creativity and their vitality. But it's experiential. They have to be prepared to stay with the practice to get passed the internal obstacles that prevent them from really letting go. And, I mean, I find that my processes It takes most people three to four weeks to really be able to confidently go into the deep relaxation with ease. I mean, really it is a skill and it's not a one-shot thing.

Scott:

I have another question. It's from Steven, and he's in Albuquerque, New Mexico. And he says:

Are there any new and unknown benefits of the relaxation response that we may not be aware of?

Eli:

Yes. Actually, in July this year, The Benson-Henry Institute in Boston published results that I find very intriguing. They found that activating the relaxation response literally (Oh, what's the term? I just lot it.) turns on (or enables) the expression of genes; it literally turns on or off genes in the body. And they found that genes that relaxation response turns on affect inflammation, cell death, and free radicals. So, they now have actually found (I mean, we speculated it) that the relaxation response, you can fairly say, probably will slow down aging because of the effect on free radicals and cell death.

I think that's really interesting and exciting.

Scott:

Absolutely. And we can't thank you enough for joining us this morning, Eli. Eric, and myself, and Melanie were all very big fans. Actually, during our broadcast, we have a chatroom. And we're getting lots of talk about you and questions, from there, and everybody's really very happy that you joined us today.

Eli:

Well, thank you. I would also like to just announce (and this is the first announcement): Early in the new year, probably in February, I am going to be releasing a DVD training program (a home-study program). For years I have instructional CDs which are People like my voice and find it very helpful. But in a sense, it's like having, you know, a technique or a few techniques. What I have always done in my work, is that I transfer the skill; and up till now, people had to attend my five-week course in Toronto, [which is] once a week for five weeks, and [that] makes it rather challenging. And for years I've always wanted to be able to share it with it people anywhere and everywhere. And I have been working for the last 18 months and we are in the process of finishing a DVD training program. And I just invite people We haven't even named it yet and it's not announced anywhere, but it's going to be announced on my website probably early in the new year. Hopefully that'll be on the market by February. So, those of you who are interested, I invite you to sign up for information on my website and we'll let you know.

Scott:

Wonderful. I'll be looking for that. Can you give us your website address, please?

Eli:

Yes. It's www-EliBay.com.

Scott:

Well, that's easy. We'll remember that.

Eli:

Okay.

Scott:

Do you have time for more questions?

Eli:

Sure.

Scott:

I have so many questions. People really want to speak to you.

Paul in St. Louis has an interesting question. And it's like:

How do you suggest creating a haven, even for a short time, in a crowded, noisy atmosphere?

Eli:

With sufficient practice, I find one can induce this relaxed state almost anywhere: on the subway, even in a crowded environment. But I certainly find, for myself, putting a I have music or sounds (meditative sounds). So many people use my CDs. They put on their iPods or use headphones to block out sounds. But I also find it's helpful at times to have something over the eyes. I mean, some people find that even sitting in a crowded place, if you have an eye cover and headphones, you can really block out sound. I know when my children were young and were often [*Chuckle*] making incredible noise when I wanted to meditate, I bought a white noise generator that would sort of have a [*Hiss*] sound, and then I would put headphones on and use music--so I could block out the external sounds. But other than that, I don't know what else to say.

Scott:

Well, that's a great answer. Thank you, very much.

I have another question. I believe her name is *Audie [47:05]*, and she's in New Mexico. And she said:

I'm interested in bringing more breath work into my practice? What is the best way to incorporate that into a treatment or into your everyday activities?

Eli:

I don't know [what] to say. I don't know what to say. I mean, certainly breathing you can do anywhere, and it's just remembering to do it. Actually, on the DVDs, I'm going to be sharing an exercise that I call "serenity breathing." And you have to learn it. It's a visual training. But it teaches people how to really ... it enables them to take probably the most complete and fullest breath that most people have ever taken. And it's an old Sufi technique, and I have found it to be just so profoundly effective, even [for] people who are in the midst of a panic attack and cannot access other mind focusing-, meditative-style exercises. But they can do this because it's mechanical. And, I mean, I've had people who have had panic attack for 40 years able to stop them doing this serenity breathing. And, of course, once you can stop them, once you can control over the panic attacks, they lose their control over you. But all I can say: Abdominal breathing is very simple, and it's a question of showing someone or learning it, and doing it, and it's a question of reminding yourself to do it. I find a lot of people discover that they can do this breathing as they walk. Maybe they'll inhale for six steps, hold their breath for six steps, breathe out for six steps--or whatever is comfortable. But I find, also, that people discover that they can do the breathing while they're

driving. And driving is usually considered downtime. Often people can get 10, 15, or 20 minutes of conscious breathing in while they're commuting, and it sharpens their concentration on their driving, and they can arrive at their destination relaxed.

Scott:

Now, I know you're talking about some of the resources that are available at EliBay.com, but I have another question from Steven. He asks:

Is there a checklist of sorts we can give to our clients to remind them when they really need to do some deep breathing to reduce stress?

Eli:

Checklist? No. On my website, I have stress tests. I have a Type-A test and I have a stress-symptom test. And the stress-symptom test is really interesting, because, you know, most people really don't associate a lot of the common issues that they're dealing with stress. I mean, people may understand it may be their anxiety attacks and maybe their sleeping problems are related to stress, but they're often really shocked to discover that their acid reflux, or indigestion, or eczema, or scoriasis, or bruxism could be related to stress. And often it's just the insights. (And, again, I refer you to the symptom test on my website.) It can be a real shock to people, and then they discover they don't. Even if they're skeptical (and, again, I love skeptics), I say, "It's not about belief, it's about doing it." But if you do the practice and the symptom disappears, then it becomes really an "Ah-ha."

But other than that, I don't know what else to say.

Scott:

We have an interesting question right on that line. I know you partially answered that with your last question, but from Diane Prentice (she's in Moose Jaw), she says:

With the huge increase in asthma and breathing-related disorders, are you finding [that] this makes a significant difference with these people that are suffering?

Eli:

Absolutely. I recently had a woman who had been spending over \$100 dollars a month on inhalers for years. And she did my training program, and three weeks into the course, she didn't need her inhaler anymore. And I've had people ten years after my training saying that they've never needed their inhalers again.

So, yes.

Scott:

Absolutely fantastic.

Eli:

No, it's profoundly effective for asthma and other respiratory problems.

Scott:

You know, it's funny. Massage therapists are directly related with reducing stress in our society. And a lot of massage therapists are stressed right now because the economy across the world, and specifically in North America, is not good. So, you know, they're worried that their clients aren't going to be able to afford what many consider a luxury item and stress is going to way up in society.

Eli:

Yeah, yeah. No, no, it's true. And it's everywhere. And the thing is: Most of the stressors, you have little or no control over. But what people have to understand, is that although you can't control what's going on out there, that's not what stress is. Those are the *stressors*. Stresses are a reaction to what's happening out there. And we can get very, very, very good, even masterful, at managing our reactions. And that's the task that we all need to do for ourselves.

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On behalf of my world massage conference partners Scott Dartnall and Eric Brown thanks again to our presenter Eli Bay. I am Melanie Hayden. Thanks for joining us and have a fantastic day.