

# Coming Up For Air

By John Wambaa

## The need for air

Dolphins are fascinating creatures. With a playfulness and buoyancy akin to my energetic eight-year-old son, they thrive in large ocean waters, coming up every seven minutes for air. This marine mammal is the epitome of vibrant health as well as admirable intelligence. We as humans can undoubtedly glean lessons from our agile, favorite theme-park animal. According to Casiday and Frey, we need to get enough air to provide the circulation needed for the burst of energy necessary for creativity and vitality (Casiday and Frey, 2015). Our water intake is also germane to boosting our blood flow and aids the exit of toxins from our bodies.

**Enthusiasm is vehicle that drives results**



## Perspiring is inspiring

Humans, like all land mammals, need oxygen to breathe and support all our living organs. The brain, the muscle most needed to keep us up on point, is declared dead after three minutes of lack of air. Our tissues are supplied with oxygen through our blood, and our quality of blood determines how sufficiently organs and tissues receive not only other nutrients but also oxygen necessary for potent life (Klabunde, 2015). It is needless to mention that many of us work in office enclaves supplied with circulated air not necessarily the best source of life-giving oxygen. What does not help the situation is some of the cities we work in, constantly circulate combustible engine air dispelled by cars and buses. Some cities, however, are working hard to curb the poor quality of air with some, like San Francisco, encouraging carpooling, stricter emission standards, while others like Sausalito are championing traffic ordinances more favorable to bicyclists. As progressive as this sounds, the onus is on the individual to get outdoors and shower his or her famished brain and organs with their most desired "food"-- oxygen.

# A formidable team wins

Finding partners to brisk-walk with helps you make walking a habit less daunting and enjoyable.

## The elixir of breathing

It is a lame proposition to assume everyone is ecstatic about breathing fresh air and drinking eight to ten glasses of water all day while away or at the desk. If we are to borrow a page from dolphins, their surfacing for air is attended with an exuberance we don't quite fathom or possess. They do so in teams. Dolphins are constantly working in groups for the benefit of each other and others and are reported to ward off sharks in some instances. Many years ago, I fondly recall walking with a work colleague on a lunch break in the suburbs of a city in San Francisco's north bay called Novato and learning so much about him and his culture. This relationship transcended our office friendship and I came to regard him a good friend. On alternate days, I played some hoops with another colleague, who later became an excellent team member at work and was one of the groomsmen at my wedding.

## Timing is important

Walking in the morning, with a work-mate, before 10 am, is preferable when the air is crisp and free from toxins; but walking at high day is still better than not walking at all. According to Dr. Jay Portnoy, allergens are also mostly suppressed during the early hours too, even though not totally absent (Griffin, 2015). The benefits are numerous especially if the focus is not on how hard walking is. More air enters the lung chambers, and into the heart muscle, extending its reach as it pumps oxygen-rich blood throughout your entire being. A simultaneous benefit of walking is the effortless exercise that sets your entire body in motion, toning all your muscles.





## The brain needs pauses, like all other organs, to recalibrate and produce desired results

It is unwise to lift weights every single day without allowing muscles to rest and ultimately grow, then taking a pill to keep the lifting going. Muscles will eventually tear and degenerate. Unfortunately, all of us have to constantly use our brain throughout the day and only manage a few hours of sleep at night, unlike children who nap to re-ignite mental vitality; we drink coffee instead. Jenifer Soong notes that short-bursts of 20 minute napping enhance memory and motor skills (Soong, 2015). Many people are now re-discovering the benefits of the power nap. I have discovered deep breathing of a tired, over-worked brain yields to a blissful, invigorated being. The lack of sleep or rest derails our dolphin-emulation quest and turns us into irritable “sharks”. It is easy to plow

through successive tasks for uninterrupted durations that extend toward the end of day without realizing the regression in focus as well as damage to your health. Breaks are not only lawful but also inherently designed to help you maintain a high standard of excellence if wisely adhered to.

As dolphins inspire us, we must remember that they live in water, which is a vital element in keeping their skin healthy. Our bodies are mostly composed of water too. Thus a combination of water, fresh air, rest, steady diet of fruits and vegetables and exercise will not only promote our well being individually, but it will also help us become better team-mates, parents, and work-mates, helping us produce qualitative and quantitative work.

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