

Experience and Impact Of a Sleep Or Daytime Apnea Event

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In many past articles, I have discussed the impact of the jaw-tongue-throat relation to the airway (choking or partially choking on the tongue) to sleep apnea. I have discussed how the body automatically compensates to manage the throat and resulting airflow to the lungs as its first priority for maintaining life. The three compensations, identified by Farrand C. Robson, DDS and addressed in Oral Systemic Balance® therapeutics, are:

- Forward type head posture
- Fight or flight (adrenaline type) response
- Clenching or grinding of the teeth

The genetic predisposition and environment not only determine the jaw-tongue-throat compensations, they also determine the mixture of compensations and intensity of this from second-to-second and the impact of the compensating upon the body-mind-spirit from second-to-second and its long term impact upon “vital aliveness” and “dis-ease” and/or “dis-function” and what medicine refers to as chronic conditions.

Today, I will facilitate your experiencing an apnea event so you can “witness” its impact as best we are capable of at this point. I say this because many of us have progressively relegated the uninvited “fight or flight” experience and that of sensations of and in our bodies to a subconscious level, since our first experience of it as an infant.

“Distraction” or sudden “relaxation” instantly upsets the equilibrium of the compensations resulting in the tongue fully (snort or apnea event) or partially blocking the throat signaling “emergency” with rapid infusion of “fight or flight” (adrenaline type) hormones into the bloodstream. This increases breathing rate and intensity, elevated blood pressure and rapid heart beat with the accompanying “on edge feelings” that we feel driven to “diminish” or “control”.

While sitting, partially exhale, then, with your finger and thumb of one hand, pinch your nostrils together and cover your mouth so you cannot breath and attempt to inhale forcefully for at least a few seconds or as long as you can until you feel the vacuum forming within your throat, chest and abdomen area and muscles. An apnea event during sleep has been reported to last up-to and beyond three minutes. Imagine the impact of this and notice that, most likely:

- Your shoulders are pulled inwards impacting your posture (muscles and joints)
- Your chest is sucked in creating a vacuum which tends to:

- Suck the gastric juices (acids) from the stomach into the esophagus potentially leading to “acid reflux”
- Repeatedly offset the positive pressure to return blood to the heart and lungs potentially leading to “pulmonary hypertension” and “right heart failure”
- The longer we maintain this, the more we can notice the “on edge feelings” from our “fight or flight” survival response that can overload the autonomic nervous system taxing the “adrenal glands” creating imbalances in the endocrine system and all body systems.

Traditional oral appliance therapy for obstructive sleep apnea offers an opportunity of keeping the airway open during sleep and Oral Systemic Balance therapeutics addresses this in a more definitive manner to stabilize and harmonize the jaw-tongue-throat relationship round-the-clock to not merely manage symptoms but to support vital aliveness.