

Supplemental Materials for Manuscript:

Non-ordinary states of consciousness evoked by breathwork correlate with improved heart-rate variability

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Supplemental Figure S1: Most common bi-grams per participant

Supplemental Figure S2: Word clouds per participant.

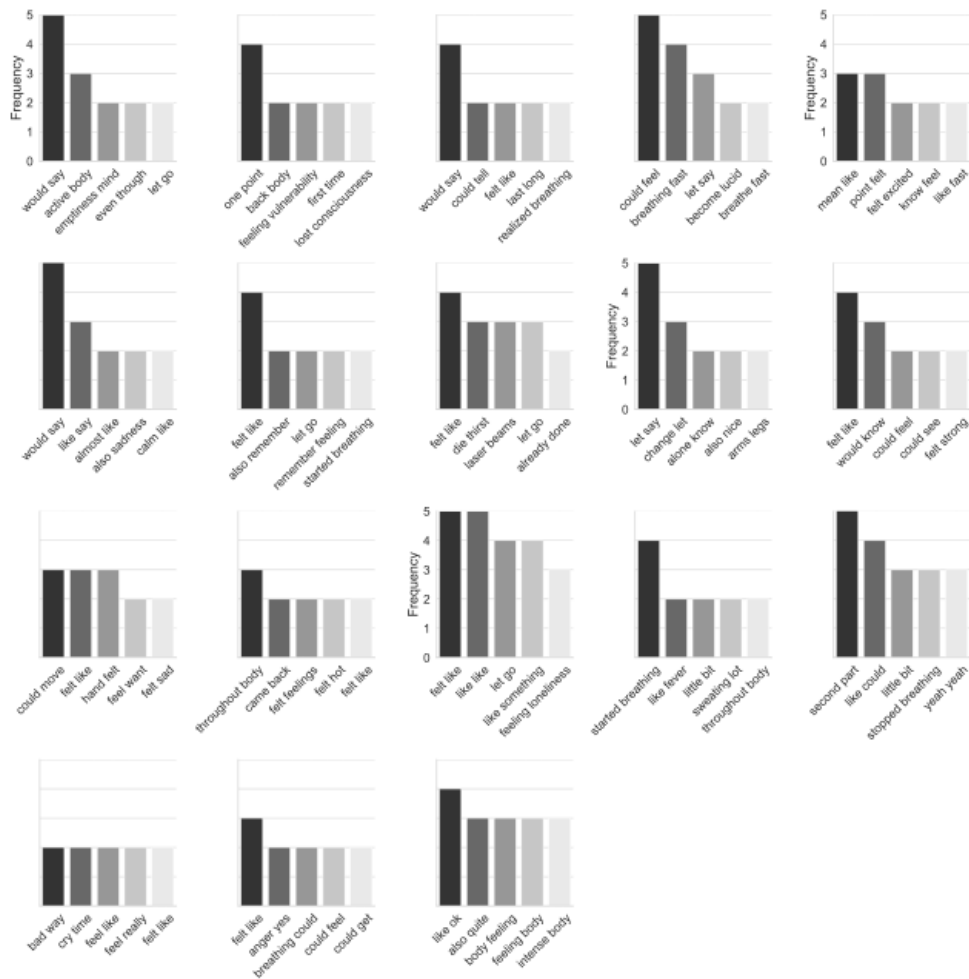
Supplemental Figure S3: NLP analysis of the emotional content of free-form reports.

Supplemental Figure S4: Unsupervised and hypothesis-driven clustering of emotional qualities yield similar structures

Supplemental Figure S5: Positive emotions are not predicted by pre-session heart-rate variability

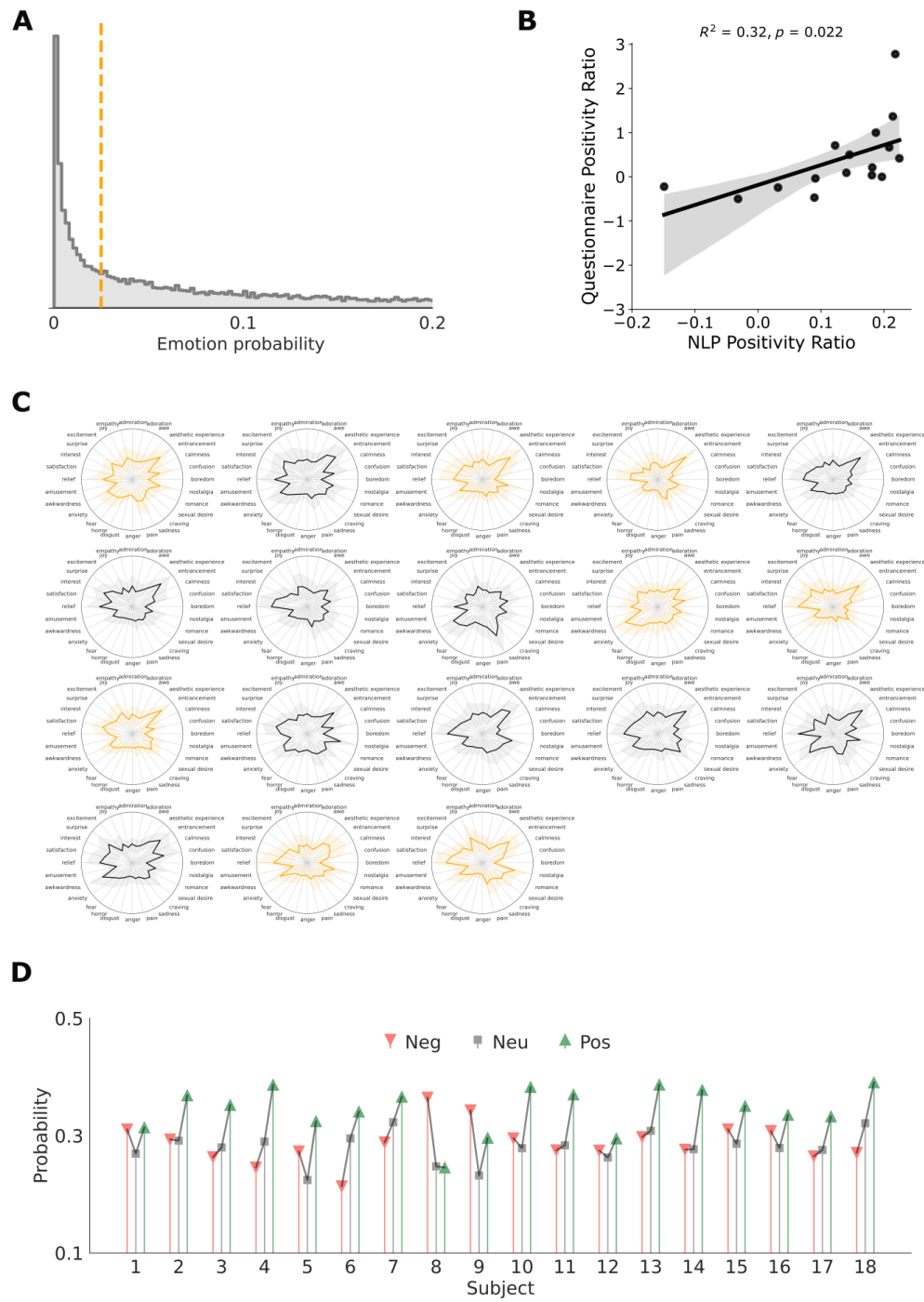
Supplemental Material S1: Raw verbal reports for 18 participants

Supplemental Figure S1: Most common bi-grams per participant



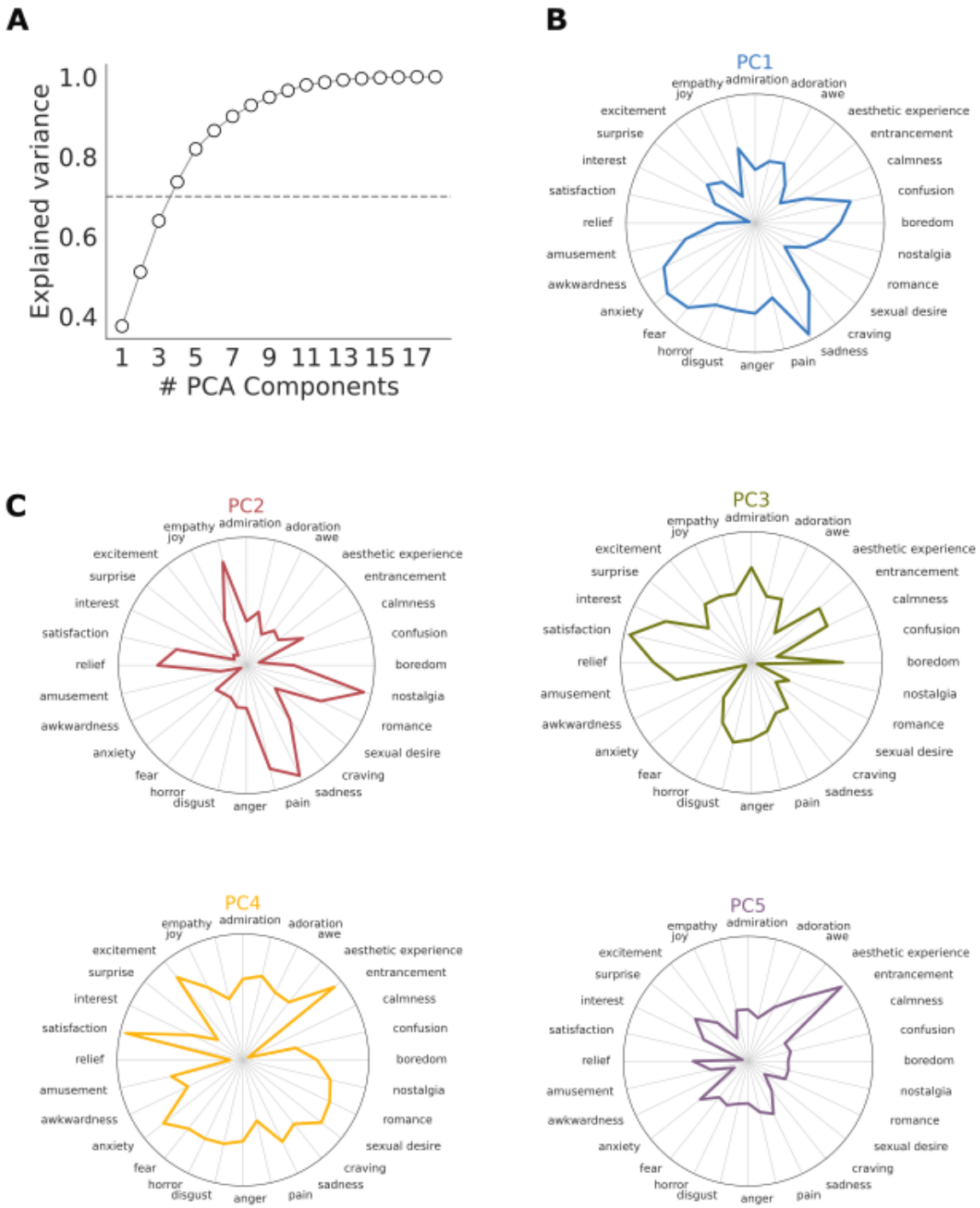
Five most common bi-grams (i.e. two-word phrases) per participant, and the absolute frequency at which they occurred. Note the common occurrence of phrases connected to concepts of interoception (e.g. "physical body," "feel body," and "body feels") and emotional catharsis (e.g. "emotional release," "deep emotions," and "feel anger").

Supplemental Figure S3: NLP analysis of the emotional content of free-form reports



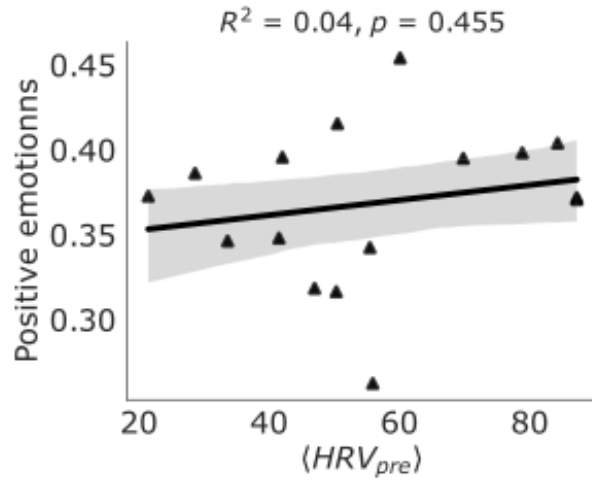
A) Distribution of emotion probabilities pooled across all subjects and all 28 emotional dimensions. The vertical dashed line indicates the elbow value we used as a cutoff to discard low-probability estimates. **B)** Correlation between the ratio of positive and negative emotions as identified with the NLP analysis of free verbal reports, and the ratio of positive and negative emotions, as computed for the 'Positive Affect' and 'Negative Affect' scores of the PCI questionnaire. Dots: Individual participants. Black line: Linear regression. Shaded area: 95% Confidence Intervals. **C)** Probability profile for 28 emotional qualities per subject. Yellow: Subjects in the Music condition. Grey: Subjects in the No-Music condition. **D)** Probability of emotions classified as having positive (green), negative (red) and neutral (yellow) valence (y-axis), per subject (x-axis).

Supplemental Figure S4: Unsupervised and hypothesis-driven clustering of emotional qualities yield similar structures



A) variance explained by different numbers of components in a principal component analysis (PCA). We chose to use five components based on a simple cut-off criterion of 70% of variance explained. Note that the amount of explained variance also plateaus with larger numbers of components. **B)** Probability profile of the first principal component, showing predictive weights for all 28 emotional qualities. **C)** Same as B for the other four principal components.

Supplemental Figure S5: Positive emotions are not predicted by pre-session heart-rate variability



Correlation between pre-session HRV and the proportion of emotions with positive valence experienced throughout the session. Triangles: Individual participants. Black line: Linear regression. Shaded area: 95% Confidence Intervals. We found no significant relation between baseline HRV and positive emotional experiences during the breathwork session.

Supplemental Material S1: Verbal reports from 18 participants

Participant 1

"I remember leaning a lot on your breath in the beginning. I remember that it had been an important guide... I also remember some effort in the beginning... I felt some tension, but then everything was very smooth even relaxing overall... Now I feel very relaxed... Yes, it was an intriguing experience... I don't know I feel I would like to do it again and go deeper.

Yes, but it was short-lived. I felt a certain resistance to the fast pace. Like a certain stress also. But again, it didn't last long, after a while it was very smooth, and the feeling you gave me in the rhythm helped me a lot.

I would localize it at the level of the shoulder joint, now that I think about it it all started with a kind of burning, unpleasant sensation localized there.

Yes, shortly after I started breathing quite violently, violently I felt pain in my shoulders and some discomfort from the exercise. Then I remembered what you had told me, to explore the body sensations and not to inhibit myself. So I started listening to your breath and focusing on that. After a while, if you remember I started to move my shoulders.

Well moving and continuing to breathe following you made all my thoughts disappear... I mean, I started to focus only on the breath and the exercise became very intense. I began to feel very strongly about some parts of my body, such as my face, hands, and legs. Without realizing it I had formed an "O" with my lips and could no longer move my fingers. At some point, I realized it, which was also when I gathered my legs closer to my chest. At that point, I paused breathing and was surprised at how my body felt.

Because a moment before-or what felt like a moment before-I was, as I was telling you this morning, very down in the dumps, feeling dejected and without motivation. At that moment, however, just breathing, I felt a completely different way. I felt like another creature, and very strong strange energy was running through my body.

Strange because I don't think I felt like that before. That is, I felt a powerful energy but at the same time an energy that could not be used to move, think or dream... It was an energy that I felt in my body... It was pleasant.

As I was telling you I was surprised at the effects of the breathing on me and I gathered myself for a moment, folded my legs and opened my arms, spread my chest (AB mimics this gesture), and listened to the sensations in my body.

After a while, I started breathing again, almost without realizing it. I continued to breathe quickly and intensely. I started to have images of water and rock... Like I was climbing a mountain while

it was raining. That is, I didn't feel that I was climbing, but just. Flying. No, not really, floating or levitating going against the rain. Then I remember having a feeling of dread, dread perhaps of reaching the top. But it was not rational. At that point, I saw a cave in front of me and I took refuge there.

I remember that almost toward the end you curled up on one side, in a fetal position. When I got to the cave, I crouched down. And there I kept breathing.

That's right when I then felt your hand on my back I let go. I felt like a weight leaving my back and I relaxed a little bit.

I especially remember that when you touched me I felt my back relax, and a kind of draught caressing me. Was there?

It was warm, it was a soothing feeling.

Then I remember feeling wrapped in a warm blanket--maybe you had put it on me--and then--then I think I went into a kind of dream. I don't remember very well, though. I remember the colors, they ranged from bordered red to black... I also remember some images. There were like shells, spirals--you know a Max Ernst painting? Similar but with movement.

Maybe after a while, I sank into a kind of sleep... Until I heard your voice telling me the session was over.

Good. Very good. Like after doing sports even more. I don't know I would tell you clean. I feel light inside. I don't feel excited and enthusiastic that's not it. I feel very present. Maybe a little tiredness in the muscles... I want to deepen this practice, I feel I could have some benefit.

Well because it was very easy for me not to think like that. I mean meditating has always been very difficult for me. But so it was stronger than me. I also feel that because it was my first time, I focused very much on the exercise itself. On the breath and I didn't let go completely. Now I think I have a better understanding of how it works and that I could explore this technique to understand things about myself. Maybe even to solve them.

Well if nothing else I feel much better than before. I feel better in my body and I feel that I no longer have unpleasant thoughts bothering me. I wouldn't know how long it can last, however, I would like to explore it."

Participant 2

Yes, at first I got off to a fast start. As you saw I had decided to breathe fast to make sure I got into the swing of it, I wanted to see what it had to show me.

Well, on the one hand, there was a desire to go along with it... To do the exercise well. On the other there was also the curiosity of wanting to go all the way, not to miss the opportunity to try something. But then I didn't keep the pace up for long.

Eh at that point I felt that everything had changed... I don't know how to explain but the perception was different. I could feel my body vibrating and pulsating while the images and thoughts haphazardly followed one another... And yes, after that I slowed down the pace as you saw. But I couldn't tell you why, it happened quite automatically. Like a kind of short-circuiting of the will to use nice big words. It was like my body and my thinking got stuck together. I mean I don't know how to tell you -- it was as if at first I was the one who decided to breathe fast, I was saying to myself "faster faster faster!" then all of a sudden that voice disappeared and what was left was a whirlwind of intense sensations and confused thoughts. Then the breath formed, without my deciding it.

Yes, I remember being in that somewhat confused, sleep-like state for a while... Then slowly the thinking calmed down and I was listening to the bodily sensations, which were surprising and pleasant.

Well, let's say I was surprised that I could feel these sensations just by breathing... It was like a tingling... But not exactly, like I felt my body all electrified... I also felt my skin a lot more I think... Whatever, it was weird.

Yes, but not in the sense that I was thinking about it more... it was like I felt it moving (describes circles with hands around and over my chest and belly)... Yes vibrating a little bit! Well, the fact of the matter is that I realized I was feeling these things and then instinctively I started breathing fast again.

Yes! At some point ... The breathing was doing on its own, maybe it was you influencing me but I couldn't say for sure. I could feel my hands closing, and all of a sudden I couldn't feel them anymore! At that point, there was no control. I could smell it very strongly, but it was like it wasn't mine anymore... To say that I still feel it, is crazy!

But it's hard to explain... In the sense that it wasn't like at the beginning where I would decide, I don't know if you can explain, to breathe. It was more like the breath was going through me, I didn't control it anymore. I mean, first I could no longer feel my hands, then my whole body in my head became a kind of indistinct luminous cloud. I couldn't feel my feet maybe even my legs well anymore... At one point the only thing I thought about was the smell. At that moment I knew it was my own and I could smell it so intense! It was so strange to me. An intense impression, a pungent smell... It wasn't sweating. Maybe it was. I don't know, I couldn't describe it now.

After that, I felt a strong vibration in the back of my head and I had a vision of a flash and I said, enough! I mean a part of me wanted to keep breathing so fast but suddenly it's like my body decided to stop. I wouldn't tell you that I was afraid... Maybe excitement, but at the same time fear yes. Kind of like when a dream starts to become lucid you know? It starts to become lucid and you get so excited that you wake up. I mean after that flash I stopped breathing I guess.

Yes in short I stopped breathing so fast.

Yes, I remember. At that moment I wasn't thinking about anything. I had no images or anything.

Total blackout. I mean I was still conscious... There were moments of the silence of the mind, though. Only the luminous cloud of the body remained, which slowly stopped vibrating and came back to describing--my body in short.

Well, it was as if I was calming down... And at the same time so I was resuming a more normal perception of my body.

Then the seat was very relaxing. The process became much more conscious after that maximum moment... At that point, I spent the session exploring my body.

No, I would say no-I was present to myself... To my body. I remember now and then I would remember the breathing thing and I would start breathing fast again for a while. But it was short-lived. Let's say I then went through the session restfully. I was relaxed but awake, wide awake. I stayed within myself and few thoughts disturbed me.

Maybe toward the end, I started to return to a state of drowsiness... A few images came back, and a few thoughts. But let's say it was also my intention to stay in a meditative state. Then I felt the body like after a run... I mean not really.. Like it had some pleasure in resting a little bit. That I think helped the meditation. But. No nothing so far.

Well, I feel relaxed and alert... I feel my mind clear. I feel much less foggy than when I woke up.

Participant 3

At first, I felt that I was moving into a kind of deeper space and there was something that I couldn't feel, but I was getting closer to a feeling of despair and loneliness, because recently I've been having some changes, some difficulties in my relationship, and yes, there was a constant having to rely on me because of these problems, you know, with my partner, and a lot of these things have been going on and I think that was the kind of feeling that I've been having to endure for the last few weeks. And I think I felt it at the beginning of the breathing, but I couldn't reach it, and

then it became more intense, and then yes, I had a release from these oppressive things that I was quite worried about, especially sadness, anger...

And then yes, the feeling was intense, it was really strong. I felt very relieved when I was in it when it was more intense, and, yes, I was able to let it go, and then there was another wave of intense emotion that was very different, it was rather... a different thing, going on in the last few weeks, it was a more social, field where I had a kind of awakened feeling, when before I felt very lonely. And there was a moment in the breath when I had several visions of people I had met recently, very pleasant encounters, some people I didn't know, some people I had known for a long time, and a new feeling arose in me, a feeling of gratitude and joy, yes.

Yes. It was just the second thing where I could see that. So it was a contrast because at the beginning I was very heavy and at the end, I was relieved and in a way happy, whereas at the beginning I was not at all, because of these relationships. Because of all these visions of people I cared about, I was able to recognize all these faces, I was able to access all these feelings of a greater intensity.

I felt this moment of sadness intensifying, I felt the breathing taking me deeper and deeper, taking me there, I think there was something I needed to see. This feeling of being lost in despair, I think I couldn't get into it before, and then through breathing, I could get there and just feel it, experience it.

Yes, exactly, I could let go of the sadness, and all these memories with people, and then I started to feel very good, very connected.

I felt like there were a lot of things that I wanted to appreciate more when they happened, but I couldn't because I felt like there was some kind of hedonic block that prevented me from feeling gratitude.

Actually, you know, I was doing some things that I wanted to do while I felt that I needed to feel heavier in those moments... To feel more. I thought in those moments that I should be happier because there were exactly the places and people I wanted to be with... But I couldn't feel it -- because I was, I guess, depressed. And now, you know, in the wave of gratitude I can feel what was impossible to feel before. I think it's because I let those feelings of despair be fully expressed, let me explore them deeply, and now I can feel the gratitude that I couldn't reach in those moments.

A little bit of anger? Yes, a little bit, yes. I think that is also related to the problem that was causing the underlying negative emotions, anger that I had to be in this bad situation because of someone who put me there.

At first, I had pain in my hand, I felt like I couldn't move it, and I was asking myself, "Is it like this all the time? Or am I tense or is there just a little pain there?" But it was only in the beginning and then I just had some tingling. In the first part, I felt quite heavy in my body. But it wasn't annoying,

it was part of the feeling, especially in the chest, but also in the rest of the body. In the second part, I felt lighter.

Yes, almost from the beginning. Already when I felt the pain in my hands it was automatic, I would say. Yes, it was very intuitive. And at the end, when I woke up, I was really surprised to realize how much my body was affected. For example, I couldn't move my left foot for a while, but it wasn't unpleasant, it was like waking up from a state of unconsciousness. Before I only felt dizziness and tingling, but I almost stopped feeling them during the heart of the session. It was a very internal, introspective journey, I never thought about moving ...

Participant 4

It was as if I would turn on and turn off again.... Like I lost consciousness somehow dissolving a little bit and then coming back because of body sensations. It was very interesting, for example my feet were really numb at one point. So I was plunging into nothingness, dissolving myself, and these sensations in my feet were bringing me back to my body in the here and now. So I was in this sort of state of here, here, there, which was also very disorienting at one point, so much so that I didn't even know what was here and what was there, and I was in this state of heightened awareness and total dissolution of consciousness. There were also images, but nothing really clear. When I was more aware and tried to fix these images, they would stop, the attempt to observe would pull me away from the observation. And then there was this crying, I cried a lot, which was related to this feeling of vulnerability, of fragility, but then this feeling changed. Before there was a lot of pain, but then the crying changed and it was no longer the same feeling of vulnerability, it was more hierarchical. And that was very interesting for me, because in those years I was on a path of embracing vulnerability but also trusting it, it was a cry very different from all the others I knew.

Yes, I think I lost consciousness completely. In the transition between being conscious and dissolving into the feeling, first I was completely immersed in the feeling and then I think I passed out, disappeared for a few moments.

The first time was scary because I was beyond that point where I realized there was no return and I was "woo ok," just for a moment. But then it was really very . How do you say? It was really very good, I was -- looking at the unity outside of myself at one point. Because I was dissolving, there were some moments when I couldn't feel my body at all. There was just darkness, religiosity, there was not even a point of consciousness. And silence. I would go back to music just for a moment and then back to dissolution. But it was not empty darkness at all, it was.... A very detailed, very ecstatic, very fulfilling feeling, a very rich darkness. And somehow powerful, I felt a power that went beyond my boundaries. It was a very different feeling, like that of a lion sleeping in a cave. So, I was still in this darkness and I felt a sleeping power, after the first time I was not afraid anymore.

Yes, there were several stages like this and then the first cry, then again, some stages like this and then I started crying again.

I had some images of people I cared about.... But soon after the beginning was challenged by a voice saying, "Why are you crying? Are you just being used by your easy accessibility to this fragile feeling?" and then I felt somehow distant from the emotions my body was feeling. I somehow felt a sensation between one part of me observing what was happening to my body and this other part of me actually feeling the body. Somehow it felt strange that I was crying. But it happened by focusing on my feet, on the cramps in my feet, at which point my body started to cry.

No, the second time there was not the same thing, the second time it was just crying. And the second one started after I stopped breathing in a connected way. The first one started out of fear, a kind of existential fear. Fear of getting lost, of floating in this adult version of myself, of finding my way to anything. I do it every day and it's fine, but then I feel that I connected with a part of me that is still very childlike and might be overwhelmed by this pressure, at which point it started as a childish sobbing, but then I realized "no, actually I'm fine," and it felt comfortable to cry. It felt good to cry, I liked it, it was no longer a desperate cry. Yes, the second one was more like that, it was a comfortable crying, I feel that the two parts of myself were at peace at that moment.

After the second cry I rested in a kind of dreamlike state.... Anyway, the second cry started in one of these transitional moments, when I came back from the darkness I experienced a memory, very briefly, and strongly the feeling of it. And right after the images associated with the memory flew away I started to cry.

However afterwards it was very relaxing, it was very nice thank you. At one point it was really energizing. But especially your touch was very important to feel a presence with me. I felt so safe that I didn't have to think, I took it as a helpful presence.

Participant 5

I remember not having difficulty sustaining the pace at first, in fact, I always followed your breathing and coordinated with it. I remember sweating a lot in the beginning, in fact, this Christmas season I overdid the drinking and eating, without being too much in line with my body.

Yes after a while I also felt resistance, and that the exercise required a lot of effort from me. After a time that I couldn't quantify I stopped feeling fatigued and resistant. Like when you go running, it's hard at first but then it becomes almost automatic.

In that part, I also remember moving a lot, agitated almost like when I had a fever. After a certain point, it was as if I calmed down, started breathing more slowly, and went into a state of drowsiness.

I don't remember precise images, but rather colors, purple and black. Colors that I also see these after doing breathing exercises in yoga, or after holding a high note with the trumpet. I remember having a moment of emptiness, of which I remember nothing. After that, I started breathing again and felt invigorated with new energy.

Yes, shortly after that there was perhaps the moment of maximum intentionality when I felt some electrostatic energy throughout my body.

I don't know, I felt energized as I told you, and tingling a little bit under the skin. But also a little bit on top of it. It was as if the air around me vibrated merging with my skin. I felt especially strong in my forearms and upper legs, close to my pelvis. Behind my eyelids, I could see yellow, red, and green static.

For this part? Well, more than emotions were personal feelings...

As I told you at the beginning I felt unpleasant feelings, of fatigue and nervousness. I had resistance and was sweating a lot... Then I remember absenting myself and being in quite a confused state, like when you have a fever. After that, I started breathing more intensely again, and there I felt all this energy in the channels of the body

Well at that point they were gone, I wasn't thinking about anything, and as I told you I was just seeing colors...

No actually no, maybe only at the beginning I thought of some expletives... But you know, I've always done yoga and it was easy for me to focus on the breath.

Yes at one point I was no longer conscious, but I would say that I could always feel my breath... Then when I started breathing fast and feeling those electrostatic sensations I had maybe some words scattered in my head... But it was as if the thought was not fast enough to describe what I was feeling... I was much more into the sensations anyway. Very relaxed, like after doing two or three hours of exercise. Then you know. During this period I also had some problems with (his girlfriend's name), and I have like a feeling that I sweated out some resentment and confusion. Now I have clearer ideas, or if nothing else I feel calmer, ready to think about it more.

The body feels quite tired, especially the rib cage. but relaxed. The mind is clearer. I think I'll take it easy today!

..No, Ah! maybe as a musician, I would talk to you about the sound.

Well the sound of breathing, first yours then mine... It invaded my head, maybe that's why I didn't think too much. The intense, regular breathing was really strong, and I could hear the sound throughout my body. I think it helped me a lot to disconnect from the thoughts, and not to follow them in confusion in short.

Participant 6

Wow. Yes now I'm back, I had left in a dream.

From the beginning? Sure. As soon as I started breathing I felt I was in a very intimate situation, because of the darkness, the darkness. But it was a good feeling to be immersed in the black, good idea the eye mask. In this black cradle I followed the rhythm you suggested and immediately began to breathe intensely. The breaths were very short and fast ... and if at first I had some confused thoughts coming to my mind ...

yes some jumbled words I was thinking about, but now I couldn't tell you what exactly? Anyway, shortly after that the breathing got faster and I started to stop having thoughts.... I mean it was like they were too fast.... I mean. Like if they were fast but understandable before then they became faster and faster and almost meaningless. And then I heard like a scream, like what I described to you, that I hear before I go into a lucid dream and I found myself again in a place that I don't know if I feel like talking about..

And I felt it my heart was beating very fast, however, your presence reassured me and I sank into another place again, just like I was falling with my whole body

the body had started to become very intense, and I felt the sensations. The sensations were very strong, like burning. I remember that my hands (she makes the gesture of closing her fingers and bringing them close to her face, a typical gesture due to hyperventilation, with her elbows bent), which rose without me being able to control them. My face had also become kind of paralyzed (laughs in disbelief), and it was as if I felt my hands almost burning, cio kind of that burning sensation you also have when you touch ice. The scream was not really a scream. But a high-pitched sound, almost a pop -- and it was accompanied by a flash of green-yellow light. It was kind of. Kind of like I wanted to throw that scream, and for a moment I thought I did that... but I didn't right?

Okay thank you, you were very precise. Now instead let's continue from the moment of the feeling of falling? What was that feeling like?

Well first of all I have to say that as a sensation it was very pleasant. I mean it's like I didn't want to stay with that so much. That panic that I had come to that my spirit transported itself elsewhere. And in that moment I felt very light. And as I was falling I started to breathe again and I felt almost catapulted into a tunnel, and the more I breathed the faster I fell... In fact after a while I was no longer falling but flying into this tunnel.

The tunnel-at first it was black and very wide. The more I breathed the narrower and more colorful it became. From black it became almost multicolored, then white. At first I was relieved, however, the feeling of fear and agitation remained for a while. Then I said to myself, well I want to see where it takes me! At that point I felt excited and raised my arms (mimicking the movement by bringing my hands toward the ceiling). The constricted feeling I had at my fingers was not gone

however I felt as if there was air around my hands... and also around my face! At that point I felt excited and curious. At some point I felt the excitement rising until I found myself surrounded by the white-yellow. It was like very bright and shiny. At that point I think I slowed my breathing and remembered where I was and you. Then for a moment I thought about speeding up with the breath again. But I stopped and all of a sudden I felt strange -- almost a little sad (pause).

Yes I think so.. But it wasn't really sadness.. It was like I suddenly had tears in my eyes, although I didn't really know why. I felt very fragile, but it wasn't that is, negative. It was almost emotion, and all of a sudden I found myself thinking how sometimes I run away from really important situations?

I don't know? It was a feeling of fragility I guess, I felt in a very strong way and I also thought about (mentions his ex-partner) and (mentions other friends) and I felt like crying? I feel that many times I was absent when I could have been there.

Yes and then you took my hand.

yes after those tears I stayed inside that room all bright, slowly it turned reddish and I slowly slipped into a more relaxed or confused state.... I remember having images and thoughts but I didn't fix them in my memory.... I think I fell asleep until you called me.

Hmm well. Good! (laughs). It was a good adventure, I feel rested but at the same time tired.... I don't think I will go out tonight.

Better, I think calmer. Actually at the beginning I was maybe agitated, I don't know. But now I feel better and I also think I've learned a lesson, yes.

But to try to be more present, not to let the past lead me to be absent as it has already happened?

Mmm no, no I guess not. Thank you! I would like to try again.

Participant 7

I remember in terms of the process that I stretched if I did this breathing that I didn't know the breath in out continuously you giving away the rhythm of the music underneath, one thing that surprised me a lot is that after a while I couldn't keep my lips taut, they were practically under my teeth. I remember at first my face was contracted.

Then I went into a state of relaxing into meditation in a way even though I was still more alert than I would be in a meditation when I'm doing it for myself, also because I was in an unfamiliar context. We were together doing something new.

I wasn't vigilant. After this first phase, I entered a somewhat dreamlike phase of ordinary consciousness.

The most impressive thing was the lips, and I remember feeling in a particular way the arms as well.... is something with my hands that maybe at first I felt a little heavier and tingling... Then some tingling around the body, as well as also something in the chest in the breathing more intense than it would be if I were sleeping. I had heard, speaking in energetic terms of the concentration of energy at the sternum at the level of the fourth chakra. There in the middle then after this one here would radiate to my body, like warmth, a radiated warmth.

I would say it was good because I found it good to do the exercise I found it interesting, as well as that is on a theoretical practical level as well as experienced. Then with you, I felt good, you gave me confidence, so positive at the end for sure. Then there were more stressful moments ... yes anyway on the level of physical exertion, it was challenging. However, this breathing was so frequent I would not say it was stressful I would say it was more maybe an annoyance because it is something I did not know my body we were struggling with.

No, I would say there were various waves of intensity. It was not constant if there was a peak after we started after a while getting the hang of it...I don't remember one peak and then a distinction this march various intensities various degrees various times. Even with respect to my consciousness I mean it went and came back, it followed the body.

It wasn't there, I don't remember it as one of those moments when you try to meditate you can't because of too many thoughts so yes, I think I had succeeded well in abandoning myself

Afterwards, I was intrigued and I would have liked to explore this thing and try to do it again if that goes well we didn't get a chance to meet afterward to do it again. It's something I don't know I read it by the way after I read a book by Grof in which he talked about breathwork and everything else in this that then also another issue. Specifically, I was intrigued by the comparison the meditation pass me the more classical term that is which if the room the breathwork lengthens and remains that it is much easier to lose, the boundaries of one's self if we want these terms here in the sense that it is easier to go into sleep rather than dream or to remain in thought. Whereas here it's a form that while still maintaining a constant activity maintains a somewhat more active level of consciousness at least this has been my experience that is it keeps you more into the situation even though then with us we had the shamanic drums I had it with the chest behind my head tense and so there was really a journey in that's what I like that having to maintain an activity of the body also maintains an activity of consciousness more easily than in classical meditation in which you let go and after a while you let go everything dissolves, here the body remains present in the sense that it seems to me to be an imposing shortcut, for meditations like vipassana, in which you do emptiness in the mind it seems to me that it takes many more years of practice and much more perseverance to be able to maintain a certain vigilance. .. not activity of control but presence within that state compared to that already the active body i.e. being the

active body it is easier for you to stay there even if you can dissociate so always I stayed with the active body however doing the emptiness in the mind..

What I mean is I see a difference in the level of presence in the sense that the "I," and I call it in analytical terms, if I give it to you in other terms with another experience to make it a little bit better maybe what I mean: levels of dissolution in which the "I" is no longer there, if kind of dream in which you go you don't know that you are simply there. For example, when you are in deep sleep thing like that I am not there, and I have no thoughts or images. Whereas in this experience I felt that although I remained conscious, my self was not my ordinary self... It was a more etheric self, call it a subtle body or whatever...

It remained the center, that I would say. That is, it was going into other realms of consciousness maintaining a connection with my consciousness my personal as well as the more expanded self that I can't get to understand all of... so actually there was a level of dissociation, but not total. I had lost a more superficial self, but I had remained present, and that more superficial part of me then went into free association... Images, words, and memories of the past, but nothing definite or important. However, the intenseness of the body didn't allow me to give it too much attention,...

As I was saying before with warmth here you don't have it yes at first more energetic because there was a discharge of energy in my body given by this more frequent breathing and after that this energy felt as if concentrating at that point there but also related to the diaphragm they keep doing it and then it spread like when you do workout and you feel the endorphin spinning come to the sense so it was warm energy more relaxing.. but actively I get a lot of seeing it in bioenergetic mode, as a set of contractions for tensions I was doing work that required certain activation. Then when I took the flow, when it activated in that mode there, it started to be able to relax fractionally so it spread this thing here that allowed even if it kept the diaphragmatic muscle activity that keeps going up and down to be the body relaxed like it was going into the sleep mode. Like it was autogenic training in that sense of a similar feeling...

Participant 8

and it was vibrating so much that I couldn't move my hands I brought a lot of attention to this feeling in my chest, this blockage that I seem to have for sometime.

I became more aware of it and it brought more awareness to this part of my body in terms of the blockage and where there is energy, how it feels breaking, how I feel the weight, it's heavy day by day, like wherever I feel in my body like it's super heavy like it's a weight. day by day, everywhere I feel in my body, it's in my chest, it's super heavy, it's like a weight, I have a hard time taking a deep breath, I always want to take a deep breath, but I can never do it properly, so I identified it, but this was really and brought a lot of attention and concentration, especially on

this part, like this special zone, and it was all very clear. this special area was all focused and that's why I started to get emotional, I was just aware of it, like, I could feel it and all my attention was brought to that area, which I know has to do with the pain and sadness that I have... oh yeah, and the breath turned into a wave of emotion. it turned into a wave of emotions and I was like I wanted to breathe, but also resist... and sometimes, once or twice, I stopped breathing and it felt very good... and then, in terms of music, at first I wasn't paying attention to the music, I was paying attention to the breathing, whereas then, once the breathing turned into a kind of trance, I started to breathe and breathe. Then, once the breathing got to the middle, I focused on the music and heard the sound, it took me to a completely different place: I was in this space of emptiness, there was nothing here, it was emptiness and I saw myself lying here with the shape of my eyes, but then I also saw my face.

In this space my face appeared and also this big purple ball that I didn't know what was in front of you, no, it was there and my face was there, but they were not there, they were there at the same time, but they were not there, but I kept seeing this big purple ball.

I also saw your face, okay, so it was like it was a face but it didn't appear at all, like something clear that I could see, like now I could imagine your face and it wasn't the same, you know, completely different, okay, and then I was thinking a lot even in the second part, yeah, and I was thinking and I was aware that I was thinking and it was like I could let go and go into this thing completely... But sometimes yes, I did for a few seconds where I was completely absent and forgot who I was and where I was and then it took a little touch to bring me back to where I am. I felt that it created a different space outside of that, like the second part; so, all this second part happened after the crying, yeah, okay, so when the music was calmer and more like a big breath, yeah, yeah, and going back to the first part... every time I took psychedelic substances, all I feel is an extreme heaviness on my chest...

Yeah, and so at that moment it was accentuated the effort of breathing, which was more noticeable, yeah... it was also like absorbing so much energy that normally goes through me, it was like stuck here, like trapped. It was just a feeling, I wasn't thinking about anything, I wasn't going anywhere, I wasn't sad or worried about anything... and so even the crying was like a body reaction to that... yeah... yeah... I wasn't going to do it or get it out completely... I needed to get it out... yeah... even then I think I held it back... you know... Yeah, yeah, I've had this feeling for a while, but it's already come -- I don't know, it's just something like I don't know, like a stone, yeah, something small, where there's this sort of condensed pain, sort of stone. And I think I just felt it and then with my mind I associated it with childhood traumas, past pains that I let go of, and then it made me aware of how much I'm still holding on to them.

I think that doing the breathing helped alleviate it a little bit, in a way it's like doing the breathing and releasing a little bit, you know.

No, it was a wave, a type of wave, and then yes, I felt it less, but I still felt it... yes, the second part was like I was somewhere else, less connected to this feeling in my chest... first of all, it started very powerfully in my chair and then it decided to calm down, I cried, and it then decided to come

down as the tingling subsided a little bit and then I focused on the music and then I went somewhere else... now that you are back in your body, do you still feel the sadness of this stone...

Yes, I think there was a spike in intensity, it started in a very physical way and then it became not physical, but mental or imaginative, and the point of highest intensity tension is when I cried. At one point I experienced this feeling, I think I experienced it three times, of panic, because I felt like I couldn't breathe and it was very difficult for a couple of seconds, but it was very similar to what happened after the crying, it was like a very uncomfortable and scary couple of seconds, like the hot feeling and not being able to breathe and how it's really hard, but then it happened, okay, yeah...

At some point in the first part, I stopped breathing, stopped forcing myself to breathe like that and it was nice.

It was a nice feeling every time I held the full after the inhalation -- but also after the exhalation. But then, like after the crying, there was the whole second part where I stopped breathing, and that part would be said to be more pleasant.

I could have breathed heavier to induce more awareness, but yes, the second part was very pleasant, I enjoyed it and wanted to go back to it.

Perhaps, not being familiar with the process, I wasn't sure how much I should breathe or how hard I should breathe.

Participant 9

At first, I was a little afraid, and I asked you to hold my hand. Because ... I couldn't move my hands, I couldn't move my extremities. I couldn't move them and I was a little afraid. I mean, I know this can happen, physiologically, but I was still a little scared. Then you gave me your hand and I felt you and I was able to move a little bit. Then I began to feel strong dizziness and a kind of thickness in my body, especially at first in the upper part of my body and later in the... Yes. And for a long time that was the main thing I felt. Usually, when I stopped breathing it was not because I was afraid of something, but because I was tired, I needed to stop for a while. So, for a long time, it was like that. Then I felt that the boundaries between me and other things in the room were ... thinner.

Yes, I felt like my body was expanding toward the rest of the room, you know? Then I felt like I was losing the weight that I was carrying.

I felt like I was losing weight, like when you're carrying bags and then you're -- you're dropping your bags. And then I felt sad and I started crying... And I think I was very sad because I understood

... my pain. I finally understood my pain. How do you anesthetize yourself for the pain that you feel every day that you don't understand? Here. I felt it and then I felt sad. And then, after I cried, I felt a lot of compassion for myself. Like I put my body on my heart saying, "You're okay, you're fine, you deserve a lot of love."

Yes ... I felt compassion and ... hunger! I feel that now I want to eat the whole world! (laughs) Because I was starving, I was eating small amounts of food these days because I didn't ... I realized that I needed foods that I needed. I was just doing things and thinking and not feeling... I wasn't trying to understand my needs. Even the basic needs, like eating. So, I was just eating because I had to eat, and you know? Yes, I feel that I want to eat (laughs), and I want to taste the food! It's really -- it's a funny thing, you know? I just noticed it now (laughs).

Now that I think about it, I think it was your touch. It was nice, I always felt comfortable and I felt it helped me. On the one hand, I felt safer, on the other hand, I felt you were helping me to go deeper.

I just wanted to say thank you! That was nice. No, because this was really... Like, you know, the things that you study, that you read, and you listen to people talk about these kinds of experiences, and even if you have some psychedelic experience... It's nice, okay, but it's like what people tell and you don't have a direct experience. You know, I've had some psychedelic experiences and it's fine, it's nice, I've experienced some beautiful things, but it wasn't like what they tell about mystical experiences and all that. And it's amazing to learn that without any substance such an experience can be had!

Participant 10

Now it's quite an effort to remember... What first happened. I remember that it was good that you were also breathing at the beginning so I could have the phasing. I remember it was also quite an effort at the beginning. Now I think I'm missing some memories of that.

Then, I remember.. I can't say the right order. I remember that then the breathing was happening quite automatically, I stopped thinking about that and the breath was just going on its own. But.. I don't know I really have some problem remembering.. Everything it's quite gone.

I remember like spots, specific things, but not continuous moments one after the other. But I know that I was having a good sense of time when it happened.

Yeah, In the exact moment everything was so clear but now it isn't clear anymore. And yeah I know there was some.. I think there was some crumping and pain in the belly, around the ribs. I remember the contractions, and I know that from other experiences and body-centered

psychotherapy. So yes, I know it also from other experiences that there could be those pain spots, I don't know, sometimes are activated. I didn't have any emotions with it, it was mainly the body doing it, I think then it turned more into.. Yes it turned less bodily, I also stopped the breathing. And.. yes I think I was more..

Yeah, and yes when there were the movements. The movements arrived. Like I started shaking a lot. And then there was a moment of relaxation, for a moment I was really relaxed. And then I started breathing again and then also there was this turning to the side, I remember this happening. And then there was this moment.. I remember my body was crying.. hard. But my emotions weren't that intense.

Yeah I was feeling my body was moving or shaking as I was crying really hard, like intensely. But there were almost no tears. And the emotion wasn't that intense. So it was more the body doing it.

No, it was not physical pain. It was more... More... It felt more like a reflex like when you hit the knee and the knee goes "click" (Johannes is miming the knee jerk with his hands). There were some pain, but not so heavy, not so hard. The pain was more the contractions, and I felt quite relaxed.

I wouldn't say I was really distant. I was involved in a way. I was somehow with it. I was like: ok this is happening, and I was feeling how my body was feeling. It wasn't like I was gone, I did know how my body was feeling, what the sensations and emotions were.. And I checked how sad I am.. And ok I was a bit sad, but it wasn't this super intense, and there was a little pain but it wasn't super intense. And the body was reacting really more than I was feeling.

Mmhh.. That I was really ok with it, like I was not... Like I was really ok. Actually I was quite relaxed.. Ah, I don't know it's really hard to put in words. It's somehow like the emotional intensity it wasn't so sad it was more like: ok I feel embodied, I feel grounded, but I don't feel the emotional sadness.

Heaviness, mostly in the chest, in the belly, heaviness in the throat, heaviness around the eye..

No I wouldn't say they were absent, maybe they weren't so intense. Maybe it was also like I wasn't so identified or attached with them, identified with them.

At that time.. It was more feeling my body, like noticing what was going on. A bit distant, like I was witnessing myself experiencing this.. But not in a cold distant way but more in a compassionate way.. But also, I was quite focused, I was more like noticing what was going on: "ok now I'm moving like this, this is happening" and to my mind... Of course, I was also thinking ok what is.. Is there something behind..? Is it sadness? Is this sadness related to something..? Like an event or something. I was searching for something like this but I didn't come up with anything.

Yes, there were no clear emotions.. Like I don't know, it's really hard to say what an emotion is, is just something happening in the body or what??

Yeah and also I remember I really appreciated your touch, and this comfort me really. Although I wasn't feeling lost or sad, but still this was comfort and help me feel good and safe. I really appreciated this. And I think also that after this there was a lot of warmth, in my belly I was feeling heat, yeah warmth. Also there I couldn't say it was emotional or it was only a physical thing.. But it felt more like an emotional thing but also not so defined.. Line "Oh ok I really feel".. It was more like "Ok my body is feeling that, but I wasn't really feeling". I wasn't really feeling that at an emotional level.

But it also it was there, and then to time to time I still had this more like intense with the body, like shaking and moving, I think it was more on and off. Like I was quite relaxed but then out of nowhere some moments, some contractions. It was like I was getting calmer, and the center of myself was moving from the center of my head down to my body and I felt this kind of relaxing state.. There was this kind of relaxing energy and then I was feeling suddenly this (J. mimicked a small geyser, producing an onomatopoeia similar to 'pshhh').

like an electric discharge. It was like, I don't know how to say, like a chi flow. More like a movement which is also still, like water which is vibrating... Yeah like something like this.

I was calm, and I felt really in my body, I felt I was not in my head but really in my body, down in my body or behind, shifting from my chest to my back to my legs. And I had the thought like "ok, I can stay here! I can stay, it is good as it is. I hear the music, I feel my body, I know what is coming through my senses and I can just rest here. Like my body is big and I can stay in here."

I feel more peaceful, more relaxed now.. And also quite relaxed, I think also.. I don't know. when I was lying there I get into a kind of dream state or sleep state. Because then I got out from it I thought "ok I'm still here!". My mind was really calm.. and you know that vibrating feeling was a bit less strong after the third times I woke up from this dream state.

Participant 11

In the beginning I was very excited, nervous, having expectations, afraid I won't do the right way, that I wouldn't feel anything and then I think your guidance really helped, just reminding me to breath or something else..

sex, I mean not really but something similar. And at the beginning I felt like thinking a lot, and especially my little finger was always pointing up... I don't think I had any special thought during it, I was always conscious of my breathing and most of the thoughts were about it, if I had to come back to it or rather modify it... But still rarely.

Yeah... And then I laugh! Laugh and cry at the same time. Well, after I felt sadness, coming back to my inner child I guess. I mean I felt like a child again, feeling a lot of rejection from my father.. I think that came up but not in a bad way in a really relieving way. And that was the point in which I laughed and cried at the same time! Because it was sad but so relieving! I think it happened because yesterday I discussed this so much with a friend, and I realized I was loving him but not getting so much attention back.. But not in a very very bad way.. I think I was just able now to feel what really I want want want to feel, like sit down and feel but I'm always trying to always solve my feelings rationally. I was finally able to really... feel them! No, it was really good, actually great.

If you are in the beach and seeing the waves from far you see, that was the sadness. Then there is the peak of the wave, the peak of sadness and then you know the white foam of the wave on the beach, that was the laughing.

But I really felt liquid emotions, especially in the stomach! Actually always a bit of tension in my chest.

In the hearth. But it's also warm, my whole body is warm.. I don't know.. fluffy! Yeah

Apparently laughing! It was my way to cope. I also felt a bit embarrassed when I heard the knee in the door and I was afraid this breathing was really heavy. But then I forgot about it, like the breathing helped shut down the thoughts and the distractions completely.

Yeah, so before that I was feeling the ocean and the sun, and that was like a safe place. And then you said something like don't be afraid to go deep and then I realise there was something more maybe.. But I was just in the feeling, and from that safe situation I felt I could just let go.. And then all the memories arose.

Not completely washed away.. I think I'd need to do it a bit longer, but then I thought you also had to go so I thought it was the first time for me and that was sufficient for this time.

It's like a weight I'm carrying with me, as the weight of thinking too much and not feeling too much... I really would like to go deeper into the sensual, I mean the sensations.

I think apart from the chest and stomach there are some extreme feelings in the hands.. but the rest of the body not so much...

Calmer, blissed... Still a bit dizzy but not very unpleasant but I wouldn't drive the car right now! I would feel like dancing right now, and it seems to me that I have a sharper visions, like all the objects are more tridimensional somehow...

Participant 12

At first, I started to feel dizzy. Then I already had let's say a feeling...a spleen today due to the change... Then let's say the more I breathed, the deeper I went and the more I realized that feelings were coming out... Yes, let's say older. The more this spleen grew the more I felt its similarity to some feelings I had when I was a child... loneliness and abandonment. And then I felt like crying, I felt this connection between all these moments of malaise in which I feel a bit lonely and vulnerable... and I look for someone or something to feel better but... There isn't. So it's been difficult (starts crying again). Mostly it's a thought that comes out when I'm down... Now I know I have many friends who are there and who love me but when I was little some figures who should have been there... My mother was very harsh in saying things like 'get by' when I was little... and these things came out... So I tried to focus on the breath but the feeling was very very strong and after a while, I felt that the crying was down there and it started to intensify. And yet it was also nice to think that with the breath I could go deeper into this feeling and maybe even change it. And let's say that this awareness gave me the energy to keep breathing.

It's a feeling... like emptiness here in the diaphragm, arms, and legs a bit weak... that is, lacking, I don't know as if they were a bit asleep, and weight on the chest.

So I tried to focus on the breath but the feeling was very very strong and after a while, I felt that the crying was down there and it started to intensify. And yet it was also nice to think that with the breath I could go deeper into this feeling and maybe even change it. And let's say that this awareness gave me the energy to keep breathing.

It's a feeling... like emptiness here in the diaphragm, arms, and legs a bit weak... that is, lacking, I don't know as if they were a bit asleep, and weight on the chest.

No, more relieved. Maybe it was because I didn't allow this spleen to escape before and that it would escape maybe tomorrow on the plane, maybe in a moment alone. Why do you have to be alone, I asked myself. Why do you have to lock yourself in a room to feel this feeling? And I realized that I wouldn't feel comfortable either telling my mother, telling my friends, or telling, maybe the only person I would feel like calling was my ex, but even he wouldn't be able to do much. So there the feeling of loneliness returned...

Yes more than anything I don't want to disturb people. That's because I feel that if you have this very desperate cry people get the idea that you're very sick, while... Yes, I just need to express it and even if I see others worried, then I feel worse... that's what happened in the clinic, I saw everyone so worried that I couldn't concentrate on myself, to feel better.

And that's why I do it alone, you know, I don't know, sometimes when I'm crying I want to be taken care of as a mother would console you... Yeah, but I don't know, I didn't see a way to do that... To express the crying and have someone there to hold me without worrying. And it can't be just anyone it has to be someone I care about. And I think my psychologist told me that you have to give yourself that comfort. And that's why I need a moment of privacy to cry like a

desperate person. And then I felt like sleeping in someone's arms, not being alone. Then you know, the last few days have been very dense with meetings, relevant to feelings, very rich in feelings. I met my ex yesterday, and I've been with (current partner) this weekend, and I'm going away, there are a lot of people I'm super fond of that I won't see for a while, and I don't know what my future will be like, my mum's away, my dad too, my best friend moved to Amsterdam. Yeah I mean a lot of things that... help. So I'm not alone but if I need a physical presence now... I don't know, it worries me.

Yeah, it makes me so happy to be there for my friends... It's so frustrating. But then it's not even that I'm ashamed of that. It's that sometimes I asked my mother for example and the answers she gave me were not reassuring. She was trying to reassure me reasonably, normalizing my experiences. I understood what she was trying to do but I would have liked to see something more... I don't know if a different reaction would have made me feel better.

Exactly, and I think this is the problem with many people who are close to me... Too rational and not very empathetic. And when I get a super-rational reaction I feel more alone than before... Not understood. And when I feel more lonely than before I get super frustrated because I kind of love that person a lot, I've made myself vulnerable and now they're even more worried because they think 'oh god she's sick'. And I just feel more lonely and also disconnected from those people. And when I try to talk to certain people about their needs, I try to approach them rationally and explain to them that they don't have to worry. But then to these people, this seems a bit ridiculous as if I were telling them how to be close to me. And I don't want that but I just want to say 'I know you want to be close to me and that's your intention, but if that's your intention with this method you can't do it. Rationality can be such a worry. What do you do when you feel an absence, or loneliness like that?

Participant 13

I remember hearing the music only in the beginning. Then I completely forgot about it and started my journey... As I told you before I started I'm not in a good period, and so I don't know if it's because of that but at the beginning, I felt really bad (laughs). I mean at first, I breathed following your rhythm, and I started to feel a sense of anger and nervousness... and then

thoughts at first not. I don't know look, I felt like. At first, I had resistance, I just didn't want to go through the effort of breathing that way. But I decided to explore that resistance a little bit as you advised, and then that listlessness, that laziness if you like, turned into anger. Maybe against myself, maybe against the situation, maybe against the whole world. And that anger motivated me to breathe even harder, even faster. How did I feel it in my body? Now that I think about it I felt like my body was crushing me. That is as if I was in a wrapping that was too tight for me like. And I wanted to breathe to make it explode, to make space for myself inside it... Yes, that's exactly what I experienced, even as internal images.

I had images of me being crushed by things (laughs). I don't know wait... That's it yes! First I saw myself as being inside a room with walls that were squeezing and wanted to crush me. They were coming close to me and I had to resist like this (gathering arms to my torso and taking a position similar to that of a defensive boxer). Then I imagined that I had two golden shields on my forearms. And with these shields, I was reflecting laser beams like that. And so I would smash the whole room exploding. But then those laser beams were starting to crush me. And so I had to hold up these two shields on my forearms that were shielding me from these two laser beams that first had freed me and now they were oppressing me, I mean they were crushing me too! But that's life (laughs). But then I started running with these shields on my arms, I felt like Dragonball (laughs)! At some point, though it's like all of a sudden something in me gave out. I didn't decide it but all of a sudden... Suddenly I felt and saw myself as at the base of a giant waterfall. That is, I was underneath and all the water was falling on my shoulders. Then something in me gave way and I let go.

Then the more dreamlike part started let's say. After this image of the waterfall I let go, even my head I remember letting go on the mat... Then I started to feel that I was taking a kind of out-of-body trip... I saw myself from above, illuminated by a green light. Then I looked at myself and at first, I still felt anger, both toward me and toward (M's partner's name). Then I saw again as if in a dream some pictures of our trip to Australia and my balls turned even more. Then I also had a kind of nauseous gag. And at that point, I decided I would take a flight over the desert. So I relaxed, and there may be yes I was guided a little bit by the music. Maybe there were didjeridoos?

And in the desert, I had feelings of heat also, of warmth though, not too violent. And there calmer I felt that the anger I felt was also because I had already cried too much. That is, for a moment I felt like crying, however, on the other side I told myself that I didn't want to anymore. That is, I had already done it. What the water could do the waterfall had already done, I had already washed myself understand? Now I am in the desert I said to myself, and here there is work to be done not to die of thirst! (laughs). At that point, I drank some water (laughs).

Yes indeed I had a very dry throat, that's why then I drank. And then, I think I relaxed, there was also very relaxing music. I just let go and for a moment I was listening.

I mean it's hard to define without thoughts. Let's say that after the little trip to the desert, I started to have scattered and confused moving images, and quick thoughts.

That is, they were words that didn't follow a logical thread, they didn't close any meaningful thought. But then I started to have practical thoughts, though. Probably the effect of hyperventilation had already thinned out... I don't know. Anyway, I started thinking about all the projects I have of making with my hands, my bags, and things I want to make with pottery... And now that I think about it, it seems to me there is a direct connection to my flight into the desert. I was in a desert and about to die of thirst! But maybe this making with my hands, no, this putting myself back into doing something very important to me is my way of finding some water again. At least that! If I'm a little thirsty then I can try to get out of the desert, if I die of thirst hello! I don't want to become a carcass of white bones... What a trip anyway, thank you very much!

Maybe I still feel a little strange now, my head feels very light and I feel like id have bigger hands... No just more sensitive. And I'm really hungry!

Participant 14

I realized listening to you that my breathing was too shallow and labored, and when I realized I was breathing normally my body immediately started to increase the pace... The only other times I breathed like this was just before a panic attack... my thinking started to get much faster." The body is usually anxious... the feeling is unpleasant. But this time it wasn't so, I was alarmed but my body felt it well from beginning to end.

Mmmh, no. It was an input that reminded me. And the thought started to go faster, so I started to wonder if I should have slowed down my breathing.

Yes indeed. Well, first I told myself to take it easy, that everything was fine. Anyway, there you were. So I relaxed and stopped controlling my breathing.

At that moment I saw your face relax, you looked absorbed... I remember at one point I had the sensation of shaking someone. It was a good feeling, intense. It made me jolt, and I realized I was breathing deeply... intensely. It happened quite automatically

Yes, the breathing was fast and automatic.

Yes, I felt a tingling in my hands, so I reduced the pace and let them do what they wanted...

I felt my hands move upwards and let them go... My roommate came to mind, he gave me massages, and he has a diploma in some kind of energy massage. I thought he must feel similar sensations. I felt good, and full of energy, although I would say I was resting.

Then my breathing started to have a steady rhythm again for a brief moment.

Yes... It was as if I felt a kind of illumination in my head and chest, and a sort of electric current running through my hands and arms.

I felt very awake and active, and two bright spots appeared on my chest and the middle of my forehead. The electrostatic tingling was also stronger at these two points.

Yes, when I meditate these are the points where I usually concentrate, but this time it was not intentional. I would say it was the feeling that drew my attention... Then I think I stopped breathing, right? "I felt a feeling of peace and a sort of vibration on my skin. I couldn't tell if I felt hot or cold, I think I felt at one with my clothes... as if the boundaries of my body were more floating

the apnoea seemed to last a very long time but I couldn't tell. Maybe now I would say no, it didn't last very long, but I find it difficult to quantify that time. Afterward, I came to my senses.

*I felt my whole body, whereas before I was reaching here (points to diaphragm with hand)
At that point, it seems to me that you started to breathe more intensely again...
Yes, I seem to have felt my breathing increase and a kind of excitement expand in my body.*

I felt like dots moving (bringing the fingertips of my hands together as if to define a point in space with them, then move them chaotically), wiggling all over my body

I don't know... No, they were spread all over my body, even on the surface... I would say they weren't too deep, a few centimeters below the skin and a few centimeters above.

Yes, there was also a certain excitement, a sort of neither pleasant nor unpleasant tickling in the lower abdomen... Like what happens sometimes when you go on swings!

I felt electrified. Then my breathing went on its own... Suddenly I felt like it was time to slow down... Then I felt a great sense of peace and at that point, I started to breathe slowly again.

No, I wasn't sleeping. Almost sleeping, I guess... Weirded out, I'd say... but in a good way...

I feel good... A bit stunned, it's like I just woke up after a dream.

Mmmh I don't know. It's hard to say more... At peace. I feel like I've done something concrete, something I might not have been able to say before I started even though I spent the morning studying... The world feels... newer to me.

Participant 15

So after I put the mask down over my eyes, I started to breathe following you. And at first, I focused only on that. I listened to my breathing and never disengaged from there.

Hmm, hard to describe. Anyway, I could feel the air coming in through my mouth and nostrils at the same time and then being expelled vigorously through a firm movement of my diaphragm. As I did this, I felt completely immersed in the music and my breath... Let's say that "N.(says his name)" no longer existed. I felt like a space traversed by the sounds and sensations of my body. I would say I felt like a vacuum crossed by strong air currents.

Well after the air forcefully entered the nostrils my attention was perhaps occupied more intensely by the abdominal muscles, the diaphragm. For a moment I wondered how I could move them so fast, felt them as if they had begun to be filled with little electric sparks. Then... (N closes his eyes and is silent for a few moments)...then came the turn of the forehead and head, I started to feel those sparks there too. First the forehead and then the whole head. Then always those sparks I felt them in the feet and all the legs. Then in the hands.

I describe them like that because I felt like tingling, and also I could see, that is, my field of vision was occupied by a kind of static that was moving very fast. Just like the static of television, but much brighter and with many more colors... Not the ones from the cathode ray tube in short, but the ones we see when we close our eyes. Also, I felt like I was feeling that static of when we feel electrical discharges on our skin... I didn't feel discharges but I felt the skin charged... Does that make sense?

I don't know-maybe 10 minutes? After a while, however, I couldn't feel my body anymore, the breath was going automatic, the static was going faster and faster, and I was no longer controlling my breath. The only thing I did was to increase the speed of my breathing rhythms. At a certain point, I remember bending my whole body (actually N had described a kind of arc on the right side), and there I felt a very strong sensation.

I felt a lot of energy, I think pleasant... It was as if a very strong energy rush went through my back and legs. After that moment I started to feel like I was on a horse (N. practices horseback riding), I found myself on my horse galloping on a path I knew.

Yes ... now that you mention it this particular one calmed me down a lot. However, then I continued to feel all the sensations or almost all the sensations... I could still feel the horse, the saddle, and the wind on my face. I could see the obstacles, we were jumping them, and I was making turns... We were treading on the pavement. It was very liberating.

I wouldn't know what else to tell you, I had a blackout moment. It might sound similar to orgasm but it was very different actually. I mean, not entirely different. I felt this strong energy charge and then a blackout. And then the ride

I think during the ride the intensity of the breath went up. The peak was undoubtedly earlier. Not only on a physical level... I would say that even on an emotional level I was feeling something very strong now you make me think about it... I wouldn't know how to describe it though...

No is that I wouldn't know how to describe it... I felt a great energy that maybe said "finally you're letting me free" ... So there was some satisfaction there. But now I feel a little sad, I don't know why ... (N pauses for about half a minute) Maybe because I feel it's sad that we don't let ourselves free to feel and express this energy more often...

At that moment it's as if I felt a kind of fullness, I had the certainty that I had come all the way through in something I was doing. Often that doesn't happen, often we don't pay total attention to what we're doing, we do it as if we're somewhere else...

It was very natural, without even realizing it I was back here with you. And I relaxed listening to music, very nice music until you called me.

Now I'm feeling good... But a little shaken, maybe a little fragile. I mean I feel good, I'm not tired or anything... But I'd say for today I'll be careful not to see too many people and just be with myself for a while.

Participant 16

I remember the last part well until I wake up...I mean until I come back...I wasn't sleeping but I was savoring the music okay but yeah but then I stopped um like breathing and I was normal. Then I don't remember that part it was just like um a lot of colors and of course, in the beginning, I had a lot of passion.

Because of this pain or... no no no before I started breathing yeah before those actions out like so this pain on my neck etc. after I started breathing I felt it became more pronounced.

Yes, then I realized that it was all right and that it was all right... and then... I had a lot of thoughts like... like flashbacks... like things that didn't make sense... like things that I had been thinking about for a while... and why... for example. .. yeah, it was more like... like in my childhood... like a flashback of my childhood... but more like they were all... connected... invited... like it was about being lonely... and... e...

So the flashbacks I had, were related to this thing, to feeling lonely. Yes, they were all like -- connected to the memories that I was feeling super lonely and.... yes, yes, but also to my dream last night, because it was the same thing as last night, that I felt -- the size of my mother, that I was lonely, and then this was about feeling lonely and... not understanding, not understanding it...

the whole thing was like um like mostly physical, I felt like there was something on me, like, yeah like something heavy.

So, first of all, flashbacks happened, like the things I remember, like memories, concerning the feeling of loneliness and not being understood and then it was all very physical, at one point it was also very sexual like I felt like the energy here like it was all here, and before like you had this feeling of loneliness and then you stopped thinking about it because you were more focused on the physical, or yeah, I stopped and then it went to sexual, okay, so from the feeling of loneliness to sex. One after the other, exactly. After that, when I felt sexually activated I had no flashbacks, no memories, no thoughts, nothing else, it was all physical, and yes, and... Yes, I felt a lot of energy here, like -- like -- like vibration and.... kind of abrasion on the inside or even kind of like the boundary of your body, where I think it was also on the outside, like I felt like yeah, I always felt like somebody was on me or like something was on me, like interacting with something or somebody on you, okay, and I felt touched, I felt like there was a lot of physical contacts, yeah, and...

I realized this: when I try to breathe super fast so I try to control my beats and control them I can't let go so I realized I'm a completely right and relaxed machine I don't have to, and I shouldn't be a slave to control. So I let go then and it's like there was a lot of tension and especially on my legs, like when I touched my leg at one point I wanted to move and I touched my leg and it was like a rock, like super stiff.

So: when I forced myself to breathe I had flashbacks and then when I let go completely it was a little more sexual and physical, then I sank like passed out but I still felt the physical and felt the thing I saw like something completely on me. And during the kind of pleasure part, it might have been a positive presence but during the unpleasant part when I forced myself to breathe I felt it threatening.

Before I started I was very stiff and strange... at first, I was like I was talking to myself all the time... like it was the first time... yeah, I was like I was reading... and then I think..., in the end, I let go completely because I didn't think about my breathing, I didn't think I had something out of place and now yes, I feel relaxed and fit.

Participant 17

I remember at first it was a little difficult to let go of my head, to loosen up. After a while, it was easier to let go, to loosen up a little bit. Let's say that at first, I felt only the head, instead little by little I started to feel more of the body.

Yes exactly, at the beginning I was caught up in my thoughts. While at the end zero thoughts at all.

It wasn't thoughts defined... It was more a realization of being in reality. Of being in this room, around there is this this this, the windows, the walls, and the surroundings... Whereas afterward, it became a completely introspective, fluid thing. The consciousness of being in a room was there for a long time... Then it disappeared completely.

I was like in another dimension, very dreamlike for me...

At first, I had some thoughts that may be a little negative because I thought I wanted to melt away... The fact that I was too conscious was almost negative yes... Instead, when I stopped thinking about it I found myself in this other more dreamlike state, less aware of the external situation.

It was pleasant, but at certain times suffering. I would say that most of the time the feelings were overall very ... positive. At certain moments I remember almost some... coming out. desires ... very

... burning that almost bothered me because they were so strong and they came out. Now I don't remember exactly what desires but I remember this feeling well.

It was very strong. It was a very strong desire. However. I felt it almost like it was negative because of how strong it was.

(laughs) yes yes, exactly!

I felt so much, yes I was so sensitive... Maybe it was the desire for life itself. Yes, it was so strong and I felt so sensitive and vulnerable... Fragile. At that moment I remember that I felt like crying for a moment even.

At that moment there was a peak of intensity, and then there was a descent... After this peak, almost commotion, there was a descent. And when there was this descent I remember having many very beautiful images but it was like getting lost in a dream. But precisely I remember that they were moments of descent, though. That is, very intense on a visionary level however it was more like getting lost in a dream than really feeling something strong.

Exactly, I was still sensitive but more peaceful let's say. There was a moment of really intense pathos. I also remember in that peak I saw people I cared about a lot like (partner's name).

Yes, I would say it was more of emotion... But also sadness because almost, like at that juncture I realized that when I have things I can't live them fully. I mean this desire to live fully and the sadness that I can't always do that. And it was very upsetting to me at that time. So it was also sadness yes.

Well, it was like I felt all vibrant -- a lot of heat here (points to chest). Which was nice yes, but precisely at certain moments it became sad and emotional, as if that warmth in the chest then was too much and had to leak out in the form of tears.

Yes, I remember after this intensity came the calm after the storm like. I remember you giving me your hand had given me an almost protective feeling after something intense that almost cradled me, and it was a super pleasant feeling. Then the more visionary part started which started with the feeling of being inside a shell at the bottom of the ocean...now that I think about it it's an image related to the feeling of safety you had given me. I felt at peace and it was a super pleasant feeling.

Well, then the state before I would describe it as more visceral... More intense as a body sensation. As I was telling you it was like feeling the fact of not living fully as opposed to the desire to do so. Moving because it was a very vital feeling. Sad though because it was like I had to deprive myself of it sometimes... Like to say it's like when I have things in front of me it's like I can't enjoy them fully ... like I have to deprive myself of them. Because like say, like when a person makes me feel good, gives me a beautiful feeling, but I can't fully enjoy it because maybe I don't feel like I deserve it... At least I think that's the point when you think about it now. That's what these very strong feelings evoke in me. So it was like something unresolved came out at the level yes -- more

visceral. Whereas the feeling afterward was nice because it's like after feeling this combination of anger, sadness, and emotion, all these opposing feelings feeling that sense of peace and protection made me feel calm. Like, okay calm down now. Like tranquility, and relaxation.

Yeah, and after the session, I felt very good, very aligned, you know. Clean in my thoughts like to say.

But as a whole may be yes ... however there were those very intense moments that were pe nothing relaxing. Now, however, I feel energetic yes. Compared to before I wouldn't say I was less or more energetic... But afterward, I was with my head freer of thoughts.

Yes, I remember especially this tribal music... And I would say it was important, I liked it very much and it helped me a lot to immerse myself, to go from the first phase more caught up in thoughts to the second phase.

Without it, it wouldn't have been the same. More than focusing I would say immersing myself in the experience. I would say that's the right term. I never strained myself with attention... It was a more spontaneous, immersive experience... It was something where I completely let myself go.

One thing I liked was that the person breathing and the person leading collaborated... I felt that you were listening, and I think what you were doing in the room was influencing me. And I found that a beautiful thing.

Participant 18

So, to start from the beginning. I was quite nervous when I came in, during the exam period, etc. I had decided I wanted to get fully into the practice, to breathe hard. After a very short time, I felt that I could no longer move my lips and felt a tingling sensation all over my face. These sensations alarmed me a little bit ... however, I decided to continue and in truth, I felt myself getting more and more excited.

Let's say that I was intrigued by all these sensations you can get from breathing... I had never experimented with it before. I once felt similar sensations...

But these tingling scattered throughout the body let's say...

Once when I was in school, I'm not sure why either... Maybe because there was a difficult situation in the family, of insecurity let's say. I felt agitated and then I had a kind of panic attack, I fainted in class. But I had felt those same feelings before.

No, it's not. But strangely enough, when I first felt those feelings I didn't have any sense of panic I was curious, I felt quite confident and I wanted to see where I was going to go.

Yes, I think you are right. This first feeling of excitement that I was telling you about led me to focus on the breath, on my body, on the music. Always to see where all this would lead me as I was telling you. So I kept breathing while also listening to the music, and in my body that feeling of pre-panic arousal (laughs), I wouldn't know how to describe it to you well, it remained stable for quite a while. I started to feel a lot of energy here (points to the diaphragm) as if there was almost a fireball that wanted to come out.

I felt it very hot, almost burning, located in the diaphragm. And I stopped to listen to it, to feel it well... It was a strong energy. From that moment on I remember not being distracted by random thoughts or images anymore...

Yes, before anyway there were those somewhat silly thoughts that I tried to ignore... What was I going to do next...what was I going to cook for dinner (laughs)...things like that.

Yes, after this fiery orb, I felt more focused... You know what was the last thing I thought about? I mean the last words I had in my head?

They came to me from the back of the pillow... Like they came from the back of my head. And I heard something I had heard some time ago during a party. It was a woman's voice during an evening saying during an electronic music track, "Do not resist the beat" (laughs). Yes I know it sounds dumb. But at that moment it felt like a revelation.

It was like an insight... I realize it now that I'm talking to you about it... At that moment I realized how often I have this energy and I don't listen to it... That is, I don't let it express itself. Maybe because I'm afraid of being scandalous, I don't know. But at that moment I decided to try to express that fireball. So I stopped breathing and tried to expand that feeling in the body. Slowly that burning sensation spread throughout my body and it was as if I felt all very hot, but a lukewarm heat. I mean it wasn't like I was dying of heat. I do remember sweating, though, and taking the covers off. Now that I tell you about it. I realize that a little bit I was thinking about that time I passed out in class all agitated. That is, I realized that sometimes my heart can beat very fast. But I don't have to be afraid of it, I have to trust what he wants to tell me... I mean if it tells me to cry I should cry, if it tells me to laugh I should laugh... And trust that it won't be the end of the world and that indeed somehow this energy of mine might "warm" the hearts of others as well. Which is sometimes so cold... Oh my God, I expressed myself so badly!

Yes, that was part of it too... That is, it's like I said to myself, "Relax!" "Do not resist the beat!" so I also stopped forcing myself to breathe and just listened.

Well. I felt satisfied maybe... I even felt like laughing. Maybe it was because I was thinking about how many unnecessary problems we sometimes make for ourselves, maybe preventing us from being fully in certain situations. I mean don't get me wrong it's not that I think we always need to

be limitless, that would be scandalous (laughs). But at that moment it's like I told myself, "Don't be afraid of your feelings, your energy... To not be afraid of me in short. From that moment, maybe also because I had slowed down my breathing, I felt wrapped in a warmth that gave me confidence, yes, like I told you. I felt as if that fiery orb was distributed throughout my body.

Yes, at that time the feeling had started to become less intense. I started to feel calmer and images started coming into my mind... They were images of the sea, beaches, and people at the beach I think... I could still feel some heat, like imagining the sun on my skin. Afterward, I remember going into a somewhat confused floating period... I would have moments of absence, of blackness, maybe falling asleep. Then I would wake up and start breathing as hard as in the beginning, when I did it was as if the dreamy images that came from the moments of absence quickened, and became less clear... Then the music calmed down completely and I let myself be rocked. It was very relaxing.

I feel much more relaxed, maybe even more confident for now. I also feel a little confused, but I think it's because it was the first time for me. Still, it was an interesting experience, to be deepened. Also because it gave me some new questions about how to listen to my body better. I mean very often from here down (points to the diaphragm and operates a gesture toward the feet) I don't feel anything, or at least I don't listen to my body. And maybe some of my anxiety problems stem from that. Definitely.

I wouldn't say that the music has been crucial... It has helped though I think, anyway I have never felt it annoying, on the contrary. Instead, I would like to add that your guidance with the breath at the beginning was a great help. Otherwise, it would have been difficult for me to figure out how to adjust, but then it was all very smooth, though. I tell you, I am surprised about that!