

Uniting and Inspiring People through Conscious Breathing

CANADA IBF National Representative Report 2018-2019



Country: CANADA
National Representative's name: JoAnn Lowell
NR since: 2007
Member IBF since: 2000

Overview Membership status for the country –

Friends: -
Members: 6
Professional Members: 8
Organisations: 2
Canadians in attendance at the GIC USA : 11

General Summary

In Canada breathwork and conscious breathing continue to take off in many positive directions in this past year. **Breathwork continues to be the new buzzword**, with many people from many walks of life drawn to it. Not just as clients, but many are drawn to want to facilitate breathwork. Nowadays it seems common to speak about conscious breathing in just about any context.

2018-19 Highlights in Canada

- We saw a **400% increase** of IBF membership this year. Of course it really helps to have the GIC 2019 happening next door to us! Two new members are from an Indigenous community in the Arctic from when I led Breathwork events there.
- Last summer I led opening ceremonies at the Shambhala Music Festival with 17,000 young people. It is a world-reknowned electronic music festival where I led **2000 young folk with conscious breathing** and a ceremony honouring all our ancestors (plus 2 days of Breathwork Workshops!). More and more young folks are choosing conscious practices- breathing among them - over drugs.
- Calgary, Canada - youth co-ordinators and famous DJs use the IBF Conscious Breathing in the Classroom program to help with **'youth at risk'**, some who are living on the streets
- **Innovative Leaders Conference** - the Conscious Breathing in the Classroom program is presented and receives lots of support
- **Palliative Care and Death** - I bring conscious breathing exercises to gently assist the dying and their loved ones
- **Cancer Patients** - I help patients learn breathing exercises to ease their pain and anxiety
- **Support for Alzheimer Patients** - family members learn breathing exercises to support their own self-care and to help instill ease and grace for their loved one

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- **Doctors and Therapists** - they are taking conscious breathing courses that I adapted from the Conscious Breathing in the Classroom program
- Bumi Sehat Birthing Centre, Bali - In my travels for a health retreat in Indonesia I introduce **conscious breathing exercises for midwives** who are first responders on the ground after earthquakes, volcano eruption, tsunamis - they learn breathing exercises for birthing mothers, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as well as for themselves from the program
- **Refugees** adapting to new lives in new countries - they learn breathing exercises for relaxation, PTSD and anxiety

The activities I speak of in Canada are essentially those in the western region where I live.

Canada is the size of 3 Europes and those breath workers in the eastern part of Canada are as far away as Sweden is from India. Without resources to travel, together with language barriers, as the NR for Canada it is not possible to be in face to face contact with breathwork community in the east unless its word of mouth. Having the GIC in North America for the first time in 10 years makes the geographical challenges easier! For the first time I am excited I will be able to **meet face to face with Canadian members for the first time at GIC** to strategize about expanding our networking with the 11 Canadians who are attending the conference.

Highlights/challenges from some Canadian IBF members, in their own words:

Lisa V. Kusch in the middle of Canadian prairies in Saskatoon says: *I am the only certified breathwork facilitator that I know of in Saskatchewan. I completed the 400 hr Power of Breath institute Somatic Breath Therapy training in 2016-18 and I am now completing the Masters of Applied Breath Sciences through the Graduate School for Applied Health Sciences. There have been a few other classes and breath ceremonies offered over the last couple years by travelling facilitators. The interest is high. All my classes and retreats fill quickly. A concern: The main issue I am meeting is people thinking that a 2-4 day training is all you need to do this work.*

Will Scharek, with Dolly Lammy on the Pacific Coast in Vancouver says: *At the present time I have about 250 members on Meetup that I share the message of breath on a regular basis via workshops. Also I use many social media based outlets to connect with others, giving group and private one-on-one workshops. I just came back from Turkey where I held a series of workshops in 3 different cities, and plans are to go back in the fall.... and I have been invited to speak in India and Argentina. Better communication throughout the year would be a great improvement in the art of truly connecting with others here in Canada.*

Keli Carpenter, in the wine-growing area of Kelowna, BC says: *I'm rather excited to be part of the IBF, learn more, definitely interested in the "breathing in the classroom". I'd be thrilled to share breath awareness in schools. I'm newer to becoming a certified facilitator of conscious connected breathwork (1+ year)... while...I'm just not new to what it means to be present, connect to source, ...and hold a safe space of integrity. I'm a life long practitioner of transcendent meditation (since age 6) and now teach. A concern/question: there are also those who will become a facilitator of*

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the breath but not necessarily facilitate the space holder position with the same level of integrity as the next (..yoga is similar). Do you know about getting breathwork practitioner insurance?

Mahara Brennan with 40 years experience in Vancouver, BC: *Breathwork is very wide spread in Vancouver. (Within the).. many forms and styles of Breathwork...it seems it is more about the facilitator that does the breathwork that is the draw. There is .. great appreciation, recognition and respect for the work and even probably breathwork is viewed as the 'deep work'. I have been hearing of some young breathworkers coming up who are using social media to grow their sphere of influence and doing well with it. I look forward to meeting them. I call my work Holistic Rebirthing, source the origin of the material that comes up using a process called Psychology of Vision. A number of my clients are doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, clinical counsellors and psychotherapists who refer their patients to me... many include breathwork into their practice as an adjunct to their work. I will be teaching this tool to my last breath. Namaste to One and All... and of course to the Miraculous Babaji...the true Father of this movement.*

IBF Presence in Canada : Updates

- **World Breathing Day** numbers here were disappointing with less than 1/3 of the normal attendance in our region (although the experience of the breath is always a gift!) It was easy to introduce a handful of the breathing exercises from the Conscious Breathing in the Classroom manual - which many participants have incorporated into their daily life.

The change of the date of the former 'Global Day of the Breath' from January 22nd to April 11th had a big impact. The date in April falls close to Easter and spring break when people are away travelling. It is also the start of warmer weather in Canada when we no longer can count on strong numbers in workshops and gatherings. The energy by then has shifted from the inward gaze of the new year in January (which is the busiest month for breathwork workshops), to looking outwards. There was feedback among some NRs about a "European look" for the PR brand, which I used this year, instead of a more evocative imagery typically used in most of the previous years. Suffice to say I experience a big part of the "International" in IBF is our diversity and difference as a gift, rather than needing to become a standard 'one size fits all.'

- I get a lot of feedback from members that they see the benefits of IBF membership through the **Conscious Breathing in the Classroom** program. This has been the easiest benefit to motivate folks to take out IBF membership in Canada. During this year's Livestream Training from the GIC, many groups in Canada are gathering to learn and practice the breathing exercises together. Groups that include therapists, workplaces, care homes, young people, breathwork trainings... on top of teachers and schools.

- In connection with our larger global **IBF presence** I have noticed a significant increase of referrals coming from our **IBF website**. This is coming from people asking for referrals in their cities, those connecting with me for breathwork, and even people from across the world seeking breathworkers or trainers in Canada for friends and family.

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- With our **NR Buddy system** for new incoming NRs - my new buddy Prema Julia has been doing some great work in Thailand and our connection has deepened through our contact, especially with her pregnancy. Blessings Prema, Aad and babacita!

- The team for **GIC 2019** are busy readying the site for the welcome of you all. Canada and Mexico have been active in many of the planning Zoom calls, helping out and I'll be there early to help with set up as best I can. Can't wait to see you all!

EXECUTIVE TEAM QUESTIONS:

Do you have any suggestions for the IBF as an Organisation? How can IBF serve you in a better way in your role as NR? I see the NR job will work more effectively and with ease, through the implementing the following:

- Bring back the practice of NRs getting the list of their country's members with city, province and email address. It's labour consuming to have to search for our members on our IBF website, then the search the internet to find the rest, and still just have contact information for half of our country's members.
- I appreciate hearing about the return of our regular NR meetings on first Tuesday of the month.

Do you still want to take up your current IBF role for the next year? If not, who do you propose as your replacement? I'm happy to continue serve in this role. A consideration for proposing a replacement: I am presently unaware of anyone among Canadian breath workers who is willing to make the annual financial and time commitment to traverse the distance to the GIC/AGMs.

What are your objectives – as NR – for the next year?

- Meet with the Canadian IBF contingent in person at the GIC.
- Recruit a 2nd Canadian NR hopefully at the GIC to cover more of our huge geography
- Continue to promote the Conscious Breathing in the Classroom program to members and members-to-be who open more fully to the promise of the IBF through it
- Set up some rotating-host Meet2Breathe gatherings online with Canadian members, inspired by Alicia's example
- This August I will lead opening ceremonies with over 2000 young folk with conscious breathing at world-rekknowned Shambhala Music Festival. Our practices and prayers will focus on how we honour our relationships: with eachother, with the earth, with ourselves. This awareness is based on the Indigenous teachings of the "All My Relations" Mitakuye Oyasin

I love you all, Dear IBF familia!! .~*~. **Many Blessings ~ JoAnn**

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**National Representative
& Ambassador Report**

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