



“Breathworks for the Brain” Nancy Swayzee

Program Summary

Nancy Swayzee is an exercise therapist with twenty years in private practice. She is certified by the American College of Sports Medicine as a Health and Fitness Instructor, and is certified as a Medical Exercise Specialist by the American Academy of Health and Fitness Professionals. She is also a neuro-muscular therapist, specializing in the St. John method of Neuro-Muscular Therapy. Considered an expert in functional anatomy, she has developed a reputation as an inspiring presenter and teacher of functional exercise for the last decade.

Working with her granddaughter, who sustained a closed head injury in 1993, Swayzee became interested in the connection between physical activity and brain function. She has since gone on to write several articles on Exercise and the Brain. Most recently, she began doing workshops for various school districts on “Stress and the Brain: What Inhibits Learning?” Her unique work with recovering stroke and brain injury patients has now grown to include those with Parkinson’s disease, Cerebral Palsy and Multiple Sclerosis.

Breathwork’s “brain-based” exercises involve multiple functions within the brain simultaneously. Based on a simple physical principle, increased demand creates increased use which results in increased function. During pattern-based exercises the brain connects auditory and visual input with processing information; planning with anticipation;

balance with meter, rhythm and pace; spatial awareness, direction and force; coordination in partner activities; focused attention on where they are in the pattern; short-term memory retrieval of the pattern itself. Every nerve and muscle – both large and small – is involved in the coordination of the physical movements. Additionally, during these brain-based exercises, the body is moving fluids and oxygenating the blood. Swayzee's program is adaptable for everyone, even special populations. Swayzee and her partner Janet Fletcher Brady are currently working with PBS to develop a daily fitness series for public television. Swayzee's book, "BreathWorks for Your Back...Strengthening Your Back from the Inside Out", was released by Avon Books in April 1998 and is in its second printing with Harper-Collins. She is currently working on a book about slowing down the aging process.

www.nancyswayzee.com/breathworks