



The Art of Breathing

How does your body control your breathing unconsciously? This album explores this complex process in fascinating detail using a battery of detectors attached to human guinea-pigs to monitor their breathing, blood flow and heartbeats. How does an anxious mind affect this system during a stressful situation? Whether stress is physical or emotional, the ancient “fight or flight” response is triggered. Physiologically, this can lead to the stress-related diseases which are getting more common in the West, so track 3 looks at the Eastern tradition of yoga, which recognises that controlling the breath is key to retaining health of mind as well as body. The audio track uses the case study of a primary school teacher monitored over the course of a day, revealing that some stress might be good for you; and experts shed light on the significance of stress using studies of baboons. This material forms part of the Open University course SK277 Human biology.