

Declaration of breathing space

by Jeff Davidson

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all people are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and breathing space. We each have the right to enjoy the rains, the lakes, the mighty rivers, and the vast oceans that cover the earth. We have the right to enjoy the forests, plains, savannas, tundras, and living deserts.

We have the responsibility to preserve and safeguard these natural resources for all generations of humans and other species that follow us.

The earth and its resources are not ours to despoil, but to enjoy, sustain, and pass on. The 30+ million species that inhabit the earth are interconnected and enable each other to thrive.

Our primary task is achieving stability in human population growth. No one of us is accountable for the teeming masses of humanity that inhabit the earth. Each one of us must affirm the need for everyone to practice prudent planetary management. A 260,000-person net gain in population every day is too much for the earth to sustain and will eventually encroach upon the freedoms of

everyone. Each of us needs space to explore, hike, swim, play — to discover anew. We need untrammelled mountain vistas, hidden springs, pockets of vegetation furiously growing wild. We face an extraordinary challenge. We have extraordinary capabilities.

This we declare: that the breathing space each of us deserves is not simply physical space but peace of mind as well. We deserve to be free from the ever-increasing bombardment of information and sensation. We have the right to be free from any medium whose purposes seem askew — from the presentation of violence to the odd and absurd — with scant attention to breakthroughs in human development, volunteer efforts, cooperation, service, or acts of real heroism, altruism, and beauty.

We deserve to be free from over-intrusion into our lives by regulatory bodies set on aggrandizement and enlargement, whose original missions and purposes were lost long ago. We have the right and the responsibility to live clutter-free lives, for indeed if we cannot keep the spaces of our lives — our desks, offices, vehicles, and homes — free and clear, how can we ever aspire to maintain a clean environment?

This we resolve: that everyone deserves to have breathing space; that

we need to maintain our breathing space and the breathing space of others; that the future will belong to those who steadfastly choose to maintain control, effectively draw upon their resourcefulness and imagination, and teach others around them to do the same. Individually and collectively, we need to preserve and expand our breathing space so that we have the energy, creativity, and resolve to meet current and forthcoming challenges.

We need to attain breathing space for ourselves and then teach others to do the same. We owe it to ourselves and to those who will come after us.

Jeff Davidson travels throughout the U.S. speaking about achieving work-

life balance to clients such as Kaiser Permanente, IBM, American Express, Lufthansa, Swissotel, AOL, Re/Max, USAA, D.O.E. and the World Bank Visit www.BreathingSpace.com or write to Jeff@BreathingSpace.com

