

# BREATH HEALTHILY LIVE HAPPILY

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Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Hold it. Hold it for a few moments. Now while holding the breath, run. Run fast. Run to the sanctuary. Quickly now. However, the bitter and stale smell quickly catches up. I gasp and release the air. Inhale. No exhale. Why can't I breathe out? My lungs begin to burn. I can feel my lungs swelling and my chest getting heavier and heaving with each failed attempt to breathe. Inhaling now becomes harder. I try to breathe in again, but all that escapes is a loud wheeze as my lungs attempt to fill with life. I feel dizzy; the room begins to spin. I have to keep going; I can see sanctuary. Only a few more steps. Wheeze in, take a step. Wheeze out, take another. Finally, I have made it as the world around me starts to become dark. I enter the sanctuary and slam the door. Immediately I grab the blue canister and shake it for dear life before holding it to my mouth. Press down. Inhale. Hold. Exhale and repeat. The swelling begins to go down, and breathing becomes easier once again. This description is only



a sample of what my asthma attacks felt like every day, multiple times a day, living with a chain smoker who smoked in the house and car regularly. Smoking in homes and vehicles should be banned, made illegal, and enforced stringently when children under the age of 18 live in the household.

My step-father was a chronic chain smoker; from the moment he got up to the very last minute before bed he always had a cigarette in his hands. The moment he stepped into our lives the thick pungent smell of stale smoke followed him and that smoke

began strangling and beating my lungs on a daily bases like a bully waiting for his victim so he could take his lunch money. When we first moved to Prince George I was diagnosed with severe asthma. For the first six years of my life I was in and out of the hospital—I was almost transported to Vancouver because they couldn't get my asthma under control—due to the pollution in the city as well as the cigarette smoke. Being in the hospital constantly didn't stop him. When I wasn't in the hospital I struggled every day to breathe. The maintenance inhaler did nothing for