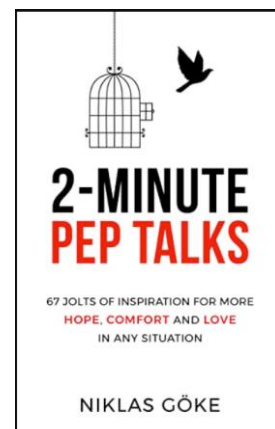


## Pep talk #14 from *2-Minute Pep Talks*

by Niklas Göke



Living is exhaling.

You wake up, open your eyes, and jump out of bed. You brush teeth, get dressed, and race to the breakfast table. Phew!

You work. You type. You work harder. You type faster. Pheeew.  
You buy groceries. You sort your bills. You tuck your kid in. Pheeeeeew.

You watch Netflix. You doomscroll. You listen to a friend yap for hours. Phew, phew, pheeeew!

By the time your head hits the pillow, you are exhausted. You're wheezing. What happened? Simple: You forgot to inhale. That's also living.

Matthew Inman says creativity is like breathing: "When you make stuff, you're exhaling. But you can't exhale forever. Eventually, you have to breathe in. Or you'll be dead."

It's not just creativity. It's everything. The adulting. The job you're trying to be good at. Even the experiencing of awesome things. As long as you're doing, you're exhaling. But eventually, you have to breathe in. Or you'll be dead.

Your health might not really be at risk, but often, you'll literally feel it: You're panting. Between meetings, homeschooling, and picking stocks, you ran out of air. You're gasping.

So, settle down! Sit. Relax. Inhale!

Inhaling is living.

You stare out the window. Nothing moves. Ahhh.

You enjoy the meal that's in front of you. No music. No TV. You can taste every spice. Ahhhhh.

You walk around the block. You see a tree. The leaves are swaying in the wind. "Is it breathing?" you wonder. Ahhhhhhh.

You lie on your back. You stretch your arms and legs into the star that you are. You look at the ceiling. How could you forget to inhale? It's the most natural thing in the world!

Doing is wonderful. Life is a one-time chance to do everything you'll ever do, and I hope most of yours will be a joy to experience. But if do is *all* you do, it'll be impossible to extract happiness from even the most fortunate of events. So, don't. Sometimes, just *don't*.

Life is not a vacuum, and so nothingness is not empty. It provides us with the very air we need to witness the full spectrum of the gift we've been given.

Don't forget to inhale.

