

# **Breathing Underwater**

## ***How To Breathe When You Feel Like You're Drowning***

### **Workshop, Retreat & Webinar Series**

#### **Introduction:**

*Breathing Underwater* is the title of the book and series I have written based on almost twenty years of experience of caring and advocating for my daughter who is medically fragile, cognitively and physically impaired.



Using storytelling and multimedia presentations, I share inspirational and practical solutions for dealing with chronic and emergent situations. I highlight stressful topics including economic, health and personal losses.

I have presented ***Breathing Underwater*** to professional and family caregivers, church and civic support groups alike. I found that each person relates to the feelings and frustrations of being overwhelmed by life. While ***Breathing Underwater*** easily addresses the needs of family caregivers, it is well suited for anyone who feels that they are overwhelmed and drowning in their circumstances.



Using the acronym ***BREATHE***, I highlight strategies to help others learn to breathe when they feel like they are drowning.

Each event is geared to the specific target audiences, while the basic message remains the same. The large and small group process is where the emphasis of the presentations

is tailored to meets the needs of the group.

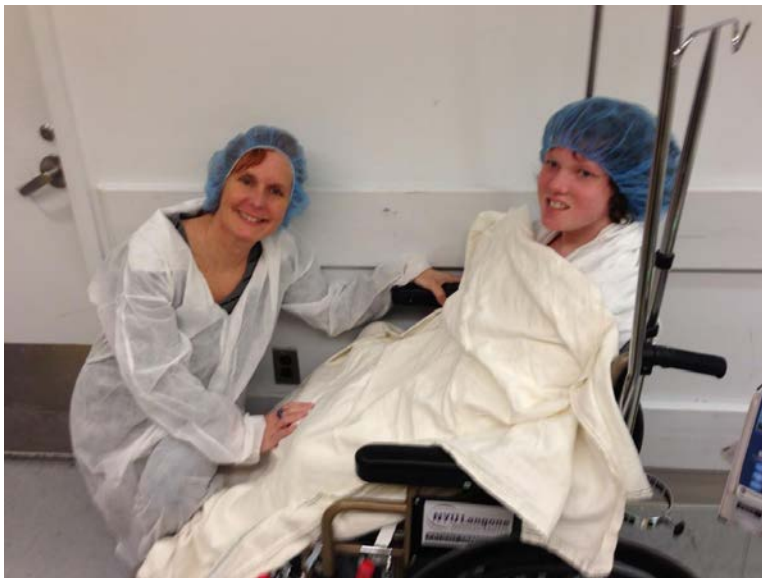
Here are some sample goals for different audiences:

**I. Family caregivers:**

The experience of caring for a chronically ill and/or disabled family member is life-altering and can be very overwhelming.

Breathing Underwater helps family caregivers to:

- a.** Learn to treat ourselves and our loved ones with dignity and respect.
- b.** Learn to grieve the loss of dreams for ourselves and those we care for.
- c.** Learn how to advocate for ourselves and for our loved ones.
- d.** Learn to practice gratitude.



**II. Professional Caregivers:**

Those who care for the chronically ill, disabled and elderly also experience caregiver stress.

Breathing Underwater helps Professional Caregivers to :

- a.** Understand the struggles and strengths of the person they are caring for with dignity and respect
- b.** Increase their appreciation of family caregiver stress, grief, depression as well as struggles in self esteem and self-care.

- c. Acknowledge their own experiences of caregiver stress in their profession.

About 50% of professional caregivers also have a role in caring for a family member.

### III. **Church Groups:**

I graduated from Franciscan University with a BA in Theology. I have been involved in Church ministry for over 25 years, leading and presenting for women's groups and retreats, as well as leading worship and speaking for parish and diocesan ministries.

In my writing and speaking, I present from my Catholic faith perspective. It's a delight for me to share my faith openly with church communities.

***Breathing Underwater*** is very well suited to parish missions, evenings of prayer and diocesan wide events. I am also very comfortable in evangelical churches, as my personal faith is imbued with the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit and a personal relationship with Christ.



Through the use of scripture, music and testimony, *Breathing Underwater* challenges Christians of all faiths to:

1. Using faith to define purpose in the midst of suffering
2. Trust God more deeply
3. Commit to a life of prayer and gratitude
4. Keep our eyes on heaven

# Sample Schedules

## Caregiver Workshops:

1. One hour presentation over lunch with small and large group process to follow. (11-2)
2. Evening workshops (7-9)
3. Saturday workshops (10-4) breaking up each point of BREATHE to include small and large group process.
4. Weekend Retreats

Any of these could include vendor tables with sponsorship of the event coming from hospitals and businesses serving disabled clients and their caregivers.

Venues include community centers, hospitals, and centers geared towards people with disabilities.





## Church Workshops:



1. Church missions over 1-3 nights include a talk in the context of a prayer service. The prayer service could include music, intercession and a time for small groups and/or individual prayer teams depending on the setting. I provide the music and the presentation to lead an entire evening.
2. Saturday workshops all day/half day with either breakfast or lunch included. Depending on time, presentations can be broken up into 3 shorter sessions with small group process. The workshop would open with short prayer and music reflections and conclude with a prayer service and/or Mass, depending on the church's needs.
3. Weekend retreat. Dividing the presentations into 5 sessions allows for extended time to process the full experience of the Breathing Underwater message. The weekend includes prayer services, journalling and small group sharing to allow for a deeper intimacy and time apart to rest and heal from chronic stress.

## Conference Keynote Speaking:



Eileen is an engaging and witty speaker who has an excellent command of large audiences. Using a multimedia presentation, which includes a live performance of music when time allows, Eileen inspires all people to keep breathing through hard times.



Eileen Benthal is a writer, speaker and certified professional coach with a special heart for caregivers. She graduated from Franciscan University with a degree in Theology. She combines her academic education, years of ministry to women and life changing experiences as a mother and caregiver for a child with a rare disease, to offer hope to those who feel like they are drowning in difficult circumstances. She is the author of *Breathing Underwater; A Caregiver's Journey of Hope* and co-author of *Navigating Deep Waters: Meditations for Caregivers*.

Eileen writes a weekly column, *Life on Purpose* for RiverheadLocal.com. She is a fierce defender for the dignity of all human life and a speaker who advocates for her family and others with disabilities. She has spoken at a press conference at the Capitol in DC on healthcare, on *The Sean Hannity Radio Show* and *Hannity* and *Fox & Friends* on Fox News.

In addition to these appearances, and the books, Eileen gives retreats and workshops around the country, as well as hosting online webinars and one-to-one coaching for caregivers. Eileen speaks from her heart and inspires from a place of faith to help those who seek strength and purpose in the midst of grave trials.

Eileen Benthal  
[eileenbenthal@gmail.com](mailto:eileenbenthal@gmail.com)  
631-833-1897

[www.CareforaCaregiver.com](http://www.CareforaCaregiver.com)  
[www.BreathingUnderwater.info](http://www.BreathingUnderwater.info)