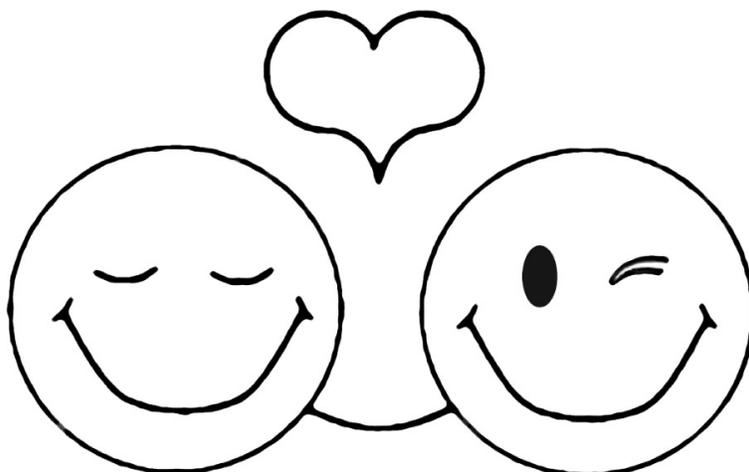


Jacques Cazan

How I STOPPED SNORING...

Expanded edition



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**How I stopped
snoring ...**

*Exercises to treat snoring
and sleep apnea*

Translated by Janice Gilmer

FOREWORD

Dear reader, male or female, female or male - *I don't which should come first, for etiquette dictates, as you know ... but when it comes to snoring ...*

In short, dear reader, I would assume that if you find this book in your hands, you are most likely a snorer or a 'snoree.'

"Snorer," "snoree." To simplify matters, I will use the term 'snorer' to indicate a person who possesses this trait which isn't really considered a disease. Nor is it a disease to gripe or grumble about the snorer, and since it's not usually the snorer who does the griping, the ambiguous terms 'gripeopath' or 'grumblopath' won't do either. I will use 'snoree' to designate a person who is the victim of the snorer's snores. In this book, I will speak at times to the one, at times to the other.

In France alone at least 10 million people are afflicted with snoring. Contrary to popular belief, snoring and sleep apnea aren't conditions that beset just the elderly or the overweight. For example, a young woman with a normal body mass index could have quite a snoring problem, while a robust elderly person may not snore at all. There is no one profile that fits all.

Don't despair! Snoring is not an incurable scourge. You will find some heretofore unexplored remedial steps in the third part of this book. I sought out some natural methods and experimented with them on myself which at first significantly lessened, then did away with, my snoring and sleep apnea.

Snorer or snoree – it's sometimes hard to know which of the two is the worse off. Guilt plagues one, anger overcomes the other. Hope of change is always welcome, to which I can attest firsthand. The crucial thing is that the remedial methods be effective and healthful, and that is what we are striving for here. "Try it, you'll like it!" – this famous popular saying gets us on the right track. You have nothing to lose, but a better life to gain!

Beneath this decidedly light tone, meant to mellow things a bit, lies the aim of addressing a serious and extremely widespread problem which often goes untalked about. In fact, a sense of shame, pride, vulnerability or confusion often prevents us from facing it or causes us to deny it.

The matter is indeed quite sensitive, and the snorer's loved ones don't always know how to approach it. If I might offer a piece of advice, go about it with kindness, tact, and subtlety.

I know it won't be easy, especially when we have put off talking about it for a long time. For the longer we wait, the more difficult it becomes to bring up the subject. It's as if we're engaging in a "little white lie" in order to spare the snorer's feelings by our revelation – and we don't know how to say it without just spewing it all out.

Indeed, the snorer may feel betrayed that we hid the truth from him for so long. It's often unfortunately the case that the exasperated snoree erupts in a sudden, rebellious outburst, occasionally in public or in the presence of friends.

Although there are cases in which the snorer and the snoree have lived in perfect harmony, unbothered by each other, or have both snored side by side, the noise of one masking the noise of the other, that is certainly not the usual profile, and most often, serenity is nowhere to be found.

We must admit that the snoree's life is not easy. In couples, the loved one with whom we've lived for some time gradually and for no apparent reason turns into the unsavory character of a touchy grouchbox, thereby bringing on mixed feelings of surprise, annoyance, sometimes rejection and often disappointment. Next comes both physical and nervous exhaustion, along with alternating bouts of resignation and anger, understanding and rebellion. Torn between his or her attachment to the snorer and the wish to bring an end to the agony, the snoree is in a double bind which quickly causes him or her to blow up in the best case scenario, or to collapse inwardly which serves no one well, indicating his or her resignation to defeat.

It also occurs that the snorer couldn't care less and largely scoffs at the suffering he or she causes, imposing a living hell upon the snoree. Thus when enough is enough, war is declared. You have only to read certain blogs and forums on the subject to be convinced of this. These rebellions are generally fomented by women, who, we must remember, comprise the majority of snorees.

Snorees, I feel for you and offer you some exercises at the end of this book to help you find some peace.

In light of the foregoing, it would be better to talk about it tactfully right from

the start. Since the goal is to find a solution which can only come from the snorer himself or herself, the snorer must go about it willingly and be ready to “get a move on.” Let’s now look for the best ways to tackle this subject ...

What NOT to Say

“You snored all night. I can’t go on like this...”

“I’m worn out. Because of your snoring, I didn’t sleep a wink all night ...”

“You snore, the noise is unbearable, and it’s not the first time ...”

“Our friends didn’t get to sleep until daybreak, I’m sure they’ll never come back, all because of you ...”

I leave to your imagination the most aggressive speech possible, and also the most hurtful to one who, we must keep in mind, is not doing it “on purpose.” The snorer himself is the victim of his own snoring. The snorer’s sleep may actually be impaired by the noise he makes, even if he is not conscious of hearing it. This kind of sleep impairment is different from that of the snoree who, wide awake, suffers the well-known torment of “not being allowed to sleep,” words dear to the hearts of those who have unleashed the aggressive speech outlined above. Except that here, the snoree has nothing to own up to, except maybe his or her feeling of sheer helplessness.

Let’s not forget either that it’s often at night that this occurs and nighttime perceptions are greatly amplified - noise, pain, length of time. In the midst of insomnia, anxiety and all the rest, everything seems much worse. The snoree’s reaction is thus often more intense than if it occurred during daylight hours. And when the snoree goes off in the middle of the night, abrasively waking up the “sleep partner” with a “Shhhhh,” or a vocal reminder like “I can’t take it anymore!” or even a good old jab in the ribs with a sharp elbow, the snorer usually takes it (and surely we can understand) as an extremely aggressive intervention. He is startled out of his sleep and that makes his heart soar. He perceives this brutal awakening as an injustice since he is unconscious of what he’s making the other suffer through, and he doesn’t see himself as responsible, at least not in the sense of an intentional desire to cause harm.

We’re off to a terrible start in our quest to improve things between the snorer and the snoree!

More appropriate Things to Say

“You snore a little at night. Do you have a cold right now?”

“I woke up to snoring last night. I don’t know if it was you or me. Or maybe I was dreaming?”

“I don’t think I slept well last night. Have you ever been told that you sometimes snore a little? Maybe that’s why.”

“Our friends told me that they heard snoring. I don’t know if it was coming from you or from me.”

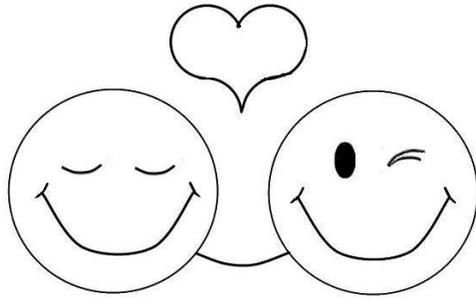
Perhaps these wordings seem a little sugarcoated to you, or worse, wishy washy, but at dawn, there’s no being too diplomatic when first carefully planting the seeds of doubt in the snorer’s mind. Especially if it’s the first time we’re talking to him about it.

As for those who are already aware of it, there’s no need to beat around the bush with them. It’s best to be straightforward with them so that the work gets off to a quick start. Wouldn’t you agree?

For Those Who Live Alone

We always speak of snorers in terms of the disturbance they cause snorees. That’s the case that seems to be the most frequent. But we mustn’t forget that people sleeping alone may also snore or unknowingly have sleep apnea, for they have no one sleeping beside them to attest to it. They often have a tendency to think that if they snore, they won’t bother anyone ...

However, besides the fact that they may have occasion to sleep elsewhere besides at home, where they occasionally risk disturbing the sleep of others, certain of them may manifest symptoms linked to sleep apnea - fatigue or headache, for example. Or, without being aware of it, they themselves may be bothered by the noise of their own snoring and may awaken exhausted and unrefreshed by sleep. By practicing the exercises in this book, they may diminish these feelings of exhaustion and shed some light on them.



Phase One

The goal of the snoree

The goal of the snoree is, of course, to make the snorer aware of the fact that he snores. Though this seems obvious it's an important point, because only the snorer has the ability to stop snoring. He must intend to do so, and, as a prerequisite, be aware of his snoring problem (or at least of the problem it causes to those around him).

Depending upon the snorer's personality, in some cases it would be wise to bring up the suffering he causes himself: difficulty breathing during the night and the ensuing lack of restorative sleep he endures as a result, which explains the tuckered out feeling he experiences during the day. In other cases, it would be best to bring up the annoyance of the snoree to stimulate a sense of guilt in the snorer to get him to do what it takes to put an end to it. In both cases, we must avoid a show down at the breakfast table, whether with just the family or with friends who bring up the subject. For it's often guests who are sleeping over for one or two nights and have not been able to sleep and don't know who was responsible for the snoring that jump in and get the hostilities going!

Why the snorer should be made aware

We may wonder if the best solution wouldn't be just to let the snorer sleep in peace and buy a pair of wax or foam earplugs readily available over the counter meant to block hearing. But, other than the fact that they won't completely stop the noise, they pose other troublesome problems for many people:

- A person may be bothered by the sound of his or her own "bodily rhythms" (heartbeat, breathing, pulse).

- He or she may be worried about not hearing noises that occur in the house, since adults often have a kind of vigilance about sounds of a possible home intrusion, or are anxious about not hearing the cry of a child experiencing a bad dream or an illness.

- Earplugs can fall out of the ear canal during the night due to a change of the sleeper's position.