

“Appreciate your Breathe” – you cannot exist without it!

I BREATHE PEACE AND LOVE INTO MY HEART  
I CHOSE ONLY HEALTHY FOOD BECAUSE I HONOUR MY BODY

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## FIRST BREATHING EXERCISE

Turning your attention to your breathing is a wonderful way to settle yourself and start to meditate. Breath is the movement of spirit in matter.

### Making a Start

This technique of breath work is simply to observe your breath and to do nothing but follow the breath cycle with your observing mind, without trying to influence it in any way. The instructions are:

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight, feet resting on the floor a little apart and your eyes lightly closed, having loosened any tight clothing.
2. Focus your attention on your breathing, and follow the contours of the cycle through inhalation and exhalation, noting, if you can, the points at which one phase changes into the other.
3. Do this for five minutes once a day. The goal is simply to keep your attention on the breath cycle and observe. No matter how the breath changes, even if the cycles become very small, just continue to follow them.

This is a basic form of meditation, a relaxation method and a way to begin to harmonise body, mind, and spirit.

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## SECOND BREATHING EXERCISE

This is the second exercise. This exercise is called “Begin with Exhalation”.

### Making a Start

Breath is continuous, with no beginning or end, but we tend to think of one breath as beginning with an inhalation and ending with an exhalation.

This exercise is to practice reversing this perception. Do it at the end of the five minutes of Breath Observation. Focus attention on the breath without trying to influence it, but now experience exhalation as the beginning of each new cycle. Do this for just one minute. You will be surprised to find how different breathing is when you concentrate on changing your normal perception of it.

This exercise makes you feel more involved with the breath, and actively working with it rather than passively experiencing it.

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## **THIRD BREATHING EXERCISE**

### **Ancient Yogic Breathing Exercise**

This breathing technique will calm the body and mind and is excellent for lowering blood pressure and relieving tension. It may take a little practice but when you have mastered this technique of breath work you will quickly enjoy the rewards by becoming much calmer and relaxed.

Lie down in a quiet room where there is as little noise as possible and gradually relax each part of your body.

Place your tongue with the tip touching the inner surface of the upper front teeth, and then slide it just above your teeth so that it rests on the ridge between the teeth and the roof of your mouth. Keep your tongue in this position for the whole of the breathing exercise.

Now exhale deeply through the mouth; making a deep sighing noise from the back of your throat but deeply from the bottom of your lungs. Now close your mouth and inhale deeply through your nose for a count of four (silently). Now hold your breath for a count of seven. Now exhale again audibly through the mouth to a count of eight. This is one breath cycle.

Repeat this breath cycle four times. Now breathe normally while still relaxing the body. Maintain the state of relaxation for a minimum of 10 minutes while keeping the mind as empty as possible. This exercise may seem difficult to begin with but as you practice you will experience great benefits and will be able to easily slow down the cycle of breath.

This exercise should be conducted twice each day. Think of it as a tonic for the body and mind.

*Elizabeth Beetham* ©