

The Breath of Life

We breathe taking air breath into our lungs and exhale millions of times in a lifetime. Most people do not give the act of breathing much thought. Breathing occurs naturally both unconsciously and consciously. It is the easiest of all vital functions to become aware of and control. Our lungs just like our heart moves in and out carrying vital energies to body's centers and then releasing outwardly toward spatial centers. Mystics and yogis have taught for eons the power of conscious breathing. In the spatial field all around is Prana, a Sanskrit word literally translated Vital Energy. This same vital energy source is called Qi in Chinese.

Transcendentalists believe harnessing this vital source of power is moving beyond the physical into vast astral frontiers. This is why most yoga practices and meditations start with and integrate a strong discipline of breath control. Numerous studies have proved the benefits of slowing down the mind simply through focusing on prolonged deep breaths can reduce stress leading to a more happy and productive life. When one intentionally moves mind into the process of breathing it changes our whole breathing pattern. Instead of generally shallow breathing at the top third of our lungs that unconscious breathing leads to, we now experience, naturally and instinctively, filling our lungs much more fully from the bottom up. This alone brings much more vital energy in to nourish all the body's centers.

Studies have shown the process of inhaling and exhaling completely can bring a sense of euphoria and calm. Extended breathing like this is the sense of ecstasy runners and other enthusiasts experience as they reach maximum vital energy intake. In meditation and yoga practices the benefits of full breath cycles comes as one becomes aware of the breath and with mind moves its vital energy along its way to different parts of the physical and energetic body. Yogis teach us to breathe into the point of stress allowing the focused breath energy to balance and synergize the target area bringing relaxation. In meditation practice breathing into energy centers such as third eye center or heart center can help the mind to focus. The conscious following the flowing of rhythmic breath can give the mind something natural to do rather than following impulse thoughts and reasoning.

As the mind directs breath's intention to move naturally into energy centers of the body this vital energy can be channeled energizing harmoniously. Primary nodal centers of the body can be energized with the breath when held in structural alignment with base universal shape. The mind can direct breath to move the energy of a triangle or circle to the heart's center. These all-encompassing 2D shapes act as energy collectors bringing conscious life energy through breath/mind cooperation. Moving breath into nodal energy points of 3D base universal shapes also produces great and natural alignment to all the body's energy centers. Visualizing natural structural and color alignments, activated through conscious breathing to heart center, can intensify the experience. Conscious direction of nature's vital energy moves the practitioner to a full and ever sensing presence of life's essence.