

Self Practice #1

"We are beaten and blown by the wind, blown by the wind, and when I go there I go there with you it's all I can do". U2

Pranayama is one of the eight limbs of Yoga. Prana is often equated to "breath" or "life force". Becoming aware of your prana is a foundational meditation technique.

"Prana rocks"

Dave Jost (www.prana.rocks)

Your "wind" can raise you up or blow you down, but an implicit goal in meditation is to "avoid polarities". The best life happens when you are present in the middle. Polarity will happen (and you can't avoid it) but the more awareness you can bring to the presence of polarity and the more awareness you have to the impact of your breath on the polarity, the less polarization you will have in life - and the more you will be centered in it.

The MoM (Meditation of the Month)

Your exercise this month is to apply non-polarization to your breath. Yogis subscribe to the concept that the exhale makes room for the inhale.

Find a time once a week to sit quietly. It does not matter how you sit, on the floor in a chair, in a yoga pose - it only matters that you are comfortable how you sitting. During your self-meditation, you do not want you mind to think about how you are sitting. Sit in a way that you will not bring further attention to.

Set a timer with a quiet alarm for five minutes.

Start by breathing as you are. Do not change your breath, just breath. Notice that you breath and and that you breath out. Breath in breath out. Keep breathing like this, letting whatever thoughts you have enter and exit your mind. Once breathing feels natural again focus more on your breath.

Focus on the "switch" from the "in" to the "out". What happens during the "switch"? Do you think about something? Does you heart feel something? What do you notice when you body, your breath, changes gears from "in" to "out"? Breath this way until something arises in your mind - it can be a thought, it can be a word, it could be nothingness or it could be nothing. Once something different happens (or you get tired of thinking about the "in" to our transition) focus on just breathing again.

"In/Out", "In/Out". Just on the breath. Stay in this breath pattern until you're comfortable with it again.

Now focus on the switch from “out” to “in”. How does this feel in your head, your body, your lungs? How is this different from the “in” to “out” focus. Breath this way until your mind presents you with a word or a concept (or until you are tired of doing it).

Now just focus on breathing again, normally.

Put this handout someplace where you do not have access to. Now go and sit and do what you remember reading about.

Post Exercise

- 1) Do you notice the polarity of your breath? Why?
- 2) Did you notice the “in/out” or the “out/in” more? Why?
- 3) What emotions happened?
- 4) If you were to try this exercise a second time what would you do differently?
- 5) Congratulate yourself for learning about yourself and you body

"I said that time may change me But I can't trace time" David Bowie