

## Waking Up meditation course Step 1 Breathe



The title, Breathe, suggests presence, mindfulness, and living life fully. Our practice is an **Introduction to meditation practice** (10 mins) then **Mindfulness of Your Breath - guided meditation** (33 mins), introducing then guiding a simple effortless practice of observing your breath. This is really the foundation of all that follows. Simplicity is best!

I encourage you to do this at least 3 times. Set aside half an hour when you can pause. Be comfortable, turn off the phone. See this as giving yourself a favour. There is paradox in this because most of our life is geared towards results and achievements, and yet I am suggesting that there is great benefit in doing nothing!

It sounds easy to pause and yet we may need help. Your first step is simple sustained mindfulness of breathing; give it a go and see for yourself what comes of it. Practice as an experiment and see what happens when you simply choose to stop. I give you all the support you need.

There is a wonderful (Spanish) Andaluçian saying:

***“que bueno es hacer nada y después descansar un porquito”***

***how good it is to do nothing, and then relax a little***

Why would we do this? Well, for our health, sanity, our integration and balance. Meditation is more restorative than sleep; it is a very efficient way to recharge your energy. It gives us the opportunity to notice, to feel and to sense more. We need to stop to witness this amazing life moving through us; because when in movement we are not able to witness it so clearly. Practice allows a still point, a fulcrum, like the eye of a tornado, a reference from which everything else can be observed more clearly.

We watch the breath, which moves, but what we hold steady is our attention; we learn to focus a gentle gaze, to hold the mind's attention on attention itself, via the breath.

We chose for our focus the breath because it is free and available; because it has no guru, no religion, no location nor price, no posture nor age. Your breath is liberating. We always have it with us. We do not need anyone or anything to practice. We are always with ourselves so we can do this absolutely anywhere, anywhen. Breathing is unique in that it is both voluntary and involuntary, both conscious and unconscious. Awareness of it spans and integrates our psyche.

There is a magic in stillness. In the background field of emptiness or void, which is still and silent, lies unmanifest potential. This is the mystery that generates all of everything. To physicists it is the zero point field. To Yogis it is Self. To some it is God, or the Tao. It is both

empty and full of potential. We can call it the pure potential, from which the world of form arises. And it is in our willingness to stop and be still that we witness this vast nameless field of awareness, which is who we really are. Through our conscious practice, we slip through the gaps between our breaths and become more and more finely attuned to this mystery.

If this all sounds rather bizarre, remember it is not theorising that counts but the actual practice of it that is important so please go ahead!

