

WHISPER OF AIR MEDITATION



There are many ways you can use the breath in meditation. Watching the chest rise and fall with each breath; amplifying the watching by counting to help focus the mind on something simple; chanting with the breath; anchoring the mind in floating with the movement, the cycle or sequence of air flow into and around the chest and out again; or finding the gap at the end of each breath as the body goes still while oxygen from the breath is drawn through the body energizing it and so on. The Islamic Sufis have added in complex counting involving visualizations and color and a structured connection with each breath sequence from Earth to the Divine.

But you can also simplify even something as basic as watching the breath to focusing just on the whisper of air as it passes into and out of the body. This is a technique most usually associated with the starting rigors of vipassana or insight meditation which involves an often difficult deliberate stilling of mind by focusing just on a tiny detail of the breathing system; watching the whisper of air crossing the nostrils with each and out breath. Its delight once mastered, lies in its absolutely simplicity or minimalism. But watching closely such a tiny detail of the living body also requires discipline.

- Settle comfortably in a familiar meditation posture. Ease free any tensions.
- Focus on the breath for a few minutes till you feel the chattering mind begin slowly to focus while allowing stray thoughts to fade into the background.
- When persistent thoughts arise just detach, discard, disengage and leave them till later. Come back to the breath when you lose it.
- You can just watch each breath sequence or anchor your mind in the flow of air by counting each breath if that works for you, or chanting a word phrase or mantra or float with the movement of your breath or zoom in on the gap between each breath, and float in that gap, as a moment of stillness.
- When you are ready, re-focus just on the entry and exit of air from the nostrils with each breath. Notice the subtlety of that sensation. Zoom in paying close attention to the rhythm and the flow of the air with each breath but just on the entry/ exit point of air in each breath from the body.
- Be aware of how reliant we are on that paradoxical connection of body energy and functioning with what is all around us, free, abundant and (often but not always) fresh and clean. It powers our very existence from moment to moment.
- Appreciate the essential simplicity of what you are doing.
- End this meditation as you desire. Two minutes or two hours. It is entirely up to you.