

Breathing sensitive to *Sukkha* (variously: *bliss, happiness, joy*)

What do to: Take 5 minutes to learn, 5 minutes to apply, and 5 minutes to enjoy the result.

What to expect: During these exercises your body and mind will relax and become open and charged. You may experience some visual phenomena or zest of the body. Then you will feel a slight dizziness that slowly transforms into *sukkha* as it rises up and spreads outwards. Enjoy the effortless happiness. Solidify into *jhana* or move up and down the *ghanas* if you wish. Afterwards you will feel improved mood and energy for some time.

Prior knowledge: Preparation: be able to meditate on the breath from a relaxed upright seated posture. Optionally: have some experience of *Piti* (variously: *zest, rapture, thrill* of the body).

Learn the following four breathing methods (M-A-S-I)

1. **Mantra breathing.** Breathe slowly through the nose, feeling the breath inside the top of the nostrils, while internally chanting the Mantra – ‘So ... Hum’. Say to yourself ‘So’ on the inbreath, ‘Hum’ on the outbreath.
2. **Yogic alternate nostril breathing.** Rest the first two fingers of your right hand in the middle of your forehead. Use your thumb and third finger to alternately close and open each nostril. Breathe deeply, in through the left nostril and out through the right nostril, then in through the right nostril and out through the left nostril. Internally chant to match to match each breath, such as ‘So’ ... ‘Hum’ ... ‘And’ ... ‘One’.
3. **Sufi breathing.** Breathe in a deep relaxed fashion while changing the in-out breathing sequence as follows; four breaths nose-nose, four breaths nose-mouth, four breaths mouth-mouth, four breaths mouth-nose, four breaths nose-nose but now very faint and wispy. Internally count the breaths in each set of four (‘One ...’ for the inbreath ... ‘And’ for the outbreath).
4. **Intense breathing.** Follow the Sufi sequence but move on after one in-out breath and drop the final wispy breath. A complete set will therefore be nose-nose, nose-mouth, mouth-mouth, mouth-nose. Repeat eight times, making your breathing deep, strong, and fast, and increasing the breathing intensity with each set.

Apply the four breathing methods

Preparation: Sit upright on your seat bones, pelvis tilted forward, back straight, a slight curve in the spine, head up, hands in your lap. Use cushions for support if you like to minimize muscular effort, reduce oxygen use, and help align the spine. Gently breathe in and out a few times to relax.

1. Do **Mantra** breathing four times, concentrating on the breath and mantra.
2. Do four complete sets of yogic **alternate nostril** breathing, concentrating on the breath and on counting.
3. Do one complete set of **Sufi** breathing, concentrating on the breath and on counting.
4. Do eight sets of **intense** breathing, concentrating on the breath alone, until you feel a little dizzy.
5. Let your breath go wispy and watch the dizziness fade, then observe energy moving from your heart upwards to fill the space above your head; smile, so effortless happiness build ups after 30-45 seconds.
6. Optionally, intensify the happiness by attaching feelings of goodwill, or by visualizing your body floating like a water lily in a pond, with your body as the stem, the crown of your head as the flower in the sun, and your skin feeling silky from floating in the water.

*Written by Malcolm and offered freely for the benefit of all
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