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## The Eight Spiritual Breaths

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## Preface

Until recently, Brahma Vidya was taught as a course in self-development. It was designed to help aspirants access their unlimited inner potential. The intention was to work towards a positive, more desirable change within: one that would give access to higher knowledge and also fill one with peace, wisdom and compassion – all of which combine to transform human beings and make for a better world.

My own experience has clearly revealed that there is a lot more to human beings than the senses can feel or perceive. This course brings into our own direct experience and knowledge, the realisation that our ego is not our true being. Rather, our true being is the reality that never changes, and is not bound by time or space. It is immortal and self-existent. It always was, is, and ever will be. Since one's true being is not bound by time or space, it cannot be grasped through the senses or the mind. It can only be experienced. This realisation helped me to further expand the scope and depth of the Brahma Vidya course, which led me to compile this knowledge in the course of The Eight Spiritual Breaths.

Human awareness is now making rapid breakthroughs in accessing new dimensions in consciousness. As Brahma Vidya is a science of evolution, it has to be kept updated and in harmony with the developing consciousness. To ensure this, Living Masters are sent at intervals to release the code in the 'practice'. The sages have said that one who accepts tradition without independent personal thought does not perform any individual function in relation to human progress. He who accepts all

the traditions of the past, subjects them to critical evaluation and adds the benefits of his own experiences is the true propagator of light and an important factor in the higher evolution of mankind.

The basic Brahma Vidya course, under the guidance of Justice M. L. Dudhat, has evolved to a level hitherto not achieved. It has developed into a course that will lead an aspirant into the subtle planes of existence, if practised with awareness and understanding.

The breathing techniques are designed to activate the *chakras*, which will help an individual systematically access the descending and ascending energies of the *Kundalini*. This will, in turn, enable the aspirant to enter the experiential stage where knowledge is gained at the subtle level from subtle dimensions.

## The Brimming Cup of Tea

A spiritual seeker who was eagerly in search of enlightenment and had performed many years of study and *sadhana*, now felt that he was ready for the final 'touch'. Thus, he went out in search of the guru who could grant him true enlightenment. Everyone told him that high on top of a certain mountain lived a Master who could bestow enlightenment upon his disciples. The seeker travelled for weeks on foot to reach the Master in his cave. On arriving there, he fell down at the Master's feet and proclaimed his earnest wish for enlightenment. He then proceeded to tell the Master of all the sadhana he had done, everything that he had learned and experienced, and that which he felt he still needed to attain.

The Master listened silently. When the seeker finally finished the long explanation of his own spiritual experiences, the Master said, "Let us have a cup of tea." The seeker looked shocked, "A cup of tea?" he exclaimed. "I've practised for years, meditated for years, searched for months, and walked for weeks in order to reach you so I could finally be granted enlightenment. I do not want a cup of tea. I want to be liberated!"

However, the Master calmly insisted that his visitor first have a cup of tea. Placing a cup in front of the seeker, he started to pour the tea. He continued pouring it until it began to overflow and spill onto the floor of the cave.

"Stop! Stop!" cried the seeker. "What are you doing? Can't you see the cup is overflowing? Please stop pouring... it is all going to waste!"

## The Eight Spiritual Breaths

The Master said to the seeker, "You are like this tea cup. You are so full of what you think you know, what you think you've achieved, what you think you've seen and what you think you need, that there is no room for me to teach you anything. Until you empty yourself of your ego and illusions, my teaching will go to waste."

So come, dear seeker, with an empty mind to receive the ancient wisdom, practice and benefits of these Breathing Exercises.

## Origins of Brahma Vidya

The origins of the ancient wisdom of the Spiritual Breaths are lost in time. The earliest recorded reference we have dates back to well over a thousand years.

At that time, the University of Nalanda was a world-renowned Buddhist centre of learning. Guru Padmasambhava (730 AD – 805 AD), who was a renowned yogi and tantric, was head of the Department of Yoga and Philosophy at Nalanda. According to one of the numerous legends, he foresaw the destruction of Nalanda by foreign invaders and, along with his chosen students, migrated to Tibet. His sacred teachings, a closely guarded secret, were handed down to his chosen disciples and, in turn to their followers, over generations. Among these teachings was a set of powerful Breathing Exercises that had been designed to help human beings realise their highest potential. These Breathing Exercises were mastered by Edwin J. Dingle, a spiritual seeker from the West, who was studying at the monastery in Tibet. He later returned to his country and created a course based on these Breathing Exercises and called it 'Mental Physics' – which he described as a 'universal spiritual development' technique. He taught this course to his students and, shortly after, offered it as a correspondence course for the benefit of spiritually inclined people around the world.

In Mumbai, K. S. Ramanathan completed this correspondence course and received permission to conduct it here. He called it the Brahma Vidya/Initiate Group Course and founded the Brahma Vidya Institute. This course was imparted in Mumbai through lectures, as well as a correspondence course, to all those who were eager to imbibe the knowledge.

The Brahma Vidya course consists of Eight Breathing Exercises and their respective Affirmations. They start with *Pranayama* and end with meditation. It is designed to awaken as Ramanathanji says, the knowledge about “What life is, what the origin of life is, what the continuation of life is, and that which causes it all.”

Among his earliest students was Justice M. L. Dudhat of the Bombay High Court. After completing the course, practicing it himself for three years, and seeing the benefits that the Breathing Exercises bestowed, Justice Dudhat became a firm believer in them. In 1985, he began conducting the course of Brahma Vidya at different locations across Mumbai.

I studied the course under Justice Dudhat and my personal spiritual awakening occurred in 1995, while doing the course and absorbing the teaching. During the process of my awakening, I had remarkable visions and direct experiences which were documented by me. These illustrated the transformation that the body-mind organism goes through, during the practise of the Breaths, in order to access the highest Truth. My experiences formed the basis of adding invaluable insights to the teachings, thereby expanding the scope and depth of the course, which I then compiled in my book – *The Eight Spiritual Breaths*.

A serious study and dedicated practise of The Eight Spiritual Breaths can take the practitioners on a journey of deep spiritual unfoldment and personal transformation. The aspirants then gain a deeper understanding of the essence of their own true nature. This results in the enhancement of one’s creative potential, increased levels of calmness, attainment of robust health and higher energy levels. It has been designed to provide you with the necessary steps you will need to achieve mastery of your life across all dimensions.

The course consists of (i) Pranayama, (ii) Eight Breathing Exercises, (iii) Affirmations and (iv) Meditation.



## Traditions of Spiritual Practice

In earlier times, various systems of philosophy and mysticism designed their practices in relation to the development of consciousness at that time. In these systems, the seeker had to spend a number of years to bring into balance the trinity of his physical, mental and emotional being. This was done in ashrams, away from the distractions of mundane life, through devotion, service, physical discipline and surrender to the guru. That has now changed, and the knowledge that was imparted to a select few is now being offered to humanity at large. This is because human consciousness has taken a quantum leap at this stage of our evolution. In order to assist a larger number of seekers on their path, the knowledge that was kept well-guarded, is now being manifested in several forms. My own experience of the knowledge revealed to me has been traced in a visual diary contained in *The Kundalini Trilogy*, that traces the functioning of the Kundalini in the process of transforming the human body, mind and intellect. If one is surrendered, committed and has faith, the universe sends forth the necessary Master and the teachings to help guide the aspirant on his path.

Osho tells us that the Master is a presence, and not a doer. The presence works as a catalytic agent. He is a clear channel and through his presence much happens. It all really depends on the aspirant. If he is receptive and dedicated, the unfolding occurs. If the aspirant makes an intention and wishes to receive guidance, persons in and around the aspirant's field will appear at every step to facilitate the aspirant's progress on the spiritual path.

If he is not receptive, he limits the unfolding of the process. It all depends on how open and surrendered he is to receive what is being directed towards him.

### **Your Sadhana – Daily Practice**

Before the start of your daily practice, you need to invoke the presence of the Master whose teachings you resonate with and, after you finish, you need to express gratitude for the help and guidance you are receiving. If you do not have a Master or guru, you may invoke the presence of the deity you worship or even the presence of someone you respect very highly. The attitude of gratitude generates a very powerful energy field and has tremendous potential to also transform negative energy into positive energy. There is no situation big or small that cannot be healed through the power of gratitude.

Remember, in the beginning, even though you are not sensing it, help is coming anyway. Energy follows thought and all thought has a form. So please know that as soon as you invoke the presence of a Master, it is there. If any questions or apprehensions arise during the practice, you can relax and ask for guidance or clarification, and it will come.

It can come in any form: in a book, in a dialogue with a friend or as a sudden insight. Nothing is left unanswered. There might be a lag time, but the clarification can also be immediate. The whole idea is to remain confident, relaxed and surrendered in the knowledge that no matter what, you will be looked after. If any experience happens, you are not to get focused on it. Just as thoughts come and go, in the same way you are to let go of the experience. Don't get attached to the experience, because it will not resurface. It has come and gone. Attachment of any kind is contracting and restricts growth.

The book you are now holding in your hands has come to you at a time when you are ready to take the challenge and responsibility for your own growth, a time when the human

consciousness has developed to an extent where it is equipped to hasten the process of its evolution and self-actualisation.

What is required of the seeker is clarity of intention, commitment, dedication and surrender. If you are surrendered, you are then taken care of and guided by your higher Self and the ascended Masters.

No life changes are required as such. You can go on with your daily living and family responsibilities. There is no restriction on diet; only indulgence needs to be avoided in all areas. You need to have a fixed place and time for your practice because you are creating a vibration in that place, which will support you. Also, the guidance that is directed towards you will be flowing at that particular time. If your routine is fragmented, the result will also be fragmented. There will not be an organised growth pattern. You need to follow the same rules that you would follow in a class. Just bear in mind that the more fragmented your practise, the more fragmented the result or, rather, no result at all. If you are not a dedicated student, the Masters are not going to be interested; they have other serious aspirants who need their attention. It is not a game you are playing, it is serious study.

When I went into the practise of the programme, I had put forth a very clear intention. It was, to know: "Who am I?", "Where do I come from?" and "Where am I going?"

Once my intention was in place, I earnestly got into the routine of following the set programme. It consisted of scientific, spiritual Breathing Exercises, beginning with Pranayama and lessons in meditation. The Breaths activated the *Ajna* chakra so that I could observe the changes taking place in the mental, emotional and physical body.

*The Eight Spiritual Breaths* is intended to serve as a guide to aspirants and presents signposts to help them navigate their way on the spiritual path, and enable an increased understanding of who we are, and why we are here.

The Breathing Exercises, Affirmations and Meditations given here will help seekers gain a deeper understanding

about the process of spiritual evolution and what it entails. This book also endeavours to clear any misconceptions and various kinds of fears that are associated with the process.

The Masters are doing their work on a massive scale, and at the rate human consciousness is now evolving, it is all the more important that we lend a hand not only by following and putting into practise what they are emphasising, but also by sharing this deeper understanding with more and more aspirants as we progress on the path.

At this point, I would like to share with you an anecdote about The Buddha which I have heard over the years. The disciples of Buddha, when they heard that their Master was ailing and only had a few more hours left to be in the physical form, went to pay homage to their Master and be with him in his final hours. The Buddha is known to have told his disciples: "It is very nice and good of you to have come to pay your homage to your Master and be with him in his final hours. But what would have been even better is that you would have continued with your practice."