

Breathing practices – from Wikipedia

Pranayama

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Pranayama (Sanskrit: प्राणायाम *prāṇāyāma*) is a [Sanskrit](#) word meaning "extension of the prana or breath" or more accurately, "extension of the life force". The word is composed of two Sanskrit words, [Prāna](#), life force, or vital energy, particularly, the breath, and "āyāma", to extend, draw out, restrain, or control.

Etymology

Pranayama ([Devanagari](#): प्राणायाम, *prāṇāyāma*) is a Sanskrit compound.

V. S. Apte provides fourteen different meanings for the word *prana* ([Devanagari](#): प्राण, *prāṇa*) including these:^[1]

- Breath, respiration
- The breath of life, vital air, principle of life (usually plural in this sense, there being five such vital airs generally assumed, but three, six, seven, nine, and even ten are also spoken of)^[2]
- Energy, vigor
- The spirit or soul

Of these meanings, the concept of "vital air" is used by Bhattacharyya to describe the concept as used in Sanskrit texts dealing with pranayama.^[3] Thomas McEvilley translates "prana" as "spirit-energy".^[4] Its most subtle material form is the breath, but is also to be found in blood, and its most concentrated form is semen in men and vaginal fluid in women.^[5]

Monier-Williams defines the compound *prāṇāyāma* as (m., also pl.) "N. of the three 'breath-exercises' performed during Saṃdhyā (*See pūraka, recaka, kumbhaka*)^[6] This technical definition refers to a particular system of breath control with three processes as explained by Bhattacharyya: *pūraka* (to take the breath inside), *kumbhaka* (to retain it), and *recaka* (to discharge it).^[7] There are also other processes of pranayama in addition to this three-step model.^[7]

Macdonell gives the etymology as *prāṇa* + *āyāma* and defines it as "*m.* suspension of breath (*sts. pl.*)".^[8]

Apte's definition of *āyāmaḥ* derives it from *ā* + *yām* and provides several variant meanings for it when used in compounds. The first three meanings have to do with "length", "expansion, extension", and "stretching, extending", but in the specific case of use in the compound *prāṇāyāma* he defines *āyāmaḥ* as meaning "restrain, control, stopping".^[9]

An alternative etymology for the compound is cited by Ramamurti Mishra, who says that:

Expansion of individual energy into cosmic energy is called *prāṇāyāma* (*prāṇa*, energy + *ayām*, expansion).
__^[10]

Someone who studies and teaches Pranayama is called a Pranalogist.

Hatha and Raja Yoga Varieties

Some scholars distinguish between hatha and raja yoga varieties of pranayama, with the former variety usually prescribed for the beginner. According to [Taimni](#), hatha yogic pranayama involves manipulation of pranic currents through breath regulation for bringing about the control of chitta-[vrittis](#) and changes in consciousness, whereas raja yogic pranayama involves the control of chitta-vrittis by consciousness directly through the will of the mind.^[11] Students qualified to practice pranayama are therefore always initiated first in the techniques of hatha pranayama.^[12]

Bhagavad Gītā

Pranayama is mentioned in verse 4.29 of the [Bhagavad Gītā](#).^[13]

According to [Bhagavad-Gītā As It Is](#), "prāṇāyāma" is translated to "trance induced by stopping all breathing", also being made from the two separate Sanskrit words, "prāṇa" and "āyāma".^[14]

Quotes

Prana is a subtle invisible force. It is the life-force that pervades the body. It is the factor that connects the body and the mind, because it is connected on one side with the body and on the other side with the mind. It is the connecting link between the body and the mind. The body and the mind have no direct connection. They are connected through Prana only.

— [Swami Chidananda Saraswati](#)^[15]

Yoga primarily works with the energy in the body through the science of pranayama or energy-control. Prana also means 'breath.' Yoga teaches how to still the mind through breath-control and attain higher states of awareness. The higher teachings of yoga take one beyond techniques and show the yogi or yoga practitioner how to direct his concentration in such a way as not only to harmonize human with divine consciousness, but to merge his consciousness in the Infinite.

— [Paramahansa Yogananda](#)^[16]

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Pranayama is the fourth 'limb' of the eight limbs of [Raja Yoga](#) mentioned in verse 2.29 in the [Yoga Sutras of Patanjali](#).^{[18][19]} Patanjali discusses his specific approach to pranayama in verses 2.49 through 2.51, and devotes verses 2.52 and 2.53 to explaining the benefits of the practice.^[20] Patanjali does not fully elucidate the nature of prana, and the theory and practice of pranayama seem to have undergone significant development

after him.^[21] He presents pranayama as essentially an exercise that is preliminary to concentration, as do the earlier Buddhist texts.^[21]

Many yoga teachers advise that pranayama should be part of an overall practice that includes the other limbs of Patanjali's Raja Yoga teachings, especially [Yama](#), [Niyama](#), and [Asana](#).^[22]

Buddhism

According to the [Pali Buddhist Canon](#), the Buddha prior to his enlightenment practiced a meditative technique which involved pressing the palate with the tongue and forcibly attempting to restrain the breath. This is described as both extremely painful and not conducive to enlightenment.^[23] According to the Buddhist scheme, breathing stops with the fourth [jhana](#), though this is a side-effect of the technique and does not come about as the result of purposeful effort.^[24]

The Buddha did incorporate moderate modulation of the length of breath as part of the preliminary tetrad in the [Anapanasati Sutta](#). Its use there is preparation for concentration.^[21] According to commentarial literature, this is appropriate for beginners.^[25]

For the Buddha, the most important aspect of breath meditation is the consciousness attending to the breath.^[26] Buddhist tradition in general has urged moderation in the area of manipulation of the breath.^[27] On the other hand, the popular Buddhist teacher [Thanissaro Bhikku](#) has advised his students to 'fiddle with the breath' until it becomes comfortable.^[28] See [Anapanasati](#) for more about active and passive breathing.

The practitioners of the yogas of [Mahamudra](#) and [Dzogchen](#) are similar to those reached by the practitioners of Pranayama in that in all cases there is a union with the nondual omnipresent - Brahman in Hinduism or Dharmakaya in Buddhism.^[citation needed] See also [Mysticism](#).

Medical

Several researchers have reported that pranayama techniques are beneficial in treating a range of [stress](#) related [disorders](#),^[29] improving autonomic functions,^[30] relieving symptoms of asthma^[31] (though a different study did not find any improvement^[32]) and reducing signs of [oxidative stress](#).^{[33][34]} Practitioners report that the practice of pranayama develops a steady mind, strong will-power, and sound judgement,^[22] and also claim that sustained pranayama practice extends life and enhances perception.^[35]

Cautions

Many yoga teachers recommend that pranayama techniques be practiced with care, and that advanced pranayama techniques should be practiced under the guidance of a teacher. These cautions are also made in traditional Hindu literature. [Pregnant women](#) may have to forgo Pranayama.^{[36][37][38]}

References

- Crowley, Aleister. 'Eight Lectures on Yoga'. Ordo Templi Orientis, 1939.
 - Bhattacharyya, N. N. *History of the Tantric Religion*. Second Revised Edition. (Manohar: New Delhi, 1999) p. 174. [ISBN 81-7304-025-7](#)
 - Chidananda, Sri Swami (1991). *Path to Blessedness*, 2nd Ed. The Divine Life Society. [World Wide Web \(WWW\) Edition ISBN 978-817052086-3](#).
 - Feuerstein, Georg (1998). *Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy*. Boston: Shambhala Publications. [ISBN 1-57062-304-X](#).
 - Flood, Gavin (1996). *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [ISBN 0-521-43878-0](#).
 - Gambhirananda, Swami (1997). *Bhagavatgītā: With the commentary of Śāṅkarācārya* (4 ed.). Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama Publication Department. [ISBN 81-7505-041-1](#).
 - Harper, Katherine Anne; Brown, Robert L. (2002). *The Roots of Tantra*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press. [ISBN 0-7914-5306-5](#).
 - Iyengar, B. K. Sundara Raja (1985). *The Light On Pranayama: The Yogic Art of Breathing*. [ISBN 0-8245-0686-3](#)
 - Iyengar, B. K. Sundara Raja (1995). *Light on Yoga*. [ISBN 0-8052-1031-8](#)
 - Macdonell, Arthur Anthony (1996). *A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.. [ISBN 81-215-0715-4](#). Reprint edition.
 - Mishra, Ramamurti S. (1963). *The Textbook of Yoga Psychology*. Monroe, New York: Baba Bhagavandas Publication Trust. [ISBN 1-890964-27-1](#). Reprint edition, 1997.
 - Saraswati, Swami Niranjanananda (1994). *Prana Pranayama Prana Vidya*. [ISBN 81-85787-84-0](#)
 - Shaw, Scott. *The Little Book of Yoga Breathing: Pranayama Made Easy*. [ISBN 1-57863-301-X](#)
 - Taimni, I. K. (1996). *The Science of Yoga*. Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House. [ISBN 81-7059-212-7](#). Eight reprint edition.
-

Anapanasati

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

(Redirected from [Anapana](#))

Ānāpānasati (**Pali**; **Sanskrit**: *ānāpānaśmṛti*; **Chinese**: 安那般那; **Pīnyīn**: *ānnàbānnà*), meaning 'mindfulness of breathing' ("sati" means [mindfulness](#); "ānāpāna" refers to inhalation and exhalation), is a form of [Buddhist meditation](#) now common to the [Tibetan](#), [Zen](#), [Tiantai](#), and [Theravada](#) schools of Buddhism, as well as [western-based mindfulness programs](#).

According to tradition, Anapanasati was originally taught by the Buddha in several sutras including the [Ānāpānasati Sutta](#).^[1] Anapanasati means to feel the sensations caused by the movements of the breath in the body, as is practiced in the context of mindfulness.

Origins in Buddhism

Anapanasati is a core meditation practice in [Theravada](#), [Tiantai](#), and [Chán/Zen](#) traditions of Buddhism, as well as a part of many [modern Western mindfulness-based programs](#). In both ancient and modern times, anapanasati by itself is likely the most widely used Buddhist method for contemplating bodily phenomena.^[2]

The [Anapanasati Sutta](#) specifically concerns mindfulness of inhalation and exhalation, as a part of paying attention to one's body in quietude, and recommends the practice of ānāpānasati meditation as a means of cultivating the [seven factors of awakening](#): *sati* (mindfulness), *dhamma vicaya* (analysis), *virīya* (persistence), which leads to *pīti* (rapture), then to *passaddhi* (serenity), which in turn leads to *samadhi* (concentration) and then to *upekkhā* (equanimity). Finally, the Buddha taught that, with these factors developed in this progression, the practice of ānāpānasati would lead to release (Pali: [nibbāna](#); Sanskrit: nirvana) from suffering ([dukkha](#)).

Traditionally, *anapanasati* has been used as a basis for developing *meditative concentration* ([samadhi](#)) until reaching the state and practice of *full absorption* ([jhana](#)). It is the same state reached by the Buddha during his quest for Enlightenment.^[3]^[*clarification needed*]

The practice

Traditional sources

See also: [Anapanasati Sutta](#)

A traditional method given by The Buddha in the [Satipatthana Sutta](#) is to go into the forest and sit beneath a tree and then to simply watch the breath, if the breath is long, to notice that the breath is long, if the breath is short, to notice that the breath is short.^{[4][5]}

While inhaling and exhaling, the meditator practises:

- training the mind to be sensitive to one or more of: the entire body, rapture, pleasure, the mind itself, and mental processes
- training the mind to be focused on one or more of: inconstancy, dispassion, cessation, and relinquishment
- steadying, satisfying, or releasing the mind.

A popular non-[canonical](#) method used today, loosely based on the [Visuddhimagga](#), follows four stages:

1. repeatedly counting exhalations in cycles of 10
2. repeatedly counting inhalations in cycles of 10
3. focusing on the breath without counting
4. focusing only on the spot where the breath enters and leaves the nostrils (i.e., the nostril and upper lip area).^[6]

Modern sources

First, for the practice to be successful, one should dedicate the practice, and set out the goal of the meditation session.^[7] One may decide to either practice ānāpānasati while [seated](#) or while [walking](#), or to alternate seated and walking meditation.^[8] Then one may concentrate on the breath going through one's nose: the pressure in the nostrils on each inhalation, and the feeling of the breath moving along the upper lip on each exhalation.^[8] Other times practitioners are advised to attend to the breath at the [tanden](#), a point slightly below the [navel](#) and beneath the surface of the body.^[9] Practitioners may choose to count each inhalation, "1, 2, 3,..." and so on, up to 10, and then begin from 1 again. Alternatively people sometimes count the exhalation, "1, 2, 3,..." on both the inhalation and exhalation.^[9] If the count is lost then one should start again from the beginning.

The type of practice recommended in [The Three Pillars of Zen](#) is for one to count "1, 2, 3,..." on the inhalation for a while, then to eventually switch to counting on the exhalation, then eventually, once one has more consistent success in keeping track of the count, to begin to pay attention to the breath without counting. There are practitioners who count the breath all their lives as well.^[10] Beginning students are often advised to keep a brief daily practice of around 10 or 15 minutes a day. Also, a teacher or guide of some sort is often considered to be essential in Buddhist practice, as well as the sangha, or community of Buddhists, for support.

When one becomes distracted from the breath, which happens to both beginning and adept practitioners, either by a thought or something else, then one simply returns their attention back to the breath. Philippe Goldin has

said that important "learning" occurs at the moment when practitioners turn their attention back to the object of focus, the breath.^[11]

Active breathing, passive breathing

See also: [Pranayama](#)

Anapanasati is most commonly practiced with attention centered on the breath, without any effort to change the breathing.

In the [throat singing](#) prevalent amongst the [Buddhist](#) monks of [Tibet](#) and [Mongolia](#)^[12] the long and slow outbreath during chanting is the core of the practice. The sound of the chant also serves to focus the mind in one-pointed concentration [samadhi](#), while the sense of self dissolves as awareness becomes absorbed into a realm of pure sound.

In some Japanese [Zen](#) meditation, the emphasis is upon maintaining "*strength in the abdominal area*"^[13] ([dantian](#) or "tanden") and slow deep breathing during the long outbreath, again to assist the attainment of a mental state of one-pointed concentration. There is also a "bamboo method," during which time one inhales and exhales in punctuated bits, as if running one's hand along the stalk of a bamboo tree.^[10]

[Pranayama](#), or Yogic breath control, is very popular in traditional and modern forms of Yoga.

Scientifically demonstrated benefits

See also: [Research on meditation](#)

The practice of focusing one's attention changes the brain in ways to improve that ability over time; the brain grows in response to meditation.^[14] Meditation can be thought of as mental training, similar to learning to ride a bike or play a piano.

Meditators experienced in focused attention meditation (anapanasati is a type of focused attention meditation) showed a decrease in habitual responding a 20-minute Stroop test, which, as suggested by Davidson and colleagues, may illustrate a lessening of emotionally reactive and automatic responding behavior.^[14] It has been scientifically demonstrated that ānāpānasati slows down the natural aging process of the brain.^[15]

Stages of Ānāpānasati

Formally, there are sixteen stages – or contemplations – of *ānāpānasati*. These are divided into four tetrads (i.e., sets or groups of four). The first four steps involve focusing the mind on breathing, which is the 'body-conditioner' ([Pali](#): *kāya-sankhāra*). The second tetrad involves focusing on the feelings (*vedanā*), which are the 'mind-conditioner' ([Pali](#): *citta-sankhāra*). The third tetrad involves focusing on the mind itself ([Pali](#): *citta*), and the fourth on 'mental qualities' ([Pali](#): *dhamma*). (Compare [right mindfulness](#) and [satipatthana](#).)

Any ānāpānasati meditation session should progress through the stages in order, beginning at the first, whether the practitioner has performed all stages in a previous session or not. [\[citation needed\]](#)

Satipaṭṭhāna	Ānāpānasati	Tetrads
1. Contemplation of the body	1. Breathing long	First Tetrad
	2. Breathing short	
	3. Experiencing the whole body	
	4. Tranquillising the bodily activities	
2. Contemplation of feelings	5. Experiencing rapture	Second Tetrad
	6. Experiencing bliss	
	7. Experiencing mental activities	
	8. Tranquillising mental activities	
3. Contemplation of the mind	9. Experiencing the mind	Third Tetrad
	10. Gladdening the mind	
	11. Centering the mind in samadhi	
	12. Releasing the mind	
4. Contemplation of Dhammas	13. Contemplating impermanence	Fourth Tetrad
	14. Contemplating fading of lust	
	15. Contemplating cessation	
	16. Contemplating relinquishment	

In the Theravada tradition

According to several teachers in Theravada Buddhism, anapanasati alone will lead to the removal of all one's defilements (*kilesa*) and eventually to [enlightenment](#).

Anapanasati can also be practised with other traditional meditation subjects including the [four frames of reference](#)^[16] and [mettā bhāvanā](#),^[17] as is done in modern Theravadan Buddhism.

In the Chinese tradition



Buddhacinga, a monk who came to China and widely propagated ānāpānasmṛti methods.

In the 2nd century CE, the Buddhist monk An Shigao came from Northwest India to China and became one of the first translators of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese. He translated a version of the Ānāpānasmṛti Sūtra between 148 CE and 170 CE. This version is a significantly longer text than what appears in the [Ekottara Āgama](#), and is entitled, "The Great Ānāpānasmṛti Sūtra" (Ch. 大安般守意經) ([Taishō Tripitaka](#) 602).

At a later date, Buddhacinga, more commonly known as [Fotudeng](#) (佛圖澄) (231-349 CE), came from Central Asia to China in 310 CE and propagated Buddhism widely. He is said to have demonstrated many spiritual powers, and was able to convert the warlords in this region of China over to Buddhism.^[18] He is well known for teaching methods of meditation, and especially ānāpānasmṛti. Fotudeng widely taught ānāpānasmṛti through methods of counting breaths, so as to temper to the breathing, simultaneously focusing the mind into a state of peaceful meditative concentration.^[19] By teaching meditation methods as well as doctrine, Fotudeng popularized Buddhism quickly. According to [Nan Huaijin](#), "Besides all its theoretical accounts of emptiness and existence, Buddhism also offered methods for genuine realization of spiritual powers and meditative concentration that could be relied upon. This is the reason that Buddhism began to develop so vigorously in China with Fotudeng."^[19]

As more monks such as [Kumārajīva](#), Dharmanandi, Gautama Saṃghadeva, and [Buddhabhadra](#) came to the East, translations of meditation texts did as well, which often taught various methods of ānāpānasmṛti that were being used in India. These became integrated in various Buddhist traditions, as well as into non-Buddhist traditions such as [Daoism](#).

In the 6th century CE, the [Tiantai](#) school was formed, teaching the One Vehicle (Skt. [Ekayāna](#)), the vehicle of attaining [Buddhahood](#), as the main principle, and three forms of [śamatha-vipaśyanā](#) correlated with the meditative perspectives of emptiness, provisional existence, and the mean, as the method of cultivating realization.^[20] The Tiantai school places emphasis on ānāpānasmṛti in accordance with the principles of śamatha and vipaśyanā. In China, the Tiantai understanding of meditation has had the reputation of being the most systematic and comprehensive of all.^[21] The founder of the Tiantai school, [Śramaṇa Zhiyi](#), wrote many commentaries and treatises on meditation. Of these texts, Zhiyi's *Concise Śamatha-vipaśyanā* (小止觀 *Xiǎo Zhǐguān*), his *Mahā-śamatha-vipaśyanā* (摩訶止觀 *Móhē Zhǐguān*), and his *Six Subtle Dharma Gates* (六妙法門 *Liù Miào Fǎmén*) are the most widely read in China.^[21] Zhiyi classifies breathing into four main categories: panting (喘 "chuǎn"), unhurried breathing (風 "fēng"), deep and quiet breathing (氣 "qì"), and stillness or rest (息 "xì"). Zhiyi holds that the first three kinds of breathing are incorrect, while the fourth is correct, and that the breathing should reach stillness and rest.^[22] Venerable [Hsuan Hua](#), who taught [Chán/Zen](#) and [Pure Land Buddhism](#), also taught that the external breathing reaches a state of stillness in correct meditation.^[23]

A practitioner with sufficient skill does not breathe externally. That external breathing has stopped, but the internal breathing functions. With internal breathing there is no exhalation through the nose or mouth, but all pores on the body are breathing. A person who is breathing internally appears to be dead, but actually he has not died. He does not breathe externally, but the internal breathing has come alive.

In the Indo-Tibetan tradition

In the Tibetan Buddhist lineage, anapanasati is done to calm the mind in order to prepare one for various other practices.

Two of the most important Mahāyāna philosophers, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* chapter of the [Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra](#) and the [Abhidharma-kośa](#), respectively, make it clear that they consider ānāpānasmṛti a profound practice leading to vipaśyanā (in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha in the Sutra pitika).^[24] However, as scholar Leah Zahler has demonstrated, "the practice traditions related to Vasubandhu's or Asaṅga's presentations of breath meditation were probably not transmitted to Tibet."^[25] Asaṅga correlates the sixteen stages ānāpānasmṛti with the four smṛtyupasthānas in the same way that the Ānāpānasmṛti Sutra does, but because he does not make this explicit the point was lost on later Tibetan commentators.^[26]

As a result, the largest Tibetan lineage, the [Geluk](#), came to view ānāpānasmṛti as a mere preparatory practice useful for settling the mind but nothing more.^[27] Zahler writes:

The practice tradition suggested by the Treasury itself--and also by Asaṅga's Grounds of Hearers--is one in which mindfulness of breathing becomes a basis for inductive reasoning on such topics as the five aggregates; as a result of such inductive reasoning, the meditator progresses through the Hearer paths of preparation, seeing, and meditation. It seems at least possible that both Vasubandhu and Asaṅga presented their respective versions of such a method, analogous to but different from modern Theravāda insight meditation, and that Gelukpa scholars were unable to reconstruct it in the absence of a practice tradition because of the great difference between this type of inductive meditative reasoning based on observation and the types of meditative reasoning using consequences (*thal 'gyur, prasaṅga*) or syllogisms (*sbyor ba, prayoga*) with which Gelukpas were familiar. Thus, although Gelukpa scholars give detailed interpretations of the systems of breath meditation set forth in Vasubandhu's and Asaṅga's texts, they may not fully account for the higher stages of breath meditation set forth in those texts. . . it appears that neither the Gelukpa textbook writers nor modern scholars such as Lati Rinpoche and Gendun Lodro were in a position to conclude that the first moment of the fifth stage of Vasubandhu's system of breath meditation coincides with the attainment of special insight and that, therefore, the first four stages must be a method for cultivating special insight.^[28]

Zahler continues, "it appears . . . that a meditative tradition consisting of analysis based on observation—inductive reasoning within meditation—was not transmitted to Tibet; what Gelukpa writers call analytical

meditation is syllogistic reasoning within meditation. Thus, Jamyang Shaypa fails to recognize the possibility of an 'analytical meditation' based on observation, even when he cites passages on breath meditation from Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* and, especially, Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers* that appear to describe it."^[29]

[Stephen Batchelor](#), who for years was monk in the Gelukpa lineage, experienced this firsthand. He writes, "such systematic practice of mindfulness was not preserved in the Tibetan traditions. The Gelugpa lamas know about such methods and can point to long descriptions of mindfulness in their Abhidharma works, but the living application of the practice has largely been lost. (Only in *dzog-chen*, with the idea of 'awareness' [*rig pa*] do we find something similar.) For many Tibetans the very term 'mindfulness' (*sati* in Pali, rendered in Tibetan by *dran pa*) has come to be understood almost exclusively as 'memory' or 'recollection.'"^[30]

As Batchelor noted, however, in other traditions, particularly the [Kagyu](#) and [Nyingma](#), mindfulness based on ānāpānasmṛti practice is considered to be quite profound means of calming the mind to prepare it for the higher practices of [Dzogchen](#) and [Mahamudra](#). For the Kagyupa, in the context of mahāmudrā, ānāpānasmṛti is thought to be the ideal way for the meditator to transition into taking the mind itself as the object of meditation and generating vipaśyanā on that basis.^[31] The prominent contemporary Kagyu/Nyingma master [Chogyam Trungpa](#), echoing the Kagyu Mahāmudrā view, wrote, "your breathing is the closest you can come to a picture of your mind. It is the portrait of your mind in some sense. . . . The traditional recommendation in the lineage of meditators that developed in the Kagyu-Nyingma tradition is based on the idea of mixing mind and breath."^[32] The Gelukpa allow that it is possible to take the mind itself as the object of meditation, however, Zahler reports, the Gelukpa discourage it with "what seems to be thinly disguised sectarian polemics against the Nyingma Great Completeness [Dzogchen] and Kagyu Great Seal [mahāmudrā] meditations."^[33]

In the *Pañcakrama* tantric tradition ascribed to (the Vajrayana) [Nagarjuna](#), ānāpānasmṛti counting breaths is said to be sufficient to provoke an experience of vipaśyanā (although it occurs in the context of "formal tantric practice of the completion stage in highest yogatantra").^{[34][35]}

Sources

Primary sources

- [Thanissaro Bhikkhu](#) (trans.) (1995a). *Ananda Sutta: To Ananda (On Mindfulness of Breathing)* ([SN](#) 54.13). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight" at: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn54/sn54.013.than.html>.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (1995b). *Satipatthana Sutta: Frames of Reference* ([MN](#) 10). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight" at: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.010.than.html>.

- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (1997). *Kayagata-sati Sutta: Mindfulness Immersed in the Body* ([MN 119](#)). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight" at: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.119.than.html>.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (2000). *Maha-satipatthana Sutta: The Great Frames of Reference* ([DN 22](#)). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight: Readings in Theravada Buddhism," at <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.22.0.than.html>.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (2006a). *Arittha Sutta: To Arittha (On Mindfulness of Breathing)* ([SN 54.6](#)). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight" at: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn54/sn54.006.than.html>.
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (trans.) (2006b). *Dipa Sutta: The Lamp* ([SN 54.8](#)). Retrieved on 2007-05-20 from "Access to Insight" at: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn54/sn54.008.than.html>.

Secondary sources

- Anālayo (2006). *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Birmingham, England: Windhorse Publications. [ISBN 1-899579-54-0](#).
- Kamalashila (1996; 2004 [2nd ed.]). *Meditation: The Buddhist Way of Tranquillity and Insight*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications. [ISBN 1-899579-05-2](#). Available on-line at http://kamalashila.co.uk/Meditation_Web/index.htm.

Further reading

- *Mindfulness with Breathing* by Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu. Wisdom Publications, Boston, 1996. [ISBN 0-86171-111-4](#).
- *Breath by Breath* by Larry Rosenberg. Shambhala Classics, Boston, 1998. [ISBN 1-59030-136-6](#).
- *Tranquillity and Insight* by Amadeo Sole-Leris. Shambhala, 1986. [ISBN 0-87773-385-6](#).

External links

- [Majjhima Nikaya 118: Ānāpānasati Sutta](#)
- [Ekottara Āgama 17.1: The Ānāpānasmṛti Sūtra](#)
- [Analysis of the Ānāpānasati Sutta](#)
- [Ānāpānasati](#), a free e-book by [Buddhadasa Bhikkhu](#)
- [Ānāpānasati – Mindfulness with Breathing: Unveiling the Secrets of Life](#) by [Buddhadasa Bhikkhu](#)
- [Ānāpānasati instructions](#) from Ajahn Pasanno of Abhayagiri Buddhist Monastery

- [Ānāpānasati: 35 Talks](#) by Ajahn Pasanno
- [Ānāpānasati instructions](#) from Bhante Vimalaramsi
- [Ānāpānasati: A concise instruction](#) by Pa Auk Sayadaw
- [Basic Breath Meditation Instructions](#) by [Thanissaro Bhikkhu](#)
- [The Basic Method of Meditation](#) by [Ajahn Brahm](#)