

## 20 IMPORTANT REASONS TO WORK WITH YOUR BREATH

By Dennis Lewis

Many of us have a narrow view of the relationship of how we breathe to health, healing, and spirituality. As a result of this narrow view, we often don't really understand the significance of the particular exercises and practices we try. This lack of understanding often undermines and distorts our efforts and keeps us from experiencing the many Benefits of these practices—if indeed we continue to try them at all.

When undertaking breathing exercises of any kind, it is important, therefore, to understand the specific functions of these exercises. Only in this way can you verify over time whether they are helping you or not.

Here, in no particular order, are 20 possible reasons for working with your breathing. While some of the safe, natural practices I teach relate to many of these functions simultaneously, some practices are designed for one or two very specific goals.

1. Provide our cells, organs, and tissues with sufficient oxygen for optimal functioning and healing.
2. Support lymphatic and venous blood flow.
3. Massage and detoxify our organs and tissues.
4. Strengthen our diaphragm and increase our lung capacity.
5. Co-ordinate the various breathing muscles for more efficient breathing.
6. Help focus our attention and direct our energy for healing.
7. Reflect the mental and emotional forces at work in us for increased self-knowledge.
8. Alter the way we think, feel, or perform.
9. Facilitate communication between the conscious and unconscious parts of ourselves.
10. Act as a bridge between mind, body, and spirit for balance, harmony, and spiritual growth.
11. Induce resonance among the various energies and rhythms at work in us.
12. Help us harmonise our nervous system, particularly in relation to stress.
13. Help with specific medical problems we may have.
14. Help ground us.
15. Increase our fundamental vitality.
16. Deepen meditation.
17. Increase communication between the left and right hemispheres of the brain.
18. Expand our awareness of ourselves and the world.
19. Connect us more consciously with others.
20. Learn to live in the present moment with real presence.

There are many more reasons to work with your breathing, of course, but this brief list may help broaden the way you look at the significance of your breath.