

The Elemental Breaths

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| | Inhale Exhale | Color & Shape | Breath Rhythm | Qualities | Effective Against | Special Instructions |
|---|-------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| EARTH <i>Strengthens Discrimination</i> | Nose/Nose 5x | Yellow Square | No pause, even rhythm | Strength Resilience Responsibility Nurturing Abundance Peacefulness | Spacing out Fear Poverty Lack of purpose | Breathe energy from the Earth up through the base of the spine, to the level of the Heart center. Release on exhale down into the Earth. Feel solidly grounded. Helpful especially when feeling “spacey”. |
| WATER <i>Strengthens Mind and Emotion</i> | Nose/Mouth 5x | Green/Aqua Crescent | No pause, emphasize exhalation | Purity Flexibility Love for others Cooperativeness Compassion Shape-shifting | Rigidity Stubbornness Resentment Feeling stuck Withdrawal | On inhale, focus on region above Crown center. On exhale, feel a shower of water pouring down, around and through you, cleansing you inside and out. Helps you to go with the flow when feeling stiff or stuck. |
| FIRE <i>Purifies the Intention of the Heart</i> | Mouth/Nose 5x | Red (in) gold (out) Triangle | Emphasize inhalation | Transmutation Energy Courage Truthfulness Enthusiasm Creativity | Depression Lack of freedom Vulnerability Cold-heartedness Pessimism | Breathe fire into the solar plexus. Then, raising it to the Heart center, radiate it out from your heart in all directions as a golden ball of light. Provides increased energy, enhances one’s ability to transform energy |
| AIR <i>Experiencing Spaciousness</i> | Mouth/Mouth 5x | Sky Blue Circle | No pause, light breath | Sensitivity Intelligence Discrimination Insight/Intuition | Confusion Despair Heaviness Addiction | Breathe gently in and out. Feel yourself as porous, with great spaces between your cells and atoms. Sense your true nature as a spiritual being who has chosen to experience physicality. |
| ETHER <i>Expansion into Divine Intelligence</i> | Nose/Nose 5x | Smoky/misty All colors/ No colors Formless | Very fine, light breath | Detachment Quickening of the Ethereic Body | Negativity Limitation | Place attention on a point about 8 inches above the crown center. Breath should be very refined, releasing negativity |

Regular practice of the Elemental Breaths will support and enhance inner development, physical well-being and emotional clearing. It may be done meditatively, prior to meditation, or to “charge one's batteries” at the beginning of the day, or while walking. The breaths are especially useful in providing balance during stressful situations or to strengthen certain energetic tendencies. For supplemental reading, the following are recommended: *Awakening: A Sufi Experience*, by Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan (Tarcher/Putnam, New York, 1999), and *Living From The Heart*, by Puran Bair (Three Rivers Press, New York, 1998).

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