**Turning Breath Meditation**

Introduction

* In this meditation, called “Turning Breath,” you are invited to focus on the flow of the breath once more. However, in this practice the emphasis is the turning or the changeover of the breath from in to out and out to in breath. I find it helps to think of the symbol for infinity (show symbol) to help me visualise the cyclical process of the changeover of the breath. As I follow the shape of the symbol it illustrates for me the slow ascent from the in breath to the out, the pause, and the ascent to the out from the in breath. I find it helps me visualise the turning of the breath as I see it climb before peaking, pausing and descending. Maybe it can help you? Another way to visualise this practice is to think of a pendulum swinging upwards and how the pendulum is already affected by gravity and slowing to return downwards despite it’s upward trajectory. Towards the end of the end of the inhalation, but before it has finished, the process of exhalation has already started to be instigated. And the same for exhalation to inhalation. This is the turning of the breath which you are invited to focus on in this meditation.

Sitting

* Sit comfortably with whatever props you need to maintain long open spine and comfortable ankles and knees.
* Consciously root down into your sitting bones to feel a grounding and a taller spine. Notice how this enables a more natural flow of the breath. Have a sense of the head floating on top of the spine. Feel from the crown of the head down to the ground. Allow the shoulder blades to release down your back and bring your chin slightly down. Palms can rest in the lap or in a mudra on the knees.

Settling

* Draw attention to your breath.
* Allow the breath to flow softly and quietly, simply watching it and without trying to change it in any way.
* When your mind wanders, without judgement, simply bring it back to the practice.
* Feel and visualise the breath flowing through your nostrils, down through your throat and into your lungs. Feel the breath expanding the lungs from the inside out.
* Allow the breath to flow naturally out of your body.
* Allow your mind to become completely absorbed in the flow of the breath, noticing where it arises and where it falls.

Turning Breath

* Become aware of the turning of the breath – that point where the in-breath climbs and peak, pauses and then falls into the out breath and the outbreath climbs, peaks, pauses and returns to the in breath like the crest of waves, forever turning.
* Noticing the seed of the in-breath growing as the out-breath fades away.
* For a moment the breath is neither in nor out, it is neutral. If we are our breath, then at this point we are just “being.”
* When your mind wanders, without judgement, simply bring it back to the practice.
* Stay fully absorbed with the breath and allow it to flow freely.
* Notice the pause before the turn of the breath. Feel the stillness of the pause.
* Notice the natural quietening of the mind.
* Notice the spaciousness and openness as you release the in-breath to flow into the out breath.
* Stay with the practice, noticing the continuing cycle of breath just like summer follows winter, day follows night, like the waves drawing in and out continuously. Focus on the seed of the turning of the breath.
* Release the focus of the practice and spend the next minute enjoying the sensation of the practice.

