

Universal Worship
“Mindfulness Through Breath”
September 8, 2024

Hinduism

Praise to your coming and going, Breath,
Praise to your rising and to your setting, Breath!

Praise to you, Breath of Life,
For both breathing in and out!
For turning to this side and to that,
Praise to all of you, everywhere!

Breath of Life, grant your blessed form
To us that we may live!
Give us your healing power!

The Breath of Life cares for all beings
Like a parent their child;
Master of all life, breathing or not.

We breathe in, we breathe out,
Even within the womb.
Quickened and enlivened by you,

And you bring us to birth!

Breath of Life, please do not forsake me,
You are, indeed, everything that I am.
As the embryo of all potential,
I bind myself to you, that I may live!

Atharva Veda XI, 4:1-10, 14, 26

Buddhism

A bhikku having gone to the forest,
To the foot of a tree, or a solitary place,
Sits down cross legged, the body erect,
And directs the mind to the object of mindfulness;
Then, with mindfulness, breathes in and breathes out:
Inhaling a long breath—"I inhale a long breath,"
Exhaling a long breath—"I exhale a long breath,"
Inhaling a short breath—"I inhale a short breath,"
Exhaling a short breath—"I inhale a short breath;"
Aware of this whole body of breath, I breathe in,
Aware of the whole body of breath, I breathe out,
Calming the process of breathing, I breathe in,
Calming the process of breathing, I breathe out,
Thus does the bhikku train awareness.

Mahasatipatanasutta

Zoroastrianism

O Ahura Mazda, I found You progressive and productive when
Good Thought came to me, and taught that the best path to
progress is meditating in Serenity...

Gatha 8:15

Taoism

Empty yourself of everything.
Let the mind become still.
The ten thousand things rise and fall
While the self watches their return.
They grow and flourish
And then return to the source.
Returning to the source is stillness,
Which is the way of nature.

Tao Te Ching (Lao Tsu)

Indigenous

Many people have heard Native people say “all my relations” after speaking or offering prayers. But what does it really mean? All societies organize around some sort of core principle. The core principle for Wabanaki societies is relationship. Our story begins with an understanding that we are related to all beings within creation. The two legged, the four legged, the winged, the beings that crawl and slide along the ground, the plants, the trees, and the living Earth are all our relatives. Everything is interconnected and interdependent; the well-being of the whole determines the well-being of any individual part. We recognize that connection in our prayers, and the understanding that the whole is shifted by every action of each individual. There is one life, one breath that we all breathe. Therefore, when we take any action out in the world, even when we pray for ourselves, we impact all life. This belief forms the foundational understanding [that] weaves through all of our other values. It’s the thread that ties them all together.

Native American attorney and sacred activist for environmental protection and human rights (Sherri Mitchell)

Judaism

The heavens are shaped by Yah's word,
Yah's breath gives life to all its being,

Psalms 33:6

And Y-H-V-H, God, formed the human, of the dust from the soil,
he blew into his nostrils the breath of Life and
the human became a human being.

Genesis 2:7

Christianity

Truly, truly, I say unto you,
Except a person be born
Of water and of the spirit-breath,
They cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:5

Islam

Whenever I shine the lamplight of Divine breath,
there the difficulties of a whole world are resolve
The darkness which the earthly sun did not remove,
becomes through My breath a bright morning.

Mathnawi I, 1941-2 (Jalaluddin Rumi)

Truth

What we generally know as the breath is that little inhaling and exhaling which we feel through the nostrils. We think that is breath and attach little importance to it, while in reality, breath is a life-current running through the innermost part of being towards the surface. It would be no exaggeration, according to the mystical point of view, to say that the breath connects heaven and earth. ... For the mystic, breath is not only a science, but the knowledge of breath is mysticism, and mysticism to the thinker is both science and religion. The mystery of breath is not a thing that can be comprehended by the brain only. The principles of mysticism rise from the heart. They are learned by intuition and proved by reason.

<https://www.sufimovementincanada.ca/practices/breath/>
(Hazrat Inayat Khan)

Once man has touched the depths of his own being by the help of the breath, then it becomes easy for him to become at one with all that exists on earth and in heaven.

The Heart of Sufism: Essential Writings of Hazrat Inayat Khan
(Hazrat Inayat Khan)