



The Art of Breathing

It's all in the breath

Narrator:

In the west, we don't often think of breathing as being integral to our sense of well being. Things are different if there's a strong tradition of meditation.

Maarten Vermaase:

In the east, because of the tradition there of looking inwards, at making your mind peaceful, then you recognise the connection between breathing and the pacification of the mind.

Narrator:

In the eastern traditions of yoga, the breath is the key to enlightenment and peace of mind.

Maarten Vermaase:

Before you do any yoga, then we're almost at the mercy of our anxieties, our tensions and our hyperventilation's, and our breathing being upset. And making us upset. And us being upset making our breathing upset.

Narrator:

In the practice of yoga, exercise and breathing are inextricably linked.

Maarten Vermaase:

You begin the meditation session or yoga session with three, sometimes nine if there's deep exhalations. And that's really to get the air that doesn't normally get exchanged in the lungs, to get that expelled. And in other words refreshed or reventilated. So that the end of the three out breath, you're breathing is refreshed. And then the mind ideally is then clear.

Narrator:

Yoga exercise work on the breath until it's rhythms become more natural and relaxed. Physiologically they serve to regulate breathing and the level of carbon dioxide in the blood.

Psychologically the breath becomes the sole focus of attention. And this conscious breathing is a starting point for relaxation of body, breath and mind.

Maarten Vermaase:

It's not that just breathing one particular way then you're mind becomes very still. It's not as simple as that. But traditionally it works with that the breathing has a kind of energy connection. And yoga that's called 'Prana' in Tibetan yoga, they call it 'Lung'. It's a sort of like a subtle energy principle. So you the juggling effect of three things. You have the energy, the breath and the mind.

Narrator:

If the mind is disturbed, perhaps my emotions or stress, breathing also becomes disturbed. As does the energy or life force.

Maarten Vermaase:

So if by certain way of regulating the breath I can begin to rebalance that energy disturbance. And by rebalancing that energy disturbance, I begin to fine tune gradually rebalance the mind.

So that generally can give like a higher sense of well being. More clarity without your mind. More peace within your mind. That's really open to everybody.

