

The Science of Breathing

Excerpts from a lecture by Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar

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The work of the life force and the work of the awareness are intertwined depending upon the quality of thoughts and feelings entertained. Ill-health is a very clear message of some irregular behaviour. It demands rectification of such irregularity to restore health in the body. The *pranic* forces enter the human body via the spleen. It is therefore necessary to keep the spleen in order. Emotions have an impact on the sacral centre which would effect the spleen. Therefore, it cannot be abused, if one wants to have good health and long life. The *Prana* also enters into the body through another centre which is in-between the throat centre and the heart centre. It exists in the spinal column nearer to the heart than to the throat. The part in between the shoulder blades is locationally its place.

These two centres shall have to be exposed to morning and evening sunlight and air, where the life forces are supplied in abundance. Only sunrise hours and sunset hours have the life energy in abundance. It is not recommended to expose the body to the Sun during the day, when the Sun is scorching. The Sun is the giver of life and is also the absorber of life. The rays that shower the life force are transmitted during the morning hours, and they shall have to be consciously received into the bodies.

We shall understand that air and light are important for us. Living in areas where there is no light, and living in houses where there is inadequate passage of breeze will cause significant ill-health. There has to be free movement of air in the house, and there should be solar light entering into the house, into every corner of the house. Any room which is not exposed to sunlight is the abode of not only ill-health, but also of evil.

That is why the science of house building demanded counter openings. When there is a window on the east, there should be a corresponding window on the west. If there is a window on the south, there should be a corresponding window on the north. The air does not pass, unless there is a through passage. Passing of air through the houses is very, very important. A house in which air does not circulate is like a body where respiration does not function.

We have to ensure that we live in houses, where there is adequate passage of air and also transmission of solar light. Dark kitchens are horrible places for ill-health. A kitchen that has no opening to the outer is not recommended to be used, because the food which is an aspect of *Prana* is not cooked in an atmosphere, where there is *pranic* energy. Dark bathrooms are also dangerous. The house we live in should contribute to our energies. We cannot live in houses which absorb our energy. Certain houses dissipate our energies, and certain houses improve our energies. The secret is in relation to the light and air that pass through the house.

As much as the houses need air and light, so much the bodies also need air and light. If you live in a closed room without opening any window, slowly you become dizzy and fall into a kind of sleep which is not sleep. The freshness of life is in the passage of air, and air is the vehicle of the life force.

The etheric body is not only the transmitter of *Prana*, but is the medium for all energies. Its importance also lies in other directions. Receiving the *pranic* force is one of the chief

functions of the etheric body. There are other ways also the etheric body becomes important. Being of physical plane matter etheric consciousness is the next step ahead for the race. To gain the ability to see etherically and to cognise etheric matter, you need to have a very finely developed physical body. It is the immediate field of explanation ahead of the modern scientist. The medical science will be the first to recognise the existence of the etheric body. *Ayurveda* recognised it thousands of years ago.

Homoeopathy also recognised the existence of the vital body, and the treatment to disease is totally different in these two sciences compared with Allopathy. That is why the future medical sciences are those which accept the etheric existence and also know how to make adjustments to the etheric body. The vitality is important for throwing out the disease. The diseases also arise in the etheric body, not in the physical body. Behaviour which is other than natural brings diseases, because it first affects the etheric body, and then the disease results in the physical body. If you see the disease already in the etheric body, then you will prevent its manifestation in the physical body.

In Homoeopathy prevention of cancer is possible. Cancer is recognised only when the effect of the disease is on the physical. Then it is already late for treatment. Likewise heart problems and cerebral attacks or strokes can also be foreseen. Adjustments can be made to the disturbances in the etheric in so far as they are visualised, so that the physical body is not put to suffering. Most of the physical diseases have their roots in the etheric body. Even getting a cold is not physical. When there is not much vitality in the body, any change in the atmosphere causes disturbance to the etheric body. Then the vitality is disturbed, and people have cold. Frequent cold, frequent sore throat, frequent stomach problems, frequent headaches – they are all very clear messages that your vital body is no good. But it can be rectified through etheric medicine. In Homoeopathy from 200 C onwards there is no substance as medicine. We are not introducing any substance into the body by way of medicine. The etheric aspect of the substance is contributed to the etheric body. It is the science of the seers. People who can see more than physical are the ones who have brought out the science of Homoeopathy, where there is no physical medicine given for etheric disorder.

Allopathy medicine has a medicinal substance. When continuously given to the body, we are poisoning the body. As the disease is not in the physical, but is in the vital or etheric, we are filling the body with all these poisonous substances. Today it is more and more realised that Allopathy is one of the significant killers of human beings on the planet! If I say this, the doctors may not agree. But this was said by the President of the American Medical Association some years ago: "A body that is put to antibiotics for 10 to 15 years is good for nothing thereafter. All the diseases that it produces later are arising out of this poisonous substance that is introduced into the body." According to him the first killer in the United States are traffic accidents, the second killer is Allopathy. Hence, they have to review and improve the system to a very large extent.

So, for any physical manifestation of the disease the cause is not in the physical, but in the etheric body. A person who has healthy etheric body can resist all diseases and can resist decaying of the body. The secret of youth is a healthy etheric body. That is another aspect relating to the etheric body. The secret of safe and sane clairvoyance and clairsentience depends upon the purification of the etheric vehicle.

The etheric emanations of people can be contaminators. People emit quite a few feelings into the surroundings, and they cause contamination. Etheric emanations – that is what we see as the aura. Depending upon the brightness of the aura, you can see the quality of

the person. If the etheric vehicle is pure enough, there is the golden aura around the person. The colour of the etheric body is golden. If the etheric body carries dull colours, it means the person is polluting the place. People worry so much about traffic pollution. We are not only polluting the outer, we are continuously contributing from within to pollution.

The Three Stages of Breathing

The breathing involves three stages of breathing: the deep breathing, the middle breathing and the top breathing. The three varieties cover the entire soul experience and the relationship to the three types of breath which are *Apana* – it regulates the lower part; *Prana* – it regulates the upper part; and *Udana* – it regulates the head. When these are brought into relationship, we have the entire soul experience in the whole body.

1. Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is breathing in and breathing out, visualizing the path of breathing from the nostrils via the brow centre, throat centre, heart centre and base centre. This should not be understood as working with these centres. It is only visualization. Exhalation is visualized from base to brow and is released through the nostrils. Inhalation is visualized conversely. This should be the first stage.

2. Middle Breathing

The second stage of breathing is breathing in up to the diaphragm and breathing out from the diaphragm to the nostrils via the heart, throat, and brow centres. This results in associating with the pulsating principle in the heart and leads the aspirant into the 'Lion's Cave'.

3. Top Breathing

Visualizing breathing from nose to the brow centre and *Ajna* while inhaling and visualizing *Ajna*, brow centre and nostrils while exhaling, is called top breathing. It works to link up to the *Ajna* centre. This is an advanced state of breathing exercise. Such is the preliminary information of the three stages of breathing.

The *Prana* that enters into the body works in a five-fold manner. That means, the one *Prana* details into five *Pranas*, and they exist as five pulsations.

1. *Prana Vayu*

There are chiefly five pulsations. They are called the five *Pranas* or *Vayus* in Sanskrit. The one that we take for inhalation is called *Prana*. It brings in a lot of life force and causes oxygenation of the body, and thereby contributes to the health of the etheric body, and thus contributes to the health of the person. Inhalation expresses the *pranic* principle which ranges from the tip of the nose to the diaphragm. It has special relation to the mouth and the speech that it conducts, to the heart and the lungs. Any sickness to these parts is due to imbalance of *Prana Vayu*, the inhaling aspect of the *Prana*. The clue is that we shall have to work with inhalation. It is the chief *Prana* from nose to the heart which relates to man.

Any affect to this part of the body will cause strong impediment to the health. We should not allow bronchitis to settle in the body, blockage of nose, foul smell in the mouth and

wrong speeches. These are all the effects of the *pranic* force not functioning. So, we lose a lot of energy, when the chief principle of *Prana* does not function. We should see that our speeches are good, our mouth is clean, and the passage from nose to the lungs is kept clean. Most of the people have problems in this passage either in the nose, in the throat, in the lungs, or in the heart. We should not allow any disease to manifest in this part of the body. The progress into higher centres is impeded, if this *Prana* is affected.

2. *Apana Vayu*

Then there is *Apana*, the second pulsation. It is exhalation. This *pranic* principle functions from solar plexus down to the tip of the toe. Weak legs, inflexible backs, rigid hips, painful feet – all these problems arise out of ineffective exhalation. *Apana* has a special relation to the organs of elimination and rejection. It controls the excretory organs and the generative organs. Now you can understand the reason for problems in relation to the uterus, the urinary track, and the problems relating to the kidneys. Constipation has come to stay with the so-called civilisations, because they have lost the science relating to eating. There is no balanced eating. We have to go to the fundamentals of how to eat and what to eat. Constipation has become the most difficult discomfort, and this is due to lack of knowledge relating to the intake and inadequate exhalation. If there is adequate exhalation practised, this part of the body gets rejuvenated.

Then the organs of generation shall have to be appropriately used. If one of the organs covered by *Apana* is abused, it affects the other organs. They have a net-working system. The whole work is a *pranic* net-work. One affects the other.

3. *Samana Vayu*

The third pulsation is called *Samana Vayu*. The bridge between *Prana* and *Apana* can be built through a change of orientation, from selfishness to selflessness. Then we attain a balance, and this balance is accomplished through *Samana Vayu*. The related part of the body covers the stomach, and hence all digestion relates to *Samana Vayu*. *Samana* extends from heart to solar plexus. It concerns food and nourishing of the body through the medium of food and drink.

This *Samana Vayu* which conducts the communication between *Prana* and *Apana* is the equilibrating air. That is where the health and the strength of the diaphragm lies. If the diaphragm is tough, if it retains its tension like the tension of the bow, the health will remain good. Its shape should be convex.

4. *Udana Vayu*

Then there is the ascent to the fourth aspect of *Prana* which is called *Udana*. *Udana* means *Ud Ana*. It moves in the upper side of the being. *Ud* means above. *Udana* moves in the entire cerebrum. It is found between the nose and the top of the head which has a special relation to the brain, the bridge of the nose and the eyes. To activate this air is the major work relating to *Pranayama*. That leads the human awareness to the divine field.

Normally we are incapable of affecting this part of the body, because the awareness is not yet. It is mostly human and sub-human, and the effort is to lift up to the divine, so that the work is completed. This is *Udana Vayu*. When it is properly controlled, it produces the coordination of vital airs. It is the peak of all airy pulsations, and this is what is achieved

through *Pranayama*. When the three *Pranas* are regulated, then there is an ascent of the *pranic* principle by way of pulsation, and the pulsation reaches the brow centre.

5. *Vyana Vayu*

Then we have the fifth pulsation as *Vyana*. It is all-permeating life force or *pranic* force. It remains as the background of the four. It permeates through the entire body from head to foot. Its instruments are the thousands of *Nadis* or nerves found in the body, and it has a peculiar, definite connection with the blood channels, the veins and the arteries. This is all-comprehensive life force.

Pranayama

The work with breathing demands rhythmic living. It is the magical formula, which is a prelude to the science of *Pranayama* –the regulation of life activity. *Pranayama* means: *Prana* regulated. All the five aspects of the *Prana* need to be regulated, so that there is a synthesis. While the *Prana* is one, it functions in the body in five varieties of ways. Working out the synthesis between the five *pranic* pulsations is called *Pranayama*. To cause such regulation of the *pranic* principles breathing or respiratory exercises are carried out.

When we are anchored in pulsation, there is neither terrible thought production, nor that kind of breathing that we normally do. The breathing gets regulated. It is not that we are regulating the respiration. It is respiration getting itself regulated. There is a lot of difference between the two. In one process there is the effort to stop breathing, and in the natural process breathing stops by itself, because we have withdrawn into the inner chamber and we remain in pulsation. For outer purposes there is no breathing being conducted.

These two wings, mind and respiration, they cease to function. When the bird takes off from the earth, the two wings need to work, and by a kind of cooperation between the two wings, the bird reaches certain heights. Thereafter the wings are no more needed. The bird floats in air without moving the wings. In that state of flight it does not use any more the wings. Before that the use of wings was necessary, and a good cooperation between the two wings was also necessary.

When the cooperation between mind and breathing is well conducted and when we are able to find the source of pulsation, mind ceases to think, and we cease to breathe in and breathe out. We exist in pulsation. This is an advanced state of meditation, where we are only aware of that which is pulsating in us. Thereafter we withdraw further into our own being, where we get into subtle pulsation. In that subtle pulsation, even when people hold us by our pulse, they feel that there is no pulsation. It looks as though we are dead. We are not dead. We are in the inner chamber in subtle pulsation which is our natural state of being.

When we embark upon *Pranayama*, then the physical is at rest, the mental is associated with the vital, and the thought is applied upon respiration. As long as we keep the thought associated with respiration, the thoughts do not generate in multiplicity. We live with a thought, and that thought is relating to the truth of our respiring. We don't have to do any specific acrobats relating to breathing. It is only to see how we are breathing, because breathing is a happening in us, but not a doing.

Patanjali very beautifully states:

“The student of *Pranayama* will first realise that there is something happening in him without his doing. He enters into the realms of happening contrary to the realms of doing.”

We are predominantly believers of doing, because we function with thought, with speech, with senses, and with the body. All that is related to doing. There is a part in us, where there is the happening, on the basis of which there is the doing. Doing is with the external instruments. They are called *Bahirkaranas*. There are also internal instruments, called *Antahkaranas*. They are working inside without our knowledge.

Into that category comes respiration. Without our proposal there is the happening of respiration in us. So, there is something else in us which is conducting respiration regardless our being conscious of it. Respiration provides a doorway into the unknown part relating to us. It is a happening in us as also the circulation of blood, heartbeat, throwing out carbon and inhaling oxygen, the chemistry of liver – so many things are happening in us, though we don't consciously work with them.

Devote your day to apply your mind upon respiration, at least for a few minutes, so that you meet the inner man and you don't live in the periphery all the time. As you keep the mind applied upon respiration, respiration becomes a conscious respiration, and gradually regains its rhythm. It becomes slow, soft, deep, and uniform. These are the four qualities of respiration which we disturb on account of the terrible change in the vibration relating to our thoughts. Respiration is frequently disturbed by the erratic thoughts that we entertain. From joy to depression, when we shift, it has a deep impact on respiration. From peace to anger, when we shift, there is a deep negative impact on respiration. When we become anxious, we give an impact on respiration. When we are deeply affected by jealousy, it has an impact on our rhythm of respiration. All these emotions are unworthy of entertaining, if we know their impact on our respiration.

When the rhythm of respiration is disturbed, the vital body in us is disturbed. That is how through thoughts we keep destroying the vital body and the ability of the vital body to receive the vitality from the sunlight. The vital body receives vitality through the sun rays and also through water and very little through food. Sun rays, inhalation and water give us more vitality than the mass of food that we eat. When the vital body weakens, it loses its ability to absorb vitality from the surrounding life, and when the vital body retires or becomes inactive, then the body becomes a harbour for frequent sicknesses.

In so far as the vital body is strong, the physical body is kept in strength. The vital body is called *Prana Sarira*. *Sarira* is the body, *Prana* is the life principle which gives vitality. There is the corresponding *Kama Sarira* which is the desire body in us. Both have their target, the etheric body in us, which forms the basis for the physical body. When the desire body starts desiring things beyond the natural law, then it gains strength and weakens the vital body.

That is why through conscious effort we have to activate the vital body, so that we may resist disease. We can also resist decay of the physical body, and we can also resist death. To resist disease, decay and death is possible, when the vital body is made very vibrant, very radiant and very magnetic. These three are the qualities relating to the vital body that we have to accomplish: vibration, radiation and magnetisation. For that we need to breathe well. The more and more we learn to breathe rhythmically, the necessary energy gets influxed into the body, and then we don't feel so much to eat.

The gross food is avoided in preference to subtle food. Even the subtle food is replaced by such things as water, air and sunlight. The shift should be gradual, but not emotional again. Don't try to live on sunlight from tomorrow. That is the ultimate goal. Try to replace the heavy food with lighter food, and then the lighter food with water, and water be replaced by breathing, and breathing also be replaced by invocation of light, the solar principle.

When we apply regularly our mind upon respiration, the thoughts get regulated. So, we have to observe our thought pattern and constantly try to improve the pattern of the thought and also the motive. From ignoble thoughts to noble thoughts, we have to travel. In so far as we speak and execute noble thoughts in life, the process of developing the vital body, as told before, also happens in this manner. But the results are better, if we work both ways: to work to improve the thought pattern and to work with respiration to improve the vitality and the thought pattern. The process is quickened.

The Four-fold Aspect of Breathing

1. Slow Breathing

The preliminary step of breathing is four-fold: slow, soft, deep and uniform breathing. Later will come the advanced steps, the science of working with breathing. When you make a slow breathing, the mind is brought back to tranquillity. In an agitated mind, the respiration is very fast. When you make a slow inhalation and a slow exhalation, then the mind gets its quittance. That itself is quite a relief. Our major problem is the agitation of the mind. It is like a machine that moves the whole system and is always in action. It should be given rest. A tranquil mind can achieve thousand times more than the other mind. So, if you do it slowly, the mind gets the peace, the quittance and feels the coolness in the body, and the system relaxes.

2. Soft Breathing

Making noise during deep inhalation, there can be ulcers at the bridge of the nose, because life carries the fire in it. When you make a conscious inhalation, the air should almost go up to the bridge of the nose, where the pituitary is, and then go down. That is how the head and the beak of the eagle is given as a symbol. When you inhale, go up to the brow, and then slowly enter through the throat and into the lungs, and you can consciously inhale even up to the diaphragm, and then again come out. Even while the air comes out, it should again come through the bridge of the nose. When you inhale without being soft, the fire relating to the air hits at this point and can cause ulcers.

Make soft inhalations without making noise. It should be as silent as possible. Even your ears should not hear the tangible sound of respiration. It is also not recommended to make noise at the throat, when you exhale. Then forget about the benefits of breathing, because ulcers would settle in the throat. That is why soft breathing is recommended. It should be slow to gain the related tranquillity. It should be soft, so that the fire does the intended work and does not cause other fire work of destruction.

3. Deep Breathing

When you make a slow and deep inhalation, consciously move with the mind from the tip of the nose through the bridge of the nose into the throat centre, the heart centre, the solar plexus, the sacral centre, and then into the base centre. The air should pass through

consciously, while the mind is engaged both with the air and with the centres. Imagine that you are moving up to the base centre with inhalation. Then while exhaling you start the reversed path: ascending centre after centre. We work with the centres (*Chakras*), until the *Ajna* is stimulated. Then the *Chakras* become lotuses. During the exhalation you visualise again all the *Chakras* from the base centre to the bridge of the nose, and then you release the air through the nostrils.

Like that you fill the entire body with fresh doses of life energy. That is the importance of deep breathing. A lot of oxygen gets into the body, and correspondingly a deep inhalation would come out as a deep exhalation. A deep exhalation will expel the carbons from the body. The carbon deposits arrest the flow of life. So, the carbons are expelled, and more life is inhaled. Consequently the body is put to good energy.

4. Uniform breathing

Every time when we start a new practice, we are a bit over-ambitious. We want to achieve the best even in the very first day. But the system will not accept. Our respiration has settled with some pattern in us, and patterns are strong. Life patterns as well as awareness patterns are crystallised. That is why we need more fire to destroy the crystallisation. Depending upon the kind of health and awareness, there is a pattern settled for our breathing, and it does not allow a new pattern. It is very common that we don't want any stranger to come and change our system.

That is why we have to do it slowly, in an agreeable manner. We can set up a depth and a velocity of breathing which is agreeable to the present pattern. The slow aspect and the deep aspect just give a little introduction to start with. From the existing speed of breathing reduce it by 10%, and when that is very comfortable, reduce it by another 10%. This gradual working is always better than abrupt changes. So also the depth of breath. Increase the depth every month or every week by 10%, so that by a year's time we will touch the optimum of the depth and the optimum of the speed which will keep the whole system in poise.

The movements also will be of great poise. There is a great dignity in the movements of the human limbs, and the dignity comes through an excellent work with respiration. A Master of wisdom when he moves it is a treat to watch, it is a feast to the eyes. There is so much dignity, so much purity and then so much gait, because you feel the movement as very noble. The movement of the human body can be the most beautiful movement. Normally they are compared with an elephant in the scriptures. There is dignity in the movement of an elephant which seems to be walking, but it is faster than the normal animals. Everything is noble about its movement, and it gives a good feeling to the people who watch an elephant in its movements. That is why the movement of a man of wisdom is related to the movement of an elephant. There are also monkey movements. You just make a comparison, and you can make your own comprehension. Monkey movements are very sudden, very unpredictable and very funny.

To ensure that the breathing is uniform, we have to be conscious by moving through every centre. At every centre we count a selected number, and when we return, we also count the same selected number at each centre, so that the uniformity is maintained.

Normally when we do one deep inhalation and deep exhalation, we may be yawning. Since it is a new rhythm of breathing we are imposing, it cannot be done continuously. It is therefore recommended that we do three deep respirations and give a pause. In the

pause we can have the old rhythm of breathing. Then again we can take up another set of three breathings. Then give a pause. Again make a set of three. Likewise there are nine respirations. Then give a greater pause. Do again three sets of three respirations with three interludes. Then we would have done 18 respirations.

Likewise do three sets of nine. That means in all we do 27 respirations. 27 respirations are recommended to cover the 27 constellations around us. And the 27 respirations in all have nine pauses. They have three major pauses and the rest minor pauses. The minor pause is after every set of three respirations. The major pause is after three sets of three respirations.

That should be the first step, and we should become comfortable and familiar with this step. By that we have done already enough magical work through abundant inhalation of the life force and expulsion of the anti-life forces in us. Then we can take to our normal rhythm of breathing. But during that time we have already activated our pulsating principle. When there is deep inhalation and exhalation, gradually through 27 respirations we have activated the resonance of pulsation in us. After 27 respirations we can very tangibly sense the resonance of the pulsation. When the mind is deeply engaged with it, we are not so much concerned with inhalation and exhalation, and many times we forget about inhalation and exhalation. They take to secondary place. The resonance of pulsation takes to primary place.

The mind is not allowed to go here and there. When it is engaged with respiration, it fairly gets internalised, and it gets further internalised, when it is engaged with pulsation. The purposes of meditation are also concurrently accomplished. Normally when we close our eyes and try to concentrate the mind, the mind laughs at us and takes us all around. It takes us to varieties of places and persons. So, this is the best way to engage the mind. The whole work relating to the first step can happen in 24 minutes, where we feel so comfortable inside, a feeling that the whole system has cooled down, as if some cool breeze is moving in the body.

When the mind is engaged with the resonance of pulsation, the inhalation and exhalation find their absorption into the third air *Samana Vayu*, and thus a bridge will be built between the solar plexus and heart centre. We tangibly feel the pulsation and note that the respirations have taken to the background. They have become so subtle that we feel they ceased to be, and pulsation takes to prominence, and we get engaged with pulsation. Then the pulsation moves. We feel the resonance of pulsation in the heart, and we also feel that the pulsation is moving upwards. Gradually there is the resonance in the throat, and we further feel the resonance in the mouth. Normally it takes three years to feel the resonance of pulsation in the throat and in the upper palate.

Please make note of one important point: When you do these respirations, keep your tongue attached to the upper palate in the mouth without leaving any gap for air to enter into. Between the palate and the tongue there should not be any air gap, and the tip of the tongue should be at the point of the gum of the upper palate. The tip of the tongue should not touch the teeth. Do not link up the upper teeth and the lower teeth. It also prevents inhaling through the mouth and exhaling through the mouth. Only unhealthy persons breathe through the mouth. This is essential for purposes of the science of breathing. Even during the day, when we don't have to talk, to prevent unnecessary speeches, we can lock the mouth this way.

This is the four-fold aspect of breathing. Such breathing causes an oxygenating effect, and the blood stream is purified. What more do you want? If the blood is pure, there is no way to have diseases. The blood is not only purified, its pressure is relieved. We have cases of tremendous blood pressure. The answer is: respiration exercises. We have blood frequently contacting disease. The answer is: respiration exercises. In the same measure as blood is oxygenated, the life of man in the three worlds is permeated by spiritual energy. Spirituality demands pure blood, and a blood that is full of oxygen is the blood that resists disease.

People who are good students of *Pranayama*, their health is always above the average. They cannot fall sick frequently, and they seem to be not doing any physical exercise, but they are healthy and strong, and the body is under control. The physical body is totally under control, if there is a good etheric body. That is why the rectifications also have to be done in the etheric body and not in the physical body.

The Effect of Breathing upon the Centres

Then there is the effect upon the centres which is most effectual. If the centres have to be positively activated or effectuated, breathing exercise helps, because it energises the etheric body. All the centres are located in the etheric body. Consequently it helps awakening the centres in the etheric body. The Master says, "It is the most effective way of activating the centres." Hence, the need for students to hold their meditation in the centres and to attempt to awaken those centres that are above the diaphragm. The centres below the diaphragm are only reflections of the centres above the diaphragm. If they are activated, they reflect better in the lower centres.

It should be clearly understood that the throat centre has its correspondence with the sacral centre, the heart centre has its reflection or correspondence with the solar plexus, the *Ajna* centre has its correspondence with the base centre. When the three higher centres are activated, concurrently the three reflective centres are also activated. It is prohibited to work with the three lower centres, because they would be confusing and misleading. People in whom the sacral is active and who have not activated the throat, feel that they have the visions of the Masters, the visions of the angels, that they are visiting Sirius. They keep meeting such people from time to time, but their daily life is not in tune with what they claim.

Their way of living will clearly show, whether it is true or illusion. This is because of wrong application of wisdom. The same is, when the base centre is activated without *Ajna*. It would result into innumerable physical problems: back pain and immobility and conditioning by the physical body and pain in joints arising out of activation of the base centre. The lower centres can be activated only in the presence of an advanced teacher of *Hatha Yoga*. The higher centres can be activated in the *Raja Yoga* path, where you adopt to a certain discipline in life and start working with the given technique. That is why the Masters of wisdom promote the path of *Raja Yoga*, so that each one can work with the given implement in a safe manner, and they also give the discipline relating to the science which is thought to be practised.

All of us are positioned in the base centre. We are deep down in the cellar of the house. Since we are there, we draw breath to reach up to that point. What does it mean? When we inhale, we feel that the air is moving into us through all the centre of the etheric body up to the base centre. That is breathing deep. Through inhalation we reach the base centre via the centre between the eyebrows. Please note, that the eyebrow centre is

different from the *Ajna* centre. At the bridge of the nose, where we have the junction relating to the eyebrow, it is the point of pituitary, and right above there is the pineal, where the *Ajna* is located. The ultimate bridge is to be built from pituitary to the pineal. When we inhale through the nostrils, we should consciously touch the eyebrow centre and feel the movement of the breath, the inhalation at the throat centre and passing through the heart centre and then the solar plexus, the sacral and the base.

The idea here is: from the very depth of our being, we draw breath from outside. In the process we draw life from the soul. That is the way to inhale. It is a conscious inhalation from the soul that is permeating in and around. The soul is also breathing. From the soul you receive your breath, and thereby you draw adequate measure of life. This is the first stage.

The Virtue of Detachment

Practice of breathing demands developing the virtue of detachment. The 5th Chapter of "*Bhagavad Gita*" gives all the regulations relating to breathing and also emphasises upon detachment. Detachment here relates to the fruits of action. It is not detachment from action. Many people think that detachment also means detachment from actions. We cannot detach from the actions, but we can detach from the fruits of the actions. The entire scheme of "*Bhagavad Gita*" in the first six chapters strongly emphasises upon the need to act without attaching to the results. In tune with the law we do our duty to the surrounding life and do not expect anything in return as a fruit of our action. If we get fruits, we get attached, and if we don't get fruits for our actions, we get disappointed and walk into depression.

The whole problem is the attachment to the result of action. We are concerned about our actions, and we are not concerned about the results. We do our duty to our parents, and we are not concerned how the parents respond to us. We do our duty to the co-born, and we are not concerned about their response to our duty. We do our duty to the spouse, and we do not expect anything in return. When there is no expectation, life moves without change of vibration. When there is expectation, there is already disappointment. If the expectation is fulfilled, there is more attachment. If it is not fulfilled, there is the displeasure. In the same way we do our duty to the society. In the same way we do our acts of goodwill. We don't have to be excessively attached to the service work that we do. It is done, because it is to be done. What comes out of it is not our problem. If we are to teach, we teach, and we should not look for the response from the teaching. This approach is the approach of detachment. It gives a detachment from the phenomenal world. This attitude of detached functioning is called *Sanyasa*, mendicancy. A mendicant is one who does not abandon actions. He acts and does not care for the results. That is the process which results into *Sanyasa*. That means, it results in rhythmical breathing by the soul within the human body. *Sanyasa* means: *Samyak Nyasa* – equilibrated pulsation of *Prana*.

If there is such a variation in vibration, the breathing exercises do not help, and all these variations in the moods are due to the attachment to events, persons and places. We should always remain constant in our vibration, whether there is a favourable or unfavourable situation. When we gain this constant vibration, at least gain the taste of it and tend to work for it, then we are fit to work with the breathing exercises. It all depends upon how much detached attitude we have towards life.

As the student gains deeper and more prolonged interludes in the breathing and also concurrently gains the related detachment with the forms of the world, interludes also happen to him in the outer life. Here detachment of form is detachment to the worldly relation, but not detachment from the duty to the form. So, he realises the temporary aspect of all relations around him, and he therefore conducts his duty to the co-beings in a very dispassionate manner. There is no passion and no emotion while working for the fellow-beings. He does purely his duty and rejoices more and more in the experience which is beyond the phenomenal world.

At this moment he is held by nothing in the world of form. Please remember, nothing holds him. It is not that he dissociates, things cannot hold him. The worldly relations cannot possess him. He renders duty in utter friendliness, and he allows people to develop their own relation with him, but he has no relation except the relation of the soul. People around such a disciple hold on to him, but he does not hold on to them. His service to them is in friendliness. The free friendship is unconditional service. That is friendship. Friendship based on mutual help and mutual appreciation is inferior friendship. Regardless the help you receive from others, you continue to help. Regardless the respect they show to you, you continue to help. The attitude of a disciple to all persons is the same, that he sees the form of the soul and serves it, whether the other person responds with warmth or responds with a cold heart. So, he is not held by the attitude of the people, but he continues to help silently, and he does not live up to the opinions of the people, because he knows that the opinions are short-lived. Things leave him, and he is freed. That is why the practice of detachment is important.

Thinking in the Heart

Master *Djwhal Khul* says: "Develop thinking from the heart, not only from the mind." Whatever you think from the heart, put it to the mind, the mind will analyse, make out a plan and manifest it. Make the mind responsive to the heart. When you start thinking from the heart, in the beginning there can be a little emotion in such thinking. Mind is the excellent apparatus which filters, discriminates, analyses, and puts it in order for expression. Each one has its own strength. So, start thinking from the heart, put it to the mind and express it out! Only those who can think from the heart have better understanding of the surrounding beings. Others are closed in their mind. They have their own opinions about others, their own judgement about others, and hence they are not open even to listen and to response, because they are closed.

Whatever the heart brings out, the mind balances it. The beauty of mind in so far as it responds to the heart it evens out the hearty impulse and gives a very sustained expression to it. If mind is not given adequate importance, it becomes an impulse of expression. They don't work well. It is easier to take spoon by spoon than by the whole jar. Heart is like a big vessel. It wants to give. Mind says: "I agree for your giving, but give spoon by spoon, so that it is digested by the person who receives." You cannot dump all your hearty things. So, think in the heart, put it to the head, and manifest it in an organised manner. When you inculcate this habit of thinking in the heart, you have a better understanding of life and a better understanding as a basis for your study.

So, please take to the science of breath and see what can be done.