**Breath: The Foundation**

Everything you learn about meditation is great but we continually go back to the foundation: the breath.

Feeling frantic in your mind with thoughts and experiences as you meditate? Let go and go back to noticing the breath.

If we can get this one foundation into our practice, and if this is your only practice for life it is a profound one.

The good news is that if you are feeling overwhelmed in meditation by your mind you have a continuous escape hatch, the breath. You don’t have to follow thoughts to their conclusion, analyze, ruminate. It feels like we have to while it’s happening but we can practice this return to the breath again and again.

In our day we think, well, I can’t check out and notice my breath or go take 5 minutes, I have to be involved, I have to be “on”. Meditation is not abdicating responsibility to what is going on in your world but having this impetus toward not being tossed on the winds of suffering over it to the same degree that we have been.

In the calmness and stillness of mind is where I find my answers on how to proceed and deal with difficulty and challenge, not in the frenzy of anxiety. I can use my breath to help calm my mind. (Remember how that works- brain science.) I can use my mind to connect to my breath.

Having said this, it’s important to remember that we are not out to prevent emotions, thoughts, experiences from arising but to begin to cultivate questioning: what do I want to do about it? Follow it or let it go? There are things we can do in this practice to help ease our suffering in anxiety.

Meditate using breath

Breath connects you to life- meditate at that meeting point of your breath and life

Feel the breath in various parts of the body

This is a “position” for the mind, awareness of when you leave your position for the “song of the mind” and if we start singing along with it

Your position is a good comfortable place to stay. You can find the rhythm of breath in one spot

If the mind wanders off you can bring it back in again

Benefits of staying in position: gives the mind a rest so that it can recover its strength from all that running around it does.

The observer that doesn’t go running around singing with all the different songs of the mind but watches them as events

When you’re the watcher you can decide whether they are worth following through or not

You get more and more used to being here, where the mind can have a home, where it can rest and accurately watch the movements of the mind.

Where are they running to? A place you want to go? If not, you can drop them and whatever reality they seem to have will drop away- solid and imposing drops away as you watch them as events and gain the upper hand.

The song of the mind never stops, we don’t have to stop it. We position ourselves again and again in breath…

Where the mind can rest, it heals itself.