

Ānāpānasati Entryways

These doorways correspond to the sixteen trainings, or ‘domains,’ originally laid out by the Buddha in his core teaching on Mindfulness with Breathing (MN 118). Each doorway has its own focus with the purpose of facilitating entry into the territory and experience of its corresponding ‘domains,’ but does not encompass all the possibilities, depths, and insights available within each of the sixteen domains when they are fully explored.

With breathing in and out ...

1. Fully releasing exhalations naturally without squeezing or stretching;
relaxing, opening up to, & receiving each inhalation as fully as possible.¹
2. Relaxing control and other interferences, sensitively flowing with however breathing needs to be, letting it go ‘wild.’²
3. Feeling the sensations & qualities of the whole body of breathing within the body and how these change as the breathing changes, throughout the body.
4. Calming breathing through steady, still intimacy in ‘guarding spot/area’;³
settling, **gathering together**, focusing, quieting somewhere along breath’s path.
5. Experiencing & appreciating the pleasure & satisfaction of living, healthy breathing.
6. Experiencing tranquil joy with calm, cool, gentle breathing.
7. Experiencing how the feeling of breathing seems positive (likable) or negative (repulsive) in mind, thus ‘conditioning’ mind (perceptions, thoughts, moods).
8. Observing what it is like to be hooked by the power of such positiveness & negativeness.
9. Experiencing the ‘coloring,’ affect, or quality of thoughts, moods, & states of mind while breathing in & out.
10. Appreciating the breathing (for any number of reasons),
thus uplifting mind with Dhammic qualities of breathing and related phenomena.

¹ You may occasionally deepen inhalations without straining or forcing. Please don’t overdo it or make into a habit.

² Entries 1 & 2 can be reversed if that works better for you. May follow or track breathing in-down & up-out.

³ Need not be pinpoint (‘one-pointedness’ is a misnomer) or narrowly focused. Cannot be tense, tight, or strained.

11. Checking in with how much *samādhī* is present and its qualities,
e.g., non-distraction, stability, clarity, agility, & brightness.
12. Focusing on the breathing as natural process: breathing without a breather.
13. Careful attention to the ending & arising of each breath and the uncertainty in
between.
14. Careful attention to anything we genuinely accept is falling apart and cannot last.
15. Noticing areas of life that are quenched & cooled because the usual clinging to 'me'
and 'mine' has been radically reduced or even ended.
16. 'Celebrating' any aspect of life that is released from the tyranny of 'me,' 'mine,' and
'my self.' What a blessing that there is nothing to cling to in this beautiful wide
world!

Note: These entryways are an approach developed by Santikaro to help student-practitioners make the most of the Buddha's primary meditation system and is not a replacement for it.

For elaboration and further development:

Mindfulness with Breathing: a manual for serious beginners, Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu,
tr. Santikaro (Wisdom Publications)

Copies of the ***Discourse on Mindfulness with Breathing*** (MN 118) are available from
info@LiberationPark.org