

Suggested Plan for Ongoing Breath Practice

(Murshid Wali Ali's suggestions at the end of the original, 2013, 21-month version of the God is Breath program, with some minor editing, to make it more appropriate for the 2023 , 12-month, new incarnation of the God is Breath Program - Course 1; as well as some underlined emphases by program director, Sheikh Muiz Brinkerhoff)

Beloved Ones of God,

It is with deep gratitude to God, the One and Only Being;

and to all those awakened beings who have realized that perfection as the essence of their souls, who have brought forth the light of its guidance for the awakening of humanity;

and particularly with gratitude to Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan and Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Sufi Ahmed Murad Chishti (*aka Murshid SAM, Samuel L. Lewis*), and the caravan of Illuminated Souls that they embody and represent;

that we come to the conclusion of this year of study and practice of the inner school of Sufism viewed through the lens of the breath. We are all so grateful to have received this continuing guidance.

And thank you all for the quickened interest and full-hearted gift of yourselves to the teachings we have received. We took a journey together and now we may see that it is an ever-continuing journey. Finding God as the very breath within our breath, we make an enduring relationship with a beloved Presence that we now better know how to find and to merge with, in different ways.

Many practices have been taken up in the course of our study. Some of these have now become established as fundamentals that we can always refer to for orientation and stability, and as a basis for continued exploration. Other practices have allowed us to taste blessings and from some we may have gotten an aroma of mastery. Others we have barely touched, with much still to realize.

As long as we are breathing, we can continue to practice what we have learned in this year's work together. What follows are some suggestions of ways that I believe would be useful for those of us who may choose to proceed with this study.

I. Make a systematic review of the course materials.

Take your time and revisit each of the 4 Lessons, in order to deepen and reinforce by repetition what you have been asked to practice and reflect on, during the course. Stay with an area of concentration until you feel confidence that you have some mastery in it. Don't be in a rush to move on to the next thing. Rather go at your own pace.

II. Remember to check in with the condition of your breath periodically throughout the day.

Notice the particular qualities of your breath each time you check in — such things as its rhythm and livingness, its refinement, what elements are in it, its capacity, where it is in the body, the state of the emotion it carries, and so on.

And remember to bring that gentle, delicate space of Loving Awareness into your noticing of the state of your breath, which ongoing engagement with *Ya Raqib* helps to deepen and expand.

Learn about your self by noticing the varying states of your breath. And also see what your intuition and Guidance suggests in the moment, to allow you to bring the breath into a more masterful condition.

For example: we can bring balance to our breath when it is imbalanced; we can refine the emotion that is in the breath by doing the breath of the Element that is dominating — such as Earth, Water, Fire, or Air, and then adding Ether to it. We can also use the breath to raise the pitch of the heart.

III. Keep a journal that arises from your contemplation of the breath.

For those who have not been inclined to keep a journal up to this point, it would be an auspicious time to begin. Such a journal can include the kinds of things you notice throughout the day, what transpires in your periods of practice or in relation to the Illuminated Souls that you may be attuning with. Devoted journals are very helpful in allowing us to see the long-range, unfolding articulation of the path of our life, and to keep us aware of how we continue to nurture what we are studying.

IV. Maintain a regular daily practice.

Continuing the daily 20-minute breath meditation in one of the forms that we have done it, throughout the year is a constant that will serve us well. Continue the process of attuning with one or more Illuminated Souls that attract you in a deep way. In addition, we have taken up other meditations, the 20-Purification Breaths and Prayer Nayaz, Zikr and Wazifah practice aloud and in Fikr, Walking practice with Toward the One, Tasawwuri Murshid, Qasab. Choose from these and other daily practices we have done throughout the year, to create a program that makes sense for you, individually.

Take into account where your natural inclinations lie, and what time you have to devote to daily practice. It might be helpful to make the decision-making process as to what to include in daily practice a part of your Breath Journal. It will work best if you begin by including in your daily routine the practices in which you feel most established and confident.

Don't try to do everything at once. Instead add and subtract things to your daily practice based on the guidance that comes during your inner reflection on your process. And pay attention to how you feel doing what you've chosen, and what impact or effect it may have on your breath and your state throughout the day.

V. Feel gratitude every day.

At the beginning, throughout, and at the end we acknowledge the presence of all the blessings in our lives, as well as the blessing of our precious human life. And we remember to attune with the great community of the Heart.

Until we meet again beloved ones ...

Love and Blessings,
Wali Ali