

*on-Line at-Home Retreat:*  
**July 30-August 6, 2022** (Saturday through Saturday)

## **Mindfulness with Breathing:** **contemplating dhammas, contemplating Dhamma** *(natural phenomena, natural truth)*

Breath is life and mindfulness with breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is the foundation meditation of original Buddhism. Breath connects us with the here-now, webs of life that support us, health & well-being, and deeper realities of mind-body. This retreat will emphasize *dhammas* and Dhamma, the realities of mind-body seen in the light of truth. Resting upon previous explorations of [body \(Feb 2021\)](#), [vedanās \(Aug 2021\)](#), and [citta \(Jan 2022\)](#), this retreat will revisit such *dhammas* (natural phenomena) as opportunities to contemplate Dhamma with the aid of Buddha's teaching. All of our experiences connected with breathing are subject to change and uncertainty, are conditioned and dependent, undergo quenching, and are opportunities for realization and release. This retreat builds on the previous *ānāpānasati* retreats but does not strictly require them.

**\*\* [Register for a retreat here](#) & [Pay \\$100 Registration Charge here](#) \*\***

**\*\*\* [Ask a question here](#) \*\*\***

### **Retreat Overview and Parameters**

In this **online retreat** (at home or in other safe accommodation) teaching will take place **via Zoom**. You will need to download and install the latest version of the Zoom app to participate. The online retreat format will support you in deepening your at-home practice, responding to the contingencies of the pandemic situation we face, and taking a break from the busyness and stress of modern life. You are encouraged to arrange your schedule to fully benefit from deepening your practice of *ānāpānasati*.

**Participants are expected** to follow the entire retreat, participate with all the guided meditations and talks live or by recording, practice with each day's guided meditation and instruction, meditate on one's own, and explore the retreat teachings each day.

**Schedule:** We'll start with a **Guided Meditation** at **7:30 am on Saturday July 30<sup>th</sup>** (all times Central) and will keep the following schedule of Online Zoom Sessions through **Saturday August 6<sup>th</sup> evening:**

- 7:30 am** Guided Meditation: brief introduction & 45 minute practice
- 10:30 am** Meditation teaching focused on the "Fourth Tetrad" of Ānāpānasati with responses to practice questions
- 7:00 pm** Dhamma Talk and Q/R

**Note:** These times were chosen to allow all 4 US time zones to participate. The 10:30 am session time was chosen to allow folks to listen to the recording if they aren't able to do so live.

**Sit at least 2 more times daily, more if possible,** at whatever times work best for you, to make the most of the instruction and retreat opportunity. Add walking meditation, yoga, or qigong as able.

You may wish to include light reading concerning *ānāpānasati*, such as Buddhadasā's Bhikkhu's [\*Mindfulness with Breathing\*](#) or Thich Nhat Hanh's [\*Breathe, You Are Alive\*](#). Limit reading periods to 15 minutes each and leave adequate time for patient reflection and journaling on any readings.

If possible, take **Meals** alone or with practice friends, and keep them simple.

**Noble Silence:** within the realities of your living situation, limit unnecessary speech as much as possible, especially trivial and frivolous speech, as well as worry-perpetuating, complaining, and blaming speech. If possible, stay off the internet and don't check email. Make realistic choices that you can relax with. If you must use devices, create realistic guidelines for yourself to wisely limit net browsing and email activity. This is for the sake of practicing restraint and supporting meditative calm and clarity.

**Personal responsibility:** The retreat is your own responsibility, with the support of the online sessions. Do whatever you need to do each day, according to your circumstances, while keeping a focus on the Dhamma of breathing mindfully and investigating the reality of mind-body-life. You may need to make a few modifications in what I have outlined here, according to your circumstances. Please stay within the spirit of retreat.

An important aspect of **Home Retreat**, such as this one, is developing a practice that fits with your own home and life realities. That requires some flexibility. However, during Covid-19 many people have discovered that having to stay at home isn't enough to meditate regularly. They are finding that personal discipline and structure are important. This retreat offers some structure with which you can learn and strengthen your own resilience.

**All the sessions will be recorded:** Links for accessing the recordings will be posted in the retreat's Home Page (a Google Doc). The audio from all sessions will be available after the retreat (on Google drive).

**Registration:** Fill out [this on-line form](#) and send [\\$100 registration fee following the information here](#). This fee is to encourage commitment to full participation. Nobody will be refused because of inability to pay this fee. Please email us [if you cannot afford the fee](#) so that we can make other arrangements.

A week before the course begins, you'll receive an email giving access to the **course's Home Page (Google Doc)**, which will be the on-line hub for information concerning this course, including the Zoom link, schedule, and links to recordings.

**Dāna as Reciprocal support:** Santikaro's time and teaching are offered on [a donation basis, as are all sharings from Kevala Retreat](#). Like many others, we at Kevala Retreat are facing income uncertainty during these times and your generosity is greatly appreciated. (We also recognize that many of you as also facing financial uncertainty.) The Buddha's teachings, sanghas of training and practice, places of practice, and practice resources involve the hard work of many people, technical skills, financial generosity, and an overall spirit of reciprocal service. As a participant in this course, in addition to the registration payment, we ask you to support our work in ways suitable to your means and abilities. The kindness of others has made this course possible; your help insures that such activities continue. Please [visit our dāna page](#) (separate from registration fee).

**Preparation:** A few days before the retreat begins, we will send access to the Home Page / Google Doc that includes Zoom details and access to recordings, along with further guidelines and suggestions for your participation.

Best wishes for your practice of the Dhamma journey of life.

Santikaro

[Ask questions here](#)

### **More detailed thematic overview**

Mindfulness with Breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is one of Buddhism's foundation practices. Many meditators have been exposed to it in some form. This retreat will deepen its roots, especially concerning Dhamma, so that it can truly serve as a foundation in our cultivation of the middle way, strengthening our daily practice of mindfulness, inquiry, serenity, and letting go.

What does a well-rounded meditation practice look like?

- it integrates all four establishments of mindfulness;
- it deepens composure, mental unification, calm abiding, joy, and freedom;
- it fosters abundant clear seeing and insight;
- cultivates the seven factors of awakening leading to “higher knowledge” and genuine liberation.

Such is mindfulness with breathing according to the original Buddhist teachings. Buddha left behind a framework for systematic meditation practice incorporating all of the above. On its own, *ānāpānasati* is a sophisticated meditation system that thoroughly explores our lived realities of body, feeling tones, mind-heart, and the laws of nature permeating all conscious moments. Exploring these facets of life through and with breathing deepens awareness, serenity, concentration, and insight.

Further, mindfulness with breathing serves as a foundation supporting many forms of meditation, such as the *brahma-vihāras* (divine abodes), providing them with a relaxed, grounded foundation. It also has a central role in somatic health and well-being.

In this retreat we will focus on *ānāpānasati* on its own practical terms, based in the original teachings of Early Buddhism. We have 8 days to explore this rich, profound process, practicing with and reflecting on how each level unfolds. Mindful breathing in and out opens up the nurturing potential of healthy breathing. Skillful exploration of such breathing releases tension, settles restlessness, and helps us be more comfortable in sitting. This makes pleasure and well-being more available. As this sensitivity increases, the more subtle dynamics of breathing are used for deepening calm and enhancing clarity. This enables us to recognize thoughts and emotions with greater acceptance and less reactivity. As we drop beyond rejection and indulgence, wisdom blossoms. This foundation will support any wise explorations that we choose.

Based on his decades of practice with and teaching of mindfulness with breathing, Santikaro will share skillful means for embodying this practice as a trusted friend. He will emphasize developing *ānāpānasati* as a daily practice.

Upon registration, you will receive PDFs of the *Discourse on Mindfulness with Breathing* (MN 118) and an outline of 16 Entryways into the Domains of Mindfulness with Breathing.

\*\*\* [Ask a question here](#) \*\*\*

**Suggested reading:**

*Mindfulness with Breathing: a manual for serious beginners*, Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu (Wisdom, 1988)

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