

*Home/On-Line Retreat:*

March 19 - 25 (Sunday through Saturday)

## **Mindfulness with Breathing: the bedrock of mindful practice**

Breath is life and mindfulness with breathing is the foundation meditation of original Buddhism. Breath connects us with the here-now, webs of life that support us, and deeper realities of mind-body. This retreat will emphasize how breath shapes health, clear-calm mind, and insights. We'll explore webs of relationship that involve breath and the cyclic, patterned nature of life.

[Register for a retreat here](#) \*\*\* [Ask a question here](#)

### **Retreat Overview and Parameters**

In this **At Home retreat**, or other safe accommodation, teaching will take place **Online via Zoom**. You will need to download and install the Zoom app to participate. This format supports you in deepening your at-home practice, responding to the contingencies of the situation we are in, and fostering sangha while taking wise Covid-19 precautions.

**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 reflect with the retreat teachings each day.

**Schedule:** We'll start with a brief **Introduction**, and then **Guided Meditation**, at **7:30 am on Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>** (all times Central) and will keep the following schedule of Online Zoom Sessions through **Saturday March 25<sup>th</sup> evening:**


**7:30 am** Guided Meditation: brief introduction, 40 minute practice, and questions.

**10:30 am** Meditation teaching "Diverse Modes of Creative Breathing"

**afternoons** Small Group interviews (times will vary)

**7:00 pm** Dhamma Talk and Q/R

**Note:** These times were chosen to allow all 4 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 1 other time daily, more if possible,** at whatever time work best for you. Add walking meditation, yoga, or qigong as able.

If you wish, pick an appropriate **Dhamma book** to read and reflect upon daily. Limit reading periods to 15 minutes each and leave adequate time for patient reflection and journaling. For this retreat, Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu's ***Mindfulness with Breathing*** is highly appropriate.

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

**Noble Silence:** within the realities of your living situation, abstain from 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.

While this pandemic persists and co-exists with other crises, we will create a sangha of similarly intentioned friends who support each other, even online.

**All the sessions will be recorded:** Links for accessing the recordings will be sent twice a day, often within a couple hours of a session. The audio from all sessions will be available after the retreat (on Google drive).

**Dāna:** Santikaro's time and teaching are offered on a donation basis, as are all sharings from Kevala Retreat. The registration fee is required (below) and therefore different from *dāna*. Making these retreats possible, maintaining Kevala Retreat for contemplative practice, and our other activities require lots of work and resources. Hence, our dependence on *dāna*. 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 are also facing financial uncertainty.)



**Registration:** Please [complete this on-line form](#) (specifying “Anapanasati Foundations”) 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.

**Preparation:** An email will be sent a few days before the retreat with Zoom details, further guidelines, reminders and suggestions for your participation.

I hope you can join us in this experiment.

Santikaro

[Ask questions here](#)

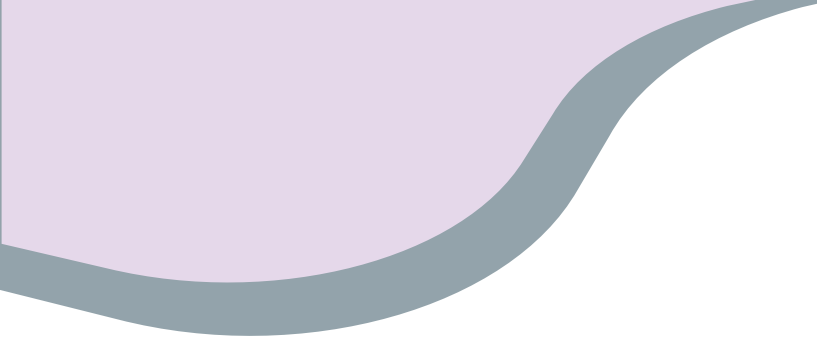
### **More detailed thematic overview**

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 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 concentration, 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, mind, 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 6 days to explore this rich, profound process, practicing with and reflecting on each level of its unfolding. 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.

**Suggested reading:**

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

