

Breathing Task

from Eva Karczag

The Navajo call breath 'the wind's child'.

*From the moment we are conceived, whatever task might occupy our attention,
we are constantly generating movement of air into and out of our bodies.*

*This process becomes so habitual that we forget how mysterious, powerful and all-encompassing this movement, called breathing, is.
Consciously returning to our breathing from time to time connects us back*

to ground and air,

to inside and outside,

to receiving and letting go.

Familiarity with our breathing supports our weight and lightness, opens space in our bodies, guides our energy, and centers and calms us.

Giving our breathing attention brings us back to ourselves.

Every now and then, just sit and watch your breathing – this could happen anywhere, at any time, in any context. Don't try to change it, simply watch the cycle of in and out-breaths for a while, and let your breathing unfold as it wants.

Document some of these occasions.

Your documentation can be:

drawing or writing;

it can also include gathering images that seem relevant to your experience,

like finding a fragment of sound or music, a video, a photo, an object, a form in nature

or it can take any other manifestation that can help someone else understand something about your experience

and helps you create a memory of your breathing insights.

Gerda (Pytt) Geddes, my first Taiji teacher, initiated my ongoing fascination with breath and its intimate connection to movement.

André Bernard introduced me to the idea that I didn't have to make my breathing happen, I could simply watch it happening.

Grateful thanks to Miranda Tufnell for sharing the Navajo concept of breath with me.

Eva Tremel and I give a version of this task to students in the ArtEZ Bachelor of Dance, ArtEZ Academy for Theatre and Dance, Arnhem, Netherlands.