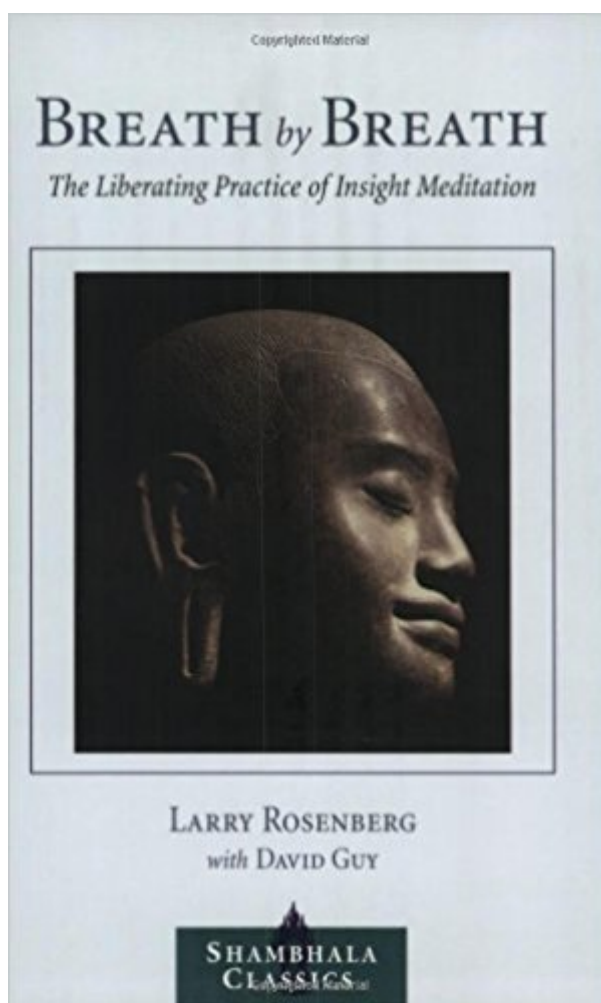


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Breath By Breath: The Liberating Practice Of Insight Meditation (Shambhala Classics)



Synopsis

Freedom from suffering is not only possible, but the means for achieving it are immediately within our grasp—literally as close to us as our own breath. This is the 2,500-year-old good news contained in the Anapanasati Sutra, the Buddha's teaching on cultivating both tranquility and deep insight through full awareness of breathing. In this book, Larry Rosenberg brings this timeless meditation method to life. Using the insights gained from his many years of practice and teaching, he makes insight meditation practice accessible to modern practitioners.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In any meditation class, one of the first things one learns is the importance of breathing. For Larry Rosenberg, a seasoned instructor of insight meditation, the breath is everything. And he's not in bad company since the Buddha himself delivered a sutra on the subject. Rosenberg's *Breath by Breath* is an elaboration on this short classic but couched in familiar language, liberally spiced with anecdotes from Rosenberg's decades of practice and teaching. It's Rosenberg's earthy humor and patient instruction that make him such a popular teacher and that make *Breath by Breath* a rewarding read. He takes the beginning student from the wandering "doggy mind" to becoming a chicken, along the way getting a teacher's bite and sitting like a frog. For the hurried and harried, he includes a nutshell, two-step version of the sutra's 16-step practice (appended in the full text of the sutra). More of a coach than a disciplinarian, Rosenberg takes a see-what-happens attitude. "You

don't make liberation happen," he says. "To contemplate breathing is to contemplate life itself."

--Brian Bruya --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rosenberg, a teacher at the Insight Meditation Center in Cambridge, MA, provides a clear description of meditative practice. The technique is based on the Anapanasati Sutra, the Buddha's own instructions to meditators. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Simply the best book I've come across on breath meditation. It really gets into the nitty-gritty questions that Westerners have with "just sitting there." He sprinkles in anecdotes from his experiences that keep the narrative moving; these are generally enlightening and often funny, as when he's bitten by a mosquito during a meditation session where the participants aren't allowed to move lest a monk beat them with the "stick of compassion." And then there's a chapter about how to incorporate everything you've just learned into a typically hectic life. Grade: A+. I love Thich Nhat Hanh and have read a huge number of his books. I cherish them, but this one really sunk in so maybe it's Rosenberg's American perspective that was so useful.

If you're interested in Vipassana Buddhist Meditation which is based on the breath, this book is for you. I had read Phillip Moffat, Jack Kornfield, Sylvia Boorstein and Adyashanti which are very good, but this book had helpful new ideas for me even though it was written before the others. All of these authors are Western teachers who have lots of experience helping people with their daily lives. My only problem is with my computer. I have an old Mac and I always have trouble. I got two of Rosenberg's books because I had to go on the website a second time.. I couldn't find the original page, but somehow it was still there.

The Anapanasati Sutra is the simplest of the several teachings of the Buddha on mindfulness and meditation. In many ways it is the very basis of the Vipassana tradition and the core of Insight Meditation. Mr. Rosenberg does not get carried away with this teaching, but approaches the sutra in a traditional manner. Of the many meditation books I have read, including better known Insight Meditation books, this is the easiest to understand and follow. Mr. Rosenberg is a very experienced teacher of this approach to meditation and the book shows it. This was the only Dharma book I took

on a self-guided meditation retreat last winter. I am now on my third reading of it and I am finding it as helpful now as the first time. If you are interested in a basic approach to Insight Meditation and a clear description of the Buddha's most elementary teaching on meditation, this is for you. I give this my highest recommendation.

This is an excellent introductory book for any meditation student, but it particularly well suited to a serious beginner. The book is targeted to a Western audience and presents the essential concepts of Insight Meditation using the Apapanasati Sutra and the practices of the Theravada tradition as a framework. I feel this book goes into more depth than most popular books on the subject, but it is still very readable and contains a wealth of information. It also contains essential Pali definitions without getting bogged down in too many Pali terms or esoteric language. He is also very clear in his explanations and complete in terms of presenting the important concepts. For an even deeper dive, try Mindfulness with Breathing by Buddhadasa Bhikku. This is a more difficult read, but well worth the effort. In fact, Larry Rosenberg based a lot of his book on his contact with this meditation master and he references him in his bibliography. Rosenberg also wrote the forward to Mindfulness with Breathing. In short, I think both books are complimentary and together form a comprehensive introduction.

If you meditate and are looking to deepen your practice this is a wonderful book. In studying the Anapanasati Sutra you see how focusing on the breath is really enough!

This isn't just a Buddhist scholar spinning romantic tales of mystical meditative states or outlining a fast track to enlightenment. This is a seasoned practitioner and gifted teacher who has done the work from the ground and writes from direct experience. In this book, the authority of the writer's voice is clearly derived from his own exemplary effort, an intense interest in the Buddhist path to freedom, and a commitment to light the way for others. Mr. Rosenberg's wisdom and humor makes for engaging reading and the student of vipassana (insight meditation), as well as the novice, can follow the format given, taken from ancient teachings, and apply them to daily life in the here and now.

This is an excellent book for beginner or advanced practitioners of meditation. It is both an informative and inspiring presentation of one of the major Buddhist sutras. (One does not have to be Buddhist -- I am not -- to benefit from the concepts presented in this work.) The chapters advance

us through the "Anapanasati Sutra" explaining each part, while reminding us all along the way that meditation is not an academic exercise. Readers are encouraged to begin meditation practice from the very outset and this book is about helping us do it. The authors write in a highly engaging style. The writing is interesting, honest, often humorous, and full of examples to bring clarity and meaning to the concepts. I have read this book twice, cover to cover, and I'm continually dipping into it for inspiration. On days when I have trouble settling myself into meditation, I begin by picking up this book until I am able to sit with my breath. The authors' words are a great encouragement. Larry Rosenberg is an experienced Buddhist who has been trained by some of the world's renowned teachers; yet he is able to skillfully write for the lay person. Roxie Smith

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