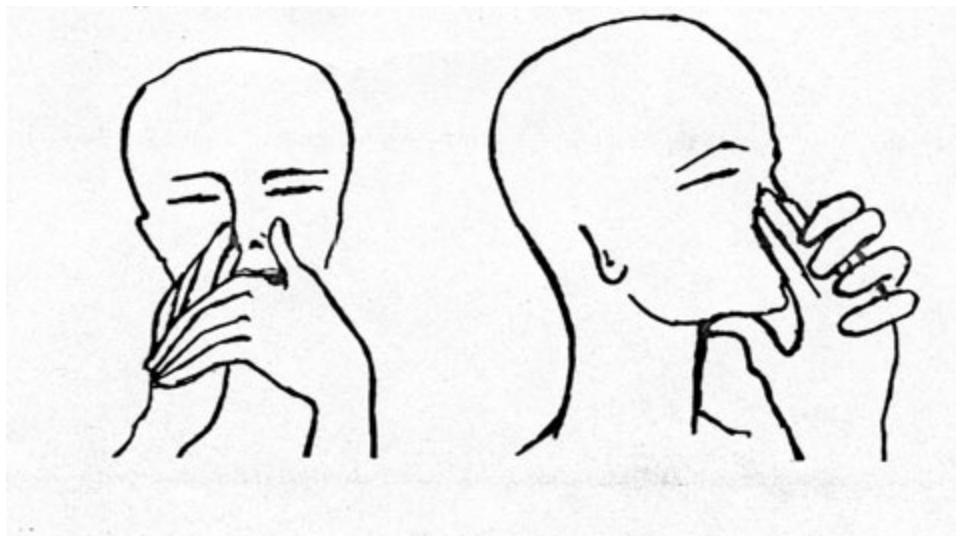


## Qasab: The Balancing Breath

### 1. Horizontal Practice

Start by holding your hands in the position shown below:



This position is designed to be comfortable during long practice sessions. Tuck your elbows in against your body, for support. The right thumb rests under the chin, with the middle finger on the right nostril. The left hand is over the right, with the thumb on the left nostril. Now either nostril can be easily closed, and the two hands support each other.

In the following instructions, let  $X = 6$  for the first try. Then each breath will be 24 heartbeats long. This is a Square Breath, as described on page 188 of *Living from the Heart* by Puran and Susanna Bair, second edition. For  $X$  heartbeats, exhale, and toward the end of the count, squeeze your diaphragm muscle and crunch your abdominal muscles to empty your lungs. Start breathing in immediately, for  $X$  heartbeats. As you approach the last counts of the inhale, draw in as much air as you can. Control the forcefulness of your breath so that you reach the end of the in-breath and out-breath in the allotted time. Hold the inhale for  $2X$  heartbeats.

When the breath is in through one nostril, imagine that it starts far away, on the horizon of that same side. When the breath is out through one nostril, imagine that it stretches out to the horizon on that side. When the breath is through both nostrils, imagine that it flows out of the heart in a forward direction on the exhale, and into the heart from the back on the inhale.

Start by exhaling through both nostrils.

#### Left-to-Right Breath

1. Breathe in through the left nostril only by blocking the right nostril with the middle finger of your right hand, for  $X$  heartbeats. Imagine the breath starts at the left horizon and ends in your heart.

2. Hold your breath for X heartbeats and then X heartbeats again, with both nostrils blocked. Think of your breath as spirit in your heart.
3. Breathe out through the right nostril only by blocking the left nostril with the thumb of your left hand, for X heartbeats. Imagine the breath starts at your heart and reaches the right horizon.
4. Repeat two more times.

### Right-to-Left Breath

1. Breathe in through the right nostril only by blocking the left nostril with the thumb of your left hand, for X heartbeats. Imagine the breath starts at the right horizon and ends in your heart.
2. Hold your breath for X heartbeats and then X heartbeats again, with both nostrils blocked. Think of your breath as spirit in your heart.
3. Breathe out through the left nostril only by blocking the right nostril with the middle finger of your right hand, for X heartbeats. Imagine the breath starts at your heart and reaches the left horizon.
4. Repeat two more times.

<http://www.amazon.com/Living-From-Heart-Puran-Bair/dp/0979526965>

For more information

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