Lots of Reasons for Ānāpānasati

(by Santikaro Bhikkhu)

1) Because breathing is prāna, is life, is chi. Know how to breathe properly and you will have these healthy energies to draw on always. (Plus, you will know when they are low and need to be replenished.)

2) Ānāpānasati doesn’t require any special paraphernalia, rituals, costume, initiations, or the like. Therefore, you don’t have to shell out any money to do it. The Buddha just sat under a tree on some freshly cut grass or a folded robe.

3) Because the Lord Buddha practiced Ānāpānasati himself: before and after the Great Awakening. He was doing Ānāpānasati when the Awakening came. He practiced throughout his life, including for R & R.

4) Ānāpānasati, in various forms, is common to spiritual traditions the world over, including those of many indigenous peoples.

5) Because no other meditation system was explained as directly or in such detail by the Lord Buddha as this one.

6) Because Ānāpānasati is both samatha (calming, stopping) and vipassanā (insight, seeing clearly) together. We can develop both without separating them or prejudicing one over the other.

7) Because Ānāpānasati perfects the four applications of mindfulness, which are central to Buddhist practice.

8) Because Ānāpānasati perfects the seven factors of awakening, without which there is not liberation.

9) Because Ānāpānasati is the noble eightfold path.

10) Because Ānāpānasati is fun.