

Chapter 7 : SAVOURING SCENTS

Chapters 6 and 7 belong together.

Chapter 6 is rather technical.

Chapter 7 is rather advanced.

They are a separate part of this book to be experimented with when you've a little extra time. They explore a deepening of the body breath sense, through tasting and scenting. They will not significantly influence your understanding of chapters 8 and 9.

Part 1:

IN PRAISE OF THE NOSE

If we had an image of God here, i would worship Hedgehogs : they can hardly see or hear, but they snuffel like world champions, their whole reality and sense of self and the world outside, rotates around smells, ... where we think: objects produce smells; a hedgehog thinks: smells produce objects.

MEDITATION AND SMELLING

Traditional and modern meditations are full of breathing exercises. However, i have never heard of the sense of smell being used or even mentioned in any breathing awareness meditation. It seems to me that smell is the active ingredient of the breath. If i'm not aware of the smell, then it is only a narrow awareness of the breathing. It's like hearing electrical notes without the trumpet and violin tones. It's like seeing in black and white.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Till recently the world was full of smells. The carpenter smellt of wood and the blacksmith had smoke drenched clothes. Quite suddenly we've lost a certain natural beauty and depth to life, where each tradesman and craftsman had their own 'colour' and their identity confirmed by their smell.

Suddenly in the developed world everything gets put in plastic bags and our personal human smells are soaped away with detergents, we aim at being odourless or perfumed.

And in the middle of our civilised odourless cleanliness, all over the modern world, humans are producing a horrible new stinking noxious substance, and we hardly seem to notice it anymore. I wonder how much the influence of petrol and diesel fumes have caused us to inhibit this sense and turn it off. And i pity all those animals who are dependant on this sense for their survival.

Personally i want to be aware of bad smells. I breathe them in anyway, if i'm aware of them at least i have a choice to move, or not to inhale deeply.

Part 2:**THE PRACTICE**

When practicing scenting, there is a great tendency to smell-in slowly or irregularly in order to savour the scents. After a few breaths you might get breathless or dizzy. So it's important to be able to let go of your breathing and give it time to regulate itself as described in Chapter 5.

The best way to approach this subject, is to smell-in something nice, with your mouth slightly open as described in Chapter 6.

Savour the new incoming scent. Notice how it invigorates the cheek bones, out towards the ears and the back of the head. Notice how the sensation of the in-smell still seems to hang somewhere in your head, a residue in the nasal canals - while the warmth of the out-smell comes up in the central area direct from the belly to the mouth.

Notice the residue of the in-smell in the nasal canals, and notice the contrast between this - and the out-smell in the central body, lower throat and mouth. It feels like the nasal canals extend over an area behind the cheek bones which opens out a bit like a cavern spreading out to the ears and the back of the head.

When we touch things with our hands, we realise them with our heads. The nose and nasal canals are where smells are 'touched'. But, where do we 'realise' smells? I wouldn't be surprised if children and animals felt the scent over the entire top of the head and down their necks, and into their bodies. I'm sure as adults we can all remember a time, when the smell of a succulent meal, seemed to fill our whole body.

THE OUT-SMELL

Hedgehogs are so used to their own inside body smell, that the out-smell happens incidentally, without them really noticing it. Their self-smell is a constant, in relation to all the smells of the world around them.

I've obviously no scientific proof, but I imagine that their out-smell is some sort of guide to their own inner health (in the same way we use visual symptoms), and I believe they would be very quick to notice and react to any changes.

SAVOURING

So, it seems to me, any sensible hedgehog practicing general watchfulness, would use the time during the old normal, reliable, habitual 'me-smell', - to search out every available new scent which they can find.

So I imagine, outside, - where scents change with each change of wind, - each fresh new in-smell is savoured and examined - they search out all the different meanings behind the smells, and notice the slightest contrasts and changes over time. In the same way we notice any visual change on the way to our neighbourhood shops.

BASICS : TASTES/SMELLS

By savouring the residue of the in-smell, our sense of smell develops into something more like a sense of taste.

Amoebas have chemoreceptors, this means they have a rudimentary sense of something like, deeper than or combining, taste and smell.

I have a feeling that every cell in my body must have a primitive form of this taste/smell perception for its environment. Scientifically speaking each cell 'responds' to oxygen - what I understand is: each cell senses, tastes and digests oxygen.

Part 3.**FILLING UP**

In Chapter 4 i discussed how with breathing, the feeling is that the breath permeates the whole body, filling it up to just under the skin, and then emptying out, a bit like a balloon. Smells are carried by the breath, - the simplest logical conclusion any clear thinking hedgehog could make is that the smell goes where the breath goes, filling up the body to just under the skin.

I would love parents to ask their four and five year olds, (after the questions on breathing): "and when you smell, "where do you feel it?" - "can you feel it in the back of your head, your neck, the top of your head? Can you taste it? Can you taste it anywhere in your body?"

I feel the smell goes where my breath goes - (and even if it's just my imagination, it's a wholesome feeling). The smell comes in filling me up to just under my skin. And this sensation is like a combination of tastes and smells.

I taste, savour and absorb the residue of the fresh new in-scent. I digest the in-smell. The sensation that i can continue to savour the scent, may well be to some extent a memory or impression - but to argue it scientifically: we know that the 'goodness' in the air we breath, goes to the lungs where it's absorbed by the heart and circulated around the body in blood, and this 'goodness' is then absorbed by the surrounding tissue, by the cells.

No hedgehog could figure out all the science. From a hedgehogs perspective, they taste and digest the scents, and then are probably conscious of it with their whole body. And as far as I'm concerned this is the truth, until it is disproved by science or common sense.

SENSING THE SCENTS

Smell something with a nice scent. Notice the contrast between the in-smell and the out-smell. Then start focussing exclusively, recognising and being conscious of and enjoying only the in-smell. Filling up with new scent and being conscious of it, and repeating this with no interest in the out-smell.

The taste/smell confirms the impression made by the breathing of the shape of my body from the inside. Alone, whole body breathing gives me a feeling something like a bag, a sheet of inside skin; but when i start smelling scents, the inside skin starts fizzing.

It reinforces the solid feeling of self identity in my body from the inside, with a sensation of vital, effervescent life happening just under my skin Smelling is the active ingredient of breathing.

So, before i can write much more, i really do need a group of parents who will question their children, to confirm my 'theories'.

Even if i did find other individuals who were interested in experimenting, any group of adults could easily start kidding themselves about the effects, and i don't want to get involved in theories. So, what i need most and first is parents to ask their children a few of the questions i've mentioned, and then please give feedback.

[Appendix C](#) has additional ideas.

There are worlds still to discover ... i'm still experimenting. The world of smells is far deeper and stranger than seeing and listening.