



A Sermon for the Center for Universal Oneness

Balance and Equipoise – Turn, Turn, Turn

Presented by Murshida Nuria Stephanie Sabato

Spring Equinox, Sunday, March 20, 2022 in the Northern Hemisphere 11:33 AM-ET

Thank you for inviting me again to join your service. I feel especially blessed that I could be with you today during the time of the Spring or Vernal Equinox, which occurs at 10:33 AM this year. The Spring Equinox is marked by day and night of equal length. Balance! Equipoise!

Most of us in the northern hemisphere are starting to emerge from winter. A longtime friend of mine described it this way in a Facebook post yesterday.

We were excited to get out for a drive. The lakes are still frozen, but the snow is melting--fields are opening up and one can hear, see and feel the happiness of the birds. The eagle migration has begun, and we saw at least three soaring and swooping.

Our favorite cardinal at the feeder, Pretty Boy, was singing a wonderful song from the treetops. I told him if I was a bird, I would be his gal. Since I am not, Queen Esther, his mate, will have the honor of his courtship for another spring.

*We are so happy and feeling full tilt ready for spring.
Spring cleaning and rebalancing.*

With the Spring Equinox our spirit is waking up with new ideas and new dreams for our life. This is the time of year when nature is fresh, and the air is filled with warm energy making us feel alive, uplifted, and inspired. The Spring Equinox is a time of awakening, a time for rebirth, fertility, and new beginnings. Just as a gardener or farmer is preparing the soil and planting seeds, let's prepare our inner garden and fields. Let's take a moment to set an intention for what we wish to weed out and remove, and what we wish to plant, grow, and bring to fruition during these coming months.

What happens in our body at this time is the melatonin recedes and the light begins to affect the brain, we can get a light "spring" in our step, we become more alert and experience increase feelings of happiness and well being. The fresh air, scents and visual displays of blooms and birth, make us feel good as we consume them with our senses.

As I was preparing for our time together today, there was a song being sung inside me. This song has been sung by Pete Seeger, Judy Collins, The Seekers, and The Byrds. And the words of this song come from a famous verse from a bible verse found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to reap;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

This scriptural reading highlights a range of opposites. What it also implies not so much in words, but in punctuation of commas is the Buddhist concept of the *nature of impermanence*; a reminder that nothing in life is fixed. Our lives through hindsight give us insight. We come to know through our experience that life is in flux, life is change, and at times life is polarizing – pulling us in opposite directions. Are we mindful of this polarization, that comes towards us from the external world, and perhaps more importantly the polarization we often feel internally? Do we take the time to ‘pause’, take a breath, giving ourselves a chance to find our place somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of polarity? If we can do this, we can discern if it is time to take thoughtful, awakened action to bring about change. At other times, practiced patience is required to lean into the knowing that “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven”. Ultimately, “Trusting in God” in our actions and in our inaction.

The breath is one of our greatest tools to help us to find a balance. The last time we were together I guided us on a concentration practice focus on light. We used breath and inner concentration during that practice, and today I would like to share with you another breath practice that has many names such as: pranayama, alternate nostril breathing, and in Sufi terminology we call it Kasab/Qasab.

The purpose this breath is to create a sense of balance and equipoise through the tool of the breath, which is done with a specific rhythmical breathing pattern.

The Kasab breath uses the: active and receptive channels of breath, after which balance or stillness between these two is achieved. Through the practice of Kasab the development, awareness and perception of the qualities of active, receptive, and balanced equipoise are made clearer.

The Kasab breath gives control of breath and therefore control of thoughts, feelings, emotions,

passions and affairs. Kasab develops volume of breath, making the breath fuller and rhythmic. Kasab purifies the channels of the breath including the lungs, veins, nerves, and helps to makes us more resilient and immune to contagious diseases.

Kasab develops expansion and freedom of inhaling and exhaling. The breath feels light and pure. Feelings of happiness and light and love arise. Body feels light and ethereal.

Through the Kasab breath the Soul experiences and spreads light both outwards and inwards so everything becomes clear. The development of this light within illuminates and guides our path. The goal is balance.

	Inhalation	Hold	Exhalation	Repetitions
Receptive <i>Beauty</i>	LN: 4	Hold in 8	RN: 4	5
Active <i>Power</i>	RN: 4	Hold in 8	LN: 4	5
Balanced	L+RN: 4	Hold in 8	L+RN: 4	5

I would like to share one of the most poignant experiences I have every had with the Spring Equinox. It happened that several decades I was out in a vast flat Kansas landscape. The sun was setting in the west and in the east, in perfect balance, was a rising full moon. It was as if these two aspects of light, the intensity of the brilliant sun and the reflection of this sun in the full receptive moon where penetrating through my heart and deeper yet into my soul becoming the fulcrum at perfect and equal balance between the two. When I remember, I feel the preciousness of that moment and I am stilled again and again. I turn towards that experience when I need to invoke that kind of balance and harmony of elements. Turn, Turn, Turn...

Play Music 3:50 minutes – The Byrds: Turn, Turn, Turn

https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=5_YsQu5tKEE&list=RDAMVM5_YsQu5tKEE

