

Benjamin Zephaniah and yoga in prison

Benjamin knew from experience the harsh reality of prison and for more than two decades he was patron of The Prison Phoenix Trust (The PPT), a charity that helps people use their time inside to become less disconnected from themselves, through tools for spiritual growth. The poem inside this leaflet, 'In-exhale', was written for The PPT's book *Freeing The Spirit*, which has inspired more than 20,000 people to practise meditation and yoga in prison and is still one of the most requested in prisons today. He also wrote the foreword to the book *Peace Inside: A Prisoner's Guide to Meditation*. "If you're finding it hard in prison," he wrote, "and very few people don't find it hard – meditation is something that will make a real difference. Meditation is a way of not just surviving but thriving in prison because it taps into that natural intelligence that we all have."

Benjamin advocated for The PPT's approach of offering non-judgemental support for the spiritual development of people in prison. Sandy Chubb, who was director of The PPT when Benjamin first joined as patron remembers him as, "A true activist, who used his voice and words to tell the stories of so many people who don't have a voice. His legacy lives on in all the books he wrote for people of all ages."

Since 1988 The Prison Phoenix Trust has supported people in prison with:
Yoga classes: trauma-responsive mindful movement and meditation
Peer-support newsletters
Books, DVDs & CDs for yoga in their cells
Mentoring from volunteer letter-writers

Be part of
the change



Scan & find out about:

Giving

Your donation or fundraising event will help us keep changing lives.

Visit bit.ly/pptfundraise

Volunteering

Mentors with an established meditation practice write to people in prison with support and advice.

Teaching yoga in prison

Learn to teach safely and accessibly with The PPT's highly respected training.

The PPT
PO Box 328
Oxford
OX2 7HF

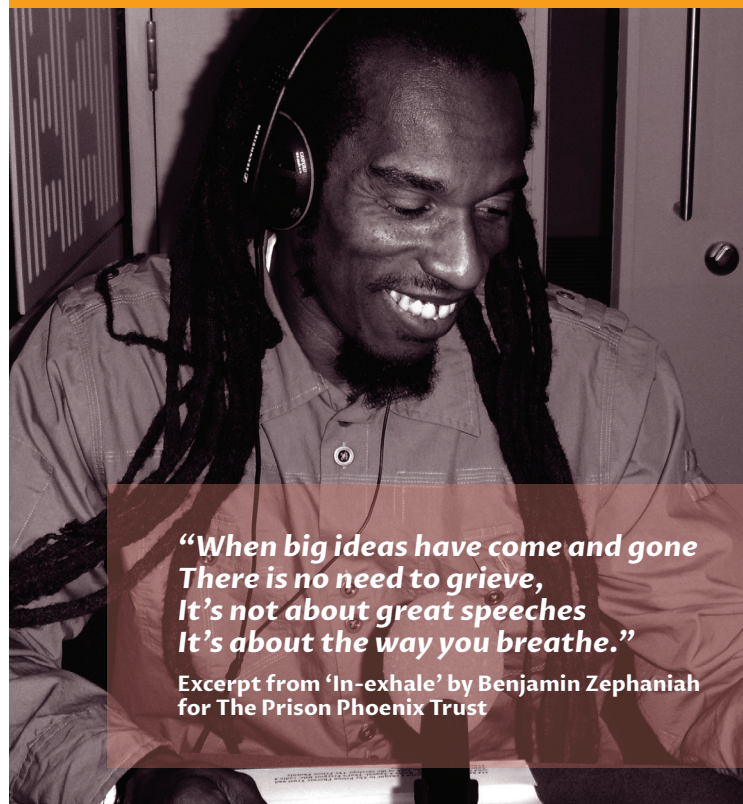
www.theppt.org.uk



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Meditation poem from Benjamin Zephaniah



**"When big ideas have come and gone
 There is no need to grieve,
 It's not about great speeches
 It's about the way you breathe."**

Excerpt from 'In-exhale' by Benjamin Zephaniah
for The Prison Phoenix Trust

In-exhale

Wise men travel many miles
Wise women sail the seas,
A wise man can fly many days
To find a well-wise tree,
Intellectuals and scholars
Find it so hard to believe,
It's not about location
It's about the way you breathe.

The body that wins prizes
Cannot sustain the dream,
The protein and the vitamins
Will never reign supreme,
Every mirror that is made
Is programmed to deceive,
It's not about the muscles
It's about the way you breathe.

Sometimes there is confusion
Between the left and right,
Sometimes you'll find we all look out
When we need insight,
But once you have found balance
It's easy to conceive,
It's not about resistance
It's about the way you breathe.

It's folly to take simple verse
And make them complicated,
The humble breath does not need words
To be communicated,
When big ideas have come and gone
There is no need to grieve,
It's not about great speeches
It's about the way you breathe.

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Benjamin at the BBC Radio 4 Appeal for The PPT in 2007

it's about the way you breathe

