



IMAGINE
YOGA ACADEMY

KUNDALINI YOGA
TEACHER TRAINING
200h MANUAL · PART I





KUNDALINI YOGA **TEACHER TRAINING**

200H MANUAL · PART I



*Imagine there's no Heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today*

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace*

*You may say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one*

*Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world*

*You may say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one*

John Lennon.

OBJECTIVES OF THE TEACHER TRAINING

KNOWING THYSELF

- *To understand the sacredness of your own life.*
- *To know that you are on a quest for truth and authenticity.*
- *To find out what Kundalini Yoga can do for you as you live your day-to-day life.*
- *To understand the blessing of learning, and that what is learned should be lived.*
- *To know that this is a path of the heart and what is learned from the heart you will want to share.*
- *As a teacher, what you have learned should make you sensitive to the light of others and compassionate in what you see.*
- *To know that personal growth in consciousness is your right and should be your only desire; what you do afterward in life will only be the natural outcome of that growth.*

YOUR PARTICIPATION

- *This is a course where you will continuously search for truth about who you are. It requires your active participation.*
- *Trust the process and study as if it was the only thing in your life that really mattered. What you take with you in the end will be in direct proportion to your level of commitment during the course.*
- *It is important to come to each seminar with an attitude of “wanting to learn.”*
- *Find the love inside of you through the practice, it is the beginning of “love what you do and do what you love.”*

METHOD

- *A strong physical practice of yoga in class to feel that change happens from within.*
 - *A strong physical practice of yoga outside of class including Sadhana and weekly classes because constant attention is necessary if you are to walk on the path of love.*
 - *The experience of deep meditation.*
 - *To love the search for ideas and inspiration wherever you find them as they add to the depth of your own thoughts.*
 - *Learning to respect others when they speak and to communicate that which will benefit everyone in the group. It is the essence of non-violent communication.*
 - *To listen to your own words as you speak and the clarity of your thinking as it rises up from your heart when you write.*
-



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Graphic design by Daniela Troconis Daly
Kriya Illustrations by Sarito - sarito.carbonmade.com*

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FUNDAMENTALS





PHILOSOPHY

WHY YOGA?

Why, is the driving force of our lives!

WHY AM I HERE?

Write it down in your notebook.

In the words of James Clear:

"All behavior is driven by the desire to solve a problem."

The questions are:

- Why are you here? What do you expect to obtain at the end of this program?
- What would you like to change?
- What problem are you solving?

WHY YOGA?

Yoga is a method of self-knowledge that has been around for thousands of years and the one and only reason for this is: it works!

When followed consistently the Yoga method delivers what it promises which is an increasingly more meaningful life product of more profound self-knowledge. The more we know ourselves and act upon that, the more meaningful our lives will be. Yoga brings coherence between thought, word and action.

WHAT IS YOGA?

Patanjali is the philosophical father of all traditional yogas and in his sutras he states:

I.2: YOGA CITTA VRTTI NIRODHA

Yoga is when we cease to identify ourselves with the fluctuations of the mind.

Why is it important?

- **Neural patterns:** a second chance.
- **Biology:** is concerned with survival not with joy.

- **Our life is what we focus on:** our focus determines what we live.
- **RAS:** Reticular Activating System.

Neural patterns:

- Formed through repetition.
- What we repeat becomes more likely. Efficiency.
 - What was repeated to you?
 - What do you repeat?
 - Which is your mantra?
- Can be changed by not doing what reinforces them and by doing new things to create new neural patterns. A second chance.
- Yoga is based on repetition.

Biology:

- Only concerned with keeping us alive and passing on our genes.
- Our brain is designed to focus on fear (real or perceived) and learn from the past to prevent similar situations in the future.
- Instinctively we run from pain, associated with extinction.
- Growth has an element of pain.

Focus

- Life is what we focus on.
- All you see is pain, your life is pain.
- All you see is growth, your life is growth.
- What is your focus?
- 95% of when our attention drifts (when we do not control our focus) we think about problems in a passive way.

RAS: Reticular Activating System.

- This is a system in the brain that is dedicated to finding information that is relevant to us from the surrounding noise.
- We biologically find information on what is relevant: ways to reproduce, water, food, and shelter.
- The modern world is more complicated.

CONCLUSIONS

- We need to still our minds, gain focus, to be able to determine the type of life we want to live.
- A meaningful life is a decision we make that requires daily work.
- It is a lifelong process.
- It is in our hands, it is our responsibility, and only we have the power to do something about it.



TECHNIQUE

KUNDALINI YOGA MANTRA

INTRODUCTION

Kundalini Yoga Mantras are chanted in a special language, Gurmukhi, that connects us with the inner sound current. The word “gurmukh” literally means “from the mouth of the guru”. While “Gurmukhi” is spoken, it is a poetic rendering, written in a script intended for spiritual writings. Chanting a Mantra is also considered a meditation and can include a mudra (hand position), breathing in a certain way, and the sound of the words.

Correct pronunciation of these ancient words, vibrate different parts of the roof of the mouth, touching on meridian points, balancing and stimulating different parts of the body and brain, and listening to the sound inside you, plus how many minutes or hours a person chants, all combines to bring you safety to inner states of awareness and change. Read these ancient sacred words, the translations and what they can bring into your life.

There are 84 meridian points on the roof of the mouth which the tongue stimulates and they in turn stimulate the hypothalamus, which makes the

CHANTING

3 minutes - Affects the electromagnetic field, the circulation and stability of the blood.

7 minutes - Brain patterns begin to shift and the magnetic field surrounding the body increases in strength.

11 minutes - Begins to change the nerves and the glandular system.

22 minutes - The 3 minds (negative, positive & neutral) balance, and begin to work together, The subconscious mind begins to clear.

31 minutes - Allows the glands, breath, and concentration to affect all the cells and rhythms of the body. Endocrine secretions are completely balanced.

62 minutes - Stimulates the frontal lobe of the brain; pituitary and pineal glands. You work through the physical body, the emotions and mental states and are then in communication with aspects of the Divine within yourself.

2 1/2 hours - Changes the psyche and its co-relation with the surrounding magnetic field so that the subconscious mind is held firmly in the new pattern by the surrounding universal mind. You can totally remake your psyche.

pineal gland radiate. When the pineal gland radiates, it creates an impulse in the pituitary gland. When the pituitary gland gives impulses, the entire glandular system secretes and a human being obtains bliss. This is the science.

Mantra Yoga is perhaps one of the most ancient ways of self realization. "Man" means mind and "tra" means wave, Mantra is that which controls the waves of the mind. According to the yogic philosophy, Mantras are primal sounds that alter the patterns of the mind and brain chemistry. The ancient sages describe Mantra as a seed, which when ripens, flowers the Divine within you.

THE PRACTICE OF SADHANA IN KUNDALINI YOGA

Sadhana (Sanskrit: साधन) is a Sanskrit term used to refer to a daily spiritual practice. Sadhana is a space where we are able to see clearly who we are and are able to take the decisions necessary for our life.

We practice yoga because we are committed to ourselves as human beings trying to evolve gaining understanding in the process. This understanding involves a healthy dose of letting the ego go and all of the defense mechanisms that we typically build our personality around. In the process, we learn about humility and compassion. It is about feeling what is truly important in your life.

As we go forward in life, we can choose how to look at everything that challenges us, everything that forces a reevaluation and subsequent change in direction. This is what Sadhana is.

WHAT IS THE KUNDALINI YOGA SADHANA?

In Kundalini Yoga we have the tradition of practicing Sadhana, which is an individual morning practice that includes physical practice, pranayama, and meditation. Traditionally the practice is done before the sun rises, and it can be done by yourself or as part of a group.

Sadhana gives you the opportunity to begin your day by clearing and steadying your mind. It is a practice that will give you strength, relaxation and ignite the energy to face the daily challenges with a clearer perspective. As it includes physical practice, pranayama, and meditation, it is a combination that will balance your body and mind.

WHEN TO PRACTICE SADHANA

Traditionally, Sadhana takes place in the so-called “ambrosial hours”, before the Sun rises. The idea is to benefit from the quiet and stillness quality of these hours to do your morning practice with less distractions to make it easier to dive into a meditative state.

THE PRACTICE OF SADHANA IN KUNDALINI YOGA

The sequence that you decide to do as your morning Sadhana is entirely up to you. You must determine which style of activity and meditation you need at the moment. Before you start the routine, you should also ensure that you prepare your mind, body, and space.

Create space for Sadhana

When practicing at home, take your time to prepare a space for the daily practice. Select a space where you can feel comfortable and relaxed, it will help with your energy and concentration and create the ideal atmosphere and mindset for your practice.

PREPARE FOR SADHANA

The preparation for the morning Sadhana actually begins the night before. Be sure to do your best to get enough sleep, eat light and get the space ready.

It is also important to prepare in advance how your practice is going to be. Choose the warmup, Kriya and meditation the night before, so you don't have to lose time in the morning thinking about what are you going to do.

As you wake up, try to take things slowly, take a shower and dress in comfortable clothing.

INDIVIDUAL VS. GROUP SADHANA?

As we mentioned, you can either do Sadhana individually or join a group to practice. The truth is that neither is better than the other. As the two options have a lot to offer, we suggest you experience the energy of both alternatives and choose according to your needs.

STRUCTURE OF THE KUNDALINI YOGA MORNING SADHANA

This is the traditional structure of the Kundalini Yoga Sadhana:

- **Japji:** Usually we begin the morning practice reciting the Japji Sahib, even though it is not mandatory to do so.
- **Mantras to tune in:** Then we chant the Adi Mantra and the Mangala Charan Mantra to begin our physical practice.
- **Warm up:** Start to move and breathe to wake up and prepare the body for the kriya we are going to do.
- **Kriya:** Kundalini Yoga Serie selected for the morning practice.
- **Relaxation:** Between 5 and 8 minutes in Savasana – *It is important not to do it too long to avoid feeling sleepy for the mantras.*
- **Sadhana for the Aquarian Age mantras:**
 1. Adi Shakti Mantra (Morning Call): 7 minutes
 2. Wah Yantee: 7 minutes

3. Mul Mantra - 7 minutes
 4. Sat Siri Siri Akal - 7 minutes
 5. Rakhe Rakhanhar - 7 minutes
 6. Waheguru Wahejio - 22 minutes
 7. Guru Ram Das - 5 minutes
- **Closure:** Either chanting The Long Time Sun song plus 3 Sat Nams or just the 3 Sat Nams at the end.

VARIATIONS

The traditional Kundalini Yoga Sadhana has a duration of about 2 to 2.5 hours, depending if you do it with or without Japji.

Eventough it is very beneficial to do the hole practice, if for some reason you can't dedicate so much time to it, here are some options to adjust:

- Choose a short warmup and/or kriya.
- Do a short relaxation.
- Reduce the duration of the mantras chanted at the end.
- Choose just one mantra to chant at the end for as long as you can commit to.
- Choose a short meditation or pranayama to do at the end instead of the chants.

Remember that what is most important about Sadhana is doing it, not for how long you do it. Avoid perfectionism and don't let the aim of doing the whole practice get in the way of doing a practice. Remember that Sadhana is a space for yourself, adapt it to your circumstances so you make it happen and stablish the commitment, and work from there allowing it to grow naturally as you expetience its benefits.

SADHANA FOR THE AQUARIAN AGE MANTRAS

1. ADI SHAKTI MANTRA (MORNING CALL) - 7 MINUTES

Ek Ong Kar Sat Nam Siri Wahe Guru (The morning call)

The Creator and the Creation are One. This is our True Identity. The ecstasy of the experience of this wisdom is beyond all words and brings indescribable bliss.

2. WAAH YANTI, KAR YANTI - 7 MINUTES

Wah Yaantii, Kar Yaantii

Jag Duut Paatii

Aadek It Waahaa

Brahmaade Treshaa Guru

It Wahe Guru

Great Macroself, Creative Self, All that is creative through time. All that is the Great One. Three aspects of God: Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (Shiva), That is Wahe guru.

3. MUL MANTRA - 7 MINUTES

Ek Ong Kaar

Sat Nam

Kartaa Purkh

Nirbhao

Nirvair

Akaal Muurat

Ajuuni

Saibhang

Gurprasaad

Jaap

Aad Sach

Jugaad Sach

Hai Bhii Sach

Nanak Hosii Bhii Sach

One Universal Consciousness,

True Identity

Doer of Everything

Fearless

Revengeless

Undying

Unborn

Self-illuminated, self existent

Guru's grace (gift)

Meditate, chant, repeat.

True in the beginning

True through all time

True even now

Nanak says Truth shall ever be

4. SAT SIRI AKAAL – 7 MINUTES

**Sat Sirii, Sirii Akaal
Sirii Akaal, Maahaa Akaal
Maahaa Akaal, Sat Nam
Akaal Muurat, Wahe Guruu**

Great Truth, Respected Undying, Respected Undying, Great Deathless, Great Deathless, Truth Identified, Deathless Image of God, Great beyond Description is His Wisdom.

5. RAKHE RAKAN HAAR – 7 MINUTES

**Rakhe Rakhan Haar Aap Ubaarian
Gur Kii Pairii Paae Kaaj Savaarian
Hoaa Aap Deaal Manho Na Visaarian
Saadh Janaa Kai Sang Bhavjal Taarian
Saakat Nindak Dusht Khin Mae Bidaarian
Tis Saahib Kii Tek Naanak Manai Mae
Jis Simrat Sukh Hoe Sagale Duukh Jaae**

God Himself is looking out for us, gives us the light, and takes care of our affairs. God is merciful, and never forgets us. God guides us, giving us good people to help us. God does not allow hurt to come to us. I take comfort in the thought of God. When I remember God, I feel peaceful and happy and all my pain departs.

6. WAHE GURU, WAHE JIO – 22 MINUTES (DOING VIRASANA)

Waahe Guruu, Waahe Guruu, Waahe Guruu, Waahe Jiio

Great Beyond description is the experience of God's Wisdom, Great Beyond Description is the experience of God Blessing the Soul.

7. GURU RAM DAS – 5 MINUTES

Guruu Guruu Waahe Guruu, Guruu Raam Daas Guruu

This is in praise of Guru Ram Das, invoking his light, guidance and grace. It is also an exclamation of the wisdom that comes as a servant of the Infinite.

8. LONG TIME SUN

May the long time sun shine upon you, All love surround you, and the pure light within you, Guide your way on.

Composed by the "Incredible String Band." It is usually sung at the end of each Kundalini Yoga class, but it is not mandatory to do so.

PRONUNCIATION KEY

Vowel Sounds

- a** A short vowel sound and usually found in a non-accented syllable. It is like the **a** in **about**.
- aa** A longer vowel sound, usually in an accented syllable. Give it more voice.
- i** A short **i** sound like the **i** in **sit** or **miss**. Normally found in a syllable non-accented.
- ii** A longer **i** sound like the **i** in **like**.
- e** More like the sound of **a** in the word **say**.
- ai** Like the **a** in the word **jazz** or **jam**.
- o** A normal **o** sound.
- au** A sound like the **ou** in **hour**.
- u** Like the **i** in **sir** or the **u** in **Guru**.
- uu** A full sound, usually representing an accented syllable. Kind of like the double **o** in **good**.

Consonants

- j** Like the words **jeans**, **jet**, **jar**.
- h** As in the words **hall**, **head**, **hold**, **hurry**.
- ch** Like the words **chose** or **chance**.
- chh** A stronger more aspirated sound than the **ch**.
- kh** Like the **k** in **kitchen**, **kiss** or the **c** in **cool**.

COMMONLY USED KUNDALINI YOGA MANTRAS

Ong

Universal consciousness

**Ong Namō
Guru Dev Namō**

I connect with the universal consciousness, so it flows through me, as I am, with all I am, in all earnestness

**Ad Gurē Name,
Jugad Gurē Name,
Sat Gurē Name,
Siri Gurē Deve Name**

*I bow to the primal Guru
I bow to the Truth that has existed throughout the ages
I bow to True Wisdom
I bow to the Great Divine Wisdom*

Sat Nam

*True identity
(I connect my inner truth)*

**Sa
Ta
Na
Ma**

*infinite, birth, beginning and the totality of the cosmos
life, existence and creativity manifest
death and transformation
rebirth, regeneration*

Wahe Guru

Expression of ecstasy; GU: darkness, RU: light

**Ek Ong Kar,
Sat Nam,
Siri
Wahe Guru**

*Oneness; Universal consciousness; Nature, female aspect
True identity
Strong light, Impact
Expression of ecstasy; GU: darkness, RU: light*

**Ad Sach,
Jugad Sach,
Hai Bhi Sach,
Nanak Hosi Bhi Sach**

*True in the beginning,
True throughout the ages,
True even now,
Nanak says that the Truth will always be true.*

**Guru Guru Wahe Guru,
Guru Ram Das Guru.**

*Call Guru Ram Das, he is the same as
Wahe Guru, and Wahe Guru is the same as
Guru Ram Das.*

**Ra Ma Da Sa
Sa Se So Hung**

*Sun, Moon, Earth, Infinite,
The experience of the Infinite is Thou, I am Thou.*

**Gobinde,
Mukanday,
Udhare,
Apare,
Hariang,
Kariang,
Nirname,
Akame**

*Sustainer,
Liberator
Enlightener
Infinite
Destroyer
Creator
Without name
Without desires*

**Ardas Bhei,
Amar Das Guru,
Amar Das Guru,
Ardas Bhei,
Ram Das Guru,
Ram Das Guru,
Ram Das Guru,
Sachi Sahi**

*I offer this prayer
By the grace of Guru Amar Das,
who is the hope of the hopeless,
And to Guru Ram Das, who is the King of the
Yogis and the bestower of all past, present and future
blessings.
Both Guru Amar Das and Guru Ram Das, guarantee that
the prayer shall be answered
and all needs met.*

**Ap Sahai Hoa,
Sache Da Sacha Dhoa,
Har, Har, Har**

*The Creator of the Universe is our protector,
The Truest of the True is our support,
The Infinite, God, The Creator*

**Sat Narayan, Wahe Guru
Hari Narayan, Sat Nam**

*The True Sustainer of this Creation is indescribable
This Creative Support is my true identity*

Har

The creative force of the Universe

**Har Hare Hari
Wahe Guru**

*Three qualities of Har. The Universal
Consciousness, He/She who acts and His/Her
presence in the Manifestation, The experience of
which produces ecstasy.*

Ong So Hung

¡The Universal Consciousness, I am Thou!

Humi Hum, Brahm Hum

The Infinite and us, us and the Infinite are one

Ajai alai

Invincible, indestructible

Abhai abai

Fearless, unchangeable

Abhu aju

Formless, without birth

Anaas akaas

Indestructible, omnipresent

Aganj abhanj

Unbreakable, impregnable

Alakh abhakh

Invisible, untouchable

Akaal dyal

Immortal, compassionate

Alekh abhekh

Unbreakable, He stands alone

Anaam akaam

He has no name, has no desire

Agaah adhaah

Unfathomable, endless

Anaathe pramaathe

He has no Guru, the destroyer of everything

Ajoni amoni

Goes beyond birth, higher than the silence

Na raage na range

Beyond the concept of love,

Na rupe na rekhe

Beyond all form and color.

Akaramang abharamang

Beyond all karma, beyond life itself,

Aganje alekhe

*Unconquerable, you cannot say anything
to describe Him.*



PRACTICE

ADI MANTRA

Ong Naamo

Guru Dev Naamo

*I bow before the Creator and the
Divine Teacher, which resides inside of me.*

This Mantra is a tool to relate, before each class, with the inner Guru or teacher. Adi has as its meaning the sense of beginnings or from the very beginning. We chant the Mantra usually in one breath, reciting it 3 times before we begin with our practice. Afterwards, we normally chant Aad Gurey Nameh 3 times.

ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE ADI MANTRA:

Ong invokes spirit, perhaps that great universal spirit pervading all of creation, and elevates me to the experience of my own spirit, which is suddenly awake to embrace those greater truths long dormant inside of me. It is spirit, which is not fettered nor attached to my sense of failure, or the damage I have done to myself as Kabir says, but rather only to a sense of learning from the past. It is spirit, which opens me up to the light of a “million suns” completely altering my internal landscape.

Namo is the idea that in the essence of my soul, I am reverent, conscious and able to set priorities in my life. I rise above the mundane and the superficial and am able to touch the profound and not so evident of life’s teachings. It is a call to greater responsibility and greater freedom.

Guru tells me of the existence of these eternal truths and the place for their teachings amongst all men – the particular age and time notwithstanding. Guru has always been this concept of the purveyor of knowledge that sheds light on confusion and eliminates doubt of self. With the concept of Guru, I come to accept a world built on justice, ideals and equality. These are the noble truths all nations have set their foundations on and were transmitted by men and women of vision. Guru becomes my vision.

Dev is the angel within, a sense of transparency where darkness and clouds are wiped clean and purified so that unobstructed light can shine forth. Dev is where the nakedness of my soul reflects strongly and proudly my character and the person that I have become. I learn that there is no need to hide behind images of self that do not reflect honestly inner realities. And with the final Namō, I again jump into the pool of that consciousness reminding me that every syllable, every sound invoked now has a place inside my thoughts and heart.

AAD GURE NAMEH: MANGALA CHARAN MANTRA

**Aad Gure Nameh,
Jugaad Gure Nameh,
Sat Gure Nameh,
Sirii Guruu Deve Nameh**

I bow to the primal Guru

I bow to the Truth that has existed throughout the ages

I bow to True Wisdom

I bow to the Great Divine Wisdom

MORE INFORMATION:

Language: Gurmukhi

Source: Sukhmani Sahib (peace prayer)

Author: Guru Arjun, Fifth Sikh Guru

This is a Mantra of protection and is recited to invoke the protective energy of the universe. In the Kundalini Yoga tradition, this Mantra is chanted 3 times in a row after the Adi Mantra at the beginning of the class.

Many people chant this Mantra when they need extra protection or when they need to get rid of negativity.

This mantra is said to be a Mangala Charan. Mangala Charan is the power of the Mars. Mars is a lord of the war. Mangala Charan is that when you create the universal cosmic warrior around you to defend you, all sides of you, so it is Mangala Charan.

PRANAYAMA PRACTICE WITH AGNI PRAN

- Sit in Sukhasana elongating the spine and with your hands relaxed over your lap or in Gyan Mudra.
- Close your eyes and focus on the brow point.
- Begin the Breath of Fire for 1-3 minutes.
- Then inhale and hold the breath for 10 seconds applying Mula Bandha.
- Relax, stay still with the same posture. Observe the natural flow of the breath and the constant coming and going of your feelings and sensations during 3 minutes.
- Repeat again the sequence of doing Breath of Fire for 1-3 minutes and 3 minutes of observation.

This is a good exercise to build your practice of Breath of Fire until you are able to do it for 11 minutes.

SURYA NAMASKAR "A"

SUN SALUTATION "A"



Surya Namaskara can be used as warm-up before a Kundalini Yoga kriya or as a serie in itself. Coordinate your breath with the movements to create an uninterrupted pace along the sequence of postures. Start practicing 3 repetitions and then gradually get to 5 reps. Surya Namaskar increases cardiac activity and circulation, stretches and relaxes the spine, giving a massage to the internal organs, improves the functioning of the digestive system, exercises the lungs and increases oxygen in the blood.



1. **Tadasana (Mountain Pose) with hands in Prayer Mudra - Samasthiti.** Stand up elongating the spine, feet together or hip distance apart, weight evenly distributed between both feet. Find your balance and open the chest.

2. **Urdhva Hastasana (Upward Salute).** Inhale, bring your arms up over your head, palms touching. Be sure not to compress the vertebrae of the neck and lower back. Drishti at the thumbs.



3. **Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend).** Exhale and bend forward from the hip joints, not from the waist. As you descend draw the front torso out of the groins and open the space between the pubis and top sternum. Emphasize on lengthening the front torso. If possible, with your knees straight, place hands on the floor on either side of the feet, with fingertips and tips of the toes in line. Drishti at the tip of the nose. Press the heels firmly into the floor and lift the sitting bones toward the ceiling.

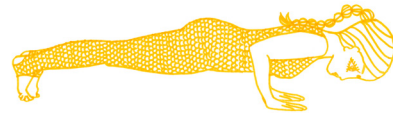
4. **Ardha Uttanasana (Half Standing Forward Bend)**

Inhale, raise the head up, open your chest, and look forward, keeping the hands or fingertips on the floor. Drishti at the Third Eye Point.



5. Chaturanga Dandasana (Four-Limbed Staff Pose).

Exhale and bend the knees, stepping back to Plank Pose. Align your shoulders slightly ahead of the wrists and come onto the balls of your feet, pressing the soles of your feet back, as if into a wall behind you. Move your chest forward and bend your elbows to lower yourself towards the floor, keeping your body as straight as a plank of wood, neither letting your center sag nor sticking your buttocks up in the air. Direct your Drishti to the floor, about 15cm in front of you, and continue to lower until your shoulders are at the same height as your elbows. Push back through the heels to engage the quadriceps and bring the lower body to life, and reach your sternum forward, creating a straight line of energy from the crown of your head through your feet. *Stepping back into Plank Pose instead of jumping directly into Chaturanga is a good option while you master jumping back.*



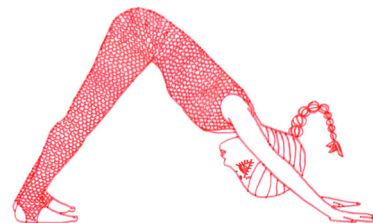
6. Urdhva Mukha Svanasana (Upward Facing Dog).

Inhale as you push forward and up, straighten the elbows and elongate the spine. Stretch from the tip of the toes through the upper back so that there is no pressure on the lower spine. Drishti at the tip of the nose. Fingers are spread wide apart.



7. Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog).

Push into your fingers and palms, as if trying to push open a heavy door. Spread your fingers as wide as you can. *Both things will prevent over-straining your wrists as you bear weight on them in postures on hands and feet or knees.* Exhale and lift your hips, stretching the spine, stretch your heels onto or down towards the floor. Straighten your knees but be sure not to lock them. Pull in your low belly towards your spine, so that it can protect your spine from hyperextending. *That can prevent wear-and-tear back pain and other complications.* Feel your hips rising higher towards the sky, and with that more of the posture's muscular effort goes into your legs, rather than mostly into your arms. Gaze towards the navel and hold this position for five breaths.



8. Ardha Uttanasana (Half Standing Forward Bend).

Inhale and bend the knees to jump or step to the front into Ardha Uttanasana.





9. **Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend).** Exhale and bend forward.

10. **Urdhva Hastasana (Upward Salute).** Inhale and come all the way up into Urdhva Hastasana.



11. **Samasthiti.** Exhale and return to the starting position with hands in Prayer Pose.



MODULE I





PHILOSOPHY

KUNDALINI YOGA: HISTORY, MYTHS & CHARACTERISTICS

KUNDALINI ENERGY

Kundalini is a term that is thought to be used for the first time in one of the sacred Hindu texts, The Upanishads, around 500BC.

Kundalini comes from the root “kundal” which means “coiled”. It is a feminine energy, or as it is known in yoga philosophy Shakti energy, which is related to our creative power or potential. Located at the base of our spine in its dormant state.

Metaphorically it is considered that when Kundalini is “awakened” it uncoils from the base of our spine, moves downward to our first chakra, and begins moving upwards “opening” the rest of our chakras. Once it reaches the 7th chakra we are “enlightened”

In a more practical analysis, the metaphor of the uncoiling of the Kundalini and the subsequent enlightenment is related to the self-knowledge process that occurs as we use our energy to know ourselves deeper. As we know ourselves, connect with our inner truth, and begin living closer to our integrity our lives gain meaning. We live more connected with ourselves, which allows us to be more connected with others and to be more connected to our surroundings. Krishnamurti states “Enlightenment, if it even exists, is no other thing than loving and respecting oneself, loving and respecting all others, and loving and respecting nature and all its creatures.”

MYTHS

The main myth around Kundalini energy is associated with what is known as “Kundalini awakening.” In the sacred Hindu texts, it is described to have certain physical characteristics like increment in body temperature, shivers, shakes, and sweats. Nevertheless, the presence of such characteristics during any type of practice does not mean necessarily that a practitioner has awakened its Kundalini.

Kundalini awakening is a state of bliss, connection, and peace usually the product of decades of disciplined practice of yoga, meditation, breathing

exercises, physical exercise, and a healthy diet, or, in extremely rare cases naturally awakened. In any case, what is relevant to this awakening is that we are able to love and respect ourselves, love and respect others, and love and respect nature and all its creatures. And what the great majority of us should worry about is developing disciplined practice, healthy habits, and caring for our wellbeing.

A second myth related to Kundalini, the practice, not the energy, is that it could be dangerous. We can find an explanation for this in how early western Kundalini Yoga practitioners, mainly 1970's and 1980's, in the search of the awakening, embarked on very intense prolonged sessions of Kundalini Yoga mixing the practice of yoga with fasting, and holotropic breathwork among others. The result of such experiences was in many cases physical and emotional distress in the practitioners. The question of course is whether such distress came from the practice of Kundalini yoga or the way they were practicing Kundalini yoga.

Kundalini yoga and its work with Kundalini energy are to be taken with responsibility and like activity when done inadequately or excessively could have harmful consequences. Practice respecting the well-being of your body and mind.

The third misconception about Kundalini yoga is that it is a cult or a sect. This can be explained easily by the fact that like many other Indian "Gurus" that arrived in the USA in the 1960's and 70's Yogi Bajan created an ashram. The main difference was that Yogi Bajan required anyone to join his ashram to adopt the Sikh religion. This meant that the first Kundalini yoga teachers that began teaching Kundalini were all Sikh, with all the specific characteristics this meant: used turban, men had long beards, dressed regularly in white, were all vegetarians, etc. As the years passed this has become the more orthodox line of Kundalini yoga but by no means the only one.

And last, it is a more "spiritual yoga." This myth has two fundamental reasons. The first is the one exposed above and the second is the presence of Mantras.

In the early days of Kundalini yoga, all teachers were Sikh which implied a similar set of behaviors in all of them, especially if they belonged to the Khalsa fraternity, which many did. This implied all Kundalini yoga teachers were tied to a religion. Second, the devotional component of Kundalini yoga is characteristically higher than in other yogas especially reflected in the regular use of mantras.

ORIGINS

Kundalini yoga as we practice it in the west was created by Harbhajan Singh Khalsa, commonly known as Yogi Bhajan around 1969 coinciding with his arrival to the United States of America. Kundalini yoga as we practice it in the west, is the result, like almost all yoga lineages that were popularized in the USA between the 1960's and the 1970's, of integration, innovation, and revelation done by their creators.

Integration - bringing in ideas from disparate systems, sometimes in a mutual syncretism, and sometimes through an appropriation from one group by another.

Innovation - the inevitable discoveries of experimentation by practitioners, which may include filling in gaps in older teachings or complete novelties.

Revelation - many teachers relate having visions of ascended masters or deities from whom techniques, mantras, insights, and special initiations were received. This often clears the way for innovations to be viewed as orthodox reforms, issued from a foundational figure within a tradition.

Therefore, there is no clear historical reference that validates the way we practice Kundalini Yoga in the west with other specific traditions, rather with many. It is particularly complicated such association in the case of Kundalini Yoga as all the historical references of Kundalini Yoga previous to Yogi Bhajan are associated with a secret practice only revealed from teacher to disciple both of who usually belonged to the higher stratus of Indian society.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KUNDALINI YOGA AND OTHER YOGAS

- **The roots:** the mythology around all yoga practices is rooted in the religion or spiritual practice its creator(s) had. Most commonly known yoga lineages as Hatha, Ashtanga and Iyengar have Hindu roots. In the case of Kundalini, Yogi Bhajan was Sikh, therefore it has Sikh roots.
- **Its methodology:** in Kundalini yoga the 5 pillars of yoga (asana, pranayama, meditation, mantras, and mudras) are present in a balanced way in its method. Other yogas in its modern approach, focus mainly in one or two of these pillars.
- **Its focus:** Kundalini Yoga has an organic approach, which means its work is more focused on activating the glands and organs. Other yogas like Hatha, Ashtanga, and Iyengar have a structural focus, which relates to bones, muscles, and tendons/ligaments.

THE CHAKRAS

CHAKRA BASICS

Chakra means, "Wheel." Chakras are energy centers, or energy vortices. They exist as dynamic energies and they can help us to understand how a human being receives and directs the energy. In Kundalini Yoga, we focus on the seventh major chakras.

The seven chakras correspond to areas of the endocrine glands or the nervous system in the physical body. There is a reference to the eighth chakra in some Kundalini Yoga texts that corresponds to the aura or magnetic field of the body.

The first three chakras are known as the Lower Triangle, and the fifth, sixth and seventh chakras are known as the Upper Triangle. The Fourth Chakra, also known as the Heart Chakra, is the point of balance between them, where experience shifts from "me to Thee," or from "me to we."

No chakra stands alone. When exploring Yogic Anatomy, we need to shift our understanding to a holistic approach that recognizes that everything works in unison. The chakras are all part of a larger cycle of evolution and devolution, manifestation and sublimation. The Lower Triangle of chakras focus on elimination and reduction, and are balanced by the Upper

The human body is like a musical instrument, constructed of 72 strings. Each string or Sur acts like a meridian vibrating with a flow of the energy of life – Prana. The inflow of energy into the body cascades through the crown of the head, the Tenth Gate, like a waterfall and collects in pools or vortices, which are the chakras.

The 72 strings are controlled by three central strings or channels, the left and right channels to either side of the spine, Ida and Pingala, together with the Shushumna, the central channel that follows the middle of the spine.

The upper chakras vibrate with the release of each independent thought of the mind. These vibrations or patterns of thought pluck those strings as if you were playing an instrument. The strings vibrate and affect 72,000 channels. Their vibration creates the shape and function of the physical body, the emotional body and the mental body.

Triangle of chakras, which accumulate, create and refine.

The first Five Chakras are associated with each of the five Tattwas or gross elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether, and the qualities each element represents. The upper three chakras correspond to more subtle realms; therefore there is no correlation with the Tattwas.

Prana, the life force, gives power to the chakras, clearing the emotional and physical blocks that impede the free, natural flow of energy through them. Kundalini Yoga facilitates this clearing, balancing, and thus maximizing the functioning of body, mind, and spirit.

Opening and balancing the chakras opens the senses, and integrates them into a responsive network that can relate to the larger source field of energy from which we come and to which we return.

A PROFILE OF THE CHAKRAS

LOWER TRIANGLE: First, Second and Third Chakras

FIRST CHAKRA: MULADHARA

SECURITY AND SURVIVAL

Earth

Foundations, survival, security, habits, self-acceptance

Location: Base of spine, includes legs as roots

SECOND CHAKRA: SWADHISTHANA

CREATIVITY

Water

To feel, to desire, to create, to enjoy.

Location: Sacral area, hips, low back, groins, sexual organs, womb.

THIRD CHAKRA: MANIPURA

ACTION AND BALANCE

Fire

The will of the spiritual warrior.

Location: The area of the navel point, solar plexus.

FOURTH CHAKRA
BALANCE POINT BETWEEN LOWER & UPPER TRIANGLES
ANAHATA

LOVE & COMPASSION

Air

Love and awakening from “me” to “we.”

Location: The middle of the chest at the level of nipples.

UPPER TRIANGLE: Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chakras

FIFTH CHAKRA: VISHUDDHA

PROJECTIVE POWER OF THE WORD

Ether

Hearing and speaking the truth, the teacher.

Location: Throat area.

SIXTH CHAKRA: AJNA

INTUITION, WISDOM & IDENTITY

Union of opposites.

Location: Forehead, between the eyebrows.

SEVENTH CHAKRA: SAHASRARA

HUMILITY & VASTNESS

Transcendence, the tenth gate.

Location: The crown of the head.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHAKRAS

THE NATURE OF OUR MULTI-LEVELLED EXISTENCE

In the midst of the great web of energies, which make up this universe, each human being is a complex organism capable of interacting and communicating across the levels of energy in the world. On the grossly physical levels we have the same limitations as all physical objects. We melt and dissipate under too much heat, we break under too much force, and we fall without the support of gravity. But unlike many other things we have the capacity to cross the levels of subtlety in the universe. We exist, connect, communicate, gather forces, manifest, and think, at levels beyond physical aspect.

We are like a little chakra, a circle or vortex of energy that cuts across many levels of existence. The inner explorers find that the universe is in its very essence, multi-levelled.

The gap in our ability to deal with a multi-level universe is like the dilemma many people faced with reconciling the idea that photons can act like a particle or a wave depending on the circumstance and type of observation. We want the security of classifying light in one conceptual box or another. But, in experiment after experiment, it leapt out of the box and beyond any comfortable labeling by our intellectual mind. It is not wave or particle, it is other or it is or/and/neither/both. Experience on that level of physics pushes us close to realms that are fundamentally different from logical physics.

Whatever a photon is, it has phases or levels of manifestation that depends on the viewer and circumstance. Its individual nature depends on the state of the entire universe to which it is connected. Its real essence is beyond our senses—but it exists. Our soul or essence has the same relationship to our mind and to our normal experiences.

We can be particulate or wave-like; like a left- brain or a right. But in essence we are beyond those classifications and are more than our senses can capture.

The vortex of energy that we are has sub-vortices, energy centers that

cross through and interconnect the levels of existence. Those centers can be thought of in a very earthy way—like a wheel; or in a watery way—like a whirlpool’s spinning vortex; in an airy way—like a whirlwind; or in an etheric way—as filaments of divine energy that orchestrate the instruments of the senses and preserve the gateways to our inner life.

The seeming separation we have from everything outside of us is balanced by the intimate unity we share with everything. Both are true and neither alone is complete as a thought. Spiritual practices realize the connectedness and guide us to develop a relationship to all levels of our existence. They tell us not to be lured into a trancelike agreement with a lower-dimensional definition of what it is to be a human being. The senses are attractive. The drive to manifest, reproduce, and feel is universal. It is an irresistible force called Maya, a veil that hypnotizes and creates illusions. The opposite flow is transcendence, enlightenment – the Kundalini force of awareness.

Each of us can act in alignment with the greater field from which we originate and in which we live. We can consciously link to the source field, which some call God or Universal Consciousness. Or we can draw the veils closed and pretend that we are totally isolated and act only within the gross, lower-dimensional, clear-cut rational and tangible world.

INTEGRATING OUR MANY DIMENSIONS

The chakras or energy centers are central to the regulation of how tightly those veils are drawn. This realization affects how robotic or free we are able to act. It changes the range of our perception, feelings, and choices, which affect the flow and types of thoughts we have, as well as the energies we can gather to act and manifest our thoughts. They affect the relationship between the conscious and the subconscious in all our behaviors. Opening and balancing the chakras opens the senses. It integrates them into a responsive network that can relate to the larger source field of energy.

The Kundalini is the thread of the Infinite pushed through the small eye of the finite needle of creation.

Every part of us: the body, an organ, a cell, or a molecule, vibrates and relates to that larger field. Each part can create a blend of qualities of energies that can be a seed along which the Infinite can align and manifest. This used to be called magic, shamanism, or alchemy. It was cross-dimensional thinking. It is the art and science of a conversation with the soul.

The only instrument up to the task of decoding these interconnections between dimensions is the soul-awareness itself, in the awakened human

being. The masters (all explorers of the inner realms of the possible human), agree on the path. They say each experience is unique but the process of gaining that awareness has many common features and laws. The Infinite field that we ultimately are is so creative, original, and complex that no individual is ever repeated; none of us are simple cogs from a cosmic cookie cutter. We are each made with more love, uniqueness, and potential than that.

Long intellectual classifications of the steps of transcendent experience are avoided as false distractions, betrayals of the humility needed to approach the Infinite, and by their very nature inauthentic. The most authentic expression of the Infinite is the state of pure love. The only real record of the awakened realms, are our actions and our compassion.

FIRST CHAKRA: MULADHARA

Mula: Root

Adhara: Base

SECURITY AND SURVIVAL

Foundations, survival, security, habits, self-acceptance

Location: Base of spine, includes legs as roots

Element: Earth

Color: Red

Purpose: Grounding, stability, solidity

Identity: Physical identity

Challenge: Fear

Gifts: Solidity, practicality, prosperity

Right: To have and to hold

Excessive: Heavy body, slow, sluggish, attachment to security

Deficient: Scattered, ungrounded, spacey, flighty

Qualities when balanced: Grounded, centered, secure, loyal, stable.
Balanced functions of elimination.

Principle: Gravity

Organs: Lower Digestive System

Glands: Adrenal

Yoga Exercises: Standing postures, Sat Kriya, Crow Pose, Chair Pose, Body Drops, Frog Pose, Mulabhandha.

Bij Mantra: Lam

FOUNDATIONS, SECURITY, AND HABIT

The First Chakra is located at the base of the spine. One of its facets is the quality and functions of earth. Here "earth" means the final step of manifestation in the realm of the senses. It is also the most veiled to the spirit. It is the most deeply wrapped in the illusions of separateness, aloneness, and tangibility. It represents the functioning of the mind and emotions when we are most unconscious.

This is not bad. It is necessary. When we perform our best in any activity, a large part of that activity is automatic and unconscious. When you ride a

bicycle well, you do not think of the pedals. The pedals are your focus only when you first learn to propel the bike and balance at the same time. Then the conscious action becomes an unconscious habit.

The First Chakra is the realm of habits. It is the land of automatic behavior. It is a repository of deep instinctual patterns we use for survival. Our potential for survival response is unconscious and deeply shared, regardless of intelligence, race, or age. The things stored and tapped in the First Chakra processes allow little individuality. The character of the First Chakra is to “reduce everything to the bottom line.”

The First Chakra is associated with elimination, with the anus and large intestines. From the anus, the food you eat is returned to the Earth in a digested form. With little variation, everything you eat is universalized to its base components. At the upper regions of the body you care a lot about each smell, taste, color, texture, and sensation. By the time it comes to the Earth, it is reduced to what is common, universal, and most tangible. The many subtle qualities are lost.

No chakra stands alone. They are all part of a larger cycle of evolution and devolution, manifestation and sublimation. The functions of elimination and reduction are balanced by the upper areas that accumulate, create and differentiate.

The First Chakra functions are very important in our modern times. We are surrounded by pollution from many chemical sources. There are thousands of chemical insults to the body that we cannot avoid. Our front-line defense is to reduce them, eliminate them, and return them to the Earth. Strong eliminative capacity is essential for survival.

The function of elimination applies to physical, mental, and emotional realms. Thoughts that become obsessive, sadness that will not go, depression that is a lack of feeling, all need the strength of the First Chakra. The ability to create and act on regular habits is partly an earthly function. Planning may come from the Sixth Chakra, projection from the Fifth, and order from the Third, but the final actions that support and make it “in hand” will require the touch of the First. It is the base-tone, that supports the variety in the melodies of life.

If you eliminate too fast, it is diarrhea. You loose water, dehydrate, and get no nutrients. People stuck on a habit, who are extremely rigid, let no new ideas, feelings, or people into their life. They wither emotionally. Over-functioning of the First Chakra leads to many malaties. Or imagine the reverse, you cannot let anything go. The toxins build up. You reach a state of self-poisoning, bitterness.

The First Chakra is associated with the sense of smell. When you hold all the toxins in you begin to reek. Smell is linked to survival. It can tell you not only about sickness, it can also let you know how different and how much the same someone is. It is found that many patterns of sexual bonding are influenced strongly by the smell and by proper hormone releases during intercourse and other forms of stimulation.

The First Chakra has strength in its functions of elimination, of setting foundations and reducing complex things to common elements. In its best use, this gives purity, security, and universality. Problems arise when this is the focus of consciousness without connection and synchronization to the other chakras. Then its functions become exaggerated. Elimination and lack of appropriate levels of attachment accelerate. This leads to insecurity. Each idea, feeling and substance is reduced to its most basic elements, so differences are lost. This loss of context can lead to compulsions and fixated behaviors. The loss of context and the mixing of all the Tattwas in this chakra to make up earth can create a clouded behavior that forms its own singular world. Traditional writings call this Tamas – heavy and confused, or perverse behavior. Disconnected from the natural expression of our identity.

Techniques that strengthen the key functions of this center and integrate its energy with the higher centers are used frequently in Kundalini Yoga. Sat Kriya is one of the best examples of that. In non-householder traditions of the spirit, people would remove themselves from daily life to emphasize the energy of the higher centers and remove themselves from “earthy” influence. Kundalini Yoga embraces the householder life and transforms the energy of each chakra so the practitioner becomes as a lotus on the water – able to elevate consciousness regardless of the environment.

When the First Chakra is functioning perfectly and it is well integrated with the other chakras, it gives you certain abilities. You are secure, stable, steadfast, positively relentless, and loyal. You show great endurance under non-ideal situations. There is a sense of self-sufficiency that comes from the quelling of the negative mind: “I have everything I need. I’m not safe; My needs are met. What I need is already here.” The checklist of imminent threats is empty. You can grasp and hold the world. You can easily accept doing something at a particular time and place. You easily receive material objects, money, gifts, etc. You feel you have a base and are not bothered by a sense of drifting emotional homelessness.

Intrinsic trust comes with a balanced First Chakra. Mastering the earth element you know earth can be reshaped. Water (emotions) can be added to the dirt (old habits) and in the new flexibility with a little heat (will, challenge and discipline) a new vessel can be made. A healthy first chakra lets change occur in steps.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOGIC BREATHING

The breath is a fundamental tool for the student of Kundalini Yoga. To become proficient with it is key to seeing clearly our emotional world, opening ourselves up to our creative potential, dealing with the changes in our energy levels, strengthening our health and developing our concentration. Control of the breath begins with a study of its basic nature.

For the Kundalini Yogi the breath is a physical action and represents the subtle force that is alive in the body and the mind called "Prana." As a student of yoga it is interesting to investigate and give the importance that the breath warrants. Think of it as something much more complex than the simple experience of breathing. Consider that the breath and its movements are connected to the changes and flows of your emotions and thoughts. Without a doubt, there is a close relationship between breathing and the words we choose to communicate.

Both the act of breathing and the words we pronounce determine the form and direction of our lives. In effect, they create a platform from which all other things are constructed and take form. If you can take advantage consciously of the full capacity of your breath and sound (the word, the breath and greater vibration), you will be able to direct your life with greater creativity and be able to reach your potential as a human being.

A yogi is always aware of the two-sided nature of perception and

PRANAYAMA:

Prana: *Life Force*

Ayana: *Extensión, expansión, length, regulation, control*

Pranayama: *Extension of one's Life Force*

PARTS IN PRANAYAMA:

Puraka: *Inhalation*

Rechaka: *Exhalation*

Kumbakha: *Retention*

experience. The breath is both gross and subtle. It is both “mine” and “not mine.” It is both automatic and conscious. The breath shares the nature of both the earthly and the heavenly views of things. The breath and the Word interact to create the matrix of our life and consciousness.

Breath and Word are intimately intertwined. We must first cultivate the breath and then value each word we speak aloud or mentally. The easiest approach to this practice is to use and control the physical breath. This will lead to command of our words and emotions. Then we can create a subtle stillness in the mind, which opens our sensitivity to the Word, shaping the greater play of life and consciousness.

LONG DEEP BREATHING

The breath is a barometer for life's energy. It is our most constant measure of vitality. It is fundamental for our consciousness and controlling our moods. The first task of a yoga student is to cultivate consciousness about this most powerful technique.

The quantity, quality and circulation of the breath create the foundation of a vital and creative life. It is a barometer of how much energy we normally run on and how much reserve capacity we have created for emergencies. The breath is both gross and subtle. The gross aspect is the blend of oxygen, nitrogen and other elements that chemically constitute the air. The subtle aspect is the **Prana or vital force** that energizes the mind, body and consciousness.

The technique we most often use in yoga is Long Deep Breathing. Nevertheless, in the societies in which we live, we seldom take the time to breathe deeply. Our habit is to breathe superficial, irregular and somewhat erratic, which often leads us to act emotionally in our lives, often characterized by having a weak nervous system and suffering from high levels of stress.

Our lungs are the biggest organs in the human body and their volume can increase up to 6,000 cubic centimeters. Besides supplying us with oxygen and eliminating carbon dioxide from the blood, the respiratory system helps to regulate the pH level in the body, eliminate water vapor, hydrogen and small quantities of methane that accumulates in our organism.

Normally, we use only 600 or 700 cubic centimeters of our lung capacity, which prevents the alveoli (the small pockets of air in the inside lining of the lungs), from carrying out efficiently their job of cleansing our blood. As a result, we are not able to receive the oxygen we need and irritating toxins begin to accumulate in the blood stream, which, in the end, can produce a variety of infections and disease.

By breathing deeply, you can expand your lung capacity eight times your normal capacity. If you become accustomed in your daily life to breathe slowly and deeply, you will gain in patience and tolerance. When you are

able to breathe no more than 8 times a minute, the pituitary gland will begin to secrete with all the benefits that come from that, such as, greater intuition. If the rhythm is inferior to 4 times per minute, the pituitary gland activates in a way that meditation becomes automatic. The correct use of the breath is a technique that should be cultivated by everyone. Perhaps we think that something so essential for life is the reason it is largely an automatic process. But the breath is both voluntary and involuntary. One part is due to our genetic makeup, our emotions and our background, and the other part is a learned process. The fact is, that when we learn to regulate the breath we modify our view of life and become capable of re-supplying the expended energy used up in the body. We are then able to increase the energy reserve that we have for emergency situations.

TECHNIQUE

The purpose of Long Deep Breathing is that the lungs can expand and contract to their maximum capacity, thereby, producing an effective pranic and gaseous interchange. That means, that our organism can eliminate by exhaling the greatest quantity possible of toxins from the bloodstream (apana), and receive by inhaling the greatest possible amount of pure oxygen (prana).

In the act of breathing, the diaphragm, which is the muscle that separates the thoracic cavity from the abdominal cavity, does the majority of the work. Our lungs in a way obey this movement of the diaphragm expanding and contracting according to the nature of its movement. When the diaphragm moves downward, air can enter into our lungs and when it moves upward, air is expelled from our lungs.

This movement of the diaphragm involves the whole trunk, in its tridimensionality, and from the pelvic region to the shoulder bones. It is for this reason that when we talk about yogic breathing in general, we are talking about three separate phases: abdominal, thoracic or chest and clavicular. While we are learning to breathe more completely, this differentiation helps us to be conscious in each part of the process. With practice, the three phases overlap more and more and we are able to feel the act of breathing as it really is, one fluid movement.

ABDOMINAL BREATHING

In this phase, we want the lungs to expand letting in approximately 60% of its oxygen capacity. For this reason, the diaphragm expands downwards gently pushing our abdominal organs forward and to the side. If the abdomen is tense, the organs will not be able to move slightly to accommodate the movement of the diaphragm and the process of breathing will be limited. That is why it is necessary to relax abdominal tension.

In order to feel what is going on, put one hand below the Navel Point. Relax the abdomen and as you inhale imagine an air pocket surrounding your entire abdomen area. Your hand moves slightly forward as you relax abdominal tension and allow the diaphragm to move downward.

To exhale, imagine that this air pocket contracts, pushing all the air out bringing with it the abdomen and its organs towards the spinal column.

Clues

- Try not to push with the abdominal muscles outwardly but don't abandon them either.
- Maintain a sense of a flexible containment.
- Remember that your body moves in a tridimensional form, not in just a forward motion. It will help you remove tension from the lower back area.
- Don't try and force your breath capacity more than you realistically can in each moment. Don't be competitive, just the opposite, do everything with gentleness and patience.

THORACIC BREATHING

In this phase, oxygen enters the middle part of the lungs and expands them 30% more. In order to do this you must widen the rib cage and permit the lungs to expand horizontally.

In order to feel this movement, place the hands along side the floating ribs, imagining them as wings. As you inhale, feel your hands expanding laterally as air enters your lungs. You will feel your ribs expanding and your lungs filling up even more. As you exhale, simply bring your wings in and let the air leave your lungs.

Clues

- It's important to maintain the space between your hip/pelvic region and the rib cage so that the rib cage can move freely.
- If at first it is difficult to feel this movement of the ribs, don't try to compensate by tensing the chest area or the shoulders. As you relax, you will be able to feel the movement.
- It's important to keep the vision of a tridimensional body, feeling the ribs move forward, towards the sides and backwards.

CLAVICULAR BREATH

This is the subtlest phase of the breathing process. The tip and smallest part of the lungs is found just below the collarbone in the chest. Here the final 10% of oxygen can enter to completely fill the lungs. So that air reaches all the way up to fill the upper parts of the lungs it is necessary to relax the chest muscles, the shoulder blades and the shoulders.

Place the hands below the shoulders in the upper chest area, imagine that the chest lifts and opens up, imagine a sun brightly shining in the center of your chest, like your heart, and allow your shoulders to soften as the air travels to the shoulder blades. As you exhale, just let the whole area relax and lower with all of the muscles returning to a natural state of rest.

Clues

- Try not to tense the shoulders or lifting up the chest and thereby tensing the stomach area.
- Remember that only a very small quantity of air can go in, so don't try to fill up more than is possible.

LONG DEEP BREATHING

Keep one hand below the Navel Point and the other hand on the rib-cage and unite the three movements: As you inhale, relax the abdomen permitting the air pocket to expand, then expand the rib cage like wings towards the sides filling up the middle part of the lungs, and finally open up and lift the chest with a soft and subtle movement.

As you exhale, let each part return to the starting point; the chest goes down, the wings of the rib cage fold back in and the lower abdomen retracts towards the spinal column. As all the air goes out, relax the lower abdominal pressure and begin again.

Clues

- Maintain the earth-sky connection keeping the spine elongated.
- If you exhale completely, pushing out the last breath of air, the inhale will happen automatically and spontaneously with all of its phases. A good exhale, with calmness and consciousness, will aid an easier inhale and one in which is richer in every way.
- If you feel tension in any of the phases of the breathing process, simply relax, exhale, readjust yourself and try again.
- Remember that adding pressure won't help, just the opposite, it won't. There is no hurry.

Benefits

- Balances the nervous system creating a harmonious relationship between vitality and relaxation.
- Increases the flow of Prana throughout the body.
- Acts like an anti-depressive as it stimulates the production of endorphins.
- Stimulates the pituitary gland, helping to develop intuition.
- Purifies the blood.
- Regulates pH in the body (the alkaline/acid balance of the body).
- Opens and activates the energy channels of the body.
- Helps to balance the emotions.

- Helps to change habit patterns.
- Helps to counteract addictive behavior.
- Generates a state of calmness in the mind and body.
- It is a fundamental tool to enter into meditation.
- Brings the mind to the present as you watch the flow of the breathing process.
- Helps to develop a calm perspective, patience, clear ideas and greater understanding.

BREATH OF FIRE

AGNI PRAN

Breath of Fire, also known as Agni Pran, is a breathing technique that is both invigorating and purifying. It involves abdominal contractions, which are rhythmic and balanced. It is an incredible tool against feeling anxious, nervous, worry, fear, sorrow and sadness.

This breath revitalizes completely your nervous and glandular systems purifying the blood in the process. When you do the breath in certain postures or with certain movements that exercises pressure on the different nerve plexus and glands, these areas of your body fill with vitality and energy.

As those parts of your body become healthier, the energy flows towards affected areas so they are able to keep their vitality.

Over time, as our energy increases, the mind experiences a greater peace, thoughts become clearer and one feels a certain radiation circling the whole body. The stressful need to always be thinking and acting and then to be the “doer” begins to diminish as the mind becomes more receptive and open to understanding. The sensation of a natural unity amongst all things begins to emerge.

TECHNIQUE

In order to learn the technique, begin with a slower abdominal movement. As you exhale, the abdomen and the Navel Point lightly contract moving towards the spine and somewhat upwards, and as you inhale the abdomen relaxes forward as the diaphragm lowers filling up the lungs.

The progressive intention of this abdominal movement, in and out, creates both an active inhalation and exhalation. The sound of the inhalation and the exhalation should be the same. As you learn the technique, maintain a moderate speed listening to the rhythm you are creating and try to merge into that rhythm feeling it occupy all of your senses.

When you have acquired sufficient practice with the technique, the diaphragm will move like a piston, raising up and lowering down

approximately 2–3 times per second rhythmically, balanced and continually.

CLUES

- It is important to practice elongating the spine.
- As you practice Breath of Fire, remember that the rest of the body is relatively static.
- The breath is dynamic (around 2 breaths per second), but begin with a rhythm that is comfortable until you gain mastery of it.
- It is fundamental that the inhalation and the exhalation have the same length and strength.
- Once you have practice, you will be able to do the technique as fast or soft as you want, depending on the exercise.

COMMON MISTAKES

Scientific tests measuring the brain waves and blood chemistry in the body, and testing the levels of oxygen and carbon dioxide, have shown that Breath of Fire isn't the same as hyperventilation. There is no reason for the exercise to produce a hypocalcaemia or rigidity in the hands, feet or face, dizziness or vertigo. These are signs that you are not doing the technique correctly and it is better to stop the practice until you have more instruction.

It's possible that you might be doing one of the following things:

- Breathing using the opposite technique. Many people learn to breathe in a way that is contrary to the natural process and contract the Navel Point in during the inhalation, which reduces the abdominal space (and therefore limits the movement of the diaphragm) and the amount of air that can enter our lungs. This pattern is common amongst smokers and those people who suffer from anxiety.
- An exaggerated pumping of the abdomen. If the contraction of the abdomen is too strong, it can affect our capacity to do Breath of Fire correctly. If you force the abdominal movement too much, you could cause lumbar pain as the diaphragm itself inserts into the upper lumbar region (L-2, L-3).

Even though you are doing the exercise correctly, it could happen that after a series of exercises you feel the same sensations of light-headedness, dizziness or other symptoms; in most cases, they are really just the body adjusting and the blood eliminating toxins. One way to avoid these sensations is to concentrate at the forehead as you do the breathing exercise and you will find that they will go away quickly.

COUNTER-INDICATIONS

- During pregnancy.
- The first days of the menstrual cycle.
- If you suffer from hypertension.
- Elderly people or children under the age of 8 years old.
- If you are a drug user.
- People who suffer from mental or psychological diseases (schizophrenia, paranoid behavior...etc.) even though they are taking medication.

BENEFITS

- Aids the heart and the blood circulation to rapidly eliminate toxins from the system.
- Expands lung capacity.
- Stimulates the solar plexus and thereby permitting a greater and freer flow of energy.
- Strengthens the nervous system and balances the hemispheres of the brain.
- Stimulates gland secretion.
- Increases physical endurance.
- Useful in breaking addictions.
- Cleanses harmful effects from drug use, cigarettes, alcohol or other toxic substances.
- Produces alpha rhythms in the brain.
- Contributes to greater mental and physical energy throughout the organism.
- Controls stress.
- Charges the electromagnetic field.
- Helps to synchronize biorhythms in the body.
- Used in different kriyas, prevents disease and strengthens the immune system.
- Increases by 60 times the positive effects of the exercise.
- Produces a rapid change in the chemical composition of the blood.
- Produces a powerful massage, both physical and energetically, of the lower chakras, the vagus nerve and all internal organs.
- Elevates the energy from the second and third chakras to the fourth chakra, the heart center.
- Helps to counteract the feeling of lethargy either on a physical, emotional, mental or energy plane.
- Creates a concentrated mind, intelligent and neutral.

PRACTICE

EK ONG KAAR, SAT NAM, SIRI WAHE GURU: ADI SHAKTI MANTRA

Ek Ong Kar Sat Nam Siri Wahe Guru

The Universal consciousness and all its manifestation are One. This is our True Identity. The ecstasy of the experience of this wisdom is beyond all words and brings indescribable bliss.

MORE INFORMATION:

Language: Gurmukhi

This mantra, in the “Long Chant” form, is done every morning at the beginning of the morning Aquarian Sadhana. It can also be chanted as a mantra without the long chant format. It opens the chakras, and brings a sense of bliss. This mantra, in its Long Chant form is also called Long Ek Ong Kar or Morning Call. According to the Kundalini Yoga tradition, this is the mantra of the Aquarian Age.

SA TA NA MA

Naad is about hearing the sound within the sound and looking deeper into the meaning of all things. In “Naad” you could hear the “aad”, the beginning or starting point, which is the meaning of “aad”. With our practice of meditating on sound and vibration, we are learning to delve deeper into the significance of life and her teachings.

“Sa Ta Na Ma” is derived from the Mantra Sat Nam which is the Mantra we chant to access universal truth. Sat is the concept of truth, that which prevails for all of eternity and is common to all men. Nam means “name” as in a proper noun and here conveys the idea of relationship. What is my relationship with the truth? Do I identify with the idea of truth as a basic principle? Is truthful living important to me? When we meditate on the four parts of the naad of Sat Nam, each one of them invites us to look deeper into the meaning of our own life.

Sa: The first part of the naad is “Sa” and represents infinity. Infinity in this sense talks of what is possible, consciousness which knows no limits and where wisdom is supported by greater knowledge. When we meditate on

SA TA NA MA:

Sa - Gyan Mudra, the thumb touches the index finger and accesses the energy of the planet Jupiter.

Ta - Shuni Mudra, the thumb touches the middle finger and accesses the energy of the planet Saturn.

Na - Surya Mudra, the thumb touches the ring finger and accesses the energy of the sun.

Ma - Budhi Mudra, the thumb touches the little finger and accesses the energy of the planet Mercury.



Sa, we often touch the index finger with the thumb thereby creating Gyan Mudra. Gyan signifies wisdom and is associated with the planet of Jupiter.

Jupiter is the planet of expansion where you access higher knowledge and greater wisdom. Jupiter represents the wisdom of the father – Zeus – he who watches over his children. He is the one who knows and has been there from the beginning of time. All other gods are inferior to him and they are there to serve his wishes. Touching the energy of Jupiter is opening yourself up to change – real and lasting change – by gaining greater understanding.

How can I live in harmony within me and in the world in which I live? How to become wise? Wisdom is listening to the truths of all time and being faithful to them with every thought, word and deed. Sa is entering into that expanse of knowledge and experience. My affirmation – my Mantra – the one I repeat to myself is: “I am open to all!”

Ta: “Ta” is life, the infinite or Prakriti penetrating every aspect of our human experience. Prakriti is the creator manifested in Maya, the world in which we live, the world of our senses and all that we see and hear. Each of us develops his or her own way to understand reality and an individual strategy to act accordingly to what becomes our perception of life.

With the sound of Ta, the touch goes to Saturn – to deep understanding. Saturn, with its nine rings, is the planetary energy of the teacher that represents restriction because he does not let you proceed until his lessons have been learned and assimilated. When the thumb touches the middle finger it is known as Shuni Mudra and it is the idea of getting to the core of things, the essence, and of not waiting for later on. Shuni – Shuniya – is Saturn and he says, “You must learn what I have to teach you, for I am the teacher.” “My rings – the comings and goings of life itself – will enslave you if you do not learn to use their force and their wisdom. They are present in your life because their lessons will not disappear, and they are there so you may easily access what they have to teach you.”

What do I have to learn from life? You ask your questions and then you say to yourself, “What will life teach me today?” What lessons must I learn so as not to repeat the same mistakes, the missed opportunities that have been

KARMA:

Karma is the force of constant change in our lives. We are asked and sometimes forced to change because we are here to evolve as human beings. Karma represents the lessons yet to be fully learned by us, so, the same situations, the essence of all the relationships that we have with others and ourselves, continue to be there in some form or another.

there in my life where I have had the opportunity to grow? I ask myself, "Am I now ready to learn?" I see the cycles that have played out in my life, the wheels of karma, and how they have continuously visited me asking me if I am ready. Saturn is the taskmaster – the true master – and his teaching goes to the core of my soul. My Mantra in this aspect is: "I am ready to learn."

Na: The ego (represented by the thumb) touches the ring finger, the sun energy – the source of life itself. This is Surya Mudra. "Na" represents the cycle of decay – the dying of the old. It is the act of new creation found everywhere on earth, just as the leaves in autumn fall from the trees so that new sprouts and life will come after them. It is the principle of renewal.

In the Hindu Trilogy, Shiva symbolizes this passage. He is the entity who wields the trident and cuts free the old and decaying so that new forms are possible. The trident is a three-pronged spear and represents the force Shiva exerts over the three gunas (Sattwas, Rajas and Tamas), which define earthly existence. Sattwas are my thoughts that tell me "I belong" and that I am at peace with the world around me. It is purity and essence growing strong within me. Rajas are my energy and motivation behind my desire to act. I draw support for my ideas and my capacity to enact them from the energy of Rajas. It is principally my third chakra working for me. In Tamas, our thoughts are less clear and we lack insight. We could be lazy or just find ourselves in a stage of retreat so that we might begin again in life with renewed spirit. Tamas will teach me about how to relax and recuperate my life energy if I know how to use its force and learn not to abuse it.

Shiva represents change and that is why yoga is effective as a tool for change as he is the patron of those who practice yoga and look inside of themselves. With the necessity to change old ways, we bring new vitality to our lives with this touch. My Mantra here is: "I have what I need to be."

Ma: Ma as the sound suggests is the energy of the mother. It is rebirth or the giving of birth. In the sense of the Mantra, Ma represents new beginnings after the desire for change has planted its roots. It is the land of unlimited possibilities and newfound realities, which until now were unknown to us. This often happens as we struggle to imagine what might lie ahead in our lives. Perhaps, that is why effecting change in our lives is a fearful proposition. But when we touch the thumb to the little finger or Budhi Mudra, Ma is reassuring, comforting and reminds us that with faith and confidence in ourselves there are new horizons waiting for us.

The little finger represents the energy of the planet Mercury. Mercury is the closest planet to the sun in our solar system and therefore represents the realm of the mind as the sun represents the realm of the soul. The mind is with us to support the wishes of the soul, to help clarify those ideas and to devise the plan for their realization. The mind is quick and the energy of

Mercury is also quick. If we access the higher mind, which is in constant connection with the soul's knowledge, the ego will know how to act through the personality. The lesson is to learn "to flow" because the sun energy is intense, and, in the same way, our intuition is always open to us. We learn that it is better not to stand in the way of our higher mind but rather let life and her messages flow freely through us. It is said that if you master the energy of Budhi Mudra, you will be blessed with prosperity and the ability to get to the core of the matter in all things. It is the land of flowing and harmonious relationships. The Mantra to repeat to yourself here is: "Let me become part of the flow."

PRANAYAMA PRACTICE WITH LONG DEEP BREATHING & AGNI PRAN

- Sit comfortably elongating the spine.
- Place your hands over your knees with Gyan Mudra.
- Close your eyes and focus on the eyebrow point.
- Start with 2 minutes of Long Deep Breathing, trying to make the inhalation and exhalation even, and creating a rhythm.
- Then inhale, hold the breath in and apply Mula Bandha, release the Bandha, exhale and begin with Breath of Fire for 2 minutes. Be sure that the rhythm of the breath is steady and that you are putting the same strength on the inhalation and the exhalation.
- Then inhale, hold the breath in and apply Mula Bandha, release the Bandha, exhale and repeat the cycle of Long Deep Breath and Breath of Fire 2 more times.

KRIYA FOR INTESTINAL HEALTH



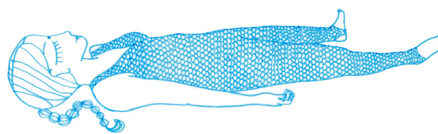
1) Windmill. Stand with the feet slightly wider than your hips. Bring the arms straight out to the sides parallel to ground, with the palms facing down. Bend forward from your pelvis, twist towards the left and bring the right hand to the left foot or shin. The left arm is stretching straight up to the back. Continue moving up and down towards your left side in a rhythm of about 10 seconds per cycle. **1 minute.** Change sides and repeat the movement for another **1 minute.**

2) Continue the same motion but alternating sides and pausing for 5 seconds as the hand touches the foot or shin. **3 minutes.**

3) Continue the same alternating motion, but pause for 25 seconds as the hand touches the foot or shin. **2 minutes.**

4) Hold the downward position touching the foot or shin for **2 minutes on each side.**

5) Relax **2-3 minutes** on the back.



6) Side Bends in Tadasana - Mountain Pose. Stand with your feet hip distance apart, arms spread to the sides, parallel to the ground with the palms facing down. Inhale in this position and exhale as you bend to the left side, letting the left arm slide down the left side as the right arm stretches up and then to the left. Press down into the ground with the right foot as you reach up and to the left with the tips of the fingers of your right hand. Inhale and come back to the center and elongate the spine. Exhale and stretch to the right side and continue. One sequence takes about 6 seconds. Continue for **1 minute.**

7) Torso Twists in Tadasana

- Mountain Pose. Standing in Tadasana, stretch your arms to the sides parallel to the ground, with the palms are facing down. Inhale at the center, exhale as you twist the torso to each side. Keep the arms in a straight line with each other. Continue moving from side to side in a rhythm of about 2-3 seconds per cycle. **1 minute.**



8) Savasana - Corpse Pose. Relax for **10 minutes.**

COMMENTS:

These exercises work on the bowel system. The bowel movements serve as an early indicator of illness.

KIRTAN KRIYA MEDITATION



Sit in Easy Pose, elongating the spine. Your eyes are closed, focused at the eyebrow point.

Chant the Mantra **Sa Ta Na Ma** as you press the thumb against each of the other four fingers as described below:



- Saa, touch the thumbs of each hand with the index fingers.**
- Taa, touch the thumbs of each hand with the middle fingers.**
- Naa, touch the thumbs of each hand with the ring fingers.**
- Maa, touch the thumbs of each hand with the little fingers.**

Chant in three languages of consciousness:

- Human: normal or loud voice (the world)
- Love: strong whisper (longing to belong)
- Divine: mentally; silent (Infinity)

Press the fingers strongly enough to keep you awake and conscious of the pressure. Keep repeating at a steady rhythm and keep doing the fingers movement along the complete meditation.

Time: Begin in a normal voice for 5 minutes; then whisper for 5 minutes; then go deep into the sound, vibrating silently for 10 minutes. Then come back to a whisper for 5 minutes, then aloud for 5 minutes. The duration of the meditation may vary, as long as the proportion of loud, whisper, silent, whisper, loud is maintained.

To end, inhale deeply stretching the arms over your head and spreading the fingers wide, shaking them out, circulating the energy. The movement may involve the whole body and the spine. Exhale.

COMMENTS:

Panj means five, and expresses the five primal sounds of the Universe. (SSS. MMM. TTT. NNN and AAA.) It is the atomic or Naad form of the Mantra Sat Naam. It is used to increase intuition, balance the hemispheres of the brain and to create a destiny for someone when there was none. This Mantra describes the continuous cycle of life and creation. This Mantra is a great catalyst for change.



MODULE II





PHILOSOPHY

THE SECOND CHAKRA: SWADISTHANA

Swa: one's own joy

Adhistana: home or dwelling place

CREATIVITY

To feel, to desire, to create, to enjoy

Location: Sacral area, hips, low back, groins, sexual organs, womb

Element: Water

Color: Orange

Purpose: movement, flow, expansion, pleasure

Identity: Physical identity

Challenge: Guilt

Gifts: Pleasure, joy, connection

Right: To feel

Excessive: Indulgent, over-emotional, sloppy, promiscuous

Deficient: Rigid, dry, numb, flat emotions

Qualities when balanced: Sensuous, in touch, graceful, flowing

Principle: Polarity

Organs: Sexual organs, kidneys, bladder

Glands: Reproductive glands.

Yoga Exercises: Frog Pose, Cobra Pose, Badha Konasana, Sat Kriya, Cat-Cow, Pelvic Lifts

Bij Mantra: Vam

TO FEEL, TO DESIRE, TO CREATE

Each chakra is a vision of the world. It is a perspective that organizes all of our feelings, thoughts and values to encounter the world and to act within it. The vision of the Second Chakra is about desire and passion, about duality and polarities, about movement and change, and fundamentally about creativity and joy.

The element associated with the Second Chakra is water. Consider the qualities of water. It flows and moves freely. It doesn't run up hills, so water under the influence of gravity seeks the lowest spot, just as feelings under the pressure of desire seek out a situation of rapport, a situation where

similar feelings can become fulfilled. Water doesn't have a set shape, just as feelings are not fixed. Water is much more mobile than earth and through patient and constant repetition, water can even shape earth, just so, feelings can give form to habits. There is a limit to the speed at which water can move and with which you can move through water. Have you ever leapt off a high diving board and unfortunately landed flat? Water, which has a mobile nature suddenly, seemed as solid as a wall. People, who function strongly through the Second Chakra and have opened to the world of feelings, move at a speed dictated by those feelings. If they don't feel ready to move; they won't, regardless of the outside pressure. If they feel they are ready to move, they will, regardless of the appropriateness of the outside world.

Someone who is dominated by the vision of the Second Chakra sees the world in terms of feelings, in terms of desires and impulses, and in terms of the fulfillment of passions. Sex from the Second Chakra represents the seeking of a polarity and the fulfillment and release of the energies created by that polarization.

Unlike the First Chakra, where the vision of the world is singular, secure and isolated, the Second Chakra requires others. When the Second Chakra is well developed, you have opinions, you make distinctions, you like blue but not red, you prefer hot rather than cold. You're not someone who lacks contrasts and contours.

A well-functioning Second Chakra paints the world with passions, motivations and opinions. It prepares the way for compassion in the Fourth Chakra because there are things you dearly care about and want.

Language in the Second Chakra is often sensual, colorful and goal-oriented. It is flexible and fluid just like water. Many people experience this as the ability to lie or to create a line or a story in order to get to the real passion underneath. It is like flirtation; whatever you may be talking about, flirtation ultimately has a sexual connotation. In fact, that's the art of flirtation; how to talk sexually without saying anything directly sexual.

From the yogic point of view, the experiences of the Second Chakra provide the first taste of merger, of going beyond one's isolated self, dissolving with, through, and into another. The momentary forgetfulness in the ecstasy of sexual release is a taste of the much greater bliss available to us as we let go and merge with the Infinite Polarity, where our finite and infinite have intercourse into a creative sense of awareness. This is very much what was meant by the Tantras, using sexuality as a way to experience the spirit.

The combination of creativity and passion found in the Second Chakra is one of the reasons that we often see such quirky and temperamental

personalities attributed to artists. In the Second Chakra, desires, pleasures, and the pains and struggles of finally expressing your creation in the light, are all mixed together. When all the other chakras are balanced in relation to the second, sexuality becomes joyful, varied, expressive, and rarely has the connotations of confusion, struggle, pain or perversion that seem to be on the rise in our culture.

Stimulation of the Second Chakra is the common form of stimulation in our society. Seeing a sexual object provides stimulation, reminds you to have passions, asks you to have feelings, and tries to engage you with the deep subconscious tides of your own passions.

In the classical symbols for the Second Chakra, there is an animal in the center of it. It is an alligator and a serpent. It represents a kind of monster or serpent that travels deep under the ocean, the kind of thing sailors were always on the lookout for that might capsize their ships. Our mind rides on the ocean of the unconscious of feelings in a little boat. It can be capsized at any moment by the power of one wave of emotion. This symbol reminds us that despite all of our rational and intellectual thoughts, regardless of our systematic plans, if we don't have a mastery of, and a good relationship to our passions, our boat can be overturned. Modern research has found that thinking and feeling go together, that our memories are sorted within our mind as much by feelings as they are by meanings or by other forms of content. It simply isn't true that thinking is a purely non-emotional function. The emotions and passions expressed through the Second Chakra, and the thoughts and assessments that are given through the Sixth Chakra stimulate each other. Thoughts and imaginations about different things produce feelings, and feelings regulate the flow, intensity, and believability of thoughts.

Imagine the rising tide. With the tide, all boats rise. As you elevate your mood and your capacity to feel, all your conscious intentions gain more clarity and contrast. You're able to throw yourself wholeheartedly into an action, towards a goal.

Taste is the sensory system connected with the Second Chakra. Without passions, life has no taste, and taste itself, is conveyed by the watery mixtures of chemicals that we take in through our tongue.

When the Second Chakra is too weak, the world seems flat. There is little passion. You don't really have opinions about this or that, and your body doesn't show the effects of motivation, of loving the senses, of movement. It tends to be constricted and limp. When the Second Chakra is overactive, there is nothing that is not sexual. You have a kind of sexual mania. Relationships will be about the fulfillment of your passion, regardless of what you say, regardless of the other roles.

In Kundalini Yoga, exercises that we do, such as Frog Pose and Sat Kriya, (that are known to work on the Second Chakra and on all three of the lower chakras), provide balance and full functioning of the chakra. Don't think of the exercises as stimulating to increase or reduce a chakra's functions. Rather the intent is to balance, and to interconnect the chakra with the play of all the other chakras.

YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI

The Sutras of Patanjali come from the classical yoga period (200–800 AD). They were written in very short but meaningful phrases. It was thought that for a better understanding and use it was better to study under the tutelage of a teacher.

The Sutras of Patanjali offer an overview of the objectives , philosophy and structure of the discipline of yoga. They provide a map for the effort required in the practice of yoga and the indicate the progress one should expect from that study. It is a guide to human fulfillment.

The whole process of yogic discipline is based on the need to control the mind's disturbances or ripples. It is believed that the mind is the link between body and spirit and the habits that keep us tied to the things that keep us attached, in duality and, as a result, subject to our continuous suffering. But also, the positive habits of the mind can lead to detachment and union with the Truth. The mind is a very sophisticated tool that can both lead to liberation and to confusion.

The mind and body represent the primary manifestation of nature: Prakriti, whose main quality is one of constant evolution and transformation, called

The Yoga Sutra itself consists of 195 aphorisms presented in four steps or chapters.

- **SAMADHI-PADA**
Absorption and Higher States of Awareness
- **II SADHANA-PADA**
Discipline and Practices
- **III VIBHUTI-PADA**
Powers and Capabilities of the Possible Human
- **IV KAIVALYA-PADA**
The Nature of Liberation

Parinama. As a result of these developments, we obtain a plural view of nature, ranging from the more subtle aspects that are not apparent to the mundane realm of the five senses. It is believed that the body and the mind (psyche), were created by the three eternal forces – the Gunas. The mind is divided into four areas: Manas – the lower mind of the senses and reactions; Ahankar – the ego; Buddhi – the mind that rationalizes and is made up of our memory, intellect and subconscious realms; and Chitta – other aspects of mind susceptible to constant change.

The work of the yogi is to stop the mind's constant dispersion in order to reach a clear perception of what is truth and what is not. This is the main objective. Patanjali does not attribute the universal suffering to an angry God, or a concept of original sin but just to ignorance.

According to Patanjali, knowledge serves the function of awakening the "I" and to eventually free ourselves. Through clarity, intuition, and special forms of knowledge, the mind can be tuned, can transcend suffering and stop the unconscious actions that cause our problems.

The methodology of meditation supports and supplements the power of sacred knowledge. True knowledge makes us see that we are more than what we normally see. As we recognize the transitory nature of all experience, we will reach a greater detachment. Through yoga practice (Sadhana), we are able to calm the mind, sharpen its functioning and gain greater comprehension to recognize truth, to hear the word and follow the inner promptings of the heart – the path of Dharma.

While in the philosophy of classical yoga there is a tendency to reject the world, nature or Maya, in Kundalini Yoga we understand that the human body contains the same elements and qualities that are in the rest of creation. Thus, the body should be considered a temple full of wealth that has the ability to influence the mind through breathing and secretion of the glandular system. Kundalini Yoga can give the practitioner awareness and balance in both worlds – inside and outside.

The quality of mental and emotional experience is transformed as the student guides their mind by the eight limbs of yoga. Patanjali describes the five stages of mental preparation. The descriptions reflect the general principle that all manifestations of Prakriti are composed of some combination of the three Gunas: Tamas – heaviness, confusion, lack of clarity; Rajas – activity energy; Sattvas – balance, subtlety, clarity. The qualities of the mind reflect varying degrees of activity and combinations of the three Gunas.

PATANJALI'S EIGHT LIMBS OF YOGA PRACTICE

One of the deep truths captured by the eight limbs is the need to develop

the entire spectrum of body and mind as a whole system.

Patanjali identified eight interrelated aspects of yoga practice some time between 200 and 600 AD. The eight limbs are equally essential to steady progress in refining the mind and discriminating the real from the illusory. They are called “limbs” or “parts” rather than steps to emphasize their integrated nature. The limbs grow a little in relation to each other, allowing the coordinated use of all the limbs.

YAMAS - *Five restraints*

NIYAMAS - *Five disciplines*

ASANA - *Postures for health and meditation*

PRANAYAMA - *Control of prana (life force)*

PRATYAHARA - *Synchronization of senses and thoughts or the “withdrawal of the senses”*

DHARANA - *One-pointed concentration*

DHYANA - *Deep meditation*

SAMADHI - *Awakening and absorption of spirit*

The list above places the eight limbs in a ladder-like manner, missing the dynamic aspects of the limbs, but emphasizes the nature of the practices from the most gross and accessible (ethical behaviors) to the most rarified and intangible (spiritual or mystic merger).

In the West, most popularizations of the techniques tend to emphasize one end or the other of the ladder. Either the body is cultivated without chanting and meditation, or the mind is cultivated through meditation, without building physical vitality through exercise. Both lead to imbalances, physically and emotionally. One of the deep truths captured by the eight limbs is the need to develop the entire spectrum of body and mind as a whole system.

THE EIGHT BRANCHES AND THREE MINDS

The negative mind is controlled by Yamas and Niyamas

The positive mind is controlled by Asanas and Pranayama

The neutral mind is gained by Pratyhara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi

THE EIGHT BRANCHES AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS

Earth: habits – confronted by Yamas

Water: emotional impulse – guided by Niyamas

Fire: energy and action – protected by Asana

Air: feelings and instincts – led Pranayama

Ether: creative interior space – navigated by Pratyhara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

YAMAS AND NIYAMAS

At the bottom of the path are the Yamas and Niyamas. Yamas are about practicing moral restraint in external relations and Niyamas are about keeping a daily discipline that helps us understand our inner relationship with the Self.

YAMAS

Ahimsa Non-violence

Satya Sincerity, Truth

Asteya Honesty

Brahmacharya Moderation, control of the senses

Aparigraha Free from attachment, greed

YAMAS: Patanjali: II.30

The principles of respect for others include: non-violence, truth, honesty, moderation and not being greedy.

These principles are directed towards the area of relations with others, but do not exclude the relationship with the self. They talk of the attitudes we should have towards our external environment and also towards ourselves. They reflect the difficulties inherent in our relationships with others.

1. Ahimsa – the respect for all beings and all things must be present at all times. It cannot accept physical violence (wounds or injury), verbal aggression (shouting, abusive language and slander), or behavior, which produces harmful effects (intolerance, the desire to take away the security of someone), especially against those who are the weakest. Ahimsa begins with respect for the body.

2. Satya – Respect for the truth through all mediums; words, gestures and writing. In the Mahabharata this attitude is defined as: “Truth should be said when it is appropriate, pleasantly and never when it may cause harm.”

3. Asteya – Is respect for what belongs to others. The concept of honesty, means we do not take advantage of other’s property; whether material, intellectual or of any other nature.

4. Brahmacharya – Respect for moderation. Find the right balance in our actions, desires, thoughts and feelings.

5. Aparigraha – Respect for cultivating desires where the intention is correct. It becomes the attitude we have to not engage in the unnecessary accumulation of material goods.

Questions:

1. How I can keep these precepts present without moralizing?

2. *Should I be ever attentive to my behavioral tendencies or is it a gradual process of growth?*
3. *Are there geographical, social, historical factors or other circumstances that may influence compliance with these principles?*
4. *As a yoga teacher, one should always respect these principles?*
5. *These principles reflect a moral code, in the end, favoring the internal evolution of the individual or do they lead to a social and religious narrowness of thought?*

NIYAMAS: Patanjali: II.32

The five principles of affirmative action are: purity, contentment, disciplined life, study of sacred texts and worship.

These principles suggest the idea of positive actions towards the self. They propose various policies for personal conduct.

1. Shaucha (Bana) – Is the yogic concept of physical and mental purity. It is our first duty to keep our bodies pure as well as our thoughts. Clean externally means to dress in clean clothes and that transmit a natural sense of purity. This is also true internally, as by good nutrition and, at times, the use of fasting or detoxifying diets, we are able to purify ourselves from within.

2. Santosha – Being happy reflects a positive, rational or not, attitude toward the events of the past, present and future. This not only means the condition of being satisfied, but also is an attempt to bring harmony to the psyche. Our ability to implement this principle is best measured when the circumstances are not favorable.

3. Tapa (Bani/Sadhana) – A disciplined life that seeks mental and physical balance through the practice of moderation in everything: sleep, work, rest, leisure, food and human relations.

4. Swadhyaya (Simran) – The daily study of sacred texts includes recitation, singing or silence. Requires constant work without judgment and leads us to the progressive discovery of oneself.

5. Ishwara Pranidhana (Seva) – When we create an attitude of devotion, we accept that there is something that transcends us and allows us to access a superior force. If you are not a believer, you can open yourself up to this energy by observing the mystery of life and respecting those who have done great things in their lives.

These five ingredients are not independent from each other. Purity is the first and most important, as it enables the existence of the others. From

purity, we journey to contentment, which promotes respect for a disciplined life. On this basis, the study of sacred texts is constructed and devotion to a higher power is possible.

Questions:

1. Which of these five principles do you are easy to follow and which are not?
2. How can you learn to respect these principles without falling into moralizing or forming judgmental attitudes?
3. A too radical approach to one of these principles can lead to conflict some of the others? Should you always be conscious of the principle of respect for others?

DEFINING THE SUTRAS

YAMAS AND NIYAMAS

II.35: Around someone who is firm in an attitude of non-violence, hostility disappears.

Violence towards others is not only physical, but can be shown in actions, words or thoughts. If you decide to truly maintain an attitude of non-violence, it is necessary should take into account all these elements.

The attitude of non-violence should never be mistaken for cowardice or desertion of one's responsibilities. Nor should it be used to manipulate or dominate others. Rather, it is laid at the service of others and helps them to assume their own responsibilities.

II.36: For someone who stays firm in Truth; the result corresponds to the action.

Sincerity assumes the attitude of non-violence and "if you have to tell the truth, try to do it with kindness, and not when it can hurt others."

According to this sutra, the acts of one who respects the truth will be carried out in a powerful and effective way: what is said will be done and what is done is exemplary. There is an exact correlation between word, action and result.

Truth is a fundamental concept and respect is a discipline that requires accurate observation and perfect consistency between intention, speech, action and results.

II.37: All jewels and riches comes to that one who practices honesty firmly.

No stealing means to not take or receive anything without prior agreement or until an exchange has been made. The expression "all the jewels"

means the best of each sphere: material, intellectual or spiritual. At the most mundane level, honesty and dignity attract trust in all relationships, whether emotional or of a professional nature.

While being honest about not taking material goods, which are not ours, to respect the thoughts that form an intellectual or spiritual work can seem more problematic.

II.38: Vitality comes to him or her who practices moderation.

Moderation creates a harmonious relationship between the various forms of energy that are instilled in the body: emotional, sensual, sexual, physical and subtle energy of thought.

The Sanskrit word that refers to this concept of moderation is Brahmacharya, which means paving the way for the self to go to God. The use of moderation with respect towards our physical energy makes for stronger spiritual enlightenment if we handle this issue effectively, and progressively evolve from quantity to quality, and from selfishness to altruism.

II.39: Whoever perseveres in the path of non-greediness (generosity) gets deep understanding of life.

The concept is based on the non-acquisition of unnecessary goods, and on the idea of exercising control over unbounded desires or the acceptance of gifts beyond reason. The idea of what is too much depends on the individual and their social and family status.

The more you have one, the more you need to protect. Also, the tendency to accept more than is necessary, to acquire more and more goods, knowledge, relationships, mystical states, etc., confuses the mind and stops the process of understanding the origin of things and the motivations and reasons for our life.

When the mind is no longer concerned to acquire and hold material goods, we understand where we have been, where we are and where we are going. We understand the meaning of existence.

II.40: Purity protects the physical body and attracts non-physical relationships with others.

It is the most important principle of those who are committed to positive action. It is respect for your body and that of others.

Physical purity goes beyond the mere cleansing of the body and the elimination of toxins through Asanas or Pranayamas. Rather than become obsessed about our appearance, it shows us the ephemeral nature of the body and reduces our attachment to it. It is understood that there is an internal dimension beyond physical appearance and where lies true communication.

The concept of purity allows us to maintain good health, but becoming excessive about our diet regimen can end up being destructive. It can lead to reject contact with others or to create obstacles in relationships. While, on the contrary, if we have a balanced approach to purifying ourselves, it will have a favorable effect on us.

II.41: So, purity, clarity, and well-being of the spirit begin to bloom, like concentration, mastery of the eleven sense organs, and perception of the inner self.

This sutra leaves behind the obsession with the body and focuses the concept of purity on the mental and spiritual level. In exchange, we receive understanding, clarity and balance (Sattva), as opposed to sloth (Tamas) or restlessness (Rajas). The Sattvic state of mind is accompanied by peace and prosperity.

If we are able to achieve this attribute, change isn't any longer a temptation and we are able to maintain a clear view in any situation. Physical and mental purity is an extremely important aspect in our search for illumination.

II.42: Joy brings supreme happiness

Happiness comes from a mental well-being that pushes us to see the positive in all beings and in all situations. Often, our frustrations come from remorse (second thoughts that we have) and anxiety, suffering or comparison with others. We tend to notice what others have or do not have, instead of nourishing an attitude of gratitude. This will only lead us to a state of discontent.

Being happy is a dynamic and constructive attitude that gives us the opportunity to see things differently. The mind is calm and serene and is essential to strengthen our confidence in achieving our goals for our relationships, pedagogy, teaching and therapy.

It's hard to stay happy, especially when circumstances are difficult, and only a few are those who succeed.

II.43: After eliminating impurity, a disciplined life leads toward perfection and mastery of the body and the eleven sense organs.

A disciplined life means a life in balance, which meets the needs of caring for the body and mind, without being loaded with harmful and useless items.

It means that we remove anything that hinders the functioning of the body and the eleven sense organs. It is important to maintain balance – first physically, then mentally. We become disciplined about food, sleep,

exercise, work and the time we spend thinking. We control the quantity and quality of our energy.

II.44: Union with the Divine comes from the study of the self through the sacred texts.

Swadhyaya, a Sanskrit word, which translated means “the study of the self through the sacred texts,” represents the recitation of texts transmitted by tradition. It is recognized that these texts are carriers of wisdom that reveal God. The use of these texts represents a starting point.

Such reflection implies that one will question himself over a long period. The sacred texts allow us to better understand the self and to discover our limitations, which will reveal what has been hidden from our eyes until now.

II.45: Contemplation and the spiritual powers it bestows, is obtained through the worship of God.

This sutra brings to mind the question of faith in God. According to some teachers, any practice of yoga that is based on faith or not, in the end, should bring you to it. Devotion, expressed in rituals, frequent prayers and thoughts, words and actions, is offered to God.

The intensity of faith leads to contemplation and the powers that go with it. These powers represent the potential that each individual has inside of himself, even if the ego constantly hides it from our eyes. By going beyond the ego and putting ourselves in the hands of a higher power, these powers are revealed. Through them, we are able to discover our limitations and the presence of a superior force in our life.

ASANA: Patanjali: 11.46

The posture is firm and relaxed

Normally, we associate this sutra in the West with various yoga postures. In Sanskrit the word refers to the sitting posture or series of postures that gradually lead to the sitting posture. Then we add other deep components of yoga such as pranayama and meditation, preparing the mind for its realization.

The verbal root (as) in the word Asana means to be present in the body – occupying, existing and living in it.

The two qualities of firmness and relaxation are important in this sutra. Firmness is physical stability, but especially attention, a presence and state of peace that eventually reaches the mind. As a complement, relaxation reflects the adaptation of the position to the physical limitations of one without excessive force or will.

Strength or physical stability is the opposite of anxiety that we often

experience in the body. The relaxed attitude we are looking for is one that allows us to feel the natural flow of things (Sukh), and is contrary to suffering (Dukh). Both firmness and relaxation relate to the physical and mental aspects, which eventually join together to form an equilibrium or balanced state (Sattva) within us, and in which there is an absence of restlessness (Rajas) and inertia (Tamas).

The position offers an experience where mind and body meet. In everyday life, posture helps us define the position we often assert in the face of our duties and others: steadfastness on essential needs and delicacy (relaxed attitude) on the way to express them.

According to Patanjali: II.47, we achieve the goals of Asana when through the right effort and meditation on the Infinite, one finds peace.

A right effort is the desire to practice regularly, to adapt practice to the possibilities and progression of each person, to reduce tensions in the body and for keeping us relaxed and free in any situation.

Questions:

- 1. Why do you think that in the West, the practice of yoga has focused almost exclusively on your postural issues?*
- 2. What are the advantages and disadvantages to have begun your yoga practice with Asanas?*
- 3. Do you think that Asanas are a means or an end?*
- 4. By observing the breath that gives life to my body, do I become more aware of my consciousness?*
- 5. Why are relaxation and meditation necessary to achieve the goal of posture?*

PRANAYAMA: Patanjali: II.49

After reaching the mastery of Asana, breath control is the regulation of the inhalation and the exhalation.

When we begin to gain the mastery of Asana, we are able to develop the minimum of physical and mental peace needed to start practicing breath control (Pranayama).

Most of the time, our breathing is automatic and unconscious and is adapted to the activities, thoughts and moods that often disturb it. Breath control means leaving behind unconscious breathing and consciously transform it so that it is measured. Regulating the way we inhale and exhale is very beneficial and affects all vital bodily functions – energy in all its forms.

The mastery of the breath, which is the manifestation of life, gives us access to the mastery of the self. According to Naad, the word “Pra – AN – a – YAM – a” means to control, gain mastery of the energies that give life to the body, and to use the experience going beyond our limitations to receive all of the benefits.

Questions:

- 1. When doing pranayama, do I maintain a position that I can hold for the duration of the practice?*
- 2. What do I notice in my body when my breathing is full and flowing? And those times when it is not?*
- 3. If my mind was distracted during practice, have I lost out on the experience? What should I do?*

Patanjali: II.50

The phases of the breath are the exhalation, the inhalation and suspension. Watching them in space, time and in number, one can achieve that the breath is more harmonious and subtle.

First, we turn our attention to the breath, which symbolizes relaxation and giving. Simply watching the breath, we make it more uniform.

For space, we understand the parts of the body where you can feel the breath, the chest or abdomen; but the sutra primarily refers to mental space, to release the mind from your worries and to be able to concentrate on Pranayama. It also means concentrating on a mantra, concept or image that inspires you towards spiritual elevation.

The time includes the duration of each movement of breath and suspension, the ratio between them, the rate and duration of practice.

With number, we refer to the number of breaths and cycles.

With time and practice, breathing becomes longer. Externally, mental agitation is removed and breathing becomes more fluid, effortless and regular. Internally, perception increases and you develop an intimate understanding of self. You cannot control your breathing if you do not have the ability to lengthen it and make it subtler.

The body achieves balance through the Asanas and the mind through Pranayama. The Gunas are balanced; the mind is not slow to react (Tamas) nor is stressed or too passionate (Rajas) and can see clearly (Sattva). One gains a greater capacity of observation and the understanding of the reactions of the mind in any situation.

Questions:

- 1. Is it balanced my breath? Are the exhalation and inhalation at the same level?*
- 2. Why does this sutra begin by naming the exhalation?*

3. *What does it mean to achieve the “subtlety” of breath?*

PRATYAHARA: Patanjali: II.54

The senses are removed when the sense organs are no longer attached to the objects of their concentration and comply with the true nature of the mind.

Voluntary withdrawal from the sensory organs occurs after reaching a state of concentration. The mind often dispersed depends on the sense organs and still acts as a slave to them. It always feels attracted to the demands coming from outside.

The eleven elements represent sensory organs or senses. In addition to the five senses of perception: hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, this expertise includes the five senses of action: talking, take, move, delete and play. Also includes the lower level thinking (manas) which coordinates all these senses in general.

The sense organs of perception must be instruments at the service of the mind, to be left free to receive messages and control the activity of the sense organs of action. Once we reach the state of concentration that allows us to see beyond the satisfaction of the senses, the ability to let go and accept sensory information becomes spontaneous.

When we reached the mastery pratyahara, the action is correct and spontaneous, as the eleven sense organs recover their true function as instruments. An object no longer attracts a sense, and this, in turn, attracts not mind. On the contrary, the mind chooses freely and spontaneously leads one of the senses towards a particular object.

Questions:

1. *Does isolation favors the withdrawal of the senses?*
2. *In this sutra, to gain mastery of the senses means that we no longer feel attracted to objects?*
3. *What are the possible consequences of achieving this ideal in our daily lives and in our relationships?*

DHARANA: Patanjali: III.1

Concentration is achieved by focusing the mind on a single point.

The first five branches of yoga are related to the body, breath and senses. Now in the next three, we explore the mental, psychological and contemplative dimension.

Concentration means keeping the mind stable and constant while we think about a particular object, both when the environment is favorable and when it is not. The object of our concentration or the time in which it might occur, can be something concrete, a concept, an idea easily accessible or

something that goes beyond thought.

In yoga, the first step towards achieving focus is to observe the body and breath.

Questions:

1. *The ability to concentrate comes usually after I am relaxed, when I feel motivated or can I reach it by willpower alone?*
2. *Is it true that for a state of concentration, we must stop running from one place to another?*

DHYANA: Patanjali: III.2

Meditation is the seamless flow of knowledge at the chosen point of concentration.

When we focus on an object for a long time, the concentration becomes meditation, whereby the understanding of the object is direct and instant. The interaction between subject and object leaves a profound impression that replaces understanding gained from the past.

The process that is from mental dispersion to concentration is progressive, but passing from concentration to meditation is very fast, instantly we find ourselves far from mental activity. Meditation is the relationship between our inside and outside world; it is often expressed by a burst of inspiration or intuition.

Questions:

1. *What practices or objects of concentration might favor my meditation?*
2. *At times, can a feeling that something is not right also be the subject of my meditation?*
3. *Is meditation a way to solve my problems?*
4. *Can I learn something about myself through meditation?*

SAMADHI: Patanjali: III.3

When the object of meditation shines only in the mind, as if the mind is emptied of its own form – that's contemplation.

Contemplation, a state often desired and sought after and sometimes feared, extends the state of concentration and meditation.

Patanjali said that in the state of contemplation, all that remains of an object is its essence. Other ways of perceiving the object, i.e., your name or physical form, have disappeared.

The understanding one achieves while contemplating the object in the

mind is so bright that the perception of one's personality disappears. The reality of the object is so intense that we forget everything else. It is a momentary state.

Questions:

1. Is contemplating an act of will or of fully giving of yourself?
2. If you arrive at the state of contemplation, does that imply keeping your eyes closed? Can I prepare myself for a sort of contemplation in action with my eyes open?

Ahangkar – The ego sense that claims the impressions of the mind for its own and reacts to them.

Ashtanga – “8” branches or limbs

Atman – The essential Self present within all creatures. Pure consciousness. The mind merely reflects that consciousness and, as such, appears to be conscious.

Bhagavad Gita – A chapter in the Mahabharata. It represents a dialogue between Arjuna, leader of the Pandavas, and Krishna, who is the reincarnation of the Hindu trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). It is a clear statement about Karma Yoga – selfless action.

Brahm or Brahma – Spirit, the true Self, the Universe

Buddhi – The component of the mind which discriminates and classifies the impressions which the lower mind (Manas) receives.

Chitta – The Universal Mind

Dharma – The righteous path of duty. “Where there is dharma there is no karma.” Action aligned with one's Infinite Self. Dharma is the central organizing principle of the cosmos.

Gunas – The three conditions of matter. Sattva, pure essence (saintliness); Rajas, active, creative or initiating energy (imperial); and Tamas, inertia or decay.

Karma – The law of cause and effect. Karma is rooted in the notion of ignorance of Atman. Remove the ignorance and Karma is removed.

Mahabharata – Maha means great and Bharata is an ancient name for India. It is an enormous epic depicting rivalries of two clans, the Kauravas and the Pandavas.

3. To achieve a state of contemplation requires letting a superior force or energy work inside of me?

Manas – The recording component of the mind, which receives impressions gathered by the senses from the outside world.

Maya – The illusion of the reality of sensory experience of one's self and the world around us. Usually thought of as that which takes us away from, or binds us from perceiving God.

Moksa – A concept that means release or liberation. It is when we realize we are Purusha, and enter into the right relationship with Prakirti.

Prakirti – It is all matter or primal nature. It is subject to the influence of Purusha, so the Self may enjoy its experience. It is composed of the three Gunas.

Reincarnation – The cycle (wheel) of birth and death. One's condition in life is determined by the balance of his or hers karma.

Samskaras – They are our tendencies, potentialities and latent states which exist in the subconscious and unconscious areas of the mind. They are built up by the continued action of thought-waves, and create new thought-waves. Samskaras define your character and behavior.

Upanishads – The earliest yogic writings, written over 1000 years ago. There are 108 in all and are dialogs between yogis and kings.

Vedanta – It is another name for modern Hinduism. The philosophy comes from the Upanishads.

Vedas – The oldest religious books in the world. It is the literature of Brahminism, an ancient religion of India.



TECHNIQUE

BANDHAS

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is an experiential process of transformation. In each asana and practice, there is the opportunity to experience the wisdom that lies guarded inside of it. The practitioner, in the process of learning and experiencing the effects, will gradually feel the wisdom that is there. Thus, the role of yogic exercises or Asanas is to guide the transformation process.

One great yogic practice is the combination of specific muscle contractions called Bandhas or locks. These sophisticated tools provide many benefits, but their main function is to create the necessary inner strength to keep open the most important channel of spiritual energy, Sushumna. They create enough hydraulic pressure to encourage the energy to move freely inside this channel.

This important channel of vital and spiritual energy is physically located along the spinal column. The Bandhas keep this channel open and with each contraction help to align correctly the spine, creating a full flow of energy. This spinal alignment serves the body, which can function as it best, and facilitates the experience higher states of consciousness by allowing a balanced flow of energy through the spine and the chakras.

There are three main locks:

Mula Bandha, "Root Lock," **Jalandhara Bandha**, "Neck Lock," and **Uddhiyana Bandha** "Diaphragm Lock." *In the 200h Teacher Training, we will focus our study mainly on the first two Bandhas.*

In most yogic traditions, Bandhas are taught after a long path of practice and refinement. In the tradition of Kundalini Yoga however, these powerful tools are introduced from the beginning of the process.

The Bandhas are considered essential in the practice of Kundalini Yoga since, although it is a yoga that promotes energy flow through all channels of the body, the Kundalini energy rises through Sushumna, therefore, it is vital to maintain the spinal column elongated and in alignment so this channel stays open.

Although not specified in certain exercises or Kriyas, the practitioner should apply the Bandhas intensely at the end of each Asana or softly when looking for a more subtle feeling by maintaining the spinal column aligned in each exercise. This means that the Bandhas can be constantly applied subtly to maintain alignment. This practice consciously builds an internal structure that keeps our spinal column aligned in any position, so that we project the energy to the place we want it to go.

When the Bandhas are correctly applied, our postural alignment uses only the appropriate muscles to maintain posture and it allows us to relax unnecessary tension in the body. The resulting posture affects positively the whole body from the inside out leaving behind rigidity imposed from external forces. We become the posture.

THE BANDHAS: MULA BANDHA & JALANDHARA BANDHA

MULA BANDHA

The “root lock” develops internal energy muscle control that is the basis of any yogic posture. The specific purpose of this lock is to trigger stimulation in Muladhara Chakra (Root Chakra) to awaken the Kundalini energy. Although Muladhara Chakra is etheric, it has its physical trigger point at the perineum. Basically, the perineum is a complex group of muscles that line and support the Pelvic Floor and includes the urogenital and anal muscles. Obtaining precise control of this area requires practice because the urogenital and anal muscles are highly interconnected and difficult to contract separately.

Muscle contraction of Mula Bandha helps to develop the strength of the Navel Point to rotate the pelvis and anchor it so that the lower back is free from tension and is in alignment with the rest of the spinal column.

This maintains the integrity of the lower Sushumna so that the energy from the lower chakras can begin its journey upwards.

There are two primary areas involved in the implementation of Mula Bandha: The Pelvic Floor and the Navel Point.

The Pelvic Floor is found at the base of the torso and supports the entire weight of the upper body. The control of internal muscles in this area is very useful in mobilizing and lifting your body weight. As when you try to lift a paper bag filled with purchases, many times we feel that it is safer to grab it from the bottom (pelvis, Pelvic Floor) instead of by the handles (shoulder girdle).

The Navel Point is located three fingers below the physical Navel Point, halfway between the navel and the pubis and a few centimeters inward.

It is an energy center different from the chakras but vitally important to the awakening of the Kundalini energy.

Activation of the Navel Point is carried out by deep lower abdominal muscles and, in relation to Mula Bandha, acts as a point of support for the contraction of the Pelvic Floor helping the muscles to contract with the right pressure, and thus keeping the lower back free from stress. It must become the structural organizer of our yogic postures and other physical activities.

TECHNIQUE

In Kundalini Yoga, we learn Mula Bandha in two phases:

A. Learn and practice localization, discrimination and contraction of the Pelvic Floor muscles.

- First contract and relax the anal muscles, then the genital muscles, and lastly the Navel Point, in order to feel each area.
- Then contract the anal muscle and hold this contraction; contract the genitals and hold this contraction; and finally pull in and up the Navel Point.
- Practice maintaining the three contractions during a few seconds and then relax them all at once.
- Practice consciously so that you are able to do all three contractions softly and simultaneously.

B. Refine and apply precisely the Bandha

- Gradually decrease the external muscular effort, feeling the movement take place more and more internally.
- Instead of using different external parts of the body or muscle groups to apply Mula Bandha, the effort is to raise simultaneously the internal muscular line that forms the Navel Point, genitals and anus.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- To remove excessive tension, consciously reduce tension in the lower back, buttocks, stomach, shoulders and face. The only true strength lies in the inner line talked about above.
- Mula Bandha is a double movement: the internal musculature rises, bringing energy through the spinal column upwards, while the sacrum descends rooting the pelvis, the base, downwards. Refine your perception and body awareness to be able to note this double movement. Maintaining this balance is essential to the implementation of this lock.
- Create space between the hips and chest to avoid tension in the middle of the back.

- It is important to keep the head aligned, preserving the natural cervical curve, in order to not block the passage of the ascending energy through the cervical region.

OBSERVATIONS

- Eventually, Mula Bandha is activated from the Navel Point, which attracts softly and organically the Pelvic Floor.
- The Bandhas are practiced with awareness and patience and without forcing them. Do not try to force your progress or pressure your body.

BENEFITS

- Governs the different energies and elements of the body.
- Promotes the vital creative energy (Kundalini) to rise and be distributed by the chakras and nadis.
- Involved in the transmutation of sexual energy.
- Prevents hemorrhoids.
- Beneficial for the colon.
- Prevents incontinence.
- Combats against constipation and facilitates evacuation.
- Facilitates sexual control.
- Energizes and balances the 1st and 2nd chakras.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Mula Bandha is not recommended for people with high blood pressure, dizziness or amenorrhea. It is also not recommended for pregnant women or during their first day of menstruation.

JALANDHARA BANDHA

The “neck lock” facilitates the extension of the cervical vertebrae and removes the blockages of the spine between the diaphragm and the base of the skull so that the energy can reach the higher centers in the head (5th, 6th and 7th chakras).

This Bandha develops a support platform between the navel and the heart that allows the spinal column to hold the weight of the head in a balanced way without unnecessary effort. This helps break the habit of moving first with the head, which interferes with gravity and the natural alignment of the body.

A good Jalandhara Bandha, for example, is vital to protect the neck from excessive pressure while practicing extensions. The key is to maintain the lock without obstructing the flow of breath.

TECHNIQUE

- First activate the Navel Point to stabilize the pelvis.
- Gently lift the chest area and pull the chin inward slightly to extend the natural curve of the neck.
- Make sure your breath is flowing easily.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- Keep your pelvis in neutral, activating the Navel Point.
- Relax the shoulders. As the chest lifts up, we compensate the movement by dropping the shoulders instead of them rising up and causing the upper back area to bend unnecessarily.
- Do not tighten the neck. The neck muscles exert just the right amount of force to keep the chin tucked. The action balances the head over the heart.

OBSERVATIONS

- Ideally, once the pelvis is well anchored, the chest can rise up until the chin is naturally in its place.
- The root lock and neck lock are performed together in its **subtle form** help to keep the spine elongated, respecting the natural curves of the spine.
- The intense application of these two Bandhas is used at the end of each asana or meditation to raise the energy and provide a moment of stillness, usually during a breath retention.

BENEFITS

- Improves the functioning of the thyroid gland.
- Beneficially influences the laryngeal plexus.
- Strengthens the cervical vertebrae.
- Tones the muscles and nerves of the neck.
- Facilitates mental introspection.
- Provides energy to the higher chakras, 5th, 6th and 7th.
- Aligns and connects the mind with the heart.

FORM & ALIGNMENT

THE PHILOSOPHY OF POSTURE

Accept where you are now and enjoy yourself. Love what you are doing at this very moment, you are always moving and improving. You are constantly refining. Enjoy the process rather than looking to the outcome.

In the yoga practice we join conscious breathing, bandhas, devoutly concentration (drishti) and the physical geometry of our body. This way, we create a flow of energy that results in the correct posture. With practice, the energy flow becomes more precise and stronger and posture evolves. Then our mind becomes more neutral and quiet.

We work using a physical approach in relation to the postures describing body positions of the body and hands, how the breathing should be and where we should focus, because this is the easiest way to communicate what is a personal experience of the energy itself. When the body evolves and opens, the mind and the spiritual understanding do the same and as a result develops consciousness.

To get most benefit from each posture and kriya, it is interesting that every time there is awareness of:

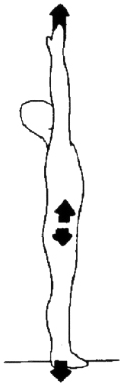
- The Navel Point and anchoring.
- The elongation of the spine
- A balanced breath (pranayama).
- Firm and subtle application of the bandhas.

THE NAVEL POINT

It is fundamentally important to understand where the Navel Point is located. The Navel Point does not correspond exactly to the location of the belly button. The Navel Point is not the Nabhi or Navel Chakra, which is etheric. The Navel Point is located in the area of the transverse abdominal muscles. The Upanishads say, "Between the belly button and the last bone of the spinal column is the Navel Point. It is shaped like a bird's egg and encloses within itself the starting point of 72.000 nadis - the body's subtle channels of energy." A good way to locate the Navel Point is to lock the Mercury finger down with the thumb, leaving the Jupiter, Saturn and



Sun fingers pointing straight. Place the three straight fingers against the stomach, right under the belly button. The Navel Point is just below the Sun (ring) Finger.



We anchor our posture through the Navel Point. Gravity always affects our posture. One part of the body yields to gravity and another pushes against the Earth, directing the resultant force through our Navel Point and out to the opposite part of the body which is reaching, stretching toward the Heavens. The yield to gravity balances the push against the Earth, and the push balances the reach. It is a constant dynamic relationship. If we push from one side of our body, we must reach from the opposite side to complete the movement. The Navel Point is the center from which we both push and reach. It is the connecting point for all postures.

Learn to bend, breathe, twist and communicate from the Navel Point. If you do, you can have an incredibly leveraged life. This is the fundamental secret of martial arts. It is the difference between a strong punch and a lethal punch. In martial arts you learn to connect the energy from the Navel Point through your arms and hands with an unbroken flow of power. If you let that same Navel Point energy flow into your hands for healing, it gives you tremendous healing energy. The Navel Point is the engine room of it all.

THE GEOMETRY OF POSTURE

As babies one of our greatest physical achievements was learning to balance the various parts of our bodies so that we could stand upright and walk. Even now if that delicate balance is upset we fall down.

All yoga postures are balanced geometries done with devotion. Being able to do yoga comfortably is simply balancing your body so that gravity serves you.

There are two ways to do an exercise: the easy way and the wrong way. But the more we strain and try to conquer our body, the tighter we get. This is because we are fighting gravity. A large part of learning to do postures well is setting up a geometric balance that allows us to interact with gravity in a positive way.

The following are the fundamentals of the geometry of five basic positions:

1. Standing with majesty-yogic stance
2. Stretching the upper back
3. Sitting
4. Walking in a way that supports your yogic practice
5. Lying still in Savasana (Corpse Pose)

STANDING

Whether it comes to doing simple or advanced yoga postures or to simply having better posture, it's all about letting gravity align you. Let's start off by looking at how to stand naturally. Stand with your feet hip distance apart. Consciously release unnecessary tension and comfortably stand this way. Relax your lower body, letting the weight of your lower body sink into the gravitational force of the Earth while your upper body and spine naturally stretch up towards the sky.

In this geometric balance the spine is gently stretching upward, the heart is centered over the pelvis and the head lines up with the heart. Symbolically, the heart is our center, balancing over the lower chakras, disciplining them with compassion while remaining connected to their fundamental vitality. The head orients itself in relationship to the heart.

The heart sits over the foundation of the pelvis. When we move the pelvis, the heart and head naturally move in alignment with it. We control the pelvis from the Navel Point. Therefore, our body actions are organized from the Navel Point and oriented from the heart.

In yoga, when we lead with our head, we suppress our heart. Our posture compresses the Heart Center. When our head leads it tightens the body. The head should move last, following the heart. Like in life itself, the head should receive the inspiration, advice and direction from the heart center.

In drawing A, you can see that the pelvis, the heart and the head are in natural alignment.

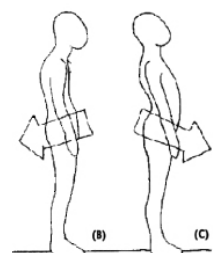
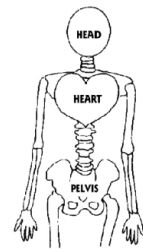
In drawing B the head is slumped forward so that the chest sinks in and the heart area is compressed. The pelvis moves forward to balance the head and the back is slightly rounded.

In drawing C the chin lifts, compressing the neck, while the pelvis is retracted, compressing the lower back.

YOGIC STANCE

Bring your feet together, pull in on the navel, apply the Neck Lock and let your arms hang naturally by your sides. This is the yogic stance, Mountain Pose, the beginning and ending position for the Surya Namaskar.

In order to not collapse the lower back we must be aware of the tilt of the pelvic bone along with posture and breathing. When the Navel Point is pulled in, the pelvis rotates, the bones that sit upon it drop down and the lower back elongates.



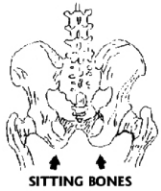
STRETCHING THE UPPER BACK

Generally the tightest area on the body is between the shoulder blades. This tension makes it difficult to stretch the upper back without lifting and tensing the shoulders. A good way to work on opening up this area is by using the resting position called Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward Facing Dog). In that position try to get your armpits to face each other. This stretches the shoulder blades apart and gives you a better sense of the stretch in the upper spine.

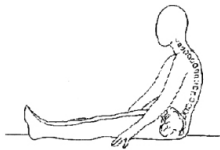
Holding your arms up over your head and hugging your ears with them relieves the tension between shoulder blades and offers more leverage to stretch the spine upward.

SITTING: CENTERING THE WEIGHT THROUGH THE PELVIS

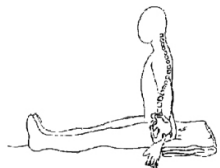
The pelvis is your base of support. Sitting well requires the geometry of the pelvis to be in optimum relationship with gravity. To do this you must consciously use the Sitting Bones called the ischial tuberosities, located under the flesh of the buttocks.



When you sit on the center of these Sitting Bones, you can yield your weight to gravity through them and stretch the spine upward, creating the correct flow of energy up the spinal column. These bones tap into a part of the brain that creates calming, grounding energy that also aids digestion. It takes no abdominal effort to sit this way and your heart is lined up with your pelvis allowing the head to be supported by the heart.



When the hamstring muscles are tight you tend to sit on the back of the Sitting Bones and on the sacrum. This rounds your back and puts pressure on the spinal discs, which impedes the flow of energy.



Sit down and put one hand on the lower back to feel whether the lumbar vertebrae are curving outwards or whether they are curving slightly inwards. If the back is rounding outwards, then you are sitting slumped on the back of your Sitting Bones. Try using a folded blanket under your buttocks until you feel that your back become upright and that you are correctly balanced on your Sitting Bones. Center your weight between the two bones, you will feel an immediate improvement in the posture. In this posture the pelvis maintains its tilt, and there is a slight natural compression of the Navel Point.

WALKING

The way we walk is important because incorrect walking habits interfere with the structural re-alignments that our yoga practice is creating. Simple things that we do every day may conspire against us in subtle ways. So be conscious to integrate the alignment concepts that you have learned into the way you walk.

RELAXATION AND SAVASANA (CORPSE POSE)

There is usually a brief relaxation period between the exercises in a Kundalini Yoga set. This is a time that we can actively use our natural, relaxed breath to regulate our energy. We can also focus our attention in the breath in order to relax consciously, letting go of all unnecessary tension in the body. This allows us to approach the next exercise without carrying over any tension from the previous exercise.

At the end of a Kundalini Yoga set, there is a relaxation in Savasana (Corpse Pose). This is the time to completely relax by letting go of the breathing, the focus, and the body. Do not concentrate on anything, just let go completely and surrender.

It is important to keep the awareness in the alignment of the spine while we are in Savasana, respecting the natural curves of your spine. If you feel any discomfort on the lower back, using a blanket under the knees to help in the relaxation of the lower back will be very useful. Another option is to bend your knees.

The alignment of your body, like yourself, is dynamic. We should be aware of how we are aligned every day and what we can change or adjust to feel better and to use energy more efficiently, not only during our yoga practice, but throughout the day. Your thoughts and your emotions affect your posture, but this phenomenon also works in reverse, it is the magic of the awareness in the postures.

PRACTICE

ADI SHAKTI MANTRA

Adi Shakti, Adi Shakti, Adi Shakti, Namó Namó

Sarab Shakti, Sarab Shakti, Sarab Shakti, Namó Namó

Pritham Bhagvati, Pritham Bhagvati, Pritham Bhagvati, Namó Namó

Kundalini Mata Shakti, Mata Shakti, Namó Namó

I bow to (or call on) the primal power.

I bow to (or call on) the all encompassing power and energy.

I bow to (or call on) that through which God creates.

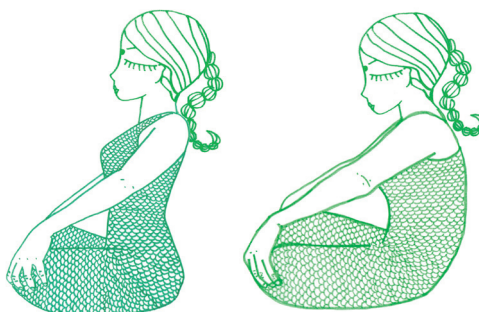
I bow to (or call on) the creative power of the Kundalini, the Divine Mother Power.

MORE INFORMATION:

The Adi Shakti Mantra tunes one into the frequency of the Divine Mother, and to the primal protective, generating energy. It is said that chanting it eliminates fears and fulfills desires. According to the Kundalini Yoga tradition, after conception, the soul enters into the womb of a mother on the 120th day. This is a day of celebration and when the soul/child is entering the womb this chant is traditional.

PRANAYAMA EXERCISE FOR AEROBIC CAPACITY & EFFICIENCY

POSE: Sit in an Easy Pose, with a light Jalandhara Bandha. Hold onto the knees with the hands.



BREATH & MOVEMENT:

- Inhale completely.
- Suspend the breath by lifting the chest and diaphragm.
- Do not let any air leak in or out during the exercise.
- Lock the tongue on the roof of the mouth.
- Press the tongue up, behind the teeth and the most forward point of the roof of the mouth.
- Begin to flex the spine forward and backward as you hold onto the knees. Flex with a smooth, fairly rapid pace.
- When you can no longer hold the breath in comfortably, go back to the center and exhale forcefully.
- Quickly inhale and continue the spine flex.

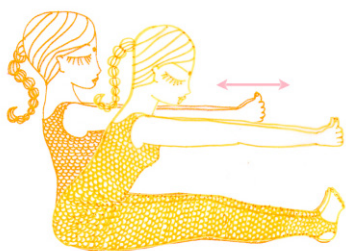
TIME: Continue for 3 to 11 minutes. To end, sit straight and inhale deeply. Hold this final breath and concentrate at the Brow Point. Relax.

COMMENTS

This one-exercise kriya has a massive impact on the body and nervous system and builds stamina. It increases the efficiency of the lungs in bringing oxygen into the blood. It pressurizes the heart to regulate itself and adjusts the various heart muscles to cooperate with each other. This kriya also helps the kidney, adrenal and sex organ systems. To master the effects of this kriya, you must build up your capacity so that you can do the spinal flex with the breath held in for at least 1 full minute at a time. Then build the time of the exercise to 22 minutes once a day. The best way to practice the 22 minutes is to break it up into two 11 minute periods with a 3-5 minute rest between them. The increased aerobic vitality that results after 40 or more days will make life richer and more positive, providing a reserve capacity to face challenge. Disease develops when the body gets less oxygen, eliminates less waste, and the brain, organs and glands

decrease their functioning. Eventually the system breaks down. This kriya helps to prevent that breakdown and maintains your vital capacity as you age.

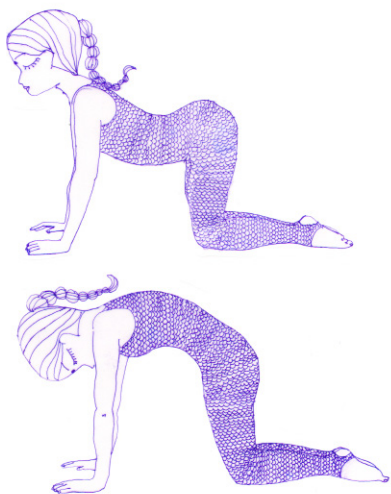
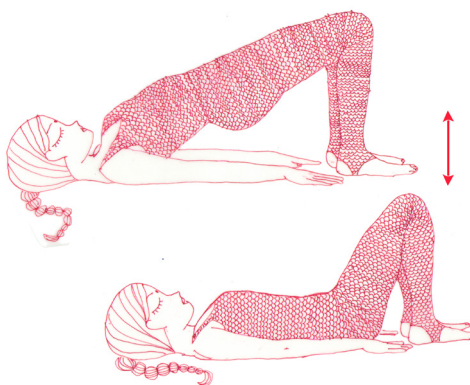
KIDNEYS SET



1. Dynamic Dandasana (Staff Pose). Sit with the legs and arms extended straight in front of you. Tightly fold the fingers onto the pads and point the thumbs up. In this position, inhale. Exhale and bend all the way forward from the hips, keeping the arms parallel to the ground. Use a heavy and powerful breath. The breath

must get heavier and heavier as you continue. Do 2 bends every 5 seconds for **5-6 minutes.**

2. Dynamic Setu Bandhasana (Half Bridge Pose). Lie down on your back, bend the knees and grasp the ankles. Inhale and raise the buttocks pressing the navel point up; exhale down. The feet and neck remain on the ground. Move rhythmically for **8 minutes.** *This exercise works on the neck, kidneys, urinary tract and is helpful for hernia problems. The heavy breath stimulates the pituitary gland to secrete.*



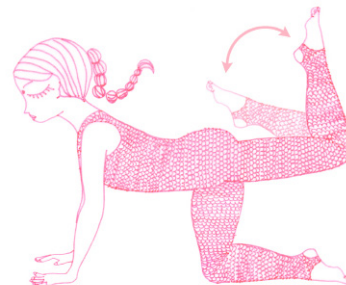
3. Exercises in Marjaryasana Bitilasana (Cat-Cow Pose):

a) Come into a Cat-Cow position supporting yourself on your hands and knees. The knees are hip distance apart and the hands shoulder distance apart with the arms straight. Begin Cat-Cow with a heavy breath, inhaling as you tilt your pelvis forward and open your chest; exhaling as tilt your pelvis backwards and arc the spine in the opposite direction. **Continue for 2 minutes.**



b) Then remain in Cow Pose and stretch the left leg back and up. Hold for **30 seconds** and switch to the right leg for **30 seconds**.

c) Now switch back to the left leg and kick the left buttock with the heel for **1 minute**. Change and kick the right heel for **30 seconds**. *This exercise works on the kidneys.*



4. Apanasana (Nose to Knees Pose). Lie on the back. Wrap the arms around the shins and hug the knees to the chest. Tuck the nose up between the knees and hold it there while you relax in this position for **1-2 minutes**. Then maintain this posture and sing an inspiring mantra for 5-6 minutes or breathe long and gently for 7-9 minutes.

5. Upavesasana (Crow Pose) with chanting. Sit in Crow Pose, a crouching position with the knees drawn into the chest and the soles of the feet flat on the ground. Stretch the arms straight out in front, parallel to the ground, and balance for 1 minute. Then begin continuously chanting **Har, Har, Har** with the tip of the tongue hitting the upper palate with each repetition. Feel the connection between the tip of the tongue and the navel. Chant for **2-3 minutes**. To end, inhale deeply, tighten the lips and mouth and balance the entire body with the breath. Hold this breath 20 seconds, and then exhale. Inhale and tighten again, balance your body under your control for 30 seconds. Exhale and relax. *This exercise totally stimulates the kidneys and urinary tract. If you feel dizzy during the exercise, it's an indication that you need to drink more water.*



6. Kunchun Mudra.

First part: Sit in Easy Pose. Both hands are in Gyan Mudra. The left forearm is held parallel to the ground in front of the chest, palm facing down. The right forearm is held

near the side, perpendicular to the ground, elbow bent sharply. The right palm faces up along side of the ear, stretching back as far as possible. Stretch your spine up. Pull up on the muscles of the buttocks, hips and sides, lifting the upper structure as much as you can. Pull in the abdomen and lift the ribs and diaphragm up, chest out, chin in. Hold 30 seconds, then let the tension go. Continue for **5 minutes**. Inhale and relax.

Second part: Now maintain this strong upward pull and with the tip of the tongue chant **Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru, Wahe jeeo**. Keep the waist area drawn up. The eyes will feel heavy and the breath will automatically become very light. Accuracy of the mudra is essential. Continue for **5 minutes**. Then inhale and relax.

This exercise is called Kunchun Mudra. It is very powerful and purifying. It enables total relaxation of the body.

CREATING SELF LOVE MEDITATION



1. Sit in Sukhasana, elongating the spine and hold your right palm 10cm above the top center of your head. The right palm faces down, blessing you. The left elbow is bent with the upper arm near the rib cage. The forearm and hand point upward. The left palm faces forward and blesses the world. The eyes are closed and focus at the lunar center in the middle of the chin. Breathe long, slow and deep with a feeling of self-affection. Try to breathe only one breath per minute - Inhale 20 Seconds - Hold 20 Seconds - Exhale 20 Seconds. **11 Minutes.** Inhale deeply and move slowly and directly into position for exercise two.

2. Extend your arms straight out in front, parallel to the ground, palms facing down. Stretch out to your maximum. The eyes are focused at the lunar center in the center of the chin and the breath is long, slow and deep. **3 Minutes.** Inhale deeply and move slowly and directly into position for exercise three.



3. Stretch your arms straight up with the palms facing forward. There is no bend in the elbows. The eyes are focused at the lunar center and the breath continues to be long, slow and deep. **3 minutes.** To finish: Inhale, hold your breath for 10 seconds while you stretch your arms upward (try to stretch so much that your buttocks are lifted) and tighten all the muscles of your body. Exhale. Repeat this sequence two more times.

COMMENTS:

Exercise one is called Reverse Adi Shakti Kriya. Here you are mentally and hypnotically blessing yourself. This self-blessing affects and corrects the magnetic field. Exercise two will benefit everything between the neck and navel. It will give strength to the heart and will open up the heart center.



MODULE III





PHILOSOPHY

THIRD CHAKRA: MANIPURA

Mani: gem

Pura or puri: city, place

ACTION AND BALANCE

The will of the spiritual warrior

Location: The area of the navel point, solar plexus

Element: Fire

Color: Yellow

Purpose: Vitality, strength, mastery

Identity: Ego identity

Challenge: Shame

Gifts: Power, strength, deliberateness

Right: To act and be free

Excessive: Controlling, dominating, bullying, constantly doing

Deficient: Weak, passive, victimized

Qualities when balanced: It is the center of personal power and commitment, self-esteem, identity and judgment. This is where the strength for inner balance, inspiration and good health is developed.

Core Value: Power

Principle: Combustion

Organs: Liver, gall bladder, spleen, digestive organs, pancreas

Glands: Adrenals

Yoga Exercises: Stretch Pose, Navasana, Plank Pose, Sat Kriya, Breath of Fire, Urdhva Prasarita Padasana (Leg Lifts), Warrior poses, twists, all exercises that work on the core.

Bij Mantra: Ram

THE WILL OF THE SPIRITUAL WARRIOR

The Third Chakra is the center of energy, willpower, sense of control, and coordination. It is associated with the region around the Navel Point. It is fed by the fire from the solar plexus, and associated with the adrenals and kidneys. It's ruled by the element of fire. It coordinates and develops the sense of sight and vision. Of the three chakras – 1st, 2nd, and 3rd – that make up the Lower Triangle, it is the subtlest. It is the driving force to act and to complete the conceptualization, and visualizations that one has in life.

The Navel Center is a beginning. It's the first point through which we are fed, nurtured, and given the energy to live as a fetus in the womb of the mother. Once your physical connection with the mother is severed, the Navel Point continues in the more subtle function of being an area to collect energy from the cosmos.

The Third Chakra near the navel is considered the reserve pool of energy within the body. It is from this area that the Kundalini energy is said to be initiated. The reserve energy at the navel gathers strength, and then goes through two small reserve channels down to the base of the spine and awakens the slumbering Kundalini, which lies coiled through the First Chakra. Then, the Kundalini energy begins its constant journey of awakening and arousal along the spine.

The energy lotus of the Third Chakra has ten petals. Ten represents the number of completion, the sense of the individual self is represented by the number one, and the sense of the infinite self, represented by the number zero. Ten petals mean that the person who has mastered the Third Chakra knows how to initiate and complete an action. That is why it is associated with the archetype of the spiritual warrior, one who is able to know one's mission and formulate the energy to act and complete it.

A spiritual warrior is conscious of each action, but not necessarily aware of the entire purpose of a particular mission. A spiritual warrior knows to serve the True King, to act in relation to the higher consciousness, but has not necessarily awakened the upper chakras of the heart and the brow and intuition. The essence of a spiritual warrior is fearlessness, an ability to act with integrity regardless of conditions.

A person who is strong at the Third Chakra will have a sense that their life and the quality of it depend on what they do. They are doers. They can shape, direct, and develop what happens in their life. There's deep confidence. The fire element associated with this chakra represents a willingness to initiate.

When in doubt in the First Chakra secure your stations and hold to your old habits. When in doubt in the Second Chakra, find your feeling and follow your passion. When in doubt in the Third Chakra, act. Do something, shake the boat, project your point, or get a vision, an image sent from the higher commander in self. A person acting in the Third Chakra is rarely still.

When this chakra dominates, the person is exuberant and expressive. It is associated with colors like yellow. Dressing from the Third Chakra will bring bright colors, and grand expressions. It will grab your attention and seize your eyesight.

When the Third Chakra energy is insufficient, a person has to compensate. If you don't feel you have enough energy to accomplish your task, you reach out for other sources of energy to gather that. This can be stimulants, drugs, or food. When you have a lot of feelings, (whether they be anger or blame, resentment, or just raw ambition), and yet you feel that you don't have the right or the energy to express them, you begin to gather energy instinctively into the Navel Center. It is the gathering, an accumulation at the Navel Center that prepares you to initiate action, to initiate the Kundalini and awareness, to begin the path of embodiment.

The Third Chakra is the doorway to the Fourth Chakra. The lower three chakras represent the realm of the unconscious. The diaphragm of the body is like the surface of the Earth, and above that, the Heart Chakra becomes the beginning of consciousness. Making the Navel Point strong is part of gathering the energy and organizing the energies of the lower three chakras to pierce into the upper realms of consciousness. Without a strong Third Chakra, you have many ideas and many good intentions but they do not come to fruition. With a strong Third Chakra, even your least intentions create actions and begin to stir the ethers.

The qualities associated with the Third Chakra are highly valued in our culture. We're very supportive of the go-getter, of he who initiates, of the entrepreneur and risk-taker. We admire the one who raises the hand first and takes the risk to accept a task regardless of the security and the assuredness of its outcomes.

A person who is strong in the Third Chakra will have a relationship to their feelings that uses the feelings to accomplish their goals. They will also look to the past to give them information about accomplishing things in the future. Third chakra actions are not necessarily strategic, but they are always focused and intelligently tactical.

THE THIRD CHAKRA AND MANTRA

There is a special relationship between the Navel Point and the use of mantra. When you pronounce a mantra and vibrate the tip of the tongue, you want to say it from the central channel – the Shushmana, and vibrate from the Navel Point at the same time. When the tip of the tongue and the Navel Point are correlated, that extra pulse of energy that comes from the navel moves the words into the realm of Anahata, the Fourth chakra and brings a sense of powerful projection. The action of speaking becomes infused with the powerful will of a warrior. It is vibrated without speaking out loud. Each cell vibrates, the energy that is released from the Navel Point. After clearing your Pranic channels and sitting elongating the spine, try chanting the steady rhythmic pulse of Har, being conscious of the tip of the tongue and pulling the Navel Point in.

There are many Kundalini kriyas that have you relax deeply after the exercises and meditate at the pulse that you can feel at the navel center. This deep meditation at the Navel Point after the energies have been adjusted provides thorough healing.

40 DAYS TO CHANGE

DANIELA TROCONIS DALY

Even if nothing changes, if I change, everything changes.

Honoré de Balzac

One of the most powerful transformation tools we have in Kundalini Yoga is the continuous practice of the same kriya or meditation for forty days in a row, commonly known as a “40-day Sadhana”. Generally this practice is associated with the Sadhana that we do first thing in the morning, although it is not mandatory to do it in this way.

When we do the same kriya or meditation for forty days in a row we have the opportunity to deepen our practice and gaining the many benefits associated with the kriya or meditation. Nevertheless, the real essence of this practice is what we learn about commitment in life.

Sadhana is a daily personal practice, something you do every day to maintain your inspiration at the highest levels possible and to keep developing as a human being. It is the practice of connecting with your intention in a directed and conscious way. A good way of establishing the habit of Sadhana is to start with a decision to do it for 40 days.

Commit to doing something for forty days is a demanding challenge, but it can be done! It is important to be clear about the intention of our practice, as this will give us the strength to keep up during the days when our resistances falter. Understanding from the heart the importance of our intention will lead us to find the discipline necessary to complete the “40 days” from a perspective of self-love, instead of from that place of obligation or some other reason imposed upon us externally. If something is initially forced upon us it will always, in the end, lose its force. Looking at each day as a new day and overcoming the challenges as they present themselves with love and perseverance, will give us the strength and the proof we need to get through the challenges of life and create the changes we want. Every day on the road is a sign of our commitment and gives us confidence in ourselves to continue.

A habit is a chain of thought patterns that have been repeated to the point that the actions resulting from those thoughts have become a behavior.

According to yogic wisdom, it takes forty days to change a habit. The commitment of doing forty days of continuous practice can bring us the change of attitude necessary to develop a new habit and to leave behind a destructive one.

Each kriya or meditation in Kundalini yoga is conceived and structured to produce changes in us in very specific ways. Doing a kriya or meditation one or more times gives us great benefits, but to enhance their effects, a continuous practice is the best way to experience it. Practicing a specific kriya every day can affect our habits in the following ways:

- **40 days:** The time required to break negative habits that prevent us from progressing and at the same time create new positive habits.
- **90 days:** Is the time needed to establish the new habit on a conscious and subconscious level.
- **120 days:** Confirms the new habit and the benefits are permanently embedded in our psyche.

Depending on their nature, habits are there forming part of our human makeup to either serve us positively in our development or to gradually destroy us. Performing a continuous practice for 40, 90 or 120 days can break this chain of reactions long established in us, and completely develop and integrate new habits that will help us to live maximizing our potential.

Diverse spiritual and cultural traditions throughout history have used the principle of “40 days” for purification, applying the accompanying regeneration to different states of the body and mind. Doing “40 days” is a commitment that you make with yourself with the clear intention of wanting to be open to change. It is about cleaning the mind and body of destructive habits, thereby opening ourselves up to change and rebirth and to the wonderful experience of having new “life habits”.

You are the one who gives power to the “40 days”. It is a commitment you make to yourself to be true to your purpose. Let your heart show you the way of change and be open to what that energy can bring you. Learn to rely on the tools you have so your strength and your flexibility may be with you and allow you to find the balance to “keep up” and “keep going” in life. A journey done from love and nonviolence will always bring you the learning you desire.

“At the end we are what we do to change what we are” Eduardo Galeano.

FORTY DAYS TO LEAVE A TOXIC HABIT

The way in which we take care of our body and nourish our organism is fundamental to purifying mind and body and cleaning out old thought patterns. What we eat determines our essence and the quality of our thoughts leaving imprints in our psyche and affecting the way in which our energy circulates – either in a violent or up and down sort of way, or in a way that is more harmonious in nature. This becomes more evident as we progress in our yogic practice.

So many toxic substances form part of our daily life such as: alcohol, coffee, soft drinks, nicotine, sugar and drugs, and should be classified as definite poisons for us. Their effects on our organism are devastating even though they have become a part of daily life. The good news is that all of these substances are not necessary for life and health, even when you think that you can't live without them.

We need to find the courage to love ourselves just the way we are, unique, sincere and courageous in our vulnerability, and unrepeatable beings of singular beauty. We do need to learn to listen to our internal rhythms and maintain the balance between "doing" and "being". If we concentrate too much on the "doing", we will be forced to supplement our energy levels with "quick fixes", with sugar and caffeinated drinks, that push the body to generate energy stressing vital parts of us in the process. The result is overexertion and causes acidification of the blood making it an ideal breeding ground for virus proliferation and the promotion of bone demineralization.

It's time to be in charge of our health and happiness. The power to do so is in our hands.

Take the challenge of leaving behind a toxic habit for "40 days". It probably is the one you've been promising yourself to leave every New Years Eve. Maybe you are concerned about finding what you "need" every time you go to a new place, or it is the first thing you think about when you get up in the morning. Whatever it is, it's time to leave it behind.

It could be that you want to leave behind a characteristic of yours that defines you and one in which you really don't like. You can do it. You could decide to stop complaining, comparing or judging yourself for "40 days". The idea is to want to do it above all else, take the decision and lighten your psychological load. If you know where you're going and why, it's always easier to stay strong through the ups and downs along the road to self-discovery.

SADHANA, ARADHANA AND PRABHUPATI

SADHANA

The practice of Sadhana is a continuous refinement of the self and it has a natural progression through stages. The three classical stages that one goes through are Sadhana, Aradhana, and Prabhupati. Roughly translated, these mean discipline, attitude, and aptitude or mastery. Note that the word “Sadhana” is used in two ways: Sadhana is the overall practice, with all its stages; and it is one of the three stages that we pass through as we master our Sadhana and ourselves. “Sadhana” and “Sadhana.” The three steps are inseparable, each supporting and developing the others.

Sadhana refines the quality and develops the characteristics of our consciousness as human beings: The stages reflect steps on the way toward the mastery of our habits; the techniques used in Sadhana lessen the sway of our ego; the process of refinement reflects the crystallization of our awareness and caliber. Sadhana is a process to refine human awareness, burn off the old patterns and clean out the subconscious. Yogi Bhajan called this refinement, self-crystallization. The ideal is to make your mind a diamond-mind, with a flawless gem quality worthy of the greatest museums. He describes this self-crystallization process:

You cannot achieve in life, you cannot crystallize your self in your life without discipline. There are scientific terms we are all familiar with: distillation, sublimation and crystallization. Distillation is to purify. That is the everyday Sadhana that we do. It is a distillation to remove impurities like a filter. Sublimation is next. It is more subtle and complete. It is the transformation of something to a higher state of energy. Sublimation leaves all deeply imbedded impurity behind. It is just like taking a block of sulfur and heating it up so all the sulfur becomes a vapor and the impurities remain below. That is what kirtan is – sublimation through word. Last is crystallization. When purification is advanced, you collect the substance around a single pure crystal. Even that process of refinement has steps and stages. The seed must be perfect. The temperature and environments must be constant. If all things are held steady in perfection then you get a perfect gem. Usually the resulting crystallization has four levels of quality. The most familiar is “opaque” or raw rock form. It is the right substance, but it may be covered

on the surface and have many flaws in its structure so it does not have its full strength or transparency. The next quality is "semi-precious gem". It is clearer, without a surface cover and a few flaws. The third quality is the "gem state." That is beautiful. It has few to no flaws and can carry clear light. The fourth quality is very rare indeed. It is flawless, with perfect structure and strength. That gem has a perfect cut in its facets and can reflect everything perfectly, with no distortion.

Crystallization is complete when what began as a goal-oriented effort becomes a spontaneous expression of joy, gratitude and love in a living discipline that arises from within our consciousness, seamlessly imbued in each moment, action by action. These stages are similar to the four stages referred to in Vedanta as waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and awakened sleep – "Turiya". The first is opaque and narrow, attached and self-concerned. The second is imaginative, elaborative and creative. The third is filled with stillness and the ability to know many things intuitively; one can leave the ego and perceive or heal without the limits of distance or time. The last state knows the Infinite in the finite form. It is dwelling in God, flowing with dharma, and acting in synchrony and harmony with the flow of the greater Being and one's destiny. It is neutral and reflects all things accurately. It is intuition – immanent and embodied – in constant spontaneous creativity. This is only achieved by going through the three stages of practice: Sadhana, Aradhana, and finally, Prabhupati.

The first step is daily Sadhana, which we've defined in broader terms but here, we explore Sadhana as expressed in personal practice. Sadhana means any practice that provides the mind and body with a disciplined procedure to express the Infinite within one's self. It is a practice that aligns your cycles, patterns, and mental and emotional reactions so that they support your purpose, your values and your goals. It is a time each day to notice all the negative habits that lead you away from higher consciousness and to eliminate the desires underlying those habits one-by-one – step-by-step.

This is a conscious activity. It is not automatic. You consciously choose to wake up in the early hours of the morning instead of sleeping. You consciously exercise the body and exalt the Infinite in your heart with your voice and projected attitude. Each day is different. Each day – you are different. Every 72 hours most of the cells of your body change. Sickness comes and goes. Motivation waxes and wanes. But through all the flux of life, through all the fickle reactions of our emotions, through all the palpitations of our unsure heart, and through the maelstrom of our thoughts and ideas, we consciously choose to maintain a constant and regular practice. By this commitment we establish a priority in life above all the changes: We choose to exalt the Infinite Universal Self and to develop our human, finite self as a channel to express our subtle and unlimited nature.

The yogic scriptures require at least 2 1/2 hours of Sadhana before the rising of the sun. In this way, you dedicate at least one-tenth of each day to refining your consciousness, maintaining your vitality and connecting to the sacred dimension of yourself and God. In these early ambrosial hours, the prana, the basic life force of consciousness, concentrates and physical cleansing is more easily accomplished than in the later hours of the day. It is a tranquil time when few people are awake and busy, so the clutter and bustle of daily activities will not distract or interfere with your practice and clarity.

Though many things may challenge the constancy or depth of your early morning Sadhana, as you conquer each one, you will build your will power, your confidence, and the ability to creatively and consciously beam your mind. This constant practice of stillness, awareness and readiness infuses your life with sensitivity to the natural rhythms of your body and to the fertile dance of each moment. This is no small accomplishment. If at the same time each day, you attune all your mental and physical rhythms to each other, then no part of yourself will be out of step with any other part of yourself. The entire day flows better. Doing a Sadhana at the same time each day helps you master it quickly because your body and mind use that regularity to anchor your consciousness. Regular practice is part of the art of learning the enterprise of self-mastery. Learning theory has shown that if you practice a particular task at the same time each day, you will learn it more efficiently. Therefore, if you practice meditation at the same time every day, it becomes easier and easier.

In meditation, you clean the subconscious mind of its fears and anxieties and in turn release reservoirs of consciousness and energy – you renew yourself. You cultivate new habits: allowing your awareness to guide you; no longer chasing the thoughts and reactions of your mind; practicing neutrality and flexibility. As each fear comes up, look at it with neutrality and your instinctual and learned fears will release their power over you. You become flexible; you break the rigid automatic behaviors induced by anxiety, fear and depression. Most of our fears were learned at a particular time of day and anchored to specific circumstances or thoughts. These fears tend to occur most intensely when triggered by similar circumstances, time periods or thought patterns that initiated them in the first place. By meditating during early morning Sadhana, we slowly process these anxieties consciously, while under our control rather than becoming subject to their reactions as they arise on their own in our daily life.

Normally you react to anxieties on their time and on their conditions. Your subconscious reactions and emotions crowd out your awareness and the reality of the moment. In meditation, these old fears come to you on your time and under your conditions. Because your practice is at the same time each day, it becomes increasingly easier to process and redirect the

fears as you establish and dwell in the clarity of your own consciousness. Eventually the mind is cleared – the clouds of fear, anger, depression and fantasy part and the light and power of creative consciousness begins to reveal itself.

ARADHANA

Gradually your Sadhana practice develops into an attitude of life and a consistent habit – Aradhana, the second stage of discipline. After practicing a regular Sadhana for some time, the teachings and the consciousness they instill begin to seep into the deeper recesses of the mind. It takes time for a conscious action or habit to permeate the subconscious and finally command the unconscious. To master a new habit traditionally takes 40 days of consistent action. You begin to sense the results of your actions and benefit from new perceptions, energy and behaviors. To stabilize it across all conditions may take 90 days. To make it flow spontaneously as you focus on other things may take 120 days. To penetrate past old blocks, fears and other habits could take a much more sustained effort – often years. It depends on the individual, the intensity and consistency of effort, and the starting conditions.

Once you've reached this stage, the efforts that you consciously planted have grown roots, and the offshoots are able to stand on their own. The subconscious mind finally gets the message. It understands that you are sincere; that meditation is a priority; that every day, at this time, you wake up automatically, ready for Sadhana. It realizes that it is as necessary as breathing; you do it no matter what else is happening in your life. The subconscious begins to support you and Sadhana begins to feel effortless. The subconscious, which directs about 85% of our activities and responses, has now acquired a habit – a habit to support your growth in consciousness and awareness through the practice of Sadhana.

In the beginning, the willful, conscious effort to do Sadhana may seem like a negative activity. It imposes a discipline at the cost of some other activities—like sleep! It confronts you with every possible impediment in your attempts to be regular. But as Sadhana grows into Aradhana, victory, confidence and gratitude come from the struggle. You have established a procedure that awakens the desire of your higher mind to connect with the universal self. During Aradhana, the mind becomes more active and Sadhana more profound in its subconscious clearing. If you find resistance or challenge in this stage, its source shifts. It is no longer from the flux of the mind or external impediments. Instead you now confront a basic question: Are you willing to act and think in your highest consciousness, or do you want to hang on to your old identity even longer? Do you continue to take your cue from the feelings and familiar emotions of your ego or do you begin to act from the sensitivity of your consciousness? Do you identify with your

ego? Do you follow your personality? Or, do you identify with your heart and soul and use your personality and your ego to serve your destiny? If you choose the higher self, then Sadhana becomes a joy and you leap up each morning to meet it. If you put off the decision, you vacillate: first motivated, then unmotivated. You exaggerate: feel more tired or sick than you may be in order to avoid getting up. You sleep: whenever you start to meditate, you may doze off in an attempt to avoid the profound transformation that comes with this commitment to your self. These are common pitfalls at this stage of development.

However, the more serious pitfall at this stage is the feeling that you have “made it.” Since the physical habit became firmly established, perhaps you have become lax in the mental discipline of beaming the mind to the Infinite. It is just like climbing a mountain: When you reach a high plateau, your impulse is to camp and look at the valley below, dine on succulent berries and rest from the strenuous climb. But waiting too long makes the muscles slack and soon you may even forget why you wanted to climb to the top in the first place when you are so comfortable here. You know the rest of the climb is harder, narrower, and colder than what you have already experienced. So you resist the last step.

So it is in our climb toward self-realization and personal excellence. When we have practiced enough to confirm an attitude, we relax. We make it to Sadhana, but fall asleep. We will chant the “Nam” – the sacred sounds and names of God – but sometimes feel the words are just mechanical sounds without meaning because we have lost touch with our initial motivation and intention. This is normal. It is part of the subconscious reorganization that affects motivation and intention. At some point in this, you may feel absolutely no motivation to continue. It is at such moments that the regular habit and the commitment to doing Sadhana support you; in fact, it is essential. Your dutiful commitment and your love of the Nam may become your only reasons for continuing. If you are constant through this dark time, you can tap new sources of energy and strength within yourself. As your feelings clarify and begin to support you, you will build reliance directly on the Infinite and never need to rely on a finite motivation or structure for your sense of self, or your purpose, or your power to act creatively.

PRABHUPATI

The final stage, “Prabhupati”, represents opening and attunement to the super-consciousness. Once Aradhana has thoroughly cleaned the subconscious and set your motivation to know, merge, and use the Infinite as your base, you enter into Prabhupati, or Mastery of God. This is the state of neutrality. Your motivation dwells in the neutral mind. It is neither for nor against anything. It expresses only what is. It experiences neither attachment nor aversion, only being. No finite thing motivates you: money,

fame, sex, or personal advancement do not determine your actions. You cease to be manipulated by things. Most of us are so attached to our possessions, and our hopes, and even our fears, that we cannot, with each breath, act creatively and freely in the highest consciousness. Instead, we compromise our potential, our future, to possess our past. But in this neutral state, you can sense the Infinite in all things and nothing motivates you beyond this experience of the Infinite itself. You become free of causation and your motivation comes only from the center of your being – from within.

In this stage, the conscious mind has merged beyond the subconscious mind into the super-conscious mind, and there is no conflict with your personality. You are not divided by the conflicts that every personality has due to its dynamic structure. Everything is experienced as harmony. Even if the gross outward circumstance seems challenging or disastrous, you sense more. You accept more. You can feel more of the pain, and more of the joy, of every person across the entire globe, but still you rest in the neutral mind – sublime, pragmatic and subtle. Intention and action merge seamlessly into spontaneous readiness to accept what is and to do what is original and organic to your awareness and values. This is Mastery of God – Prabhupati. In this concept there is not a God external or separate from you. The Infinite is intimate; you dwell in God and God in you. Your sacred higher Self manifests in every thought, feeling and cell of your body. You embody godliness through your kindness, compassion and caliber. Prabhupati means that you have cultivated faith in your own mind; you trust that every action is from your being, beyond mind. The unseen flows comfortably with the seen.

Soul and mind reconcile into dharma. You drop the attachment to a single thought or belief as you invoke your consciousness, which exists beyond thoughts. This is the full awakening and integration of compassion into the personality. Compassion gives us the capacity to forgive the unforgivable. Normally, we do not see God in All; we see God in a few – people or actions we deem “good” – if at all. We love those we like instead of loving everyone – especially our enemies. To have true compassion, we must perceive and experience the subtle within us that is beyond mind, beyond form, that which gives rise to all forms and existence. To be compassionate we must learn to become zero; we must practice non-existence. We must dwell only in the sacred being of God and our own Infinity. Without that habit of stillness within our mind and ego, we get caught defending or prosecuting what we feel is good or bad, holy or unholy, and we lose the capacity for authentic love and compassion. We risk being religious without being spiritual; or its reverse. We need both – the free flow of the spirit manifest in disciplined, compassionate action.

THE LAW OF POLARITY

The Law of Polarity rules action and reaction throughout the cosmos. Everything must come to balance. What you give, you get. If you steal, the law of balance requires someone or something to steal from you. This provides an order to the world that we call karma – actions have an effect and a balance in the totality of life. Because these laws govern the flow of events in a normal life, the circumstances we live in function to teach us, to reflect our actions and the actions of others. By accepting and embracing each moment, we can begin to recognize our patterns as opportunities to change – to begin moving toward our destiny and not our fate. We can act from consciousness instead of reacting and, in so doing, align to the flow of “God’s Will” or dharmic action that is free from the narrow constraints of ego or fear. This is the state of Prabhupati. Those who act beyond the laws of time and polarity; those who act from intuition with authentic compassion; they are the exception. They are exceptional—beyond the law of karma.

Such an accomplished person, a “Sadhu”, who has mastered Prabhupati can forgive the thief, welcome the lost, and inspire the hopeless. This great one can plant in that dark heart the spark of inspiration that brings out the hidden potential of their infinite self and destiny.

TECHNIQUE

FREEING UP HIPS & SHOULDERS TO IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY

We can divide the spinal column into four parts:

• **More flexible areas:**

- 1) **The cervical spine**
- 2) **The lumbar spine**

• **Less flexible areas (as they are connected to larger bone structures):**

3) **The thoracic spine**, connected to the rib cage. Its flexibility depends on the ability to open spaces between the ribs and the capacity of movement by the shoulders.

4) **The sacrum**, which includes the last five vertebrae of the spinal column and is connected to the pelvic bone. Its flexibility depends on the capacity of the pelvis to be able to rotate forward or backwards on the hip joint.



The areas of the spinal column with less flexibility have the advantage to be situated close to joints with a high degree of flexibility: the thoracic spine is located close to the shoulders, and the sacrum is situated close to the hips. When these two important joints are freed up we have the ability to bend forward and stretch backwards maintaining the spinal column aligned (pelvis + heart + crown). If they are not aligned, then both our lumbar and cervical regions suffer when we bend forward forcing our lumbar vertebrae to stretch and bend more than is normally accepted in order to compensate for stiffness in the hip joints. And when the shoulders are stiff, we do the back extensions forcing the neck to bend more than what is natural to compensate that stiffness.

If we want to gain greater spinal column flexibility, we should try to be conscious to keep these two joints open and free of tension. It is also important to be aware of these two areas when we choose to bend forward or stretch backwards so that the effort doesn't take place in the middle of the back or in the neck region because that will cause an effect which isn't productive and might be potentially harmful.

KEYS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY:

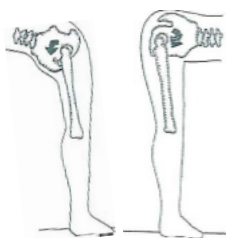
There are exercises that we can do to help unblock both the hips and the shoulders. We recommend their use after you have sufficiently warmed up the body, as the body needs warmth and heat in order to change.

Remember that to gain flexibility is a gradual and progressive process. To force the body in order to enter into a given posture will only delay the process since by not respecting the alignment of the spine, you will force it and end up contracting the different muscles when the key to flexibility is to let go.

The use of the breath in order to go deeper into the practice of asanas is key. Breathe deeply, use the inhalation to stretch the spine, the exhalation to relax and let go, entering little by little into the posture.

The body is different each and every day. Exercise from the point you are at each day and then begin the work of transformation.

EXERCISES FOR FLEXIBILITY OF THE HIPS:



To move the spinal column and keep it aligned, the sacrum, which is part of the pelvic bone, rotates forward or backwards on the hip joint. The whole unit of sacrum and pelvic bone has a significant range of movement.

When the muscles of the pelvis and the upper part of the legs are tense they work against the rotation of the pelvis, which then gets literally blocked and fixed in one position. The spinal column is unable to move as an aligned unit either forward or backwards since the sacrum and pelvis aren't free to rotate on the hip joint. This obliges the spinal column to bend from the more flexible region of the thoracic vertebrae and as such, breaking the connection between the sacrum and the rest of the spinal column. This can cause pain and possible injury.

Adapt the following exercises to your own body and not the reverse. Feeling pain in the knees while practicing any of the exercises could be indicative of trying to stretch more than what your hip joint is capable of. Be careful, as too much tension can be harmful for the knees. The exercises are not in sequence but rather just individual exercises of which you can freely choose to include anyone of them into your daily practice. Begin with 5 deep breaths in each posture and gradually work up to 10 breaths in each posture.



Anjaneyasana – Crescent Moon or Low Lunge Pose. From Downward-Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana), exhale and step your right foot forward between your hands, aligning the right knee over the heel. Then lower your left knee to the floor and, keeping the right knee fixed in place, slide the left back until you feel a comfortable stretch in the left front thigh and groin. Turn the top of your left foot to the floor. Inhale and lift your torso to

upright. As you do, sweep your arms out to the sides and up, perpendicular to the floor. Draw the tailbone down toward the floor and lift your pubic bone toward your navel. Lift your chest from the firmness of your shoulder blades against the back torso. Hold for a minute, exhale your torso back to the right thigh and your hands to the floor, and turn your back toes under. With another exhale, lift your left knee off the floor and step back to Adho Mukha Svanasana. Repeat with the left foot forward for the same length of time.

Eka Pada Raja Kapotasana – One Legged King Pigeon Pose. Begin on all fours, with your knees directly below your hips, and your hands slightly ahead of your shoulders. Slide your right knee forward to the back of your right wrist; at the same time angle your right shin under your torso and bring your right foot to the front of your left knee. The outside of your right shin will now rest on the floor.



Slowly slide your left leg back, straightening the knee and descending the front of the thigh to the floor. Lower the outside of your right buttock toward the floor. Position the right heel just in front of the left hip. The right knee can angle slightly to the right, outside the line of the hip. Look back at your left leg. It should extend straight out of the hip (and not be angled off to the left), and rotated slightly inwardly, so its midline presses against the floor. For a deeper stretch, you may stretch forward over the front leg with your arms in stretched to the front. Breathe long and deep, relaxing consciously all tension in the body. Maintain the posture for at least 1 minute. Change sides and repeat the exercise. As you gain flexibility you may move your left foot gradually, until it is aligned with the left knee, parallel to the top of the mat. Do it step by step, increasing the angle very slowly.



Sucirandhrasana - Eye of the Needle Pose. From a reclined position, bend both knees and cross the right ankle on top of the left thigh. Interlace the fingers behind the left thigh and draw the left knee toward you. Flex the right foot to engage the muscles around the knee joint.

Relax the shoulders, the jaw, and the face. Close your eyes and breathe slowly in and out, directing the awareness to where you feel sensation in your body. Stay here for about 1 minute before switching sides.

Ananda Balasana - Happy Baby Pose. Lie down on your back. Bend your knees over your stomach and flex your feet. Catch hold of your big toes and open your legs to the sides so that the legs are no longer over the body. Press the big toes and bring the knees towards the floor. The ankles are over the knees with the shins of the legs perpendicular to the floor. Stretch the heels up. Create resistance in the legs by pushing the feet up. Try to lower the coccyx to the floor.



EXERCISES FOR FLEXIBILITY OF THE SHOULDERS:

The shoulder blades are large bony structures that when correctly positioned, can be used as a fulcrum to lift up the chest area and arch the thoracic spine backwards.

They can be positioned to help the shoulder joints hold the arms up in the air without strain or make it easier for the arms to support the weight of the body.

Each one of the following exercises works on opening up the shoulder area. You can choose anyone of the exercises to include in your practice. Remember to work gradually, and when your muscles are sufficiently warmed up, to work on those blocked areas of the body. Begin with 5 deep breaths and gradually work up to 10 breaths.



Variation of Garudaasana - Eagle Pose.

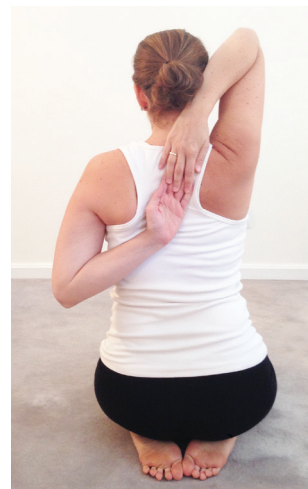
Sit in Sukhasana or Siddhasana and align your spine. Open your arms wide to the sides and then cross your arms in front of you with the right arm on top of the left arm, the right elbow resting on the left arm. Let the shoulder blades relax lowering them as far as possible. Bend the elbows so that the forearms are perpendicular to the floor. Hug the arms to the chest and press the hands even more together. Interlace the hands, that will be at different levels. Stay in the

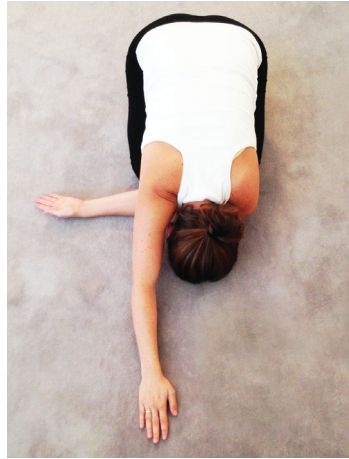
posture for 5 breaths then change the position of the arms. If you wish to intensify the experience, lift the arms up slightly.

Yoga Mudra. Sit on your heels; interlock your hands behind your back in Venus Mudra. Exhale, and keeping the spine elongated, lean forward from the hip joints, not the waist. If possible, rest your forehead on the floor; if not, put a block under your forehead. Stretch the arms up straight until they are perpendicular to the floor. Stay in the posture for 1 minute. If you need more space to bend forward, try opening your knees to the sides. On the contrary, if you feel an overextension of your lower back, keep your knees together to prevent that.



Grabbing the hands behind the back. Sitting in Vajrasana (Rock Pose), stretch your right arm up, and rotate the arm so that the armpit faces forward, bend the elbow and bring the hand behind the back. The hand faces towards the spine. Then stretch the left arm to the side, bend the elbow bring the hand behind the back until you are able to catch hold of the right hand with your left hand. If you are unable to catch hold of your hands, use a belt to help you. Remember to lift up your chest and respect the natural curves of your spine. Stay in the posture for 5 deep breaths and then change arm positions.





Thread the Needle Posture. Begin on all fours, slide the left arm under the right arm so that the left shoulder rests on the floor. Stretch the right arm forward with the palm on the floor. Stay in the posture for 5 deep breaths and then change sides.

SAT KRIYA



Sat Kriya is essential to the practice of Kundalini Yoga. It is one of the few exercises that is a complete action in itself. It is a kriya: an action or series of actions that completes a process and has a predictable outcome. Most kriyas consist of series of exercises that synergize. Sat Kriya can stand alone like a precious gem. Any serious student should master this kriya. **Beginner students should start with 3 minutes.** The time can be built up from that base.

HOW TO DO SAT KRIYA

- Sit in Vajrasana (Rock Pose). The heels are under the sitting bones. The knees are close to each other.
- Stretch the arms over the head until the arms hug the sides of the head.
- Interlace all the fingers except the index fingers.
- Chant in a steady rhythm the Mantra "Sat Nam", approximately 8 times every 10 seconds. As you pull the navel up and in toward the spine, chant "sat" from the Navel Point. Feel it as a pressure from the Third Chakra center. With the sound "nam," relax the belly. The focus of the sound "nam" can be either at the Navel Point or at the Brow Point (the point where the eyebrows meet at the root of the nose; the area that corresponds to the Sixth Chakra).
- The breath regulates itself and no breath focus is necessary.
- The spine stays still and straight. The rhythmic contraction and relaxation produces waves of energy that circulate, energize, and heal the body. This is neither a spinal flex nor a pelvic thrust. Remain firmly seated on the heels throughout the motion of the kriya. The abdominal contraction is focused at the Navel Point. There is an automatic contraction of the rectum and sex organ areas as in Mula Bandha, the lower body lock, but the lock is pulled from the navel.
- Continue for 3-31 minutes.
- To end, inhale and gently squeeze the muscles from the buttocks all the way up along the spine. Hold it briefly as you concentrate on the area just above the top of the head. Then exhale completely. Inhale, exhale totally

and hold the breath out as you apply a firm Maha Bandha, contracting the lower abdomen, lifting the chest and locking in the chin, squeezing all the muscles from the buttocks up to the neck. Hold the breath out for 5–20 seconds according to your comfort and capacity. Inhale. Relax.

COMMENTS

In the beginning, practice Sat Kriya for just 3 minutes. Give your attention to perfecting form, rhythm, and concentration. To build it up in time and increase effects, start with rotational cycles: 3 minutes of Sat Kriya with 2 minutes of relaxation. Repeat this cycle 3–5 times. Build gradually. Then switch the cycles to 5 minutes Sat Kriya and 5 minutes rest. Then add 3–5 minutes to the kriya time as you become comfortable and accomplished at it. Soon you will be able to do the entire 31 minutes.

As a kriya, it is a process that works on all levels of your being – known and unknown – making you more capable of responding to your own subtlety and totality. Approached with patience, steadiness, and moderation, the end result is assured. If you have very little time and you wish to do a beautiful practice, make this kriya part of your daily routine.

One of the primary actions of Sat Kriya is to balance the energies of the lower triangle of chakras, the energy distribution centers, by mixing prana and apana at the navel center. This generates a heat in the system and opens the inner channels to the upward flow and rotation of energy. The contraction of the navel and the gentle pull of the Mula Bandha guide the forward projection and the process of mixing energies of the chakras.

It is excellent for digestive troubles and for transcending fears. The excellence of Sat Kriya is that all the three sisters of the lower chakras are pulled together and act in unison. The correlated action of all three centers multiplies the effect and stabilizes the changes.

The main impact of this kriya is to tone the nervous system, to calm emotional disarray, and to channel creative and sexual energies of the body. The entire sexual system is stimulated and strengthened. It relaxes and releases many phobias about sexual behavior, potency, and capacity.

Those who are very distraught and disturbed mentally will be over-involved in the lower triangle; hence this is an excellent regular practice for them.

It is a direct stimulant to the Kundalini energy to release from its dormant phase at the base of the spine, by activating a reservoir of energy that is stored in the area of the body under and near the Navel Point. Respect the inherent power of this technique. Let the kriya prepare the ground of your body properly so you may plant the seed of higher experience.

ALTERNATE POSITIONS

An alternate hand mudra can be done in Sat Kriya. Just place the palms flat together with all the fingers pointing up. This enhances the effect. It is not usually given as a first practice or in most public classes, because it increases the flow of internal energy quickly. If you have done cleansing work on your body and you have no current drug use, then this mudra is excellent to use. A person who has used drugs recently or who has degenerative damage from drug use may experience discomfort when the toxins and old drugs release, or when old emotional blocks coded in the structure of the body start to change.

Sat Kriya can also be done in Celibate Pose, sitting between the heels, with the buttocks on the ground.

For a person who cannot sit on the heels due to knee or ankle problems, the same actions of Sat Kriya can be done in a cross-legged position.

COMMON MISTAKES MADE WHILE DOING SAT KRIYA

- Lifting the shoulders as if doing a shoulder shrug.
- Moving the back as in spinal flex rather than fixing the spine steady and letting the motion come from the naval area.
- Accelerating or varying the speed when chanting.
- Lowering the tone rather than keeping it steady.

Feel free to correct your students verbally to correct these common mistakes made during Sat Kriya, and if the speed gets out of control, instruct the students to follow your lead.

PRACTICE

PRANAYAMAS PUMPING THE ABDOMEN

Pumping the abdomen is a very common technique used in several Kundalini Yoga kriyas. Most of the times this type of pranayama is done in Bahya Kumbhaka (holding the breath out), but it can also be done in Antara Kumbhaka (holding the breath in). A well developed abdominal area, where energetic center of the Navel Point is located, is very related to a good health and a sensation of physical wellness.

Pumping the abdomen rhythmically, moving the Navel Point in and the relaxing it, keep the organs in a good shape. It is like doing an internal massage and it is very effective to prevent most of health problems, as it helps in the detoxification of the body. This simple exercise is mentioned in antique Yoga texts which says that its practice keeps thousands of diseases away.

TECHNIQUE

- Sit down in Sukhasana, elongating the spine, hands in Gyan Mudra over the knees.
- Inhale deeply, exhale completely and hold the breath out.
- While you hold the breath out (20-30 seconds), begin pumping the Navel Point strongly and vigorously.
- Inhale and then exhale to repeat the cycle 2 more times.
- Relax.

GOBINDE MUKANDAY

Gobinday	<i>Sustainer</i>
Mukanday	<i>Liberator</i>
Udaaray	<i>Enlightener</i>
Apaaray	<i>Infinite</i>
Hariang	<i>Destroyer</i>
Kariang	<i>Creator</i>
Nirnamay	<i>Nameless</i>
Akamay	<i>Desireless</i>

INTERPRETATION

Gobinde is the masculine principle in the Universe, that which sustains life by example, by the act of giving. Its lineage is that of Krishna, Ram and ultimately Vishnu, or part of the Hindu trinity. Another name for Gobinde is Gopal. The myth of Gobinde or Gopal is that the divine nature of the Creator is supported in the physical realm of the earth. Guru Gobind Singh in his autobiography "Bachitra Natak" said that he was meditating high in the Himalayas at a place surrounded by seven mountain peaks when the Almighty came to him and told him to take birth again to save the world and show man the nature of True Religion. He said he was content to stay but the Divine Entity imposed upon him to leave his state of ecstasy. The place where Guru Gobind Singh meditated in another life is known as Hemkunt Sahib and today is a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. To sustain and preserve is often to show the way.

MORE INFORMATION:

Language: Gurmukhi

Source: Jaap Sahib

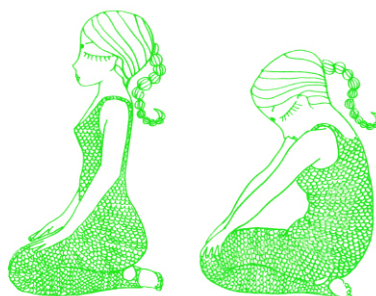
Author: Guru Gobind Singh, Tenth Sikh Guru

This mantra is noted for the capacity to break through deep-seated blocks.

KRIYA FOR PROSPERITY

1. Spinal Flexes in Vajrasana (Rock Pose).

Place the hands over your thighs and keep them . As you inhale, flex the spine forward. As you exhale flex the spine back, keeping the shoulders relaxed and the head straight. Continue rhythmically with deep breaths for **2-3 min.** mentally inhaling **Sat** concentrating at the first Chakra and exhaling **Nam**



concentrating on the 3rd Chakra. Do the movement without balancing front and back and without sliding the hands over your thighs. To end, inhale and pull root lock, exhale and pull root lock and hold for ten seconds.

Repeat 3 times.



2. Body Drops from Dandasana (Staff Pose). Sit on the floor with your legs together and extended in front of your torso. If your torso is leaning back, it may be helpful to sit on a blanket to lift the pelvis. Sit towards the front of the sitting bones. Firm the thighs, press them down against the floor (or your support), rotate them slightly toward each other and flex your ankles, pressing out through your heels. Place your hands on the floor, facing forward, not under your shoulders, but a little bit forward to have better support. Inhale as you lift your body away from the floor, exhale as you let it drop. Continue for **2-3 minutes.**

3. Crow Pose. Begin in Tadasana (Mountain Pose) with feet hip distance apart and parallel between each other. Extend the arms straight forward parallel to the ground, interlace the fingers, forefingers pointing out in front of the heart. Inhale, exhale as you bend your knees into squatting position. Hold the posture with Breath of Fire for **2-3 minutes.** To end, inhale, hold and project out from the heart centre and then exhale.



4. Running in Place. Run at a fast pace with the knees up high and a punching motion with the arms. **3-5 minutes**



5. Upavistha Konasana B (Kundalini Lotus Pose):

Sit in Badha Konasana (Bound Angle Pose), elongate the spine and grab the either the big toes or the outside edges



of the feet, apply Jalandhara Bandha. Balance on the back part of your sitbones, elevating your feet a few centimeters away from the ground. Activate your core and begin to open your legs to the sides, stretching them completely (if it's possible to maintain the balance). Draw your shoulder blades toward each other to open the chest and press out the bottoms of your feet. Hold the posture with Breath of Fire for **2-3 minutes**.

6. Trea Kriya. Sit on the left heel with the right foot on the left thigh, hands are cupped below the navel, right hand over left hand, thumbs touching. Lift up the diaphragm and chant **Ong So Hung** strongly from the heart. Feel the sound vibrating in your heart. **3-5 minutes**.



7. Arms Out Parallel in Sukhasana (Easy Pose).

In Easy Pose, stretch arms out to the sides, parallel with the ground, palms are up, concentrate on the energy coming in from the left palm and going out the right palm forming a powerful arch between the hands with Breath of Fire. **2-3 minutes**.

To end, inhale hold and feel the energy enter the left palm, move through the shoulders and leave from the right palm and arch overhead. Exhale and relax.

8. Bowing to the Infinite in Sukhasana (Easy Pose). In Easy Pose, hands in Venus lock behind the neck. Exhale and bring the forehead to the floor, silently chanting **Sat** and then rise up, inhaling silently chanting **Nam**. **2-3 minutes**.



9. Arm lifts in Sukhasana (Easy Pose). Extend the arms straight out in front, palms down, alternately raise and lower the arms to 60 degrees. Inhale as the right arm goes up and exhale as the right arm goes down. **2-3 minutes.** To end, arms together at level of the 3rd eye and project from the 3rd eye out to infinity. Exhale and relax.



10. Cosmic Connection.

(a) Hands in Venus lock, 10 centimeters above the head with the palms down. Focus eyes up and out of the top of the head breathing long and deep for **2-3 minutes.**

(b) Keep the hands in place, and point the fore fingers up maintaining focus at the top of the head breathing long and deep **2-3**

minutes.

(c) Keep the hands in place, and place the finger tips together in the shape of a teepee and continue to focus at the top of the head with Breath of Fire for **2-3 minutes.** To end, inhale, hold and project out exhale and relax.

11. Creating opportunities and prosperity. In Easy Pose, place arms at the sides, bend the so that the arms point up with palms facing forward, comfortably and relaxed. Visualize green energy, chant from the heart, pulling in at the navel centre: **Hari Hari Hari Hari Hari Hari Har** for 2-11 minutes. To end – inhale, exhale and relax the hands over your lap, right hand over left hand. Meditate and think about all the things you can be grateful for. Enjoy the shower of energy coming to you. Love every breath that comes and love all things known and unknown.



COMMENTS:

This kriya attracts opportunities and opens the heart center. Allows you to approach prosperity from the consciousness of the heart center or attraction field. This awareness can be summarized as: "The more I open, the more I can attract to me. Need no fight. I have the ability to attract opportunities to me." You begin to realize that opportunities and prosperity may come in much different ways than you'd imagined. Believe you deserve prosperity and that the universe loves you.

HAR MEDITATION FOR PROSPERITY



Posture: Sit in Easy Pose, elongating the spine.

Drishti: Focus at the tip of the nose, eyes are 9/10th closed.

Mudra: Elbows are by the sides, forearms are at a 45° angle, with the fingers at the level of the throat. The exercise begins with the palms facing down.

Alternately strike the sides of the hands together. When the palms are face down, the sides of the Jupiter (index) fingers touch, and the thumbs cross below the hands, with the right thumb under the left.

When the palms are face up, the Mercury (pinky) fingers and the Moon Mounds (located at the base of the palms) touch.

Mantra: Har

Chant continuously from the navel, using the tip of the tongue (pronounced “hu-duh”). Tantric Har is recommended for this meditation.

Time: Continue for 3-11 minutes

