



# **MIND MANAGEMENT and HUMAN VALUES**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Semester**

**YOGA PORTIONS**

# **Cyclic Meditation (C.M.)**

## What is meditation?

- Meditation is a way to take a deep rest and be alert and conscious at the same time.
- It is the skill to calm the agitated mind and get in touch with your inner joy.

## Concept of Cyclic Meditation

- Cyclic Meditation is a blend of mindfulness and movement.
- In this meditation, you consciously connect with your body as you move. Each step, stretch or breath becomes an opportunity to observe your physical sensations and mental state without judgment.
- Cyclic Meditation is built on the principle of [alternate stimulation and relaxation](#).
- Several stimulations of varying intensity suited to different stress levels bring out harmonious growth in tune with one's innate nature.
- In this practice, stimulations are provided by a group of simple asanas in a sequence to achieve maximum benefit.
- Yoga asanas used in this program help relax every group of muscles by systematically stretching and relaxing.
- Different relaxation techniques are used at different levels after stimulations.
- Successive stimulation and relaxation, one after the other, helps to release stress at deeper and deeper levels.
- Different sounds like **A (ॐ)**, **U (उ)**, **M (म)** and **Bhrāmarī** are also used during several stages of yoga asanas as effective stimulations.
- Post resonance helps release subtle tension and brings refined awareness, which pervades the entire bulk of the body.
- Resolution is a clear thought, well formulated using minimum positive words. The resolve can be as follows: I am full of energy; All my cells are booming with health; My immune system is robust.

# Basic frame of Yoga-āsanas used in Cyclic Meditation

1. Standing postures
  - Tāḍāsana
  - Centering
  - Ardhakaṭī-cakrāsana
2. Sitting postures
  - Vajrāsana
  - Śaśāṅkāsana
  - Uṣṭrāsana

# Tāḍāsana



## Ardhakaṭī-cakrāsana





# Vajrāsana



# Śaśāṅkāsana





# Uṣṭrāsana



# What is Relaxation Technique?

The relaxation technique is a practice that aims to bring about the body's "relaxation response", which is characterised by slower breathing, lower blood pressure, and a reduced heart rate. The relaxation response is the opposite of the stress response.

## Relaxation techniques used in Cyclic Meditation

**Instant Relaxation Technique (I.R.T.):** This relaxation technique works at the physical level. This technique involves tensing different muscles and then releasing the tension. This relaxation is done for 1 minute.

**Quick Relaxation technique (Q.R.T.):** This relaxation technique works physically, mentally, and emotionally. This relaxation is done for 3 to 5 minutes.

**Deep Relaxation Technique:** This relaxation is done with the chanting of A (ॐ), U (उ), and M (म). This relaxation is done for 10 minutes.



# Śavāsana



# Expansion of Awareness in Cyclic Meditation

- **Pointed Awareness**

to

- **Linear Awareness**

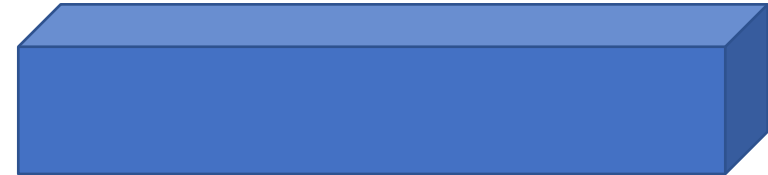
to

- **Surface Awareness**

to

- **Three- Dimensional Awareness**

Leading to a reduction in the speed of thoughts and calming the mind



## Sounds used in Cyclic Meditation

- The use of sound in different asanas is an effective means to generate 3D awareness in the entire body.
- We use A (ॐ), U (उ), and M (म) to produce resonance in the lower, middle and upper parts of the body and in the entire bulk of the body, respectively.
- These resonances bring a delicate tingling and soothing effect. This set of sound stimulations opens up the subtle constrictions and brings refined awareness, pervading the entire bulk of the body.



## Position for Cyclic Meditation

- Lie down on your back in supine posture, keep the legs and hands apart. Keep the eyes closed.
- Relax the body with normal breathing.

## Steps involved in Cyclic Meditation

Step 1: Instant Relaxation Technique (I.R.T.), Linear Awareness, Centering

Step 2: **Ardhakaṭī-cakrāsana**

Step 3: Quick Relaxation Technique (Q.R.T.)

Step 4: **Vajrāsana, Śaśāṅkāsana, Uṣṭrāsana**

Step 5: Deep Relaxation Technique (D.R.T)

Step 6: Silence

Step 7: Resolution

Step 8: Coming back to body consciousness

# Procedure for Cyclic Meditation

## Step 1:

### a) Instant Relaxation Technique (I.R.T.)

Bring your legs together, and join the heels, toes, and palms by the side of the thighs. Keep your face smiling till the end. Gently bring your awareness to the tip of your toes. Stretch the toes, tighten the ankle joints, and tighten the calf muscles. Pull up the kneecaps. Tighten the thigh muscles. Compress and squeeze the buttocks. Exhale and suck in the abdomen. Make the fists of the palms and tighten the arms. Inhale and expand the chest. Tighten the shoulders and neck muscles and compress the face. Tighten the whole body from the toes to the head. Tighten...tighten...tighten... Release and relax. Legs go apart, arms go apart, palms facing the roof. Assume the most comfortable position; let the whole body sink. Let all the groups of muscles beautifully relax. Collapse the whole body. Enjoy the relaxation.

### b) Linear Awareness:

Slowly raise the left hand above the head along the ground. Slowly turn over to the left side. Place the head on the left biceps, the right leg on the left leg, and the palm on the right thigh. Feel linear awareness. Slowly start coming up to Tadasana. Chant **Bhrāmarī** to generate 3D awareness throughout the body.

### c) Centering:

Now, slowly lean forward. Feel the weight of the entire body on the toes. Pointed awareness. Slowly lean backwards. Feel the weight on the heels. Surface awareness. Come to the centre. Lean to the right. The entire body's weight is on the right edge of the right foot. Linear awareness. Lean to the left. Come to the centre. Feel surface awareness. Now that the whole body is centred, the weight of the body is equally distributed throughout the soles of the feet. Collapse the shoulders, arms hanging freely down. Smiling face. Feel all the changes taking place throughout the body.

## Step 2:

- a) **Ardhakaṭī-cakrāsana** on the right side of the body: Slowly start raising the right arm sideways up, to raise the arm slowly and continuously to horizontal position, enjoy the movement. As the right arm reaches 90° positions, twist the palms at the wrist. Concentrate on pointed awareness at the wrist and glide the right arm up to the 135° position. Beautifully pointed awareness of the deltoid muscles of the right arm. Feel the pleasant stimulation in the shoulder muscles as the right arm reaches the vertical position. The right biceps touch the right ear, and the beautiful surface awareness is felt. Feel the blood gushing down the arm. Smiling face. Stretch the right arm from the tip of the fingers of the right palm. The entire right portion of the body gets stretched, but not the face. Keep the face always smiling and relaxed. Slowly, start bending down to the left. Left palm sliding down along the left thigh. Fine movement of surface awareness. Enjoy the fine stretch of the waist muscles on the right side and compression on the left side.
- b) **Ardhakaṭī-cakrāsana** on the left side of the body: Repeat the same procedure as above with your left arm.

### Step 3: Quick Relaxation Technique (Q.R.T.)

Now, slowly sit down and lie down to **Śavāsana** from the right side. The entire right arm is stretched, head in the right bicep, left leg on the right leg, and palm on the left thigh. Feel the sharp linear awareness. Slowly turn over with the back collapsing on the ground. Keep the legs and hands apart.

There are 3 stages in QRT:

1. In the 1<sup>st</sup> stage, you observe the abdominal movements for 5 rounds. No manipulation with the breath.
2. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, synchronise the abdominal movements with the breathing for 5 rounds.
3. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage, breathe with feeling for 5 rounds.

## Step 4: Sitting Postures

- a) **Vajrāsana:** Slowly fold the right leg backward and then the left leg, sitting on the heels, coming to the **vajrāsana** position. Palms on the thighs and keep the spine erect.
- b) **Śaśāṅkāsana:** Now slowly start taking the arms behind. Hold the right wrist with the left palm. Start feeling the pulse at the right wrist and feel the heartbeat. Now slowly start bending down forward for **śaśāṅkāsana**. The abdominal and chest muscles pressing on the thigh have beautiful surface awareness. Now, collapse the forehead on the ground. Fine surface awareness. Collapse the shoulders. Observe all the changes going on, the increased flow of blood into the head and feel the heaviness in the head region. Inhale and chant M-kara, Mmm... Feel the resonance throughout the head, 3D awareness. Slowly, come up to **vajrāsana**. Carefully follow all the changes in the head region. Feel the lightness in the head. Feel the heartbeat, refined 3D awareness throughout the body. Slowly release the arms and place them on the thighs near the knees.
- c) **Uṣṭrāsana:** Slowly rise to stand on the knees for **uṣṭrāsana**; standing on the knees, observe all the changes in the head region. Slowly slide the palms up along the thighs, fingers together and support the waist with the palms, fingers pointing forwards. Slowly, start bending backwards from the waist. Relax the neck muscles, head hanging freely down. Beautifully stretching of the abdominal and thoracic muscles. This is **Ardha-uṣṭrāsana**. Those who can go further down to **uṣṭrāsana** by placing both palms on the soles of the feet. Inhale and chant Aaa; slowly return by releasing the arms and placing them on the waist. Feel the avalanche of nerve impulses throughout the body. Feel the heartbeat. Slowly come back to **vajrāsana** and place the palms on the thighs. Feel all the changes and let the changes continue; refined 3-dimensional awareness throughout the body. Unfold the right leg and the left leg. Assume the leg is in a stretched position. Head hanging freely backwards or resting on either of the shoulders.

### Step 5: Deep Relaxation Technique (D.R.T)

Slowly slide down to **Śavāsana** with the support of the elbows. Legs apart, hands apart, palms facing the roof. Let the whole body collapse on the ground. Let us make ourselves comfortable and relax completely.

There are 4 stages in D.R.T

- 1) In the 1st stage, relaxation from toes to waist followed by chanting of A (ॐ)– kārā in low pitch.
- 2) In the 2nd stage, relaxation from waist to neck followed by chanting of U (ॐ)– kārā in medium pitch.
- 3) In the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage, relaxation from neck to head followed by chanting of M (ॐ)– kārā in high pitch
- 4) In the 4<sup>th</sup> stage, relaxation of the completed body from the toes to the head followed by chanting of A (ॐ), U (ॐ), and M (ॐ) kārā sequentially in low pitch.

## **Step 6: Experiencing Silence**

**Step 7: Make a Resolution:** The resolve can be as follows: I am full of energy; All my cells are booming with health; My immune system is robust.

**Step 8: Returning to consciousness:** Bring your awareness to your physical body. Move your body a little. Feel the lightness and energy throughout the body. Gently bring your legs together and hands by the side of your body. Turn to your left or right and come up effortlessly.



**D.R.T.**



**I.R.T.**



**Centring**



**Ardhakaṭīcakrāsana**



**Q.R.T.**



**Vajrāsana**



**Śaśāṅkāsana**



**Uṣṭrāsana**



**Cyclic  
Meditation**

## **Key points to be remembered for the Practice of Cyclic Meditation**

- Throughout the practice, all the movements must be slow and done with complete awareness.
- The final position of the Asanas varies from person to person and is not very important.
- No forceful stretching in Asanas; get to the final position as much as possible without strain.
- Close your eyes throughout the practice. In the initial sessions, one may open the eyes and look at your teacher to learn and correct the practice.
- One should experience different sensations and changes within the body and mind during the practice.
- Carefully feel all the changes in the body-mind complex without strenuous attention but by passive or effortless awareness.
- The practice of CM can be done at any time of the day.
- The practice of CM can be done sitting on the chair.
- An empty stomach or very light stomach is mandatory.
- A person with back pain can do relaxation techniques with a bent knee.
- Practice of I.R.T, Q.R.T and D.R.T can be done separately as well.
- Only I.R.T has to be done before Asana and CM.

## Benefits of practicing Cyclic Meditation

- This practice is one of the most powerful tools in controlling a large number of psycho-somatic ailments such as high BP, insomnia, anxiety, etc.
- The subtle power of meditation can increase your tolerance of stress and sense of peace.
- You'll learn how to increase your ability to be mindfully present in the moment.
- Daily practice of CM can help increase one's attention span and sharpen focus.
- With so many distractions at the tip of our fingers, the problem of insomnia and irregular sleep has become quite prevalent in the current generation. CM streamlines the thought processes in the mind, allowing it to switch itself off quickly, thus helping you regularise your sleeping patterns.
- When the mind-body complex is relaxed, the amount of Oxygen used up is much less.
- The rest you get from cyclic meditation is equivalent to four hours of undisturbed sleep.

## Benefits of practising Relaxation Technique

- This practice brings a deep, meditative state of rest, which may help in the repair of tissues and cells and in releasing stress.
- By relaxing the muscles and quieting the mind, it can help restore a sense of calm during times of exhaustion, illness, or overexertion.
- It also gives time for the yoga asanas to sink in deeper.
- Improves one's physiological response to stress, Relaxing the muscles and quieting the mind

## **Note**

C.M., Q.R.T., I.R.T. and D.R.T.  
mentioned in this document have been compiled  
by the notes developed by the founder of a  
Yoga university and ex-scientist of NASA.

# Kriyā and Prāṇāyāma

**Kriyā** is a cleansing technique. There are six(or more) ṣaṭkarma which are preliminary purifications described in the Yoga texts.

The word "**Ṣaṭkarma**" comes from Sanskrit and translates to "six actions. "These six purification techniques are physical practices targeting the digestive, respiratory, and urinary systems.

They help eliminate waste products and toxins, potentially improving digestion, boosting immunity, and enhancing overall physical well-being. Their purpose is to remove impurities and prepare the body for **Prāṇāyāma**.

## Posture for Kriyā and Prāṇāyāma





# What is Kapālabhāti Kriyā (कपालभाति) ?

**Kapālabhāti** is a Sanskrit word, where **Kapāla** means Skull and **Bhāti** means to shine or to illuminate. **Kapālabhāti** translates to “skull-shining” or “skull-illumination.”

This refers to the technique's purported effect of cleansing and invigorating the head region, promoting clarity and alertness. It is a powerful breathing technique that involves forceful exhalations with rapid abdominal contractions.

One can observe the automatic suspension of breath, which is also called **Kevala Kumbhaka**. As you exhale and stop inhaling, the air in your lungs creates a slight internal pressure. This can stimulate the vagus nerve, activating the parasympathetic nervous system and promoting relaxation.

## Procedure for Kapālabhāti Kriyā

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your neck and spine erect.
- 3) Close your eyes throughout the practice.
- 4) Relax the whole body completely.
- 5) Practice rapid breathing with active and forceful exhalation and passive inhalation.
- 6) During each exhalation, blast out the air with vigorous flapping movements of the abdomen quickly.
- 7) Repeat the exhalation as quickly as possible, at 10 to 15 strokes per minute.
- 8) Inhale passively at the need of each exhalation.
- 9) At the end of one minute, stop the practice.
- 10) Observe automatic suspension of breath.
- 11) Simultaneously, the mind experiences a deep state of silence.
- 12) Wait until the breathing comes back to normal.

## Benefits of Kapālabhāti Kriyā

- 1) **Improved lung capacity:** Through sustained breath control, the lungs may become more efficient at absorbing and utilising oxygen, increasing stamina and vitality.
- 2) **Enhanced detoxification:** The natural pause in breath creates a vacuum effect in the lungs, potentially aiding in the expulsion of stale air and accumulated toxins.
- 3) **Boosted immune system:** The deep relaxation and increased oxygenated blood flow associated with kevala kumbhaka may support the immune system's function.
- 4) **Improved nervous system regulation:** The focused awareness and stillness cultivated during kevala kumbhaka can help regulate the nervous system, promoting stress reduction and relaxation.
- 5) **Enhanced mental clarity and focus:** The stillness of the mind during kevala kumbhaka can sharpen concentration and cognitive function, leading to improved mental clarity and focus.
- 6) **Reduced stress and anxiety:** The deep relaxation and release of tension associated with kevala kumbhaka can significantly reduce stress and anxiety levels.
- 7) **Increased emotional stability:** The inner peace and tranquility cultivated during kevala kumbhaka may enhance emotional stability and resilience. tranquility

## Precautions

- 1) The practice of Kapālabhāti should be avoided in case of moderate and severe high blood pressure.
- 2) Those who have heart disease should avoid this practice.
- 3) Those with epilepsy, hernia, vertigo, gastric ulcer, slipped disc and spondylosis should avoid Kapālabhāti.
- 4) Women should avoid this practice during menstruation.
- 5) During pregnancy, women should avoid this practice.

## Points to be remembered

- 1) It is essential to learn to allow the inhalation to happen automatically by relaxing the abdominal muscles at the end of each quick exhalation.
- 2) In the beginning, one can start at the rate of 10 to 20 blasts per minute and repeat it for 2 to 3 rounds with regular breathing intervals of a few seconds.
- 3) With regular practice you can increase the speed to 60 -120 blasts per minute.
- 4) As soon as the sound diminishes, stop and start afresh or reduce the number of blasts and cycle, or stop for the day.
- 5) Stop the practice the moment irritation or strain is felt.
- 6) The stomach should be entirely empty before the practice of kapālabhāti.

# Prāṇāyāma

The importance of breath goes far beyond simply staying alive. It's a vital life force, influencing everything from your physical health and mental well-being to your performance and energy levels. Human breathing patterns are inherently adaptable and vary depending on factors like activity level, posture, and emotions. This adaptability is vital for our survival and well-being. However, several modern influences can affect our breathing patterns and potentially lead to less efficient or even unhealthy breathing habits. Here are some examples:

**Stress and anxiety:** Chronic stress can trigger shallow, rapid breathing, which can become a conditioned response even when relaxed.

**Poor posture:** Slouching or hunching can restrict our diaphragm and lung capacity, limiting our ability to breathe deeply and efficiently.

**Environmental factors:** Pollution, allergens, and even dry air can irritate the airways and contribute to breathing difficulties.

**Lifestyle choices:** Smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and lack of physical activity can negatively impact lung function and breathing patterns.

It's important to remember that breathing is a natural reflex, and our bodies strive to achieve optimal oxygen intake based on our current needs. However, these external factors can disrupt this natural balance and lead to various issues like Fatigue and low energy, difficulty concentrating, headaches and muscle tension, and sleep disturbances. In severe cases, even respiratory problems. We can counteract these influences and reclaim a sense of control over our breath by erasing the old pattern and creating new pattern through mindful and conscious breathing practices called **Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma**.

# What is Anuloma?

- **Meaning:** “Anu” means “along with” or “with the grain,” and “loma” means “order.” So, “Anuloma” translates to “following the flow” or “going with the grain.”
- **Breathing pattern:** Anuloma Prāṇāyāma involves inhaling through one nostril and then exhaling through the other nostril. This cycle is then repeated on the opposite side. This pattern mirrors the natural sequence of inhalation and exhalation through each nostril in nostril breathing.
- **Connection to natural order:** Anuloma aligns with the natural order of breath because it follows the established pattern of alternating nostril usage for inhalation and exhalation. It creates a smooth, rhythmic flow of air that resonates with our natural breathing cycle.



# What is Viloma?

- **Meaning:** “Viloma” means “against the grain” or “against the natural order.”
- **Breathing pattern:** Viloma Prāṇāyāma deviates from the natural order in several ways. Practising an exhale-first technique, reversing the inhale-exhale sequence
- **Intentional disharmony:** Viloma techniques deliberately disrupt the natural rhythm and flow of breath. This challenge helps develop greater breath control and awareness, pushing beyond the established patterns and exploring new possibilities.

## There are several subsets of Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma practices

- 1) Sūrya Anuloma-Viloma Prāṇāyāma (सूर्य अनुलोमा विलोमा प्राणायम)
- 2) Chandra Anuloma-Viloma Prāṇāyāma (चन्द्र अनुलोमा विलोमा प्राणायम)
- 3) Sūrya-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma (सूर्य भेदन प्राणायम)
- 4) Chandra-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma (चन्द्र भेदन प्राणायम)
- 5) Nāḍī śodhana Prāṇāyāma (नाडी शोधनम्)

**Sūrya Anuloma-viloma Prāṇāyāma** involves inhaling through the right nostril, which is associated with the sun and solar energy. The right nostril is said to be more active and stimulating, and it is often associated with the sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for the body's fight-or-flight response.

**Chandra Anuloma-viloma Prāṇāyāma** involves inhaling through the left nostril, which is associated with the moon and lunar energy. The left nostril is said to be more calming and relaxing, and it is often associated with the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for the body's rest-and-digest response.

**Sūrya-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma:** Sūrya denotes sun. Bhedana is derived from the root ‘bhid’, meaning to pierce or pass through. The nerve on the right side of the nostril is called **Piṅgala Nāḍī or Sūrya Nāḍī**. In this Prāṇāyāma, one inhales through the right nostril and exhales through the left nostril. As the right nostril is associated with the sun, which is symbolic of heat, activity, and stimulation. **Sūrya -Bhedana Prāṇāyāma** is said to increase energy, focus, and alertness.

**Chandra-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma:** Chandra denotes the moon. The nerve on the left side of the nostril is called **Idā Nāḍī**. In this Prāṇāyāma, one inhales through the left nostril and exhales through the right nostril. The left nostril is associated with the moon, symbolising coolness, relaxation, and introspection. **Chandra Bhedana -Prāṇāyāma** is said to reduce stress, promote relaxation, and improve sleep quality.

**Nāḍī Śodhana Prāṇāyāma:** Nāḍī denotes a tubular organ which carries **Prāṇa** or energy through our body. **Śodhanam** means purifying. **Nāḍī Śodhanam** is purifying the blood vessels and nerves so that they function effectively.

**Piṅgalā Nāḍī**  
**(Right Nostril)**

**Idā Nāḍī**  
**(Left Nostril)**



शितोष्ण-मुद्रा (Śītoṣṇa mudrā)



The name शितोष्ण मुद्रा (Śītoṣṇa mudrā ) comes from the Sanskrit words “Śīta” meaning "cool," and “Uṣṇa” meaning "hot."

The **Mudrā** is said to help balance the body's heat and energy and to promote a sense of calm and relaxation.

It is performed by placing the tips of the little finger on the left nostril and the tip of the thumb placed on the right nostril. The other 3 fingers, ring, middle and index, are folded in the palm.

## Procedure for Sūrya-Anuloma-Viloma-Prāṇāyāma (सूर्य-अनुलोम-विलोम-प्राणायाम)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the left nostril with the little finger and keep the right nostril opened.
- 7) Inhale and exhale deeply and slowly through the right nostril only.
- 8) Keep the left nostril closed all the time during the practice.
- 9) One cycle inhalation and one exhalation forms one round.
- 10) Repeat 9 rounds.



## Benefits of Sūrya-Anuloma-Viloma-Prāṇāyāma

- 1) Improves respiratory function and lung capacity.
- 2) Increases energy levels and alertness.
- 3) Reduces stress and anxiety.
- 4) Enhances focus and concentration.
- 5) Promotes emotional calmness and balance.
- 6) Improves sleep quality.
- 7) Boosts the immune system.

## Precautions

- 1) Avoid practicing **Sūrya-Anuloma-Viloma-Prāṇāyāma** if you have high blood epilepsy, vertigo and heart problems.
- 2) Pregnant women should consult with their doctor before practising this prāṇāyāma.

## Procedure for Chandra-Anuloma-Viloma-Prāṇāyāma (चन्द्र-अनुलोम- विलोम-प्राणायाम)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the right nostril with the thumb and keep the left nostril opened.
- 7) Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply through the left nostril only.
- 8) Keep the right nostril closed all the time during the practice.
- 9) Repeat for 9 rounds.

## **Benefits of Chandra-Anuloma-Viloma-Prāṇāyāma**

- 1) Induces deep, restful sleep.
- 2) Promotes emotional stability and balance.
- 3) Enhances self-awareness and introspection.
- 4) Boosts immune system.
- 5) Improves digestion.
- 6) Balances hormones (potentially easing menstrual discomfort).
- 7) Detoxifies the body.

## Precautions

- 1) Low blood pressure: People with low blood pressure should approach this prāṇāyāma with caution, as it can further decrease blood pressure. Consult a doctor or yoga teacher for tailored modifications.
- 2) Asthma and phlegm: Individuals with asthma or excessive phlegm are advised to avoid this prāṇāyāma, as it might aggravate these conditions.

## Procedure for Sūrya-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma (सूर्य-भेदन- प्राणायाम)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin-mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the left nostril with the little finger. Inhale slowly through the right nostril.
- 7) After full inhalation, close the right nostril with the thumb, release the right nostril and slowly exhale through the left nostril.
- 8) One inhalation and one exhalation forms one round.
- 9) Repeat for 9 rounds.

## Benefits of Sūrya-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma

- 1) This prāṇāyāma increases heat in the body and increases the digestive power.
- 2) It helps calm the brain and increases vitality.
- 3) Its helps in cleansing the frontal sinuses.
- 4) This practice is good for those who suffer from tremors, burning eyes, fears, restlessness

## Precautions

- 1) Avoid practicing Sūrya Anuloma Viloma prāṇāyāma, if you have high blood pressure, epilepsy, vertigo and heart problems.
- 2) Pregnant women should consult with their doctor before practising this prāṇāyāma.



## Procedure for Chandra-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma (चन्द्र भेदन प्राणायाम)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the right nostril with the right thumb on the right hand. Inhale slowly through the left nostril.
- 7) After full inhalation, close the left nostril with the little finger, release the right nostril and slowly exhale through the right nostril.
- 8) One inhalation and one exhalation forms one round.
- 9) Repeat for 9 rounds.

## Benefits of Chandra-Bhedana-Prāṇāyāma (चन्द्र भेदन प्राणायाम)

- 1) This prāṇāyāma has a cooling effect on the body., thereby it reduces heat in the body.
- 2) It also activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for rest and digestion. Thereby, it reduces blood pressure.

## Precautions

- 1) Low blood pressure: People with low blood pressure should approach this prāṇāyāma with caution, as it can further decrease blood pressure. Consult a doctor or yoga teacher for tailored modifications.
- 2) Individuals with asthma or excessive phlegm are advised to avoid this prāṇāyāma, as it might aggravate these conditions.

## Procedure for Nāḍī-Śodhana Prāṇāyāma (नाडी शोधनम्) – Technique (A)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the right nostril with the right thumb and inhale through the left nostril.
- 7) Close the left nostril with your little finger and release the right nostril. Now, exhale slowly and entirely through the right nostril.
- 8) Inhale deeply through the same right nostril. Then close the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril. This is one round of Nāḍī śodhana prāṇāyāma.
- 9) Repeat 9 rounds.

## Nāḍī-Śodhana Prāṇāyāma (नाडी शोधनम्) – Technique (B)

- 1) Sit in any meditative posture.
- 2) Keep your head and neck straight.
- 3) Eyes closed throughout the practice.
- 4) Keep the whole body relaxed during the practice.
- 5) Adopt Śītoṣṇa mudra on your right hand and Cin mudrā on your left hand.
- 6) Close the left nostril with the right little finger and inhale through the right nostril.
- 7) Close the right nostril with the thumb and release the left nostril. Now, exhale slowly and ultimately through the left nostril.
- 8) Now, Inhale deeply through the same left nostril. Then, close the left nostril and exhale through the right nostril. This is one round of Nāḍī śodhana prāṇāyāma.
- 9) Repeat 9 rounds.

## Benefits of Nāḍī-Śodhana Prāṇāyāma (नाडी शोधनम्)

- 1) Excellent breathing technique to calm and center the mind.
- 2) Our mind has a tendency to keep regretting or glorifying the past and getting anxious about the future. Nadi Shodhan prāṇāyāma helps to bring the mind back to the present moment.
- 3) Works therapeutically for most circulatory and respiratory problems.
- 4) Releases accumulated stress in the mind and body effectively and helps to relax.
- 5) Helps harmonize the left and right hemispheres of the brain, which correlates to the logical and emotional sides of our personality.
- 6) Helps purify and balance the nadis – the subtle energy channels, thereby ensuring a smooth flow of prana (life force) through the body.
- 7) Maintains body temperature.

## Precautions

No Limitations. Anyone can practice this prāṇāyāma

# Vaiṣṇavi Mudra



## **The Objective of Vaiṣṇavi Mudra**

1. To develop a deep awareness of the human body and mind.
2. To experience a sense of gratitude for the various vital functions that body parts perform.
3. To enhance the functioning of the human body and mind.

# **“Vaiṣṇavi Mudra”**

**An overview and practice**

There is revolution occurring in brain science. Every day, new learnings are coming out. We have assumed that the brain we are born with is the brain we will die with. We thought the human brain was hardwired to function in predetermined ways. However, researchers have found that this is not true. The brain is not hardwired. It turns out that it can be rewired because of its plasticity.

A Human learns and adapts behaviour through the atmosphere and surroundings he or she lives in. We believe that the brain has the capability to learn and develop, and we have already set predetermined methodologies for its development, and those methods are limiting its growth. We also believe that genes play a significant role in predetermining human behaviour, and very little can be changed about the genes that we have inherited. But the fact is that the brain has limitless capability/capacity of growth. In other words, the pre-programmed brain can be reprogrammed. If the brain was hardwired, then new experiences and learnings were not possible. A person's thinking, belief system, and experiences that have hardened his personality or, in other words, hardwired his brain can be changed/rewired/reprogrammed through various methods and practices. The brain can rewire itself or can be rewired by intervention. In fact, new brain cells can be born. Besides the brain, the other body parts and organs can also be made to function beyond our perceived capacity/capability, and that can be achieved through following a practice called “**Vaiṣṇavi Mudra**”.

**Before we speak more about Vaiṣṇavi Mudra, let's understand the human body.**

Studying the human body is a revelation. The more detailed study we take up, the more awesome the body seems. Generally, people take their bodies for granted. Only when a leg is broken or amputated, we start appreciating how amazing important legs are. We often use the word “awesome” for food or music or other delightful stuff. However, our body truly puts the awe into “awe-some.” Think of a dazzling galaxy in space, or the most sophisticated machine you can imagine. Your body is even more awe-inspiring than either of those. And it constantly self-heals!

Every second of every day, our body undertakes literally in quantifiable number of tasks - a quadrillion, a nonillion etc., beyond imagination that too without requiring an instant of our attention. Our body is like a machine, working 24 hours a day for decades without (for most part) needing regular service or the installation of spare parts, runs on water and few organic components, is soft and rather lovely. It is accommodately mobile and pliant. It reproduces itself with enthusiasm, makes jokes, feels affection etc.

## How are we celebrating our glory of existence?

For most of us, that means exercising minimally and eating maximally. Think of all the junk we throw down our throats and how much our life is spent in a near-vegetative state before a glowing screen. Our bodies are a universe of 37.2 trillion cells operating in more or less perfect concert, more or less all the time. There are thousands of things that can kill us, slightly more than 8,000, according to the International Statistical Classification of Disease and Related Health Problems compiled by the WHO (World Health Organization), and we escape everyone. Yet, in some kind and miraculous way, our body looks after us.

Our body needs our attention, and that doesn't mean getting only six monthly health checkups but identifying what our body consists of the limbs, body parts, and organs and their role. We should then learn what it takes to function in each part. The knowledge would dazzle us and we could appreciate the body. The more we know, the better we learn to deal with the issues the body faces, and that understanding will help us prevent harm to our body and help healing. When somebody offers a cigarette to the smoker, what does he or she say in response? THANK YOU. We express our gratitude to the person offering us a cigarette but forget what our lungs and hearts face. We neglect entirely how lungs keep working against harmful smoke and charcoal and rigorously keep working towards protecting the harmful effects of smoke. Once we understand how lungs function and what their role is in our existence, we will be more thankful to our lungs than to the person who obliged us with a cigarette.

## Why express gratitude to your body?

Thanking others, thanking ourselves, and Mother Nature – gratitude can enlighten the mind and make us happier. It has a healing effect on us.

The human body is truly a wonderful, beautiful, and fantastic thing. Just think about all the great things it does for us daily: breathing, walking, digesting food, doing everything possible to keep us from getting sick, and so much more. When we start to appreciate our body, we acknowledge all the vital things our body does for us every day that keep us alive and healthy. Gratitude is positively correlated to more vitality, energy, and enthusiasm.

Every minute of every day, our body is reacting and literally changing in response to the thoughts that run through our mind.

A person who thinks negatively about himself/herself constantly pushes himself/herself from bad to worse. For example, a person who is overweight and is constantly cursing the body and probably one's genes is pushing the self into depression, lethargy, lack of confidence, non-active participation in social life, anxiety, physical activities, etc. As a result, that individual would continue adding weight and losing on multiple fronts of life. On the other hand, a person who is aware of his overweight body keeps a positive attitude. In spite of the heavyweight, he keeps thanking his body for keeping up with daily life challenges and not facing any significant hindrances. As a result, this person will have a positive impact on his social, professional, personal and physical life. Because of being active, he can likely lose weight, and his overweighed body will not hinder his happy and healthy life. Because of positivity, the brain sends positive messages to the cells, and they respond by rejuvenating and regeneration.

Here is an example of cursing a tree: According to the historical understanding, in the Solomon Islands of the Pacific, if the islanders need a tree to be cut down and it is too big to be chopped down, it is brought down by the combined efforts of the Islanders cursing negatively and yelling at the tree. This negative energy somehow damages the tree's life energy, the result being after about 30 days of getting cursed, the tree dies off and falls to the ground!

Now we can imagine if a tree can feel the negative emotions of humans and get affected by those, what can happen to our body, which is constantly communicating with our brain?

## What is “Vaiṣṇavi Mudra” ?

Vaiṣṇavi Mudra is a Yoga technique that helps us master the art of rewiring.

We must sleep 7 to 8 hours daily to rejuvenate our body and mind. We all know that sleep time is not essential, but the quality of sleep is. Vaiṣṇavi Mudra practice focuses on that quality sleep part, body relaxation, and rejuvenation. It also is an evolved method for enhancing the functional capacity of the body parts.

So, when we lie down in spine/sleep posture, we keep our eyes open and start calling the names of our body parts and organs in our mind and thanking them for supporting our whole being. Say, for example, “Thank you, my heart, for not missing a single beat, purifying and supplying much-needed blood relentlessly”. We thank the heart as we stay awake.

## **Here are the steps that are recommended for practicing “Vaiṣṇavi Mudra”**

1. As a first step, we lie on our back, which is the posture for sleep, but we remain awake for seventy-five minutes at a stretch without falling asleep. Note: Keep the eyes open.
2. Ideally, the final stage of Vaishnavi Mudra expects us to stay awake for three hours with our eyes open. However, knowing the difficulty of this practice, we practice a simpler version wherein we stay awake using a prop called instructions.
3. Instructions used here are of higher quality, which will help us develop great respect for our body and express gratitude to all body parts, which works like a well-oiled machine without us interfering consistently.



## Position for Vaiṣṇavi Mudra

- Lie down on your back in a supine posture, keep the legs and hands apart. Keep the eyes open.
- Relax the body with normal breathing.



## **Benefits of practising “Vaiṣṇavi Mudra”**

1. Helps us improve our relationship with our own body, takes care of the body optimally with love and affection and boost self-esteem.
2. Changes the chemicals positively that our brain feeds our body.
3. Regular practice triggers the calming branch of the autonomic nervous system, the parasympathetic system.
4. Regular practice leads to a better outlook of life and we are more likely to accomplish our creative goals and live a socially productive life.