

As a sacrifice some offer "THE OUT-GOING BREATH INTO THE IN-COMING BREATH AND OTHERS OFFER THE IN-COMING INTO THE OUT-GOING." The latter is, in the technique of *Pranayama*, called the *Puraka*, meaning the 'process of filing in'; while, the former is the 'process of blowing out,' technically called the *Rechaka*. These two processes are alternated with an interval, wherein the 'breath is held for sometime,' within and without, which is called the *Kumbhaka*. This process of *Puraka-Kumbhaka-Rechaka-Kumbhaka*, when practised in a prescribed ratio, becomes the technique of breath-control (*Pranayama*). This technique is again explained here as a *Yajna* by which the practitioner, in the long run, learns to offer all the subsidiary *Pranas* into the main *Prana*.

*Prana* is not the breath; this is a general misunderstanding. Through breath-control we come to gain a perfect mastery over the activities of the *Pranas* in us. When very closely observed, we find that the term *Prana* used in the Hindu Scriptures indicates the various "manifested activities of life in a living body." They generally enumerate five different kinds of *Pranas*, which, when understood correctly, are found to be nothing but the five different physiological-functions in every living body.

They are: (1) the function of perception, (2) the function of excretion, (3) the function of digestion and assimilation, (4) the circulatory system, which distributes the food to all parts of the body, and lastly (5) the capacity in a living-creature to improve himself in his mental outlook and