

## Lesson 28

Day after day the creatures die, yet those alive seek eternal life.

Even as a frog well within the mouth of a serpent flings to catch a fly, likewise all of us lying within the jaws of death seek enjoyment in sensual pleasure.

*Mahabharata*



## Jnana Yoga

Jnana yoga is usually defined as the path of knowledge, the Sanskrit word *jnana* meaning 'knowledge'. However, jnana does not mean intellectual or logically deductive knowledge; it means intuitive, illuminative knowledge. Jnana yoga is the method of union through intuitive flashes. The truth is realized through insight. Jnana is the result. The path of jnana yoga can be defined as the path of enquiry. From intense enquiry comes intuitive knowledge - jnana.

It is often said that jnana yoga is the most difficult path but this is not really true. It is only difficult if it does not suit your personality. If it suits you then it comes naturally - you will take to it like a fish to water. Certainly it is true that jnana yoga is the path for the few, for it requires strong willpower and the overwhelming need to find an answer. A person has to lose and absorb himself completely in his enquiry in order to obtain the required results and answers. Most people have so many distractions that they cannot engross themselves completely in the enquiry. Jnana yoga requires obstinacy ... in fact, an obsession to find out answers. If you have this obsessive need for answers then jnana yoga will come spontaneously.

Jnana yoga requires that you throw out all concepts, dogmas, ideas that you don't know to be true from personal experience. Throw them out ... believe nothing. Of course, this does not apply to all things. If someone tells you that a scorpion will bite you, then believe them. There is no need to test their statement through personal experience. Accept this type of idea for it is not of great significance in your life. Whether the statement is true or untrue is not really so important, unless it bites you of course and then it will be too late. If someone tells you that the food which you eat is digested in a long fleshy tube called the intestines and also shows you a diagram to confirm the statement, then accept it. You need not dissect

a human body yourself to find out - thousands of other people have already done so. Accept this fact and accept numerous other statements that are part of everyday life. If someone tells you that certain plants are poisonous, why test them? Accept the fact - it makes life easier. Most things in life have to be accepted on face value.

But if someone tells you that you are divine, that there is something more than body and individual mind or that there is such a thing as mystical experience, why believe them? In fact, the path of jnana yoga says that you have to reject all these concepts unless you have experience to the contrary. All concepts of God, deities, etc. have to be thrown out. This is the starting point of jnana yoga: ACCEPT NOT, BELIEVE NOT. The path of bhakti is different; it tells you to believe and if this belief is strong enough then it will take you to a point beyond belief. Jnana yoga will take you to the same knowledge that is beyond blind acceptance and belief. The two paths are different, but they lead to the same realization and knowledge.

To tread the path of jnana yoga one must be ruthless. This is why it is regarded as a difficult path. It is not easy to believe in nothing. It is not easy to empty the mind of preconceived ideas and dogmas. It is far easier to believe in something, even though the belief may be superficial or even erroneous. Jnana yoga can therefore be practised only by those people with unflinching determination.

Jnana yoga says that if you believe something without personal experience then, in fact, you are autosuggesting the answer to yourself. You are indoctrinating yourself and if you think about this you will agree that it is true. Even in the case of the intestines, your knowledge is really autosuggestion. You do not really know the shape and size of the intestines unless you open up a human body. You accept the description given in books or

by physiologists because it is convenient; actually you indoctrinate yourself. But as we have already mentioned, this general acceptance of many things in life is absolutely necessary. We cannot spend all our lives testing and investigating everything; the world would be a graveyard if everyone wanted to personally test if a plant is poisonous or not, or there would be total chaos if every person went to Timbuktu to see if such a place really exists. We have to learn about most things from the words of other people and their personal experience. But this is not the case with investigations into reality. Those who wish to tread the path of jnana yoga should not accept other people's words, dogmas and preachings on this subject. If you do then you are indoctrinating yourself. You are auto-suggesting an answer to yourself without personal experience. And without the overwhelming proof of personal experience no change will occur in your life. Superficial answers will not illuminate your existence. They merely act as a verbal intellectual tag onto which you precariously grasp, but your deeper being is not fooled. In the core of your heart you will know that you are deluding yourself. Deep down you will know that you have blindly adopted and accepted another 'ism'. Your lifestyle will not be changed and you will not be any happier or wiser.

If you wish to follow the path of jnana yoga you should believe nothing. Throw out all beliefs. It was Christ who said: "Empty thyself and I shall fill thee."

The Zen master Chao-chu was asked: "What would you say to someone who came to you with nothing?" He replied: "Throw it away".

It is reputed that Lao-tse said: "Scholars gain every day (useless, non-experienced knowledge), but Taoists (sages) lose every day (the accumulation of useless non-experienced dogmas and knowledge)".

This is the beginning of jnana yoga. Reject all concepts.

From the starting point of non-acceptance of ideologies, a person on the path of jnana yoga must start to enquire. One of the most well known enquiries is: "Who am I?" This is the method that Ramana Maharshi suggested. If you answer the question with "I am John Smith," then you have not even started on the path of jnana yoga. You still have not emptied

the mind of trivial, insignificant, superficial and logical answers. Your name is only a label to differentiate you socially from your neighbour who is perhaps called Fred Smith. Your name is not you - it is merely a means to an end which allows your mail to reach you and for you to receive the correct pay packet. It is your marker, your label - it is not your identity. Your name is not you.

To make progress in jnana yoga you have to throw out all definitions about your existence. You must be overwhelmed by the feeling that you do not know who you are. If you merely ask the question "Who am I?" from your lips, if you do not ask the question with intensity and the overwhelming need to know, then nothing will happen. If you ask the question like a parrot then the implications of the enquiry will not penetrate the deeper layers of your being. This is why jnana yoga is difficult for most people; few people can become completely obsessed and filled with enquiry into their own nature.

Ramana Maharshi was a jnana yogi. He asked himself the question "Who am I?" He did not merely ask the question for five minutes every morning before breakfast. His whole being vibrated with the enquiry twenty-four hours a day, whether awake or asleep. The enquiry invaded and permeated his deeper being. The enquiry continued constantly, whether consciously or unconsciously. The question continued whether he was walking, sitting or talking. His whole being tackled the enquiry. His whole being was poised on the edge of a precipice. And the result? He realized his real nature. He became self-realized. This is the path of jnana yoga. It requires that a person has such a personality that he tenaciously clings to the enquiry and desperately needs to know the answer . . . as though everything depends on the answer. And in fact it does.

It is not necessary to pose the question "Who am I?" Any question can be asked but it must be a question for which you desperately seek an answer. Actually, if you are really ready for the path of jnana yoga, then you probably don't need to pose the question. The question will already be there. It will be nagging at you from under the surface of your mind. If you have to sit down and ask yourself: 'What will be the question that I will ask myself?' then

jnanayoga is not your path. At the present time if you have to sit down and try to think of a question, then it means that there is no question that sufficiently obsesses you, and that you do not deeply and seriously question the nature of your being and existence. If you have a question that haunts you day and night, then that question will be your vehicle in jnana yoga.

A few minutes thought will convince you that jnana yoga is the method of scientific discovery, artistic creation and musical inspiration. Of course, it is not known as jnana yoga, but the process is basically the same. All scientific discoveries, all artistic and musical creations have one thing in common: they have defied logic. They have arisen because of intuitive flashes. The perception of a scientific law or a piece of music occurred suddenly - it happened like a thunderclap. The scientist, musician or artist suddenly saw something that was not defined by the existing arena of accepted and documented knowledge. No scientific discoveries or works of art have ever been worked out using the laws of logic or the intellect. The intellect comes subsequently when flashes are rationalized in order to fit the new knowledge into current patterns of thought of the rational world.

The sum total of knowledge, known and unknown, can be compared very roughly, and not very correctly, to a large field (let us assume for the sake of the analogy that knowledge is finite). The surface and earth of this field represent the sum total of knowledge. In the field there are various holes - some big, some small. These represent knowledge that is currently known. The size of the hole represents the amount that is known about that particular subject. It is logic and rational thinking that enlarges each hole, using the 'intuitive' knowledge as its basis. In other words, the hole was perhaps started by a certain scientist who intuited some knowledge about a specific phenomenon. By technology, applied science, etc. the hole is enlarged. The method of logic does not dig new holes, it merely enlarges existing holes. There are large parts of the field that contain no holes. This is 'unknown knowledge'. The only way for this knowledge to be known is for new holes to be dug. The method is intuitive flashes. It is intuition that creates new avenues of knowl-

edge. It is logic that enlarges these avenues and applies the knowledge in the world for constructive (and destructive) purposes.

We have tried to explain the essential part that intuition plays in the world of science and arts. Now we pose the question: 'How did these discoverers, inventors, composers and artists receive their creative flashes?' The answer is simple: they allowed some question or thought to obsess them night and day. Einstein did not discover the laws of relativity without effort. He was obsessed by the mystery of time and space. His whole being was immersed in the problem. The intuitive answer that he realized was total . . . not only half an answer. He saw everything. How can something become infinitely heavy at the speed of light and at the same time have no length; how can the speed of the observer and source have no influence on the speed of light? And so on. The answer that he received defied logic and currently accepted science. He spent the rest of his life trying to put his intuited knowledge on paper and trying to fit it into a logically understandable system. The important thing to note is that the answer did not come from rational thinking. Had Einstein been attached to logical reasoning then he would still be trying to find the answer to the relationship between time and space. He would not have formulated the theory of relativity, and certainly it would not be part of present day science. This is the method of jnana yoga applied in the field of science. There are other obvious examples of people who applied the method of Jnana yoga in this field. Leonardo da Vinci is a good example of a person who applied Jnana yoga in the phenomenal world. Michaelangelo is an example of a genius who received intuitive inspiration in the field of sculpture. All great musical composers followed the path of jnana; they have expressed and created their music after receiving illuminative experience. They were all on the path of jnana. But since they had probably never heard of the system of yoga, they did not classify themselves as jnanis.

The foundation of jnana yoga is that one should know and feel the limitations of intellectual thought. This feeling should come from the very depths of one's heart. When you know and accept the severe limitations of the intellect, then you are ready to start the

path of jnana yoga. If you believe that deep and meaningful answers can be obtained from intellectual thought and discussion then you are not yet ready to tread the path of jnana yoga. Sri Aurobindo explained this as follows: "The capital period in my intellectual life was when I could clearly see that what the intellect said might be correct or not correct, that what the intellect justifies was true and that the opposite was also true. I never admitted truth in my mind without simultaneously keeping it open to the contrary of it. . . and the result was that the prestige of the intellect was gone."

Even modern science seems to be heading more and more in this direction. We are informed that atomic physics can only explain the behaviour of atomic particles by postulating the simultaneous action of contradictory laws. That is, laws that are logically opposite are used to define the observed phenomena of atomic particles. We are also informed that two logically contradictory laws are used to explain the behaviour of light. The world we live in is much stranger than the dictates of logic. Therefore, to tread the path of jnana yoga one should not take logical thought too seriously. You should feel the inadequacy of the intellect. This does not mean discarding the laws of social living and doing crazy things. No, it merely means that you should take all intellectual speculations and all logical games with a 'pinch of salt'. Understand clearly that logical thought is a means to an end, nothing more; it is a tool that makes life easier and more organized. Without logical rules and laws of conduct then the world would erupt in a state of chaos. Rational thought is a necessary tool. But it cannot bring meaningful answers and deep knowledge in life.

Jnana is the path of intense reflection. This reflection leads to intuitive knowledge. Nothing must be taken for granted. Discard and reject all preconceived dogmas. Ask yourself questions such as 'What is this thing called I?' 'What is consciousness?' 'Is there any truth in the atma that is mentioned by so many sages? No, impossible. Why should I believe?' Throw out everything that is not based on personal perception. All you have to do is to continually enquire.

The guru helps the disciple on the path of jnana even when the disciple does not know that he is treading the path of jnana. The guru

can pose a question, or he may say something that seems completely contradictory to the disciple. The guru may pose the question directly or indirectly; perhaps the disciple will hear a passing comment, but this leaves a lasting impression. Something within the disciple stirs. The mind is put in a state of crisis. The disciple becomes completely absorbed in trying to solve or come to grips with the problem. Deeper forces come into play in order to try to resolve the conflict. He starts to contemplate on the problem. He becomes totally absorbed, subconsciously and consciously, trying to solve the dilemma. The mind is tuned up; it becomes supercharged and one-pointed. The mind that was previously diverted here and there and engrossed in trivial thoughts becomes completely engulfed in the enquiry. This enquiry need not always be on a conscious level. All the different levels of one's being are brought into play in order to battle with the enquiry. The whole mind flows in one current. The seed has been planted - all forces are consolidated to bring about fruition. The mind is normally like a river with many currents; it wanders here and there without any real force. Then the lock gates are opened . . . the currents are swept away. The river flows with one mighty unified force. The enquiry opens up the blocks of the mind. The dammed up mind is released; it becomes receptive to the influx of intuition. Higher truth is revealed in intuitive flashes passing through the medium of a concentrated yet relaxed mind. This is jnana.

The question will be asked: 'Is jnana yoga for me?' Only you can decide, or your guru. But certainly jnana yoga is for the few; it is a path that is fraught with pitfalls, the greatest of which is that it can so easily degenerate into mere intellectualization. This happens very often; people are so habituated to intellectual thinking that they automatically start to think of intellectual answers to their enquiry. Instead of removing concepts they start to fill their heads with them. They lack the intensity of purpose. The enquiry does not have the intensity to penetrate the deeper realms of being to find a solution. The result is that they resort to intellectual explanations. There are many people who have reached what they feel are relevant answers through mere word juggling. They talk endlessly about God,

consciousness, divine beings and so on, but it is all speculation and words. There is absolutely no basis in personal experience. They are replacing experience with mere words. This is definitely not the aim nor the path of jnana yoga. This is where jnana yoga becomes corrupted. The aim is to wipe out superficial, intellectual speculations, not create them. The aim is to empty the mind of concepts, not fill it up. The person on the path of jnana yoga has to persevere with the enquiry without giving up or accepting secondhand speculations. You must wait for illuminative experience, which is firsthand experience. When this happens there will be no doubt about its validity.

It is impossible to follow only the path of jnana yoga, nor is it desirable. Each person is composed of different aspects, some of which may be more prominent than others. For example, some people are very active; others are more thoughtful; some are prominently devotional. All of these aspects need to be channelled into a unifying force. The follower of jnana yoga is likely to be the thoughtful type with strong willpower. However, this does not mean that he sits and thinks all day. He should also do physical karma yoga and perhaps some asanas, pranayama and meditational practices. This will bring about an overall harmony, which will help him to make more progress on the path of jnana yoga.

If you think you are ready to tread the path of jnana yoga, then begin right now. But remember, it is only for those people who have a one-pointed mind. Anxieties, phobias, neuroses and other mental disturbances prevent intuition. They act as impediments. If your mind is continuously oscillating and distracted then you cannot fill yourself with the enquiry, it will lack sufficient depth to induce intuitive understanding. Under these circumstances, we suggest that you practise other forms of yoga to make the mind more harmonized and concentrated, in order to prepare you for future practise of jnana yoga.

Let us summarize: if you wish to follow the path of jnana yoga then you must believe and accept nothing unless it is based on personal experience, not the experience of others. You should not blindly accept answers that have been given by sages, saints, thinkers and books. You must find out the answers for yourself;

while cleaning the mind of conceptual debris you should fill it up with an intense enquiry into your own nature. You should pursue your enquiry through thick and thin until you realize the answer. This is the path of jnana yoga.

## Kriya Yoga: Practice

### KRIYA 5: SHABDA SANCHALANA (ROTATION OF WORD CONSCIOUSNESS)

The Sanskrit word *shabda* means 'word'; *sanchalana* means 'rotation' or 'conduction'. Therefore, this practice can be called 'the rotation (or conduction) of word consciousness'. Here the word is the mantra Soham. Shabda sanchalana can also be regarded as the sixth stage of ajapa japa<sup>1</sup>.

#### The implications of Soham

*Soham* is widely called the *ajapa gayatri* - the spontaneous song of the breath. It is a mantra that arises automatically with each and every breath. It is the sound that corresponds with the natural rhythm of breathing. It is the mantra that every person chants continuously, whether knowingly or unknowingly.

In all yoga practices awareness must be fixed on something. There has to be a focal point that settles the fluctuations of the mind and makes it one-pointed. Anything can be used: a mantra, a mental picture of a deity or even your big toe. But it should be something that automatically attracts your attention and brings about continuous remembrance. This sounds easy but is not. The mind resists the process of concentration and starts to wander. The symbol is quickly forgotten and one becomes lost again in the stream of bubbling thoughts. Soham is an ideal mantra because it is always being chanted independent of the state of mind. It will only stop if you stop breathing. Therefore, Soham reminds you to be aware.

Any mantra can be integrated with the breath to produce continuous remembrance, but Soham arises naturally, which makes it easier. It has also been tested by numerous yogis for thousands of years. We highly recommend it (and the mantra Aum) for all sincere sadhakas. Constant remembrance will lead to dhyana.

*Soham* also has a literal meaning. It means: "I am Shiva (pure consciousness)" or "I am He

(pure consciousness)". It indicates the union of Shiva and Shakti, the merging of the individual with the cosmic or supreme consciousness. However, the reader should not worry too much about the meaning, unless he or she has had a deep transcendental experience. Any attempt to understand the meaning of Soham logically will lead to delusion. It can only be understood at an intuitive level. When a person understands its transcendental meaning, and only then, can it be used as a means of constant affirmation and remembrance. This will maintain a steady flow of dhyana.

If you wish and if your mind is sufficiently one-pointed, you can enquire further into the deep and real meaning of Soham. This is a method of jnana yoga. But it will not yield results if your mind is tense and full of problems and unless you enquire incessantly, whether consciously or unconsciously twenty-four hours a day. If your mind is ready and your aspiration intense then there will be a transcendental explosion of the meaning of Soham. The meaning will show itself like a flash of lightning, but you have to be ready. Few people are prepared for this type of jnana yoga practice. Generally, therefore, we recommend remembrance of Soham as the best sadhana.

In shabda sanchalana do not worry about the meaning of Soham. Only be aware of the sound synchronized with the breath.

#### Pronunciation of Soham

Some people hear the sound *Saham* when they listen to their breath instead of Soham. This is perfectly acceptable and can be used in shabda sanchalana instead of Soham.

Soham should be integrated with the breathing. With the practice of ujjayi pranayama the sound can be heard very distinctly. Try it. You should hear: *So* with inhalation, *Ham* with exhalation.



In shabda sanchalana you should hear so as you breathe in from mooladhara up the frontal arohan psychic passage to bindu. The sound should be prolonged.

That is, from mooladhara to swadhisthana kshetram the emphasis will be on the sound: s-s-s. From swadhisthana to bindu the emphasis should be on the sound: o-o-o-o. This is clearly shown in the diagram.

You should hear the sound *Ham* as you breathe out and down the spinal awarohan psychic passage from bindu to mooladhara. From bindu through ajna to vishuddhi, the emphasis will be on the sound: h-a-a-a. From vishuddhi to mooladhara the emphasis should be on the sound: m-m-m. This will be a humming sound that vibrates down the spine.

The sound *Soham* should not be pronounced aloud. It is the natural sound of the breath. The sound should be such that you can hear it very distinctly, but other people cannot unless they put their ear very close to you.

### Sitting position

Remain in the same sitting pose that was utilized for pawan sanchalana, the previous kriya<sup>2</sup>. Only move and adjust your position if you feel any pain and stiffness in your body.

The traditional sitting poses are padmasana or siddhasana (siddha yoni asana for women). If these asanas are not comfortable then you can use any other comfortable sitting pose such as ardha padmasana, swastikasana, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Keep your back straight throughout the entire practice; the only part of the body that should be moved is the head.

### Psychic passage awareness

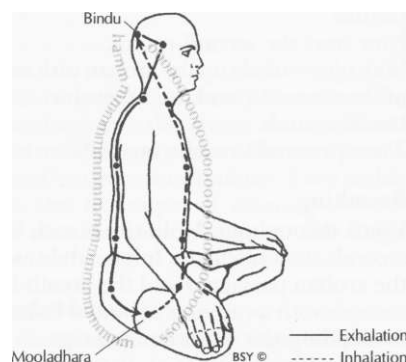
As you breathe in with *So* your awareness should ascend the frontal arohan passage. After leaving mooladhara chakra you should feel the mantra and breath piercing swadhisthana, manipura, anahata and vishuddhi kshetrams and then finally bindu.

As you breathe out with *Ham* your awareness should descend the spinal awarohan passage. After leaving bindu, feel the mantra and breath progressively piercing ajna, vishuddhi, anahata, manipura, swadhisthana and finally, the mooladhara chakra.

There should be no mental repetition of the names of the kshetram and chakras . . . only awareness.

### Subsidiary practices

You should practise ujjayi pranayama, khechari mudra and unmani mudra during shabda sanchalana. These were also utilized in pawan sanchalana<sup>2</sup>.



### Technique

You should practise shabda sanchalana directly after finishing pawan sanchalana.

Sit comfortably. Hold the back straight.

Open your eyes.

Do khechari mudra; this should continue throughout the whole practice.

Exhale deeply.

Bend your head forwards.

Become aware of the mooladhara chakra.

The first round starts here.

With ujjayi pranayama, breathe in and up the arohan passage.

Hear the sound *So* and feel it piercing each kshetram in turn.

When your awareness travels between the vishuddhi kshetram and bindu slowly raise your head.

Your head should be upright when your awareness reaches bindu.

The *So* mantra and inhalation should end when your awareness reaches bindu.

Be aware of the bindu for a few seconds.

Then breathe out with ujjayi down the awarohan passage in the spine.

Start with unmani mudra.

Hear the mantra *Ham* and feel it piercing the chakras in turn. No mental repetition of the chakra names . . . only awareness.

Your exhalation and the *Ham* mantra should finish when your awareness reaches mooladhara.

Bend your head forwards.  
 Open your eyes again.  
 Maintain awareness of the mooladhara for a few seconds.  
 This is the end of the first round.  
 The process is shown in the accompanying picture.  
 Now start the second round.  
 With ujjayi inhale up the arohan with awareness of the sound *So* and the kshetram.  
 Do 59 rounds.  
 Then proceed to maha mudra<sup>4</sup>.

### **Breathing**

Ujjayi throughout. Hold the breath for a few seconds at mooladhara. Inhale while ascending the arohan passage. Hold the breath for a few seconds with awareness at bindu. Exhale while descending the awarehan passage.

### **Mental turmoil**

If your mind is disturbed let the Soham be quite loud and the breathing faster.

If the mind is relaxed and reasonably one-pointed then let the Soham sound be more subtle and the breathing slower.

### **Awareness**

Maintain awareness of the mantra Soham, breathing and the psychic passages.

### **Sequence**

Shabda sanchalana should be done directly after pawan sanchalana<sup>2</sup> and before maha mudra<sup>4</sup>.

### **Duration**

You should practise 59 rounds. This will take between 25 and 40 minutes depending on the speed of respiration.

### **Counting of rounds**

In our description of pawan sanchalana we advised you to use a 108 bead mala and tie a knot after the forty-ninth bead. For this practice there is no need to tie another knot. After completing pawan sanchalana your fingers will be at the forty-ninth bead. Merely continue the process of rotating one bead at the end of each round of shabda sanchalana (when your awareness reaches mooladhara). When your fingers reach the sumeru bead then you will have completed 59 rounds (49+59=108).

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Ajapa Japa: Stage 1; Book II, Lesson 20, Topic 5

<sup>2</sup> Book III, Lesson 27, Topic 2

<sup>3</sup> Book I, Lesson 7, Topic 2

<sup>4</sup> Book III, Lesson 29, Topic 1

## Hatha Yoga: Nauli (Stage 1)

Nauli is one of the six main groups of shatkarmas or cleansing techniques, three of which have already been described<sup>1</sup>. Most of the practices of dhauti have already been explained as well as jala neti, sutra neti and trataka-. In this topic we propose to explain the first part of nauli<sup>3</sup>.

### General information

Nauli is a yogic technique of massaging the entire abdomen and stomach by contracting and rolling the abdominal muscles (specifically the rectus abdominii). It is very beneficial for the health of the digestive system and in fact the health of the whole body. Of all yogic practices, nauli gives the most profound massage of the inner organs. It is quite difficult for beginners but with determination and regular practice it can be done by almost even one.

### Definition

The Sanskrit word nauli comes from the root word *nala* or *nali*, which means: a tubular vessel, vein or nerve of the body; a reed or hollow stalk (perhaps of a lotus). The word *nala* is also Sanskrit for the rectus abdominii muscles (in the Monier Williams Sanskrit Dictionary it is literally defined as the 'navel string'). The rectus abdominii are the two muscles which act as pillars supporting the abdominal organs between the pelvic region and the chest. Thus **nauli** is the technique that is concerned with manipulation of the rectus abdominii muscles.

It is also interesting to note that the Sanskrit word *nau* means 'ship'. When nauli is perfected then the abdominal muscles seem to flow like the rolling waves of the ocean. The muscles create the same wave-like motion produced by a ship gliding through the water.

Nauli is also called *lauliki karma*. The word *lauliki* is derived from the root word *lola* which means 'to move hither and thither', 'rolling and agitation'. And this is exactly what the

technique of lauliki (or nauli) does. It rolls, rotates and agitates the entire abdomen and associated muscles and nerves. The word karma here means 'process or technique'. Thus lauliki karma is the technique of rotating the abdominal muscles and stirring up the inner organs.

### Scriptural references

Nauli is mentioned in various yogic scriptures but with little detail. In the *Gherand Samhita* it says: "Vigorously rotate the abdomen from side to side. This practice eliminates all types of disease and increases the digestive fire." (v. 1:53) Nothing more is explained. From the description given it is completely impossible for a beginner to learn and practise nauli. Personal guidance is necessary. In the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* it says: "Bending the shoulders forwards, the abdomen should be rotated from right to left and then left to right. This practice is called nauli by yogis. Nauli removes abdominal ailments, increases the digestive fire and brings happiness. This is the greatest practice of hatha yoga." (v. 11:33, 34) Again the description is valid, but too brief for learning nauli. These short verses in the scriptures are intended more as a method of remembrance than as instruction. Instructions had to be learned directly from the guru.

### Rectus abdominii

In nauli various muscles are utilized in the abdomen, back, legs, arms, etc. However, the practice is primarily concerned with contraction of the rectus abdominii muscles. These are two long vertical muscles located in front of the abdomen. The top ends are fixed under the centre of the ribcage near the diaphragm and the bottom ends are fixed at the pubic bone just above the genital region. The two muscles are wider at the top than the bottom.

The rectus abdominii function in conjunction with other abdominal muscles. The main ones

are called the external and internal obliques and the transverse abdominii. These muscles, together with the rectus abdominii, are arranged in sheets in such a way as to give maximum strength and control. They protect the inner abdominal organs. When they are insufficient then hernia can result. These muscles also contract and massage the internal organs and aid one another in the process of micturition (passing of urine), defecation, vomiting and also childbirth in women.

It is these muscles that are directly manipulated during the practice of nauli.

### Preparation

Before attempting nauli you should master the practices of agnisar kriya<sup>4</sup> and uddiyana bandha<sup>5</sup>. Without mastering these two preparatory techniques you will find nauli difficult, if not impossible.

### Body position

Stand with the feet a little less than one meter apart. Bend the knees slightly.

Lean forwards.

Place the hands firmly on the thighs just above the knees.

The fingers can point inwards or outwards; choose the position that you find from experience to give the greatest contraction of the abdominal muscles during nauli.

The arms should be straight throughout the whole practice.

Bend the head forwards and gaze at the abdomen.

This position of the body is clearly illustrated.

### Summary of full practice

Time and practice are required in order to master nauli. Also, one should progressively develop control over the abdominal muscles. For this reason we have divided nauli into two stages, as follows.

### Stage 1: abdominal contraction

In this preliminary stage one must master the following:

1. *Madhyama nauli* where both the rectus abdominii muscles are contracted centrally.
2. *Vama nauli* where only the left rectus abdominus muscle is contracted.
3. *Dakshina nauli* where only the right rectus abdominus muscle is contracted.

These three practices are done separately one after the other. When they are perfected then one proceeds to stage 2\

### Stage 2: abdominal rotation

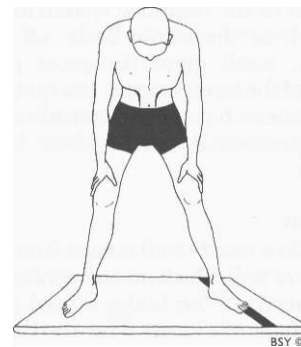
This second stage is the full form of nauli. It consists of two parts:

1. Rolling movement of the abdominal muscles from left to right.
2. Rolling movement of the abdominal muscles from right to left.

For a beginner this rolling or churning movement has to be seen to be believed. It appears as if the rectus abdominii muscles are rolling across the front of the abdomen.

In this topic we will describe stage 1 and in the following lesson, stage 2. Do not attempt stage 2 without first of all mastering stage 1.

### NAULI - STAGE 1 ABDOMINAL CONTRACTION



#### 1. Madhyama nauli (central contraction)

Take the correct standing position.

Exhale deeply, emptying the lungs as much as possible.

To obtain the fullest exhalation you should contract the abdominal muscles by doing uddiyana bandha<sup>5</sup>.

Look at the abdomen.

Hold the breath.

Try to contract the rectus abdominii muscles so that they form a central arch running vertically in front of the abdomen.

This position is clearly shown in the figure.

Hold the contraction for as long as you are able to comfortably retain the breath.

Try to contract the muscles as much as possible, but don't strain.

Then relax the muscular contraction so that you return to uddiyana bandha.

Breathe in slowly and let the abdomen expand. Relax your whole body.

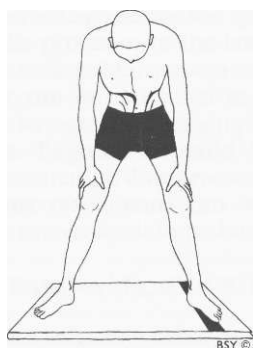
This is 1 round.

Breathe normally a number of times, allowing the pulse beat to return to normal.

Then repeat the practice.

You should practise madhyama nauli until it is perfected; this may take a number of weeks, or even months.

Then proceed to vama nauli.



## 2. Vama nauli (left isolation)

Do not attempt vama nauli until you have mastered madhyama nauli.

Take the correct standing position.

Do madhyama nauli as described under the previous heading.

Then try to relax the muscles on the right side of the abdomen, especially the right rectus abdominus muscle.

Maintain contraction of the left side muscles; this will pull the rectus abdominii muscles to the left hand side as shown in the above figure. Contraction of only the left hand muscles is not easy for beginners.

You will find that this practice is easier if you press your straight left arm firmly against the thigh, while reducing the pressure of the right arm on the other thigh.

Also the practice becomes easier if you lean slightly forwards and towards the left side of the body. You should try this for yourself.

Contract the muscles to the left side as strongly as you can without straining.

Then return to madhyama nauli.

Relax the muscles and do uddiyana bandha.

Breathe in and let the abdomen expand.

This is 1 round.

Breathe normally a number of times until the pulse returns to normal.

Then do dakshina nauli.

## 3. Dakshina nauli (right isolation)

Do madhyama nauli.

Then try to relax the muscles on the left side of the abdomen, especially the left rectus abdominus muscle.

Contract the right abdominal muscles.

The rectus abdominii muscles will form an arch or a ridge on the right hand side of the abdomen.

You will find this practice easier if you lean slightly forwards and to the right side of the body, and press the right arm firmly on the right thigh while releasing the pressure of the left arm on the left thigh.

Hold the contraction as tightly as possible while retaining the breath. Do not strain.

Then return to madhyama nauli.

Relax the muscles and do uddiyana bandha.

Inhale slowly.

Breathe normally a number of times.

Let the heartbeat return to normal.

Repeat vama and dakshina nauli a number of times according to available time and energy.

Do not strain yourself by attempting to do too many rounds.

## Breathing

Normal breathing in the starting position.

Deep exhalation combined with uddiyana bandha before isolation of rectus abdominii muscles. Hold the breath while contracting the abdominal muscles. Controlled inhalation after releasing the muscular contraction. Normal breathing before the next round.

## Successive contractions

In order to develop muscular control, beginners can if they wish successively contract and relax the muscles in the final position. That is, quickly contract and relax the abdominal muscles while retaining the breath. This applies mainly to madhyama nauli, though it can also be performed for vama and dakshina nauli.

## Awareness

You should pay full attention to the control of the muscles. If you watch the muscles you will find that control becomes easier.

**Time of practice**

Nauli should only be practised when the stomach is empty; that is, at least five to six hours after meals. The best time to practise is early in the morning before breakfast.

**Precautions**

If you feel any pain in the abdomen during nauli you should immediately stop the practice. Try nauli the following day or when the pain subsides. If the pain persists then you should seek proper guidance from an experienced yoga teacher or doctor.

**Limitations**

Nauli should not be attempted by people suffering from any serious ailment such as:

- high blood pressure
- gallstones
- hernia
- peptic or duodenal ulcer

If you are in doubt seek the advice of a yoga teacher.

Pregnant women should not practise nauli. However, after childbirth we suggest the practice of nauli (under the guidance of a qualified yoga teacher) in order to strengthen the abdominal and pelvic muscles and to reshape the body and readjust the position of the inner organs.

**Duration**

At first you should not do too many rounds. If you are trying to master madhyama nauli then five or six rounds is more than sufficient at first. With practice you can do a maximum of about ten rounds. If you are trying to master vama and dakshina nauli then three to five rounds each is sufficient. Do not strain under any circumstances. You must pay attention to your body and stop if you feel even a little tired.

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> For further details on the shatkarmas refer to Book I, Lesson 1, Topic 2

<sup>2</sup> Sutra neti - Book I, Lesson 10, Topic 3  
Trataka: stage 1 - Book I, Lesson 8, Topic 6;  
stage 2 - Book I, Lesson 9, Topic 6; stage 3 -  
Book I, Lesson 10, Topic 7

<sup>3</sup> Book III, Lesson 29, Topic 2

<sup>4</sup> Book I, Lesson 6, Topic 2

<sup>5</sup> Book II, Lesson 18, Topic 3

## Asanas: Practice

Here we will describe three asanas:

- 1 Mayurasana
- 2 Hamsasana
- 3 Padma mayurasana

These are excellent asanas for speeding up the metabolic processes in the body and for eliminating toxins. Mayurasana and padma mayurasana can be described as balancing asanas and hamsasana as a simple form of mayurasana. Beginners should first of all master hamsasana and then proceed to mayurasana. Padma mayurasana can be done by anyone who can easily sit in padmasana.

### MAYURASANA (PEACOCK POSE)

This asana is a balancing asana that requires a reasonable degree of muscular strength. Most women will find it quite difficult.

#### Definition

The Sanskrit word *mayura* means 'peacock'. This asana is so called because its final pose resembles a peacock with full plumage. The legs represent the long tail, the forearms the peacock's legs and the hands the peacock's feet and claws.

There is also another reason for the name. A peacock has a well-known ability to absorb and destroy toxins in the things that it eats. Mayurasana is also renowned for its capacity to eliminate toxins from the body, hence its name.

#### Scriptural references

Mayurasana is mentioned in most of the well-known scriptures of hatha yoga. In the *Gherand Samhita* it says: "Place your palms on the floor with the elbows on each side of the navel. Raise your whole body in the air as though it is a bundle of sticks. This is called mayurasana by yogis." (v. 2:30)

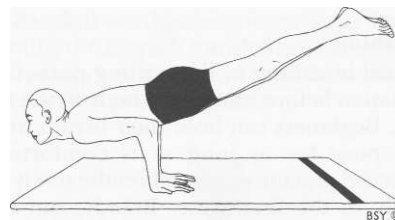
In the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* it says: "Lie flat on the ground. Rest your body on the elbows

keeping both sides of the navel in contact with the elbows. Raise your whole body off the ground just like a log of wood parallel to the ground. This is called mayurasana." (v. 1:30) "Mayurasana is one of the best asanas for eliminating all types of abdominal ailments. It increases the digestive fire and eliminates the toxins consumed through faulty diet." (v. 1:31)

Little needs to be added to these quotations; they speak for themselves.

#### Preparation

In the final pose of mayurasana the whole weight of the body rests on the two elbows and palms. This is quite difficult for beginners since it requires muscular effort combined with balance. We suggest that beginners first of all prepare themselves by doing hamsasana and/or padma mayurasana. Chakrasana is also a good preparatory asana<sup>1</sup>.



#### Technique

Kneel on the floor.

Place the two feet together.

Separate the knees.

This position is as adopted for simhasana<sup>2</sup>.

Lean forward.

Place both palms on the floor between the knees; the fingers should point backwards towards the feet.

Bring the wrists and forearms together so that they touch.

Lean forward and rest the abdomen on the top of the elbows in the region just below the navel.

Let the chest rest on top of the upper arms. Stretch the legs back so that they are straight and together. Breathe in deeply. Tense the muscles of the body. Slowly elevate the trunk, head and legs so that they lie in one straight, horizontal line. Hold the head upward. The whole body should be balanced on the palms. Try to elevate the legs and feet higher, keeping them straight, by applying more muscular effort and by adjusting the balance of the body. This is the final pose. Hold the final pose for as long as is comfortable. Use the fingers to maintain balance. Do not strain. Then slowly lower the legs to the ground. Return to the starting pose. This is 1 round. Another round can be done if you have sufficient energy and when the breathing rate has returned to normal.

#### **Caution**

It is very easy to fall forward from the final pose and crush the nose on the floor. Be careful and if necessary place a small cushion under the face.

#### **Breathing**

Normal breathing in the starting pose. Deep inhalation before raising the body to the final pose. Beginners can hold their breath in the final pose for as long as is comfortable. Advanced practitioners can breathe slowly and deeply in the final pose. Breathe out after returning to the starting position. Breathe normally before attempting a second round.

#### **Awareness**

Awareness should be on balance in the final pose.

#### **Duration**

Stay in the final pose either:

1. For as long as you can hold your breath, or
2. While breathing deeply for as long as you feel no undue fatigue.

Do not strain under any circumstances. Beginners should stay only for a few seconds in the final pose, slowly increasing by a few

seconds every day. Do not attempt too many rounds. Three is about the maximum. With practice it is possible to stay in the final pose for a few minutes, but there should not be any strain.

#### **Time of practice and sequence**

Practise when the stomach is empty. Like most asanas, the best time to practise is early in the morning before breakfast.

Mayurasana vigorously speeds up the blood flow. Also it tends to increase the amount of toxins in the blood as part of the process of purification, therefore do not practise mayurasana before any inverted asana, for this may direct excessive toxins towards the brain.

Mayurasana should be done at the end of your asana program.

#### **Limitations**

Mayurasana should not be practised if you suffer from any of the following ailments:

- high blood pressure
- any heart ailments
- hernia
- peptic or duodenal ulcers

Do not attempt to do mayurasana if you are even slightly ill or if you feel any physical weakness. Pregnant women are strictly advised not to practise mayurasana.

#### **Benefits**

Mayurasana is a unique asana in that it vigorously stimulates the entire body processes. It stimulates the blood circulation and the process of metabolism. It thereby helps to purify the blood and in turn the whole body. If you have a bad complexion and boils then we suggest that you try mayurasana combined with the following program:

- Stop eating highly toxic foods such as spices, meat, sweets and any synthetic, adulterated foods that are difficult to digest.
- Adopt a simple diet consisting of such items as buttermilk, fruit, vegetables, grains, etc.
- Apply your urine all over your body before a bath. Leave it on your body for about one minute before washing it off.
- After two weeks practising the above, start to practise mayurasana every few hours, for at least a few minutes each time. If mayurasana is too difficult then do hamsasana or padma mayurasana as alternatives.



bring a general inner and outer purification of the entire body. It will be a great help in removing boils etc. If you see no marked improvement then extend the program for another few weeks.

In one respect, however, you have to be careful; mayurasana tends to expel impurities in the body very quickly. You may initially find that your skin complexion and boils become worse; this is merely the manifestation of inner toxins. Either persevere with your practice or reduce the number of times that you do mayurasana; you must decide. If you wish, seek expert advice.

Mayurasana massages and stimulates all the digestive organs. It is very useful for treating diabetes, constipation, flatulence, sluggishness in the liver and kidneys, etc. Mayurasana stimulates the process of waste removal from the bowels. It is a very useful asana for many types of digestive ailments and also helps to keep the digestive system in good, efficient order.

glands of the endocrinal system. It strengthens the muscles of the whole body and develops muscular control along with a sense of balance.

#### Integration with other practices

Mayurasana is an important part of basti<sup>4</sup>. It is utilized to fully eliminate water from the bowels.

#### HAMSASANA (SWAN POSE)

Hamsasana is a much simpler form of mayurasana. It should be mastered before attempting mayurasana.

#### Definition

The Sanskrit word *hamsa* means 'swan'. We are not sure why it is called the 'swan pose', because the final pose does not immediately evoke the image of a swan in the same way that mayurasana evokes an image of a peacock.

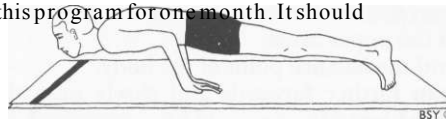
#### Technique

Kneel on the floor with the feet together and the knees apart as in simhasana<sup>2</sup>.

Place the palms flat on the floor with the fingers pointing towards the feet.

The method is exactly the same as for mayurasana except that the feet are not raised off the ground.

Try this program for one month. It should



Hold the head upwards.

All the weight of the body should be supported on the hands and tips of the toes in the final pose.

Stay in the final pose breathing slowly and deeply. Then return to the starting position.

This is the end of 1 round.

Do another round when the breathing has returned to normal.

#### Other details

Details on breathing, awareness, duration, time of practice, sequence, limitations and benefits are as given for mayurasana. The benefits of hamsasana are basically the same as mayurasana but at a much lower level. Women can do hamsasana instead of mayurasana.

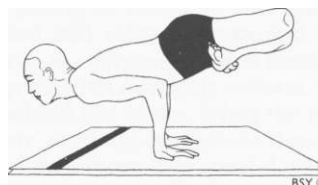
Mayurasana also helps to mayurasana

#### (LOTUS OR BOUND PEACOCK POSE)

This is a form of mayurasana which can be done by those who can sit in padmasana.

#### Definition

The Sanskrit word *padma* means 'lotus flower'. Literally, the English translation would be 'the lotus peacock pose'. A better name, however, is the 'bound peacock pose'.



#### Technique

Sit in padmasana<sup>3</sup>.

Raise the body so that the weight is supported on the knees.

Place the palms flat on the floor in front of the body with the fingers pointing backwards.

Bend the arms at the elbows and bring them together.

Lean forwards and place them against each side of the abdomen.

Lean further forwards so that the chest rests on the upper arms.  
Find the balance point of the body.  
Lean further forwards and slowly raise the folded legs.  
Make the trunk, head and legs lie in one horizontal straight line.  
This is the final pose.  
Either hold your breath or breathe slowly and deeply.  
Stay in the final pose for a comfortable time.  
Then slowly lower the knees to the ground.  
Breathe normally for a short time.  
Then do another round.

#### **Other details**

All other details are as given for mayurasana, but slightly less intense. This asana looks quite impressive and quite difficult, but is in fact relatively easy if you can sit in padmasana.

#### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Book III, Lesson 26, Topic 4

<sup>2</sup> Book I, Lesson 3, Topic 1

<sup>3</sup> Book II, Lesson 15, Topic 2

<sup>4</sup> Book III, Lesson 30, Topic 2

<sup>5</sup> Book I, Lesson 7, Topic 2

## Meditation: Antar Mouna (Stage 3)

The aim of antar mouna is to help each and every person to become his own psychiatrist. That is, it helps a person to release and resolve the problems in his mind. Even the best psychiatrist, yoga teacher, swami or whoever cannot remove your problems for you. They can only stimulate you and encourage you to remove them yourself, by helping you to face tears and conflicts etc. You have to confront and relive these subconscious experiences for yourself. Antar mouna is a psychiatric tool that helps you to do this without the direct guidance of another person.

We have already described stage 1 and 2, where one first of all becomes accustomed to outer disturbances and then, secondly, faces the spontaneous inner flow of thoughts<sup>1</sup>.

### ANTAR MOUNA - STAGE 3 CONSCIOUS CREATION OF THOUGHTS

This stage is exactly opposite to stage 2. You should not allow spontaneous thoughts to occur. If they arise they should be immediately eliminated. Instead you should choose a thought at will, reflect on it for some time and then throw it out. Then you should choose another thought, exhaust it, forget it and then choose another thought. This process should be continued for as long as you have time available.

#### **Purpose**

The mind is full of negatively charged thoughts (samskaras). Antar mouna stage 2 helps to release many of these mental tensions by allowing them to erupt without inhibition. However, many of these subconscious thoughts are deeply embedded in the normally inaccessible regions of the mind. They have been firmly fixed and rooted in the mind through habitual suppression. Therefore, they do not arise spontaneously. They have to be loosened from their hold on the mind by

another method. One method is stage 3 where one chooses specific thoughts at will. These posed thoughts stir up a train of other associated thoughts, some of which may be deeply embedded complexes of the mind. That is, the consciously created thoughts tend to excite and arouse deeper thoughts and memories. This helps to induce a spontaneous flow of subconscious thoughts which can then be exhausted.

We can best illustrate the function of stage 3 with an analogy. If one goes fishing, bait is fixed on a hook; this bait may be a worm or even another fish. This represents the consciously created thought. The bait is put in the water; this represents the subconscious mind. The bait attracts many hungry fish; these are the deeply embedded subconscious thoughts. Eventually a fish will be caught on the hook and lifted out of the water. This represents the removal of the previously suppressed thought. If you repeatedly put the baited hook in the water, then you will bring out more fish. If you create different conscious thoughts then you will hook and exhaust more subconscious thoughts.

The posing of conscious thoughts stirs up the mind and releases knots and blocks. It helps you to relive suppressed memories and feelings etc. that adversely influence your life from behind the scenes. When the memories, fears, etc. are fully confronted then they lose much of their force. The mind slowly becomes more and more peaceful.

#### **Choice of thoughts and images**

You can choose any thoughts that you wish, but don't waste your time choosing inconsequential thoughts. Choose negative thoughts in preference to positive thoughts; the more unpleasant, the better. Do not waste your time with thoughts such as: "I will have a bath this morning" or "What time is it?" for these thoughts are unlikely to be associated

with strong emotions; they are not likely to stir up emotionally charged thoughts from the subconscious. Choose a thought such as: "That man cheated me of money" or "I really hate my boss". These type of thoughts are much more likely to induce subconscious eruptions of other thoughts and emotions.

If you cannot think of any unpleasant thought, then choose any thought that arises. For example, you can try to remember the things that you did in the previous twenty-four hours, progressing in sequence hour by hour. Or you may choose to think about the train journey to your place of work. Let your mind follow all the events that happen on the journey. Or you may choose a thought such as: "Where did I lose my umbrella?" Expand this line of thought: "I left it in the train; no, I had it later, because I prodded someone with it when I reached my destination, yet it definitely wasn't with me when I left work." And so forth. Choose any thought and follow it. Do not let the mind wander off the theme you have chosen. Keep it on one track. Create as many thoughts as you can concerning the chosen idea. Let your thoughts follow a sequence. If you wish you can create vivid mental images, the more unpleasant, the better. These images can be integrated with the thought sequence. Most people will find this difficult, but if you can do it you will find that it is a good method of awakening suppressed subconscious thoughts, images and experiences.

Thoughts have no end, for one thought leads to another and that thought in turn leads to another. Therefore, after a certain period of time you have to cut your thought sequence, you have to leave it and create a new sequence. If you wish you can spend half an hour on one theme, especially if it is a thought sequence that is particularly disturbing. However, in general we suggest that you spend no more than a few minutes on each thought sequence.

Try not to repeat the same thought sequence, for this is a waste of valuable time. Create new trains of thought and exhaust them. Throw them out of the mind. After some practice you will develop the habit of confronting conscious thoughts and then exhausting them. This is a great help in bringing peace into the mind.

### Technique

Sit in a comfortable pose.

Close the eyes.

Create any thought of your choice.

Be aware of all the thoughts that you can create on the same theme.

Don't allow irrelevant thoughts to distract you.

Keep your thoughts on the chosen theme.

Create as many thoughts as you can on that one theme, allowing only thoughts that you wish to appear.

Try to be aware . . . a witness of the whole process.

Don't become overpowered by spontaneous thoughts; if they arise say to yourself: 'not now' and return to thoughts on the chosen theme.

Then after a minute or so throw it out with a sudden jerk.

Create another thought, preferably a disagreeable one.

Study it for a minute or so.

Think of all aspects of that chosen thought.

Create deliberate thoughts on that theme.

Brood over it.

Then cut that train of thought.

Invite a new thought and repeat the same procedure.

Then become aware of the chidakasha - the space in front of the closed eyes<sup>2</sup>.

Watch that space and allow any spontaneous thoughts to arise.

Be a witness to any thoughts or visions that arise.

This is the time when you may become aware of suppressed subconscious experiences.

Only be a witness.

Then after a minute or so again create a thought at will and create a sequence of associated thoughts.

After a minute or so wipe out your perception of the thoughts.

Choose another thought and create a sequence of related thoughts on the same theme.

Then again be aware of the chidakasha.

Only be aware of the spontaneous eruption of thoughts - don't intentionally create thoughts.

Then after a minute or so again create a new train of thought.

Continue in this manner for as long as you have time available.

This is the technique of antar mouna stage 3.

**Awareness**

Try to be a witness throughout the entire process.

**Limited suppression**

It should be noted that the wilful disposal of thought implies a degree of suppression. However, much of the emotional content of the thought is exhausted by the limited review of each created thought train. It is impossible to completely reduce the influence of thoughts because the process of reviewing itself creates more thoughts. That is, the process of thinking about thoughts itself leads to more thoughts. Therefore, there has to be a compromise: one has to release most of the emotional tension of the thoughts, but after a short period of time one has to suppress in order to create new thoughts. There is not enough time available to spend a long period following one train of thoughts. Therefore, one has to accept a small amount of suppression.

**Combination of stage 2 and 3**

You will note that we have combined stage 2 and 3 in the technique just described. That is, the wilful creation and disposal of thoughts is stage 3; the period of watching the spontaneous eruption of thoughts at the chidakasha is stage 2. We have done this for a good reason; the wilful creation of thoughts stirs up the subconscious; the period of watching the chidakasha allows stired up thoughts to bubble up and be exhausted.

**Readiness for stage 4**

After a certain period of regular practice of stage 3 you will find that spontaneous thoughts occur before you can choose a thought on which to dwell. The frequency and intensity of these thoughts is so great and overwhelming that you will find it difficult to decide on one thought for analysis. There is a state of psychic confusion. You are then ready to proceed to stage 4<sup>3</sup>.

**Notes**

- 1 Antarmouna: stage 1 - Book III, Lesson 26, Topic 5; stage 2 - Book III, Lesson 27, Topic 5
- 2 Book II, Lesson 13, Topic 5
- 3 Antarmouna: stage 4 - Book III, Lesson 29, Topic 5

## Daily Practice Program

In this lesson we have introduced jnana yoga. It is a difficult path that only brings tangible results after a period of intense practice and aspiration. It should be combined with other yogic practices, including kriya yoga, which make the mind one-pointed and enable one's constant enquiry to bring realizations.

Nauli is an excellent practice that keeps the body strong and healthy. We suggest that you master it in your spare time. We have not included it in the suggested programs because of lack of time.

You should practise either mayurasana, hamsasana or padma mayurasana according to capacity. Don't do them all.

We have described antar mouna stage 3, the conscious creation of thoughts. It is not

advisable to start this stage until you have practised stage 2 for a reasonable period of time. This may take a few months or even longer because it takes a long time to reduce the constant chatter in the mind and allow it to exhaust itself. We suggest you spend at least three months doing stage 2 before commencing stage 3.

Shabda sanchalana takes about 30 minutes to complete. This means that the first five kriyas, nos. 1 to 5, take about 80 minutes. For this reason, we have excluded the kriya practices from the one hour program. Instead, the one hour program will be reserved for general yoga practice.

Practice	Minutes
<b>Program 1:</b> duration 2 hours	
Surya Namaskara	5
Shavasana	3
Ardha Padma Paschimottanasana	4
Bhujangasana	3
Mayurasana, Hamasana or Padma Mayurasana	3
Ardha Matsyendrasana	4
Bhastrika Pranayama	10
Kriya Yoga:	
Kriya 1: Vipareeta Karani Mudra	10
Kriya 2: Chakra Anusandhana	4
Kriya 3: Nada Sanchalana	7
Kriya 4: Pawan Sanchalana	25
Kriya 5: Shabda Sanchalana	30
Antar Mouna - Stage 3	12
	120

Program 2: duration 1 1/2 hours

Surya Namaskara	5
Shavasana	3
Bhastrika Pranayama	6
Kriya Yoga:	
Kriya 1: Vipareeta Karani Mudra	10
Kriya 2: Chakra Anusandhana	4
Kriya 3: Nada Sanchalana	7
Kriya 4: Pawan Sanchalana	25
Kriya 5: Shabda Sanchalana	30
	<hr/>
	90

Program 3: duration 1 hour for general yoga practice

Surya Namaskara	5
Shavasana	3
Bhujangasana	3
Ardha Padma Paschimottanasana	4
Ardha Matsyendrasana	3
Sirshasana	4
Tadasana	1
Shavasana	2
Mayurasana, Hamasana or	
Padma Mayurasana	3
Bhastrika Pranayama	12
Antar Mouna:	
Stage 2	10
Stage 3	10
	<hr/>
	60

Try to find the time to practise nauli. Also, if you find sirshasana too difficult then sarvangasana can be done as a substitute.

