

Practical : Yoga Protocol Instructor (YPI)

A. Demonstration Skills

4.1 Yoga : Concept and recitation of Pranava and other hymns.

Prayer (प्रार्थना)

The word prayer or (*prārthanā* in Sanskrit) is derived from two words '*pra*' and '*artha*' meaning pleading, begging passionately. In other words, it is asking God for something with intense desire.

Through a prayer a devotee expresses his helplessness and gives the doer ship of the task to God. When we put full efforts from our side but still things don't work in our favour then we pray in expectation of fulfilling our desires from God or to take blessings from him.

Giving the doer-ship to God means that we acknowledge that God is helping us and getting the task done. Prayer is an important tool of spiritual practice in the generic spiritual path of Devotion (*Bhakti*).

Prayer includes respect, love, pleading and faith. When we pray, it is absolutely necessary to have our mind completely still and quiet. While praying, indulging our mind in worldly affairs destroys the power of Prayer.

Prayer is an esoteric, mysterious, sacred and powerful device to begin any activity.

One must realise the importance of Prayer in keeping problems and calamities away. Prayer in the sense of mantra is an esoteric science, having it's own principles.

Dhanwantari, the physician of gods says :

अच्युतानंद गोविंद नामोच्चारण भेषजात ।
नश्यन्ति सकलारोगाः सत्यं सत्यं वदाम्यहम् । (धन्वंतरी)

Achyutaanand govind naamochchaaraṇ bhashajaata /

Nashyanti sakalaarogaa: satyam satyam vadaamyaham / (Dhanwantari)

Meaning :

The chanting of the names of God like Achyuta, Ananta and Govinda is the medicine which will destroy all diseases; and I speak the truth and nothing but the truth.

In modern society, a major problem is “Disease”. Both physical as well as mental. It is an eternal truth that Diseases considered to be incurable can be cured by means of prayer.

Any problem be it personal or social nature can be resolved by prayer. However, one must be physically and mentally capable of generating the powers of Prayer.

This capability can be acquired or improved with proper practice of Yoga and Ayurveda. These two sciences are the golden gifts bestowed upon us by our ancestors. The potent power of prayer is realized when it is done in conjunction with the Yogic practices.

Alexis Carrel, a 1912 Noble prize winner in Physiology says :

Prayer is force as rain as gravitational force.

Prayer is a force one can generate as terrestrial gravity

It is not important that how much time you have spent in praying. Important is sincerity with complete engagement of Body, Speech, Mind or Sense Organs (Kaya, Vacha & Manasa)

Before starting any auspicious work, we worship Ganesha first. When we began our day, in the morning - we pray to God and request to make your day good.

At the night before sleeping we Thank God for all that good happened to us. Similarly we start Yoga session with Prayer to have concentrated mind for yogic practices.

Usually, we pray - when we are in trouble or when we need something in return.

Prayers done from the bottom of heart are accepted because it generates power.

There are 3 types of prayers :

1) Personal prayer : The prayer in which one prays for himself alone as soon as get up from the bed and before stepping down. Modern medical science also suggest that when you get up from good night's sleep, don't get out of bed suddenly. Since the body is resting heart is working at slower pace. When you get up and sit the signal is sent to brain to increase the heart beats.

*Karaagre Vasate Lakshamee Karamadhye Sarasvati |
Karamule śhchā Govinda Prabhaate Karadarshanam ||*

**‘कराग्रे वसते लक्ष्मी । करमध्ये सरस्वती ।
करमुलेश्च गोविंद । प्रभाते करदर्शनम् ।’**

The meaning is:

Lakshmi, goddess of wealth rests at the tip of hand (i.e. palm), who we worship for wealth. Saraswati is in the middle of the palm, who we worship for knowledge. And Govind is at the base of our hand, who we worship for health and protection

2) Group Prayer : Prayer done with a group or students. It is in the interest of welfare of the group. Examples of this type of prayer are found in the Vedas and Upanishads, like :

ॐ सहनावतु | सह नौ भुनक्तु
सह वीर्यं करवावहै | तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Saha Naa vavatu | Saha Nau Bhunaktu |

Saha Viiryam Karavaavahai |

3) Universal Prayer : The prayer is sincerely for the welfare of the whole world.

In such kind of prayer there are no expectations for individual benefits and no desire for anyone in particular. Selfless expressions for the wellbeing of all creatures in this universe. Like :

सर्वे ऽ पि सुखिनः सन्तु | सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः |
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु | मा कश्चित् दुःख माप्नुयात् ।

Sarvepi Sukhinah Santu | Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |

Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu | Maa Kashcit-Duhkha-Maapnuyat |

Prayer, Mantras or Jaap can be chanted in four ways:

1. Vaikhari (वैखरी) – Chanting loudly so that others can hear. Daily spoken language, which do not require much thought.
2. Upanshu (उपांशु) / Madhyama (मध्यमा) – Whispering. Lips in slow pace so that the persons who is chanting can listen.

It is described as the speech which is active in the form of contemplation.

3. Mental (मानसिक) - In mind without any lip movement.
4. Written (लिखित) – By writing the Mantra

Prayer are in the form of some of the rituals of worship which includes : Prayers (Prarthana), chanting (Mantra), Keertan and bhajans.

By chanting mantras / Jaap we get the blessings of God. For getting the desired effects, It is necessary to have correct pronounce with devotion & purity.

The word Mantra is a combination of two letters “man” and “tra” (" मं" and " त्र ")

“Man” represents mind and “tra” comes from Sanskrit word *trayati* (त्रायति) means “to protect”. Therefore, the one who protects the mind is called as *Mantra*.

मननात् त्रायते इति मंत्र"। – “Mananat trayate Iti Mañtra”.

ॐ Om - Single syllable mantra.

ॐ Om is also known as Omkar or Pranav. Om is made up of three Sanskrit words, A , U and Ma (the words A and U combined with O).

Before the creation of this material world, there was a natural sound in the universe. This is the echo of a strong and loud sound of the universe.

Om is called Anahata Naad (Unstruck sound). Anahata means unhurt, unstruck, and unbeaten. It activates / awakens Anahat & Ajnya Chakra .

It is always recited before mantras. Like Om Namoji Aadya!

Om Namaste Ganapataye!

Chanting Om is a very sacred practice that helps in energizing our mind and body. It reduces stress, relaxes your body thereby reducing blood pressure.

Decreases the heart beats to a regular rhythm.

Now we will try to understand some prayers and their meanings.

1. Gurur Bramha : गुरुर ब्रह्मा

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः	गु (Gu) = Darkness रु (ru) = Remover
गुरु साक्षात् परब्रह्मा तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः	Guru (गुरु) = Remover of darkness

Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu Gurur Devo Maheshwaraha

Guru Saakshaat ParaBrahma Tasmai Sri Gurave Namaha

Guru is the Creator (Brahma), Guru is the Preserver(Vishnu),

GuruDeva is Destroyer(Maheshwara)

Salutations to that Sri Guru, who is the absolute (singular) Lord himself,

2. Sarvepi Sukhina (Universal Prayer) : सर्वे ऽ पि सुखिनः

सर्वे ऽ पि सुखिनः सन्तु । सर्वे सन्तु निरामया : ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु । मा कश्चित् दुःख माप्नुयात् ।

Sarvepi Sukhina Santu | Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |

Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu | Maa Kashcit-Duhkha-Maapnuyat |

May all become happy
May everybody be healthy (free from illness) |
May all see auspiciousness everywhere
May none suffer any way |

3. Sahana vavtu : सहनाववतु

ॐ सहनाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु
सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Saha Naa vavatu | Saha Nau Bhunaktu |

Saha Viiryam Karavaavahai |

Tejasvi Naav -dhiita-mastu Maa Vidvissaavahai |

Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih |

May God protect us together (Teacher and the Student)
May He accept and nourish us together.
May We work together with great vigor.

May what has been Studied by us be filled with the Brilliance

May we be bonded together with love and affection

Let there be no hatred amongst us.

ॐ Peace, Peace, Peace

4. Gayatri Mantra : गायत्री मंत्र

ॐ भूर् भुवः स्वः तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्॥	Om Bhūḥ – Bhuvaḥ – Suvaḥ Om Tat – Savitur – Varenyam Bhargo Devasya Dhīmahi Dhiyo Yo Naḥ Pracodāyat
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Mantra in English is called as Hymn. Pronounced as Him and ‘n’ is silent here. The Gayatri Mantra is dedicated to God Sun who gives us life in the form of light.

The meaning is :

Om, the Earth, the Space in between and the Heavens. That Lord is the one who is the most worshipful. We meditate on that divine effulgence & all-knowledge. May he set our intellects in the right direction.

Gayatri Mantra is very ancient Mantra. It is an universal prayer to illuminate our intelligence.

It is a torch to spiritual wisdom. It is said to be most powerful amongst all Sanskrit mantra. Therefore, it is called as Maha-mantra.

Mantras are seen by Great Rishis in their deep meditative state. The seer of the Gayatri Mantra is sage Vishwamitra, who has written for us. Origin of the term Gayatri is in the name itself : *Gayantam Trayate iti mantra*.

The Mantra which protects the one who recites mantra is Gaytri.

The Gayatri mantra has been translated in many ways.

Swami Chinmayananda says :

May my intellect be steady without agitations;

May it be clean without the dirt of passions.

May the light of consciousness come to shine forth a brilliant beam of its radiance through my intellect.

Thus :

May my perception of the world be clear,

My discrimination be subtle,

My judgments be correct and quick,

My comprehension of situations and beings be precise and wise.

Ending Prayers :

Any Yoga sessions, Satsang, spiritual activity is concluded by Shanti Path or shanti Mantra.

Each Upnishad have different Shanti Mantra. Most popular Shanti Mantras are :

1. Om Asato Ma sadgamay from Brihadaranyak Upnishad

2. Om Purnamadah from Ishavasya Upanishad

At the end of the Shanti Mantra, we say Shanti three times to get rid of the 3 types of pain or suffering.

Pain or sufferings come from three different sources : –

1. Aadhyatmik : Intra-organic or from one's own body and mind. The griefs of adhyâtmika can be of two types, namely physical and mental. Physical causes are when the body suffers from the imbalances of vâta, pitta and kapha or the differences of food and habits. Mental causes refer to desires, rage, jealousy, hatred, and love like passion that cause grief.
2. Adhibhautik : Extra-organic or from outside oneself but from the natural world. These griefs are caused by other animals like snake, scorpion stings and injuries by the other wild animals, being beaten by someone, suffering from abusive words.
3. Adhidaivik : Extra-organic but from the supernatural world. These sufferings are floods due to rain and snowfall, lightning strikes, earthquakes and such other abnormal disasters.

5. Asato maa. (Shanti path) : असतो मा

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय। तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय। मृत्योर्मा मृतं गमय ॥ ॐ शान्ति शान्ति शान्तिः ॥ - बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् 1.3.28	Om Asato Maa Sad-Gamaya Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya Mrutyor-Maa Amrutam Gamaya Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih
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Lead me from untruth to truth

Lead me from darkness of ignorance to light of knowledge

Lead me from mortality to immortality

Om peace peace peace.

6. Om Purna Madaha. (Shanti path) : पूर्णमदः

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

om pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṁ pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate॥
om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ॥

Om! That is the whole. This is the whole. From wholeness emerges wholeness.
Wholeness coming from wholeness, wholeness still remains.



How to Pray

How it Works



Stages of Prayer Postures



- a) Bow your head
- b) Thumbs touching the mid-brow Adnya chakra
- c) Begin praying

- d) After praying assume posture 2
- e) In posture 2 the wrists should touch the mid-chest Anahat chakra



Tips for a more effective prayer:

God

Imagine you are at a peaceful place

Visualize God or positive frequencies

Correct Posture Increases Spiritual Benefits



Activation of Spiritual emotion



Benefits of Prayers :

1. It provides us a healthy lifestyle.
2. Brings you closer to yourself as well as to the greater things you seek.
3. It reduces ego and improves self-confidence.
4. Spiritual development which reduces stress, depressions and other mental ailment.
5. Provide mental strength to pass through any difficult situation.

If you worry, it means you don't pray.

If you pray, then why worry?

References :

- 1) Certification of yoga professional official guidebook for level I (YPI)
- 2) Swasthya Yoga Book - By HathaYogi Nikam Guruji
- 3) Spiritual Science Research Foundation

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