

## Introduction

## History

### Introduction

#### Introduction to Yoganidra

- Yoga Nidra (योगनिद्रा) is a deep relaxation technique that:
  - Relieves stress.
  - Improves sleep.
  - Accesses the bliss state (Ananda आनन्द).
- Composed of series of body, breath, imagination acts to guide into progressive states of relaxation (non-doing)
- Inspired by the Bihar School of Yoga, this script follows the inward journey through the Koshas.

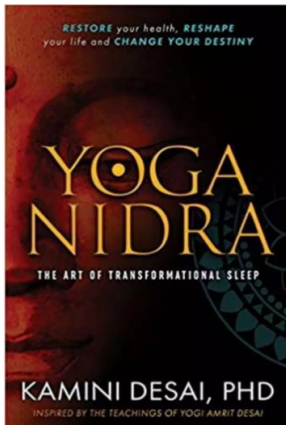
#### Introduction to Yoganidra

- Yoganidra translates to "yogic sleep" and represents a state of deep relaxation.
- Often referred to as the "4th state" or Turya in Mandukya Upanishad.
- Unlike regular sleep, Yoganidra involves deep relaxation combined with heightened awareness.
- Practiced through guided meditations that induce states of restful alertness.

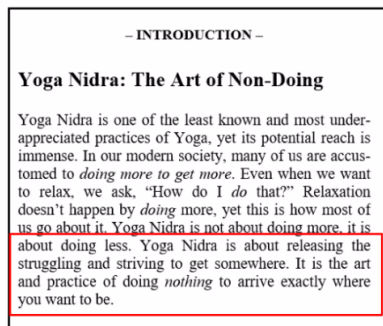
#### Borderline between Awake and Sleep

- Yoganidra is on the borderline between wakefulness and sleep.
- It balances conscious and subconscious awareness, bridging the gap between these states.
- Practitioners bypass the usual conscious filtering, allowing direct access to the subconscious.

#### What is Yoga Nidra?

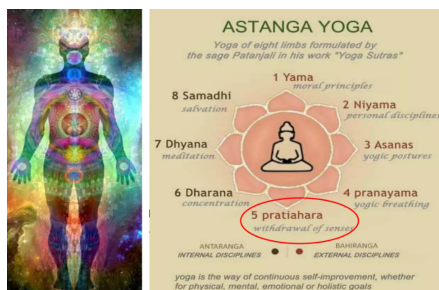


(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)



#### What is Yoga Nidra?

Its is Pratyahara प्रत्याहार : Prati प्रति (inside) + ahara आहार (food), ie food to inside, that is, contrary to our attention being always external looking, here we are looking inside. Plus, there is tantra word 'nyasa' न्यास , meanings seating. meaning you put attention at different places.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

#### Notable points

- Yoganidra comes from tantra तंत्र , where it is called 'nyasa' न्यास (withdraw, like Pratyahara प्रत्याहार), meaning withdraw from acquired self full of anxiety and worry, and go inward to become real self who is calm and peaceful.
- Yoganidra works on manas मनस (which is feminine, motherly) and not on buddhi बुद्धी (which is masculine, fatherly)
- Swami Satyanand Sawarswati revived it after loss in centuries in between, now given to Swammi Niranjanananda.
- Yogasutra is part of 6 darshana दर्शन (yoga योग), which is 'what' and 'how' process, tantra and not just 'what' in case of word 'Philosophy', purely theoretical.
- Bhagavad geeta भगवद्गीता starts with word 'dharma kshetre' धर्मक्षेत्रे so its about 'dharma' धर्म. Yogasutra starts with word 'atha yoga anushasanam' अथ योग अनुशासनं, so, 'atha' अथ means 'now'. Its all about 'now' the awareness of the present, that's it.
- The world will not adjust to your needs, you accept and withdraw to do your work.

(Ref: Yoga Nidra (online) - Shrimath Yoga)

#### Notable points

- Make list of desires however small, keep them secret, will turn one of them to resolve.
- Mind has 4 modes: manas buddhi chitta ahamkar मनस बुद्धी चित्त अहंकार , we need to regulate it. one mode is active predominantly.
- manas: when ideating, brain-storming, when no judgment is exercised
- buddhi: selection of ideas/alternatives, using intellect filter whats needed
- chitta: memory, go to past, whats the experience of past (hard-disk)
- ahamkara: ego/self-arrogating (assignment)-principle is attached, is it suitable to me. To have will power to implement decisions taken.

(Ref: Yoga Nidra (online) - Shrimath Yoga)

#### Four Stages of Human Consciousness



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## Brain Wave States in Yoga Nidra

- During Yoga Nidra, consciousness fluctuates between:
  - Introversion and extroversion states
  - Alpha and theta wave states
- The Nidra State:
  - Located at border between alpha and theta waves
  - Mind becomes highly receptive
  - Allows contact with subconscious and unconscious dimensions
  - Access to dormant potential and hidden solutions

## Scientific Evidence of Brain States

- Alpha Brainwaves:
  - Associated with relaxation and creativity
  - Enhanced learning capabilities
  - Improved cognitive function
- Brain Coherence:
  - Different regions synchronize activity
  - Similar to experienced meditators
  - Access to deeper consciousness states
- Autonomic Nervous System:
  - Activates parasympathetic response
  - Reduces effects of chronic stress
  - Promotes natural healing processes

## Practitioners



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)



## Modern Development

### Swami Satyananda Saraswati's Contributions :

- Systematized Yoga Nidra in the 20th century
- Founded Bihar School of Yoga
- Made the practice accessible to modern practitioners
- Emphasized scientific approach to traditional practice
- Developed structured methodology for teaching

## Research

### Richard Miller



<https://www.irest.org/users/richard-c-miller>

(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## Sleep vs Yoga Nidra

### Sleep :

- Unconscious state
- No awareness
- Natural occurrence
- Brain in delta waves

### Yoga Nidra (योगनिद्रा) :

- Conscious relaxation
- Maintained awareness
- Guided practice
- Brain transitions through various wave states
- One hour equals 4 hours of regular sleep

## Meditation vs Yoganidra

### Meditation :

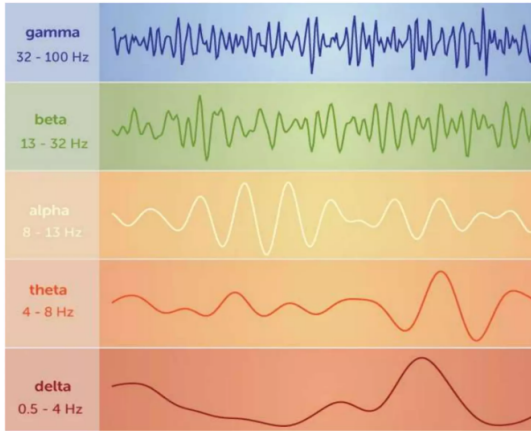
- Typically done sitting up
- Focuses on one point of concentration
- Requires active mental effort
- May be challenging for beginners

### Yoga Nidra (योगनिद्रा) :

- Done lying down
- Systematic rotation of awareness
- Guided relaxation practice
- Accessible to all skill levels

## Differences between Yoganidra and Self-Hypnosis

- State of Consciousness :
  - Yoganidra: Achieves a state of Turya – deep relaxation with heightened awareness; mind remains alert.
  - Self-Hypnosis: Involves a trance-like state where the conscious mind becomes passive, with a focus on specific suggestions.
- Process :
  - Yoganidra: Uses guided meditation to systematically relax each body part while retaining self-awareness.
  - Self-Hypnosis: Often uses repetitive suggestions or imagery to access the subconscious for specific goals.
- Purpose :
  - Yoganidra: Aims for overall relaxation, self-awareness, and mental clarity; spiritual alignment.
  - Self-Hypnosis: Typically used for behavior modification or addressing specific habits.
- Awareness Levels :
  - Yoganidra: Maintains a balance between conscious and subconscious, with an element of witnessing.
  - Self-Hypnosis: Primarily engages the subconscious with reduced conscious interference.
- Applications :
  - Yoganidra: Stress reduction, relaxation, self-exploration, and spiritual growth.
  - Self-Hypnosis: Often goal-oriented, targeting specific habits like smoking cessation, or reducing anxiety.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)



## Science : ECG

- Level 1: Alpha waves and reduced BP
- Level 2: Theta waves and creativity
- Level 3: Theta followed by Delta waves: Like NREM sleep, but individual is aware
- Level 4: Simultaneous sleep and awareness: Alternates between theta and delta waves (?)

(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## 8 Stages of Yoganidra

1. Preparation (Shavasana): Deep breaths in Shavasana (शवासन).
2. Resolve (Sankalpa): Optional positive affirmation (संकल्प).
3. Body Awareness (Rotation): Relax body parts.
4. Breath Awareness: Relaxation through breath.
5. Opposite Sensations: Experience and release emotions.
6. Visualization: Reach the subconscious with imagery.
7. Resolve (Sankalpa): Repeat the Sankalpa again.
8. Exiting: Return awareness to external surroundings.

## Key Instructions

- No movement during Yoganidra.
- Stay awake, do not fall asleep.
- Do not think, just follow the instructions.

## The Koshas (कोश)

- Annamaya Kosha (अन्नमयकोश) - Physical Body
- Pranamaya Kosha (प्राणमयकोश) - Energy Body
- Manomaya Kosha (मनोमयकोश) - Emotional Body
- Vijnanamaya Kosha (विज्ञानमयकोश) - Wisdom Body
- Anandamaya Kosha (आनन्दमयकोश) - Bliss Body

## Koshas in Yoganidra

- Body Awareness (Rotation): Annamayakosha (अन्नमयकोश) - Physical Body: Focus on different body parts (right palm, right arm, legs, back, etc.).
- Breath Awareness: Pranamayakosha (प्राणमयकोश) - Breath Awareness: Reverse breath count from 27.
- Opposite Sensations: Manomayakosha (मनोमयकोश) - Emotional Body: Experience opposite sensations (hot/cold, wet/dry).
- Visualization: Vijnanamayakosha (विज्ञानमयकोश) - Subconscious Visualization: Visualize calming scenes like deserts, lakes, and waves.

## Tips for Practicing Yoganidra

- Use simple and precise language in the script.
- Speak in a clear and even tone.
- Sit comfortably and be still during facilitation.
- Practice in a warm, comfortable space. Use props (pillows, blankets) to support the body.
- Remain still, but do not fall asleep.

## Important Considerations

- Consult Healthcare Provider if:
  - Pregnant or recently post-partum
  - Have serious medical conditions
  - Experiencing severe mental health issues
- Practice Guidelines:
  - Avoid practice immediately after meals
  - Ensure comfortable room temperature
  - Practice at consistent times
  - Stay awake during the practice

## Benefits of Yoganidra for the Mind and Body

- Deep relaxation and mental reset.
- Allows reprogramming of habitual negative thoughts.
- Enhances self-awareness and reduces stress.
- Promotes clarity, relaxation, and mental fortitude.

## Limitations of Yoganidra

- Its a mental, psychological process, so no physical problems are solved
- Can not cure diseases like diabetics but the mental trauma associated with it

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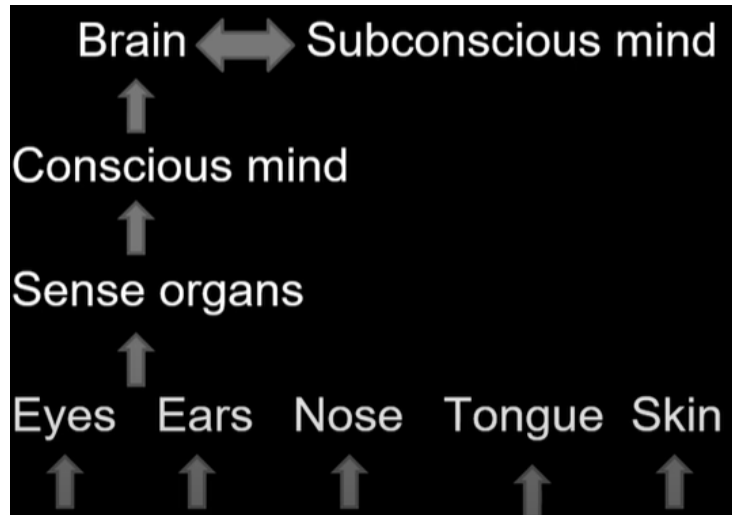
- Only for Psychological problems:
  - Its a mental, psychological process, so no physical problems are solved
  - Can not cure diseases like diabetics but the mental trauma associated with it
- Requires Guidance:
  - Proper guidance from a skilled teacher or accurate recordings is essential for effective practice.
  - Self-practice without understanding may lead to superficial relaxation without achieving deeper benefits.
- Effectiveness Depends on Regularity:
  - Practicing sporadically may yield limited benefits; consistency is needed for noticeable mental and emotional transformation.
  - Results can take time, requiring patience and dedication.
- Not a Substitute for Therapy:
  - While beneficial for stress and self-awareness, Yoganidra may not replace therapeutic interventions for serious psychological issues.
  - It is best used as a complementary practice rather than a sole treatment for mental health concerns.

## Theory

## Theory : How it works ?

## How Mind and Memory Work

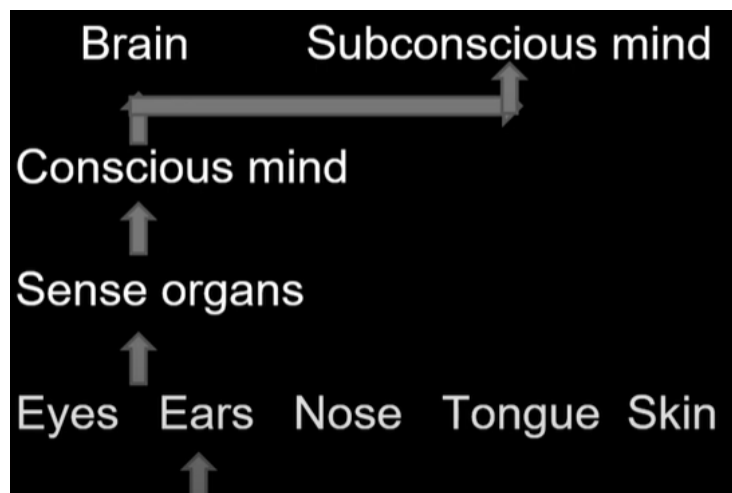
- In typical awake states :
  - Sense organs send signals to the conscious mind.
  - Conscious mind decides what information to relay to the brain.
  - The brain processes, references memories, and creates responses or stores knowledge.
- In sleep :
  - Only critical or threatening signals are relayed.
  - Subconscious mind remains active, processing memories without conscious interference.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra as Therapy - Yogapointindia)

## Changes in Yoganidra: Bypassing the Brain

- In Yoganidra :
  - The conscious mind bypasses usual processes, directly influencing the subconscious.
  - Desired affirmations or resolutions can overwrite or reprogram unwanted memories.
  - This bypass allows deeper, lasting personal transformation without mental resistance.
- Conscious instructions integrate seamlessly into the subconscious, enabling habit or perception changes.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra as Therapy - Yogapointindia)

## Swami Rama's Demonstration of Yoganidra

- Swami Rama, in Yoganidra, demonstrated heightened awareness by re-counting discussions held while he was in a deep sleep state.
- This phenomenon indicates awareness in delta wave states, typical of deep sleep but with conscious recollection.
- Delta state in Yoganidra aligns with the Turya state: deep rest with expanded consciousness.

## The State of Turya in Mandukya Upanishad

- Turya is the fourth state beyond wakefulness, dreaming, and deep sleep.
- It combines elements of deep sleep (rest, rejuvenation) with a keen alertness.
- In Yoganidra, practitioners enter Turya, accessing latent aspects of the mind, fostering self-awareness and calm.

## Introduction to Yoga Nidra

- Overview of the Yoga Nidra steps and how to design it for self-practice or teaching.
- Includes essential and optional steps: Settling and Internalization, Sankalpa, Body Rotation, Breath Awareness, Opposites, Visualization, Repeating Sankalpa, and Externalization.

### Stage 1: Settling & Internalization

- Essential for all Yoga Nidra practices.
- Body preparation in Shavasana (or alternate comfortable positions).
- Focus on relaxing body parts, awareness of sensations, and external sounds.
- Gradual shift to sound of breath, preparing for inward focus.

### Stage 2: Sankalpa (Resolve)

- Optional but highly beneficial for personal growth and positive reinforcement.
- A short, positive mental statement set at the beginning and repeated at the end.
- Sows a seed of intention in the subconscious, helping to reshape personality.

### Stage 3: Rotation of Consciousness

- Essential step that involves mental awareness of body parts.
- No physical movement; focus moves systematically from one part to another.
- Consistent pace, starting with the right thumb, concluding with left toe.
- Supports relaxation and subconscious awareness.

### Stage 4: Awareness of Breath

- Focuses on natural breath awareness without altering it.
- Can involve counting breaths or observing the breath at various points.
- Promotes deeper relaxation and healing by balancing body energy.

### Stage 5: Opposites (Sensations & Feelings)

- Optional, focuses on pairs of opposite sensations (e.g., heat/cold, heavy/light).
- Harmonizes brain hemispheres, controls unconscious functions, builds emotional resilience.
- Brings deep relaxation through catharsis.

### Stage 6: Visualization

- Optional stage using powerful imagery (e.g., landscapes, symbols).
- Draws subconscious content into conscious awareness, aiding self-discovery.
- Encourages relaxation by processing deep, often unrecognized emotions.

### Stage 7: Repeating the Sankalpa

- Optional but recommended if introduced in Stage 2.
- Reinforces positive intention as a "seed" planted at the beginning and "watered" at the end.
- Enables personality transformation by embedding the resolve into the subconscious.



## Stage 8: Externalization

- Essential final stage, transitioning back to waking state.
- Gradually reconnects awareness from subtle inward focus to physical body and surroundings.
- Can include gentle movements and Om chanting for a smooth return.

## Most critical: Sankalp

(Ref: Assignment Sankalpa & Mantra - Yogapointindia)

### What is a Sankalpa?

- A Sankalpa is a Sanskrit term meaning resolve or resolution.
- It is a powerful tool that can shape destiny and guide personal transformation.
- Defined as a mental intention for virtuous conduct, will, or purpose.
- Seen as a choice that shapes how we live, influencing us physically, mentally, and spiritually.

### Benefits of Sankalpa

- Strengthens the mind and willpower.
- Helps to change habits, addictions, and conditioning.
- Transforms personality and gives positive direction in life.
- Acts as a guiding principle for living a balanced, meaningful life.

### How to Find Your Sankalpa

- Requires reflection on life goals, weaknesses, and personal values.
- Spend time meditating and contemplating to uncover the right Sankalpa.
- Once chosen, stick with it for a lasting, powerful impact.
- Avoid frequently changing your Sankalpa; consistency enhances its strength.

### Formulating Your Sankalpa

- Make it positive and concise.
- Ensure it is easy to remember without needing to refer to notes.
- Phrase it in the present tense to reinforce its relevance and power.
- Examples:
  - "I am happy and healthy in body, mind, and soul."
  - "My emotions are balanced; I can overcome obstacles."
  - "I am peaceful and content."

### Using Your Sankalpa

- Repeat your Sankalpa upon waking and before sleeping.
- Use it at the beginning and end of practices like yoga, meditation, or pranayama.
- Keep reminders in visible places to reinforce it during the day.
- Recall it during challenging times to boost motivation.

### Sankalpa as a Mantra

- Treat the Sankalpa as a mantra, repeating it mentally or aloud.
- Each repetition strengthens it in your consciousness, like building a "positivity bank."
- The more you repeat it, the more powerful and ingrained it becomes.

### This Week: Finding Your Sankalpa

- Reflect on personal goals, strengths, weaknesses, and values.
- Review thoughts and emotions, identifying key areas for growth.
- Analyze personal obstacles to uncover the root causes.
- Use these insights to formulate a meaningful Sankalpa.

## This Week: Practicing Your Sankalpa

- Repeat it daily, morning and night, to deepen its impact.
- Practice saying it mentally on each inhalation for heightened effect.
- Write it as Japa, repeating it 11 or 21 times in written form.
- Experiment with both mental repetition and written Japa to see what resonates more.

### Completing the Assignment

- Reflect on your experience with your Sankalpa:
  - Was it easy to remember and repeat?
  - Did it feel natural or spontaneous to recall?
  - Which method (mental, verbal, written) felt most powerful?
- Note any additional personal insights or observations.

## Sleep

(Ref: Physiology of sleep - Yogapointindia)

### What is Sleep?

- Sleep is a naturally recurring state of altered consciousness in both mind and body.
- During sleep:
  - Conscious thought and movement are reduced.
  - Sensory activity and interaction with the environment are minimized.

### Sleep Needs by Age

- Sleep needs vary by age:
  - Newborns: 14-17 hours.
  - Older adults: 7 hours or less.
- Sleep supports growth and development in children and shifts to maintenance in adults.

### Sleep Patterns

- Polyphasic Sleep: Multiple short sleep periods in 24 hours (e.g., under experimental isolation).
- Monophasic Sleep: Single long sleep at night, common in young adults.
- Afternoon Naps: Short naps improve mental health, memory, and heart function in older adults.

### Mechanisms of Falling Asleep

- Reticular Activating System (RAS): Balances neurons that induce sleep vs. wakefulness.
- GABA and Melatonin: GABA slows brain activity, melatonin (in darkness) induces sleep.
- Cortisol and body temperature patterns also contribute to sleep onset.

### Role of Light and Biological Clock

- The biological clock is influenced by natural light.
- Blue Light Exposure: Disrupts melatonin levels, affecting sleep quality.
- Cortisol levels drop at night and peak in the morning, aiding wakefulness.

### Sleep Stages

- NREM Sleep: Stages 1-4, transitioning from light to deep sleep.
  - Stages 1-2: Light sleep, characterized by alpha and theta waves.
  - Stages 3-4: Deep sleep, delta waves dominate (slow wave sleep).
- REM Sleep: Rapid Eye Movement sleep, marked by vivid dreams and high brain activity.

### Why Sleep is Important

- Essential for brain function: aids memory formation and attention.
- Supports growth, immune function, and heart health.
- Helps the body repair, remove toxins, and maintain metabolism.

## Tips for Good Sleep

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule, even on weekends.
- Avoid blue light exposure (e.g., screens) at least an hour before bed.
- Avoid heavy meals, nicotine, and caffeine close to bedtime.
- Regular moderate exercise supports better sleep quality.

## SWAN

(Ref: SWAN Analysis - Yogapointindia)

### Introduction to the SWAN Principle

- Developed by Swami Niranjan of Bihar School of Yoga as a yogic self-management tool.
- SWAN stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Ambitions, and Needs.
- Helps us examine how we live, think, and set a clear direction in life.
- Can be applied to various life aspects (e.g., relationships, work, personal growth).

### S = Strengths

- Identify personal qualities, talents, and skills that are natural or developed over time.
- Types of strengths:
  - Physical (e.g., strong health).
  - Mental (e.g., resilience, patience).
  - Professional (e.g., leadership skills).
  - Social (e.g., friendliness, empathy).
- Reflect on strengths honestly; avoid false modesty.

### Questions for Strengths

- How do I know these are my strengths?
- Which strengths are inherent (genetic, personality)?
- What strengths do I want to develop or use to overcome weaknesses?
- What strengths support my ambitions?

### W = Weaknesses

- Identify attributes that hold us back.
- Types of weaknesses:
  - Physical (e.g., low immunity).
  - Mental (e.g., anxiety, anger).
  - Professional (e.g., struggle with teamwork).
  - Social (e.g., shyness, low confidence).
- Balance strengths and weaknesses for a realistic view.

### Questions for Weaknesses

- Which weaknesses can I turn into strengths?
- Can I accept my weaknesses while working to improve?
- What strengths can I use to address specific weaknesses?
- Are there limitations I must accept?

### A = Ambitions

- Ambitions are deep inner urges and life goals.
- May stem from survival instincts, desires, or personal growth.
- Types of ambitions:
  - Physical (e.g., strong body).
  - Mental (e.g., balanced mind).
  - Professional (e.g., career fulfillment).
  - Social (e.g., strong relationships).
- Distinguish between realistic ambitions and fantasies.

## Questions for Ambitions

- Which ambitions are practical and achievable?
- What ambitions are influenced by society or family expectations?
- How do ambitions change with age and circumstances?
- Which ambitions align with my dharma (life purpose)?

### N = Needs

- Identify essential needs for survival, security, and growth.
- Types of needs:
  - Physical (e.g., rest, nutrition).
  - Mental (e.g., quiet time).
  - Professional (e.g., financial security).
  - Social (e.g., love, belonging).
- Differentiate between true needs and wants or ambitions.

### Questions for Needs

- What are my essential needs versus my wants?
- Which needs are societal expectations versus personal?
- How can I fulfill needs without them dominating my life?
- Are there needs that will diminish as I grow and change?

### SWAN Assignment

- Write down your strengths, weaknesses, ambitions, and needs.
- Ensure a balanced list of strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify one key weakness to work on and use strengths to address it.
- Reflect on life direction, priorities, and unnecessary burdens.

## Instructions

## Instructions

### Setting Up the Environment

- Room Requirements:
  - Quiet, peaceful space
  - Comfortable temperature
  - Dim lighting
  - No distractions (phone on silent)
- Best Practice Times:
  - Not immediately after meals
  - Early morning or before bed
  - Consistent practice time

### Props and Session Duration

- Recommended Props:
  - Yoga mat or comfortable surface
  - Bolster or pillow under knees
  - Blanket for warmth
  - Eye pillow (optional)
- Session Duration:
  - Beginners: 20-30 minutes
  - Experienced: Up to 60 minutes
  - Regular practice: 1-3 times per week

## Practice Guidelines

- Timing Your Practice :
  - 20-minute session equals hours of normal sleep
  - Practice at consistent times daily
  - Choose higher energy periods to avoid sleeping
- Physical Setup :
  - Support lower back with bolster
  - Keep room slightly cool to stay alert
  - Use eye pillow to block light
- Mental Preparation :
  - Set clear intention before practice
  - Stay alert but relaxed
  - Allow thoughts to pass without engagement

## Preparation - 0

- Lie in Shavasana (शवासन).
- Take a comfortable position with feet wider than hips, palms away from hips, allowing armpits to breathe.
- Relax shoulders, arms, hips, back, knees, ankles, and neck.
- Close your eyes and keep them closed for the entire practice.
- Consciously release tension by bringing awareness to any tight spots.
- Remain still, but make adjustments with minimal movement if necessary.
- Maintain a safe, protected space; stay awake by listening to the voice guiding you.
- Set an intention: "I am practicing Yoga Nidra. I am awake, and I will remain awake until the end."
- Bring your awareness to the space between your body and the earth.
- Let your body soften and sink into the floor.

## Internalization - 1

- Pratyahara प्रत्याहार : Bringing attention from outwards to inwards via sound. Listening to far away sounds then near ones then to only commentary.
- Sound Awareness: Become aware of the sounds around you, beginning with distant sounds.
- Move attention from sound to sound without labeling the source.
- Shift awareness to sounds within the room, noticing your breath flowing freely through your nostrils.
- Visualize yourself within the room: the four walls, ceiling, floor, and your body lying on the mat.
- Bring awareness to your natural breath, feeling it flow effortlessly in and out through both nostrils.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

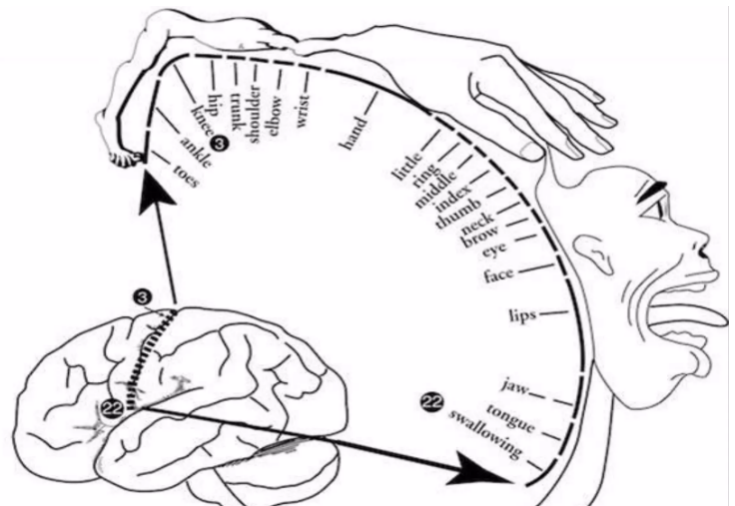
## Choosing Your Sankalpa - 2

- Guidelines for Selection :
  - Keep it short and simple
  - Use positive language
  - Make it personal and meaningful
- Usage :
  - Maintain same Sankalpa across sessions
  - Repeat until manifestation
  - Plant during receptive state
- Examples :
  - "I am at peace with myself"
  - "I am healthy and strong"
  - "I am connected to my inner wisdom"
- Sankalp is customized for each case, memory overwrite, e.g. pain from left foot is gone. Ideally it's a positive statement

## Rotation of Awareness (Abbreviated) - 3

Also called as "Prayatna Shaithilya" प्रयत्न शैथिल्य as it is effortful relaxation. Focus on body parts :

- Right heel
- Left heel
- Right calf
- Left calf
- Right knee
- Left knee
- Right thigh
- Left thigh
- Both hips
- Lower back
- Upper back
- Right shoulder
- Left shoulder
- Back of the head



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## Rotation of Awareness - Right Side

- Begin the journey of awareness on the right side of the body.
- Focus sequentially: Right hand -- thumb, 2nd finger, 3rd finger, 4th finger, 5th finger, palm, back of the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder.
- Move to the right torso and leg: right side of chest, waist, hip, thigh, knee, calf, ankle, top of the foot, big toe, 2nd toe, 3rd toe, 4th toe, 5th toe.

## Rotation of Awareness - Left Side

- Shift awareness to the left side of the body.
- Focus sequentially: Left hand -- thumb, 2nd finger, 3rd finger, 4th finger, 5th finger, palm, back of the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder.
- Move to the left torso and leg: left side of chest, waist, hip, thigh, knee, calf, ankle, heel, sole, top of the foot, big toe, 2nd toe, 3rd toe, 4th toe, 5th toe.

## Rotation of Awareness - Back of the Body

- Shift awareness to the back of the body.
- Focus sequentially: soles of the feet, heels, calves, backs of knees, thighs, lower back, middle back, upper back, spine, right shoulder blade, left shoulder blade, back of the neck, back of the head, top of the head.

## Rotation of Awareness - Front of the Body

- Shift awareness to the front of the body.
- Focus sequentially: forehead, right temple, left temple, right ear, left ear, right eyebrow, left eyebrow, space between eyebrows, right eye, left eye, right nostril, left nostril, right cheek, left cheek, upper lip, lower lip, entire mouth, chin, jaw.
- Move to the throat and torso: right collarbone, left collarbone, chest, upper abdomen, navel, lower abdomen, whole torso.

## Rotation of Awareness - Whole Body

- Whole Body Awareness: Experience the entire body as a single, unified presence lying on the mat.
- Confirm wakefulness: Move your right toe gently, affirming, "I am awake, I am aware, and I am practicing Yoga Nidra."

## Breath Awareness Techniques - 4

### Progressive Breath Work:

- Place right hand on belly, left hand on chest
- Observe natural breath pattern
- Make breath bigger gradually:
  - Feel belly rise first
  - Then chest expansion
  - Hold briefly
  - Release with gravity
- Count breaths backwards from 27. Breathing counting is reverse just to keep us on borderline, if it was ordered we would sleep automatically.
- Visualize breath as golden light
- Check Consciousness: Confirm you are awake and aware by listening to the guide's voice.

So far it was mostly conscious mind level, from next step onward we will involve subconscious mind.

## Opposite Sensations (Abbreviated) - 5

- Bring awareness to the sensation of heat
- Feel your whole body becoming warm.
- Shift awareness to cold. Feel the entire body cooling down.
- Release both sensations.
- Similarly: heaviness and lightness, pain and pleasure, love and hate, etc

## Feelings & Sensations - Experiencing Anxiety

- Recall an experience of anxiety: Feel the stress, worry, or fear without focusing on the source.
- Allow your body to become aware of tension: Notice areas of tightness or rigidity throughout the body.

## Feelings & Sensations - Releasing Tension

- Take a deep breath in, visualizing relaxation flowing into tense areas.
- With each inhale, feel your body becoming soft, loose, and calm.
- Breathe in calmness and exhale all stress and worries.

## Creating a Protective Space

- Visualize your IshtaDevata (favorite deity, teacher, or higher consciousness) sending positive energy.
- Imagine a circle of protection around you, creating a safe and peaceful space.
- Feel calm, safe, and secure in this protected space.

## Revisiting Anxiety in a Safe Space

- While feeling secure, recall the experience of anxiety, observing it without attachment.
- Notice how the anxiety melts away, protected by the presence of your IshtaDevata.
- This space is free from worries and tension; it is your safe and peaceful zone.

## Affirmation of Peace

- Remain in this space, breathing deeply, visualizing all tension and worries floating away.
- Repeat to yourself: "I am calm, peaceful, and free from anxiety."
- Believe in this affirmation with faith and conviction.

## Guided Imagery (Abbreviated) - 6

### Journey through Nature:

- Imagine standing in a meadow, surrounded by a lush forest.
- Feel the warmth of the sun and smell the wildflowers.
- Walk into the forest, following a path that leads uphill.
- Reach a cave and discover a lit candle inside.
- Meditate on the candle's flame, with your Sankalpa inscribed on it.

Visualization is 5-6 minutes long to impart something in the memory. Here also customization can be done.

## Visualization (Symbols)

- Instructions: Visualize each image briefly, allowing it to resonate with your emotions, memories, or imagination.
- Jump from image to image without lingering.

- Cool Clear Water
- Vibrant Sunset
- Tall mountains
- Traffic Lights
- A good night's rest
- Deep Breath
- Beautiful Garden
- Temple Bells Ringing
- Deep Blue Sky
- Relaxing afternoon
- A cat stretching
- A warm hug
- Doctor's office
- Your reflection in a mirror
- Meditating Buddha
- Mother
- Ancestral Home
- Laughing with friends
- The sound of my voice
- Your body lying on the floor



## Sankalpa - 7

- Repeat your Sankalpa three times with focus, clarity, and determination.
- Visualize your sankalpa taking shape and becoming successful.
- Feel your sankalpa bearing fruit and manifesting in your life.

## Exiting the Practice

- Gradually bring awareness back to your breath, feeling it flow in and out of your nostrils.
- Shift awareness to your physical body lying on the floor, noticing all points of contact.
- Awareness of Sounds:
  - Sounds within the room, around your mat, and the sound of my voice.
  - Expand awareness to sounds outside the room.
- Visualize the room and your position within it.
- Slowly begin to move:
  - Move hands and feet gently.
  - Roll over to the right side, revisiting feelings of safety, calm, and peace.
  - Use your left hand to sit up comfortably.
- Take a deep breath, exhale fully. Rub palms to create warmth and place them over your eyes.
- Open your eyes gently, and blink your eyes open while looking into your palms.

The practice of Yoga Nidra is now complete.

## Post-Practice Reflection

Journaling Guidelines :

- Record your experience immediately after practice
- Note any physical sensations experienced
- Document emotional states encountered
- Track progress over time
- Record any insights or revelations
- Compare experiences across different sessions

This reflection helps deepen your practice and track your progress.

## Best Practices for Teachers

- Voice and Delivery :
  - Speak in a soothing, even tone
  - Maintain consistent pace
  - Use clear, simple language
  - Allow adequate pauses
- Session Management :
  - Start with shorter sessions (20-30 minutes)
  - Progress gradually to longer sessions
  - Always complete all stages
  - Monitor student comfort

## Children's Practice Considerations

- Session Duration :
  - Keep sessions shorter (10-15 minutes)
  - Use age-appropriate language
  - Include playful visualization
- Special Elements :
  - Use simple counting exercises (40 to 1)
  - Include light visualization exercises
  - Incorporate gentle encouragement
  - Allow natural breaks in concentration
- Closing Practice :
  - End with positive affirmations
  - Include sharing of "light" with loved ones
  - Gentle return to regular awareness

## Teaching

## Teaching

### Introduction to Yoga Nidra

- Yoga Nidra is a systematic method of complete physical, mental and emotional relaxation
- Eight different steps - some essential, some optional
- Can be designed for:
  - Personal practice
  - Teaching students
  - Therapeutic purposes

### Eight Steps of Yoga Nidra

- Essential Steps :
  - Settling and Internalization
  - Body Rotation
  - Breath Awareness
  - Externalization
- Optional Steps :
  - Sankalpa (Resolve)
  - Opposites
  - Visualizations
  - Final Sankalpa

### Stage 1 : Settling & Internalization

- Body Preparation
  - Shavasana (recommended position)
  - Alternative comfortable positions if needed
  - Proper alignment and support
- Progressive Awareness :
  - Body sensations
  - Environmental sounds
  - Sound of breath

### Stage 2 : Sankalpa (Optional)

- Purpose :
  - Short mental statement
  - Reshaping personality
  - Training the mind
- Implementation :
  - Introduced when mind is receptive
  - Stated at beginning (sowing seed)
  - Repeated at end (watering seed)

### Stage 3: Rotation of Consciousness

- Essential characteristics:
  - No physical movement
  - Consistent pace
  - Mental repetition
- Systematic sequence:
  - Right side (thumb to little toe)
  - Left side (thumb to little toe)
  - Back of body
  - Front of body

### Stage 4: Breath Awareness

- Techniques:
  - Natural breath observation
  - Various focus points (nostrils, chest, navel)
  - Counting breaths (27 to 1, 54 to 1, or 108 to 1)
- Benefits:
  - Promotes relaxation
  - Increases concentration
  - Awakens higher energies
  - Balances energy in body

### Stage 5: Opposites (Optional)

- Common pairs:
  - Heat and cold
  - Heaviness and lightness
  - Pain and pleasure
  - Joy and sorrow
- Benefits:
  - Harmonizes brain hemispheres
  - Develops emotional willpower
  - Enables conscious experience creation
  - Promotes emotional catharsis

### Stage 6: Visualization (Optional)

- Types of Symbols:
  - Conditioned (cultural, religious)
  - Universal (mantras, yantras, mandalas)
- Visualization Options:
  - Landscapes and nature
  - Sacred symbols and spaces
  - Stories and sequences
  - Chakras and energy centers

### Stage 7: Final Sankalpa

- Implementation:
  - Use exact same wording as beginning
  - State clearly and positively
  - Can include visualization of writing
- Importance:
  - Reinforces initial resolve
  - Mind highly receptive
  - Strengthens mental transformation

### Stage 8: Externalization

- Progressive return (minimum 5 minutes):
  - Breath awareness
  - Body awareness
  - Room awareness
  - External environment
- Closing:
  - Gentle body movement
  - Optional Om chanting
  - Complete return to waking state

### Creating Your Own Yoga Nidra

- Consider Purpose:
  - General practice
  - Specific therapeutic goals
  - Individual needs
- Key Points:
  - Adapt length as needed
  - Maintain consistent sequence
  - Consider student readiness
  - Avoid triggering visualizations
  - Keep appropriate pacing

### Flow of Yoga Nidra Practice

- Progression from Gross to Subtle:
  - External environment (gross)
  - Physical body awareness
  - Breath awareness
  - Mind layers (subtle)
- Return Journey:
  - Mind layers to breath
  - Breath to physical body
  - Physical body to environment

### Guidelines for Body Position

- Shavasana Benefits:
  - Minimal body parts touching
  - Reduced chance of sleep
  - Natural alignment
- Alternative Positions:
  - Must ensure complete comfort
  - Use appropriate props
  - Maintain stable position

### Sankalpa Guidelines

- Format:
  - Present or future tense
  - Positive phrasing
  - Clear and precise wording
- Implementation:
  - Maintain same sankalpa
  - Allow time to unfold
  - Must resonate personally

## Examples of Emotional Opposites

- Basic Pairs :
  - Calm - Agitated
  - Confident - Insecure
  - Happy - Sad
- Advanced Pairs :
  - Empathetic - Indifferent
  - Powerful - Helpless
  - Trusting - Suspicious

## Types of Visualizations

- Nature-based :
  - Mountains and valleys
  - Oceans and rivers
  - Forests and gardens
- Symbolic :
  - Chakras and energy centers
  - Sacred symbols
  - Colors and patterns

## Therapeutic Applications

- Customization Options :
  - Focus on specific body parts
  - Targeted breathing patterns
  - Healing visualizations
- Considerations :
  - Individual needs
  - Medical conditions
  - Emotional sensitivity

## Common Challenges

- Student Issues :
  - Falling asleep
  - Mind wandering
  - Physical discomfort
- Teacher Solutions :
  - Maintain appropriate pacing
  - Use clear, engaging voice
  - Provide position alternatives

## Advanced Practices

- Breath Techniques :
  - Psychic breathing
  - Soham awareness
  - Extended counting sequences
- Visualization :
  - Complex symbolic journeys
  - Chakra meditation
  - Healing practices

## Safety Considerations

- Physical Safety :
  - Appropriate props
  - Room temperature
  - Comfortable environment
- Emotional Safety :
  - Avoid triggering content
  - Gentle transitions
  - Support when needed

## Best Teaching Practices

- Preparation :
  - Clear script
  - Timed segments
  - Emergency protocols
- Delivery :
  - Consistent pace
  - Appropriate tone
  - Clear pronunciation

## Customization of Yoganidra for Specific Issues

- Personalized Sankalpa संकल्प (Resolve):
  - The Sankalpa is a positive, personal resolve set at the beginning and end of Yoganidra.
  - By choosing a specific Sankalpa, practitioners can focus on particular goals, such as improving confidence, reducing stress, or achieving health-related outcomes.
  - The Sankalpa is phrased in clear, affirmative language (e.g., "I am calm and focused").
  - 2-3 sentences, a decision of the patient for cure, must be positive and singular (use "I" not "You") formation.
- Targeted Visualization Techniques :
  - Visualization sequences can be customized to address specific issues by guiding the mind through images and scenes aligned with the practitioner's intentions.
  - A new file/pattern which is going to get overwritten on the old one, a directive from the therapist to the patient (use "You"), although results are in future, say it in present, meaning you have already got results.
  - For example :
    - \* Anxiety relief: Visualizing calm environments like a peaceful beach or forest.
    - \* Healing: Imagining light filling and healing the body, directed at areas of discomfort or pain.
    - \* Self-confidence: Visualizing oneself successfully completing tasks or achieving goals.
  - For deeper emotional concerns, the visualization can include imagery that encourages letting go of negative emotions, promoting emotional release in a safe and controlled manner.

## Therapy

(Ref: Experiences of Yoga Nidra as Therapy - Yogapointindia Presented by Dr. Vidya Praveen Deshpande from Yoga Vidya Gurukul, Nashik, Maharashtra, India.)

## Types of Yoga Nidra

- Developed by Guruji Dr. Vishwasrao Mandlik, targeting specific health issues.
- Includes varieties like :
  - Stress-relief Yoga Nidra (तनावमुक्त योगनिद्रा)
  - Positive outlook Yoga Nidra
  - Sleep improvement Yoga Nidra
  - Fertility improvement Yoga Nidra

## Benefits of Yoga Nidra

- Manages insomnia, mental stress, and various chronic health conditions.
- Supports heart health, diabetes control, and healing post-surgery.
- Used to develop a positive outlook and build resilience against stress.

## Applications in Chronic Conditions

- Regular practice benefits patients with heart issues, diabetes, and autoimmune conditions.
- Practiced twice daily to improve treatment efficacy.
- Known as विकार मुक्ति योगनिद्रा in local terms, it aids in managing long-term conditions effectively.

## Yoga Nidra for Fertility

- Specially designed Yoga Nidra techniques support conception.
- Used by individuals seeking natural support for fertility without medical intervention.
- Many have reported positive outcomes and normal pregnancies.

## Youth and Student Applications

- Yoga Nidra for students helps improve concentration and reduce exam anxiety.
- Builds mental resilience and assists with learning processes.
- Supports young individuals in managing stress and enhancing focus.

## Yoga Nidra for Elderly and Heart Patients

- Specifically crafted for elderly patients with chronic ailments.
- Promotes relaxation, reduces blood pressure, and stabilizes heart rate.
- Proven to aid in post-surgery recovery, particularly for heart surgeries.

## Practical Instructions for Use

- Advised to practice twice a day for maximum benefit.
- Best results seen in a calm environment, ideally early morning or before bedtime.
- Practices involve guided relaxation, affirmations, and breath focus to enhance healing.

## Resources for Further Study

- Reference Materials :
  - Traditional texts
  - Modern adaptations
  - Research studies
- Practice Development :
  - Personal practice
  - Teaching methods
  - Continuing education

## Towards End

## Conclusions

## Benefits

- Improves Sleep<sup>1</sup>
- Reduces Stress<sup>2</sup> and improves general well-being
- Can help in improving glycemic control in Type 2 DM<sup>3</sup>
- Improves creativity, enhances memory and learning<sup>4</sup>
- Reduces cognitive and physical symptoms of anxiety<sup>5</sup>

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(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## As behavioral change

- Can begin from 10 min, twice weekly, to 20-30 min, 4-5 times per week.
- Its is Acceptable, Feasible, Cost Effective, No side effects and can be done while in any diagnosis.
- Teaching or coaching can be done in-person or remote, singular or in group, local or global

(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

## Additional Benefits

- Mental Benefits :
  - Increased learning capabilities
  - Enhanced memory and intuition
  - Boosted creativity
  - Mental reprogramming capabilities
- Physiological Benefits :
  - Balanced nervous system
  - Increased endorphin production
  - Reduced cortisol and noradrenaline levels
  - Deep skeletal-muscular relaxation
- Therapeutic Applications :
  - Relief from depression and anxiety
  - Help with insomnia and headaches
  - Management of fibromyalgia
  - Treatment of chronic fatigue
  - Support for hypertension

## Summary

- A meditative form, 8 stages
- State of deep relaxation with awareness
- EEG changes simulate sleep pattern (NREM)
- rCBF changes and endocrinal effects
- Improved general well-being, coping, and resilience
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, PTSD & insomnia
- Benefits in chronic pain, DM, and PMS

(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)



## Integrating Into Daily Life

- Morning Practice :
  - Sets positive tone for day
  - Enhances mental clarity
  - Boosts energy levels
- Midday Reset :
  - Reduces workplace stress
  - Improves focus and productivity
  - Quick restoration (15-20 minutes)
- Evening Practice :
  - Prepares for restful sleep
  - Releases daily tension
  - Processes emotional residue

## Common Challenges and Solutions

- Falling Asleep :
  - Practice at times of higher energy
  - Maintain lighter room temperature

- Keep eyes slightly open

- Racing Thoughts :
  - Focus more on physical sensations
  - Return to breath awareness
  - Practice regularly to improve focus
- Physical Discomfort :
  - Use additional props as needed
  - Adjust position before starting
  - Practice progressive muscle relaxation

## Resources for Further Reading

- Books :
  - "Yoga Nidra" by Swami Satyananda Saraswati.
  - "Yoga Nidra: A Meditative Practice for Deep Relaxation and Healing" by Richard Miller.
  - "Yoga Nidra: The Art of Transformational Sleep" by Kamini Desai.
- "Yoga Nidra Script - 8 Stage for Anxiety & Stress Management (40 mins practice)" <https://www.tummee.com/yoga-philosophy/yoga-nidra-script-anxiety-8-stage-40-mins>