

Introduction

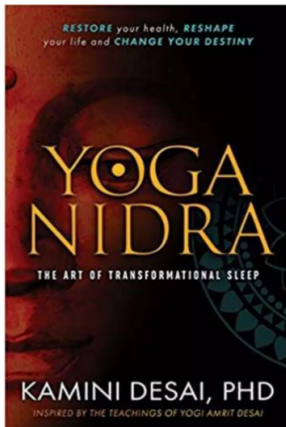
(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

Introduction

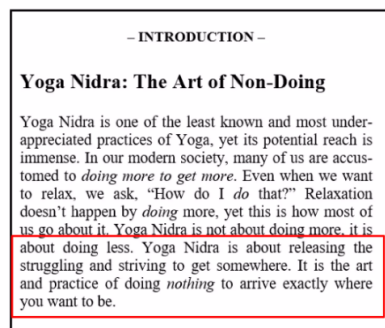
Introduction to Yoganidra

- 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.

What is Yoga Nidra?

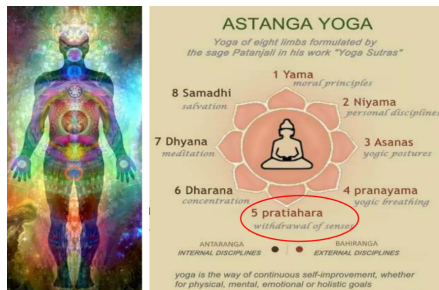


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What is Yoga Nidra?

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.

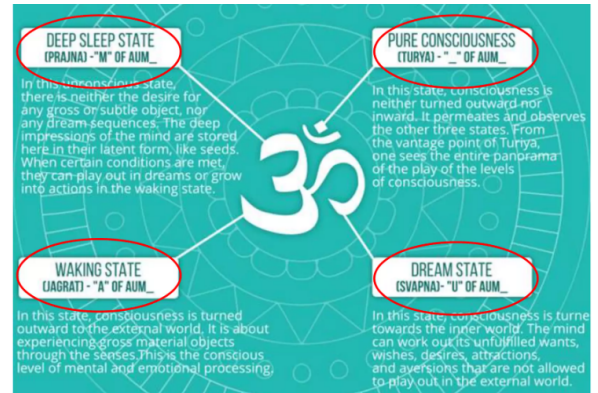


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History



Four Stages of Human Consciousness

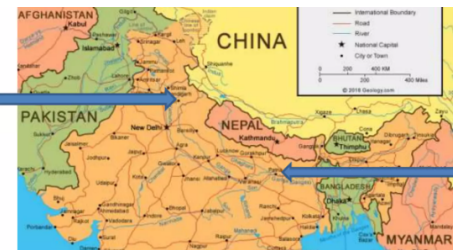


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Brain Wave States in Yoga Nidra

- 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

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

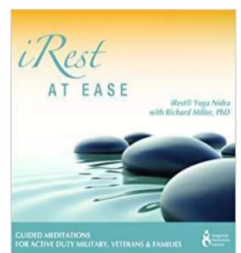
Research

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

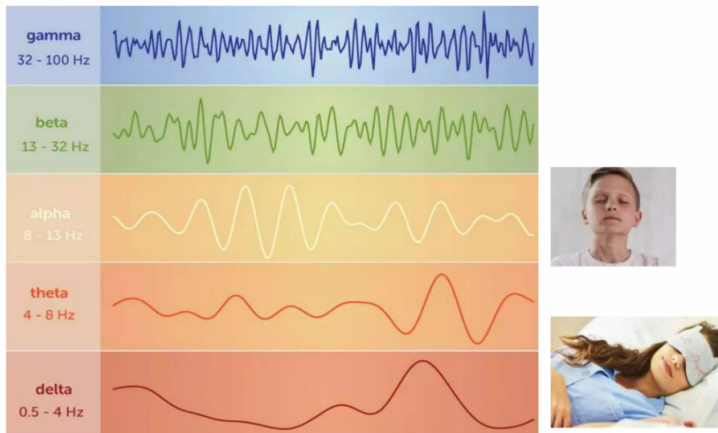
Meditation:

- 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

Science: ECG



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

Science: ECG

Levels: Parker & Bharti (2013)

- Level 1: Alpha waves and reduced BP
- Level 2: Theta waves and creativity
- Level 3: Theta followed by Delta waves
 - Like NREM sleep, but indl 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

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

Preparation

- Lie in Shavasana (शवासन).
- Bring your awareness to the space between your body and the earth.
- Let your body soften and sink into the floor.



(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

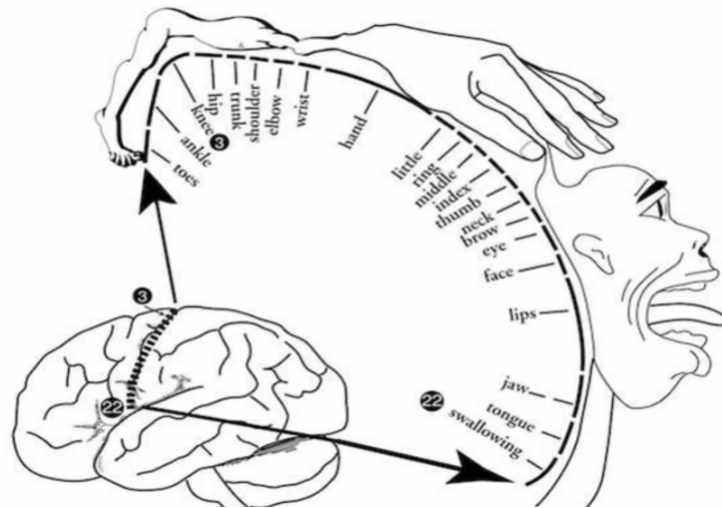
Setting the Sankalpa (संकल्प)

- A positive “I am” statement to guide your Yoganidra practice.
- Examples :
 - "I am strong."
 - "I am peaceful."
 - "I am the witness."
- Repeat the Sankalpa 3 times at the start and end of Yoganidra.

Rotation of Awareness (Abbreviated)

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)

Breath Awareness Techniques

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
- Visualize breath as golden light

Opposite Sensations

- 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

Guided Imagery

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.

Exiting the Practice

- Repeat your Sankalpa 3 times.
- Bring awareness to the sounds around you.
- Slowly move and break Shavasana.

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

Towards End

Conclusions

Benefits

- Improves Sleep¹
- Reduces Stress² and improves general well being
- Can help in improving glycemic control in Type 2 DM³
- Improves creativity, enhances memory and learning⁴
- Reduces cognitive and physical symptoms of anxiety⁵

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2. Dwivedi MK, Singh SK. Yoga Nidra as a stress management intervention strategy. *Purushartha: A Journal of Management Ethics and Spirituality*. 2016 May 12;9(1).
3. Amita S, Prabhakar S, Manoj I, Harmander S, Pavan T. Short Communication - Effect of Yoga-nidra on blood glucose level in diabetic patients. *Indian J Physiol Pharmacol*. 2009;53(1):97-101.
4. Bhushan S. Yoga Nidra: its advantages and applications. *Magazine of the Bihar School of Yoga*. 2001.
5. Ferreira-Vorkapic, C., Borba-Pinheiro, C. J., Marchioro, M., & Santana, D. (2018). The Impact of *Yoga Nidra* and Seated Meditation on the Mental Health of College Professors. *International journal of yoga*, 11(3), 215–223.

(Ref: Yoga Nidra - Dr Amit Chail)

Benefits

- Yoga Nidra has beneficial effects
- Can begin from 10 min, twice weekly
- 20-30 min, 4-5 times per week
- Online videos
- Courses
- As a behavioural intervention
 - Acceptable
 - Feasible
 - Cost effective
 - No side effects
 - Not limited to any diagnosis

(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

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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

Resources for Further Reading

- Practice regularly to improve focus
- Physical Discomfort:
 - Use additional props as needed
 - Adjust position before starting
 - Practice progressive muscle relaxation

- 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.

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