

## SWARA YOGA

One element operates every twelve minutes. First twelve minutes the air element operates. The second twelve minutes the fire element operates. The third twelve minutes the earth element operates. The fourth twelve minutes the water element operates and last twelve minutes the ether element operates. This cycle repeats itself regularly through out the day in the average healthy person. If there is any disturbance in this cycle, physical or mental diseases crop up till the cycle again achieves balance.

Thus, in everyone hour, in the last 12 minutes period the ether element operates, and the individual is in direct and subtlest connection with cosmic energy. From this one is charged with new energy, new thoughts, intuitive wisdom and is thus ready to work for the next hour, on the grosser level of manifestation. When the ether element is flowing, the flow of air in both the nostrils is equal and full. This is known as Shushumna or SARASWATI or bilateral breathing. However, when the other four elements are operating, at that time they are good for worldly work. They are characterized by either the right or the left nostril only flowing freely.

Sushumna is good for Meditation or march towards the Self or for introversion. Sushumna or bilateral breathing is known as the key breathing for successful and speedy Meditation. Thus, if one knows how to flow Sushumna just before Meditation, then 12 minutes to 30 minutes of meditation time will be more than enough.

Knowing this secret, Raja Yoga was formulated on Asanas ( Postures), Pranayamas (breathing exercises), Pratyahar (introversions), Dharna ( Concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (super consciousness). There are special Asanas, and Pranayamas to

help to active the Sushumna flow. When the ether element is operating Sushumna flows, Pratyahar (withdrawal) of sense organs comes. Then come steps for Meditation. Now all one has to do is to concentrate on any symbol, either it may be a Mantra, Chakras, or psychic centers, center of eyebrow, diagram, cross, flower, Shivalinga, photo of Guru, God, father, mother, or any object which leads him towards his spiritual goal, without disturbing his mind in lower desires. (to be precise, one can choose object of his intrinsic interest; so that for concentration, it does not create any tension or irritation.)

Once his consciousness is coupled with the object of concentration other thoughts will not disturb him. They will come and go, but he will only witness them without identifying with them. If one's consciousness is coupled with the object of concentration without being taken away by any other thoughts only for twelve seconds. then, technically it is known as Concentration. If this concentration increased up to 144 seconds at a stretch, it is known as Meditation. Furthermore, if the time span reaches 1728 seconds (28 minutes and 48 seconds) it known as Samadhi.