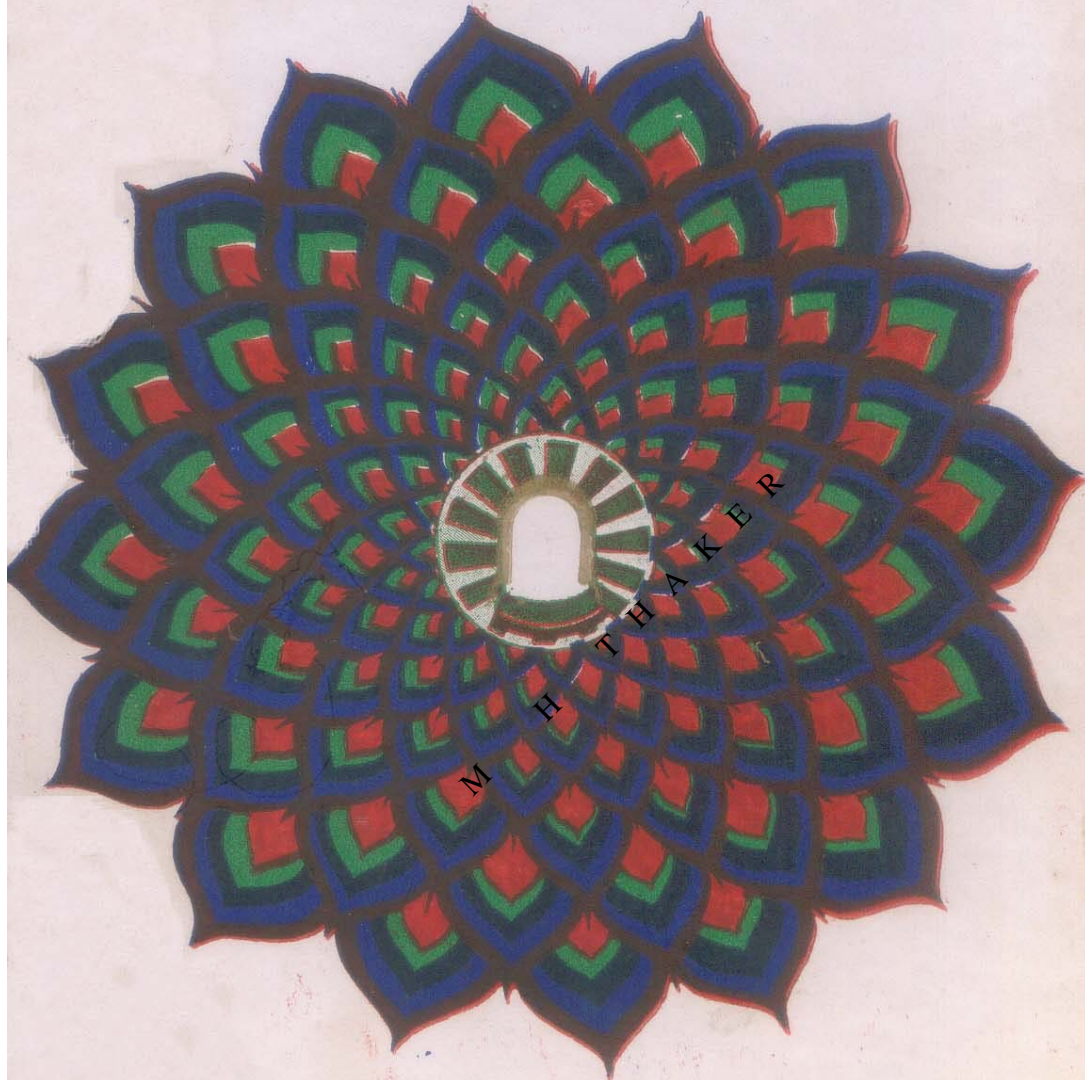


# YOGA



MAHENDRA THAKER

# YOGA

M H T H A K E R

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## PREFACE

The compilation is outcome of Mahendra Thaker's 9 months international teacher's training course conducted by Bihar School of Yoga Monghyr in 1967- 1968 by Swami Satyananda Saraswati. And there after tour of Europe and America till 1969

It is hoped that this skeleton book on this vast subject of Yoga which should integrate and stimulate life, would be found useful to aspiring students of Yoga.

This small booklet covers all aspect of yoga in nutshell.

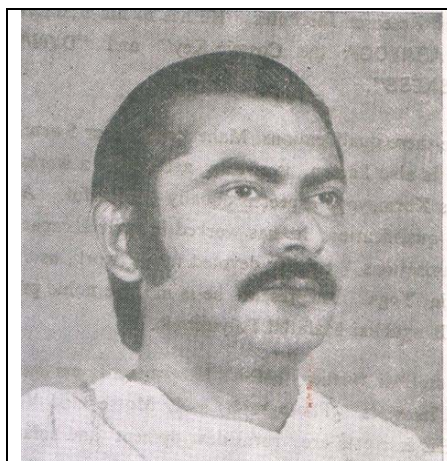
Diagrams are not good but intentionally kept in memory of late Principal R.A.Raut of vartak polytechnic Vasai, Mumbai. Who has drawn all diagrams. Specially given me time with lot of love and devotion, 20 years before from now (December 2011). I could have put nice digital pictures but this serve purpose, so pl accept it.

All technique shown are tried by masses and got very effective results in India and Abroad. So its tried and tested and can be duplicated.

Specially Meditation part where technique of Bilateral breathing (Sushumna) is given which is worth trying gradually to reap beneficial result to over come present day stress , and stress induced diseases.

For higher and finer attainments, the student is strongly advised to approach advanced books on the subject, and preferably take guidance of a competent teacher.

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## LIFE SKETCH

Shri Mahendra Thaker was born in Ahmedabad on 25th March, 1944. At the age of 12, in answer to a divine call from within, he started his journey in search of Truth. This urge brought into his life various Yoga masters and led to his contact with renowned teachers like Swami Sivananda, Swami Satyananda, Swami Poornananda, a few Himalaya Sages and Motabhai. These associations inspired his appetite to know deeply the occult sciences.

It was in 1962 that he started studying Yoga seriously as a science. In 1967 he joined a nine months course for International Yoga Teacher's Training under the auspices of Paramahansa Shri Satyananda. This study and his dedicated years to Yoga training qualifies him as an expert teacher in various Yoga fields. He has also been initiated in the Highest Kriya Yoga by Paramahansa Shri Satyananda.

In 1968-69 he set out to take his knowledge to Europe and U.S.A. where he met with outstanding success. His visit stimulated much response towards our ancient science in France, Holland, Switzerland and New York. He conducted classes, started Ashrams and delivered lectures on meditation at various colleges, Churches, Hospitals and Research Institutes. He has to his credit two Brilliant Books "SWARAYOGA the Cosmic Key" and "DYNAMISM OF CONSCIOUSNESS".

Despite these qualifications, Mahendrabhai, or Swami Madhavananda as he is also known, is not an ascetic or a world-renounced Sadhu. His Karmayoga aspect is equally colorful. An Electrical Engineer by qualification, he has worked in such a capacity in many leading organizations, equally devoted to his work, as he is to the spirituality in Yoga. At present he is in the noble profession of teaching at Bhagubhai Mafatlal Polytechnic.

Mahendrabhai further enfoldes his versatile personality in his hobbies and interests. Photography, multimedia and Videography, are his hobbies. His interests are rural development and solar energy to which he devotes his leisure.

A simple man with a definite and clear vision, he pursues anything he takes up with the zeal of worshipper, getting both satisfaction and pleasure. He says humbly that -he is doing whatever he can for the upliftment of humanity and he is helped in his goal by his brilliant organizing power constructive application.

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# YOGA

By  
MAHENDRA THAKER

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# YOGA

## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

“The supreme path begins when the five senses and the mind are stilled and when the intellect is silent, This tranquility of the senses is yoga”

-Katha Upanishad

Yoga is increasingly being known and appreciated all the world over now-a-days, though its different meanings and its deeper significance and purpose are not well understood.

Yoga was known and developed for more than 5000 years, and was practiced in India even before the Aryan civilization started to flourish in the Indian Sub-Continent.

The word 'Yoga' is mentioned in various places in the Vedas particularly in 'Rig Veda'. Many aspects of Yoga are mentioned such as 'dharna', (Concentration), dhyana, (meditation) etc. The 'self' or consciousness was understood as something beyond the body and mind, and yet, to be realized within. The seers of the Vedas clearly recognized that there existed dynamic life principles which they called 'Vayu' ( or 'Prana' ) which, they clearly recognized, was closely related to breathing,

The Vedas also mention the existence of pranic centres ('chakras') within but not in the physical body; The Science of sound was also clearly recognized for they mention psychic sounds ('mantras') that can be used for the attainment of both spiritual and material goals. In the Vedic times, the experience of Yoga were known, but the Science of Yoga had not yet developed and systematized.

The Brahmins mention 'Japa' (meditative technique with chanting of 'mantras') and 'mauna' (inducing inner silence).

The various Upanishads give Yoga a more definite shape.

The essential message of the Upanishads is that the 'self' can be only known through union or Yoga, and not by mere speculation and learning. It is also emphasized again and again that the Self is not to be realized outside; it is not something separate; but at the core (centre) of our being.

Many of the 'Upanishads' describe the mental attributes that must be adopted, developed and cultivated in order to both begin and make progress on the yogic path. Other 'Upanishads' mention methods that can be practiced in order to induce meditation ('Dhyan').

Several 'Upanishads' devote much space to describing 'prana' and its implications. The earlier Upanishads recognize that 'prana' is the sub-stratum behind all life-forms. They describe the psychic pathways that exist within physical body, through which 'prana' flows, including the all important 'nadis', 'ida', 'pingala' and 'sushumna'.

In the later Upanishads such as Prashna and the Katha, this theme was further developed. The

different forms of 'prana' within the body were mapped out according to the functions performed, and it is stated that there are seventy two thousand 'nadis' or pranic channels within the body. The concept of 'Kundalini' (psychic and spiritual power) in the form of a serpent within the body is also explained.

Various other Upanishads also cover a range of practical aspects of Yoga, ranging from 'asana' and 'pranayana' to psychic centers and self-realization.

Bhagvad Gita is a Yogic scripture par excellence, and is applicable to people throughout the world and in every walk of life. It maps out in concise, but specific manner, the Yogic paths of Karma Yoga (the path of action), Gyana Yoga (the path of intuition), Bhakti Yoga, (the path of devotion) and Dhyana Yoga (the path of meditation).

It is in Bhagvad Gita where we really see that Yoga is for everyone and not for the recluse. Before the writing of Bhagvad Gita, there was a tendency to regard Yoga as something only meant for the later stages of life and not concerned with daily life from the very beginning. It is the Bhagvad Gita that urges everyone to start practicing Yoga here and now, and not to consider it something to be practiced on retirement from one's responsibilities or at some time in the future when the opportunity presents itself. It is to be practiced NOW as an integral part of one's life.

Another important aspect of the Bhagvad Gita is that it synthesizes the different aspects of Yoga into a comprehensive whole. Practice of Yoga should not be confined to one path. In fact this is impossible. Integration of all the different paths is necessary. Though a person might follow one path in particular, the other paths should also be practiced where possible. The Gita makes this point very clear. Before the time of writing the Gita, the different paths were considered as separate and even some of the paths were considered as mutually exclusive. It is the Gita that formulates the basic structure of the Science of Yoga as it is known today.

The first great sage who contributed the foundation of the Yoga system was Kapila (700 B.C.) who was the author of 'Sankhya' system of Philosophy. He developed the theory of 'Samyak Gyana' (proper knowledge) of 'Purusha' ('prana' and 'consciousness') and 'prakriti', the inert matter including the 5 sense organs, the five organs of action, their 'tanmatras' ('manas', 'Budhi', 'chitta', 'ego', and 'mool prakriti').

According to the theory of evolution expounded by the 'Sankhya', all experience is based on the duality of the subject 'purusha' and the object 'prakriti'. 'Prakriti' (or Nature) is the basis of all existence-physical and psychical. It is pure potentiality. It is a state of tension of three constituents ('Gunas') – 'Sattva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas',

'Sattva' is potential consciousness, 'rajas' is the source of activity, and 'tamas' is that which resists activity. They are instrumental to the experience of pleasure, pain and indifference.

When the three constituents are held in balance, there is no action. When there is disturbance in the equilibrium, the process of evolution emerges,

The evolution of 'prakriti' can take place only through the presence of 'purusha' (consciousness).



The development of this process of evolution follows a law of succession. 'Mahat' ( literally the 'great one' ) is the first product of 'prakriti', It is the basis of intelligence ('Buddhi' ) of the individual, 'Buddhi' is the subtle substance of all mental processes. 'Ahamkara' or self-sense instinct develops out of 'Buddhi' and is the principle of individuation.

From 'Ahamkara' arise the three different lines of development. In the 'sattva' aspect arises the 'manas' (mind), the five organs of perception and the five organs of action. From the 'tamas' aspect arise the fine or subtle elements. The 'rajas' aspect supplies the energy for both these developments.

The individual is not the body, life or mind; but the informing SELF, silent, peaceful and eternal-the pure spirit. 'Buddhi', 'manas' etc., are the instruments of consciousness and are not in themselves consciousness. We become conscious of 'pra.kriti' by the light of 'purusha'.

As there are many conscious beings in the world, the Sankhya adopts the. view of plurality of Self,

Salvation in the Sankhya system is only phenomenal. The true Self is always free. Bondage is the activity of 'prakriti', not knowing the distinction between the 'purusha' and 'prakriti'. Release is inactivity of 'prakriti', Freedom from bondage is obtained by discriminative knowledge, It is the result of the practice of virtue and yoga,

Later, Sage Patanjali (2nd Century B.C.) expounded the Yoga system as it is known today. He emphasized Yogic practice along with '*Samyak Gyana*' to achieve excellence of body and mind. He is the Author of the basic text. '*Yoga Sutras*', which consist of 175 '*Sutras*' (cryptic sayings) divided into 4 sections

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Samadhi Pad  | (51 Sutras) |
| 2. Sadhana Pad  | (55 Sutras) |
| 3. Vibhuti Pad  | (35 Sutras) |
| 4. Kaivalya Pad | (34 Sutras) |

Yoga according to Patanjali is the power to discriminate between subject and object, '*purusha*' (self or spirit) and '*Prakrti*' (nature), which means the realization of the inner self. Yoga is a methodical effort to attain perfection through the control of the different elements of human nature, physical and psychical.

What the Sankhya calls '*mahat*' (the great one, or 'buddhi') is called '*chitta*' (mind-stuff) in the Yoga system of Patanjali. The '*Chitta*' undergoes modifications when it is affected by objects through the senses. The consciousness of '*purusha*' reflected in the '*Chitta*' gives rise to the impression that it is the experiencer. '*Chitta*' is really the spectacle of which the Self is, by reflection, the spectator.

We have as many '*Chittas*' as there are '*selves*'. The ego ('Ahamkara') is different from the self and is dependent on the experience of the world. The life of the ego is restless and unsatisfied, being

subject to the five afflictions of

1. Ignorance or the mistaking of non-eternal for the eternal ('*Agayana*').
2. The erroneous identification of oneself with the instruments! of body and mind.
3. Attachment to pleasant things.
4. Hatred of other things.
5. The instinctive love of life and the dread of death.

When the 'Self' is freed from '*Chitta*', it withdraws itself into its own pure nature, and is no more influenced by the external afflictions that affect the '*Chitta*'.

The Yoga system accepts the Samkhya psychology and metaphysics. However, it is definitely more theistic than the Samkhya, as evidenced by the addition of God to the Samkhya's 25 elements or reality.

The main interest of Patanjali is not metaphysical theorizing, but the practical motive of indicating how salvation can be attained by disciplined activity.

The special feature of the Yoga system is its practical discipline by which the suppression of mental state is brought about through the practice of spiritual exercise and the conquest of desire.

Patanjali, the author the Yoga Sutras, defines Yoga as “....complete control over the different patterns or modifications of consciousness.”

In other words, Yoga implies control over the conscious, unconscious, subconscious and super-conscious realms of our being, One becomes the observer of these different higher states of changes attaining complete knowledge of them.

Yoga really means Union-union between the limited self ('*Jiva*') and the cosmic self ('*Atman*').

Yoga can be defined as a science for developing creativity; as the science for unfolding the deeper aspects of the personality; as the science of being; as the science of consciousness. The implications of Yoga on one's life are vast, for Yoga concerns itself with the every core of our life body, mind and consciousness.

YOGA as it is commonly understood is the path or method which one adopts to attain the realization of '*yoga*'-One's true identity, The practice of Yoga is aimed at rooting out the ego, the aspect of our individuality, and enhances the sense of independence from our surroundings. Once the ego is transcended, the Individual realizes his real inner nature.

The various methods of Yoga, in practice, aim at bringing the functions of the different organs, muscles and nerves into perfect coordination. so that their functions harmonize and assist each other, and work for the overall good of the body and mind. Thus yoga also means physical harmony and health.

Yoga also leads to mental balance and mental peace, i.e. coordination between mind and body, so that the body responds perfectly to our mental command, conscious and sub-conscious.

For practice, Yoga system suggests the following techniques for the attainment of its goal.

1. 'Yama' (control and discipline of the mind.)
2. 'Niyama' (observation of rules to obtain the aim).
3. 'Asana' (physical posture)
4. 'Mudra' (external expression of inner attitudes)
5. 'Bandhana' (psychic locks)
6. 'Pranayama' (breath-control and manipulation of breath to control 'Pranayama')
7. 'Pratyahar' (abstraction of the senses)
8. 'Dharna' (concentration)
9. 'Dhyana' (meditation)
10. 'Mantra' (special sound patterns which can produce subtle impact and change)
11. 'Samadhi' (unfolding of the spiritual realm, the super conscious state, the climax of meditation in which one experiences unity with cosmic consciousness, '*Kaivaiya*').

'Yama' (control and discipline of the mind) and 'niyama: (observance of rules for maintaining the purification, internal and external) are the prerequisites for the practice of Yoga.

'Asana', posture, is a physical aid to concentration.

'Pranayama', breath control, promotes serenity of mind.

'Pratayahara', withdrawal of the senses from their natural functions, helps to keep the mind still.

These five steps are indirect or external means to pursue Yoga.

'Dharna', fixed attention, or concentration, helps the mind to remain focused on a particular object.

'Dhyana', contemplation or meditation, leads to concentration.

The ultimate aim of yoga is 'Samadhi', where the self regains its eternal and pure free status, totally detached. This is the meaning of freedom or salvation in the Yoga system, leading to 'Moksha', release from the cycle of births and deaths.

The co-ordination of these in a specific and scientific manner brings about the developments in a person as a whole, ultimately leading to complete co-ordination of the physical, psychic and mental activities.

## DIETARY GUIDANCE FOR ASPIRING YOGA STUDENTS.

The importance of balanced and nutritional food for a healthy life, needs no emphasis. The value of diet in the growth of the body, maintenance of good health, prolongation of life, and its application as a therapeutic measure for treatment of diseases were known even in olden times.

The food we eat every day -

- (i) provides the body with fuel, such as fats and carbohydrates, which are oxidized and supply the energy required for various activities;
- (ii) provides protein for the building and upkeep of the body tissues;
- (iii) furnishes vitamins and minerals by means of which life process in the body is regulated, thereby protecting against ill-health.

Functionality, food can be classified as

(i) Energy yielding foods-food rich in carbohydrates and cereals, roots & tubers, dried fruits, sugars, fats.

Cereals, in addition, contain a fair amount of protein, minerals and certain vital vitamins.

ii) Body building foods-Foods rich in protein:

Milk, pulses oil-seeds, nuts, low fat oil-seed flours, meat, fish and eggs

(iii) Protective foods. Foods rich in protein, vitamins and minerals are:

Milk, green leafy vegetables, fruits, eggs, liver, etc.

Milk, eggs, fish & liver are rich vitamins and minerals and proteins of high biological value. Green leafy vegetables are rich in vitamins and minerals only.

**Proteins** are required for promoting growth and for building and up-keep of body tissues and are essential for muscular development. They are necessary for the production of metabolic and digestive enzymes, blood protein and hormones.

Deficiency in proteins reduces the body's resistance to results in general weakness, emaciation, edema, dry skin pigmentation.

**Fats** along with carbohydrates in the food serve as a source energy. Fat in the diet serves as a carrier for fat-soluble vitamins and is also essential for the absorption of carotene

prolonged deficiency in fat in diet causes dryness of the skin.

**Carbohydrates** are the main source of energy to Excess of carbohydrates in the diet is converted into fat in the body.

**Minerals** play an important role in nutrition

- (i) as constituent of the mineral matter in the bones;

(ii) as structural constituents of the soft tissues:

(iii) as constituents of physiologically active substances e. g, iron in hemoglobin.

The more important minerals are calcium, phosphorus and iron.

Calcium and phosphorus are major constituents of bones and teeth. They are present in all the fluids of the body and supply the electrolytes for the action of muscles and nerves. Calcium also participates in the coagulation of blood.

Iron is mainly required for the formation of hemoglobin which is an important constituent of red blood cells.

**Vitamins** are essential for growth and health. The most important vitamins are

(i) **Vitamin A and Carotene-a)** essential for integration of epithelial tissues.

b) stimulates new cell growth.

It is essential for the health of respiratory, digestive and urinary tracts. It keeps the membranes of the bones, throat and the wind pipe strong and healthy, helping to prevent colds and other infections of this region.

It is essential for maintaining the eyes in healthy condition and for proper vision. Continued deficiency of this vitamin causes night blindness, reduced resistance to infection, dryness of the conjunctiva of the eyes, grayish patches on the white of the eyes and opacity of the cornea.

Carotene is a precursor of vitamin A and is present in large quantities in green leafy vegetables, tomatoes, carrots and some fruits.

(ii) **Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)**-plays an important role in carbohydrate metabolism.

It is essential for maintenance of good appetite and normal digestion. It is also necessary for the normal functioning of the nerve tissues and muscles.

Mild deficiency of this vitamin in diet results in loss of appetite and digestive disorders

Without sufficient quantity Thiamine, the body would be in a perpetual state of ache and pains.

(iii) **Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)** is concerned with the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats.

It is necessary for the maintenance of healthy skin and eyes Its' most important function is the production of enzymes that help to digest food.

Deficiency of Vitamin B2 causes burning sensation in the eyes, inflammation of the tongue, dimness of vision, fissuring at the angles of the mouth, etc.

Nicotinic Acid (Niacin), another member of the Vitamin B Group, also takes part in the metabolism of carbohydrates.

Severe deficiency of this vitamin causes the disease known as 'pellagra', characterized by soreness of the mouth and tongue, diarrhea and dark pigmentation of the exposed parts of the body.

Vitamin B12 stimulates the formation of red blood cells. Deficiency of this vitamin causes macrocytic anemia.

Vitamin B12 occurs only in foods of animal origin e.g. eggs, liver, mutton, fish, milk and curds.

Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid) is necessary for the maintenance of good health. It is the great healing vitamin of the body. It is essential for building bones, maintenance of the walls of the smaller blood vessels, strengthening of teeth and gums, and aids in the absorption of iron. It also hastens the healing of wounds and bone fractures.

Deficiency of Vitamin C in the diet causes 'Scurvy' which is characterized by tender, swollen and bleeding gums, bleeding in the skin and joints, anemia and delayed healing of wounds and fractures.

Vitamin C is found abundantly in fresh fruits, leafy vegetables, potatoes and tomatoes.

Folic Acid stimulates the formation of red and white blood corpuscles. Deficiency in Folic Acid in diet results in the development of macrocytic anemia.

Important sources of Folic Acid are whole cereals, pulses, nuts, ~~gram~~, leafy vegetables and liver.

Vitamin D increases the absorption of calcium and phosphorus and regulates their concentration in the blood. It directly helps in the formation of strong, hard and healthy bones and teeth.

Deficiency of vitamin D causes rickets, the bones becoming soft and pliable.

Vitamin D is available in milk and eggs. But the body builds its own supply of Vitamin D by the interaction of the sun and the natural skin oil.

There are over 20 known vitamins which play different roles in the proper functioning of the various parts of the body.

These vitamins are present in a great variety of foods. A mixed balanced diet generally produces these essential vitamins. A healthy body has the ability to transform one type of food into another as required.

A person who is able to gain control of his system can live on a simple food and transform it internally to other substances as his body requires.

Many Yogic practices, especially 'Surya namaskara' and 'pranayama' increase the efficiency of this transformation process.

## YOGA AND DIET

Throughout history many sages and yogis have advocated vegetarianism as the preferred way of life, because there is a definite relationship between what we eat and our state of mind. The food we eat has profound repercussions on our mental and emotional attitudes. It has been said that meat eating is conducive to internal tensions and disharmony, where as vegetarian food tends to promote inner calmness.

It is generally assumed that vegetarianism is an integral part Yoga practice. This assumption is only partly true. Yoga considers . vegetarianism as the most beneficial system in nutrition. It does not insist that all practicer of Yoga should become vegetarians.

Vegetarianism does find a place in Yoga only in so far as it is the preferred nutritional system whereby total body health can be obtained in preparation for higher forms of Yoga.

By being a vegetarian. we feel that one is laying down a foundation for a harmonious and happy life. But this does not mean that we cannot attain higher state of awareness if one is not a vegetarian.

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## MEDITATION

In the modern world, scientific and technological advancement have discovered and made many contributions to the satisfaction of man's physical senses to experience and to enjoy.

But advancement of modern science has also brought on the human race, restlessness, impatience, discontentment and a purposeless mad race to unknown goal. Man everywhere feels that there is something missing from life. Man has been deprived of a healthy mind, a free mind, a mind with illumination, and knowledge. Many of the sufferings that one experiences, are because of he has not developed his mind. To achieve the best of life, sensual, material and spiritual, an illuminated and enlightened mind is a necessity.

More and more men all over the world are more and more turning to the ancient system of Yoga as a means to escape from the worries of the modern way of life.

Man needs to find a way of bringing about external and internal change simultaneously. Man cannot neglect his inner life to seek only social, economic and material benefits. Similarly, man cannot isolate the inner from the outer benefits and run away from his daily life, responsibilities and social commitments. A balance and harmony between the inner and outer life of man is essential to avoid imbalance in society.

For this purpose, we must learn how to withdraw the mind and bring it closer to the inner self, to the deeper recesses of life.

Meditation (Dhyana) is a path to achieve this balance and harmony between the inner and outer life of man. Through meditation, we begin to realize that the cause of our disappointment and misery and problems is not in outside material world. The cause of our misery, restlessness and turmoil is within ourselves.

**"Meditation** is communion with the inner self. It is the means of expanding our consciousness, transcending the external being and becoming one with the infinite source and life and wisdom. Meditation is not a process of self-forgetfulness and escape, it is not entering into total darkness, total nothingness. Meditation is discovering oneself."

Patanjali defines meditation as that state when the mind becomes free from the awareness of subjective and objective experience.

When one is no longer distracted by external images appearing in the mind, when one can no longer hear external sounds, and sense objects do not disturb the mental state any more, then he is in a state of meditation. His mind is completely controlled, intensely but effortlessly concentrated on one point. He has transcended the moral limitations of the mind and senses, and has obtained complete oneness with the object of contact.

The Gita says:

"He who cannot meditate must not expect peace; and without peace, how can anyone expect happiness?"



The path of meditation is not easy. It involves a certain amount of discipline and will power.

In the early stages of practicing meditation, many subtle thought and visions which have been stored away in the sub-conscious mind appear.

All such psychic experiences and visions only indicate that your subconscious mind is undergoing a state of purging-tensions, suppressions and anxieties are being-released, as you become more and more relaxed and aware.

Meditation induces a true state of rest and aid in repair and improved health of the cells and tissues of the body, The most beneficial rest is gained when the mind is in peace and fully concentrated in the practice of meditation.

Meditation also brings great benefits to the physical body and functioning of the brain.

Normall only about one tenth of the human brain is utilized and the remaining nine-tenth remain dormant. Within the dormant portion, many psychic functions can be activated, and many functions of creativity, wisdom, genius and enlightened states of mind achieved. It is through meditation that the unmanifest potentials of the human brain can be discovered and brought into action, There is no limit to the power of the human mind when one has learned to merge it with the cosmic mind.

To achieve balance, equilibrium of the mind, one has to go above the three 'gunas'. 'Satva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas' and completely balance then. One has to be subjected to, and at the same time be above them. Then only the 'self' or '**AT MAN**' merges into and becomes one with the '**PARAMATMAN**' or cosmic consciousness, free from the bondages of the lower manifestation, This is the eternal and endless chain reaction of the cosmic plan,

One who knows the secret of awakening the dormant power of the latent consciousness of the 'Kundalini' (dormant pranic energy). pierces the earth element which is in the 'Mooladhara' and merges with the water element, which is located in the 'Swadhisthana', With fuller awakening, one merges the water element with the fire element, which is in the 'Manipura Chakra', Then on further pierces the air element in the 'Anahata Chakra' and lastly the ether element in 'Vishuddhi Chakra' and rises into AJNA chakra, One rises above the desires and good and bad, and finally identifies himself in SAHASRARA with the cosmic consciousness or Lord Shiva. When one gains mastery of Sahsarara, he is free from all states, free from all bondage and acquires the psychic powers.

To awaken the serpentine power of '**Kundalini**' one has to merge his speech into his mind, and merge his mind into 'prana'. 'Apana' and 'Samana', the three principal 'prana Vayus' in the Body. This means taking the Prana Vayu which resides in the heart, and taking up the Apana which resides near the anus region, and join them with Samana which is at the navel region. Finally this is taken up in the Sushumna Nadi (Saraswati Nadi) passing through all the six Chakras, piercing the fine elements and reacting the AJNA Chakra. By this one goes above all desires and ultimately merges with cosmic consciousness, Lord Shiva. This union of the individual soul or gross self with Cosmic consciousness, the Divine Self, or primordial Source, is Samadhi, the goal of all Yoga.

Any science which leads towards this ultimate union of the individual self with the universal self, to realize god, or cosmic consciousness, is Yoga. This is also known as Kundalini Yoga. Kriya Yoga, Laya Yoga, Agni Yoga and Swara Yoga. ultimately the purpose of all is the same to go from the gross to subtle, and finally merge with the primordial source.

As the circumference of a circle consists of an infinite number of tiny points, every point leading to the centre with different radii, so also the mental tension of individual souls; from infinite points all leading towards the Supreme Soul (cosmic consciousness or Premordial sense of the circumference).

Meditation is a concentrated march towards the centre of the circle from whatever level and from whatever point on the circumference we may be.

M H T H A K E R

## YOGIC MEDITATION

The mind is a very complex composition of various psychic, physiological and nervous pattern. It is compassed of thoughts, emotions, memory, love, hate, jealousy, passion and detachment. These are all patterns of the mind; but not the mind itself.

The main purpose of meditation is to free the mind of these patterns. The essential nature of the mind is spiritual, it is not evil. The ultimate nature or the fundamental basis of the mind is transcendental.

When the mind is associated with matter, it is bound. When it is freed from matter, it is liberated. The main aim of meditation is to liberate the mind from the bonds of matter, '**Prakriti**'. When the mind is freed from patterns, formations and impressions, it becomes infinite in nature.

In Patanjali's '**Yoga Shastra**', meditation is described as "When the mind has been able to transcend the knowledge of smell, sound, touch, form and taste, and, at the same time, when the consciousness is functioning 'around one point.'"

"Becoming like a crystal, on the modifications disappearing, the mind acquires the power of thought-transformation (Samapatti) the power of appearing in the shape of whatever object is presented to it, be it the knower, the knowable or the act of knowing."

-Yoga Bhashya

These are three distinct stages involved in meditation; The first leads to withdrawal of the senses (Pratyahara)

The second leads to concentration (Dharna)

The third and last leads to meditation (Dhyana).

**Pratyahara** (abstraction of senses) is that of which the senses do not come into contact with their objects and follow as it were the nature of the mind.

The process of Pratyahara is intended to detach one's awareness from the sense organs, thereby promoting internalization of consciousness. It depends upon the regularity and intensity of practice and aid the state of the mind. When the mind is clear, Pratyahara can be easily induced. Without mastery, it is not possible to induce Dharna.

**Dharna** (concentration) is the stead fullness of the mind.

Concentration means the mind becoming fix in such places as the sphere of the navel, the lotus of the heart, the light in the brain, the forepart of the nose, the forepart of the tongue, and such like parts of the body, or by means of the modifications only in any other external object only."

Dhyana-can only be experienced.

The continuation of the mental effort is meditation or Dhyana.

When the object of contemplation takes entire possession of the mind, contemplation shows forth only the light of the form of the contemplated object, and is 'Dhyana' as it were, of its nature of self-recognition, then it is called trans or contemplation or Samadhi.

Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi together for\_'Samyam' (inner discipline).

M H T H A K E R

## STEPS TO ACHIEVE 'DHYANA'

There is no single meditation technique which can be uniformly followed by all, As different persons have different temperaments and different dharma, so each has to follow the path that is most suitable to his individual needs,

The body is the vehicle through which meditation has to be achieved, '**Prana**' is the motive force.

To accumulate and conserve '**Prana**', one must have certain mental disciplines to conserve mental energy, Without 'prana shakti', one cannot think, one cannot imagine, move, speak or understand. Therefore, every person who aspires to realize the deeper states of meditation must find a way to amplify and conserve 'Prana', 'Prana' is the vital energy.

'Prana' is responsible for maintaining unflinching awareness and steadiness of the mind during meditation.

The effective ways by which one can build up and conserve 'prana shakti', and means of preparing the body and mind to experience '**Dhyana**' are

### (i) Asanas and Pranayama :

These are not only for the cultivation of the body and to preserve better health, but these were also developed with the intention of providing a perfect means of preparing the body and the mind for meditation.

In mediation, we build energy physically, mentally and psychically.

Asanas stimulate the glands, purify the liver, heart, lungs and increase the supply of blood to all organs.

Not only the Asanas influence the body and mind, but also the emotions, attitudes and consciousness. They sharpen one's reactions, and relax and aid in balancing the passions, neuroses, anxiety and phobias.

Pranayama provides more 'prana' to the body and revitalizes the nervous system.

Steady meditation postures can be maintained only when the breath is under control, the nervous system is coordinated, heart beat is rhythmical and all the glands are functioning properly. With greater quantity of 'Prana' in circulation throughout the body, the mind automatically becomes calm and one-pointed.

### 2. Balancing Ida and Pingala :

In the human body, there are 72000 'nadis' or channels through which 'Prana' circulates. There

are 10 important 'nadis' and of these the 3 most important are:

1. Sushumna-which is the main nadi flowing through the central canal within the spinal cord.
2. Ida.-situated to the left of the Sushumna.
3. Pingla-situated to the right of sushumna.

Sushumna is responsible for spiritual awareness, ida controls all the mental functions, and Pingala direct all the vital functions.

These 3 Nadis controls all the functions of the body.

Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna start at the Mooladhra Chakra in the Perineum and proceed to the end of the tail bone, and go right up the spinal cord to Ajna Chakra situated beyond the eye brow centre. Ida and Pingala cross at the various Chakras and end at Ajna Chakra, but Sushumna proceeds on to Sahasrara, the highest chakra at the top of the head.

Sushumna is the spiritual channel through which Kundalini rises. It portraits the part of the mystics and the path of Yogis who tread the narrow razor's edge balancing between Ida and Pingala. Ida is related to the breath flow in the left nostril and the parasympathetic nervous system. Pingala is related to the breath flow in the right nostril and the sympathetic nervous system.

During the day, the breath will be predominantly flowing alternately through the left and the right nostrils; but there are times when Ida and Pingala are flowing together and at such times there is greater degree of mental and emotional balance. Such balance of Ida and Pingala are ideal for practicing meditation. Balance between the nadis can be induced through the practice of Asanas and Pranayama.

### 3) Developing Awareness:

Awareness is the ability to stand back and observe one's mental and physical activities. In a state of awareness, a person becomes the spectator of his activities-both internally and externally.

Attachment to ego is the major obstacle to progress; and the most effective method of detaching the ego is to withdraw concern for it.

There are two modes of awareness.

Internal awareness, when we direct our attention towards the activities of the mind, and outward awareness when the attention is directed to the world of sense impressions or the activities of the body.

Yoga provides us with a systematic and direct method of developing awareness. Yoga Asanas make us more closely aware of our body and its feelings and they demand of us a certain amount of concentration which is gradually increased and intensified.

The techniques aimed at developing awareness are:

Awareness of the senses, Awareness of the past experience, awareness of the present, and mantra repetition.

Other techniques which help meditation are:

Antar Mouna, Japa, Ajapa Japa, Chanting of Mantras, Ishta Devata, and Yantras and Mandalas.

## KRIYA YOGA

Most of the systems of Yoga emphasize the importance of concentration as a means of withdrawing the consciousness from the outside surroundings and directing it into the innermost realms of the mind.

Kriya Yoga does not pre-suppose concentration or even withdrawal of your awareness from the outside surroundings. Kriya Yoga is more interested in awareness than concentration. Awareness means conscious attention of thoughts or of objects, either external or internal, without necessarily being one-pointed. The word implies a relationship between the activity of perception and the perceived.

Kriya Yoga does not insist on the withdrawal and concentration of mind on one point; on the contrary, it asks one to move his awareness, to rotate his consciousness from one point to another in a particular order. As such it is most suitable for most people today, since they are habituated to extroversion, and cannot concentrate, and their conscious perception constantly jumps from one point to another.

Kriya Yoga means activity or movement of awareness or consciousness. It is the preliminary practice which leads first to '*Dharna*' and then to the transcended state of '*Dhyana*' (Meditation) and finally to Yoga. It requires one to purposely create activity in one's consciousness. By this process, mental faculties are harmonized, and when developed to its fullest potential, brings about co-ordination between the nervous system and the brain.

Kriya Yoga is actually a combination of Mudras, Bandhas, Asanas, Pranayama and awareness. By practicing the techniques of Kriya Yoga, Kundalini, the vital Shakti, energy, which lies in the Mooladhara Chakra can be awakened. With this Kundalini energy, we can also awaken the different Chakras and with the functioning of these centers, we can directly operate upon the dormant areas of the brain.

Anyone who wants to learn Kriya Yoga will have to go through a lot of preparation, if he wants to gain the best results. Asanas, pranayama, and Hath Yoga cleansing techniques should be practiced. Breath consciousness and Ajapa must be perfected, the psychic passages must be discovered and the correct locations of the Chakras must be established. Preliminary Kriya exercises involving Mudras and Bandhas should also be practiced for Some time. The Mudras and Bandhas are methods of stimulating nerve plexuses and endocrinal secretions and for activating the Prana in the body.

There are no restrictions or barriers of age, diet, sex etc. in the practice of Kriya Yoga.

## SHAT KARMA

In Yoga great importance is given to the regular cleansing of the body system. Without purification of the body, one will not be ready for the higher practice of Yoga.

There are six purificatory techniques or '*Shat Karma*', prescribed for the internal purification of the body:

(i) Neti	nasal cleaning, including Jal Neti.
(ii) Dhauti	Cleaning of the digestive tract.
(iii) Basti	Colon cleaning.
(iv) Nauli	Abdominal massage.
(v) Kapalbhata	Cleaning of the lungs and respiratory system.
(vi) Trataka	Training of the Visual organs-eyes to practice blink less gaze (leading to concentration of mind)

These simple techniques purify the nadis and groom the organs for Yogic practice. They purify the whole body and promote good health, and also bring-calmness and harmony of the mind.

These can be practiced by all. They are specially of benefit to fat people to eliminate body toxins (Poison).

### 1. Jal neti:

Jal neti is the process of cleaning the nasal passage with lukewarm saline water. and is essential for allowing free breathing.

Take lukewarm water, with pure salt dissolved in it (1 Teaspoon of salt for half a liter of water) in a small kettle or tea-pot.

Gently insert the nozzle of the pot into the left nostril. There should be no force, but the nozzle should press firmly against the sides of the nostril, so that there is no leakage of water.

Gradually tilt your head to the right side, simultaneously raising the pot so that the water runs into the left nostril.

Let the water flow out of the right nostril for 10 to 20 seconds.

Remove the nozzle from the left nostril,

Blowout the impurities by blowing out through the right and left nostrils.

Repeat the same process with the right nostril.

After Jal neti, the nostrils are cleaned and dried by doing Bhastrika-Pranayama (Bellow



Breathing)

(a) **Chandra Bhastrika**:- (cleaning of left nostril )

Close the right nostril with the thumb. Through the left nostril inhale and exhale vigorously, with moderate force, with the help of rhythmic relaxation and contraction of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

Repeat this 10 to 20 times.

Inhale deeply and harmoniously through the left nostril, hold the breath for a while by closing both the nostrils. Then keep the left nostril blocked and exhale through the right nostril.

(b) **Surya Bhastrika**:

Close the left nostril, and repeat the same process (bellow breathing) as above with the right nostril.

Then inhale deeply through the right nostril, retain the breath for a while and exhale through the left nostril.

(c) **Surya-Chandra Bhastrika** :

Repeat the bellow-breathing with both the nostrils, for 10 to 20 times.

Then inhale deeply with both the nostrils, retain the breath for a while, and then exhale gradually through the both nostrils.

2. **Dhauti (Cleaning of the Digestive Tract)**

**Kunjali Kriya** : (A simplified method of Dhauti)

Sit in the squatting posture.

Drink three or four glasses of lukewarm saline water (or more till the stomach is full).

Immediately after this, bend the body from the knees, bringing the trunk as horizontal as possible.

Keeping the left hand pressed near the navel, gently slide the middle and index finger of the right hand along the surface of the tongue towards to back of the throat. simultaneously pressing the back of the tongue.

This induces the sensation of vomiting, and allows the water gush out from the stomach through the mouth.

Continue this until all the water is expelled from the stomach.

Kunjla Kriya should be done once a week

### 3. Basti

Basti is a Hatha Yoga method of cleaning the Colon by sucking in air or water through the anus. It is a direct method of cleansing the bowels.

Basti stimulates the nerves of the, Colon as; well as the nerves connecting other parts and organs, of the digestive system.

It should be learnt from an expert,

Before attempting Basti one should master 'uddiyan Bandh' and churning of the abdomen.

### 4. Nauli

Nauli is a Yogic technique of massaging the entire abdomen and stomach by contracting and rolling the entire abdominal muscles. Of all yogic practices, nauli gives the most profound massage to the inner organs. It is beneficial for the digestive system and for bodily, health as a whole.

It is quite difficult and it is advised that this should be learnt under expert guidance.

Before attempting 'Nauli' one should master the two preparatory\_ technique of 'Agnisar Kriya' and 'Uddiyan Bandh'

### Kapalbhati

Sit in a comfortable asana: Padmasana. (Lotus posture), Vajrasana, Siddhasana or Siddha Yoni Asana.

Hold the back upright.

Close the eyes, and relax the whole body.

Breathe rapidly from the abdomen.

Exhale with forceful contraction of the abdominal muscles.

Inhale by allowing the abdominal muscles to expand slowly, Repeat a comfortable number of rapid respiration.

Then take one deep and slow inspiration

Breathe out and empty the lungs as much as possible\_

Do Maha Bandha (Jalandhara, Uddiyan and Moola Bandh together),

Hold the breath as long as is comfortable.

Then release the 'Maha Bandha', raise the head and slowly breath in.

This is one round.

After one round, breathe naturally for a few times and then start the next round.

In Bhastrika Pranayama, both inhalation and exhalation are accentuated and forceful. In Kapalbhata only exhalation is forceful, the inhalation is completely passive.

The whole respiration is done from the abdomen as far as possible.

Benefits;

1. Kapalbhata cleans out the lungs and the respiratory tract.
  2. It massages and improves the functioning of the digestive organs.
  3. It wakes up the mind and induces a tranquil, receptive state of mind,
- It is the best preparatory techniques for meditative practice.

## 6. Trataka

Place a lighted candle at eye level at arm's length directly in front of you and make your position completely comfortable. You should be seated in a meditation posture with the candle in such a position that you do not see the double.

Close your eyes and become totally aware of your physical body. Make the body completely still, there should be no physical movement throughout the practice.

When the body has become still, chant 'OM' 7 times and feel the vibration of this mantra surging through your whole body and brain.

Now open your eyes and gaze intently at the wick of the candle; Do not look at anything else. Your eyes become fixed on the tip of the wick. Eyes should be wide open and the pupils should not move. Try to consciously relax the eye muscles. Concentrate fully on the candle. The whole of your consciousness must become centered in the eyes to the extent that awareness of the rest of the body is lost. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back.

You must try not to blink or close the eyes.

Gaze steadily at the candle for about 3 minutes, or until the eyes begin to water. Then close the eyes and relax. Do not move the body, but become aware of the after-image of the flame.

The after-image will tend to move up and down or sideways. You must try to hold it steady at the eye brow center.

When the image begins to fade, open your eyes and fix them on the external flame again.

For 3 minutes try to focus your awareness on the top of the wick. No blinking and no movement of the eyes.

Then close the eyes again and concentrate On the after-image.

Notice that the color of the flame's aura will change.

Try to hold the image steady at the eyebrow center. Witness any experiences and watch the activities of the mind.

Do not allow the mind to wander, merely observe its tendencies.  
Continue external and internal Trataka. Do as many rounds as you have time for, but do not strain the eyes.

Now chant 'OM' 7 times, keep the eyes closed for a short time and again witness your mind. Without becoming involved, watch the activities of your mind.

Then open your eyes and blowout the candle.

Gradually you should increase the number of rounds from 5, which will take about 20 minutes, up to 30 minutes of practice. Advanced aspirants can incorporate 'japa' into their practice of Trataka.

After Trataka, please do the following Eye Exercises :

Eye Exercises:

1. Far and Near:

First look at your right hand index finger, kept at the eye level and 6" away, then immediately focus the eyes at some far object.

2. Side ways:

Look at extreme left, then right. Look at the top and then at the bottom .Look at diagonals (left top to right bottom and right top to left bottom).

3. Rotation: Without moving the head, rotate eyes clockwise and anticlockwise.

4. Palming. Rub the two palms gently and briskly and then apply the hollow of the palms to both eyes; feel the soothing warmth. Repeat a few times.

Wash the eyes with cold water, or use eye wash ball.

5. Trataka brings out lot of perspiration (takes out poison). It also helps in the flow of Shushumna (Bilateral Breathing). After Trataka, if you feel excessive body heat, please drink milk with three almonds.

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## PRANAYAMA

### NADISHODHANA:

#### Nasagra Mudra (Nasikagra Mudra)

In 'Pranayama' the breath through the nostrils is controlled by the fingers of the right hand held in front of the face. Nasagra Mudra is important in the practice of Pranayama'.

The position of the hand and fingers is as follows:

Hold the right hand in front of the face.

Place the tips of the second (index) finger and the third (middle) finger to rest on the forehead between the eye-brows. These fingers should be straight.

The thumb should be placed beside the right nostril, and the fourth finger, beside the nostril.

The air flows through the right and left nostrils are controlled by pressing the thumb and the fourth finger.

The elbow of the right arm should be in front of, and as near the chest as possible, and the forearm should be as vertical as possible.

The head and back should be held upright.

#### Nadi shodhan (1st stage) :

Sit in a comfortable position. The simple meditative asans. 'Sukhasana' and Vajrasana are particularly suitable for this.

Sit straight, holding the spine upright.

Place the left hand on the left knee or 'in the laps. Relax the whole body.

Close the eyes.

Place the right hand in 'nasagra' mudra.

Be aware of the breathing process,

1. Close the right nostril with the thumb, and slowly deeply inhale and exhale through the left nostril Continue this for a few minutes.

Then close the left nostril with the fourth finger, release the right nostril. Slowly, deeply inhale and exhale through the right nostril ,

2. In this second stage, try to control the duration of inhalation and exhalation.

First close the right nostril and breathe through the left nostril, While inhaling, mentally count 1, 2, 3....,

During the exhalation, again count 1, 2, 3.....

Try to make the time of exhalation double that of inhalation. Repeat this 10 times with the left nostril.

Then repeat the same 10 times closing the left nostril and inhaling and exhaling through the right nostril

Stage 2: '**Sukha Poorvaka**' or alternate **nostril pranayama**

sit in a comfortable position or any of the simple meditative asanas.

Hold the head and back upright, without straining. Be calm and relax the whole body.

Be aware of your breath.

Lift your right hand and adjust the fingers in 'nasagra mudra',

Close the right nostril with the thumb and inhale the left nostril. Breathe as deeply as possible, to fill the lungs to the maximum.

At the end of inhalation, close the left nostril and release the right nostril. Exhale slowly. The lungs should be emptied as much as possible.

After the exhalation, inhale slowly through the right nostril.

After full inhalation, close the right nostril, and exhale through the left nostril.

This is one round.

Repeat a few rounds in the same way.

During the process, be aware of the breath, and mentally count during the inhalation and exhalation.

Gradually with practice, try to increase the duration of inhalation and exhalation.

In the earlier stages of practice, try to keep the period of inhalation and exhalation equal.

The process is the same as in stage 2, i. e.

Inhalation through the right nostril .

Exhalation through the left nostril.

Inhalation through the right nostril  
& Exhalation through the left nostril.

Gradually with practice, try to increase the duration of exhalation in relation to the duration of inhalation, until gradually the period of exhalation becomes double that of inhalation.

Stage 3:- ('Antaranga' or 'Poorna Kumbhaka'):

After you find no difficulty in practicing the stages of pranayama described above, the next stage will be to retain the breath after inhalation.

Gradually increase the period of retention of breath after inhalation.

Breathe slowly and through the left nostril, keeping the right one closed.

At the end of inhalation, close both nostrils and retain the air in the lungs. Hold your breath (Kumbhaka) as long as can be done comfortably.

Then breathe slightly through the right nostril and then slowly breathe out through the right nostril. The exhalation should be controlled, the duration being twice that of inhalation.

At the end of exhalation, breathe in through the right nostril, keeping the left nostril closed.

Hold the breathe (Kumbhaka) as long as is comfortable. Breathe in slightly through the left nostril and breathe out through the same nostril, the duration being twice that of inhalation.

This is one round.

Continue the process as long as comfortable.

With practice, try to increase the duration of retention of breath.

Benefits:

The practice of Poorna Kumbhaka is excellent for the mind; It also helps to throw out impurities from the body. It brings about harmony within the pranic body and mind.

He who can do Kumbhaka for some time will increase digestive fire and hear the internal cosmic sound (nada) The body will become purified and free of disease.

During Kumbhaka, the mind becomes steady and one experiences timelessness. One is able to concentrate intensely on the Brukuti (the eyebrow center),

#### Stage 4 :

The next stage will be to practice outer retention (Bahir Kumbhaka).

The process is as under:

Inhale through left nostril.

Retain breath internally (Antaranga).

Exhale through right nostril.

Retain breath externally (Bahir Kumbhaka).

Inhale through right nostril.

Retain breath internally. (Antaranga).

Exhale through left nostril.

Retain breathe externally (Bahir Kumbhaka)

This is one round - Repeat this as many times as possible.

#### **Bhastrika Pranayama :** (Charging Breath) :

Sit in Vajrasana.

Place your hands on the knees - keep the eyes closed all the time.

Press the air out of the lungs in short rhythmical spurts by contracting the diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

Then breathe in, letting the air in rhythmical spurts, and, by fully expanding the abdominal muscles.

While breathing bend forward slowly, until your forehead touches the floor.

Then count 15 breaths, the forehead remaining touching on the floor.

Slowly raise the head, counting breathing in spurts at all the time in even rhythm.

Strengthen the elbows, and keep breathing on even rhythm while tilting your head backwards. Do this 15 times with your head tilted backwards, keeping an even rhythm.

Bring the head back to the straight position, inhale deeply. Do Jalandhara Bandha (chin lock).

Press the chin against the chest. Contract the perineum as in Moola Bandha.



Hold the breath for a few moments.

Release the Bandha, and exhale, bringing the head to the straight position.

Keep the eyes closed throughout the practice.

The mouth should be closed throughout and only breathe through the nostril.

Most of the air should be inducted into the lungs by the expansion of the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm, so also the air should be expelled by contraction of the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm

### **Ujjayi Prannyama (Psychic Breathing) :**

Sit in a comfortable position, preferably in 'Vajrasana', hands on the knees, and chin touching the chest, holding the neck and head upright. Relax the body.

Breathe slowly and deeply, keeping the glottis partially closed in the throat. As you breathe, a continuous sound (like light snoring sound) is emitted from the throat. Look between the eye brows; Raise your head while breathing in, look up, close the eyes. Exhale lowering the chin.

Repeat this 15 times.

The awareness should be on the sound from the throat and the process of inhalation and exhalation.

Ujjayi can be done with tongue - lock (Khechari Mudra).

Roll your tongue upwards and backwards so that the lower surface of the tongue lies in contact with the upper palate. Stretch the tip of the tongue backwards as far as is comfortable.

### **Benefits:**

By performing Ujjayi Pranayama, one becomes mentally and physically relaxed, and is important in meditation practices. It has many subtle influences on the body and brain. This is beneficial to people suffering from insomnia and those who suffer from high blood pressure.

### **Bhramari Pranayama-(Humming or Vibrating Breathing):**

Sit in 'Padmasana' (Lotus Pose) Close the eyes; relax the whole body.

Breathe in slowly and deeply Retain the breath for 15 seconds.

Bring your hands to your head, plugging the ears with your thumbs Keep the chest lifted, elbows well in back.

Breathe out, making a humming sound, through your nose. The humming sound should be smooth and continuous. The important thing is that you can't hear the sound vibrating under your head. The exhalation would be slow and controlled. Stop the humming at the end of exhalation.

Repeat a few times.

This helps in harmonizing the mind and directing awareness inwards, and gaining tranquility during times of stress.

Bhramari Pranayama is an excellent method of removing mental tensions, and for preparing the mind for dedicational practices.

### **Nasikagra with manduki :**

Sit between the knees, buttocks inside the ankles on the floor, toes out.

This is frog position.

Keep hands on the knees. Fix your gaze at the tip of nose and at the same time, follow the incoming natural breath from the tip of nose to the top of nose. With exhalation, be aware of outgoing natural breath from top of nose to tip of nose. The gaze is fixed at the tip of the nose all the time.

Also try to find out smell of breathing. This will bring quick introversion and spiritual intoxication.

When the eyes are tired, close them and only follow the normal breathing in the nasal passage from tip to top, from top to tip. Do it for 3 to 5 minutes.

After this exercise, sit in meditation for some time or do some Yoganidra (psychic sleep).

### **Cooling Practices:**

These are simple practices which cool down the body. They can be done after the yogic practices which tend to over-heat the body. Besides cooling the body, they also help to cool the mind and relieve mental tension.

#### **1. Sheetali Pranayama :**

This consists in inhaling through the mouth, and then exhaling slowly through the nose.

The tongue is rolled so that it forms a tube through which one inhales. This is done by rolling the tongue so that both sides upwards and inwards, with the edges almost meeting. The end of the tongue should be outside the mouth.

Sit in Padmasana (Lotus pose) Hold the back straight and head upright.

Close your eyes and relax the whole body.

Roll the tongue to form a tube.

Slowly and deeply inhale through the tongue-tube.

Withdraw the tongue and close the mouth.

Raise the shoulders, do Jalandhara Bandha (Chin lock). Hold the breath.

Release the Jalandhara Bandha. Exhale slowly through the nose.

Repeat 5 times.

2. "Sheetli Pranayama alleviates diseases of the spleen and other large organs of the body, and helps to remove fever, hunger and bilious problems Furthermore, it helps to eradicate all poisons from the body. ('Hatha Yoga Pradipika'-V.3:58)

"A sadhaka should do Sheetali Praoayama since it eliminates indigestion, cough and bilious problems (v.3:7 3)

### **Sheetkari Pranayama:**

Sit in Padmasana (Lotus Pose)

Shape of mouth as described: Press the lower and upper teeth together. Separate the lips as much as comfortable.

Hold the tongue backwards into Khaechari Mudra, so that the lower surface touches the upper palate (roof of mouth)

Close the eyes.

Breathe in slowly and deeply. At the end of inhalation, close the mouth, keeping the tongue in Khechari Mudra

Raise the shoulders, do Jalandhara Bandha Hold the breath for 15 seconds.

Release the bandha, raise the head.

Slowly breathe out through the nose.

Repeat 15 times.

"Make the sound 'Shee' while breathing through the mouth, By doing this practice one will

become like Kamadeva" (' Hatha Yoga Pradipika V. 3:54).

**Kaki Mudra:**

Sit in a comfortable Asana.

Place the hands on the top of the knees.

Keep the eyes open throughout and do 'Nasikagra drishti' i.e. fixing both eyes on. the nose tip.

Push the lips together leaving a small tube through which the air is inhaled.

Breathe in slowly and deeply through the mouth. At the end of inhalation close the lips. Exhale through the nose.

The eyes should be open and there should be continuous Nasikagra drishti, throughout the practice.

Repeat a few times.

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## BANDHAS

Bandhas are small but very important group of yogic practices. They are an essential part of Kriya Yoga, where they are combined with various other yogic techniques. It is, therefore, necessary to master each of them before beginning Kriya Yoga.

Bandhas consist in specific part of the body being gently yet powerfully contracted and tightened. This has vast repercussions. The physical contraction or lock has extensive influence on psychic body (pranic body). The flow of Prana that continuously streams through our subtle body is redirected and even stopped. This has direct influences on the mind. The whole body and mind is tranquilized and made receptive to higher states of awareness. Such is the power of bandhas when they are perfected.

Bandhas, like all other yogic practices, act on and influence different levels of individual being. They have profound effects on the physical, pranic and mental levels.

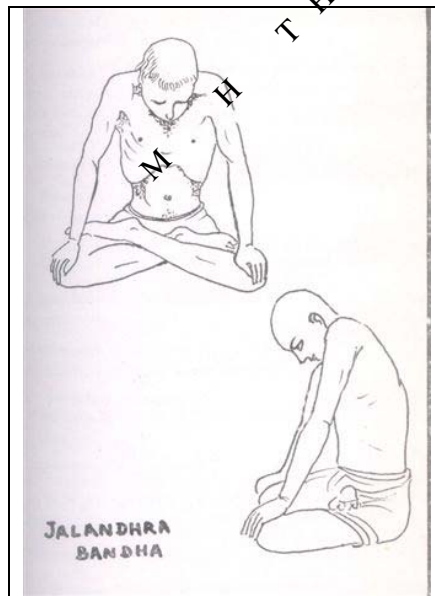
### Jalandhara Bandha

Sit in Padmasana or Siddhasana.

Make sure that the knees are firmly in contact with the ground.

Place the palms of your hands on the knees.

Close the eyes.



Relax the whole body.

Inhale deeply.

Retain the breath inside the lungs.

Then bend the head forwards and press the chin tightly against the chest, in particular against the sternum (breastbone).

Straighten your arms so that they are locked; that is, you have to gently but firmly push your elbows towards each other as though you are trying to bend your arm inward instead of outwards.

Your hands should remain on the knee.

This action will tend to intensify the pressure applied in the region of the neck.

Simultaneously, hunch your shoulders upwards and forwards to ensure that the straight arms are firmly locked.

Stay in the final position for as long as you can comfortably hold your breath.

Then relax the shoulders.

Bend the arms outwards and release the lock.

Slowly raise your head. Then exhale. This is 1 round.

Breathe normally.

When your breathing rate returns to normal you can repeat another round.

Benefits ;

Jalandhara Bandha influences the individual at all levels; physical, psychic and mental. It controls the flow of prana in the body, This induces mental relaxation and can help, to induce meditation.

## **UDDIYANA BANDHA**

Uddiyana Bandha is a very beneficial yogic practice and an integral part of Kriya Yoga. Therefore, it must be perfected before undertaking the more advanced practice of Kriya Yoga.

Sit in any meditation asana with the knees flat on the ground  
( Padmasana or Siddhasana ).

Place the palms of the hands flat on the knees; this is important to. allow the arms to apply pressure in the final pose.

Close the eyes.

Relax the whole body.

Exhale as deeply as possible by accentuated contraction of the abdominal muscles and the chest. The lungs should be emptied as much as is possible.

Hold the breath outside.

Do Jalandhara Bandha.

Take a false inhalation i.e. expand the chest as though you are breathing in, but without allowing air to enter the lungs. The abdomen will become concave.

Stay in the final pose for a comfortable length of time while holding the breath.

Then slowly relax the chest. The abdomen will resume its normal position.

Then release Jalandhara Bandha and bend the arms.

Inhale Slowly.

Repeat the process when the breathing has returned to normal.

Don't strain under any circumstances.

### **Points to Remember during the Practice:**

1. Try to initially empty the lungs as much as possible by accentuated contraction of the abdominal muscles and the chest.
2. Make sure that you apply Jalandhara Bandha before doing the final position of Uddiyana. It is Jalandhara that prevents air entering the lungs during the false inhalation.
3. It is the false inhalation that gives the final contraction of the abdomen. The abdominal muscles should remain passive. Many people contract the abdominal muscles in the final position - this is wrong.
4. Don't allow air to enter the lungs when you make the false inhalation.
5. When you release the final pose, firstly relax the chest then release Jalandhara Bandha and finally breathe in. This order is important to prevent injury to the lungs.

### **Benefits:**

The benefits are almost the same as for Jalandhara Bandha. The entire abdomen is squeezed like a sponge. This pushes out all the stagnant blood. All the inner organs are revitalized. It can help to alleviate or prevent a large number of abdominal ailments including indigestion, constipation, diabetes, colitis and so forth if they are not too serious and chronic.

Uddiyana Bandha also has many subtle influences on the pranic body. Uddiyana also redirects prana into the Sushumna nadi. This helps to expand awareness and induces meditation.

## MOOLA BANDHA

Sit in Siddhasana.

Place the palms on the knees.

Close the eyes and relax the whole body. Inhale deeply.

Then hold the breath and practice Jalandhara Bandha.

Contract the muscles at the Mooladhara chakra region.

Draw the muscles upwards as much as you are able without excessive strain.

Keep your attention fixed on the point of contraction, Hold this contraction for as long as possible,  
Then release the contraction.

Release Jalandhara Bandha.

Raise the head and breathe out.

This is 1 round.

If necessary, allow the breathing to return to normal.

Then do some more rounds. Maintain awareness,  
Don't strain.

While taking the final position and doing Jalandhara Bandha, awareness should be directed to the breath. In the final pose, the awareness should be fixed at the place of contraction in the perineum.

The final position can be held for as long as you can hold your breath.

Benefits:

"Moola Bandha brings about the union of prana and apana, and nada and bindu. This will bestow perfection in Yoga. Of this there is no doubt." (Hatha Yoga Pradipika. Ch 4.64)

## MAHA BANDHA

Uddiyana Bandha combined with Jalandhara, as previously described, and Moola bandha is called Maha Bandha.

### **Technique :**

Practice Uddiyana Bandha combined with Jalandha Bandha.

Then contract the perineum as described in the practice of Moolla Bandha.



This is the final position.

Retain your breath for as long as comfortable.

Then release Moola bandha, Uddiyana Bandha, and finally Jalandhara Bandha.

This is 1 round.

Maha Bandha is directly utilized in Kriya Yoga Practices.

M H T H A K E R

## THE CHAKRAS

The Chakras are the vertices of pranic energy within the human body which control the circulation of 'prana' permeating the entire human body.

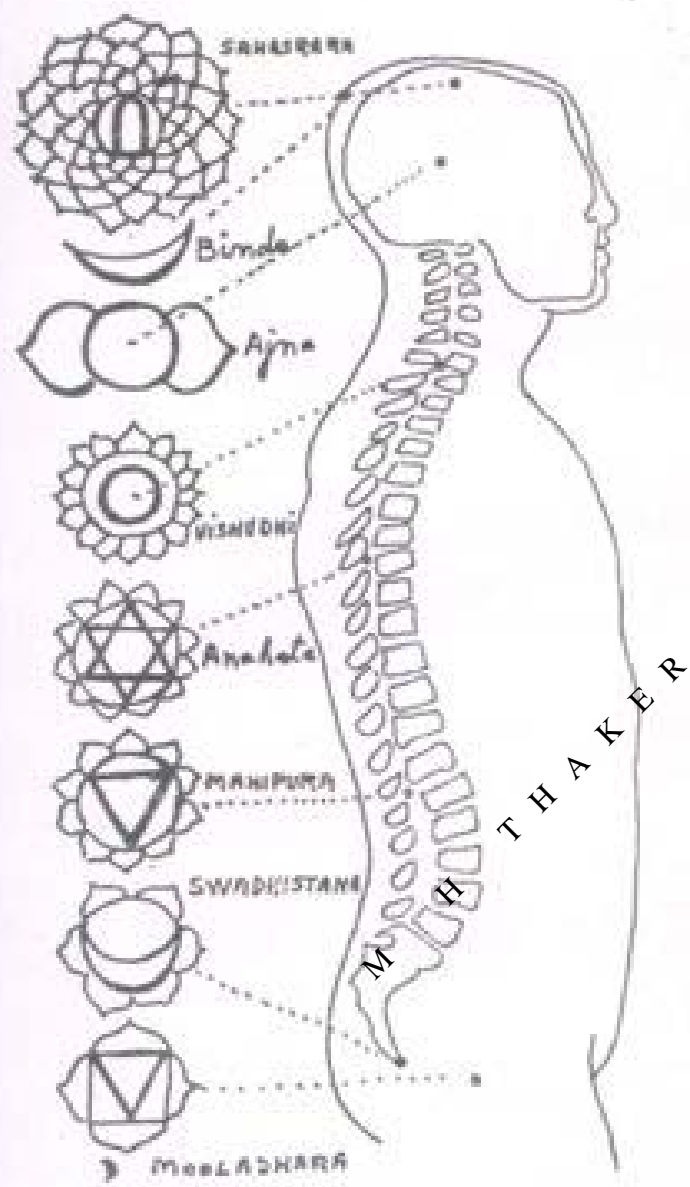
In Yogic practices, only a few of the principal Chakras are utilized.

The main Chakras are :

1. Mooladhara
2. Swadhisthana
3. Manipura
4. Anahata
5. Vishuddhi
6. Ajna
7. Bindu
8. Sahasrara

the '**Chakras**' are both real and symbolic. They are:

1. Centers of subtle energies (prana) within the pranic body of man. each chakra being associated with pranic energy at specified frequency levels, and specific levels of the mind.
2. Progressively higher levels of awareness. They represent different levels of awareness in man, from the more instinctive realm associated with 'mooladhara' chakra to the more intuitive



**CHAKRAS**

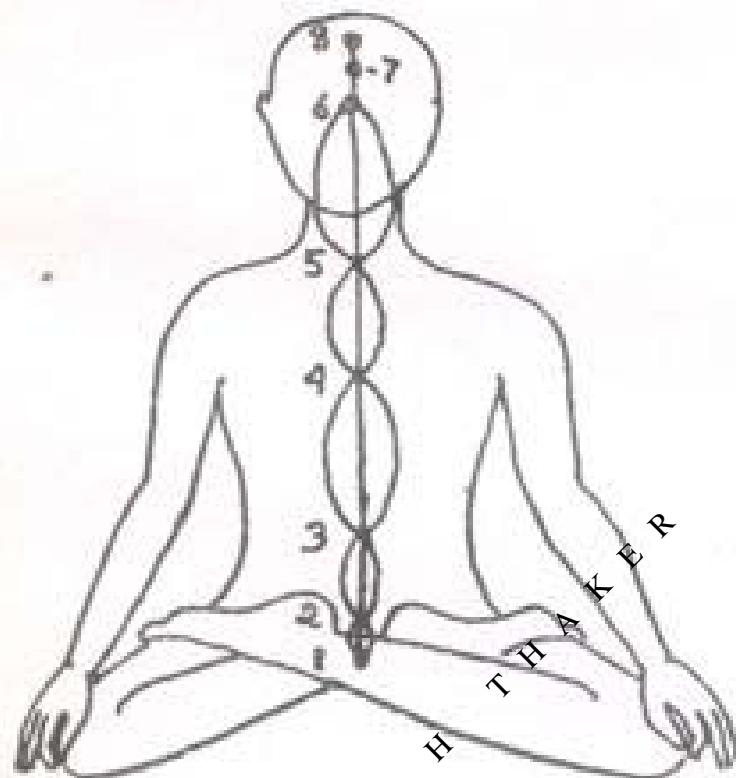
PINGALA



SUSHUMNA



IDA



1. MOOLADHARA

5. VISHUDHI

2. SWADHISTHANA

6. AJNA

3. MANIPURA

7. BINDU

4. ANAHATA

8. SAHASRARA

realm associated with Ajna Chakra. They symbolize the spiritual path. A specific start of awareness will induce prana to predominate at the corresponding chakra. Physical or mental stimulation of the psychic centers can lead to change of consciousness. As a result, the psychic potential in man develops and enables him to realize his higher self.

internalized awareness aspect is symbolized by the 'Ida' nadi and the 'Prana' aspects by the 'Pingla' nadi. The 'Ida' and 'Pingla' nadis cross each other at each of the six main Chakras. Thus the awakening of each Chakra is inseparably related to both 'prana' and 'consciousness'.

For the purpose of practicing Kriya Yoga or the advanced forms of meditation, it is important to have the knowledge and awareness of the chakras and to be able to locate them all accurately.

To awaken Kundalini, to bring out the dormant and sleeping centers of the brain into action, it is necessary to be familiar with the Chakras. Every chakra, is connected with particular portions of the brain.

The Chakras are an indication of the fullest potentialities of each and every person. The lowest of the human Chakras, the Mooladhara, represents the level of man where there are several limitations of both in knowledge and the ability of act. Higher Chakras represent higher levels in the range of understanding, harmony, bliss, identification and knowledge.

Mooladhara and Swadhishtana Chakras are predominantly 'tamasic' in nature. One's actions tend to be 'adharmic' and disharmonious.

Manipura and Anahara, the two middle Chakras, are a mixture of both positive and negative qualities. At this level, 'rajas' predominates. Actions and thoughts are a combination of Dharma and Adharma.

'Vishudhi' and 'Ajna' the two higher Chakras are predominantly positive and 'Satvik'. One tends to follow Dharma and one's thoughts and actions are in harmony with one's individual nature.

The path of Yoga is a series of stages. The progressive awakening of the Chakras correspond to these stages.

**(1) Mooladhara Chakra** is the basic substratum-the fundamental root or framework of individual human existence and awareness.

The 'Kundalini', the latent potential in human being, is regarded as residing Mooladhara Chakra.

The three major nadis, Ida, Pingla and Sushumna, arise from Mooladhara, and make their ascent via the other Chakras to Ajna Chakra, in the mid-brain.

Sushumna, the symbolic passage through which Kundalini rises through the Chakras. is generally regarded as starting from Mooladhara Chakra, and ascending in turn through the other higher Chakras to 'Sahasrara'.

This is the centre where people are almost entirely self-centered, where the predominant drives, thoughts, motives and actions are directed towards attainment of some security in the world, money, material object, food etc. The Karma of previous birth manifests in the form of anger, hatred, greed, passion, love, jealousy, etc.

The location of the Mooladhara is in the region of the perineum.

## **(2) Swadhisthan Chakra**

'Swadhisthana' means one's own abode. This Chakra is regarded as being the substratum, the basis, of individual human existence, and is generally associated with the unconscious mind with its storehouse of mental impressions, 'Sanskaras'. All one's 'Karmas' from past lives are all locked away in that centre of the brain which is connected with Swadhisthana Chakra.

Swadhisthana Chakra represents the level of being where one is primarily connected with seeking of pleasurable sensations, through the sense organs. Swadhistana Chakra is the level where people motivate their whole life to attaining peace in the way that suits them. The world, all things and other people, are treated according to the amount of pleasure that they can bring.

The physical trigger point or Chakra Kshetrarm of Swadhistana chakra is at the base of the spine, at the tail bone

## **(3) Manipura Chakra :**

This is the third of the ascending chakras, Manipura Chakra is the 'centre of 'prana' within the human framework. It is the centre of the incredibly complex net work of subtle energy that permeates and controls the body from behind the senses.

It burns up and assimilates the energy in food.

At the level of Manipura Chakra, people become 'Very active and extroverted. They try to impose their will on the other people and the world around them. All things and other people are Seen as means to providing personal power and satisfying, worldly ambitions. It is the .centre of dynamism, Manipura Chakra is closely related to the sense of sight and movement of feet.

The physical trigger point of Manipura Chakra is in the middle of the spine directly behind the navel. Manipura Chakra Kendra is art the navel.

## **( 4) Anahata Chakra:**

Anahata Chakra is the fourth chakra , the centre of unbeaten sound. That is, the cosmic sound (Shabda Brahman) is heard at this centre.

It is located in the spine in line with the heart. Anahata Kshetra is at the heart.

This centre is regarded as the centre of consciousness (Jivatma) in human being.

This centre is so powerful because it is the seat of emotions. These emotions when purified and

one-pointed, are transformed into devotion. Opening this Chakra produces intense feeling of Bhakti. The mind becomes overwhelming one pointed which leads to transcendence.

The Anahata Chakra is the level where one begins to accept and love everyone and everything unconditionally. One begins to love people and the objects of the world for what they are. One begins to accept their nature with their faults and positive qualities, and to realize that everyone and every thing is acting according to its own 'Swadharma.'

At the level of this chakra, one begins to become more creative, whether in the field of science, art, music, poetry or whatever.

Anahata is closely related with: the sense of touch or feeling and with the movements' of the hands.

Above this Chakra level, there is progressively less identification with limited human existence. One starts to transcend individual identifications,.

Just below the Anahata Chakra. there is a minor centre called 'Ananda. Kendra'- the root of bliss. It is here that many people create the image of their Ishta Devata, and worship mentally. It is the centre where devotion is intensified.

#### **(5) Vishuddhi Chakra :**

Vishuddhi Chakra or purification Centre, is the centre which purifies and harmonize all opposites. where poison and nectar, good and bad, etc, are united into a common experience of bliss.

A wakening Vishuddhi Chakra is responsible for the maintenance of health, youth and longevity. When Vishuddhi is functioning, degenerated tissues become rejuvenated and diseases are kept away.

Vishuddhi Chakra is the level where one is really to accept the world for which it is, taking the good with intelligence behind all happenings. He becomes compassionate, peaceful and full of bliss.

The location of Vishuddhi Chakra is in the spine directly behind the throat pit, Its Kshetra is in the throat where the thyroid gland is situated,

#### **(6) Ajna Chakra**

Ajna Chakra is the centre of command. It is also the Guru Chakra, where the inner guru resides and directs.

Ajna Chakra is the point of confluence of the three great forces. Ida, Pingla, and Sushumna, which link all the Chakras. This is an important centre and must be purified before one commences to awaken the other chakras.

Ajna is the centre of wisdom and intuition. When this Chakra is awakened, the mind becomes a perfect instrument - steady, reliable and free of all attachments. Will power becomes very strong, and all goals are achieved. One gains full control over his/her prana and can distribute it to all parts of the body at will. With the awakening of Ajna, psychic powers (siddhis) are likely to manifest in accordance with one's mental tendencies.

Ajna is associated with mind.

The location point of Ajna Chakra is in the centre of the brain at the top of the spine. It is difficult to locate this area; so in Yogic practice, the eye brow centre (Bhumadhya) is Utilised. Ajna and Bhumadhya are directly connected through a psychic passage. Ajna is also directly linked to the pineal gland.

#### (7) Bindu

Bindu is the seat of the nectar, which maintains the life of Yogis. It controls all possible processes of metabolism, produces nutrition and the required quantity of Oxygen.

The location point of Bindu is at the top back of the head.

The Bindu is directly connected with Vishuddhi Chakra by a particular net work of nerves which flow through the interior portion of the nasal orifice passing through Lalana (a minor chakra responsible for storing secretion of Amrit or nectar ) when awakening takes place in Vishuddhi, it also takes place in Bindu and Lalana.

Bindu is the centre of Nada. There is not one particular sound in bindu, but many, many sounds. When practicing Nada Yoga one should concentrate on Bindu.

For the awakening of Bindu, there are no specific practice. Once Vishuddhi becomes active, it will have a consequential influence on Bindu.

#### (8) Sahasrara

The Sanskrit word Sahasrara means 'one thousand'. Although

Sahasrara is represented by a lotus with one thousand petals, the 'one thousand' literally implies that its magnitude and significance is vast, in fact, unlimited. Sahasrara is shoonya, the void. It is difficult to discuss Sahasrara, for it transcends concepts and words and is beyond experience, for the experience, the experienced and the experiencer are one and the same. Sahasrara is the merging of consciousness and prana. It is the culmination of yoga, it is yoga itself, the perfect union.

When one gains mastery over Sahasrara, he becomes free in all states; he becomes rooted in happiness and free from grid and bondage. With the blossoming of Sahasrara, the Yogi is said to acquire various psychic powers, but if he can free himself from attachment to such powers, he may then become the knower of the Supreme, and acquire every kind of knowledge.



## ASANAS

'Asanas' means a steady and comfortable posture.

Normally, it is taken to be physical exercise, but this does not carry its full significance.

Each person is made up of three aspects i.e. Body, mind and consciousness, which merge together to constitute one whole being. Asanas aim at influencing all these three aspects and synchronizing them into one harmonious whole.

Correct performance of Asanas requires participation of one's whole being in relation to the physical position and movements, the breath, relaxation of the muscles, etc.

Asanas loosen up the joints of the body, stretch and tone up the muscles and remove poisons which tend to accumulate in various parts of the body.

They also harmonize the nervous system and they improve the functioning of the internal organs such as heart, lungs, abdominal organs, endocrinal gland, blood vessels etc. It leads to better health and longevity.

Asanas make the body relaxed, strong, supple, free from aches and pains, and this, in turn, brings about emotional and mental calmness and confidence.

The greatest and most profound benefit of Asanas comes through the influence of the asanas on the pranic and mental bodies, harmonizing the process occurring below the normal level of perception. It is this influence that can bring about remarkable improvements in the overall health and one's attitude towards life.

### **Guidelines to be observed in practicing Asanas.**

Asanas should be performed in a clean and well ventilated place.

A rug or a blanket should be placed on the floor.

The Asanas should preferably be practiced in the morning.

Asanas should not be performed after the meals, at least not before three hours after meals.

Keep the body and mind relaxed during the practice. There should be no tension.

Breathing should be through the nostrils and not through the mouth.

Eyes should be closed as far as possible during the practice.

Movements of the body and the muscles should be slow and controlled.

Control and regulation of breath is an important aspect of Asanas.

If one feels physically or mentally tired he should relax.

Do not overstrain or overstretch the muscles.

The programmes of Asanas should be carefully chosen and practiced regularly and systematically.

After performing the Asana relax the body and mind completely.

There is no restriction of age or sex for practicing Asanas.

## **SAITHALYASANA**

( Relaxation Pose)

Sit on the floor with legs outstretched in front of the body.

Separate the knees, moving the legs apart.

Bend the right leg and place the sole of the right foot against the inside of the left thigh. The whole of the right leg should rest on the floor.

Carefully fold your left leg so that the left foot lies beside the left buttocks.

Place your hands on your right ankle.

Relax the whole body and exhale.

Then while inhaling, slowly raise your arms upwards, keeping them together and straight, until they are eventually vertical above the head at the end of the inhalation.

Then exhale, twist the trunk slightly and bend forward over the right knee.

Bend forward as far as possible, but with practice try to touch the forehead on the ground directly in front of the right knee.

Relax the whole body.

Remain in this final position as long as comfortable. Breathe slowly and deeply.

Then, as you inhale, raise the arms, head and trunk until the arms are vertical.

Exhale and lower your arms.

Repeat the same process, adjusting the body position so that the left sole presses against the right thigh, and the right leg folded backwards.

**Benefits:**

This Asana is very beneficial for the whole body, particularly for the back and abdomen, and the spinal cord, brain and internal abdominal organs.

## **Padmasana (Lotus Pose)**

This is one of the best meditative asana.

Sit with the legs stretched forward.

Slowly fold one leg and place the foot on the thigh of the opposite leg,

The sole of the foot must face upwards, with the heel in contact with the front of the lower abdomen.

When you feel comfortable, fold the other leg in the same way, also placing the foot on the top of the opposite thigh. In the final pose both knees should rest comfortably on the floor.

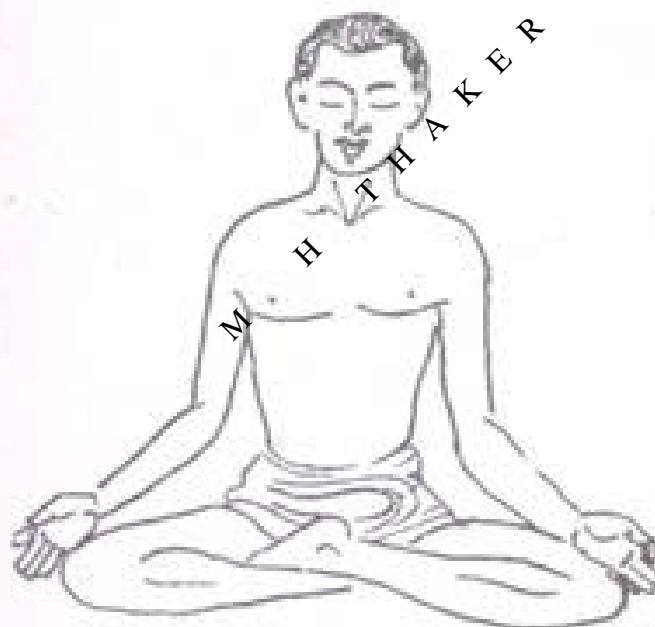
Hold the back and head upright, but without strain. Close the eyes.

**Benefits:**

Padmasana induces mental calmness, which is the essential prerequisite for pranayama and meditative practices. This tranquility also helps to bring about physical health and mental equilibrium on a permanent basis. This asana also tones the organs, muscles and nerves in the abdominal and pelvic regions.



**PADMASANA**



**SIDDHASANA**

## Siddhasana

Sit with the legs stretched in front of the body.

Fold your right leg and place the sole of the right foot against the inside of the left thigh.

Your right heel should be placed So that it presses against the area between the anus and the genitals (the perineum). This is an important aspect of Siddhasana.

Then fold your left leg and place the left foot on the top of the right calf.

If possible try to adjust the position of the left heel So that it presses into the pelvic immediately above the genitals. Your gentile should therefore lie between the two heels.

Grasp your right toes and pull them upwards into the space between the left thigh and calf.

Adjust the body so that it is comfortable. The knee should be in contact with the ground.

Hold the spine and head upright, yet relaxed.

Benefits:

Siddhasana gives essentially the same benefits as Padmasana..

## Vajrasana

Kneel on the ground with your knees close or slightly apart.

Position the feet so that your toes touch each other. ⇄

Rest the arm beside the body.

Bring the buttocks down on to the heels, at the same time taking support with the help of hands on the floor.

Try to sit on the heels.

Let the weight of your trunk be supported on your feet without support of your arms.

Hold your head upright. The head, neck and back should be in one straight line.

Place your hands on top of your legs, near the knees.

Relax the arms and the whole body.

Benefits:

Vajrasana is a very relaxing position. Conducive to mind and body.

It is an excellent meditative asana.

Note;

In the early stages, it may be difficult to sit on the feet without support of the arms.

Beginners, who find that their heel ache after a very short time in this position. and should return to the normal position and then sit down on the floor with the legs outstretched. Bend one leg, hold the ankle and vigorously shake the foot until the signs of stiffness disappear. Repeat with the other leg.

Then again sit in Vajrasana.

## **Veerasana**

This is a simple asana which can be used for meditative, practices.

Sit with the legs outstretched in front of the body.

Bend the left leg and place the left foot under and to the side of the right buttock. Now bend the right leg over the top of the left leg, placing the right foot beside the left buttock.

Arrange the position of the knees so that one is above other.

Hold the head, neck and back upright.

Place the hands either on the feet, or on the knees, one: on top of the other, palms facing downwards.

Relax the whole body.

### **Benefits.**

This is a comfortable sitting position for those people who cannot sit in the more difficult meditative asanas. Like all meditative asanas, it is conducive to physical and mental equilibrium.

## **Bhujangasana ( Cobra Pose)**

Lie flat on the stomach on the floor, face down, with eyes closed, legs straight and the soles of the feet uppermost.

Place the palms of the hands flat on the floor, directly under the shoulders. The fingers should point forward.

The arms should be bent with the elbows facing backward.

Rest the forehead on the floor. Close the eyes.

Relax the whole body.

Breathe out slowly and deeply.

As you breathe in, slowly bend your head backwards so that the chin eventually points forwards and the neck is compressed.

Slowly start arching the spine backwards, at the same time slowly raising the head and shoulders off the ground.

Continue to slowly arch the back and raise the trunk of the body as far as flexibility will allow.

Take care not to straighten the arms (keep the elbows bent), do not lift the abdomen off the floor. Only the trunk should be bent back. Try to keep the navel in contact with the ground.

Keep the legs closed together, straight and relaxed.

In the final position, the back of the head should point towards your feet.

Hold to this final position as long as comfortable, breathing slowly and naturally.

On exhalation, return to the starting position slowly in the reverse order as described above.

The movement must be slow and synchronized with the breath.

Throughout the body, back and legs must be fully relaxed.

At the end of the movement, the nose should brush with along the floor and the forehead eventually rest on the ground.

Relax the whole body.

Repeat this a number of times.

### **Benefits:**

Increases flexibility of the back.

loosens the spine, relieving tension in the spinal region.

In particular, it influences the kidneys and the adrenal glands.

Kidneys purify our blood. Bhujangasana improves the efficiency of the Kidneys.

The adrenal glands, situated on top of the kidneys, are also made to work more efficiently. These glands secrete various hormones which have repercussions on our mind and body. The secretion of adrenaline which affects our nervous tensions and relaxation, is regulated.

Cortisone, another, major hormone secreted by adrenal glands, is closely connected with rheumatism. Bhujangasana by encouraging correct secretion of the hormone is useful in relieving rheumatism.

The spine is the major channel which carries all the nervous impulses from the brain to the body. Efficient nerves require good blood system, Bhujangasana loosens the spine and tones up the nerves, resulting in better communication between the brain and the rest of the body.

The Asana massages the organs of the abdomen and the pelvis, such as the stomach, pancreas, liver, gall bladder, sexual and eliminative organs.

People who suffer from chronic back ache, or neck ache or generally stiff spine can benefit from this asana.

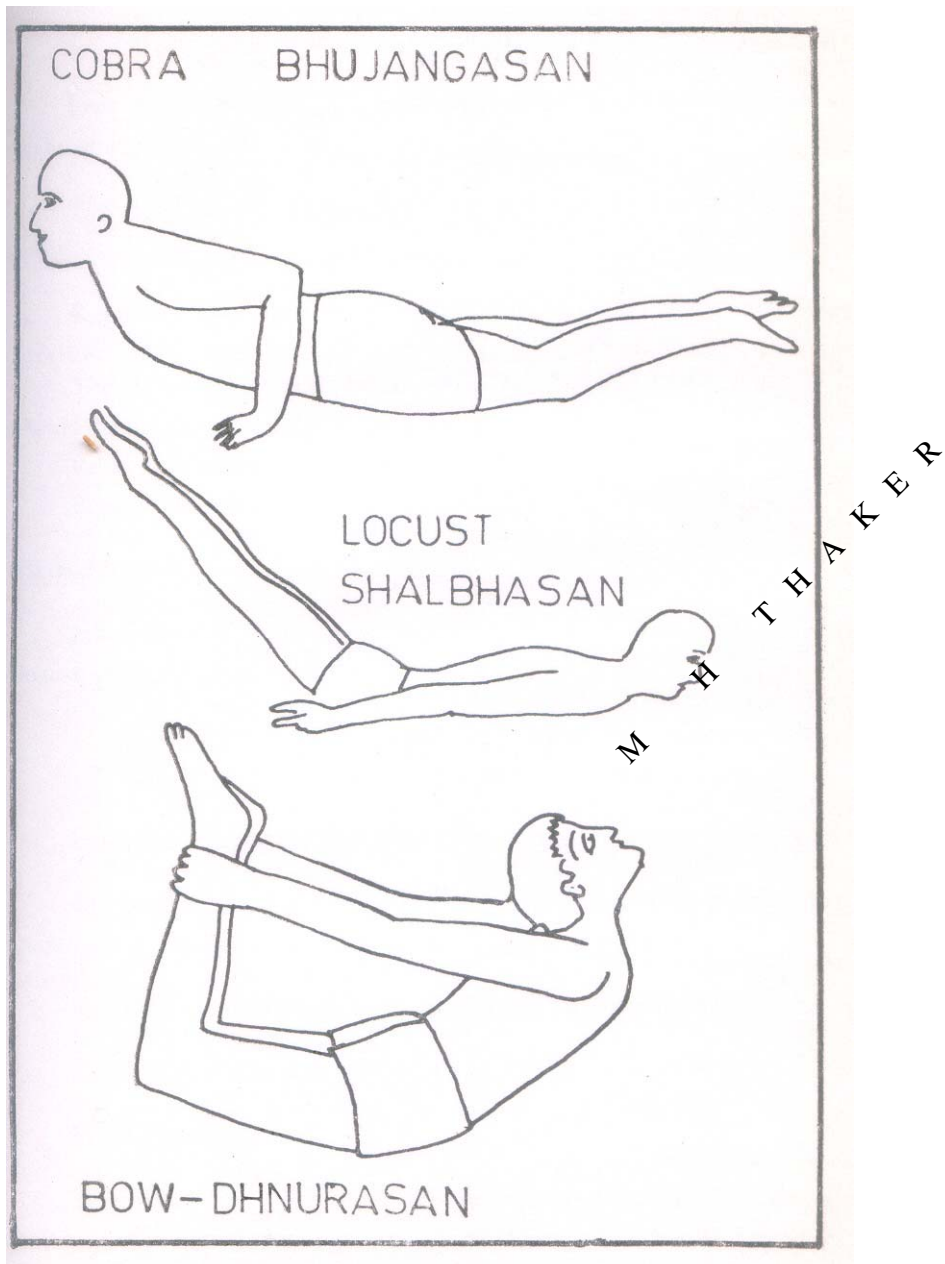
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The thyroid gland is also regulated. This plays a large part in maintaining a healthy body.

This asana also helps in removing extra fat.

Caution:

Persons who suffer from peptic ulcers, hernia, intestinal tuberculosis or hyperthyroidism should not do this asana.





## *Shalabhasana* ( The Locust Pose)

position:

Lie flat on the ground. face downwards.

Legs should be straight with feet together, the soles should point upwards.

The arms can be placed under the body or on either side of the body.

Keep the chin in contact with the ground throughout the practice.

The shoulders should be as near as possible to the floor, and should remain so throughout the exercise.

Relax the whole body; close the eyes.

Breathe out deeply.

### **Method 1 :**

Inhale deeply, hold your breath and raise both legs, keeping them together and straight (knees should not be bent)

The elevation of the legs is produced by pressure applied on the arms and contracting the lower back muscles.

Hold the legs in the raised position while retaining your breath.

Try to stretch your chin in front of you as much as possible but maintaining contact with the ground.

Hold the final position as long as possible without strain.

Slowly lower the legs and exhale.

Relax the whole body.

Then allow the breathing to return to normal. Breathe out deeply and then breathe in deeply and repeat another round by raising the legs as mentioned above.

Repeat as many times as is possible without strain. While doing the Asana, try to allow *the* abdomen to sustain most of the body weight

### **Method 2 :**

Lie flat on the floor face downwards as mentioned above.

Keep the left arm under the body and the right hand stretched above your head.

Raise the left arm and the left leg, keeping the arm fully stretched and leg straight (knees should not be bent).

Hold for a few seconds

Lower the left arm and the left leg slowly.

Repeat the same movements as above, reversing the side of the body, i. e. by raising the right arm and the right leg.

After the breathing returns to normal, repeat the posture with both arms and both legs, by stretching both arms straight over the head.

Breathe in deeply, and hold it while lifting both the arms and legs.

Hold the position as long as passable without strain, and exhale while slowly bringing down the arms and the legs.

Relax.

### **Benefits:**

Shalabhasana stimulates the whole automatic nervous system, particularly the parasympathetic outflow, which allows the internal organs to carry out their functions.

Shalabhasana helps in keeping the autonomic nervous system in an efficient order by stretching the nerves and improving blood circulation.

All the abdominal organs are massaged.

The pressure of the abdomen due to the weight of the body is transmitted to the lungs and heart via the diaphragm, improving the functioning of both these vital organs.

Shalabhasana has been found useful for relieving sciatica and mild forms of slipped disc.

Rids the thighs of excess fat.

Shalabhasana complements Bhujangasana (the cobra pose),

While Bhujangasana exercises the top part of the body, Shalabhasana correspondingly exercises the lower part of the body.

For this reason, it is advisable to perform the two asanas one after the other.

### **Caution:**

This Asana comparatively requires a greater degree of physical effort. .

As such, persons who suffer from coronary thrombosis, or high blood pressure, should not practice this.

Persons suffering from hernia, peptic ulcer, Intestinal tuberculosis and similar ailments should not do this asana.

### *Dhanurasana* (The Bow Pose)

#### Stage 1:

Lie on the left side with the head resting on the palm of the left hand.

Raise the left leg with the knee bent.

Grasp the ankle with the right hand and gradually push away the leg so that the right elbow is straightened.

Push the abdomen forward and arch the spine. Retain this position as long as convenient without strain.

Return to the original position gradually.

Repeat the exercise on the other side of the body.

#### Stage 2:

Lie flat on the floor, facing downwards,

Bend the legs at the knees and bring the heels as close as possible to the back.

Reach back with your hands and grasp the anklets of each leg.

Keep the feet together so that the toes remain in contact. Place the chin on the floor.

Breathe out deeply while on the ground. Breathe in deeply.

Then tense your leg muscles and try to straighten your legs. This will arch your thighs and lift your chest and head off the ground.

The only muscular contraction should be in the legs.

The back, arms and the rest of the body should be as much relaxed as possible.

The arms should remain straight and passive.

Hold the head high and raise your chin.

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Adjust your position in such a manner that the soft portion of the abdomen (the belly) supports the weight of the entire body on the ground.

Hold the breath in the final pose.

Stay in the final pose as long as it is comfortable. Do not strain.

Slowly relax the legs and muscles and return to the starting position.

When you reach the ground, breathe out.

Relax the whole body for a short time until respiration becomes normal.

Repeat the practice.

As you advance in the practice of this Asana, try to lift the legs higher off the floor, using the hands as levers. Knees should be kept together.

- Note:--
1. Do not tense the back in order to raise the body. only the leg muscle should be used.
  2. Make sure that your hands wrap around the ankles and not the feet.
  3. Keep the feet together so that the toes remain in contact throughout the entire practice.
  4. The weight of the body in the final pose should rest on the soft part of the abdomen (belly) and not on the ribs.
  5. The arms should not be bent, but kept straight.

Benefits:

Dhanurasana compliments Bhujangasana and Shalabhasana. as its main influence is on the intense intra-abdominal pressure.

Dhanurasana is very useful in overcoming lethargy and sluggishness in mind and body, as it has a direct effect on the solar plexus at the navel. The nerves are brought into maximum efficiency, which leads to improved functioning of the whole body, especially the digestive, eliminative and reproductive organs.

The liver, kidneys, pancreas and the entire alimentary canal are massaged and aligned. It helps to alleviate constipation, dyspepsia, sluggishness of the liver, diabetes and excess fat.

The Spinal Column is aligned and rejuvenated. This relieves stiffness and aids circulation of blood.

Dhanurasana massages the heart.

It is useful for alleviating various chest disease ; improves breathing process.

The various endocrine glands are massaged and toned notably the thyroid and the adrenals.

This helps to alleviate various types of rheumatism.

caution:

People suffering from weak heart. high blood pressure. hernia. peptic and duodenal ulcers, appendicitis colitis. and other abdominal diseases should not do this Asana.

This Asana should not be practiced after meals at least for 3.to 4 hours.

***Shashankasana***  
**(Rabbit Posture )**

Sit in 'Vajrasana' i. e. sit on the heels with the top of the feet on the floor. so that the buttocks rest on the heels.

Place the hands on the knees, and comfortably straighten the back,

Relax the whole body and close the eyes.

Inhale slowly, and at the same time, slowly raise the arms, keeping them straight.

Slowly exhale, and bend forward.

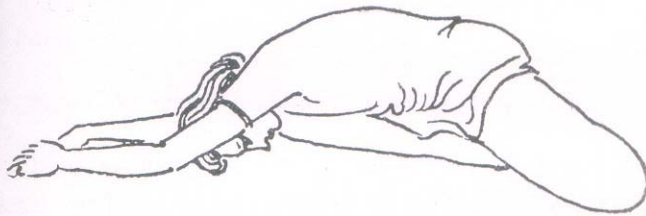
Continue the bend forward, until the palms and forearms rest on the floor. Rest the forehead on the floor.

Stay in this final position for a comfortable length of time.

Breathe slowly and deeply.



SHASHANKASANA



SAITHALYASANA

M H T H A K E R

Inhale, and slowly raise the head, arms and trunk to the vertical position.

Slowly exhale and lower the arms, and return to the original position.

Slowly increase the duration of the final pose.

### **Benefits;**

Shashankasana stretches the back muscles and keeps the vertebra apart. This rejuvenates all the back nerves and important spinal nerves.

The deep breathin during the final pose applies a powerful massage to abdominal organs. This helps to remove and prevent various abdominal disorders like constipation and indigestion.

This Asana is very comfortable and relaxing both to the mind and the body.

## **VARIATIONS OF SHASHANKASANA**

### **Variation 1 :**

Sit in 'Vajrasana',

Hold too arms behind the back and clasp the right wrist with the left hand,

Relax the whole body and close the eyes.

Exhale slowly and bend the whole body until the forehead touches the floor.

Remain in this position, breathing slowly and deeply.

After Some time, slowly raise the trunk while inhaling, and return to the standing position.

### **Variation 2 :**

Sit in 'Vajrasana',

Instead of holding the arms behind the back (as in variation 1) the fists are placed in front of the soft portion of the abdomen, just below the navel, the knuckles touching each other.

Exhale slowly and bend tho body forward until the forehead touches the floor.

### **Variation 3 : (Also called 'Pranam8sans')**

Sit in 'Vajrasana'.

Clasp the lower part of the calves just above the ankles with hands.

Bend forward and place the crown of the head on the floor in front of the knees.

Raise the hips slowly until the thighs are as vertical as possible.

Breathe normally.

Remain in this pose as long as possible.

Slowly reverse the process and return to the standing position.

Benefits :

This 'Asana' directs extra blood to the brain.

It helps removing tiredness, and mental fatigue, and certain types of head ache

*Matsyasana*  
(The Fish Pose)

Sit in 'Padmasana' (Lotus pose)

Leaning backwards:

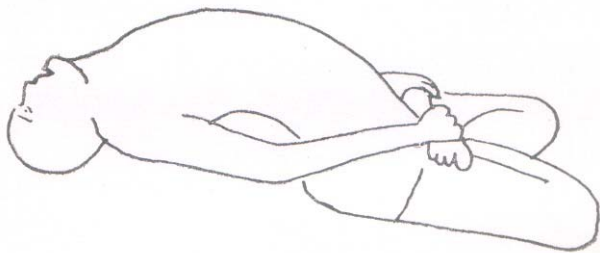
Lean slightly backwards

Place the hands on the floor slightly behind and on the sides of the buttocks.

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FISH - MATSYASAN



SPINAL TWIST  
ARDHA MATSYENDRASAN

M H T H A K E R

Support the weight of the body on the straight arms.

Bend the arms, one after the another, so that both elbows rest on the ground.

At this stage, the trunk and head should be supported above the ground behind the buttocks.

**Final Position:**

Bend your head backwards so that you can see the floor behind your head.

Slowly slide your arms forward away from your head and lower the top of the head towards the floor.

Gently allow the top of the head to support the body weight.

Adjust the position of the head to attain maximum arch of the back.

Relax the arms, the weight of the body being supported by the head, buttocks and legs.

Grasp the big toes with the hands.

This is the final pose.

Stay in this final pose as long as is comfortable.

Breathe slowly and deeply

Then return to the starting position - 'Padmasana' - by executing the stages in the reverse, order using the arms to raise the body back to the upright position.

Matasyasana is a counter-pose for all forward-bending Asanas such as Sashankasana.

It should be performed after any of such type of Asana.

**Benefits :**

Matsyasana helps to alleviate various types of digestive disorders. It improves breathing process and is beneficial to those who suffer from asthma or lung ailments. It revitalizes the organs in the pelvic regions.

**Caution :**

Those who suffer from peptic ulcer, hernia or any serious spinal ailments and ladies in advanced stage of pregnancy should not do this Asana..

***Supra Valrasma***  
**(Supine posture)**

Sit in 'Padmasana' (Lotus Pose).

Bend backwards at the waist, and place both elbows to rest on the ground. (As in Matsyasana - the fish pose).

Arch the spine so that the crown of the head can rest on the floor. Gently allow the top of head to support the body weight.

Keep the neck arched and place the hands on the thighs.

Adjust the position of the head to get the maximum arch of the back.

Keep the eyes closed and breathe slowly and regularly.

Stay in this position as long as comfortable.

Return to original position - Padmanasana - by executing the stages in the reverse order.

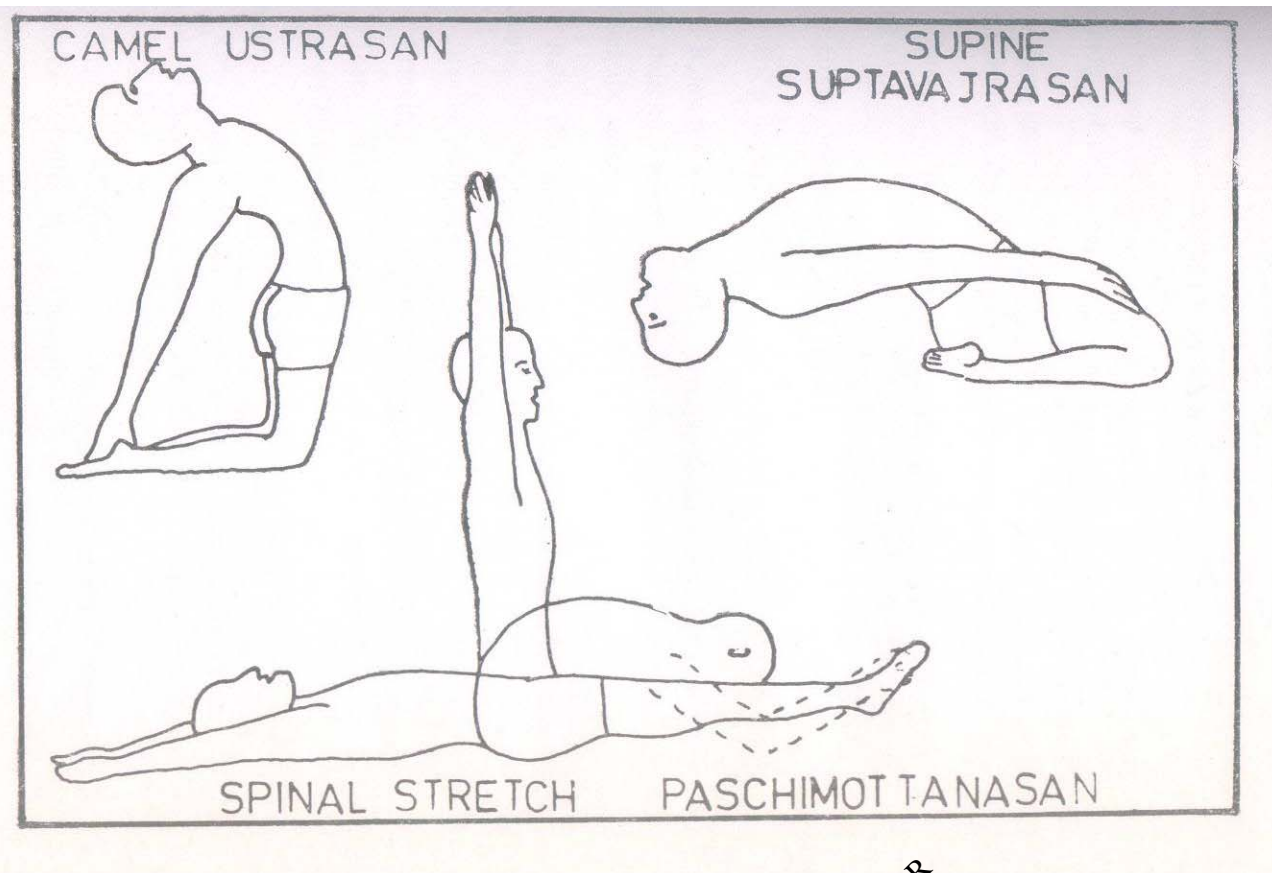
**Benefits**

This asana is a counter pose to all forward bending asanas like Paschimattanasana, Sarvangasana etc.

It helps to develop the chest in men and firms and builds the breasts in ladies.

This asana gives the same benefits as 'Matsyasana' and can be Performed in place of Matsyasana.

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## *Ushtrasana* ( The Camel Pose)

Kneel on the floor, adjusting the knees and feet so that they are separated by the same width as the hips.

The top of the feet should rest on the ground. In the starting position, the thighs, trunk and hand should be vertical.

Lean backward slightly. Turn to the right side and grasp the right heel with the right hand.

Straighten the arm, allowing the arm to support the weight of the body.

Grasp the left heel with the left hand.

Drop the head back.

Relax the whole body, especially the back muscles. Utilizing the back muscles, gently push the thighs, pelvis and abdomen forward arching the spine.

Relax the muscles of the neck, legs, arms and back as much as possible.

Breathe normally.

Remain in the final pose as long as is comfortable.

Then return to the standing position by tensing all the muscles and reversing the process.

### **Benefits:**

This Asana stretches the whole of the chest and abdomen. It is useful for abdominal ailments associated with kidneys, intestines, and liver.

The spine is also given a backward bend, thereby loosening the vertebrae and stimulating the spinal nerves.

This Asana is beneficial to those who suffer from backaches, neck ache, stiffness of spine etc.

*Sarvangasana*  
**(Shoulder Stand)**

**Stage 1:**

**Raising Legs:**

Lie flat on your back with both legs straight and together. Straighten your arms and place them beside the body, palms down wards.

Completely relax the whole body.

Hold the breath.

Slowly raise your legs, by contracting the abdominal muscles and/or pressing the arms against the ground, if needed be in the earlier stage. The movement should be gradual and with control.

At this position, the buttocks and head should be on the ground and the legs should be vertical.

Remain in this position for a short time.

**Stage 2 : Final Pose**

Elevate the legs further off the ground by pressing the arms and hands against the floor, and contracting the abdominal muscles.

Raise the buttocks and legs slowly, until eventually your back is vertical, with the body supported by the two arms and hands, the back of the neck, the shoulders and the back of the head.

Transfer the pressure on the arms to the elbows and upper arms.

Hold the fore-arms upwards and place the hands on the back of the Chest.

Gently push the chest forward so that it presses firmly against the chin.

Straighten the legs so that they are vertical.

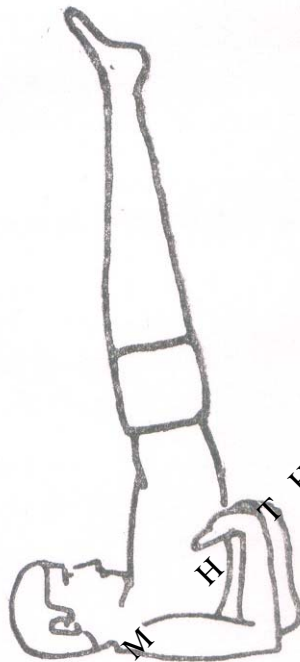
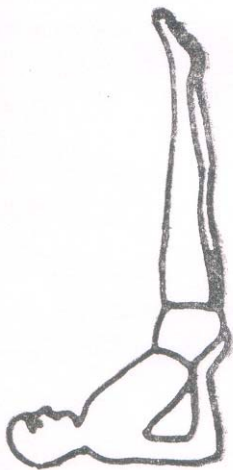
Keep your legs and feet together throughout the movement.

The body should be supported as much as possible by the shoulders, the back of the neck and the back of the head.

PLOUGH  
HALASAN



VIPRITKARNI



SHOLDER STAND-SARVANGASAN

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This is the final pose.

Close the eyes. Relax the whole body, Breathe deeply and slowly

### **Stage 3 : Returning to the standing position:**

Bend the legs at the knees, and bring the knees near the forehead.

Slowly release the position of the hands and place them on the floor.

Slowly lower the buttocks to the floor.

Lower the legs to the ground.

Completely relax the body when it is again flat on the floor.

### **Precautions;**

The movement of the body during raising and lowering should be slow, graceful and controlled. No jerks.

Don't raise the head off the floor throughout the entire practice.

There should be no tension in the legs in the final pose. They should be relaxed.

The chest should be pressed against the chin, but without straining the neck but the chest should be pressed towards the chin. The chin should not be pressed towards the chest. This is important.

The legs should not be separated or bent. They should be kept straight and together throughout the entire practice.

One should not practice Sarvangasana ;

1. If he/she feels physically tired.
2. During the period of illness, fever, cough, cold etc.
3. until after 3 hours after meals.
4. Ladies during menstruation and advanced stages of pregnancy.

Sarvangasana can be done by persons of all ages. old and. young, male or female.

People should not perform 'Sarvangasana' without seeking expert advice, if they suffer from the following:



- (i) Weak heart or high blood pressure.
- (ii) Excessively enlarged Thyroid.
- (iii) Weak blood vessels in the eyes.
- (iv) Cerebral thrombosis.
- (v) Arteriosclerosis.
- (vi) Slipped discs..

### **Counter pose :**

It is important to practice a counter pose after an inverted Asana.

The counter pose can be any asana which bends the head backwards, to remove the tension in the neck.

In the case of Sarvangasana any of the following asanans can be practiced as a counter pose.

'Matayāsana', 'Stupa Vajrasana', 'Bhujangāsana', 'Chakrasana'. 'Ushtrasana'.

### **Sarvangasana**

#### **Benefits:**

Sarvangasana has beneficial effects on the entire body. It should be an integral part of everyday Asana programme. The benefits are vast. The following are some :

It has direct influence on thyroid glands and helps to remove many diseases and to maintain good health of the entire body.

It improves the blood supply to the brain, and increases brain power.

It improves the flexibility of the vertebral column and the nerves that pass through the neck and brain.

It is very useful for asthmatics, those who suffer from slight high blood pressure, piles etc.

Regular practice helps to remove various types of digestive ailments, diabetes.

It is useful for toning the legs and removing fatigue.

Finally, Sarvangasana is an excellent method for obtaining mental tranquility and helps to bring harmony and peace in man's life.

***Halasana***  
( the Plough Pose)

Basic Form:

Lie flat on your back, with both legs straight and together.

Straighten the arms and place them beside the body - palms facing either upwards or downwards.

Completely relax the body: breathe in deeply.

Slowly raise the two legs to the vertical position, by contracting the abdominal muscles and pressing the arms against the floor if need be, in the earlier stages.

Then fold the legs over to the top of the head. keeping them straight. As the legs are raised over the head. the buttocks and hips should also be raised.

Breathe in deeply and hold the breath.

Gently lower the feet towards the floor behind the head and touch the toes to the ground behind the head.

(this will require gradual practice) There should be no stressing. This is the final pose.

The hands and arms can:

- (i) either remain in the same position i.e. flat on the floor or
- (ii) the forearms folded and palms placed behind the hips.

In the final pose, relax the whole body, keeping the legs straight.

Breathe slowly and deeply.

Remain in the final pose as long as comfortable.

Then return to the standing position, by reversing various movements.

The movements should be slow and controlled using the abdominal muscles as much as possible.

Legs should be brought down gently to the ground.

The back of the head should remain in contact with the ground throughout.

Benefits:

'Halasana' gives the same benefits as 'Sarvangasana'. It is forward bending and semi-inverted pose. It has more emphasis on the back, abdomen and the pelvis. It leads to better efficiency of the body.

It is most beneficial with Sarvangasana.

These two can be performed one after the another, followed by a Counter pose.

Variation of 'Halasana':

There are many variation of Halsana, which have distinctive advantage. They are performed from the final pose of Hallasana. These variations can be practiced individually or one after the other.

#### **Variations 1 :**

Starting pose is final pose of basic Halasana.

From the final pose of Halasana, gradually move the toes nearer towards the back of the head. Grasp the toes with the hands to accelerate to the process. The legs should be kept straight and together.

Relax the body as much as possible.

Breathe slowly and deeply.

This variation stretches the lower back.

#### **Variation 2 :**

From the final pose of the basic Halsana, gradually move the toes away from the back of the held.

Place the hands behind the hips. The toes should be as far away from the head as is comfortably possible.

The legs should remain straight and together.

Relax the body. Breathe slowly and deeply.

This variation produces accentuated stretch of the upper back and neck.

#### **Variation 3:**

From the final pose of basic Halasan , place the arms on the floor behind the head.

Grape the big toes with the fingers.

The toes should be moved as far away from the head as possible.

Hold the final pose breathing deeply and slowly. Relax tension and relax.

This variation stretches all the back muscle and toe nerves.

It also massages the kidneys and adrenal glands.

#### **Variation 4 :**

From the final pose of the basic Halasana. separate the legs by about half a meter.

Bend the legs and bring the knees as close as possible, towards the shoulders and the ears.

Place the knees on the ground.

The thighs should be folded as closely against the chest as possible.

The top of the feet should lie flat on the ground.

Wrap the arms around the back of the- knees and head.

Try to relax the body. Breathe deeply and slowly.

In this variation, the neck muscles are given a powerful stretch. The cervical (neck) vertebra muscles loosened and the nerves tuned. It also squeezes and massages the thyroid and parathyroid gland in the throat.

*<sup>M</sup>  
Simha Asan*

( Lion Pose )

Sit in Vajrasana..

Spread the knees a few inches, the toes should remain in contact, Palms can be on the ground or on the knees, with fingers spread, elbows pointing backwards.

Bend slightly forward, tensing the body and assume the position as If you were a lion about to spring. Give maximum stretch to the front of the neck and tilt the head backwards.. Keep the eyes open and the tongue struck out.

Keep your gaze on the center of the brows or on the tip of the nose.

Inhale deeply. While exhaling, produce a clear loud, steady, vocal sound, 'Ha' from the throat.

\_Repeat a number of times.

There are a number of variances of doing Simha Kriya'.

This is an excellent exercise for the face, bringing fresh blood to the face, to keep the skin firm and enlivened. It also helps to massage the throat and vocal cords. It is an useful practice for removing pharyngitis, Laryngitis and other throat ailments, sore throat etc.

### ***Makarasana*** (The Crocodile Pose)

Lie flat on the stomach with the head and shoulders raised off the ground.

Hold the head cupped in the palms with the elbows resting on the ground.

Relax the whole body, close the eyes and breathe rhythmically.

Benefits:

This is simple 'Asana' for those who suffer from spinal or lung ailments. Lie in the 'Asana' as long as you can.

### ***Manjarasana*** (The Cat Pose)

Sit with the knees on the ground.

Lean forward and place both hands flat on the ground, in front of the knees, in such a position that when your trunk is horizontal, the arms should be vertical.

The thighs should be vertical.

Relax the whole body.

Arch your neck upwards, while exhaling so that it forms (makes) a hump.

Contract the abdomen, as far as possible.

At the end of the exhalation, your head should be between the arms, facing towards the thighs.

Slowly depress your back, and raise your head as you breathe in. At the end of the inhalation, the face should be facing upwards and the spine should be arched as much as possible in a concave curve. Expand the abdomen as far as possible while inhaling.

Then raise your back upwards, while lowering the head and breathing out.

Repeat the process, as many times as can be comfortably done.

Benefits: .

This 'Asana' loosens up the spine, and is beneficial to persons with rigid spine and chronic back ache or neck ache.

It has a beneficial influence on the internal organs of digestion, reproduction and elimination.

This 'Asana' is particularly beneficial to women.

*Ardha Matsyendrasana*  
**(Half Spinal Twist Pose)**

Sit on the floor with both legs stretched in front of the body. Bend the left leg at the knee, and bring it is close to the groin area.

Grasp the right leg and carry the foot over the left knee.

Place the right foot, so that the sole is flat on the floor and the ankle close to left-knee, outside, the foot and toe shall point forward.

Place the right hand on the floor to balance, and then lift the left hand over the right knee so that you can grasp the right ankle.

The elbow of the left arm should be firmly against the right knee.

Relax the whole body, especially the back. Keep the trunk straight and vertical, and twist it towards the right arm, which should be resting on the floor slightly behind you.

Then turn the face in the same direction as the trunk so that you face over the shoulders.

Make the sure that the trunk and head are upright and that the back muscles are relaxed.

In the final position, the shoulders should remain at the same level.

Breathe slowly and deeply.

Remain in the twisted position as long as it is comfortable.

Then release the twist and return to the starting position, and straighten both the legs.

Repeat the twist on the other side of the body by the opposite arms and legs.

This Asana keeps the spine healthy and flexible, promotes circulation of blood, and relieves tension and stiffness throughout the body. This is also beneficial in the treatment of back ache, neck ache, head ache, cases of sciatica and stiffness of the body.

*Shavasana*  
**( The Corpse Pose-Complete Relaxation)**

**Stage 1:**

Lie flat on your back in the supine position. (Place a small pillow for resting your head and shoulders).

Rest the arms in line with and in each side of the body but slightly away from the body. The palms should face upwards, and the hands should not be clenched. Legs should be straight and slightly separated close your eyes.

Try to feel the different parts of the body in contact with the floor. This is important for developing the awareness of the different parts of the body.

a) Feel the contact between the floor and the buttocks. Keep your attention on the pressure between the floor and the buttocks for a few seconds until you think that this area of the body is relaxed

b) Now feel the contact between the floor and the right heel for a few seconds.

Repeat the same with the left heel.

c) Now feel the contact between the floor and the right arm, right hand, left arm, left hand, the middle of the back each shoulder, back of the hand, and finally the whole body -feel the contact for a few seconds at each point of contact.

Next, try to feel that your whole right leg:

a) is heavy and is sinking into the floor. Feel the right leg become lump.

Do this for a few seconds.

b) Repeat this with the left leg

c) Repeat the same thing with your right arm, then, the left arm.

Feel your shoulders slump into the pillow.

Remove load from the shoulders.

Relax completely during the entire duration of the practice.

Try not to move any part of the body during the practice.

Maximum benefit is derived if your attention is totally involved in the practice.

This practice is meant to give complete relaxation of the mind and the body, which is a first requirement for the practice of Yoga.

## **Stage 2:**

Lie on your back in the supine position as described in stage 1.  
Eyes and mouth should be closed. The body should be completely relaxed.

NOW;

Feel that your head is very heavy.  
Feel the heaviness of the whole body.

Imagine that your whole body is so heavy that it is sinking into the floor.

Feel the gravity acting through every party of the body and pulling it towards the ground.

NOW:

Watch the space or blankness in front of your closed eyes.

Imagine that this space surrounded your whole body and that your whole body is in the middle of this space.

Try to imagine that your body is slowly sinking in that space, slowly and slowly.

Feel your body sinking, sinking into the depths of that infinite space.

Do this for few number of times, or two minutes or if you like even longer.

NOW:

Become aware of your breath -becoming aware of the flow of breath in and out of your nostrils.

At the end of the practice, slowly open your eyes, stretch your hands, then your arms, stretch your feet and legs and become aware of the surroundings.

The whole practice should be done with full alertness and awareness of all the process at each stage, and without any tension.

The aim of 'Shavasana' is to gain a high state of relaxation while being fully awake.

Practice Of 'Shavasana' a few times every day is beneficial to persons who suffer from high blood pressure. neurasthenia., diabetes and other ailments directly related to excessive stress.



## *Yogamudra*

Sit in Padmasana.

Close the eyes.

Hold the hands behind the back either with the fingers of both the hands interlocked or with the left hand holding the right wrist.

This is the starting position.

Relax the whole body.

Breathe slowly and deeply.

Then inhale deeply.

Exhale while slowly bending the trunk forwards.

Try to touch your forehead on the ground in front of your body; if this is not possible, merely bend forwards as far as you can comfortably.

This is the final pose.

Relax the whole body, especially the back, as much as possible. Breathe slowly and deeply, feeling the expansion and contraction of the abdomen.

Stay in the final position for as long as you can. Then, slowly raise the body to the starting position, while breathing in.

This is the basic technique.

### **Breathing:**

Breathing should be synchronized with the physical movement during Yoga Mudra. This is important, For clarity, the breathing sequence is listed below.

Breathe normally in the starting position, while relaxing the mind and body. Then inhale deeply once before bending forwards. Exhale as you lean forwards. Breathe deeply and slowly in the final pose. Inhale as you return to the starting position,

Counter pose :

Yoga Mudra is a forward bending asana. Therefore, it is ideally preceded and followed by a backward bending asana, such as Ushtrasana, Bhujangasana or Shalabhasana.

Benefits :

Yoga Mudra is most useful for relaxing the whole mind and body.

As such it is an excellent prelude to meditative practices. This asana helps to improve the functioning of the organs in the abdominal and pelvic regions, and can help to alleviate various types of sexual disorders.

### *Sirshasana* ( **Head Stand**)

Sirshasana should be gradually developed and practiced in stages. The initial stages have to be practiced and perfected before attempting the final pose.

Sirshasana should be practiced with a blanket or thin cushion, to protect the top of the head.

Place the blanket on the floor.

1) Kneel in front of the blanket.

Interlock the fingers.

Place the forearms flat on the blanket so that the elbows are about 10 inches apart.

Lean forward and place the head on the floor, with the top of the head resting on the blanket.

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Wrap the interlocked arms around the back of the head, and adjust them so that they firmly support the head.

2. Lift the knees off the floor. Shift the position of the toes so that they rest on the floor.

Straighten the legs so that the body is supported on the head, two arms and the toes of the feet.

Slowly bring the toes nearer to the face, so that the knees come nearer the chest. This will make the back move towards the vertical position.

3. Keeping the vertical, slowly bend the legs.

close as possible to the chest.

Transfer all the body weight on to the arms and the head. Lean forward, and raise the feet, and lift both feet off the ground keeping the knees close to the chest.

Keep this position for a few seconds, maintaining balance.

Slowly raise your legs, adjusting the position of the trunk to counterbalance the weight of the legs.

Fold the legs upwards and backwards as so that the heels move towards the buttocks. Maintain equilibrium.

Keeping the knees near the buttock, slowly raise the knees upwards. The knees should point directly upwards and the feet pointing downwards.

The spine and the thighs should be in line, straight and vertical.

Slowly raise the feet so that they point upwards and the legs become straight.

The whole body should be in one straight line.

This is the final pose of Sirshasana

Relax the whole body as much as possible.

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Close the eyes.

Breathe slowly and deeply.

Stay in the final pose as long as is comfortable, say 10 minutes.

Then return to the starting position on the floor, by performing the stages in the reverse order.

The body should be lowered slowly and with control and should not be dropped down.

To come down, first slowly bend the knees, and slowly lower them to the chest, letting the trunk tilt forward a little to maintain the balance. When the knees came close to the chest, lower feet to the ground keep the head on the ground for a minute after you came down.

Raise the head and return to the starting position..

Rub the palms of the hand together and place them on the face, rubbing them lightly over it.

After Sirshasan, it is essential to do a counter-pose, e. g. Tadasana, to return to normalcy the body functions.

### *Tadasana* ( The Palm Tree Pose)

Stand erect with your feet about 6 inches apart. Keep the eyes open throughout the practice.

Gaze at a point in front of you, or above you, but the gaze must be fixed on the point throughout the entire practice

Interlock the fingers of both the hands. Hold your arms directly above your head.

Gently adjust your hands so that the palms face upwards. Stretch your whole body upwards as far as possible. Stretch your arms, keeping the fingers interlocked.

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Raise yourself on tiptoe, trying to stretch up as high as you can.

Remain in this final position for a few seconds, but keeping your gaze fixed on the chosen point.

Lower the body, and bend and relax the arms.

Allow the backs of your hands to rest on your head. Rest for a few seconds, and then repeat another round.

**Benefits :**

This 'Asana' develops a sense of balance. The whole body is stretched, and it loosens the entire spinal column. The abdominal organs and muscles are also toned up.

### ***Tiryaka Tadasana . (Wind blown Palm Tree Pose )***

Stand erect with the feet about 6 inches apart.

Stretch your arms about your head,, fingers interlock in the same way as described for 'Tadasana'.

Gaze at a point in front of you or above you. Throughout the practice, the gaze must remain fixed on the point.

Stretch your whole body and raise yourself on tip toes. (4)

Maintain this stretched position, and bend your body to the right.

Return to position (4) and bend the body to the left.

Repeat this round, bending the body alternately to the right and the left, keeping always the arms in line with your body.

Note :

Try to bend the body from the waist. Keep the body stretched to the maximum, and balanced on the balls on your feet.

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### ***Trikonasana* (The Triangle Pose)**

There are distinct variations of performing of Trikonasana. They all start from the same standing position with legs apart.

#### **Variation 1 :**

Stand erect with the feet 2 to 3 ft apart. Lift the arms sideways to the shoulder level, with the palms turned upwards and inhale. The arms and shoulders should be in one straight line and parallel to the ground.

Bend slowly to the right and exhale. Touch the right toe with the fingers of the right hand. The left leg must to kept straight. Do not bend forward.

Your arms should remain in one straight line, with your head facing forward — the right hand touching the right foot, and simultaneously the left hand pointing upwards.

While inhaling raise the body and while exhaling turn the head upwards to the left and gaze at the left hand.

Repeat this a few times.

Return to the standing position by reversing the movements.

Inhale while straightening the body and returning to the standing position.

Repeat the same movement, bending to the left.

This completes one round. . Perform a number of rounds.

#### **Variation 2 :**

The procedure is the same as in variation (i) up to the point where you touch the right foot with the right hand, head facing forward, and the left arm raised vertically.

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Now, slowly swing your left arm downward over the left side of your head, and touching the left ear. Do not bend forward; but the whole body should be in one vertical plan©.

Slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat the same process, leaning the body to the left. Return to the starting position.

This is one round. Perform a number of times.

#### **Variation 3 :**

Stand in the same position as for variation (i). Place both palms on the sides of the waist.

This is the standing position.

Lean to the right side, while slowly sliding the right hand down the right hip and leg, towards the right foot; try to touch your foot with the right hand.

Simultaneously raise your left hand upwards, towards the arm-pit, keeping the palm always in contact with the left side of your chest.

Do not bend the body forward. Your legs, arms, trunk and head should as far as possible in the same vertical plane.

Slowly return to the starting position, bringing your right hand upwards and pushing the left hand downwards to the original position at the side of the waist.

Repeat the same process, now bending to the left side.

This is one round. Perform few rounds.

#### **Variation 4 :**

Start with the feet as wide apart as possible. Place your hands behind your back and hold the left wrist with the right hand. This is the starting position.

Twist the hips to the right, keeping the feet in the same position.

Slowly bend to the right side, and try to touch the right knee with the nose.

The left leg should be kept straight, but the right leg may slightly be bent at the knee.

This is the final position, to the starting position.

Hold for a second or two; and return

Repeat and the same process, bending to the left side.

This is one round.

Perform a few rounds.

### **Variation 5 :**

Stand erect with your feet 2-3 ft. apart.

Stretch the arms side ways horizontally.

Bend forward at the waist so that your head, trunk and arms are in the same horizontal plans. Look forward.

Turn your waist to the right and touch your right foot with your left hand.

Turn the hands in such a way that when the left hand touches the right foot, the right hand points directly upwards.

At the end of the movement, turn your head and look upwards at your right hand.

Stay in the final position for a second or two.

Then twist your body in the opposite direction, touching your left foot with your right hand, and the- left hand positioning upwards straight.

In this way twist your body a few times.

Then return to the starting position.

95

Hold your breath while twisting your body to each side. Breathe in as you resume the standing position. Breathe out as you lower your arms.

All the different variations can be performed one after the other.

### **Benefits:**

This asana influences the region of the waist. The spinal nerves, and the entire nerves system, are toned up. It loosens up the muscles and joints of the body, fortifies abdominal organs, and helps in releasing constipation.

## *Pavana Muktasana (The Wind Releasing Pose)*

Lie flat on your back.

Relax the whole body.

Bend the right leg and bring the thigh and knee as near as to the chest as possible. The other leg should remain straight.

Place the hands over the knee and interlock the fingers.

Gently pull the knee nearer to the chest. Relax the whole body keeping the straight leg, back and head on the floor.

Breathe in slowly, simultaneously raising the head and shoulders. At the end of the inhalation, the forehead, nose, chin and neck should touch the right knee, or as close to it as possible.

Hold the breath for a short time in this raised pose. Exhale slowly and lower the head and shoulders to the floor.

Then Inhale again while repeating the same procedure.

Do a number of rounds.

Then straighten the bent leg and relax the whole body for a short time.

96

Then bend the other leg towards the chest and repeat the same procedure, the same number of times.

Straighten the left leg and relax the whole body for a short time. Now fold both legs and draw towards the chest.

Repeat the same process of raising the head and shoulders, as mentioned above.

Do a few rounds.

Straighten both legs and relax the whole body.

### Benefits:

This Asana gives excellent massage to the abdominal organs. This helps in relieving the ailments associated with the inefficient functioning of the abdominal organs.

It also tones up the back muscles and spinal nerves.

## *Prana Mudras*

### Vajrasana\_

Sit in the position of Vajrasana. This asana is highly beneficial. It pulls the glands near the navel and pushes prana in the lower region, from navel to toes. Prana works in 'Swadhisthan' and 'Muladhara Chakra'. When the spinal cord is straight and erect, mind becomes peaceful.

Keep the palms on thighs and inhale deeply, Feel the air going in the lower lobe.

Now keep the back of the palm on the thigh and inhale deeply. Feel the air going in the middle and upper lobes in greater quantity.

This little change of Mudra acts on the biological system.

This is only for demonstration of deeper dimensions of pranic energy.

### **1 Nabbi Mudra**

Sit in Vajrasana.

Unite the tips of thumb and index finger to make a circle. Other fingers to be kept straight. The palm should rest in the middle of the thigh.

Then perform Ujjayi Pranayama. Breathe in and out in Ujjayi, keeping the chin at a particular angle like pigeon, to give a hissing sound. Breathe deeply, delicately, slowly, normally with the hissing sound.

It helps prana to circulate from the naval to toes and correct the lower system, thus curing the diseases. of those parts.

Do it for 3 minutes. Do not give pressure on the hands.

Do it on an empty stomach. You will feel relaxed.

### **2 Hridaya Mudra**

Sit in Vajrasana. Unite the tips of the thumb and the index finger to make a circle. The other fingers should be folded in so that their tips are in contact with the palm. Place the hands on the thighs.

Perform Ujjayi Pranayama, as in Nabhi Mudra.

There is a quantitative and qualitative difference in the prana flow. It helps prana to circulate



from the naval to the neck.

This Mudra can aid in preventing bronchial disorders, heart complaints, cough and colds.

### 3 Bhomadbya Mudra

The position and the breathing are the same as in Nabhi Mudra.

The thumb is kept inside the palm and the four fingers overlap the thumb. Do not press them, only give moderate pressure. The air intake will be maximum.

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The whole pranic pressure is on the collar bone and neck regio, directing the Pranic current into side lobes of the brain which is the creative side of human personality. It supplies more pran to the thyroid, parathyroid, pituitary and pineal glands ( in terms of Kundalini Yoga, Vishudhi, Ajna and the Sahasrara Chakras are supplied with prana )

### 4. Purna Mudra

Sit in Vajrasana position with the palms facing upwards. Fold the thumb in the palm, and the four fingers over lapping the thumb, with medium pressure.

Tilt and raise the fist from the wrist in such a manner that the back of the lower flange of the fingers touch each other.

This Mudra should be practiced gradually in Ujjayi pranayama. The inhalation lasting 30 seconds, with two seconds of retention and 31 to 32 seconds of exhalation and two seconds of external retention.

As the name suggests, it is a completely rejuvenating Mudra, very powerful, developing over-all personality and especially helping correct growth from neck to head.

Purna Mudra can alone give you health, emotional balance, clear thinking and spiritual growth.

### Tribandhstraya Mudra

This is a metabolic pranayama giving immense energy, creativity, development of personality etc. Ego disappears, diseases are cured and all the cells are energized.

In this pranayama, you retain breath more than 5 seconds, so that three Bandhas, namely, Mooladhara, Uddiyana Bandha and Jalandhara, are applied.

1. Sit in Vajrasana as before.

2. Assume Purna Mudra.
3. Perform Kapalabhati.
4. Exhale completely with hissing sound.
5. Then with inhalation, raise the head backwards.
6. With retention apply Jalandhara Bandha, tilting your chin to touch the root of the throat.

Then apply Uddiyana Bandha, sucking in the abdomen and Moola Bandha (drawing up the Anus) and hold the breath in the lungs

Gradually, increase the internal retention up to one minute (Swadhistan part below naval is pulled up).

7. After enough retention, raise the head and release Jalandhara.

8. Exhale gradually and slowly (do not release Uddiyana and Moola) While exhaling, the diaphragm is pulled up and the upper part of the abdomen is contracted. Simultaneously suck in the abdomen while exhaling. Thus further extension of Uddiyana and Moola Bandha takes place due to exhalation.

9. Inhale, exhale normally for 2/3 breaths. This in one round.

Initially start with 3 rounds and increase it to gradually 10 rounds for a period of 2 months.

With continued practice, you can reach a state of - Keval Kumbhaka (spontaneous retention), which reorganizes the energy. It has corrective, curative and creative effects. It purifies the body, increases will power, removes bad habits, boosts energy, strengthens personality. Finer energy is available for psychic growth and Kundalini is awakened.

### **Meditation Mudras:**

The following 3 mudras are the finest and help the Prana to flow through Sushumna and bring the stage of Keval Kumbhaka/Sahaj Samadhi.

So they are equated to 'Dharna' 'Dhyana' and 'Samadhi'. In fact these are the mudras that take us beyond the intellect. Intellect has the capacity of deducting and inducting decision, probing into things having an element of control over nature. We can have still higher dimension of consciousness when Prana flows into Sushumna. This refines and strengthens intelligence. Refined intellect culminates in

- (1) **Shradha (dharna)**
- (2) **Megha (Dhyana)** and
- (3) **Prajna (samadhi)** step by step.

Whereas the intellect divides us, the refined intellect unites us, with love and will (Satvikvritti) and makes us a total personality. The secret of refinement is absence of ego and this results in 'Samyak Drishti' and opens in new dimensions of consciousness.

You can achieve the highest stage described in Bhagwat gita as 'Sthita Prajna' (one who is established in wisdom, detached ,from the subtlest level of Prakriti), yet acting with full potential, through every level of Prakriti and enjoy life from every dimension. Such a person is 'Purna Purusha-Jeevan Mukta a person who has attained self-realisation, the Liberated one.

### **Dharna**

sit in 'Padmasana' with palms facing up.

Touch the tip of the thumb with the tip of the index finger, keeping the other 3 fingers straight.

The eyes should be closed.

Breathing should be without any sound, and should be fine, graceful, delicate, deep and rhythmic.

Inhale for 6 or 7 seconds., retain for three seconds, exhale for 7 or 8 seconds, with external retention for 3 seconds. The number of breathing comes down, and the respiration rates is brought down to 5 to 10 per minute. Breathing will become shallower.

The, brain will be relaxed and the wandering mind becomes quiet.

Do this for a maximum of 7 minutes,

### **Dhyana**

The sitting posture is the same as in Dharna posture, except' that the tip of the index finger is placed on the middle part of the thumb

The breathing is the same as in Dharna posture.

Here, your breath will be still deeper and the quantum of air will be 50% less than in Dharna.

Peace will be bestowed Upon you and you will be in meditation effortlessly.

Do it for 7 minutes.

### **Samadhi**

Sit in the earlier posture.

Put the tip of the index finger on the root of the thumb.

Remain calm and quiet and forget everything. Let the breath flow automatically,

Do this for 7 minutes.

Air intake becomes profoundly less and calm.

When Prana travels in 'Sahasrara' there is no need to breathe.

Mind, Buddhi and Ego ceases to function momentarily, when higher creative consciousness is unfolded. Consciousness recedes, and a saga of pure silence is attained. The state of Kaivalya is unfolded out of divinity.

This spontaneous state of suspension of breath is known as 'Keval Kumbhaka'.

Gradually prana flows through Sushumna, at your will by regular and persistent practice.

Only 20% of the brain's grey matter is used normally but by these mudras you activate the remaining part gradually according to your evolutionary efforts.

General Benefit:

Relaxation of brain increases in brain energy, removal of tension, creation of higher and finer intelligence.

As long as the moral, ethical system of the body is impure, 'Kundalini' cannot be awakened, i.e. Prana will not flow through 'Sushumna' and there will be no finer development of the intellect.

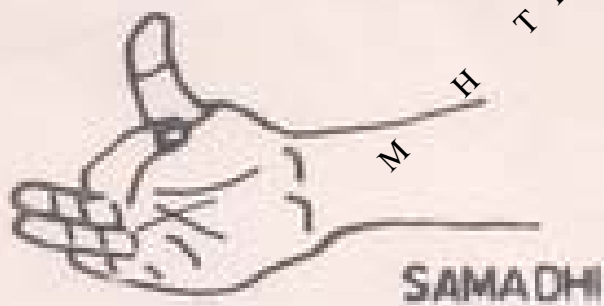
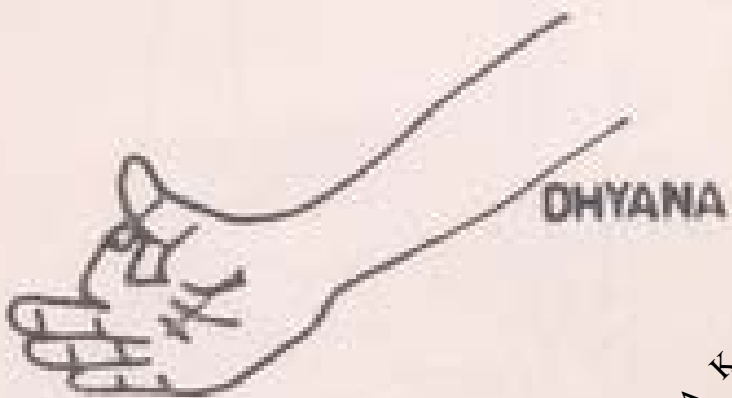
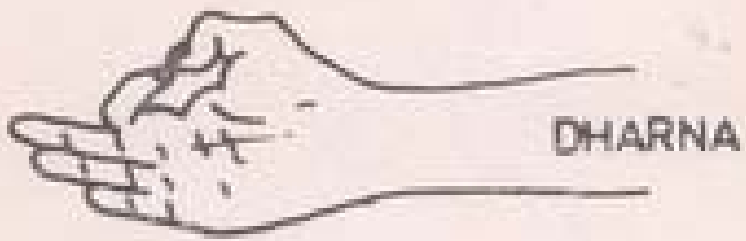
Only 'Rudra' Glands may be activated and you may have occult experience, but they are linked with ego.

In spiritual experience, ego ceases, the centre disappears and as a result, the circumference also disappears. There is a dimensional change and this is known as introversion, In that flickering second, you have the profoundest experience...

All yogic theories or Kriya (practices) are 'Mala Shodhana' constantly and ceaselessly. It is achieved here by Prana Mudra (Pranic Energy) by flow of full consciousness and Prana through 'prana Vahinies, (energy channels).

There are 101 energy channels in the body, 50 on the right side, 50 on the left side of the spinal column, and one is 'Sushumna'. These channels, when triggered on ductless endocrine glands by correcting their functions, diseases are cured

## MEDITATION MUDRAS



T H A K E R

MEDITATION MUDRA DHARNA



## MERUBANDA MUDRA



M H T H A K E R

## NABHI MUDRA



M H T H A K E R



HRIDAYA MUDRA



BHUMADHYA MUDRA



M H T H A K E R



and creative faculty of consciousness is activated, and intuitive perception sets in. This is the concept of 'Samadhi'.

## ***Raja Yoga***

Yoga is derived from Sankhya Philosophy of Rishi Kapila. According to Sankhya, the universe is made of 3 principles:

1. Consciousness
2. Prana
3. Prakriti.

They can be represented by Shiva (feeling), Vishnu (movement) and Brahma (Matter).  
Consciousness and prana together form Jeevatma.

### 1. Consciousness:

Expressions of consciousness are thought, feelings, reaction, intellect, meditation, memory and forgetfulness. We call the total process as Manovritti' (Acceptor), 'Budhivritti' (discriminator), 'Chitta Vritti' (subtle impression).

### 2. Prana :

Prana is the root of all movements and vibrations. There are different manifestation of Prana. e.g. heart beat, pulse rate, blood pressure, skin resistance, brain wave, cellular movement. Pure 'Prana' can only be felt and experienced.

### 3, Prakriti. :

All Yoga theories and practices are only for removing impurities (Mala shodhan). Prana\_ Nadies (psychic invisible channels) are to be purified, so that :prana can flow freely, which will trigger the ductless glands and elevate the personality. Prana does not have any magnetic field or density, only pranic radiation.

By Tapasya (Sadhna) when consciousness and Prana are detached from prakriti, then Ego ceases, and true meditation begins. and perform Karma, but even then, you are detached. Life will be no more a load or a problem and you will be the master of it. Satvik Ahar (balanced diet) is essential for Sadhna. Lead a path of moderation. A genius is not born, but becomes one. through Sadhna. Thus, anyone who breathes Prana and consciousness from the same root, has the potential of becoming a genius. If Prana is under control, the consciousness can also be controlled. This can't be measured, but their effect on Prakriti can be remotely measured. In Raja Yoga We have a plan of various Prana Mudras.

By manipulating finger connection, Prana is directed to flow in different centers of the body and thereby purify a lower Prakriti, which helps in achieving a pure cosmic consciousness. Prana is a subtle energy, nourishing the mind and developing the personality completely.

# **Shakti-Bandha**

## **or**

## **Energy Block Exercises**

### **Introduction:**

Shakti Bandha relieves tension, pain in the back and joints, headache, muscular troubles, and brings tranquility and relaxation. In short. it makes the body light and fresh.

Sushumna or bilateral breathing starts flowing, which is most necessary for concentration or mediation. Furthermore, it flushes fresh blood in the head by its bending forward and backwards. Thus, the memory is strengthened and the brain fatigue is removed by Shakti Banda. The thyroid gland is developed by the chin lock and bending backwards By this,. the toxins that accumulate in the thyroid are removed. Looking into the centre of the eye-brows increases eye sight and promotes personal physical magnetism. The pineal gland is operated- and serotonin secretion increases, which brings tranquility, introversion and good meditative power.

The hair does not turn grey due to the skull being given the proper exercise and looking up to the centre of the eye-brows. Breathing becomes deep and relaxed. The lung capacity increases, The heart grows strong, The chest or breast expands and assumes. its promotional shape,

Manipura or Solar Plexus becomes strong and you can absorb mental, psychological and emotional shocks easily and laughingly

Furthermore, the abdominal wall becomes strong and constipation is removed, excess fat is reduced. It purifies Swadhistana and Mooladhara Chakra too. By deep and full breathing, one attains. sexual health. The semen becomes strong; wet dreams, weak muscles of the genital organs etc., are removed;

Shakti Bandha is a very good exercise for all the joints of the legs. It develops muscles. By stretching the toes, it stimulates many nerve centers which are in the sole of the feet.

Thus the energy block exercises, in short, remove energy blocks from top to the tip of the toes and makes one free from all diseases. They develop personality, giving good health, sound mind and a cheerful soul.

### ***Energy Block Exercises***

1. Sit on your heels in Vajrasana, with knees spread one elbow length apart and the toes touching,

Place the hands in the back with the fingers interlocked. Lean forward and with exhalation place your head on the floor close to your knees. Raise your arms in the back as high as you can and inhale.

Swing the arms slowly to the right and exhale, bringing the shoulder to the floor.

Swing the arms back to the centre and inhale, always keeping the hands joined.

When in the centre, start exhaling and swing over to the left side with the left shoulder touching the floor.

Raise the arms and inhale, and when in the centre, start exhaling and go over to the right again.

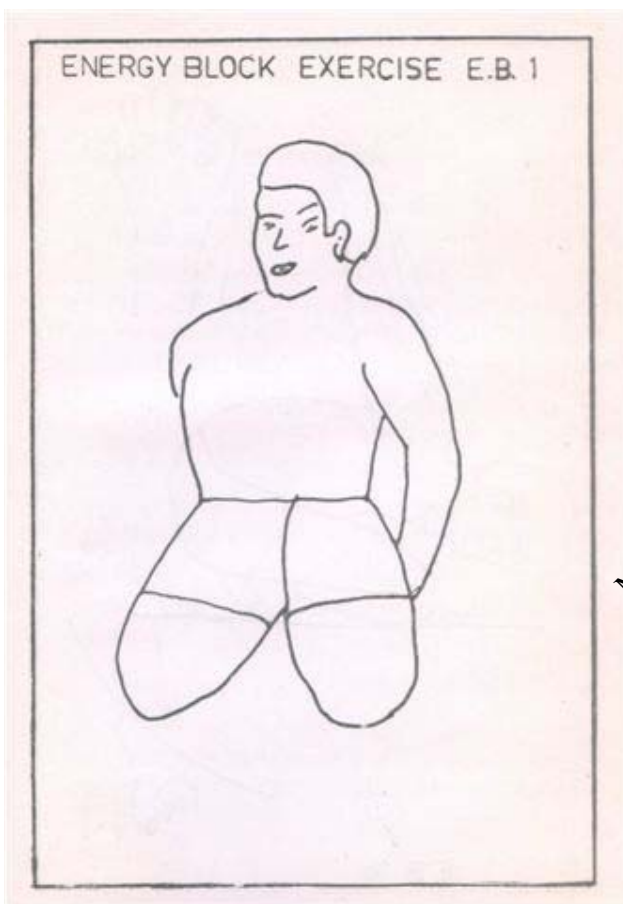
Repeat 7 times.

Your head should firmly remain on the floor without moving, so also the rest of your body sitting on your heels

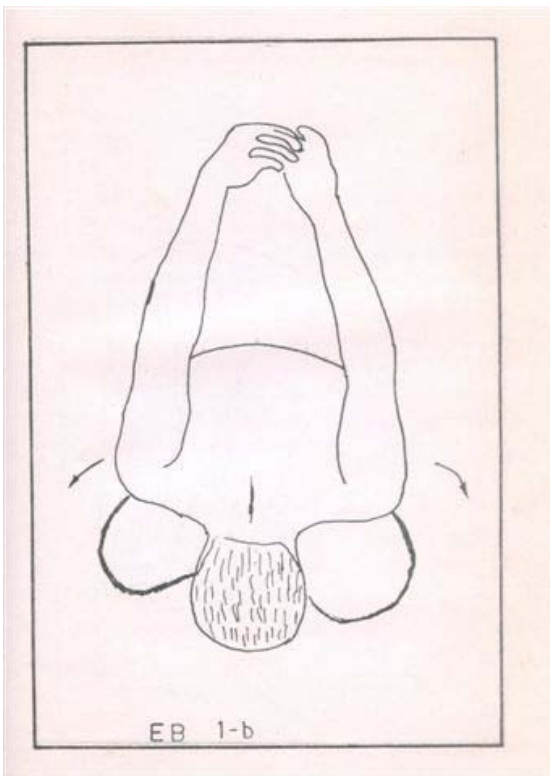
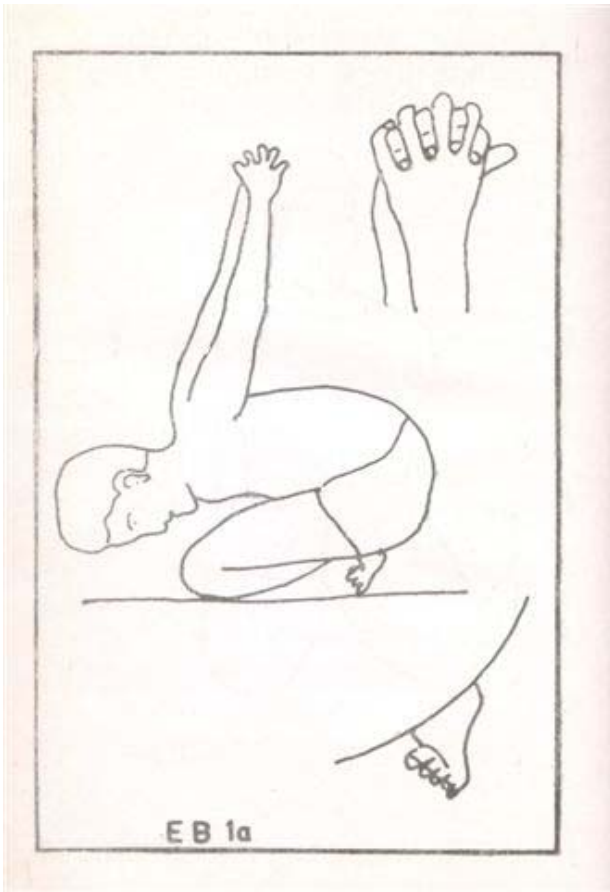
It is only your arms that move sideways as freely as you can

This exercise removes energy blocks from your spine and cervical area.

( See figures EB-1, EB-1 A and EB-1 B )



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## Exercise 2 :

Sit on the ground with your legs stretched out in front, with the knees six inches above the ground.

Bring the arms forward and make firm contact with the palms of the hands to the toes and soles to the feet.

Touch the chin to the chest, inhale, raise the head backward, draw the toes inward from the ankle joint and make the upper body position straight.

Finally, look into the centre of the eye-brows, and retain this for 7 counts.

Close your eyes, exhale slowly, lower the head till the chin touches the chest:

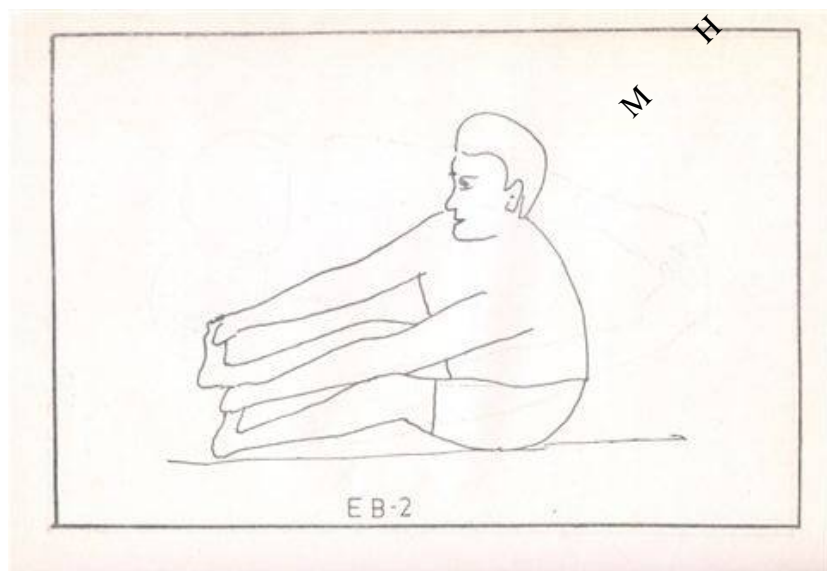
Draw the toes outside (away from you) from the ankle joint and push the spinal cord, backwards making a semi-circular shape.

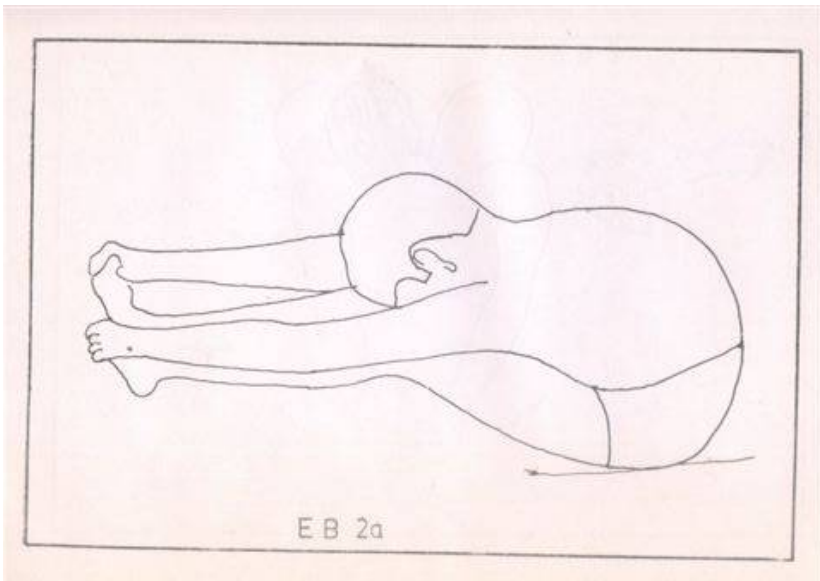
Retain this chin lock position for 7 counts.

This is a polarization exercise. It balances the positive and negative energy of the body, and removes nervousness. It promotes good sleep and relaxation, makes the spine flexible, and gives relief from constipation. It is excellent for radiant health.

Repeat this exercise 7 to 12 times.

(See figures EB-2 and EB-2A)





### Exercise 3 :

Sit on your heels, with the knees spread one elbow length apart and the toes touching.

Place the hands in the back of the torso and interlock the fingers.

Inhale deeply.

Exhale, and start bending your body till the right chest rests on the right thigh, with the right side of the face, resting on the floor.

Remain in this position with the eyes closed.

Inhale deeply, raise your arms up as high as you can, then exhale and lower the arms slowly and finally let them fall to the ground by gravitational force.

Feel total relaxation

Repeat this for 7 respirations. combined with arms movements.

Lift the chest up together with inhalation. and relax for a few seconds.

Then exhale

Then inhale deeply.

Exhale and lower the chest to the left side, bending the body till the left chest rests on the left thigh with the left side of the face resting on the floor.

Repeat the same procedure as above for 7 respirations, on the left side.

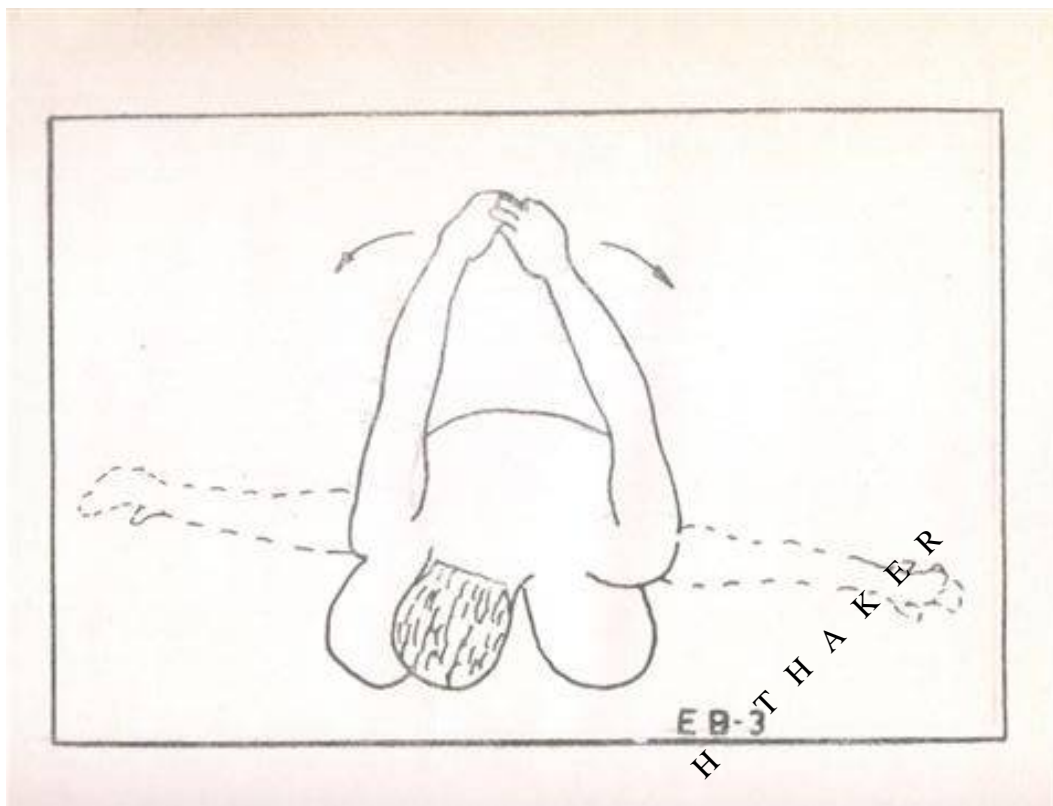


Come back to the original position.

Bend forward in the centre and repeat for 7 respirations combined with the arms movements.

This completes one round.

(See figure E-3)



Exercise 4 :

Sit in the position of 'Gomukhasan' or sit on the heel folded from the left knee and put the right leg above the root of the left thigh.

Sit straight, take the right hand up above your head and fold it from your elbow.

Bring the left arm towards the back, fold it from the elbow and try to lock the fingers of the two hands.

Keeping this posture, inhale deeply and push the head back exerting the pressure on the back where there is the finger lock.

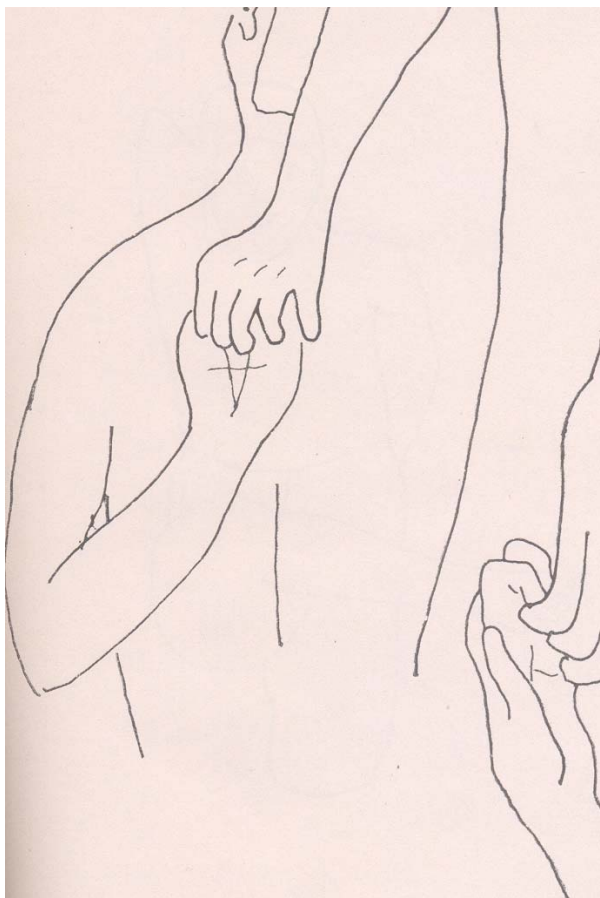
With exhalation, bend your head and your back from the point of finger lock.

Repeat this for 7 - 12 respirations.

Then reverse the whole procedure for left hand finger lock. (See figures E-4 and E-4A.)



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#### Exercise 5 :

Sit in the Indian toilet position or squatting position. Sit straight with the two feet about 1 foot apart. Position the elbows so that they touch the knees from inside, and fold the palms together, touching the thumbs to the heart chakra at the chest.

With inhalation, push the elbows in order to open the thighs.

Look up and concentrate in the center of the eye-brows.

Straighten your spinal cord.

With exhalation, bring the head down to the chin touches the chest.

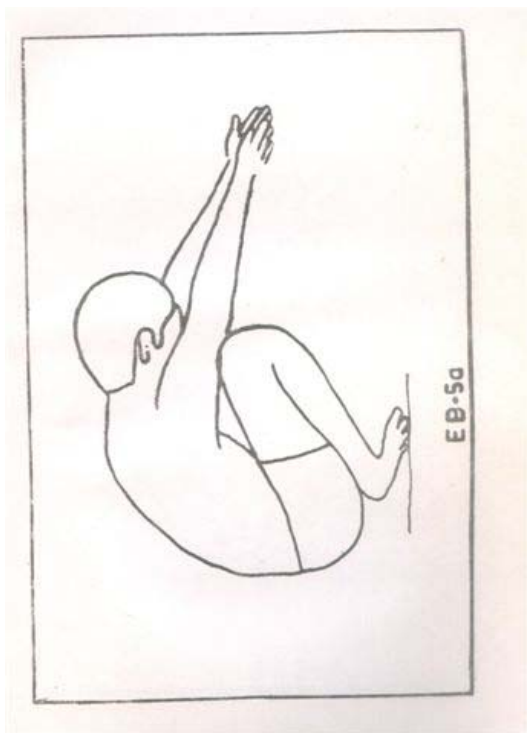
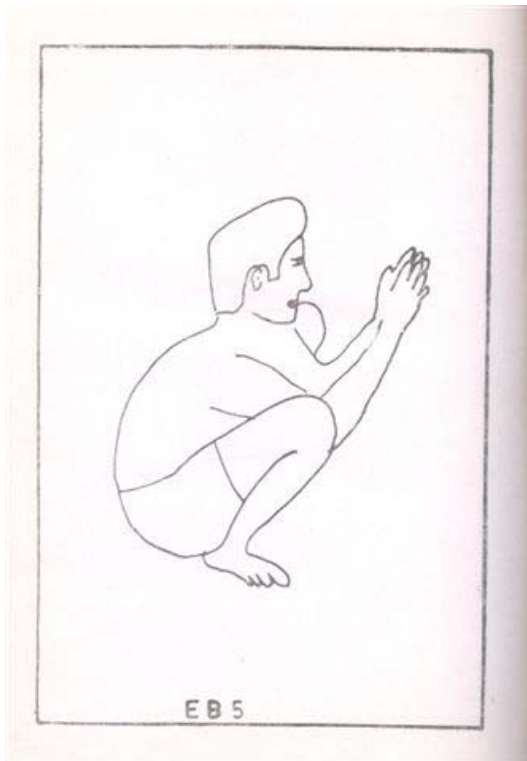
Hold the spine in the semi-circular position and press both knees together with the arms between them.

With folded palms, stretch the arms. towards the ground.

Repeat this round 5 times.

This exercise is very good for abdominal breathing and stomach ailments.

(See figures EB-5 and EB-5A)



M H T H A K E R

Exercise 6 :

Sit in the same position as in Exercise 5, fold the arms from the elbow and wrap them around the outside of the knees.

Put the right fingers over the left fingers and hook them well.

Now with the chin touching the chest, inhale, raise your head back, look and concentrate in the center of the eye-brows, and make the spine straight by pushing the knees outside.

Now exhale, close your eyes, lower the head down until the chin touches the chest, bend the spinal cord and press the knees together by both arms.

Repeat this round 5 times..

Exercise 7 :

Sit in the same position as in Exercise 5, and put both palms on both knees..

Twist to the right till the left knee touches the ground.

Keep twisting yourself from the spinal cord until the left breast touches the right knee.

Also push the head to the right.

Inhale and come back to the original position.

Exhale and do the same exercise on the left side.

Then inhale and come back to the original position.

Repeat this exercise for 7 times. (See Figure E- 7)



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### Exercise 8 :

Sit in the same position as in Exercise 1.

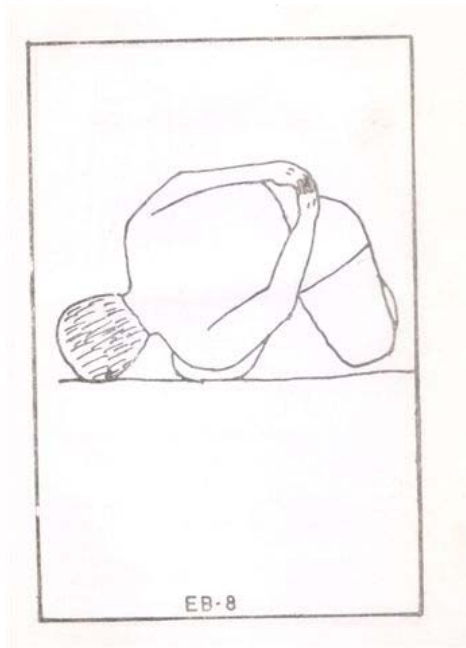
Inhale deeply and twist towards the right from the spinal cord.

keeping the shoulders in a straight line.

Now with retention, bend down on the right knee, putting the left chest over it, resting the head on the left side. Now exhale in this position, and with inhalation, come back to the original position.

Then twist the spinal cord towards the left; with retention, keeping the shoulders straight, bend down on the left side, with the right breast over it.

Exhale in this position and with inhalation, come back to the original position. (See Figure E- 8)



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### Exercise 9:

Assume the cobra pose (Bhujangasana), resting on the two palms and the two toes only.

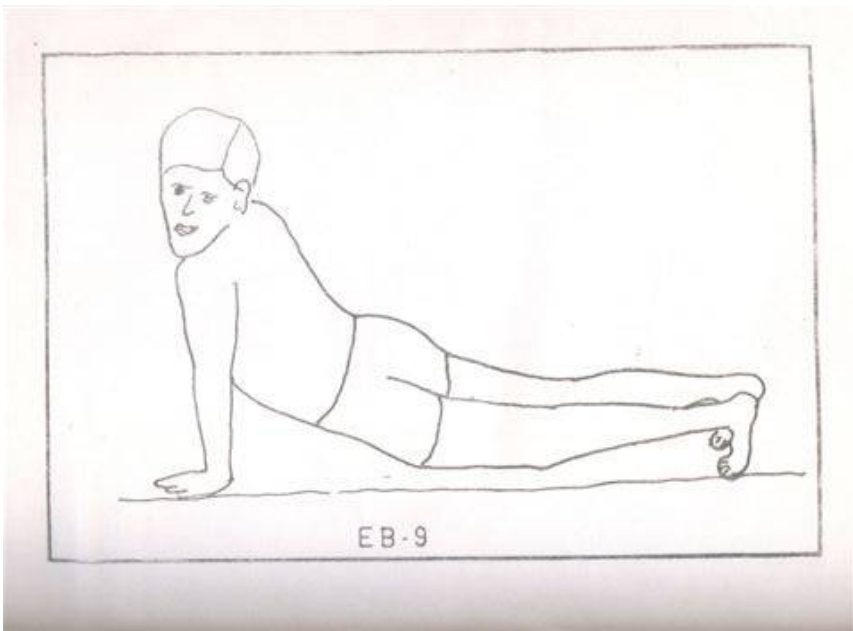
The arms should be straight without folding from elbows.

Twist your head towards the extreme right looking at the top.

Return to the original position.

Then twist your head towards the extreme left looking at the toes.

Repeat this for 7 to 12 times. (See figure EB-9 )



#### Exercise 10 :

Sit on the heels with folded knees.

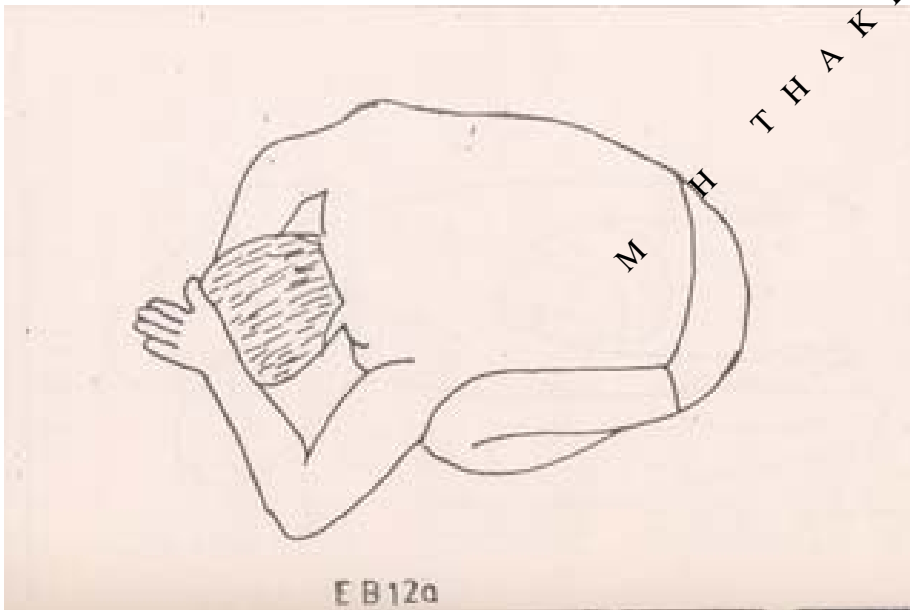
Raise the arms over the head, and inhale deeply.

Now exhale slowly, resting the arms and forehead on the ground. The head should be as near to the knees as possible, with the eyes closed and the body completely relaxed.

While breathing, the concentration should be from the tip of the nose to the center of the eye-brows, during inhalation; and from the centre of the eye-brows, to the tip of the nose, during exhalation.

Relax completely in this position for 5 minutes. ✦

Sushumna (bilateral breathing) starts flowing by this exercise. (See Figures EB-12, E8-12 A)



Exercise 11 :

Do **Tasasana** (See Asanas).

Exercise 12 :

**Trikonasan:** Forward and sideways bending as in trikonasan (See Asanas)



**YOGA NIDRA**  
**or**  
**Psychic Sleep (Psychosomatic Relaxation)**

**Steps:**

A) Lie down on your back. in relaxation position.

B) Relax your body as easily as possible, If necessary contract part by part with inhalation and relax with exhalation-right leg, left leg, right arm, left arm, back, front, neck, head, whole body.

C) After complete physical relaxation relax your mind There are many methods of relaxation of the mind. cutting off connection with the world, world problems and tensions, and focusing or concentrating on the self. Use anyone as per your psychic nature. Here are but a few, to get the idea,. but they are not the only ones. You can relieve your mind even in a fraction of a second, just by remembering a certain psychic symbol-just as for a child, the memory or sound of his mother makes him relieved and peaceful.

1. Try to think about a psychic and spiritual subject like, God, Universe, Truth, "Who Am I" ,. Love, beauty of nature, Silence. Sun, Moon. Heaven, Mother, Guru, Yoga, Sleep, Dream, Sound, Mantra. Diagram Symbol-whatever method will channel your consciousness to concentrate upon it and make you calm and tranquil.

This is an act of introversion or going beyond intellectual level or relaxing physically and intellectually and being aware inside,

and to guide consciousness consciously -in other words to enjoy "sleepless sleep" (the sleep in which your consciousness does not slip or does not remain suspended)

2. To achieve the same end, you can compare yourself with the sun, moon and stars and the whole cosmos and locate your relative value. You will find you do not exist. Then you will be able to forget problems and pain for some time. It will bring momentarily self-forgetfulness and thus, you will be able to overcome intellectual faculty and get introversion.

3. Imagine that you are in the lap of Divine Mother Earth and you are not alone. Your problems are universal and cosmic and not only individual. Rest and relax your mind by developing this philosophy. Those who have devotional background will succeed in this practice.

D) Now your personality is deeply relaxed. Put some "cosmic seed of thought" in the form of resolve in it, and it is bound to come out, as a plant, flower or fruit. Resolve to remove personality error and personality complex, to remove bad habits and to achieve success in life. Thus it is an art of "thought projection" or powerful thinking, or positive thinking, or "to increase will power" or to "materialize through thought". It should be an honest and pure resolution. Formulate it in a few simple but effective words. Write it down in your diary. Repeat 21 times and continue it for one or two months until you find a change in your personality or until your aim is achieved.

The same resolution should be repeated at the end of psychic sleep using the same words and with the same underground feeling-21 times.

E) Now you have trained your consciousness to project on any particular thought, channelise and concentrate over it. In this exercise you have to rotate your consciousness in different joints of the body-feel them, understand them, relax them. Thus by concentration on any part, you are able to draw more nervous current and, thus, more blood circulation in that region which

gives healing effect and keeps that part healthy and relieves psychic tension in that part. Like this you will rotate your consciousness in the whole body. Put order in every cell of the body Thus enjoy perfect physical and mental health and deep peace and bliss.

Now rotate your consciousness in the following parts of your body, repeating the name mentally and taking your consciousness in those parts and feeling those parts with love, and relax them. Rotation should be continuous and channelised with the same speed.

Right hand thumb	Left hand thumb
Second finger	Second finger
Third finger	Third finger
Fourth finger	Fourth finger
Fifth finger	Fifth finger
Palm	Palm
Wrist	Wrist
Elbow	Elbow
Shoulder	Shoulder
Armpit	Armpit
Waist	Waist
Hip	Hip
Thigh	Thigh
Knee	Knee
Calf	Calf
Ankle	Ankle
Heel	Heel
Sole	Sole
Right toe	Left toe
Second toe	Second toe
Third toe	Third toe
Fourth toe	Fourth toe
Fifth toe	Fifth toe

Complete first column then start second column

right shoulder blade	right chest
left shoulder blade	left chest
right buttock	center of chest
left buttock	heart

back	heart beating
front	naval
head	abdomen
forehead	genital organ
right eyebrow	right leg
left eyebrow	left leg
center of eyebrows	right arm
right eye	left arm
left eye	trunk
nose	Head
nose tip	whole body
right cheek	whole body
left cheek	whole body
right ear	whole body
left ear	whole body
upper lip	whole body
lower lip	whole body
chin	whole body
throat	whole body

Repeat this whole sequence 3 times until you feel totally introverted and do not remember the next part of your body, A lot of confusion comes and finally your external consciousness becomes dim and internal consciousness becomes bright or awakens.

Now if you have enough time to do the following additional exercises;

1. Try to feel your whole body part by part-heavy\_
2. Try to feel it part by part light-repeating the same above sequences.
3. Super impose feeling of heat and feel part by part your body becoming hot.
4. Super impose the feeling of cold and feel part by part cold.
5. Superimpose the feeling of acute pain in your body in any part.
6. Superimpose a memory of the best happiness you ever had or imagine one.

Thus train your psyche more and more to odd and even of life so, in the world, when you have to fight under the influences of good and bad, you will be able to turn and adjust your mind soon. Thus you will be above the influences of this duality because finally you know how to achieve unity (Yoga) with your soul.

F) Now totally relax-no thought , void-watch your incoming breathing from tip of the nose of to top of the nose and outgoing breathing from top of the nose to the tip of the nose. Try to sleep as quickly as possible and be aware to See and watch from where sleep comes and what is your last thought or mental condition when sleep comes and what happens during sleep. Follow the sleep-be aware and witness during sleep. This practice will take you deep down in your personality and great treasure of wisdom will be open to you.

You will learn many things during your sleep you will yet be totally relaxed, light, fresh and full of new energy and creative thought when you come out of this sleep.

This is the process of brining dynamism to your consciousness. This practice alone can lead you to the best meditation and even to Samadhi (super conscious experience). It will provide you health.

happiness. Peace, tranquility, beauty and strength with all round dynamism and success in all walks of life.

G) Before you come out of this practice repeat your resolution 21 times.

H) Now be aware slowly of external atmosphere-room, sounds. out side of room sound etc. Stretch your arms, back. neck, head and whole body and with positive thought, tranquility, peace of your soul through your whole personality.

I) Do not forget to do the spinal strength exercises to stimulate the body and awaken it, after Yoga Nidra (Paschimnottan asana) This will. bring the circulation to normal.

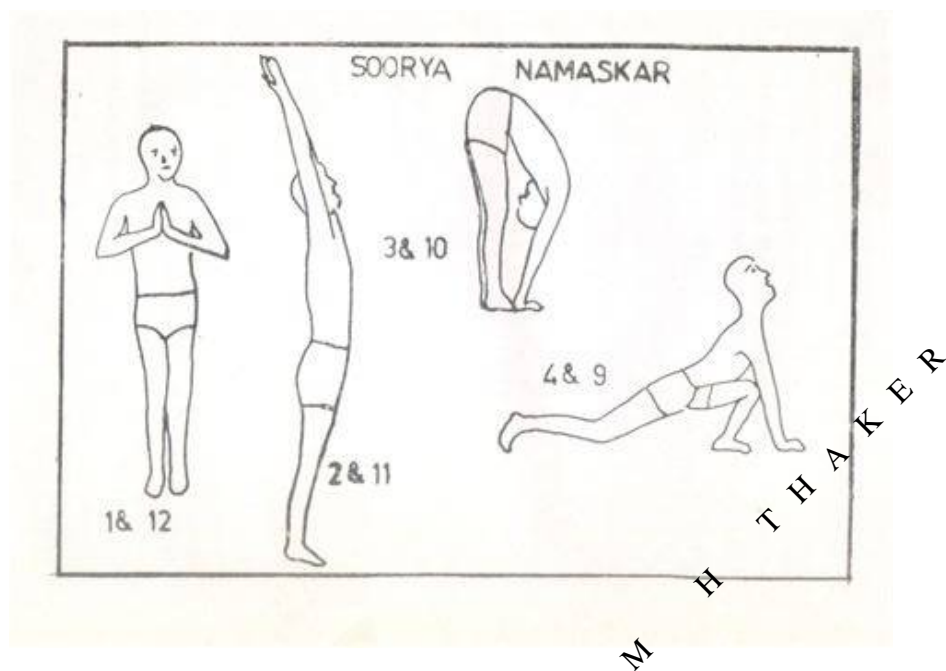
M H T H A K E R

## SOORYA NAMASKAR

This exercise is a very beneficial, powerful and easy exercise for the young and the old. This exercise is complete in itself. If it is synchronized with deep breathing and concentration, it takes care of the whole body. During the exercise, you should perform contraction, expansion and stretching.

Like the 12 zodiac positions of the sun, this exercise also has. 12 positions. Like the sun, this exercise is a nourishes, a life-giver. and it floods the body with Prana, brilliance, energy, vigor, strength, love and beauty.

One should do a minimum of 5-12 rounds daily every morning.



1. Stand erect with the feet together. Then fold the arms at the elbows and bring the palms together, touching the thumbs to the chest. Inhale deeply looking straight ahead, expanding the chest, and concentrating on the Heart Chakra.
2. Retain your breath. Raise your arms upright over the head and look at the palms. Bend the head back at the neck and concentrate on the Visbudhi Chakra (thyroid gland).
- 3 . With exhalation, bend forward, keeping the legs straight and stretched. and try to touch your nose to the knees with the palms on the ground in line with your toes. The concentration is on the back.
4. With inhalation. stretch the right leg back, resting it on the toes and knees and bend the left leg a little forward from the knee and ankle joint. At the same time, arch the spinal cord, look up and concentrate at the center of the eye brows.
5. With retention, lift the right knee up from the ground and rest

it on the sole of the right foot instead of the toe. Now bring the left leg back also in line with the right leg. Touch your chin to your chest, look at your toes and concentrate on the back.

6. With the exhalation, rest your knees on the ground folding the arms from the elbows and touch your chest., and chin to the ground, Thus, only 8 parts of your body are touching the ground.

They are: Two palms, two knees. two big toes, the chin and the chest. Concentration is on the Manipura Chakra or naval center.

7. With inhalation come to the cobra position keeping the arms straight without folding from the elbows. The knees are resting on the ground with only chin and the chest off the ground. Concentration is at the root of the spinal cord.

8. Exhale-Repeat same as 5

9. Inhale-Repeat same as 4

10. Exhale-Repeat same as 3

11. Inhale-Repeat same as 2

12. Exhale-Repeat same as 1.

Release the arm and come to normal rest, standing position. ✎  
This is one round of SOORYA-NAMASKAR. ✎

A minimum of 12 rounds of Soorya Namaskar every day should be done by all men, women and children-young and old. The maximum number of rounds should not exceed 144. ✎

In one minute, one should do between 2 to 5 rounds. ✎

Through Soorya Namaskar, all diseases-physical, mental, emotional and spiritual are removed. Health, vigor, inner strength and courage increase. Personality becomes radiant. Brain-power increases, aura improves. Thus, you are benefited by all encompassing success in all walks of life.

Ladies: Do not do this exercise during menstruation, or after three months of pregnancy. The practice may be resumed after the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of following child birth.

## 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.

## DAILY PRACTICES

### A word of warning

All those who meditate by sitting in only one position for long periods of time will have digestion trouble, clogging of the blood, constipation, trouble in the spinal cord and pain in the joints of the leg. For them it is prescribed to follow a few Asanas and breathing exercises as indicated in the Morning Meditation Scheme. In Meditation complete metabolism retards, so it is to be counter acted by suitable yogic postures and breathing practices.

In short half an hour is more than enough to go into Samadhi and come back after Pratyahar (flow of Sushumna).

Our first aim will be to create the flow of Sushumna (Pratyahar) before starting meditation. For this purpose we use a few important postures and breathing exercises, They are :

### Posture Exercises:

1.	Soorya Namaskar	5 rounds	2 minutes
2.	Sabasana		1 minutes
3.	Supta Vajrasana		1 minutes
4.	Paschamottanasana	7 times	2 minutes
5.	Shashankasana		4 minutes
6.	Veepareetkarnee		3-5 minutes
7.	Matsyasana		3 minutes
8.	Maha Bandha		3-5 minutes
9.	Agnisar Kriya		3-5 minutes

### Breathing Exercise

1.	Bhastrika (charging breathing)
2.	Kapal-Bhatt (cleansing breathing)
3.	Ujjayi (psychic breathing)
4.	Bhramari (vibrating breathing)
5.	Sheetali (cooling breathing)
6.	Sheetakari (cooling breathing)
7.	Nadishodhana (alternate breathing)
8.	Nasikagra (looking at the tip of the nose and watching the breathing).

Out of this lot, one should choose a few exercises for oneself, which are appropriate for bilateral breathing. We suggest numbers 1. 2. 3, 4, 5, posture exercises and 1 & 3 of the breathing exercises. Feel the flow of bilateral breathing (Sushumna) flow.



## Steps to Meditation exercises:

Remember:

- a) To do psychic breathing (Ujjayi pranayama)
- b) To invert your tongue touching the upper palate. (Khechari)
- c) "Aum" (ॐ) (Nada Sanchalan)
- d) The psychic passage is from navel to throat as your consciousness ascends, and from throat to navel as your consciousness descends. (i.e. with inhalation and exhalation ascending and descending consciousness. This is 'Pavan Sanchalan').
- e) So-Ham ( 'Sahabda-Sanchalan' )
- f) Center of eyebrow of third eye. ( 'Chittaksh Dharna' ).

## PROCEDURE

1. Nada-sanchalan (Aum consciousness) 13 times:

Sit in the meditation posture keeping the spine erect, and the back, neck and head straight. Do not tense your back. Now with your exhalation repeat 'Aum', (ॐ) descending your awareness down from the throat the navel.

2. Pavan-Sanchalan (Breathing-consciousness) 49 times:

Apply Khechari, and inhale in Ujjayi from the navel to the throat and exhale from the throat to the navel. descending your consciousness.

3. Shabda-Sanchalan ( 'So-Ham' consciousness) 59 times:

Apply Khechari, and inhale in Ujjayi from the navel to the throat, but now feel the vibration of 'So' ascending with it, and with exhalation descend your conscious with the vibration of 'Ham' from the throat to the navel.

4. Chittaksh-Dharan 5 to 15 Minutes:

Relax your tongue and your breathing. Keep your eyes closed and meditate in between the center of the eyebrows. Watch the passage of breathing from the tip of the nose to the top of the nose, and vice versa. With inhalation, expand the consciousness in the center of the eyebrow (or open the third eye), and with exhalation contract the third eye. Continue this until you get complete introversion and one-pointed. Continue until your consciousness is coupled with the third eye. Then you will be able to concentrate over that point. After some time, you will be able to meditate and finally you will be in Samadhi or Super Consciousness. Increase the practice of this exercise. To come out of meditation follow the reverse process.

5. Shabda-Sanchalan 5 times:

Inhale from the navel to the third eye with the vibration of 'So' and exhale from the third eye to the navel with the vibration of 'Ham'.

6. Pavan-Sanchalan 5 times:

Simply inhale taking the consciousness from the navel to the third eye, and exhale with descending consciousness.

7. Nada-Sanchalan 3 times:

Inhale from the navel to the third eye and exhale chanting "OM" from the third eye to the navel. This is only an infrastructure of meditation, a blue print only. Yet after Sushumna flow one can tune within, by any individual method, traditional method, or taught by any spiritual adept. The method is only a marg (the path) but the goal is only One eternal.

### **"Complete Morning Meditation Scheme" (45-60 Minutes)**

Meditation becomes very successful early in the morning between 4 and 6 A.M. when the natural vibration and solar ultraviolet rays brings tranquility, peace, introversion and a healing effect on your psychic personality.

Get up 5 A.M. and answer your morning calls. Wear loose clothing. Fresh air should be circulating through your meditation room. Spread a blanket on the ground. Do the following exercise :

a. Soorya Namaskar (five times)

b. Sabasan

c. Paschimottasan (Spinal stretch) 5 rounds

d. Supta Vajrasana

e. Shashankasan (Rabbit pose) 3 minutes

f. Do the following breathing exercises :

Charging breathing exercises,

Psychic breathing 15 times

M  
H  
T  
H  
A  
K  
E  
R

### **Neck Exercises:**

i) Move your head towards the right and then towards left shoulder. Also move your head up and down.

jj) Rotate your head clockwise and anti-clockwise. The breathing will be deep and corrected, thus the blood will be purified. The pranic flow will be free and stream like. Finally it will control and effect the mind. From all these, you will receive peace, tranquility, beauty, strength and mental equilibrium.

After each Meditation practice, do not forget to perform Pschimottanasana (spinal stretching) for a few times to stimulate the body and the make the joints stable and healthy.

**Rush Meditation:**

Some days if you have very little time do a short Meditation:

Soorya Namaskar	1 minute
Sabasan	1 minute
Supta Vajrasana	1 minute
Charging Breathing	1 minute
Psychic Breathing 7 times	2 minutes

Also the Meditation Exercises:

a) Nada-Sanchalan (om consciousness)

13 times for 3 minutes.

b) Pavan-Sanchalan (breathing consciousness)

15 times for 4 minutes.

c) Sabda-Sanchalan (So- Ham Consciousness)

21 times for 5 minutes.

d) Meditation itself 5 minutes.

The total of this short meditation is 23 minutes. From this short meditation charge your body for a whole day. However, you must sincerely do it and reduce your sleep by a half-hour.

**Sitting Position for Meditation:**

Use a blanket folded four times over it spread a clean cotton piece. You can also use a wooden plank and above it place the blanket and the cotton piece. In short, the seat should be a bad conductor of electricity and 1 or 2 inches from the ground.

If you sit cross legs and if your knees are above the ground then put a pillow below your buttocks, in such a manner that the knees touch the ground easily to prevent cramps in the legs due to the improper blood circulation.

Do the following Meditation exercises:

1. Nada-Sanchalan (Om consciousness) 13 times
2. Pavan-Sanchalan (breathing consciousness) 50 times .
3. Sa bda Sanchalan (So-Ham Consciousness) 59 times
4. Chittakash-Dharana 5-15 times
5. Sabada-Sanchalan 5 times
6. Pavan-Sanchalan 5 times
7. Nada-Sanchalan 3 times.

In Meditation exercise ( 4 ) Chittakash Dharna one is free to choose his own method of Meditation. In short, every individual should concentrate on his own "psychic symbol" and thus perfect

his Meditation. Some psychic symbols are Mantras, sounds, Divine Mother, Love, purity, sleep, dreams, God ,Universe, Truth etc. In general, choose any spiritual subject of choice for you to go deep. Others can witness their self and do self analysis. The ultimate purpose of this is to "Realize God within your Self". However, those who do not have any guidance, should concentrate on the third eye and expand the third eye with inhalation and contract it with exhalation. From this alone they will get deep insight and self guidance.

This short formulated scheme contains complete information in its beginning stage. It can culminate into Bhakti Yoga (Yoga of devotion) or Gyana Yoga (Yoga of knowledge and discrimination) according to the individuals psychic nature.

Thus it satisfies people of all faiths. Even Christians , Buddhas, Hindus all can continue their own practice. Exercise 4 of Meditation, as per their religious liking.

**Om tat sat**

M H T H A K E R