

# **NOTES FOR YOGA PRACTICALS-II**

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## UNIT-1: RISHIKESH SURYA NAMASKAR

Surya Namaskar is a practice which has been handed down over millennia from the wise sages of the ancient Vedic times. 'Surya' means sun and 'Namaskar' means salutation. In ancient times the sun was worshipped as a daily ritual because it is a powerful symbol of spiritual consciousness. Worship of the outer and inner sun was a religious-social ritual, which attempted to placate those forces of nature beyond man's control. This variation of Surya Namaskar gets its name Rishikesh as it was popularized by the Swamis who resided in and around Rishikesh on the banks of the river Ganga.

Rishikesh Surya Namaskar is a series of twelve physical postures. These alternating backward and forward bending postures flex and stretch the spinal column through their maximum range giving a profound stretch to the whole body. Synchronizing the breath with the movements of the body is very important. The basic breathing principle is to inhale during upward and backward bending postures and exhale during forward bending postures.



### 1. Pranamasana (Salutation posture)

Stand erect with feet together.

Join the palms together in front of the chest. Concentrate on standing straight, steady and cultivate a prayerful attitude.

This posture helps induce a state of introversion, relaxation and calmness.

It activates the Anahata Chakra.  
Exhale fully.

### 2. Anjali Mudra with the back bend in Hasta Uttana Asana (Raised arm posture)

Inhaling stretch both arms above the head palms facing upward, arch the back and stretch the whole body.

This posture stretches the chest and the abdomen and lifts Prana energy upward to the upper parts of the body propelled by inhalation.



### 3. Pada Hastha Asana (Hand to foot posture)

Exhaling bend the body forward and down, keeping the spine straight. Avoid collapsing the chest or over rounding the upper back. Keep the legs straight and perpendicular to the ground. The knees may be allowed to bend a little if needed. This posture massages the abdominal organs, especially the liver, kidneys, pancreas, adrenals, uterus and ovaries. The power of digestion increases and female disorders such as prolapse and menstrual irregularities are relieved. A good flow of blood is sent to the spinal nerves as they are stretched and toned. The hamstring muscles at the back of the thigh and calf muscles are stretched and toned. Inversion increases blood flow to the brain. Prana is channeled to the lower regions of the body propelled by exhalation.



### 4. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture)



On your next inhalation, extend the right leg back and drop the knee to the ground.

The left knee is bent and kept between the hands and the feet placed flat on the ground.

Lift the spine and open the chest. Concentrate at the eyebrow center.

### 5. Mehruasana (Mountain posture)

On the exhalation bring the left leg back to join with the right leg. Simultaneously raise the buttocks and lower the head between the arms, so that the body forms a triangle with the ground. Try to place the heels flat on the ground. Focus awareness at the neck area. This posture strengthens the nerves and muscles in the arms and legs, stretches the calf muscles and Achilles' tendons and makes the spine straight and taut. It relieves varicose veins and tones spinal nerves. Maintaining the posture take a deep inhalation.



## 6. Ashtanga Bhumi Sparsha (Posture of salutation with 8 limbs touching earth)

Exhaling gently drop both knees to the ground and slowly slide the body down at an angle as you bring the chest and chin to the ground.

All eight limbs - toes, knees, chest, hands and chin - touch the ground. The buttocks are kept up.

Hold the breath.

This posture develops the chest and strengthens arms and sends additional blood to this area helping to rejuvenate the nerves.



## 7. Bhujangasana (Cobra posture)

On the inhalation, lower the hips while pushing the chest forward and upward with the hands, until the spine is fully arched and the head is facing up. The knees and lower abdomen remain on the ground.

Focus the awareness at the base of spine and feel the tension from the forward pull.

This pose gives dynamic expansion to the organs of the chest and abdomen, relieving many ailments such as asthma, constipation, indigestion, kidney and liver problems.

It is very good to relieve tension in the back muscles and spinal nerves.



## 8. Mehru Asana (Mountain posture)

Exhale and get back to the mountain posture as done earlier in number 5.



### 9. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture)

Inhale and swing the right leg forward between the hands.

The left leg remains back. Resume posture as done earlier in number 4.



### 10. Padahasthasana (Hand to the foot posture)

Exhaling, bring the left foot forward. Join both legs and resume posture as done earlier in number 3.

### the Hastha Uttana Asana (Raised arm posture)

Inhale, raise the trunk up and bend backward. Resume posture as done earlier in number 2.

### 11. Anjali Mudra and back bend in the Hastha Uttana Asana (Raised arm posture)



### 12. Pranamasana (Salutation posture)

Straighten the body and bring the hands in front of the chest. Resume posture as done earlier in number 1.

**Note:** The above constitutes one half of a round of the Rishikesh Surya Namaskar.

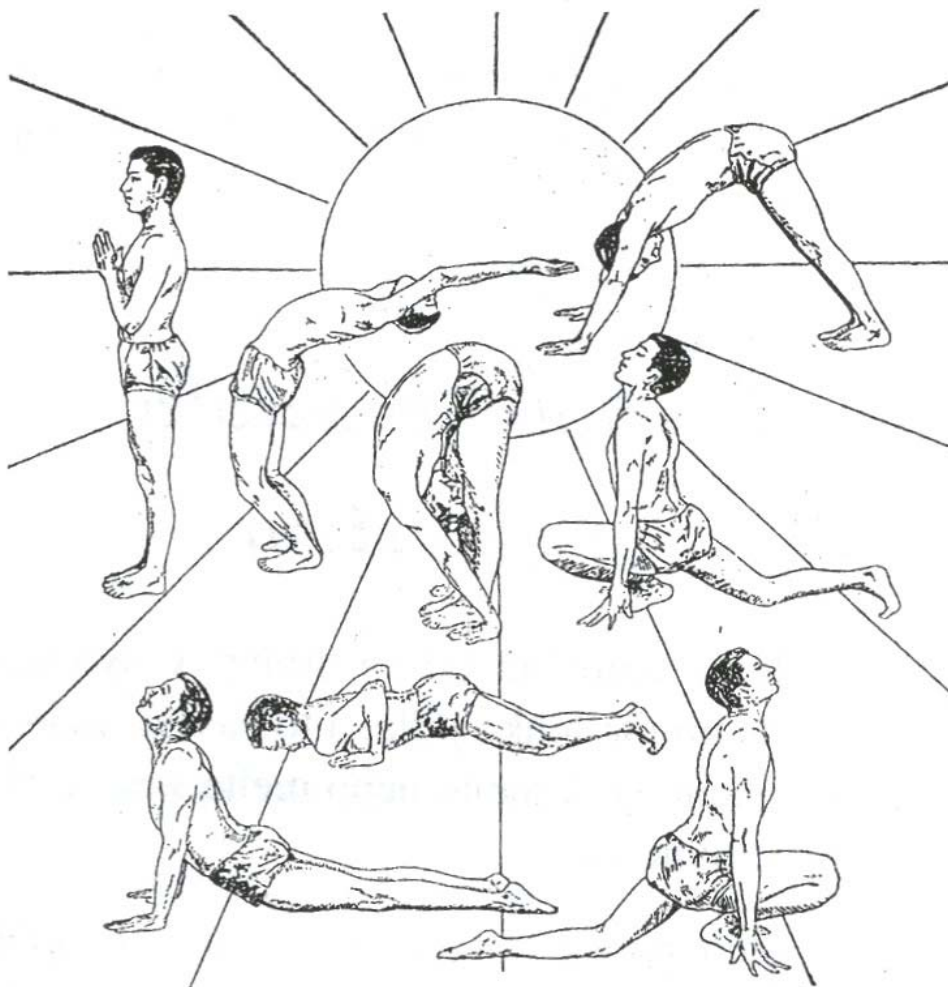
To complete the other half the same movements are repeated except that the left leg is brought back in posture 4 and brought forward in posture 9.

So one full round consists of the 12 poses done twice in sequence. Practice 3 to 9 rounds of the Surya Namaskar daily for maximum benefit.

When the exercises are done little quickly the gain is more physical and when they are done slowly with breath awareness the gain is more mental and spiritual.

### THE TWELVE SUN MANTRAS

Mantras are potent combinations of specific sounds destined to produce a particular effect on the mind and its functioning through the body. Every year the sun passes through twelve different positions in space called zodiac in western astrology and Rashis in Hindu astrology. As the sun passes through these Rashis it displays a characteristic quality or property. So the sun has been given twelve different names to indicate these different qualities or properties.



In Rishikesh Surya Namaskar the sun is saluted twelve times, each time taking one of its names. The salutation to the sun is done by chanting the sun mantras. These sun mantras are not merely names; they are special sound syllables that act as a vehicle of cosmic energy. These twelve mantras should be mentally chanted while performing the twelve postures of Rishikesh Surya Namaskar. The mantras, their meaning and significance are given below:

1. **Om Mitraya Namaha** (Salutation to the friend of all): The sun is regarded as a universal friend providing heat, light and energy to support all life on Earth. This Mantra is chanted in Pranamasana to express our gratitude and reverence to the source of all life.
2. **Om Ravaye Namaha** (Salutation to the shining one who is praised by all): Ravi is the one who shines and offers divine blessings upon all life and hence is praised by all. This is chanted in the second position to signify that we are stretching our whole being upward towards that light to receive those blessings.
3. **Om Suryaya Namaha** (Salutation to the one who guides everyone): Chanted in the third position. Surya represents the sun after sunrise when nature's activities begin. This mantra is dedicated to this aspect of the sun who guides all the day's activities.
4. **Om Bhanave Namaha** (Salutation to the one who bestows beauty and illumines): The sun is the physical symbol of the Guru who removes ignorance from our consciousness just as the sun removes the darkness of night with each dawn. In the fourth position we turn our face towards this symbol of inner illumination and pray for the end of ignorance. Real inner beauty can then manifest in all our activities.
5. **Om Khagaya Namaha** (Salutation to the one who moves through the sky and stimulates the senses): 'Khaga' means the limitless sky. The sun is saluted in this name to lead us from our present limitations to the state of limitlessness. Our senses are expanded beyond the mere experiences of the earth.
6. **Om Pushne Namaha** (Salutation to the nourisher of all life): In the sixth position as we bend down to touch the ground with eight parts of our body we offer our whole being in total surrender to the source of nourishment so that he may bestow physical, mental and spiritual strength and nourishment.
7. **Om Hiranyagarbha Namaha** (Salutation to the golden womb or golden germ): Hiranyagarbha means golden womb or egg. It is the original causal state from which the universe comes into existence. The sun because of its resplendent light and also because everything here on Earth originates from the sun is taken as a symbol of Hiranyagarbha and is worshipped as the symbol of great virility.
8. **Om Marichaye Namaha** (Salutation to the healing rays of the sun): the healing power of the sun is well known and documented below as a note on sunlight and health.
9. **Om Adityaya Namaha** (Salutation to the son of Aditi who inspires real pure love): Love has been defined by Dr Swami Gitananda Giri

as profound interest and who can be a better example of this profound interest or love for the human race than the sun itself.

10. **Om Savitre Namaha** (Salutation to the stimulating power of the sun that begets life): 'Savitre' is said to represent the sun before rising, stimulating and arousing man into waking activity and begetting life.
11. **Om Arkaya Namaha** (Salutation to the one who is full of energy and inspires awe in the beholder): 'Arka' means energy. The sun is the source of all energy. In this eleventh position we once again stretch our whole being to receive the energy like we did in position 2.
12. **Om Bhaskaraya Namaha** (Salutation to the effulgent one who leads to enlightenment): In this final position we offer respect to the sun as a symbol of great revealer of all transcendental and spiritual truths.

### **SUNLIGHT AND HEALTH:**

The sun is the source of all life. The Hindu civilization worships the sun as a Cosmic Deity. For the ancient Aryans, Egyptians, Greeks & Romans the sun was also the source of life. They also adored the sun as a Deity. Sunlight is the best masseur. It heals diseased bones, builds up weakened muscles, clears up infected tissues, and restores crippled bodies to health.

Sunlight induces the production of vitamin D & E by its action on the skin, when the body is exposed to the Sun. Ultra-violet rays are short chemical rays. They have powerful effects upon living tissues. They kill the germs on the surface, increasing resistance to infection, improve the function of glands, and stimulate the circulation of blood.

They convert the precursor substance in the skin to vitamin D. The ultra-violet rays increase calcium & phosphorus, affect the constituents of the blood, promptly cure certain bone-diseases such as rickets, increase the alkalinity of the blood and so remove acidosis, increase the iron content in the blood, and is also useful in anemia. They increase the formation of anti bodies which fight infection and build up body resistance to disease. The ultra-violet rays cure certain skin diseases as ringworm, acne, boils, etc. They stimulate the healing of wounds and aid the union of fractured bones. The rays are absorbed into the blood stream. They alter the composition of blood & influence the general health. Ultra-violet rays prevent the developing of rickets.

Expose your body to the ultra-violet rays of the sun in the morning and attain good health and vigor. Infra-red rays are the long heat waves of sunlight. They heat the tissues and bring more blood to parts on which they impinge, Children need plenty of sunlight everyday to grow into healthy and robust boys & girls. Let the sun's rays fall on the closed eyes for two or three minutes every day. This will improve your eyesight.

Loose clothing of white fabrics allows free permeation of the sun rays into the skin. Modern civilization has forced man from his natural outdoor environments to a life within closed dark room that shut out the warm, life-giving rays of the sun. Sunless life, man has lost his vim, vigor, vitality & health. O man! take sun bath and regain your lost health and vitality.



## UNIT-2: ASANAS

### VEERA ASANA-I: THE HERO'S POSTURE

Take up the Samastithi position and breathe in. Breathe out and jump with your feet three to four feet apart. Breathe in and turn your right foot and your head to the right side. Breathe out and bend your right knee, creating a 90 degree angle in the space behind the knee. The knee should be directly over the ankle, and the arms should be stretched straight out from the shoulders. The torso is held erect and the chest opened up as much as possible. Hold this position, breathing deeply and counting slowly to ten. When ready, stand up by straightening your knee on the in breath. Hold in the breath, turn your right foot and your head back to the front.

Turn your left foot and your head to the left side. Breathe out and bend your left knee. Hold the final position and, breathe deeply and count slowly to ten. When ready, slowly come back to the standing position on the in breath. Hold in the breath and turn your left foot and your head back to the front. Breathe out, lower the arms to the side, and jump back to the Samastithi position. Relax in the Samastithi Asana, and then perform the entire routine twice more on both sides.



#### BENEFITS:

- Stretches and tones up the muscles of the entire back, arms and legs.
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.
- Improves the confidence levels of the individual

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from injuries to the neck, back and hamstring muscles should proceed with caution.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

## VEERA ASANA-II —THE HERO'S POSTURE

Take up the Samastithi position and breathe in. Breathe out and jump with your feet three to four feet apart. Breathe in and turn your right foot and your head to the right side. Breathe out and bend your right knee, creating a 90 degree angle in the space behind the knee. The knee should be directly over the ankle, and the arms should be stretched straight out from the shoulders. The torso is held erect and the chest opened up as much as possible.

Hold out the breath and turn your arms straight out to the sides. On the next incoming breath, stretch your arms high over the head and perform the Anjali Mudra by bring the palms of both hands together. Look up at your hands.

Keep your left leg as straight as possible while the right knee is kept bent at the 90 degree. Hold this position with deep breathing, counting slowly to ten.

When ready, release the Anjali Mudra and lower your arms back down equal to the shoulders on the out breath. Hold out the breath come back to the Veera Asana-I.

Breathe in and straighten your knee, and keep standing with your arms still extended out from your shoulders. Hold in the breath and turn your head and the right foot back to the front

Turn your head and left foot to the left and repeat the whole procedure on the left side before returning to the Samastithi position.



Rest in this posture before repeating twice more on left and right sides.

### BENEFITS:

- Stretches and tones up the muscles of the entire back, arms and legs.
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.
- Improves the confidence levels of the individual
- Develops the mental strength that we need in order to face the battles of life with courage

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from injuries to the neck, back and hamstring muscles should proceed with caution.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

### **VEERA ASANA-III – THE HERO'S POSTURE**

Take up a comfortable Samastithi Asana. Breathe in and bring your hands together in Namaskar Mudra in front of your chest. Continue the incoming breath and bend forward while extending your hands straight to the front as if performing the Agra Mudra.

Slowly lift your left leg until your leg, torso and arms form a straight line parallel to the ground. Hold for a slow count of ten.

Breathe out and lower your leg back down to the ground. Bring your hands back to the Namaskar at your chest and return to the upright position. Relax your hands back to your sides and rest a few seconds in Samastithi Asana before performing on the opposite side. Do twice more on right and left sides. This is also known as the EKA PADA ASANA or -the One Legged Posture.



#### BENEFITS:

- Conveys harmony, balance and power.
- Helps to contract and tone the abdominal organs.
- Gives agility to the body and mind.
- Stretches and tones up the muscles of the entire back, arms and legs.
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.

- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.
- Improves the confidence levels of the individual
- Recommended for runners, as it gives vigor and agility.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from injuries to the neck, back and hamstring muscles should proceed with caution.

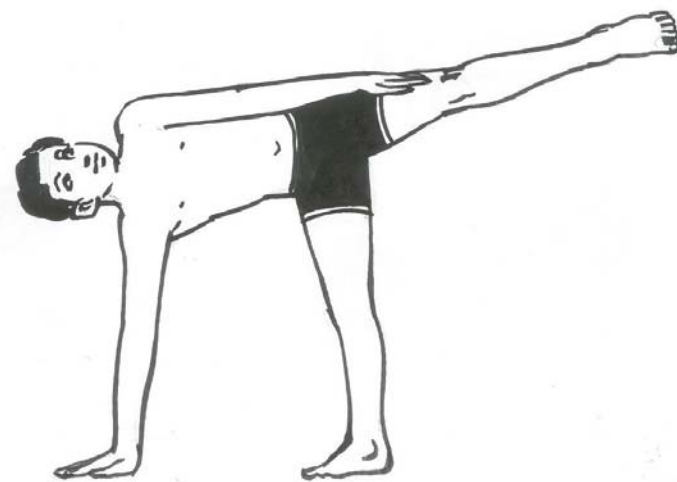
This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

### **ARDHA CHANDRA ASANA -THE HALF MOON POSTURE**

Stand in the Samastithi Asana and breathe in. Breathe out and jump with your legs apart and arms extended straight out from your shoulders. Breathe in and turn your right foot and at the same time your head to the right side. Breathe out and bend your right knee, as though performing Veera Asana. Continue the outgoing breath, reach down and touch the ground in front of your right foot with your right hand. Find a balance point, and on the next incoming breath, lift your left leg up as high as possible. At the same time straighten your right leg, keep your left hand on your left thigh and look up.

Keep the right leg on which the entire balance rests straight, and do not bend your right or left knees.

Hold for a slow count of ten and then lower your left leg back down to the ground. Return to the Veera Asana with your right knee bent and then stand up on the incoming breath. Hold in the breath, turn the right foot and the head to the front and then repeat the procedure on left side.



After performing the posture on both the right and left sides, rest in the Samastithi Asana.

Try to perform the Ardha Chandra Asana twice more to get maximum benefit.

#### BENEFITS:

- Stretches and tones up the muscles of the entire back, arms and legs.
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.
- Improves the confidence levels of the individual
- Gives agility to the body and mind.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from injuries to the neck, back and hamstring muscles should proceed with caution.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

#### **GARUDA ASANA: THE EAGLE POSTURE**

Stand in a steady and comfortable Samastithi Asana. Perform the Garuda Asana by balancing on your right leg while bringing your left leg across and around the right so that both legs are intertwined. Now perform the Garuda Hastha Mudra by crossing your right hand over the left so as to intertwine both hands. Bring the entwined arms inward and twist them up to your face level.

When ready slowly release the foot and hand positions and come back to the Samastithi Asana for some deep breathing and relaxation.

Repeat the practice by performing it on the opposite side in order to also attain the healthy musculoskeletal benefits on that side of your body too.

When ready slowly release the foot and hand positions and come back to the Samastithi Asana for some deep breathing and relaxation.



#### BENEFITS:

- The performance of the Garuda Hastha and Pada Mudras together helps to maximise the benefits of both the Mudras.
- This provides a slow and sustained stretch to the muscles of the arms and legs which produces an excellent relaxation response in these tissues.
- This is a useful prelude to other relaxation practices and also helps to develop a keen sense of perfect balance.
- Nerve currents that stimulate glandular activity are also stimulated by this practice.
- Garuda Mudra in the Garuda Asana stretches the spinal column and is a boon for those suffering from problems of the lower back.
- Gives an excellent stretch to the muscles of the arms, forearms, and legs.
- Enhances the capacity of the wrist, elbow, shoulder, hip, knee and ankle joints
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from injuries to the neck, back and hamstring muscles should proceed with caution.

Care should be taken not to push the wrist, elbow and knee joints into too much of an unnatural position as it may cause strain of the ligaments surrounding these important joints.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

#### **GOMUKHASANA: THE COW FACE POSTURE**

Sit in the Vajrasana with your spine as erect as possible. Take up the Gomukha Asana by crossing your knees with the right leg over the left and then bring your feet back so that you are sitting between the heels of your crossed feet.

Perform the Gomukha Mudra by taking your right hand over your right shoulder and catching it from behind by your left hand. Fix your gaze on the tip of your upright elbow and enjoy the creation of the benign energy of the bovine life forms.

Slowly release the hand and leg positions and come back to Vajrasana for a short period of relaxation with deep breathing.

Perform the practice on the opposite side to create a balanced effect on both halves of your body.

Slowly release the hand and leg positions and come back to Vajrasana for a short period of relaxation with deep breathing.



#### BENEFITS:

- This practice creates a healthy circulation in the upper part of the body and massages all tissues of the neck, shoulder and upper areas of the spinal column.
- It releases unhealthy tension that tends to accumulate in the upper spinal and neck regions from sedentary desk jobs and physical inactivity.
- Stretches the spinal column and produces a healthy spine and resilient back muscles.
- Gives an excellent stretch to the muscles of the arms, forearms, and legs.
- Enhances the capacity of the wrist, elbow, shoulder, hip, knee and ankle joints
- Relieves stiffness of the upper and lower extremities.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back, neck, shoulder and knee injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee and ankle joints.

#### **BADDHAKONA ASANA: THE BOUND ANGLE POSTURE**

Sit on the ground with your legs stretched out in front. Bend your right knee and bring your right foot inwards until the right heel is close to your perineum. Bend your left knee and bring your left foot in until the soles of both your feet are touching each other.

Catch hold of your feet with your hands. Grip the outer side of your feet and try to make your thighs touch the ground as much as possible. Make sure that your spine is as straight as possible. Close your eyes and contemplate



the pelvic region Perform 3 rounds of the Moola Bandha, the anal lock by tightening up your perineal musculature for a short period of time before relaxing it.

You may also perform 5 to 15 rounds of the Aswini Mudra by alternately tightening and relaxing your perineal musculature as in the defecating action of the horse.

When ready slowly release the position and stretch your legs forward for a few rounds of deep breathing in the Uttana Asana.

#### BENEFITS:

- An excellent posture for improving the pelvic circulation and so is useful in gynecological disorders in women and male sexual disorders such as erectile dysfunction
- Develops stability and concentrative abilities of the mind
- Enhances inner and outer awareness
- Improves blood circulation in the lower back, abdomen and pelvic regions
- Enhances digestive and eliminative capacities
- Improves the flexibility of the lower limb and strengthens the hip, knee and ankle joints.
- Conducive posture for the performance of Moola Bandha and Ashwini Mudra. Both the Moola Bandha and the Ashwini Mudra help to energize the entire system and are useful in patients suffering from piles or genital prolapse.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating lower back injuries and arthritic conditions of the lower limb should exercise caution in performing this practice. This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint and ankle joint.

#### YOGA MUDRA ASANA: THE GESTURE OF UNION

Yoga Mudra, the Gesture of Union is done from Padma Asana, the Lotus Posture. There are two hand positions that may be used in this Mudra. In the first position which is relatively simple the right hand





is used to catch the left wrist behind the back.

The second position is more difficult and is done by crossing the hands behind the back so as to catch the right foot with the right hand and the left foot with the left hand.



Once the hand position has been attained, the head is lifted on an in-breath and an excellent stretch given

to the entire spinal column. The head is then brought down to the ground slowly on an out-breath. The forehead or chin may be placed on the ground depending on your ability and flexibility. Shallow Sukshma Pranayama or butterfly-like subtle breathing is done in the final position to attain a quiet state of psychophysical union.

When ready, come back up to the sitting position on an in-breath. Slowly and carefully release the hands and then the feet and enjoy a short period of relaxation with your feet stretched out in front.

#### BENEFITS:

- This Mudra helps relieve abdominal disorders of many kinds and is especially useful for patients of Diabetes Mellitus as well as liver and digestive disorders.
- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Gives a good stretch to the whole back and neck region and helps realign the shoulder in line with the back.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the abdomen, waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Helps to focus the mind in the Sahasrara Chakra, the crown centre.
- The Bhija Mantras for all the chakras can be chanted in this posture or the ***Om Namashivaya Mantra*** can be used to create Chakra Awareness.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice.

This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from acute abdominal disorders where the condition may be aggravated by the pressure on the abdomen. Those with severe incapacitating lower back injuries and arthritic conditions of the lower limb should exercise caution in performing this practice. This posture is contraindicated for those suffering from ligament tears of the knee joint.

## **ARDHA MATSYENDRA ASANA: THE CLASSICAL POSTURE OF RISHI MATSYENDRA NATHA**

Sit erect with both legs stretched out in front and your palms gently pressing on the ground by your sides in Uttana Asana. Fold your right knee and place the heel tight in against the perineum. Place your left foot by the side of your right thigh by crossing it over the knee. Bring your right hand round the outer side of the left knee passing between the chest and the knee and catch hold of the left big toe. Your right shoulder blade rests on the outer side of your left knee.

Take your left hand round your back and try to get a grip on your right thigh. Look back over your left shoulder. The erect knee acts as a fulcrum for getting maximum twist of the spine. Keep your trunk vertical. Hold the posture for 30 seconds with soft breathing. This posture gives an excellent massage to all the abdominal organs and is very useful for those suffering from diabetes as well as digestive disorders.

Release and come back to the Uttana Asana.

Repeat on the opposite side by folding your left knee with the heel tight in against the perineum. Place your right foot by the side of your left thigh by crossing it over the knee. Bring your left hand round the outer side of the right knee passing between the chest and the knee and catch hold of the right big toe. Your left shoulder blade rests on the outer side of your right knee.

Take your right hand round your back and try to get a grip on your left thigh. Look back over your right shoulder. The erect knee acts as a fulcrum for getting maximum twist of the spine. Keep your trunk vertical. Hold the posture for 30 seconds with soft breathing.

When you are ready slowly release the posture and come back to the Uttana Asana.



### **BENEFITS:**

- Twists the abdominal area and gives a healthy massage to the abdominal organs of digestion and elimination.
- Stretches and tones up the muscles of the entire back, arms and legs.
- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the abdomen, waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region
- Useful for patients of obesity and diabetes mellitus.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back, neck, shoulder and knee injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice. Those with enlarged liver or spleen must not perform this posture till their medical condition improves. It is contraindicated for those suffering from acute abdominal disorders where the condition may be aggravated by the pressure on the abdomen.

#### PAWAN MUKTA ASANAS: THE GAS RELIEVING POSTURES

Lie down in a comfortable Shavasana and start to breathe in and out for an equal count of six or eight.



To perform the single legged Eka Pada Pawan Mukta Asana bend and lift your right knee while breathing in and simultaneously also lift your head off the ground. Catch hold of

your knee with your arms and try to touch your knee to your forehead. Hold the position a few seconds and then while breathing out slowly release the position and lower your head while at the same time bringing your foot back to the ground. Repeat this at least two more times to complete a set of three rounds of the practice.

Relax a few seconds in the Shavasana and then perform the practice on the left side.

Relax in Shavasana for a few minutes with deep and rhythmic breathing while concentrating on your abdominal area that will help to relax you further.



To perform the double legged Dwi Pada Pawan Mukta Asana bend and lift both your knees while breathing in. Bring them as close to your forehead as possible while simultaneously raising your head to meet the knees. Hold a few seconds and then while breathing out, lower your head and simultaneously bring your feet back to the ground. Repeat this two more times to complete a set of three rounds at each session.

Relax in Shavasana for a few minutes with deep and rhythmic breathing while concentrating on your abdominal area. This will help you to relax even further as the emotional tensions tend to tighten up the abdominal area leading to a feeling of “butterflies in the stomach”.

#### BENEFITS:

- This set of supine postures is a great way to get rid of the stress and tension that tends to accumulate in the abdominal region.
- They are also useful to prevent and control the various joint disorders that afflict the limbs and the abdominal organs.
- Help prevent and relieve joint pains, gas troubles and abdominal problems such as indigestion and constipation.
- Useful for those suffering from gas problems, constipation, diabetes and sluggish liver and kidneys.
- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the abdomen, waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice. Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, should exercise caution and not hold the posture too long. These postures are contraindicated for those suffering from acute abdominal disorders where the condition may be aggravated by the pressure on the abdomen.

#### **NAVA ASANA: THE BOAT POSTURE**

Lie down in Shavasana with your arms by your sides. While breathing in, slowly come up to the Uttana Asana. Hold in the breath and raise both feet off the ground until the toes are in the line with the nose. This is the Nava Asana, the Boat Posture.

The hands are placed onto the top of the thighs, close in against the body. On an outgoing breath, slowly lower the feet to the ground and then recline back allowing each vertebra of the spine to return to the ground, as though the treads of a caterpillar tractor.

The posture is repeated two more times before relaxing to deep breathing in Shava Asana.



#### BENEFITS:

- The abdominal and thigh muscles are toned up in a healthy manner by the regular practice of Nava Asana.
- A massive supply of blood is also sent down into the pelvic area by the healthy tension of holding this posture.
- Effective for disorders of the intestines, liver, gall bladder and spleen.
- The practitioner gains strength in muscles of the back.
- Brings life and vigor to the entire back and enables one to move comfortably.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice. Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, should exercise caution and not hold the posture too long.

#### CHAKRASANA: THE WHEEL POSTURE

Lie flat on your back in Shavasana. Bend your knees and place both heels next to the respective buttock. Raise your arms up and behind you and place your palms flat on the ground underneath the respective shoulder. Rise up into Vilomasana with the head on the ground and take a few breaths.

Slowly push up with the arms and legs and extend your hips as high as possible. Continue to walk the feet and the hands toward each other and straighten the arms and push the navel up. Stay in this position for 20 to 30 seconds with normal breathing.

Slowly come back to Shavasana in a step by step manner by retracing the steps of the ascent.



#### BENEFITS:

- All the benefits of the back bend exercises at its best.
- This is a great pose for “opening up” the shoulders and for increasing arm, leg and shoulder strength.
- Stretches and tones up the musculature of the entire back as well as upper and lower extremities.
- Normalizes blood supply to the brain and head region and increases the blood supply to the upper part of the body.

- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.
- Improves the sense of balance and coordination.
- Helps to correct structural deformities of the spine, shoulders and upper back region
- Stretches the groin and inner thigh region in a healthy manner.
- Tones the spine by stretching it fully and keeps the body alert and supple.
- Gives vitality, energy and a feeling of lightness.
- Useful in gynecological, hormonal and respiratory disorders

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice. Those suffering from disorders causing disturbance in balance and equilibrium should not perform the practice without assistance. Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, should exercise caution and not hold the posture too long. Patients of Glaucoma and acute infections of the head and neck region and acid peptic disorders shouldn't perform this posture until their medical condition improves. Patients of cervical spondylitis shouldn't put their entire weight on the head while performing the Viloma Asana posture and should proceed with care.

#### **KARNAPIDA ASANA: KNEE TOUCHING EAR POSTURE**

From Shava Asana lift both legs up towards the sky on the in breath. Take the legs over the head until the toes touch the ground beyond the head. Do not bend the knees. Stretch the arms out behind the back or hold on the lower back with the elbows on the ground. Hold the posture for a few seconds with lighter breathing.

Gently bend both knees and move into Karnapida Asana by lowering the knees next to the respective ears and apply a gentle pressure against the ears.

Stay in this position for 10 to 30 seconds with shallow breathing and then return to the Shavasana in a step by



step manner by lowering the legs back to the ground as you breathe out.

Repeat the Karnapida Asana at least three times and you will find that with practice you will be able to hold the posture for longer duration of time.

Come back to Shava Asana, step by step and roll your head from side to side to ease away any pressure that may have accumulated in the neck.

#### BENEFITS:

- Useful for patients of thyroid disorders, obesity and diabetes mellitus.
- All organs of the abdominal cavity are given an excellent massage with a tremendous improvement in circulation thus helping the digestive system to function at its best.
- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the abdomen, waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those who have neck problems shouldn't do this posture as it may aggravate the neck pain. Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice. Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, should exercise caution and not hold the posture too long. Patients of Glaucoma and acute infections of the head and neck region and acid peptic disorders shouldn't perform this posture until their medical condition improves. This posture is contraindicated for patients of cervical spondylitis.

#### **JANU SHIRASA (HEAD TO KNEE) IN SARVANGA ASANA**

Lie down in Shava Asana. On the in breath, raise both legs together and come into the Sarvanga asana.

Keep the trunk and legs in a straight line by supporting the trunk on the shoulders. Breathe in a shallow manner while concentrating on the pressure at the throat.

To perform the Eka Janu Sarvanga Asana, breathe out and bend the right leg. Try to touch your forehead with your right knee. Keep the sole of the right foot against the front of the opposite thigh. Breathe in and out for a few rounds and feel the healthy pressure over the right upper abdominal liver area.

When ready release the position and bring the leg back up into the Sarvanga Asana while breathing in. Repeat the practice two more times.



Do the same on the left side by bending the left leg to bring the knee to the forehead. Breathe in and out a few times and feel the pressure over the spleen area of the left upper abdomen. Repeat the entire action two more times before relaxing back to the Shavasana.

Perform a few rounds of deep breathing and roll your head from side to side to ease away any pressure that may have accumulated in the neck.

To perform the Dwi Janu Sarvanga Asana, the double knee to head action, breathe out and bend both legs until both knees are touching the forehead with the feet pointing upwards. Breathe in and out a few times and feel the healthy pressure over the entire abdominal area. When ready release the position and come back to the Sarvanga Asana while breathing in. Repeat the practice two more times.

When ready relax into the Shavasana and enjoy a period of well deserved relaxation. Perform a few rounds of deep breathing and roll your head from side to side to ease away any pressure that may have accumulated in the neck.



#### BENEFITS:

- Useful for patients of thyroid disorders, obesity and diabetes mellitus.
- All organs of the abdominal cavity are given an excellent massage with a tremendous improvement in circulation thus helping the digestive system to function at its best.
- Enhances digestion and elimination capacities.
- Helps reduce the fatty accumulation around the abdomen, waist and hip region thus reshaping the body structure.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those who have neck problems shouldn't do this posture as it may aggravate the neck pain.

Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries should exercise caution in performing this practice.

Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, should exercise caution and not hold the posture too long.

Patients of Glaucoma and acute infections of the head and neck region and acid peptic disorders shouldn't perform this posture until their medical condition improves.

This posture is contraindicated for patients of cervical spondylitis.



## MAYUR ASANA: THE PEACOCK POSTURE

Sit in Vajrasana and then kneel on the ground with your knees slightly apart. Place both your hands on the ground with your fingers pointing inwards towards your body. Bend your elbows while keeping the forearms together and place your mid area of the abdomen on your elbows. Try to get a good pressure into the abdomen with a good grip and then straighten your legs one by one until you are balanced on your hands and toes. Exhale and raise both your legs off the ground and try to get into a position where your entire body is parallel to the ground. Hold the posture for 10 to 30 seconds with light breathing. When ready slowly come back to the starting position by reversing the ascent procedure and relax in Vajra asana for some time. With practice you can extend the time of holding the posture to obtain maximum benefits.



### BENEFITS:

- Gives a healthy pressure to the abdominal organs and tones up the abdominal and torso musculature in a healthy manner.
- Helps tone up the muscles of the arms and the entire posterior region
- Redistributes fatty accumulation from the hip and lower back region.
- Useful for those suffering from gas problems, constipation, diabetes and sluggish liver and kidneys.
- Activates the Manipura Chakra.
- Enhances digestive and eliminative capacities
- Realigns the torso and lower limb in a healthy manner

### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating lower back injuries and arthritic conditions of the lower limb should exercise caution in performing this practice.

Patients of hernias and intra-abdominal space occupying lesions should proceed with care as this posture may increase the intra-abdominal pressure.

Patients of hypertension and heart ailments should exercise caution depending on their medical condition.

If you have arthritis in your wrists this pose may aggravate the problem.

If you have osteoporosis, the body weight may be too much for your wrists to support.

If you have difficulty with your balance, place a large, soft cushion on the floor in front of you in case you fall forward.

## MAYURI ASANA OR PADMA MAYUR ASANA: THE PEAHEN POSTURE

Perform Padmasana and lock your feet up tightly. Come onto the knees and place both your hands on the ground with your fingers pointing inwards towards your body. Bend your elbows while keeping the forearms together and place your mid area of the abdomen on your elbows. Try to get a good pressure into the abdomen with a good grip until you are balanced on your hands and knees. Exhale and raise your bound knees off the ground and try to get into a position where your entire body is parallel to the ground. Hold



the posture for 10 to 30 seconds with light breathing. When ready slowly come back to the starting position by reversing the ascent procedure. Relax the feet and thump the thighs for some relaxation. With practice you can extend the time of holding the posture to obtain maximum benefits.

### BENEFITS:

- Gives a healthy pressure to the abdominal organs and tones up the abdominal and torso musculature in a healthy manner.
- Helps to give a healthy pressure to the intra pelvic organs of the female reproductive system and is especially good for ladies.
- Helps tone up the muscles of the arms and the entire posterior region
- Redistributes fatty accumulation from the hip and lower back region.
- Useful for those suffering from gas problems, constipation, diabetes and sluggish liver and kidneys.
- Activates the Manipura Chakra.
- Enhances digestive, reproductive and eliminative capacities
- Realigns the torso and lower limb in a healthy manner

### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Those with severe incapacitating lower back injuries and arthritic conditions of the lower limb should exercise caution in performing this practice.

Patients of hernias and intra-abdominal space occupying lesions should proceed with care as this posture may increase the intra-abdominal pressure.

Patients of hypertension and heart ailments should exercise caution depending on their medical condition.

Those with severe knee problems must not try to perform the Padmasana until their condition improves.

If you have arthritis in your wrists this pose may aggravate the problem.

If you have osteoporosis, the body weight may be too much for your wrists to support.

If you have difficulty with your balance, place a large, soft cushion on the floor in front of you in case you fall forward.

## **KAKA ASANA: THE CROW POSTURE**

Take up a squatting position on your toes with your knees slightly apart. Place your hands on the floor between your feet, hands slightly rotated in with the fingers spread apart, ready to grip the floor as needed for balance. The elbows are slightly bent.



Place your knees against the back of the arms just above the elbows.

Begin to lean forward until your feet lift off the floor, leaving you balanced on just your hands.

If you are having difficulty in balancing, then raise your head a little. This often helps people find the balance point between the hips and the head. - If it is too difficult to lift both legs at once, try lifting one foot off the floor at a time until you feel confident with your balance. Try to have the hands take the weight of the pose, like a hand balance, instead of having the knees weigh heavily on the backs of the upper arms.

Hold the posture for 10 to 20 seconds with normal breathing. When ready, slowly lower your feet back to the floor while exhaling.

Relax with your legs stretched out and perform a few rounds of Hastha Jattis for the hands, to relax the joints of the wrist as well as the muscles of the entire arms.

### **BENEFITS:**

- Strengthens the arms, shoulders, and wrists.
- Strengthens the abdominal muscles, neck and chest.
- Massages the abdominal walls and the organs of the abdominal cavity.
- Brings lightness to the body.
- Improves one's sense of balance and gives confidence.

- Holding the pose gives endurance.
- Prepares the upper body by giving it strength to perform the headstand and handstand.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

If you have arthritis in your wrists this pose may aggravate the problem. Do not do without checking with your doctor.

If you have osteoporosis, the body weight may be too much for your wrists to support.

If you have difficulty with your balance, place a large, soft cushion on the floor in front of you in case you fall forward.

#### **BAKA ASANA: THE CRANE POSTURE**



Take up a squatting position on your toes with your knees slightly apart. Place your hands on the floor between your feet, hands slightly rotated in with the fingers spread apart, ready to grip the floor as needed for balance. The elbows are slightly bent.

Place your knees in as close as possible to the armpits and lean forward until your feet lift off the floor, leaving you balanced on just your hands.

If you are having difficulties in balancing, raise your head a little. This

often helps people find the balance point between the hips and the head. - If it is too difficult to lift both legs at once, try lifting one foot off the floor at a time until you feel confident with your balance. Try to have the hands take the weight of the pose, like a hand balance, instead of having the knees weigh heavily on the backs of the upper arms.

Hold the posture for 10 to 20 seconds with normal breathing.

When ready, slowly lower your feet back to the floor while exhaling.

Relax with your legs stretched out and perform a few rounds of *Hastha Jattis* for the hands to relax the joints of the wrist as well as the muscles of the entire arms.

#### BENEFITS:

- Strengthens the arms, shoulders, and wrists.
- Strengthens the abdominal muscles, neck and chest.
- Massages the abdominal walls and the organs of the abdominal cavity.

- Brings lightness to the body.
- Improves one's sense of balance and gives confidence.
- Holding the pose gives endurance.
- Prepares the upper body strength for the headstand and handstand.

#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

If you have arthritis in your wrists this pose may aggravate the problem. Do not do without checking with your doctor.

If you have osteoporosis, the body weight may be too much for your wrists to support.

If you have difficulty with your balance, place a large, soft cushion on the floor in front of you in case you fall forward.

#### SHIRSHA ASANA: THE HEAD STAND

Begin in the heel sitting Vajra Asana. Bend forward and place your hands on the ground. The distance between each elbow can be measured by clenching one fist at a time, and touching the inside of the opposite elbow.

Clasp your hands and place them firmly on the ground with the elbows forming a supporting triangle.

The part of the head just above the hair line is placed onto the ground, inside of the clasped fingers, and the body weight is shifted up onto the knees.

Walk up onto the forepeak of the head until the legs are straight and the



Shirsha Asana.

spine is perpendicular to the ground.

Lift both legs off the ground when ready and perform a double knee lift against the chest on an incoming breath.

The knees should be held against the chest in Ardha Shirsha Asana before straightening the legs upwards on an incoming breath, into the complete

Make sure that your whole body is in one straight line.

There are many variations of the foot positions that can be done in the Shirsha Asana. These include the legs spread wide apart variation, the legs in the Manduka Mudra and the legs in Garuda Mudra.

One of the best positions to create awareness of the higher Chakras is done by locking up the feet into the Padma Asana, the lotus posture while holding the Shirsha Asana.

This increases the awareness and power of the posture. It focuses the flow of energies between Muladhara Chakra at the base of the spine, and the coronal Chakras in a more powerful manner.

The Pranava AUM may be chanted while in the posture at the point where the head is centered on the ground, or the Bhija Mantra ANG or OM can be used to create awareness of the Ajna Chakra.

When ready slowly come slowly step by step back to the ground and relax in the Shashanga Asana or Dharmika Asana.

#### BENEFITS:

- Improves the blood flow to the upper body and head region by virtue of gravity by being a "head below the heart posture".
- Very useful to improve concentration, memory and quality of sleep.
- Develops health for the whole body and disciplines the mind.
- One becomes balanced and self-reliant in pain and pleasure, loss and gain.
- Very useful for those suffering from constipation.
- Regular practice is a good preventive measure against colds, coughs, tonsillitis and halitosis.
- Revitalizes body and mind and Relieves psychological disturbances.
- Useful in Asthma and Diabetes.
- Strengthens the arms, shoulders, and wrists as well as the abdominal muscles, neck and chest.
- Brings lightness to the body and develops endurance.
- Improves one's sense of balance and gives confidence.



#### LIMITATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- If you have arthritis in your wrists this pose may aggravate the problem. Do not do without checking with your doctor.
- If you have osteoporosis, the body weight may be too much for your wrists to support.
- Those with severe incapacitating back and neck injuries shouldn't do this posture as it may aggravate their condition.
- Patients suffering from cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension shouldn't do this posture without adequate preparation for at least 6 months with other simpler "**head below the heart**" postures such as Padottana Asana and Mehru Asana as well as Shirshasana preparatory practices like the Kaka and Baka Asana. Even later they should exercise caution and not hold the Shirshasana too long.
- Patients of Glaucoma and acute infections of the head and neck region such as ear infections shouldn't perform this posture until their medical condition improves.
- Contraindicated for patients of cervical spondylitis.

## UNIT -3: PRANAYAMAS

### SHEETALI PRANAYAMA

- Sit in a comfortable and straight-backed Vajra Asana.
- Roll the tongue into a tube by folding up the sides of the partially protruded tongue so as to form a long narrow tube resembling the beak of a bird. Pressing the lips round the tongue further narrows the passage. This gesture is called Kakachandra Mudra or the Crow's Beak gesture. The tongue should protrude one-half to three-quarters of an inch beyond the lips.
- Inhale in short gulps of air, along the rolled up tongue, until the lungs are completely inflated. Perceive the cooling effect of the air as it passes through the tongue.
- Allow the breath to be stopped effortlessly.
- Exhale slowly through both nostrils.
- Then allow the breath to be held comfortably before the next inhalation.
- Repeat the cycle at least nine times.



- This 'Icing Breath' or 'Ice Maker Breath' brings about almost instantaneous cooling of the body, and the body's over-all cooling processes are enhanced. Sheetal Pranayama has very good effect upon Vata and Kapha disorders of the "wind" and "mucous". It helps overcome a constant craving for liquids and may be of value in the treatment of diabetes

## SITKARI PRANAYAMA

- Sit in the Vajra Asana. Exhale through both nostrils. Relax the lower jaw, and slightly open the mouth, so that the tongue may be rolled into a trough-like "V". This is called the Jihva Mudra, or Tongue Gesture. Fold the tongue backwards and press the tip of the tongue to the hard palate, leaving narrow openings on either side of the tongue.
- Inhale through these side-openings with a sipping sound of "sit-sit-sit." When the lungs are completely filled, allow the breath to be stopped with ease. Then breathe out through the nose until all breath is expelled.
- A ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 can be used for the inhalation and exhalation.
- You can also push the air out rapidly through both nostrils in a modified Bhastrika or Bellows Breath.
- Repeat the entire cycle at least nine times at each session.
- Sitkari Pranayama has both a psychical as well as physical effect. Ventilation of the mouth and nasal passages as well as airways resistance is improved. The blood stream is cooled and higher Nadis of the subtle body are brought under control.



## BHASTRIKA PRANAYAMA

- The word, '**Bhastrika**' means bellows and this gets its name because the air is forcibly drawn in and blasted out as in a blacksmith's bellows.
- Sit in the Vajra Asana. Inhale and exhale strongly and forcefully in quick succession. During inhalation the abdomen is released and during exhalation it is contracted inward. The movement should be however primarily concentrated in the lower and mid parts of the chest wall.
- On completion of 20 quick, vigorous, forceful expulsions take the deepest possible inhalation, hold the breath as long as possible apply Jalandhara and Moolabandha. Follow it up by releasing the Bandhas



and deepest possible exhalation followed by the application of the Uddiyana Bandha. Then slowly inhale and rest.

- Do three such rounds (Garshanas) of 20 expulsions each morning and evening. Take a minute rest at the end of each round. Gradually increase the number of expulsions to 60 per minute.
- It removes all diseases which arise from excess Wind (Vata), Bile (Pitta) and Phlegm (Kapha).
- It purifies the Nadis and awakens the Kundalini.
- It breaks the three Granthis (psychic obstructions) –Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra during the ascent of Kundalini.

### **SURYA BEDHANA PRANAYAMA**

- Sit comfortably in an erect spine position such as Vajrasana
- Perform either the Vishnu Mudra or Nasagra Mudra
- Breathe in through both nostrils and perform the Jalandhara Bandha
- Begin the actual Surya Bhedana Pranayama by letting the breath out slowly through the left nostril only by closing the right nostril.
- Then inhale through the right nostril only all of the time keeping the Jalandhara Bandha and by closing the left nostril.
- Lock in the breath for a lengthy Kumbhaka, and then repeat the entire cycle again.
- Breathe out through the left and breathe in through the right nostril
- A controlled rhythm of 4 x 16 x 8 is to be recommended, but a competent student of Pranayama may undertake more lengthy periods of time with regular and dedicated practice (Abhyasa).
- The entire technique should be learned first-hand from a Guru skilled in the Yoga science of Pranayama.
- Surya Bhedana is one of the early practices to condition a Yogi to the more strenuous and exacting Laya Yoga Pranayamas.
- Perform the Pranayama for nine rounds in the beginning and then slowly increase the number of rounds in multiples of 9.
- This excellent Surya Bhedana cleanses the forehead (frontal sinuses), destroys the disorders of Vata, and removes the worms, and, therefore, it should be performed again and again.



## CHANDRA BHEDANA PRANAYAMA

- Sit comfortably in an erect spine position such as Vajrasana
- Perform either the Vishnu Mudra or Nasagra Mudra
- Breathe in through both nostrils and perform the Jalandhara Bandha
- Begin the actual Chandra Bhedana Pranayama by letting the breath out slowly through the right nostril only and by closing the left nostril.
- Then inhale through the left nostril only all of the time keeping the Jalandhara Bandha by closing the right nostril.
- Lock in the breath for a lengthy Kumbhaka, and then repeat the entire cycle again.
- Breathe out through the right and breathe in through the left nostril
- A controlled rhythm of 4 x 16 x 8 is to be recommended, but a competent student of Pranayama may undertake more lengthy periods of time with regular and dedicated practice (Abhyasa).
- The entire technique should be learned first-hand from a Guru skilled in the Yoga science of Pranayama.
- Chandra Bhedana is one of the early practices to condition a Yogi to the more strenuous and exacting Laya Yoga Pranayamas.
- It helps to relax the body and relieve stress and tension thus benefiting patients of hypertension and diabetes mellitus.
- Perform the Pranayama for nine rounds in the beginning and then slowly increase the number of rounds in multiples of 9.

## PRANAVA PRANAYAMA

- '*Tasya vachakah pranavaha*', the sacred sound of the Divine is the Pranava says Maharishi Patanjali. This practice develops the abdominal, thoracic and clavicular regions of the lungs to their maximum capacity. Pranava Pranayama has unlimited healing potential and is useful in virtually all disorders. It brings about harmony of body, emotions and mind and is an important part of Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga tradition as taught by Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj.
- Adham Pranayama, the abdominal or lower chest breathing. Put the fingers into the Chin Mudra with the index and thumb fingers touching each other at the tips. Keep the other three fingers straight and united. Take a deep breath into the lower chest and abdominal regions..1..2..3..4. Now let out the breath with the sound aaa.....



- To perform thoracic or mid-chest breathing, the Madhyam Pranayama, curl your fingers inward to form Chinmaya Mudra. Take a deep breath into the mid chest and thoracic regions 1...2...3...4 . Now breathe out with the sound ooo.....



- Adyam Pranayama is the clavicular or upper chest breathing and utilises Adhi Mudra. Clench your fists with your thumb in the centre. Keep the Adhi Mudra on your thighs and breathe deeply into the upper chest and clavicular regions 1...2...3...4... Now, exhale with the sound mmm.....



- Joining the earlier three parts of the breath in a complete Yogic breath is the fourth stage, known as Mahat Yoga Pranayama. Put the Adhi Mudra with knuckles of your right and left hands touching in front of the navel. This is now known as the Brahma Mudra. Take a deep breath into the low 1...2...mid 3...4...and upper chest 5....6....regions. Now let the breath out with the sounds of aaa...ooo...mmm....



- Relax in Vajrasana and enjoy the feeling of potent healing energy flow through the entire body.

## **BRAHMARI PRANAYAMA**

- Sit on the heels in the Vajrasana with the spine erect.
- Perform the Shanmuki Mudra with the thumbs of the hands closing the external auditory canal.
- The first two fingers are then placed over the closed eyelids while the ring fingers regulate the flow of air through the nostrils. The little fingers are placed over the closed lips.



- This Mudra helps in joining together the nerves of the hands with the facial and trigeminal nerves on the face.
- Take a slow and deep breath in for six counts. Let out the breath very slowly while making a sound in the nasal passages like the high-pitched sound of a female bee. This buzzing sound is very much like the Anuswarah sound of "mm" of the "AUM".
- Repeat this at least nine times.
- Brahmari is one of the Swara Pranayamas and stimulates the secretions and tones up nerve centres. This helps relieve Pitta conditions and rejuvenates the skin. It also creates a beautiful voice. It is a contemplative prelude to Nada Yoga.

### **SAVITRI PRANAYAMA**

- In Savitri Pranayama, the Rhythmic Breath, each lobular segment of the lungs is filled as in the Mahat Yoga Pranayama, but a held in and a held out breath are added to the breath technique.
- The incoming and the outgoing breath should be taken for an equal count, while the held in and the held out breath are only half of that duration time cycle.
- If a six count is used for the inspiration and expiration, then a three count should be used for the retained breaths (6x3x6x3). Longer ratios 8x4x8x4 are conventional Yoga practices.
- This breath provides an excellent deep relaxation and is very suitable for the relaxation position or for breathing done while stretched out back prone as in Shavasana the Corpse Posture.
- It can also be used along with the nature walks and the speed of walking timed to the breath cycles.
- Each of the rhythms of the Savitri Pranayama has its own additional benefits but those details are beyond the scope of this book.

## **UNIT-4: SHAT KRIYAS OR KARMAS**

The first of the Niyamas in Ashtanga Yoga is Saucha or cleanliness. Yoga has many internal cleansing practices known as Shuddi Kriyas or Karmas that help prevent the accumulation of toxic substances in the body systems and tracts by keeping all important parts of the human body clean and healthy. The Shuddi Kriyas include those that are used for the cleaning of the eyes, the nasal passage, the ears, the teeth, the tongue, the oral cavity as well as the whole gastro intestinal tract from the mouth to the anus.

According to the Hatha Yoga Pradipika of Yogi Swatmarama the six major cleansing techniques (Shat Kriyas or Shat Karmas) are

***"dhautir bastis tathaa netis traatakam naulikam tathaa  
kapaalabhatis caitaani shatkarmaani pracakshate"***

**The following are the six practices traditionally accepted as the Shat Kriyas:**

- 1. Dhauti**
- 2. Basti**
- 3. Neti**
- 4. Trataka**
- 5. Nauli and**
- 6. Kapalabhati**

The Shat Kriyas also help to balance the three Doshas namely Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Imbalance of the Doshas is a major cause of disease and so the Shat Karmas help to prevent and treat various disorders and diseases that are due to this imbalance. These practices are also used before Pranayama Sadhana in order to purify the body from toxins and to ensure safe and successful progression along the spiritual path.

These powerful techniques should never be learned from the books or taught by inexperienced people. According to the tradition only those instructed by a guru may teach others. It is essential to be personally instructed as to how and when to perform them according to individual needs.

**GENERAL BENEFITS OF PERFORMING THE SHAT KRIYAS:**

- Clean and refresh the inner tracts namely the optical path, respiratory tract and gastro intestinal tract.
- Inner awareness is developed
- Desensitizes the hypersensitive reactions such as in nasal allergies
- Build stamina and forbearance capacity
- Prepares the Sadhaka for the higher aspects of the Yoga Sadhana

### **DHAUTI KRIYA**

The various Dhauti Kriyas are meant for cleaning the upper digestive tract including the stomach.

There are three major types of Dhautis

- Jala Dhauti or Vamana Dhauti [Kunjal]: Cleansing with water
- Vastra Dhauti: a thin muslin cloth is used for cleansing
- Danda Dhauti: a rubber tube called 'Danda'

**GENERAL BENEFITS OF DHAUTI:**

- Dhauti practices are useful for relief of gastric trouble and acidity etc

- They are beneficial for those suffering Kapha disorders such as Asthma and Chronic Bronchitis.
- Dhauti activates the digestive fire and helps to have good appetite

### **VAMANA DHAUTI (KUNJAL KRIYA)**

- Practice early in the morning and on empty stomach.
- Prepare lukewarm saline (1%) as in the Neti Kriya
- Drink 2 to 3 litres of this water as possible and as quickly as possible in a standing position.
- Perform the Nauli Kriya by churning the abdomen in both directions
- Lean forward and tickle the throat with the index and middle fingers.
- This will induce the vomiting reflex and water will come out in a series of quick gushes.
- Perform the practice until you feel that most of the water has come out
- Don't eat immediately after the practice and when u do eat take a light, non spicy breakfast of Kunjee or Dal Kichidi

With dedicated practice, one can stimulate the emetic sensation and flush out the water without using the fingers at the throat. Further practice can lead to a continuous vomiting of all the water through the mouth, as if it is coming in a jet. This resembles the water-jet that comes out of the trunk of an elephant and is termed "**GAJA KARANI**".

### **VASTRA DHAUTI**

- This is performed with a long and smooth strip of thin muslin cloth about 20 foot long and 2.5 inches wide.
- The cloth should be thoroughly washed and boiled in water before using.
- It should then be placed in a glass containing lukewarm water
- Any loose thread should be removed.
- Place one end of the cloth in mouth and then begin swallowing it.
- In the beginning there may be frequent retching but this will subside with practice.
- When the majority of the cloth except for the portion being held by your hands has gone inside the stomach perform the Nauli Kriya by churning the abdomen in both directions.
- The cloth should then be brought out slowly and carefully.
- The same cloth may be used several times.
- After the practice boil the cloth thoroughly in hot water as it will be filled with mucus. Dry it well in direct sun light and store in a clean place.

**CAUTION:**

- The exercise should be done in the morning on an empty stomach.
- The exercise should not be performed by people suffering from hypertension, heart disease, stroke or generally illness.
- This may aggravate the hyperacidity situations due to the stimulation of stomach glands and the regular use is better avoided in such cases. However it may be used to provide symptomatic relief of the acidity when done once in a while.
- The cloth should not be kept in the stomach for more than 20 minutes, because it may go through the pyloric valve and enter the intestine. It will be difficult to bring the cloth out in such a case.

**BENEFITS**

- Useful for patients of asthma, bronchitis, chronic cough and other respiratory tract ailments.
- Improves digestion and is useful in hypoacidity and gas conditions.
- Balances the Pitta Dosha.
- The very insertion of the cloth acts as a stimulant to the stomach walls, the stomach walls come in close contact with the cloth whose net result is that the stomach walls are rendered clean and devoid of all extra mucus coating and also stimulated to good peristaltic movements.

**DANDA DHAUTI :**

- Practice early in the morning and on empty stomach.
- Prepare lukewarm saline (1%) as in the Kunjal Kriya
- Drink 2 to 3 litres of this water as possible and as quickly as possible in a standing position.
- Take a rubber tube (Danda) about 1cm in diameter and about a metre long.
- Slowly place thinner and tapered end of the tube in the back of the throat and push it down the esophagus into the stomach.
- When it reaches the stomach, slowly bend forward.
- All the water will come out by siphon action.
- Perform a flapping action of the abdominal wall to help push the water out.
- When ready remove the tube gently.

**CAUTION:**

- The exercise should be done in the morning on an empty stomach.
- The exercise should not be performed by people suffering from esophageal reflux, strictures, hyper-tension and other heart diseases.

## **BASTI KRIYA**

The word "Basti" is a general term pertaining to the lower abdomen and pelvis. Basti Kriya is a Hatha Yoga process of enema to clean the large intestine and should be done on empty stomach in the early morning.

### **TYPES OF BASTI:**

- JALA BASTI (Yogic enema with water)
- STHAL Basti (dry Yogic enema)

### **JALA BASTI (YOGIC ENEMA WITH WATER):**

- In this technique the practitioner traditionally sits in a body of water and by the use of Ashwini Mudra sucks the water into the colon through the anus.
- In recent times a rubber tube and enema can is used and the tube is inserted into the anus.
- After sucking the water in and retaining it for some time in the colon it is expelled out through the anus.
- Nauli Kriya may be done while holding the water in the colon for better results.
- After evacuation, it is traditionally taught to perform Mayurasana or Padma Mayurasana to further help evacuate the colon completely as the pressure exerted stimulates further peristalsis and any water that may remain inside is thrown out.

### **STHAL BASTI (DRY YOGIC ENEMA):**

- Take up a squatting position such as Utkat Asana
- This technique may be done, by sucking the air into the bowels, by performing Ashwini Mudra.
- The air is held in the colon for some time and then expelled out through the anus.
- Nauli Kriya may be done while holding the air in the colon for better results.

### **BENEFITS OF BASTI:**

- Basti cleans the colon by removing the gas and other accumulated waste material from the colon.
- Basti helps in various abdominal ailments and increases the appetite
- It is useful in relieving constipation.
- The body becomes light and active.
- It helps to cool down the body heat that may be generated by the advanced practice of Pranayama.
- The colon right up to caecum is cleaned and purified.
- Old stool and gas is expelled.



## NETI KRIYA

Neti is the practice of cleaning the nasopharyngeal tract with liquids or thread.

### TYPES OF NETI:

1. Jala Neti -Nasal irrigation with lukewarm saline water
2. Sutra Neti -Nasal cleaning with a thread or catheter
3. Dugdha Neti -Nasal irrigation with milk
4. Ghrta Neti -Nasal irrigation with ghee
5. Jala Kapalabhati
  - Vyutkrama Kapalabhati
  - Seetkrama Kapalabhati

### JALA NETI

- Prepare warm saline with 10 grams of salt per litre of lukewarm water (1%).
- Check up which nostril is flowing freely and perform the Neti on that side first followed by the other side.
- Fill the Neti pot with the lukewarm saline and hold it in your right hand.
- Insert the nozzle of the pot into your right nostril.
- Keep your mouth open and breathe freely through your mouth
- Tilt your head slightly forward, downward and sideward to the left, so that the water to the left, so that the water from the pot enters the right nostril and comes out through the left by gravity. Allow the flow till the pot is empty.
- Repeat the same on the left side.
- Blast out the air accumulated in both nostrils by active exhalations through alternate nostrils as in Kapalabhathi to clean the nasal passages of the remaining water.

### SUTRA NETI

- Check up which nostril is flowing freely and perform the Neti on that side first followed by the other side.
- Insert the blunt end of a thin soft rubber catheter from the front horizontally in the nostril that is open.
- Push it along the inner septum of the nose until the tip is felt in the back of the throat.
- Insert your right index and the middle fingers through the mouth and catch the tip of the catheter at the back of your throat.

- Put it out through the mouth and gently massage the nasal passage by moving it back and forth while catching the two ends of the tube.
- Remove the catheter through the mouth so that the thick end of the catheter pulls all the mucus into the throat that can be then spat out easily.
- Repeat on the opposite side.

### **DUGDHA NETI AND GHRTA NETI**

Here milk and ghee are used respectively in place of water as in Jala Neti.

### **VYUTKRAMA JALA KAPALABHATI**

- This is similar to Jala Neti, with the difference that the water comes out of mouth instead of through the opposite nostril.
- Pull the soft palate and mandible down to ensue an easy flow of the water through nose and mouth
- This is an active process of sucking the water into the nose from the palm held below the nose and over the upper lip.
- The water is then sucked from nose into the mouth and then thrown out.
- Repeat the process three times at each session

### **SEETKRAMA JALA KAPALABHATI**

- Take a mouthful of lukewarm saline water.
- Pull the soft palate and mandible down to ensue an easy flow of the water through nose and mouth
- Bend forward and downward while relaxing the soft palate so that the water comes out of the nose.
- Use the tongue to help push the water into the nose by pressing it back against the hard palate
- Repeat the process three times at each session

**CAUTION:** Neti Kriya is to be followed by few rounds of Kapalabhati, so as to keep the nasal passage clear of any stagnant water that may cause problems later.

**USE OF THE SALT:** The addition of salt ensures the osmotic pressure of the water is equal to that of the body fluids. This minimizes irritation to the mucus membranes. If a painful burning sensation is felt it is an indication that there is either too little of too much salt in the water. This exercise has a very good cleansing effect on the nose. The exercise can also be done by using in the beginning; tolerably warm water and the temperatures of the

water are then gradually reduced to ordinary cold water. The idea behind using hot water followed by cold water is to acclimatize the mucus membranes of the nose to the changes in the temperature of the environmental air. The tendency to frequently catch cold with changing weather will be greatly reduced. Neti with plain water when irritation in the nose ceases can be practiced daily.

#### BENEFITS OF NETI KRIYA

- All the five special sensory organs, the Jnanendriyas are purified, cleansed and activated by the Neti Kriya
- It is a good preventive measure against cold, cough, sinusitis and infections of the respiratory tract.
- Has a cooling and soothing effect on the brain and is beneficial for hysteria, epilepsy, temper tantrums, migraine and depression.
- Helps to overcome addictions especially to tobacco and alcohol.
- It has a positive effect on the two master glands in the brain, namely the pituitary and pineal.
- Develops intelligence, eye sight, suffers no graying of the hair or wrinkling of the skin.
- Removes mucus and dust particles from the nasal passages and the sinuses.
- It helps prevent respiratory tract diseases like asthma, pneumonia, bronchitis, pulmonary TB, etc.
- Helps to awaken Ajna Chakra.
- Neti, in general, purifies most structures in the head and neck.
- Neti not only clears the nasal passages but also renders the nose resistant to many irritants like water, cotton, rubber, ghee, milk etc. hence it is very helpful in removing the hypersensitivity as seen in persons suffering from allergic Rhinitis.
- Vision becomes more subtle.

#### TRATAKA

Trataka is the practice of fixing the mind by gazing steadily on an object without blinking the eyes. It is important to relax the eyes after the practice with palming.

#### TYPES OF TRATAKA:

- Jyothi Trataka: concentration on a flame
- Jatru Trataka: concentration on the finger tip
  - Urdhva Mukha and Ado Mukha Jatru Trataka

- Vama, Dakshina and Ubhaya Jatru Trataka
- Bhrumadhya Trataka: midpoint between the eyebrows
- Nasagra Trataka: concentration on the tip of the nose

## **JYOTI TRATAKA**

The term Jyoti means a luminous light. This Trataka is the concentrated gaze at the tip of the flame of a lamp kept in front and at eye level 3-4 feet away.

Sit in any of the meditative postures and gaze steadily at the tip of the flame without blinking the eyes. Don't allow any distracting thoughts to enter your mind and if they do then clean them out at once.

Try to maintain the gaze and control the blinking of the eyes as much as possible. There may be the tendency for tears to form. Ignore this unless it becomes overpowering.

When you can no longer continue the gazing close your eyes and relax for some time.

Repeat the practice at least 3 to 9 times at each sitting to obtain maximum benefit.

To relieve any tension that may have accumulated in your eyes, rub your palms together to generate healthy, warm, Pranic energy. Place your cupped palms over the respective eye blocking out any external light and rest your elbows onto the ground to relax for some time.

Concentration upon a single point or object for a prolonged period helps to shut out the outer world and also produces a state of alert awareness. With prolonged practice of one-pointed concentrative gaze, all irrelevant sensory feedback can be eliminated from consciousness leading to the experience of a state of meditation.

## **URDHVA MUKHA JATRU TRATAKA (UPWARD GAZE)**

Take up a comfortable sitting posture such as the Sukhasana or Vajrasana.

Fold your right hand into a fist with the thumb perpendicular to the fist as if performing the Shiva Linga Mudra.

Slowly lift the fisted right hand and bring it up in front of your eyes.

Turn the fist so that the outstretched right thumb is horizontal to the ground and at eye level.

Look at your right thumbnail without blinking your eyes.

Slowly move your right hand upwards, smoothly and continuously, up to the maximal point where you can still see the thumbnail clearly. Try to avoid jerky movements.

Move only the eyeballs and not your head as you follow the thumbnail upwards.

Maintain with intense focusing on the thumbnail for about 10 to 20 seconds with normal breathing.

Slowly bring the thumb back to the eye level while following it with your unblinking gaze.

Drop your hands back down to your lap.

After completing the practice, gently close your eyes. Rub your palms against each other, form a cup of your palms and cover your eyes. Relax by feeling the warmth and darkness in your eyes for about 30 seconds.

After sufficient relaxation, gently drop your hands down. Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.

Repeat the practice thrice at each sitting.

### **ADHO MUKHA JATRU TRATAKA (DOWNWARD GAZE)**

Take up a comfortable sitting posture such as the Sukhasana or Vajrasana.

Fold your right hand into a fist with the thumb perpendicular to the fist as if performing the Shiva Linga Mudra.

Slowly lift the fisted right hand and bring it up in front of your eyes.

Turn the fist so that the outstretched right thumb is horizontal to the ground and at eye level.

Look at your right thumbnail without blinking your eyes.

Slowly move your right hand downwards, smoothly and continuously, up to the maximal point where you can still see the thumbnail clearly. Try to avoid jerky movements.

Move only the eyeballs and not your head as you follow the thumbnail downwards.

Maintain with intense focusing on the tip of the thumb for about 10 to 20 seconds with normal breathing.

Slowly bring the thumb back to the eye level while following it with your unblinking gaze.

Drop your hands back down to your lap.

After completing the practice, gently close your eyes. Rub your palms against each other, form a cup of your palms and cover your eyes. Relax by feeling the warmth and darkness in your eyes for about 30 seconds.

After sufficient relaxation, gently drop your hands down. Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.

Repeat the practice thrice at each sitting.

### **DAKSHINA JATRU TRATAKA (RIGHT SHOULDER GAZE).**

Take up a comfortable sitting posture such as the Sukhasana or Vajrasana.

Make sure that your body is erect and that your head is steady and neck straight.

Clench the fingers of your right hand with the thumb perpendicular to the fist as if performing the Shiva Linga Mudra.

Lift and stretch the hand in front with your elbow straight so that the vertical right thumb is in front of you at eye level.

Keep your left hand on your left thigh.

Fix your gaze on the nail of the right thumb.

Slowly and smoothly move your right hand in a wide arc towards your right shoulder while keeping your gaze fixed on the thumb nail.

Move only the eyeballs and not your head as you follow the thumb to the tip of the right shoulder.

Hold the position for 15 to 30 seconds and then slowly come back to the front position.

Go as slowly and consciously as possible and hold the gaze without blinking.

Relax your right hand back to the thigh.

After completing the practice, gently close your eyes. Rub your palms against each other, form a cup of your palms and cover your eyes. Relax by feeling the warmth and darkness in your eyes for about 30 seconds.

After sufficient relaxation, gently drop your hands down. Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.

Repeat the practice thrice at each sitting.

### **VAMA JATRU TRATAKA (LEFT SHOULDER GAZE).**

Take up a comfortable sitting posture such as the Sukhasana or Vajrasana.

Make sure that your body is erect and that your head is steady and neck straight.

Clench the fingers of your left hand with the thumb perpendicular to the fist as if performing the Shiva Linga Mudra.

Lift and stretch the hand in front with your elbow straight so that the vertical left thumb is in front of you at eye level.

Keep your right hand on your right thigh.

Fix your gaze on the nail of the left thumb.

Slowly and smoothly move your left hand in a wide arc towards your left shoulder while keeping your gaze fixed on the thumb nail.

Move only the eyeballs and not your head as you follow the thumb to the tip of the left shoulder.

Hold the position for 15 to 30 seconds and then slowly come back to the front position.

Go as slowly and consciously as possible and hold the gaze without blinking.

Relax your left hand back to the thigh.

After completing the practice, gently close your eyes. Rub your palms against each other, form a cup of your palms and cover your eyes. Relax by feeling the warmth and darkness in your eyes for about 30 seconds.

After sufficient relaxation, gently drop your hands down. Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.

Repeat the practice thrice at each sitting.

### **BHRUMADHYA DRISHTI TRATAKA**

Bhrumadhya Bindu refers to the midpoint between the eyebrows and is one of the most important concentration points in Yoga.

Perform Siddha Asana and do a few rounds of deep breathing.

Open your eyes wide and gaze upwards. Focus your gaze on the Bhrumadhya Bindu. Concentrate on this point without blinking your eyes as long as possible and then relax your gaze. Close your eyes and hold this point inwardly for fifteen to twenty seconds.

To relieve any tension that may have accumulated in your eyes, rub your palms together to generate healthy, warm, Pranic energy. Place your cupped palms over the respective eye blocking out any external light and rest your elbows onto the ground to relax for some time.

Repeat the practice three times at each sitting until a sense of inner concentration is achieved.

A deeper aspect of this practice is the Shambhavi Mudra where an element of contemplation on the Atman or the Higher Self is added to the practice for a deeper inner experience.

### **NASAGRA DRISHTI TRATAKA**

Perform Padma Asana and do a few rounds of deep breathing.

Open your eyes wide and focus your gaze upon the tip of your nose. Your left eye must catch the tip of the nose with the same balance and lack of tension as does your right eye. If there is tension, close your eyes and imagine that you are still gazing at the tip of your nose.

Repeat 3 to 9 times at each session until a sense of relaxation is achieved.

One should gradually increase the practice of Nasagra Drishti without putting too much strain on the eyes.

To relieve any tension that may have accumulated in your eyes, rub your palms together to generate healthy, warm, Pranic energy. Place your cupped palms over the respective eye blocking out any external light and rest your elbows onto the ground to relax for some time.

If a headache develops, stop the practice session and rest your eyes with palming. It is advisable to washout your eyes with lukewarm saline after the practice if any tension is still felt in the eyes.

### **BENEFITS OF TRATAKA:**

- Trataka may help correct weakness of the external ocular muscles

- Lachrymal apparatus is rejuvenated
- Helps to improve eyesight
- Helps develop the power of concentration to an almost unlimited degree and thereby awakens all latent faculties
- Improves memory
- May help those suffering insomnia and mental tension if practiced before going to bed at night
- It clears accumulated complex, problems and suppressed thoughts from the mind
- Activates Ajna Chakra

## NAULI KRIYA

Nauli Kriya is the practice of churning the Abdominal Recti muscles that run vertically on either side of the navel thus giving an intense squeezing massage to the abdominal contents.

### TYPES OF NAULI:

1. MADHYAMA NAULI:- It is the technique of contraction and isolation of the Abdominal Recti muscles at the centre of the abdomen
2. VAMA NAULI :- It is the technique of contraction and isolation of the Abdominal Recti muscles to the left side of the abdomen
3. DAKSHINA NAULI:- It is the technique of contraction and isolation of the Abdominal Recti muscles to the right side of the abdomen.
4. NAULI CHALANA: - When one has gained control over these three types of Nauli, rolling of the Recti muscles clockwise and anti-clockwise is practiced. This is called "Nauli Chalana".
  - a. PRADAKSHINA NAULI: Nauli Chalana in the clockwise direction
  - b. APRADAKSHINA NAULI: Nauli Chalana in anticlockwise direction

### PROCEDURE:

- It is best practiced in the morning on a completely empty stomach.
- Stand with feet separated by about three feet.
- Bend the knees, lean forward and place the palms of the hands on the mid thighs. The arms should remain as straight as possible.
- Perform Uddiyana Bandha in the standing position. With a mock inhalation contract the Abdominal Recti muscles and isolate them in the centre. This is called Madhyama Nauli.
- Then isolate the muscles first on the left (Vama Nauli) and then on the right side (Dakshina Nauli).



- Then churn the muscles left to right and right to left in a circular motion.
- Do 3 rounds of Madhyama Nauli.
- Then do 3 rounds of Vama and 3 rounds of Dakshina Nauli.
- Practice abdominal churning 5 to 6 rotations in each direction.
- Do not strain.
- When finished slowly stand up back in the Samastithi Asana with deep breathing and relax for some time.

#### BENEFITS OF NAULI:

- Nauli is one of the important Kriyas to purify and strengthen the vital internal organs as a whole.
- This is the most powerful method of removing most abdominal ailments
- The functions of liver, pancreas and spleen as well as the kidneys are activated by Nauli
- It massages and tones the muscles of the entire abdominal area.
- It helps to correct many sexual ailments and urinary disorders.
- It removes constipation, flatulence and improves intestinal peristalsis.
- It stimulates appetite, digestion, assimilation, absorption and excretion in the digestive tract.

#### CAUTION:

- Not to be practiced by patients suffering from high BP, peptic or duodenal ulcers, hernias or serious digestive disorders.
- Pregnant women should not practice. However it is recommended 4 to 6 months after childbirth to tone up the abdomen.

### **KAPALABHATI**

'Kapala' refers to the skull and 'Bhati' means to clean and shine. Kapalabhati cleanses the contents of the skull and is a breathing technique for purifying and activating the cells of the brain.

The nostrils are kept open and one blows out air forcibly by contracting the lower abdomen. The exhalations are forceful and the inhalations are mild and automatic. The exhalations are done at a frequency of two per second. One round of Kapalabhati consists of 30 such exhalations. The exhalations in one round may be gradually increased to 50. During the exercise the chest and the shoulders should not move up, they must be kept steady and static.

The idea in this Kapalabhati is to subject the nostrils to a very forceful current of air, which exerts suction on all the crevices of the nares as well as the opening of the sinuses, to evaporate their contents and help drain them off.

This exercise should be done after the nose has been cleaned and cleared of their congested material by doing the Jala Neti.

#### PROCEDURE:

- Sit in Vajrasana and forcefully expel all of the air from the lungs while pushing the abdominal diaphragm upwards.
- The expulsion is active but the inhalation is passive. Rapidly breathe out actively and inhale passively through both nostrils.
- On the in breath visualize warm, golden Pranic energy flowing from the front of the brain to the back.
- On the explosive out breath, visualize cool, silvery Apanic energy rising from the base of the spine, passing over the top of the brain and then circulating through the brain.
- Do ten rounds slowly for a beginning and then do another round at a faster rate and finally round off with a round of breathing as fast as possible.
- You can increase a few rounds each day as long as there is no dizziness or fainting from hyperventilation. One hundred and twenty rounds at a sitting is the maximum. There is no point in going beyond this number of rounds.
- Enjoy the Kevala Kumbhaka or spontaneous cessation of respiration that occurs for a few minutes at the end of this practice. This occurs due to the greater carbon dioxide washout that occurs when we do the Kapalabhati for a prolonged duration of time.

#### BENEFITS:

Kapalabhati is highly recommended for students who have to do a great deal of study and need a clean, clear mind and for spiritual aspirants before practising concentration and meditation.

#### Kapalabhati

- activates the brain cells
- washes out the acidity from the blood
- cleans the air passages
- relieves bronchospasm
- tones up the cardio respiratory function and
- Stimulates the abdominal organs.

Patients of depression and hypo-metabolic conditions as well as those suffering general lethargy, dullness and tiredness can benefit a lot from the practice of Kapalabhati.

## UNIT-5: MUDRAS

### ASHWINI MUDRA

Ashwini Mudra, the Horse Gesture is a simple and effective practice that has a wide range of physical, psychological as well as spiritual benefits.

This Mudra can be performed from any sitting position and is done by imposing an anal restraint called Moola Bandha on the external sphincter muscles of the anus and rapidly tensing and releasing the restraint, like the defecating action of a horse (Ashva).

This Mudra energizes the entire nervous system and is an excellent preventive and curative practice for hemorrhoids as well as disorders of the rectum, gonads and perineum.

It is useful before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth.

### SHANMUKI MUDRA

To perform this Mudra, bring your hands up to your face level with your palms facing inwards. Lift your elbows so that the forearms are parallel to the ground. Spread out the fingers of both hands and use them to control all six orifices of face in the following manner. Place the tip of your thumbs into the external auditory canal of both ears. Use the index and middle fingers to cover the eyes with the tips pressuring the root of the nose. The ring fingers are used to control alternate nostril breathing by applying a light pressure to the nostrils. The little fingers are placed over the upper lip to pressure the Bindus situated there.

This Mudra arouses inner sounds of the divine Dhun, the Shabda Brahman. It is sometimes called Parangmukhi Mudra, the "inward facing" Gesture, or Samabhava Mudra, the "Gesture of Equipoise".

It is also called the Yoni Mudra or the Womb Gesture as it shuts off all external stimuli and recreates the calm felt by a fetus in the womb.

This Mudra stimulates the Trigeminal and Facial nerves that run over these areas of the face. Shanmuki Mudra is an excellent physical Pratyahara technique as all the five senses of the Pancha Jnanendriya are controlled. It is also an excellent pacifier for excessive stress and especially effective when used along with the Brahmari Pranayama.

When ready, slowly relax your hands back to the thighs.

Shake your hands a few times to release any tension that may be there from the opening up of new areas of our hand and finger consciousness. Hold the loosened up tension tight by making a fist and then throw it out with a powerful bellows like Bhastrika breath. Repeat the shaking and throwing away of tension a few more times for complete relaxation of the fingers and hands.

Shanmuki Mudra is an excellent rejuvenator of the sensory-neuro system and helps us to go within ourselves.

## VIPARITA KARANI

Viparita Karani is the shoulder stand-like Mudra where the weight of the body is supported by the elbows while the hands are placed against the pelvic girdle.

From the supine Shavasana slowly lift both your legs up as if performing the Sarvangasana.

However the weight of your body should be balanced on your elbows and arms and not on your shoulders.

Hold the posture in a comfortable manner and then start to perform the incomplete and complete actions of this Mudra.

Start to perform the incomplete action by taking a deep inhalation and bringing your straightened legs towards your head so that your body makes an acute angle. Then perform the completed action by pushing your legs away while exhaling the breath. Make sure that your feet are extended in a rigid position making an obtuse angle.

As you breathe in bring your feet towards your head and as you breathe out push your feet away towards the opposite direction. Continue the practice for a minimum of three to nine rounds of this alternation between the incomplete and complete postures with the breath cycle at every session.



This Mudra promotes a healthy metabolic function by stimulating the pancreas and the uptake of insulin by cells of the body. It is highly recommended for the prevention, control and possible cure of conditions such as Diabetes Mellitus and imbalances of the thyroid gland. It is also useful to reduce prolapsed organs such as the uterus or rectum back into their normal location.

When ready slowly bring your legs down to the ground in a phased manner and enjoy a quiet period of relaxation in the Shavasana.

## TADAGI MUDRA

This tank-like gesture of Hatha Yoga is performed from a sitting position.

Sit erect in the Uttana Asana with your legs stretched out in front of you. Keep your torso as straight as possible. Bend forward and catch hold of the outside of your feet with the thumb and first two fingers of both hands.

Lift your head and stretch the neck in a small back bend. Bring your chin down to the chest while breathing out. Hold the breath out and hollow up your abdomen by pulling your abdominal muscles in as far as possible.

This Mudra gets its name Tadagi because the abdomen is lifted "like a tank".

Hold the Mudra 10 to 15 seconds and then release the abdomen back to its normal position. Come back to the sitting position and lift the chin off the chest while taking a deep inhalation.

With practice the Mudra may be held for duration of even up to 3 minutes.

A wonderful massage of all abdominal organs occurs during this practice leading to improved abdominal and pelvic circulation. The gastric fire is stimulated and the abdominal musculature is also toned up in a healthy manner.



## MANDUKA MUDRA

This Mudra is named after the amphibian frog due to the peculiar arrangement of the arms over the back.

From the sitting position slowly raise both your arms forward and then reach over your shoulders. Stretch your arms as much as possible and try to place your palms on either side of your spinal column in such a way that your elbows are pointing right up at the sky.

Keep both your elbows as close together as possible while your gaze is maintained straight.

Excellent spinal and musculoskeletal health is obtained by the regular practice of this Mudra. This is a boon for those suffering from neck, back and shoulder disorders.

This Mudra helps us to understand the psyche of the lower life forms and thus develop humane compassion and love for all living beings.



Hold the Manduka Mudra as long as it is comfortable and then relax the position slowly and bring your hands back to your thighs. Relax your feet and shake the hands and feet to relax any tension that may have accumulated from our starting to use parts that were in dis-use.

## SHAMBHAVI MUDRA

Sit in an erect sitting pose such as the Vajrasana, Padmasana or Sukha Asana with your eyes looking straight ahead.

To perform this Mudra direct the gaze of both eyes towards the Bhrumadhya, the midpoint between your eyebrows. Hold the gaze at this point as long as possible and meditate upon the Atman or Brahman, the Higher Self.

When you feel the need to relax, bring your gaze back to the normal position.



Palming of the eyes should be done after this practice in order to reduce any eye strain that may have accumulated. Rub your palms together and place the warm palms against your eyes. Bend forward and place your elbows on the ground for support. Relax for some time and then repeat the practice again.

Repeat the Mudra 3 to 6 times at each sitting with adequate relaxation.

This Mudra is also used along with other Hatha Yoga practices such as the Simhasana.

It is very useful for those suffering weakness of the eye muscles as it is a form of Trataka or concentrated gazing at a fixed point. It also develops good concentration, attention span and self confidence.

## SPARSHA MUDRAS

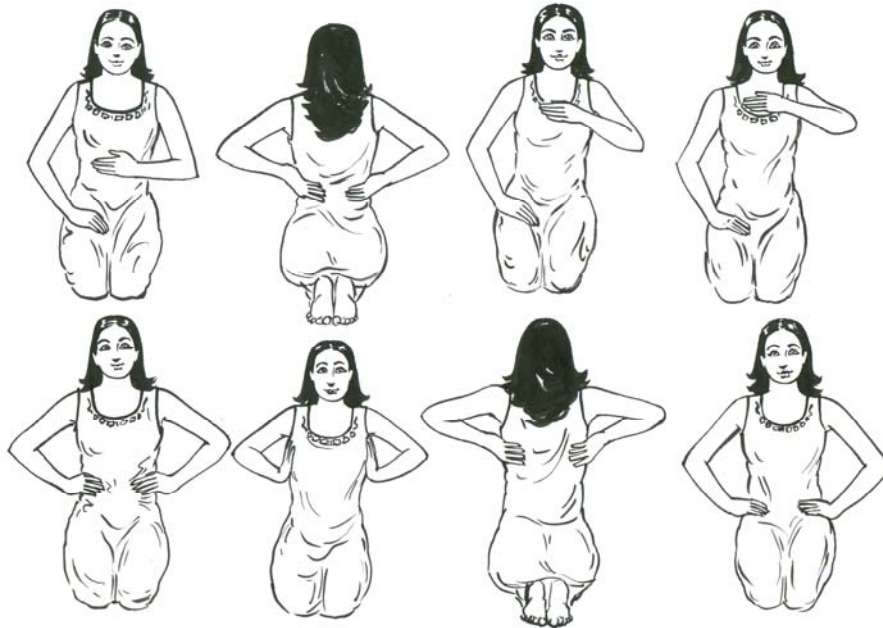
Sparsha means to touch or feel with awareness and consciousness. The Sparsha Mudra or the touching gesture is performed by placing the palm of the hands on different parts of the body to facilitate the flow of Pranic energy to that part in order to produce certain effects. These Mudras are especially used to focus our awareness into the different segments of our lungs while performing Vibhagha Pranayama, the sectional breathing.

Sit in the Vajra Asana with your hands placed comfortably palms down on your thighs.

To become aware of the lower lobes of your lungs place both your palms onto your lower chest in the region of the diaphragm. This is the Adhama Sparsha Mudra. Let your hands be relaxed with your elbows to the sides. Breathe deeply with your awareness focused on the front section of your lower lungs. After a few rounds of deep breathing bring the Sparsha Mudra to the side section of your lower lungs and breathe deeply for a few rounds. Finally take the Sparsha Mudra to the back lower chest area and breathe deeply into the posterior section of your low lungs.

Now combine all three sections of the low lungs by breathing into the front, side and back areas with the respective Sparsha Mudras.

Then breathe out first from the back section, then the side and finally the front section of the lower lung area. Perform this at least 9 times moving the hands from front to side and then to the back to enable you to concentrate and focus your mind on those areas properly in the performance of Adham Pranayama.



To become aware of the middle lobes of your lungs place both your palms onto your mid chest region over the breasts. This is the Madhyama Sparsha Mudra. Let your hands be relaxed with the elbows to the sides. Breathe deeply with your awareness focused on the front section of your middle lungs. After a few rounds of deep breathing bring the Sparsha Mudra to the side section of your middle lungs and breathe deeply for a few rounds. Finally take the Sparsha Mudra to the back middle back area and breathe deeply into the posterior section of your mid lungs. Now combine all three sections of the low lungs by breathing into the front, side and back areas with the respective Sparsha Mudras. Then breathe out first from the back section, then the side and finally the front section of the mid lung area. Perform this at least 9 times moving the hands from front to side and then to the back to enable you to concentrate and focus your mind on those areas properly in the performance of Madhyam Pranayama.

To become aware of the upper regions of your lungs place both your palms onto your upper chest region over the collar bone area. This is the Adhyama Sparsha Mudra. Let your hands be relaxed with your elbows to the sides. Breathe deeply with your awareness focused on the front section of your upper lungs. After a few rounds of deep breathing bring the Sparsha Mudra to the side of the hips so that the armpits are free from the body. Concentrate into the side upper lobes and let your breathing inflate the upper lobes situated under the armpits. The Sparsha Mudra is not placed under the armpits as that area is very sensitive with a great number of

nerves and blood vessels. Finally raise your arms over the shoulders and place your palms onto the back upper lung area to help you concentrate your mind into the high back lobes. Now combine all three sections of the low lungs by breathing into the front, side and back areas with the respective Sparsha Mudras. Then breathe out first from the back section, then the side and finally the front section of the upper lung area. Perform this at least 9 times moving the hands from front to side and then to the back to enable you to concentrate and focus your mind on those areas properly in the performance of Adhyam Pranayama.

To perform Mahat Yoga Pranayama, the Grand Yogic Breath place your right hand in the Adhama Sparsha Mudra onto your diaphragmic region and your left hand in the Madhyama Sparsha Mudra at the mid chest. Start a long, slow, deep breath regulating the first two counts to the low lung area. Continue the breath into the mid chest for another two counts and then fill the upper lungs for the next two counts while bringing the right hand into the Adhyama Sparsha Mudra over the clavicular area. Then let the breath out in the same order, first deflating the low, then the mid, and then finally the upper lung areas sequentially. Take a short rest at this point and then repeat the entire cycle for a total of three to six rounds.

All of these Sparsha Mudras are used to consciously direct the flow of Prana into the different lung segments thus producing a state of excellent health and well being. The proper flow of Pranic energy into the low chest region facilitated by the Adhama Sparsha Mudra is useful for patients suffering abdominal, pelvic and lower limb disorders. The use of the Madhyama Sparsha Mudra helps patients of heart and chest disorders while the Adhyama Sparsha Mudra helps those suffering from head and neck disorders to regain their health.

## **UNIT-6: RELAXATION**

### **SHPANDA – NISHPANDA KRIYA**

This practice is done from Shavasana using the yogic concept of Shpanda Nishpanda, which means the coupling of tension and relaxation. We consciously tense different parts of our body as much as possible and then relax them to the maximum in a step-by-step manner. This produces a better relaxation response than the mere attempt to relax without putting in the initial effort of tension.

Lie down in a comfortable supine Shavasana with your entire body in a single straight line. After a few seconds of relaxation in this position, start to tense your entire body part-by-part from your toes up to the top of your head until every part of your body is as tense as possible. Hold this 100% tension state of Spandha for a few seconds. Let all the muscles of your entire body be as tense as possible.

At the peak of the tension, just 'let go' and immediately relax your entire body 100%. This is the state of Nishpanda. Enjoy this relaxed state and with



conscious awareness continue to watch your breath as it comes in and goes out of your nose.

Repeat this practice again by tensing up your entire musculoskeletal system to the state of Spandha and hold it for a few seconds. When ready let go completely and enjoy the Nishpanda state for a few minutes.

To complete the practice repeat the Spandha – Nishpanda Kriya a third time by tensing up your entire musculoskeletal system from your toes to the top of your head. Hold the complete tension for a few seconds. When ready let go completely and enjoy the complete relaxation that ensures. Be aware of how all your muscles relax in this practice because the relaxation is deepened when it is contrasted with tension.

This practice is a boon for those suffering psychosomatic, stress induced and stress aggravated disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, insomnia, peptic ulcers and bowel disorders. It is also useful for patients of musculoskeletal problems such as neck pain, back pain and arthritis.

### **SHAVASANA WITH SAVITRI PRANAYAMA**

Shavasana is a relaxing and energizing posture in which the body, emotions and mind are united in the process of conscious relaxation. 15 minutes of Shavasana properly performed is equal to more than one hour of refreshing sleep.

Lie supine on a flat surface with the head preferably to the north or east enabling us to be in alignment with the earth's magnetic field.

Make sure that the head and body are in line and the hands are kept relaxed by the sides of the thighs with the palms facing upwards.

Relax the feet with the heels touching lightly. Let the fore foot fall away into a 'v' shape.



Start watching your breath and let your awareness settle in the abdomen.

Feel the abdominal movements as the abdomen rises with the in breath and falls with the out breath. Feel the cool inspired air flowing into the nostrils and the warm expired air flowing out of the nostrils. Let your awareness settle at the tip of the nose.

Now perform SAVITRI PRANAYAMA the harmonizing breath to relax and rejuvenate the body, emotions and mind. Breathe in through the nose for 6 counts and hold in for 3 counts. Breathe out through the nose for 6 counts and then hold out for 3 counts

Make sure that you are breathing in and out through both nostrils and are using the complete Yogic breathing

Repeat for 9 rounds

When coming out of the relaxation, make sure that you perform conscious stretching and make a smooth transition from the relaxed state to the active state. Do not jump up immediately after relaxation. Turn over onto the left side and then onto the face-prone pose (Unmukhasana).

Perform Makarasana, Bhujangasana and then Chatus Pada Asana before coming to the sitting posture.

Sit quietly for some time with the eyes closed in the sitting pose. Come up slowly to the standing pose.

## **TALA KRIYA: WHOLE BODY STRETCH RELAXATION**

This 4-part stretching action is performed while lying supine on the back. "Tala" refers to the Palmyra tree and you should try to stretch yourself as tall as that tree while performing this practice.

To perform the first part, lie down supine in the Shava Asana. Breathe in and start to hollow out your back as much as possible by lifting your lower spine. As you breathe out slowly recline your spine back to the ground. Repeat this practice a few times and exaggerate the movement of your abdomen so that the highest possible lower back lift is accomplished. Do not lift your buttocks or shoulders off the ground but simply arch your back while lying supine and doing deep breathing. Repeat the practice at least 3 times before relaxing in the Shavasana.

Perform the second part by wiggling your hips and legs downwards to stretch your lower back. Imagine that your "buttocks are feet" and that they are "walking away from you". This stretches the lower back at the expense of the stationary upper back and shoulders. After a few movements of the downward action stop and fix your hips as the stationary part. Begin to crawl "upwards" using your shoulders, until your middle and upper back are stretched to the point that your hips feel that they are being pulled out of the first position. Relax the shoulders and neck and then repeat the practice two more times. At the peak of the third round stop the upward action at the point where the neck is in a cramped position and continue to the head-rolling action of the third part.

To perform the third part, start to slowly roll your head from side to side. Roll your head to your right and then to your left. You should feel your neck being gently pulled upwards releasing you out of the cramped position created by Part II. Keep on rolling the head until the neck is fully stretched upwards. Hold this position and then start to perform the next part.

Perform the fourth part by lifting your arms over your head until the back of your hands are in touch with the ground above you. Breathe in deeply and push downwards with your toes and at the same time stretch upwards with your fingers. Hold in the breath and keep your whole body stretched from the tip of your toes to the tips of your finger in this state of complete tension. Hold this state of Spandha for 10-15 seconds and then let go of the tension and relax your body as you breathe out in a long drawn out whoosh through your nostrils. Let your arms relax over your head in a bent position until you are ready to perform another round of this practice. Breathe in and

tense the whole body from the tips of your toes to the tips of your fingers. Hold the tension for 10-15 seconds and then relax as you breathe out.

Breathe in and again tense your whole body from toes to fingertips. Hold the tension for 10-15 seconds and then relax as you breathe out.

Relax your arms to your side and perform a few rounds of deep breathing in the Shavasana.

Patients of musculoskeletal disorders such as cervical and lumbar spondylitis, lumbago and sciatica can benefit immensely from the regular application of the Tala Kriya. It is also useful for those suffering from arthritis of the upper and lower limbs.

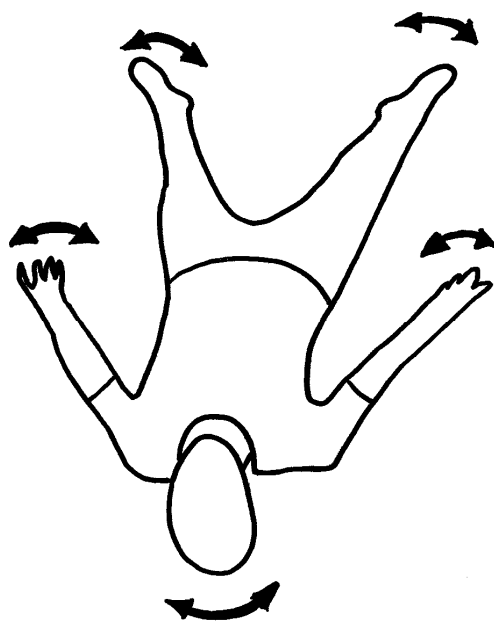
### **KAYA KRIYA: DYNAMIC BODY RELAXATION**

Lie supine on the ground with your head preferably to the north enabling your body to be in alignment with the earth's electromagnetic field. Make sure that your head and body are in a straight line while your hands are kept relaxed by your side with the palms facing upwards.

To perform the first part of this four part practice, adjust your feet so that they are a foot and a half apart. Perform a few rounds of regular breathing with equal duration for the incoming and outgoing breaths.

As you breathe in turn your toes inward at the ankle until they are touching the ground between your feet. On the outgoing breath, turn your feet out at the ankles until your little toes are touching the ground on the outside. Continue three to nine rounds of slow abdominal breathing and continue this foot turning action. Turn your feet inward while breathing in and turn them out while breathing out.

After 3 to 9 rounds of this practice let go and relax for a few rounds of deep breathing. Let go of all physical tension and lie still without squirming, fidgeting or feeling the desire to move for a few minutes.



To perform the second part of the Kaya Kriya keep your feet close to each other while your arms are relaxed at your side. Take in a slow, deep intercostal breath and roll your arms along the ground as far out as they can go. Do not lift the arms off the ground, but roll them along the ground like a log being rolled across the ground. On the outgoing breath, slowly roll your arms back inwards until your palms come in touch with the outside of your thighs.

Continue this movement with breathing for three to nine rounds by

rolling your arms outwards on the in breath, and then rolling them back to the thighs on the out breath. Make a mental note of the fact that the arms movement is the complete opposite of the earlier leg movement.

After 3 to 9 rounds of this practice let go and relax for a few rounds of deep breathing. Let go of all physical tension and lie still for a few minutes.

To perform the third part of the Kaya Kriya keep your feet close to each other while your arms are relaxed at your side. While breathing deeply into your upper chest, slowly start to turn your head to the right side. As you breathe out, roll your head back to the centre and continue rolling over to your left side. Resist the temptation to roll the head too quickly. Continue this slow head rolling for three to nine rounds.

Finally after a particular outgoing breath, let your head relax in the mid-position and totally let go of all body tension. This tensionless state is called Nishpanda. Let go of all physical tension and lie still for a few minutes.

Part 4 of the Kaya Kriya includes the combination of the first three parts in tune with the complete breathing in all areas of the lungs in the Mahat Yoga Pranayama. Start rolling your feet inwards on the abdominal inspiration, roll out your arms on the mid chest inspiration, and finally roll your head to the right side with the clavicular inspiration. Release the abdominal breath and roll out the feet until your little toes touch the ground. Continue the expiration from the middle chest and roll your arms inwards until they touch your thighs and while releasing the breath from the clavicular area roll your head from the right side to the left.

Perform nine rounds of this three-part body action in tune with the breath.

Coordination between body movement and the breath cycle brings about a reunion between the body, emotions and mind. As most eating disorders are psychosomatic in nature this reunion of the body-emotion-mind complex helps the patient to recover from their troubled condition and attain to as perfect a state of health as may be possible in the given circumstances.

After performing the nine rounds of the Kaya Kriya collapse in the Nishpanda, the deep relaxation state. Let go of all physical tension and lie still for a few minutes.

## **CLASSICAL YOGA NIDRAA: PSYCHIC SLEEP**

There are a number of forms of Yoga Nidraa taught in the world today. The technique given here is one of the classical versions of Yoga Conscious Sleep (Yoga Nidraa) as taught by Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj.

Stretch out in the Shava Asana, the Corpse Posture, with the head to the north, and the feet to the south to align oneself with the earth's electromagnetic field.

Begin conscious Polarity Breath like Savitri Pranayama, Rhythmic Breath. Establish a count of 8:4:8:4. The breath is taken in and out for the eight counts, but held in and held out for only half of the time or the four counts.

Practise this Rhythmic Breath until semi-relaxed, and then centre your consciousness into Manipura Chakra, or the Solar Plexus. Let the breath take its own pattern and concern yourself only with directing a particular energy flow.

From the Solar Plexus concentration point, which is as minutely small as the point of a pin, being to imagine energy flowing clockwise, around and around, in the tiniest circle possible.

After a few minutes of this concentration imagine the energy slowly spiraling outwards in ever-increasing size until finally the circle of energy will be larger than the top of the head and the soles of the feet.

Be very slow and methodical in the spiraling outwards from the Solar Plexus. It is best to go through a step-by-step, clockwise, outer circling by first centering on a point size of pin, then:

Imagining the circle to be no bigger than a one-rupee coin,

Increase the spiral until it is as big as the rim of a teacup.

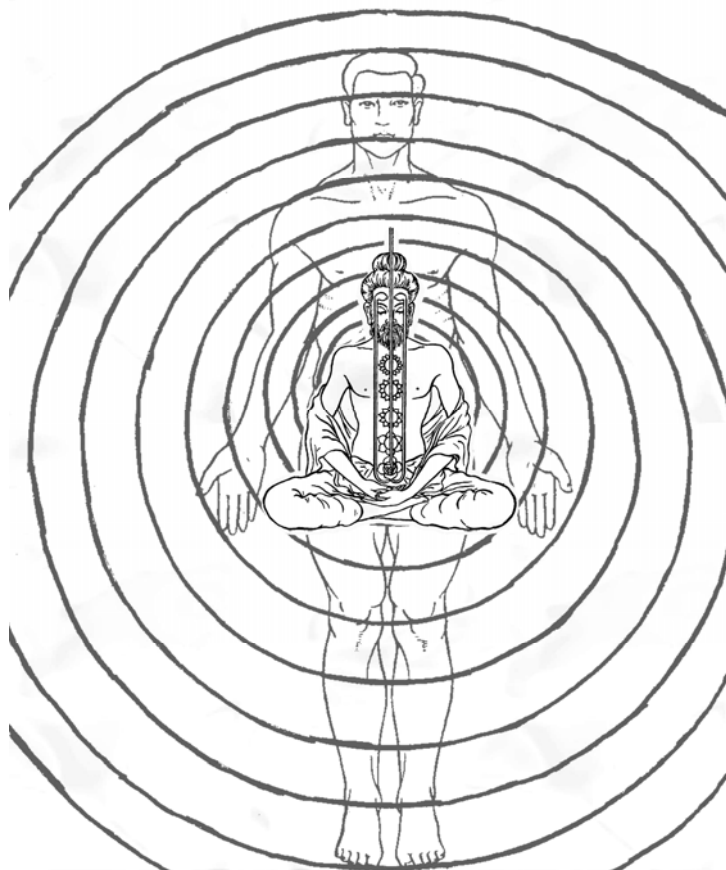
Extend the spiral until it is large as the rim of a saucer.

Let the spiral grow until it is as large as a dinner plate, taking in the ribcage at the top and the pelvic bones at the bottom of the circle.

Slowly increase the spiral outward until the top of the circle is at the mid-chest, and the pubis below.

Extend the circle until it extends from lower neck to middle of the thighs.

Spiral outwards until the circle extends from the chin to the shins.



Let the circle extend until it is passing through the eyebrows at the top, and the ankles below.

Extend the circle until it is passing through top of the head above and the soles of the feet below.

Continue the spiral circle outwards until it is at least six inches below the feet and six inches above the top of the head.

Stop at the point six inches above the top of the head, and maintain this point in conscious relaxation for thirty seconds to three minutes having the Sankalpa or resolve to remain awake and aware, but enjoying the resultant deep relaxation.

Now, reverse the spiral, anti-clock-wise back through all of the ten preceding stages: ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two and one, back to the beginning pin point in the Solar Plexus.

When one enters the Solar Plexus area, imagine the reverse, anti clock-wise spiral being tightened down like a wood screw being turned into soft wood by a screwdriver.

At this point, the deepest stage of Yoga Nidraa begins. Simply enjoy this Cosmic Stage of relaxation. Body sensations will return in just over twelve minutes, when you can then begin stretching and rolling the limbs, then the neck and head, and finally the torso of the body. To come up to a sitting or standing position from Yoga Nidraa, raise the left arm, roll over onto the left heart side and come up onto the hands and knees before standing. A brief pause in the crawling or heel-sitting position should be done before sanding up to avoid dizziness.

### HOW YOGA NIDRAA AFFECTS BODY, MIND AND PSYCHE

When the polarity-like breath is done, the cells of the body regain their polarity and subsequent electrolytic balance. When the mind is centered in the Solar Plexus, it is centered at the seat of the Atman, the Cosmic Life of the individual. When this Atmic force moves with the Prana in a clock-wise pattern, it disturbs the habit pattern of the nervous system by cutting across twelve nerve fields which emanate out-wards from the solar plexus like the numbers on the face of a clock. The positive energy flow of Yoga Nidraa breaks up old negative habit patterns, aligning the Pancha Kosha, the Five Bodies of Man, and allowing an elevated psychic state of exist. Not only are there psychic benefits from the Yoga Nidraa, but very physical benefits as well. The twenty minutes to half an hour that it takes to do the Yoga Nidraa Kriya is equal to eight hours to sleep. Sleep is nature's way of repairing the body. During sleep the catabolic destructive cellular process is at its lowest point, which the anabolic, regenerative process of cells is at the highest level. Yoga Nidraa produces high cellular repair of an anabolic nature, as well as reviving the healthy functions of the nervous system.