

Conscious Breathing Workbook

Powerful Techniques for Enlightenment
Through Yoga Science, Kundalini, and Meditation

By Holly Semanoff

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Conscious Breathing

Introduction

Conscious Breathing Workbook

The purpose of this workbook is to create the union between body, mind, and spirit in this physical existence. These three aspects of who you are is bridged by the breath. There is no life without breath and the world turns on the cycle of the breath. Breath is not just breathing but is the life force that animates all existence. The breath can always return you to the present moment. It creates the easiest pathway to connect you to your true self or that part of you that is omnipresent.

Your true self refers to that aspect outside of your everyday consciousness, away from titles, body images, and other materialistic things. Your true self is that aspect of you that is ever-living, infinite, and aware; that is what omnipresent means, it goes beyond the physical and merges with the infinite, yet it is also part of the physical.

The mind can go in many directions in a split second, but the breath cannot. It has only one path: inhalation and exhalation. Controlling the breath and observing its rhythm brings your consciousness to stillness. The control of the breath begins the control of consciousness, yet they can meet at a point where there is no difference between them. That is the point where the body, mind, and spirit can become one. This is because when the mind is concentrated on the flow of breath you can experience a radical shift from your normal mode of perceiving the world and yourself.

How you perceive the world around you is continually influenced by the state of your mind and body. The breath will mirror what is going on inside of you, if you take the time to notice it. For instance, if you are connected with your true self, then you are tapped into a higher knowledge of what is.

When you approach life from the consciousness of your true self life becomes clearer and more effortless. You trust that you are experiencing everything in its perfection. The breath will mirror reality by flowing effortlessly and deeply, feeding your body full of life force energy. Your body will then begin to emanate this life force and you will become the embodiment of your true self in the physical.

The opposite is also true. If you are disconnected from your true self, then you will experience confusion and life will feel as if it is a burden. The breath would

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mirror this by being short and shallow; creating a limited amount of life force energy, because of the limits you are putting upon yourself. Your body will mirror this energy by emanating heaviness.

The bottom line is the breath can be your bridge toward full enlightenment. There is a deep power within your breath and when you truly remember how to consciously breathe, you can create a shift within yourself and others. This shift is the guru's path. The one who brings one from darkness to light. You are the one you have been waiting for and conscious breathing is the first step. This is your time to consciously breath moving out of separation and into oneness. With this being said, welcome to the new world.

Workbook Layout

You will begin to create a conscious union to your true self by first learning about the subtle body. From here you will then be led into conscious breathing. Everything you will learn in this workbook is building you up to the point where you can move into a very powerful meditation known as Chakra Dhyana. You will also be able to utilize these techniques of conscious breathing to naturally initiate any personal meditations. This is a layout of simply one pathway you can use to flow into meditation.

We will be working closely with the science of yoga in order to explain and build a working knowledge of your subtle body. Another word for meditation is Dhyana. Chakra Dhyana and this workbook is a pathway designed to lead you to creating a union to your true self through conscious knowledge, will, and action. The knowledge is the introduction to your subtle body. The will is the desire to connect to your true self and the divine. The action is the use of the various conscious breathing techniques that you will learn in the following pages. Ultimately, the union to the true self and the divine is the result.

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Chapter 1

The Subtle Body

Everything in our world is made up of energy. A definition of energy in scientific terms is information that vibrates. The subtle body refers to this energy that vibrates both within the physical and beyond, to the subtle levels of existence. The subtle body cannot be separated from the physical body, similar to the fact that the air cannot be pulled out of the atmosphere while having the atmosphere remain unchanged.

Scientific research has proven that everything energetic contains information, or in other words, data that tells the atom whether it should occupy the brain or the heart. Besides containing information, energy also vibrates at its own unique speed.¹ Subtle energy for instance operates on a different plane than physical energy.

Physical energy is electrical in nature and it travels slower than the speed of light. It also gives rise to gravity. Subtle energy is magnetic in nature and moves faster than the speed of light. This means that you can't see it, but you can experience its seemingly paranormal effects on the physical level.²

The fact is we know subtle energies exist because we can perceive its effects. The core evidence for subtle energies includes:

- The use of various magnetic devices for perceiving electromagnetic energy beyond the bounds of the body.³
- The scientific discovery of L-fields, also called life fields and T-fields, also called thought fields.⁴
- The universal light field, also called a "Zero- point Field," consists of photons or units of light that regulate all living things.⁵
- The measurement of the meridians and chakra systems that operate at higher levels of electromagnetism than the rest of the body.⁶

Why are most people unable to see subtle energy? Human senses operate within a narrow range on the electromagnetic spectrum, which is the measurable

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band of energy that produces various types of light. Eyes can only detect radiation, the term for noticeable energy emitted by substances, in the range of 380 to 780 nanometers. That is visible light and what we know is that subtle energy is faster than the speed of light but just because one cannot see it, does not mean it doesn't exist. Subtle energy is much like sound waves. You may not be able to see the sound waves with your naked eye, but you can perceive, hear, and feel its effects.

Subtle energy also operates by different rules than measurable physical energy. It works within the realm of quantum physics, which can stretch and sometimes completely ignore time and space. It can also change form at will and occupy many places at once. In the science of yoga, it is believed that subtle energies create physical reality and research now is starting to prove it. If you can fix a so-called problem in the subtle structures, the subtle system can then share this solution down through all the planes of being and into the physical.

Subtle energy flows downward from the highest plane of subtle energy, which can be defined as "The divine and the true self," to the lowest, which can be defined as physical. Each plane of being provides a template for the level below. As the subtle energy enters each plane of being, it adapts and instructs. The laws differ on each of these planes because the energy gets denser. The planes of energy from the least to most dense are as follows:

- The Divine and True Self
- Spirit
- Mental and Emotional
- Physical

In this workbook, you will be utilizing the knowledge and experience found in the ancient science of yoga. Yoga is so much more than physical postures or asanas. Yoga means union and this union refers to the conscious connection between all planes of being. Because you will be working closely with this system, we will use many of the words and descriptions that yoga uses to describe subtle energy. These yoga given names reference back to the original language from which all yoga came from which is Sanskrit.

Each one of the planes listed above send subtle and physical signals through the nadis and chakras, these are the channels for physical and subtle energy. (Chapter 6-7) They operate like antennas that detect and send signals from the

upper levels of being to the lower levels and vice versa. The subtle energy and structures that you will learn about interact with all the planes of being that exist.

Within these planes there are also other bodies. Two of these bodies are known as the astral body and the casual body. Both bodies can be a book in themselves but for the purpose of this workbook you will only need a brief description of each.

The Astral Body

The astral body enlivens the physical body, much like electricity enlivens a bulb. It connects the physical and subtle planes of being. It is free from time and space. The astral body is the energetic equivalent to the physical body without but without the physical matter. It can also expand and contract.

The Causal Body

The causal body corresponds to both the astral body and the physical body. This casual body is the thought body for the astral and the physical body.

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Chapter 2

Pancha Koshas: Vital Sheaths

In the science of yoga there are also five sheaths that encase the body from the densest plane of being to the subtlest plane of being. They are referred to as pancha koshas which mean vital sheaths. These relate to the planes of being that we touched upon in the subtle body chapter. All the five sheaths are nourished by life force energy which sustains them. They are listed in order below, from the densest sheath to the subtlest sheath.

The physical body is considered the densest plane of being and is the sheath of matter, called Annamaya Kosha. This level is directly affected by physical movement and diet. In this workbook, you will make use of physical postures known as asanas and specific hand positions known as mudras to cleanse and purify this sheath.

The second sheath is pranamaya kosha. This sheath is related to the energy field of an individual, which include the electromagnetic field and the astral body. It has also been called the pranic or breath body because it is the basis for the practices of conscious breathing techniques known as pranayama. To purify this sheath, you will use conscious breathing techniques, visualization, sound vibrations known as mantras, and meditation. All of these purify this sheath and balance the channels through which life force energy flows.

The third sheath is manomaya kosha. This is the mental sheath and is related to the conscious mind. It holds the two denser koshas, annamaya and pranamaya, together as an integrated whole. It is the bridge between the outer and inner world and relates to the mental and emotional plane, as well as the causal body. To purify this sheath, you will utilize sensory withdrawal, known as pratyahara, along with conscious breathing techniques, visualization, sound vibrations, and meditation.

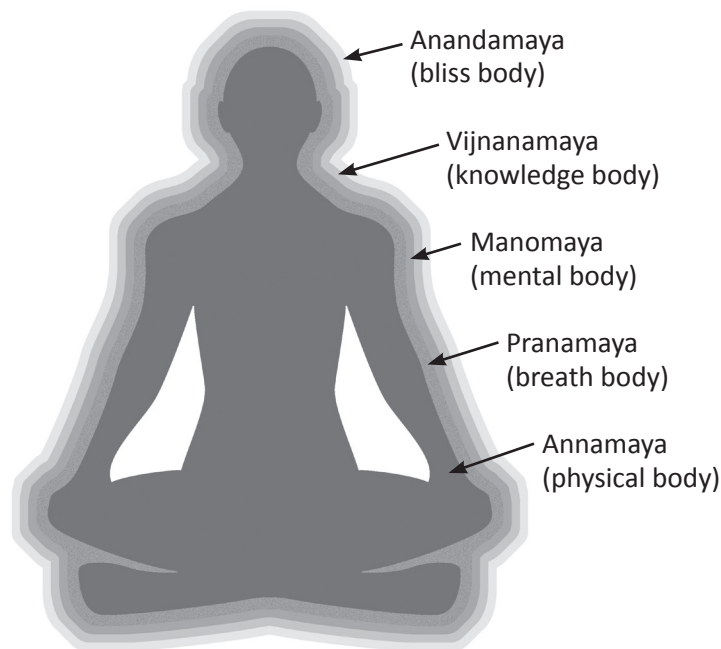
The fourth sheath is called vijnanamaya kosha. This sheath is related to the unconscious and superconscious mind. It is also associated with knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom is referred to as knowledge beyond the five sense organs; wisdom utilizes the sixth sense also called intuition. This sheath is the link between individual consciousness and universal consciousness. When you purify

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and awakens this sheath, life is experienced on an intuitive level and you see the underlining planes of being behind the outer appearances of the physical. This then leads you to wisdom. To connect purely to this sheath, which relates to the spirit plane of being, the lower three sheaths must be purified and harmonized.

The fifth sheath is called anandamaya kosha. It is related to bliss because it is when this sheath is awakened that one experiences the divine bliss of union to the true self and the divine. This sheath relates purely to the level of the divine. All techniques you will utilize in this workbook create a means for you to connect consciously to this sheath.

The Koshas of the Body



All these sheaths are directly affected by life force energy. When you consciously connect to this life force through the medium of the breath, you begin to unify all these sheaths and planes of being. This creates a union between all levels of consciousness. Working directly with life force energy you can actualize this union in your physical body and become the embodiment of your true self within the divine consciousness while living on this earth.

Chapter 3

Prana and Mahaprana: Life Force Energy

When yoga speaks of life force energy, it is referring to the vital energy of the universe. Every culture has its own version of this. The Chinese call it chi, the Japanese call it Ki, and recent researchers call it electro-magnetic energy, or just plain energy. Since we are going to be working with the scientific system of yoga, we will be referring to life force energy by its yoga given name found in the ancient Vedas, from which all yoga came from, as prana. When prana is referred to as Mahaprana, it is referring to the underlining aspect of all creation; this energy can be labeled as the divine intelligence or cosmic life force energy. It is the cosmic life force energy that enlivens all existence on every plane of being from the highest to the lowest.

There is individual prana that is within each one of us that is part of the cosmic sea of Mahaprana, cosmic life force. Prana is the individual life force and Mahaprana is the cosmic life force. Mahaprana can only be experienced experientially and until one experiences it they will see themselves as separate from the divine and the true self.

Mahaprana can be perceived much like the neutral gear in a car. Prana gives life to the individual aspects which would be like the gears. There is a first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and neutral gear. Mahaprana is the neutral gear that is needed to shift into any one of the other individual pranas or gears. Without the neutral gear, the system would fail and without Mahaprana there would be no way to shift from one experience to another. In fact, there would be no experience of the self because there would be no separation and without separation there would be nothing to relate to.

In the science of yoga, prana and consciousness must be present for life to exist. These are viewed as the two aspects of existence which determine the nature of everything. Prana is becoming and manifestation through motion; Consciousness is being, awareness, and knowledge.

Because prana and consciousness are so intricately connected, the way you channel prana can have a direct effect upon your conscious awareness. One of the mediums in which prana is directly affected is through the medium of the

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breath. When you focus upon conscious control of the breath, all functions of the body, brain, mind, emotions, and consciousness are affected. By developing conscious awareness of the breath, you begin to develop sensitivity to prana. This leads to greater awareness of life force energy within the body, that in turn leads to higher consciousness.

Exercise to Experience Prana-

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Lay down flat on your back and take a few deep breaths, inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth. Do this three times, then allow your breath to become natural. Notice the entire body from the top of your head to the tips of your fingers and your toes.

Notice the body as a complete whole, consciously aware of the entire body. Now allow your conscious awareness to focus on your skin. Breathe here for a moment with total awareness on your skin. Now go deeper, move down through the muscles of the body, the joints, and the ligaments. All the way down until you touch the very cells of your entire body. Notice each and every cell in the body, in this moment right now. Be aware of the energy that is present without any physical movement. Touch the life energy within the cells of the physical body and breathe.

Continue to feel the energy of life, the energy of prana that enlivens the physical form. Whenever you are ready slowly come back. Notice the weight of the body on the earth and begin to make small movements. Slowly awakening the body and open your eyes.

Questions:

1- What did you feel as you moved your conscious awareness down into each cell within your body?

2- How would you describe the energy of life force, prana, within each cell?

Note that Mahaprana will be experienced experientially either in your own personal meditations or when you move into the Chakra Dhyana meditation. Mahaprana will be present as being at one with all things, Mahaprana is the experience and conception of oneness within all things.

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Chapter 4

The Five Vayus

The individual prana that moves to enliven the physical body alone is known as Vayu which means wind. There are five distinct Vayus that enliven specific sections of the physical body. These include Prana Vayu, Apana Vayu, Samana Vayu, Udana Vayu, and Vyana Vayu.

Prana Vayu is in the region of the chest and head, Apana Vayu in the pelvic region, Samana Vayu in the abdomen region, Udana Vayu in the throat region, and Vyana Vayu pervades the entire body. In this workbook you will be concentrating on Prana Vayu and Apana Vayu.

Prana Vayu literally means “breathing forth” life force energy and it fills the head, lungs, and throat. Prana Vayu is the fundamental prana in the physical body and feeds the other four Vayus. It governs inhalation. Your personal Prana Vayu is your portion of prana that manages your energetic processes from what you take in, in the form of food and water, your five senses, the inhalation, and includes ideas you absorb through your mind.

Apana Vayu is a specific type of prana, located in pelvic region. Apana Vayu governs downward impulses, including exhalation, urination, excretion, elimination, menstruation, birth, and sexual activities. Apana Vayu plays a vital role in awakening the dormant cosmic life force energy within the physical body known as kundalini.

Exercise to Experience Prana Vayu and Apana Vayu-

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Move into a seated position with the spine straight. Close your eyes and relax your body. Now to experience Prana Vayu. Inhale in deeply, feel an energy flowing inwards and upwards from the bottom of your lungs all the way up to the crown of your head. Notice this subtle energy flowing inward and upwards, nourishing the heart, eyes and brain. Exhale and repeat the process, inhaling

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bringing your attention to the inward and upward flow of Prana Vayu. Continue for a round of ten breaths.

Now to experience Apana Vayu. Exhale out deeply, feel an energy flowing outwards and downwards from the top of the head to the tailbone, with its greatest concentration in the lower pelvic. Notice this subtle energy flowing outwards and downwards, eliminating carbon-monoxide throughout your entire bodily system. Inhale and repeat the process, exhaling bringing your attention to the outward and downward flow of Apana Vayu. Continue for a round of ten breaths.

Questions:

1- What did you feel with Prana Vayu?

2- What did you feel with Apana Vayu?

Why we work with Prana Vayu and Apana Vayu

Through the practice of specific breathing techniques Prana Vayu and Apana Vayu are shifted. The flow of Prana Vayu is taken downward while the flow of Apana Vayu is taken upward. As they move towards one another they unify within the abdominal region. The unification of these two types of prana within the body create so much energy in the form of heat, known as the yogic fire, that the kundalini is awakened within the physical body.

Kundalini is the dormant cosmic life force energy that resides in a subtle coiled passageway within the coccyx. In ordinary waking consciousness, your individual prana will flow most often down through the levels of the koshas and subtle bodies, finally making its way into the physical body. The dormant life force energy of kundalini plays a vital role in uniting both your astral and causal body along with your spirit to the mortal form. Specifically, kundalini moves the consciousness of your spirit into the mortal form by connecting it to the five sense organs. When this connection is created it then goes to sleep and is called "sleeping" kundalini.

When kundalini is awakened, the dormant cosmic life force energy awakens within you and begins the journey back to cosmic consciousness. Specifically, in the physical body it moves back up the spine from the place that it resided in the coccyx. The purpose of kundalini is to take the individual consciousness and prana through a journey of reuniting with cosmic consciousness and Mahaprana while in the physical experience.

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Chapter 5

Kundalini Energy

To better understand what kundalini energy is we will look at its source. In yoga science it is believed that your spirit enters physical incarnation at the time of conception. The entire body then grows from the seed cell formed by the unification of the sperm and ovum. Both your individual prana and consciousness are involved in this process, along with Mahaprana, which links to the divine cosmic consciousness.

When the work of your individual prana and consciousness as spirit along with Mahaprana are done creating the physical body, Mahaprana will come to rest in a subtle coiled passageway found in the coccygeal center. When it does this it is now called kundalini. Kundalini is the energy of both individual prana and Mahaprana. Think of it as individual consciousness and prana now being at the forefront of conscious awareness and the Mahaprana that still runs through you as being asleep.

Its creative work completed, the concentration of the cosmic life force that is Mahaprana, moves to that subtle coiled passageway in the coccygeal center and is now “sleeping” kundalini. It emanates outward into the body, continuously enlivening the physical region of senses including sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and of the earthbound creative force of sex. This in turn causes your consciousness to become strongly identified with the body and its senses.

When Kundalini rest in the coccygeal center it is coiled three and a half times. Because of this coiled nature, it is often represented as a snake. The three coils relate to three states of energy, positive, negative, and neutral. The half coil represents the kundalini now as the dormant cosmic life force energy that sleeps.

Kundalini is considered the kinetic aspect of creation, while cosmic consciousness is the static aspect of creation, because it always is. Kundalini is associated with creativity because it moves and creates while cosmic consciousness pervades all existence as the static aspect. Kundalini is connected to both individual prana and Mahaprana. Its purpose of “awakening” is to take the individual prana and consciousness back up the spine to unite once again in full awareness with Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness.

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The purpose of yoga, conscious breathing techniques, and meditation is to withdraw the individual consciousness and prana from the physical senses alone and reverse the flow of kundalini to move back up the spine. In awakening the kundalini, you consciously unite with Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness. This creates the union back to the true self while in the physical existence, this is the fully awakened being or the attainment of enlightenment.

When kundalini is awakened in the body it ascends the spine, specifically through the pathway known as sushumna nadi. Because of its relation to Mahaprana, it brings one to higher states of consciousness. The realization of the true self is the realization of Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness within all things while still active in the physical plane of existence. Fully awakened and enlightened you can now transcend duality and the experience of separation is dissolved.

It is important to note that everyone will have their own experience of what kundalini may feel like when it awakens and moves up the spine. People often relate it to heat or a tingling sensation, some even relate it to a coldness.

Chapter 6

Nadis: Channels of Energy

The word nadi comes from the Sanskrit root nad and means “movement.” The nadis are channels that transport prana throughout the body’s subtle system and physical system. The nadis interact, specifically, with the physical nervous system. They conduct prana throughout the body and also convert it into different types of energy for organs, glands, and tissues. The nadis also play a vital role in the raising of kundalini.

There are two specific types of nadis and they both carry prana. The first type of nadi is subtle or immaterial; Within this group there are two channels. The first channel is manas, which channels the energy of the mind. The second channel is chitta, which channels the energy of the feeling self.

The second type is gross nadis. They are material visible channels. This set encompasses the physical systems of the body. They include the lymphatic and cardiovascular system along with nerves, muscles, and acupuncture meridians.

There are over seventy-two thousand nadis but three key subtle nadis and they include:

Sushumna Nadi- The main nadi that runs along the spinal cord and through the head.

Ida Nadi- This nadi begins at the base of the spine on the left side of the body and weaves its way up along the spine around sushumna nadi.

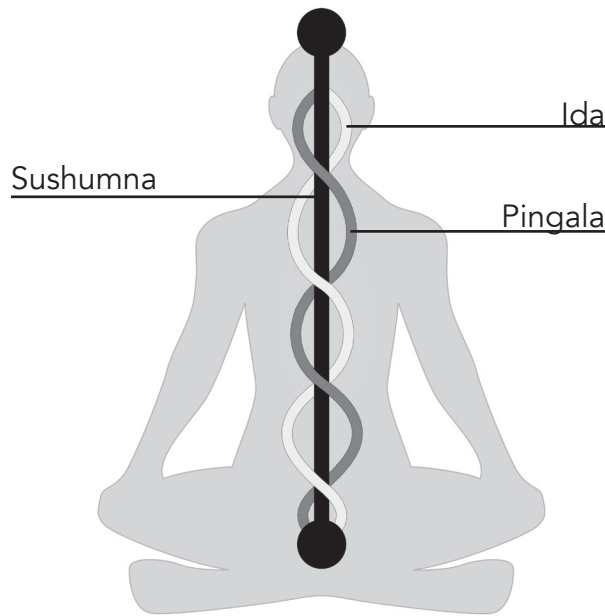
Pingala Nadi- This nadi begins at the base of the spine on the right side of the body and weaves its way up along the spine around sushumna nadi.

The major chakras, receiving and sending subtle centers or vortexes, are fed by prana through these three main nadis. Sushumna nadi is the channel that kundalini energy moves through in its awakened state. As kundalini ascends it pierces each one of the seven chakras that are encased within this channel.

The ida and pingala nadis cross like a double helix around the axis of sushumna nadi until they both stop and meet in the brow of the head at the sixth

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chakra. Sushumna nadi then continues up to the crown of the head at the seventh chakra. At the point where ida nadi and pingala nadi cross over sushumna nadi, a chakra is present. At each chakra, the currents of prana branch off through the network of nadis to enliven the subtle and physical body.



Ida nadi governs the left side of the body and the left nostril. Pingala nadi governs the right side of the body and the right nostril. Ida, pingala, and sushumna nadi originate in the perineum at the first chakra.

Even though they cross over sushumna nadi at specific points, their unique energy will continue to have influence on either side of the spine. Because of their beginning movement from the first chakra, ida nadi relates to the left side of the body, while pingala nadi relates to the right side of the body.

Both ida and pingala nadi relate to the nervous system and specifically, to the autonomic nervous system. The autonomic nervous system divides into two sections that are constantly interacting with one another and often for dominance. Ida is connected with the parasympathetic nervous system, which most often perform the action of rest, relaxation, and recuperation. This is why the prana energy that runs through ida nadi is related to feminine energy. This has nothing to do with gender but its qualities. Ida nadi is associated with the moon, yin, emotions, and mental life force energy.

Pingala nadi on the other hand is related to the sympathetic nervous system, which most often performs the action of the accelerator. This can relate to the fight or flight reflex and is why the prana that runs through pingala nadi is related to masculine energy qualities. Pingala nadi is associated with the sun, yang, logic, and vital life force energy.

Pingala nadi is usually most active during the day when one is “doing” and ida nadi is usually most active at night when one is “resting.” When one begins to consciously work with prana in the body, they most often tune into the prana flowing through pingala nadi first. This is because it channels the active prana energy which is usually easier to feel.

The active prana energy in the pingala nadi is sometimes referred to as vital life force. When you first begin to tune into the prana within the body through conscious breathing techniques, it is usually the vital prana within pingala nadi that you consciously connect to. This is because of its more active state as vital life force. When you do tune into this vital life force in pingala nadi, it automatically activates the chakra within the brow, sixth chakra, where pingala nadi meets ida nadi. With the activation of the sixth chakra, the emotional body activates and allows the distribution of pranic energy to consciously run through both ida nadi and pingala nadi at the same time. Again, this is unique because most often one is dominate.

Now that the two are balanced and activated, the Prana Vayu within the head/chest and Apana Vayu within the pelvic can begin to unite through conscious breathing techniques. Once the Prana Vayu and the Apana Vayu are united within the navel region the heat generated, yogic fire, can then awaken kundalini. As kundalini awakens, it takes with it the prana generated from within both the ida nadi and the pingala nadi and begins its ascent up the spine. This ascent takes the individual prana and consciousness back to its source as Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness.

This occurs because when kundalini pulls the pranic energy out of the ida nadi and pingala nadi it also takes consciousness out of its dualistic nature. Ida and pingala's relationship are that of opposites. Ida nadi channels pranic energy that has a negative charge and pingala nadi channels pranic energy that has a positive charge. Kundalini is a neutral force.

When Kundalini is awakened it is the neutralizing force that is yogic fire. Its purpose is to burn the unique illusions within each of the seven chakras that have led your individual consciousness to believe that it is separate from cosmic consciousness, the divine, and your true self.

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Chapter 7

Introduction to the Chakras

There are seven pranic centers known as the chakras that are encased and radiate out of the sushumna nadi. Chakra means wheel, disk, or vortex in Sanskrit. A chakra is a whirling vortex of pranic energy within the subtle system. When kundalini is awakened and begins its ascent up the spine through the sushumna nadi, you may feel kundalini stop at a specific location related to one of these seven chakras.

The reason for this is that as kundalini moves to unite completely with the essence of the true self and the divine, there may be blocks along the way. These barriers can inhibit the flow of cosmic consciousness on a conscious level. These blocks can be physical, mental, or emotional. If there are barriers, the kundalini will stop and focus its energy here.

When you work with kundalini consciously, you can trade in the normal pathway or road in life for the fast track. The reason for this is because when you are consciously focusing on awakening kundalini, you are using your own knowledge, will, and action to unite to the true self and the divine. It is possible to have kundalini awaken on its own accord through the intelligence of the true self, which can happen spontaneously, but for the purpose of this workbook I am teaching you how to do it consciously.

Because of its origins in creating the physical form from cosmic consciousness, kundalini creates a means energetically for you to tune in and see, know, feel, or experience what may be creating a block within you from consciously connecting to your true self. It is beneficial to know what area of consciousness governs each of the seven chakras so that if this occurs, you can meditate on the reason for the block or even meditate on a specific chakra alone.

The earliest mention of the word chakra comes from the "Vedas" these are the 4 Hindu holy books which date back to 2,500 BC. Before the Vedas societies, mystics and yogis passed the knowledge of the chakra system through the spoken word.

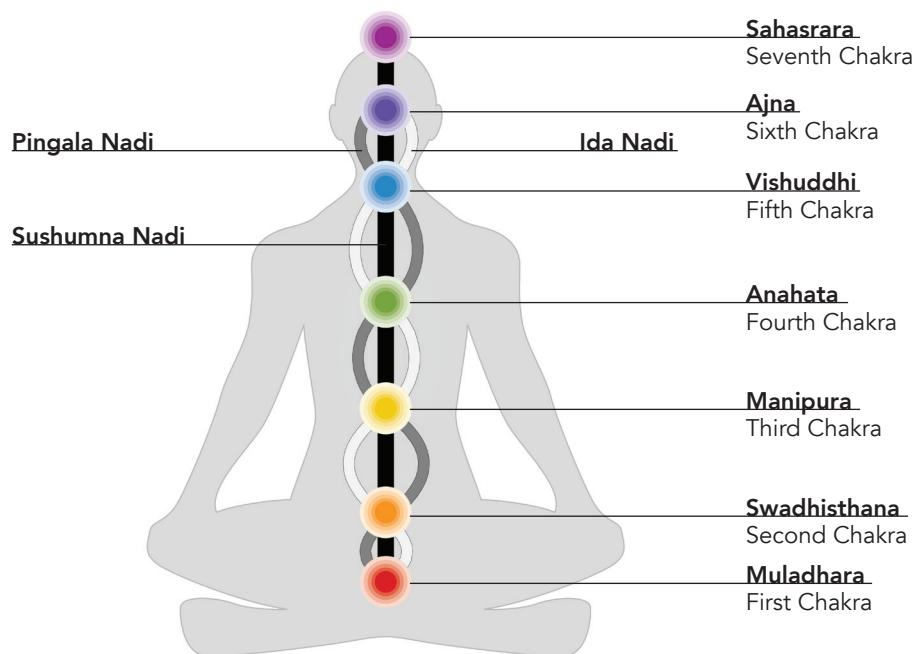
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Our chakras operate at subtle level, vibrating at a rate normally undetectable by the physical eye. You can think of the chakras as receiving and sending stations for the prana that flows to you, through you, and out from you moment by moment. Each one of these energy centers has a unique part to play in the process of daily living and spiritual growth.

The chakras are the points of contact beyond the physical that also mesh with the physical. The seven major chakras are along the spinal column and into the head.

The first chakra, at the base of the spine, enables you to connect with the earth and nature and to stay grounded and practical as you master the day-to-day, physical level of existence. The second chakra, below the navel, governs your sexuality and creativity. Through the third chakra, above the navel to the solar plexus, you express and master your personal power. The fourth chakra, located in the center of the chest, inspires you with compassion and generosity: to be love in action. Through the fifth chakra, located in the throat, you have access to the tremendous power of the spoken word and communication. The sixth chakra, at the brow, enables you to focus, see a situation clearly and tap into the highest truth through intuition. Through the seventh chakra, at the top of the head and slightly above, you engage your oneness with all things. It is your connection beyond the finite into the infinite.

The 3 Major Nadis and the 7 Chakras



The position of the seven chakras coincides approximately with the position of the glands in the endocrine system. The endocrine system is one of the body's main physical control mechanisms. The endocrine system, along with the autonomic nervous system, help maintain optimal health by adjusting levels of hormone secretion to suit special demands.

The same way that the central nervous system consists of the spinal cord leading to the brain, the energetic equivalent is the sushumna nadi within which the seven chakras are located and radiate out of. Each chakra is rooted into the sushumna nadi by both a front and rear aspect that correlates to the front and back of the body.

Each chakra also has an inner and outer vortex that spins. The outer vortex represents your subconscious mind that in turn regulates the unconscious and conscious mind. The inner vortex represents your superconscious mind that is directly linked to your true self and the divine. Which aspect of the wheel is dominant depends upon the plane or planes of being you are connected to. If one is fully connected to the five sense organs and the physical plane of being alone, the outer vortex will dominate. If you have utilized kundalini and conscious

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breathing techniques to create union between all planes of being the inner vortex will dominate.

This is because as each energy center spins, it creates its own frequency and color. If you could see yourself on a subtle level, you would see that the pranic light shining from each chakra can vary in intensity and purity. This all depends on whether the pranic energy flowing through a chakra is balanced or blocked. Stronger and more pure emanation indicates a strong and balanced flow of pranic energy. The weaker and duller emanations indicate a blocked flow of pranic energy at that chakra.

When you use your prana to think, feel or act in ways that are in alignment with your true self and the divine, you attract to yourself more prana. And when this prana is flowing freely through your chakras, you feel healthy, balanced and energetic. When you mold your prana in ways that take you further away from your true self, you create mental and emotional toxins that block pranic flow. When a chakra is blocked, you can experience fatigue, health problems, and emotional imbalances.

When someone creates beliefs and makes choices with their individual prana that are in opposition to the true self, the light that is cosmic consciousness, Mahaprana, is diminished. The mental, emotional, and physical energy that is in opposition to the true self collects like debris around the seven chakras, hampering the natural flow of prana through the subtle system.

There are two specific ways a chakra can be imbalanced. The first is over stimulating it and this is done by placing continual stress on it. This is usually created by obsessions related to that chakra causing it to overload and expand when compared to other chakras. The second is under stimulating it by completely ignoring the energy related to that chakra, which in turn makes it weak. This creates an under stimulated and compressed chakra.

This can also happen when you have fears about the energy related to that chakra or by depleting the prana through unwisely expending its energy by being around negative people, situation, or holding negative thoughts about yourself and others. All these things can create imbalances in your chakra system.

Since your chakras are also interconnected, what happens in one chakra will also affect all the other chakras. If even one chakra is imbalanced, it can throw the rest of the system off. This includes the Pancha Koshas because each chakra connects and relates to a specific sheath.

Each chakra is symbolically depicted as a lotus that has a number of different petals. This is because when viewed on a subtle level, the electrical discharges, which emit light, each have their own unique level of pranic intensity. These discharges look a lot like petals and that is why each chakra has a specific number of petals.

Each chakra also resonates with a specific life lesson and has a symbolic representation of energy associated with it such as earth, water, air, ECT. Within each chakra, you will also see a letter from in the language of Sanskrit. This pertains to the seed sound or bija mantra for that specific chakra.

The first, second, and third chakras are sometimes referred to as the lower chakras, but they are just as important as the higher chakras.

In the following chapter, we will go into detail about each one of the seven chakras. It is important to note that you do not have to memorize the following information about each of the seven chakras. It is here as a guide, in case you find the kundalini energy stopping its ascent within any one of the seven chakras while doing the Chakra Dhyana Meditation.

If this does occur, the following detailed information will give you possible insight into why the kundalini is remaining in that chakra, asking for balance and neutralization to be achieved. There are also individual chakra meditations given in Chapter 9 if you feel you would like to concentrate on one specific chakra, though it is not a necessity for the Chakra Dhyana meditation.

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Chapter 8

The Seven Chakras

First Chakra-Muladhara: “Foundation”



Location: Rooted in the coccyx vertebrae and immediate area. In men, it is concentrated in the region of the perineum, between the anus and genitals. In women, it is concentrated posterior to the cervix, midway between the vagina and uterus.

Color and Petals: Red with four lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Bones and Pelvic Nerve Plexus.

Glandular Connection: Adrenal Glands

Element: Earth

Vital Sheath: Relates to Annamaya Kosha- Physical Body

Function: Physically, this chakra works to eliminate solid waste. Mentally and emotionally, it is concerned with basic survival; safety, security, and physical needs.

The Muladhara chakra is the base or foundation of our inner and outer development. At the first chakra, you can access the kundalini energy. The first chakra in the subtle body connects you with the physical world, including nature

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and your immediate environment. Balancing the pranic energy in this chakra is fundamental to your foundation for practicality and effectiveness in the physical world.

The first chakra relates to foundation because it is the health and vitality of this chakra that will have the most significant effect on the raising of kundalini. Without a strong foundation in the first chakra, kundalini may touch the awareness of cosmic consciousness and the true self, but it will not be able to maintain it for any length of time. This is because the foundation is not strong enough. For example, think of the first chakra as a cup. As awareness reaches the essence of divinity and the true self, the Mahaprana of cosmic consciousness, pervades the self as the individual. If the self as the individual cup is not strong enough in its foundation, it will have cracks. If Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness enters a cup or foundation with cracks in it, it will simply leak out. This then leaves one in a place where they are not able to hold and maintain their connection to the true self and the divine.

How you choose to use the individual prana that resides in the first chakra will also determine whether the potential of your other chakras remain dormant or becomes fully awake.

Simply said, you cannot maintain the essence of your true self without a strong foundation; The two are intimately related. Physical matter is the instrument of your true self and the divine. It allows you to express yourself. You can also look at physical matter as the instrument and the true self as the musician. Without the instrument of the physical world, the musician, which is you true self, could not play its song. The physical matter gives you the gift to play your song.

Another misconception one may have is that in order to be spiritual they must escape from the world. Real spirituality is not leaving the world behind, it is integrating the physical and subtle energy which brings with it, the ability to then BE your true self in the world. This means you are still in the physical world but not blinded by it. Being blinded by the physical world would be completely forgetting your true self and the divine. For example, if you only identify yourself with your body, you can begin to believe you are only your body. You believe only in that plane of being, when in fact you are so much more. The physical is an important part of your immediate experience, but it is only a piece of the entire picture!

When balanced and neutralized the first chakra calls attention to the physical being a creation of the true self and the divine. There is a fable of the astronomer

who would wander around the town each night and study the sky. One night, while he was staring up at the heavens, he fell into a deep hole. Someone finally heard his cries and said, "Why probe the sky when you cannot even see what is here on earth?". In other words, being rooted in the physical, practical essence of life supports the connection to your true self because when the roots are strong, you can reach as high as you like toward the heavens, which represents the divinity within you and all things. In fact, with a strong foundation, the cosmic consciousness which runs through you and the physical world will support and nourish your physical existence.

Another lesson you learn in the first chakra is to have a positive view of your body and to build a working relationship with your body. This is not about identifying only with the body, but about working with your body. When you have a healthy regard for the physical world and for your physical body, you become a powerful conductor of Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness.

On a pranic level, the reason it's important to pay attention to the physical is that the condition of your body determines, in part, how much prana you can hold on to. If you plug a 120-volt desk lamp into a 240-volt outlet, the light bulb would burn out. Likewise, your body will channel only the amount of pranic energy you are able to receive physically. Believe me, it does not serve for anyone to explode when they touch Mahaprana and their true self. Yet it does serve greatly to be able to hold the Mahaprana and the consciousness of your true self within the body.

Your care for your physical also includes your home and your work environment. They are extensions and expressions of your first chakra.

In the first chakra, you will find the point where ida, pingala, and sushumna nadi begin. At this point, there are also another seventy-two thousand nadis that radiate out from the dormant cosmic life force that is sleeping here, kundalini. The kundalini in the first chakra is connecting you specifically to the physical world through the five sense organs. Its purpose is to support the survival of you in the physical form until you are ready to awaken to your true self.

Symbolically, the first chakra is associated with the elephant, which carries the seed sound (bija mantra) of this chakra. This represents being dependable, solid, and persevering. This energy helps you harness and direct the energy needed to have a strong foundation.

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Bija Mantra: Lang pronounced “lung.” This mantra stops our energy from descending beyond our foundation, the first chakra. This sound is generated by the earth element.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning to fast) can include:

- Being a bully
- Overly materialistic
- Greedy
- Self-centered

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Being needy
- Low self- esteem
- Self-destructive behavior
- Scarcity mindset

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Lower back pain
- Sclerosis
- Autoimmune disorders
- Chronic Fatigue
- Recurring cold or flu
- Joint inflammation
- Depression
- Constipation

Benefits of when this chakra is balanced can include:

- High physical energy
- Feeling safe and secure
- Healthy relationship with money
- Having a sense of belonging

Life Lesson: The life lesson for your first chakra is to unite the material with the spiritual.

Second Chakra-Swadhisthana: "Sweetness"



Location: Rooted in the Sacral Vertebrae. Includes the region above the pubic bone and below the navel, in the lower abdomen region.

Color and Petals: Orange with six lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Sexual Organs, Kidneys, and Sacral Nerve plexus.

Glandular Connection: Ovaries or Testes Glands

Element: Water

Vital Sheath: Relates to Pranamaya Kosha- Breath Body

Function: Physically, this chakra controls sex and reproduction. Mentally and emotionally, it governs creativity and sexuality.

At the second chakra, you need to determine if you are letting your individual prana flow into areas that someone else has determined for you, based on conditioning, or that you have set up for yourself based on your desires. The lesson here is to realize that you will never be totally happy, at peace or fulfilled, if you don't claim your individual prana and direct it into the mainstream of your life.

Balancing this chakra also gives you the opportunity to free yourself from those aspects of your personality that are not part of your true self. Sometimes you can develop this persona because you may think it is what other people expect from you. It can also be created because of unpleasant experiences and trauma in the physical, mental, or emotional body. For protection and to alleviate pain, one can

develop certain behaviors and defense mechanisms that adversely affect them. This can lead to blockages in the subtle system. When you heal and balance this part of yourself you can then liberate your individual prana and follow your own passions and desires.

At the second chakra you have moved passed survival and into what makes life worth living. That is why the second chakra holds the energy of your creativity and sexuality. Part of balancing your prana here is to find balance concerning your sexuality. This balance will be reached by not allowing your sexual desires to rule over you or on the flip side, not expressing your sexuality at all out of fear or guilt.

This chakra initiates the expansion of the individual prana and individuality. This is also why the second chakra govern creativity and the expression of the yourself through creative means.

Symbolically, the crocodile carries the seed sound (bija mantra) for this chakra representing the unseen, as in our desires, that lies under water. The element of water found in the second chakra encourages you to find joy in creative expression.

Bija Mantra: Vang pronounced “vung.” This nourishes our body’s fluids and the flows of creativity along with sexuality. The sound is generated by the element water.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning to fast) include can:

- Over indulgence in food or sex
- Emotional instability
- Manipulative
- Having no boundaries

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Lack of creativity
- Fearfulness of change
- Feeling guilty for no reason

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- Inability to let people in

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Lower back pain
- PMS
- Lower bowel blockage
- Prostate/ cervical cancer
- Impotence
- Ovarian cyst
- Urinary tract infection

Benefits of when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Joyful living
- Flow of creativity
- Clear and healthy boundaries
- Relationships being energizing for all involved

Life Lesson: The life lesson for your second chakra is to uncover the motivations influencing your choices based on either conditioning by others or being true to you.

Third Chakra-Manipura: "City of Jewels"



Location: Rooted in the lumbar vertebra. Includes the region of the navel and above to the solar plexus.

Color and Petals: Yellow with ten lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Digestive Organs, Immune System, Nervous System, and Solar Nerve Plexus.

Glandular Connection: Pancreas Gland

Element: Fire

Vital Sheath: Related to Pranamaya Kosha- Breath Body

Function: Physically, the third chakra controls the fire of digestion. Mentally and emotionally, it governs your personal power and self-will. Within this chakra are the keys to finding balance and deciding how you are going to achieve your dharma, life purpose, rather than just live out your karma or past experiences.

In the third chakra, you can become the masters of your own inner peace. This is done by mastering your emotions and desires through action. Within the third chakra, there is a large network of nerves located just behind the stomach that is referred to as the solar plexus. You process the action of energy in motion or emotions through this chakra.

Mastering emotions does not mean you do not have emotions. Emotion is simply individual prana in motion. You can use your prana in motion anyway you

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choose. For example, you can use it to create inner peace by staying calm when everything around you is in chaos. Your third chakra has a tremendous reservoir of prana that can be summoned to stabilize any situation, and this is directly connected to the mastery of self-control.

It is within the domain of the third chakra you can also learn to master your energy flow by remaining balanced and neutral. This means avoiding the extremes in life through the power of self-awareness and self-discipline. When the third chakra is balanced it maintains a state of accountability and self-empowerment. In this state you would use your ability to act as the creator of your reality and release yourself from reacting to life, as if you were a victim of circumstances. Anyone maintaining a sense of victimization has an imbalance in the third chakra because you cannot maintain a victim attitude and claim your power at the same time.

You can also tell a lot about the condition of your third chakra by seeing how effective you are in the area of action. The reason for this is simple because if you do not know what you want, you have yet to utilize the pranic energy within the third chakra to empower through self-will the goal of what you want to manifest.

You can master personal power and self-will as you sort through your desires and simplify your life to reflect what you really want to be doing. If you do not take the time to do this, you may find yourself as a slave to your desires. Just because you feel the urge to have or do something doesn't necessarily mean it serves your highest good. Be honest and ask yourself: why do I want this? Is it something to grow my ego or will it empower my true self to shine through?

This moves us right into the next governing force of the third chakra which is giving and receiving. An interesting thing about the third chakra is that the more you give and receive, the more you open the reservoir of pranic energy that flows here.

Symbolically, the third chakra is associated with the ram that carries the seed sound (bija mantra) representing courage and support for moving in the world. Elementally, it is associated with fire. This connects to digestion, which also relates to our ability to digest and assimilate everything-including thought through self-awareness and will.

Bija Mantra: Rang, pronounced "rung." This provides you with courage and support. The sound is generated by the element fire.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning too fast) can include:

- The need to be in control
- Taking on too much responsibility
- Acting superior and judgmental
- Too much emphasis on power and recognition

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Low self- esteem
- Fearful of being alone
- Needing constant reassurance
- Letting others make decisions for you

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Stomach ulcers
- Excess weight around the middle
- Digestive disorders
- Blood sugar imbalances
- Gallstones
- Sclerosis of the liver
- Eating disorders
- Kidney infections: Kidney stones

Benefits of when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Owning your personal power
- Ability to shake off fears of rejection and criticism

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- Spontaneous and uninhibited by other opinions
- Maintain a state of balance founded in self-confidence and self-awareness.

Life lesson: The life lesson in your third chakra is to find yourself through self-acceptance and self-confidence. From here, you then have the courage to be who you are and to walk the middle way of balance.

Fourth Chakra-Anahata: "Unbroken"



Location: Rooted in the thoracic vertebrae at the level of the heart. Includes the region of the chest.

Color and Petals: Green with twelve lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Heart, Lungs, Circulatory System, and Cardiac Plexus.

Glandular Connection: Thymus Gland

Element: Air

Vital Sheath: Related to Manomaya Kosha- Mind Body/Conscious Mind

Function: Physically, the fourth chakra governs the circulatory system. Mentally and emotionally, the fourth chakra is the balance point between the lower chakras and the higher ones. It is here you will find the governing pranic force of relationships and love.

The fourth chakra will take on your unique pranic energy when it comes to relationships and love. This can be represented by compassion or judgment, kindness or selfishness, love or fear, and how it is represented is entirely up to you.

It is also important to distinguish within the fourth chakra the difference between compassion and sympathy. Compassion gives to another what he or she really needs in that moment. Sympathy stands in the way of what they really need because sympathy validates that sense of victimization. Compassion, on the other hand, uplifts others so they can realize their full potential. Compassion supports

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the process and doesn't leave someone who is hurting where it finds them. For example, when a child is first beginning to walk, you may want to guard them from being hurt and give them the support they need. Yet, it is essential to let them try again and again until that first step is entirely on their own. The same is true for all steps in life. No one can do it for us, and we can't do it for anyone else.

The fourth chakra considers compassion and love for the self also. In matters of forgiveness, you may have heard of the health and psychological benefits of forgiving others, but you must also remember to forgive yourself. The fourth chakra will not only include relationships with others, but the relationship with yourself. You cannot give freely what you do not allow for yourself. In order to keep the pranic energy of your fourth chakra flowing, you must be willing to include compassion and love for yourself just as much as for others.

Symbolically, the antelope leaps with this chakra illustrating the mastery of air, reflecting the passion and joy of being alive. It encourages an understanding of matter outside of everyday concerns. Elementally, it is linked to air.

Bija Mantra: Yang, pronounced "yung." This opens the heart. The seed sound is generated by the element air.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning to fast) can include:

- Possessiveness
- Overly dramatic
- Lack of compassion
- Loves conditionally

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Feelings of unworthiness
- Codependency
- Self-pity
- Fears of rejection

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Breast cancer
- Hypertension
- Asthma
- High blood pressure
- Blood clots
- Upper back pain

Benefits of a when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Love as a state of being regardless of external environment
- Having self-love
- Compassionate and forgiving
- Offer your heart and soul in relationships, knowing you are safe and secure

Life lesson: The life lesson in the fourth chakra is to have forgiveness and compassion for yourself and others. It is here you become love in action.

Fifth Chakra-Vishuddhi: "Purify"



Location: Rooted in the cervical vertebrae. Includes the region of the throat.

Color and Petals: Sky blue with sixteen lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Vocal Cords, Mouth, Throat, Ears, and Pharyngeal Nerve Plexus.

Glandular Connection: Thyroid and Parathyroid Glands

Element: Ether, which is the space that all the other elements are in. The throat chakra is also connected with sound and it is through space or ether that sound travels. This is why the throat chakra is connected to sound vibration, but it is more the space or ether that sound vibration travels through, not necessarily the sound itself.

Vital Sheath: Related to Vijnanamaya Kosha- Knowledge Body/Unconscious and Superconscious Mind

Function: Physically, the fifth chakra governs speech. Mentally and emotionally, it governs communication and self-expression.

At the throat chakra, you have the ability, through the spoken word to communicate. Mastery over this chakra involves not only what you choose to say but how you say it and what you choose not to say.

Every time you communicate you are making a choice: to help or to harm. Your words have an amazing amount of pranic energy. When you tune into this pranic flow of energy in the fifth chakra, you can realize the impact that your speech has on others and yourself. Words are potent and command energy, it is in this chakra you make a choice to use your speech to create unity or division.

Speaking the truth is also an important aspect of the fifth chakra. You can enliven the prana within this chakra when you choose not to lie and not to exaggerate the facts. You can also tune into the wisdom of realizing there is power in knowing when it serves to speak and when it serves to remain silent.

And just as there is a time to speak and a time to remain silent, prayers, mantras and affirmations can also provide a boost to the chakras. This is because they can help undo any false mental programming that may be lodged in your subconscious. Every time you think something negative about yourself, every time someone criticizes or intimidates you, your subconscious records the event. Sometimes you don't even realize how much you've been influenced by another's thoughts or words, especially a parent, sibling, or authority figure. The subconscious not only records negative impressions but positive ones as well. Simply put spoken words command pranic energy. The creations of your words can most often become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The throat chakra is the last of the chakras that processes the gross or physical elements. Within its location you prepare to shift into the chakras devoted to spirituality. This chakra is supported by a white elephant, which delivers harmony and grace.

Bija Mantra: Hang pronounced "hung." This energizes and harmonizes the throat. The seed sound is generated by ether.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning too fast) can include:

- Verbal abuse
- Over-talkative
- Self-righteous
- Constantly butting in or cutting people off

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

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- Holding back ones feeling and thoughts
- Stuttering
- Severe shyness
- Holds inconsistent views

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Recurring sore throat
- Neck pain
- Thyroid dysfunction
- Hearing problems
- Canker sores
- Cervical disc diseases
- TMJ
- Teeth and gum disease
- Constant clearing of the throat

Benefits of a when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Being an active listener and hearing hidden truths
- Slowing down your speech to be more conscious and thoughtful
- Being able to express your emotions and communicating your truth
- Allow others the space to speak their truth

Life Lesson: The life lesson for the fifth chakra is knowing the power of choice and personal expression. Then choosing to utilize that expression to support the fourth chakra in being love in action.

Sixth Chakra-Ajna: "To command"



Location: Rooted in the nasion section between the eyes. Including the region above the eyebrows, to the back of the cranium, and the base of the cranium. It is sometimes referred to as the "third-eye."

Color and Petals: Indigo blue with two lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Eyes and medulla plexus.

Glandular Connection: Pituitary Gland

Element: Light

Vital Sheath: Related to Vijnanamaya Kosha-Knowledge Body/Unconscious and Superconscious Mind

Function: Physically, the sixth chakra governs sight. Mentally and emotionally, it is connected to your perception. This is where you can "see the unseen and know the unknown." It is the center of your sense of intuition and your direct connection to an infinite source of wisdom. It moves beyond just physical sight and includes how you choose to perceive the reality around you.

Through the sixth chakra you can access the power of inner vision to perceive the reality of a situation. In addition, the "third eye" chakra connects you to the higher mind that is bridged to the true self. When this bridge is open it gives you the ability to gain insight into the inner nature of reality. This comes through the inner awareness associated with intuition. When you are in tune with your

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true self, the insights may appear as promptings through your intuition. The sixth chakra is where the most concentrated force of intuition or “the sixth sense” lies.

When balanced, the sixth chakra can access clear perception and clear perspective on life through the lens of seeing the entire picture. Analyzing and evaluation are an important and necessary skill but like anything, if it is not balanced, you can set yourself up to overanalyze a situation. This can then block your capacity to tune into your intuition.

In the sixth chakra, there lies an opening of consciousness that can dissolve duality. This is done as kundalini raises through sushumna nadi and pierces the sixth chakra. This piercing of kundalini in the sixth chakra allows one to stop differentiating between “I” and “you” and accept the greater unity within the cosmos. This is not only because kundalini has now awakened in the sixth chakra but also because this is the highest point in the body where ida nadi and pingala nadi meet. Here ida nadi and pingala nadis relationship as opposites dissolves and the unity of the cosmos is seen. All three main nadis meet in the sixth chakra and from there only sushumna nadi continues to the seventh chakra. It is through the sixth chakra that you are provided the opportunity to see the cosmic life force energy, Mahaprana, in everything.

When kundalini is brought up to the sixth chakra, you also open the ability to use intuition in your everyday life because you can see things as they are without judgment to taint it.

Symbolically this chakra is not associated with a specific animal. It is connected to the supreme element of light, which generates all the other elements.

Bija Mantra: Om pronounced “aum.” This connects the beginning, middle, and end of all things. It moves one into perceiving the divine unity between all things.

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning to fast) can include:

- Highly logical
- Too conservative
- Overly rational
- Authoritarian

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or block (spinning sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Learning difficulties
- Lack of concentration
- Constant negative thinking
- Unreliable

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Poor vision
- Brain tumors
- Neurological disorders
- Headaches

Benefits of a when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Non-attachment to material things because you see the bigger picture
- Trusting that the answers to life's challenges lie within you
- Being open minded
- Recognizing the importance of meditation so you can hear the whisper of wisdom from your true self

Life lesson: The life lesson in your sixth chakra is to perceive the bigger picture of reality as an integrated whole and dissolve duality. Also, to use the wisdom and intuition derived from your true self.

Seventh Chakra-Sahasrara: "Thousand-Petaled"



Location: Rooted at the bregma where the frontal and sagittal parts of the cranium meet. This is the "soft spot" found in infants. Includes the region at the top of the cranium and slightly above.

Color and Petals: Violet and sometime white with a thousand lotus petals.

Related Anatomy: Upper Cranium and Cerebral Cortex.

Glandular Connection: Pineal Gland

Element: Thought/Consciousness

Vital Sheath: Anandamaya Kosha-Bliss Body/Cosmic Consciousness

Function: Physically, the seventh chakra governs the pineal gland which is also closely associated with the pituitary gland of the sixth chakra. When the kundalini energy is raised to the seventh chakra, one experiences a state of bliss, a union with the cosmos or in other words, cosmic consciousness in its fully awakened state. Kundalini in the seventh chakra is the union of kundalini as the kinetic life force energy to cosmic consciousness as the static force in all things. When they unite and become one in the seventh chakra, full cosmic consciousness is awakened, and the true self is known.

The seventh chakra is where you receive and experience the knowledge of enlightenment. This refers to knowledge of reality that is beyond the physical world but that also enlivens the physical form. It is the knowing of who you are beyond the physical reality.

It is through your seventh chakra that you can connect to a higher source of knowledge from your true self and cosmic consciousness. This connection gives you the answers you can't find anywhere else. You have unlimited access to all the knowledge in the universe through the seventh chakra, that is if you are prepared to receive it.

One way you can balance your seventh chakra and prepare to receive divine knowing is to slow down. Sometimes one can fill up their day with so many activities that they forget to listen. That is why it is so important to allow yourself some time to either meditate or just sit in silence.

When you remember and maintain Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness in your seventh chakra you will then be able to sustain an awareness of oneness. From this space you can embody the true self and recognize the true self in others.

If the pranic energy of the seventh chakra is unbalanced it will be difficult to sustain the awareness of your true self. This may occur if one allows their spiritual experiences to "go to their head" creating a sense of pride that they are better than others. One may even get addicted to the spiritual bliss that can come from the seventh chakra and never come down to earth again but none of these are the embodiment of the awakened seventh chakra. The initiation of the seventh chakra demands that one let go of pride and aloofness by bringing your true self through all the levels of being spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically.

Symbolically the seventh chakra is the thousand petaled lotus. This represents that the seed of your true self has sprouted from its roots in the earth and has grown upward through the elements of water, fire, air, ether, and light, and now back to the source—cosmic consciousness itself, experienced through the element of thought.

Bija Mantra: It is here that the greatest mantra of all can be experienced and it is silence.

It is important to note here that for the purpose of raising kundalini into the seventh chakra in the Chakra Dhyana Meditation you will utilize the mantra Ogom Satyam Om pronounced "oh-goom saught-yahm aum." This mantra symbolizes the highest heaven, absolute truth, and the divine reality. It is chanted to connect all the chakras to the seventh and allows the knowledge that lies within the seventh chakra to be absorbed into all the levels of being.

Conscious Breathing

Signs of when this chakra is excessive or too open (spinning too fast) can include:

- Being flighty
- Disconnection from the physical
- Obsessive thought about the past or the future

Signs of when this chakra is deficient or blocked (spins sluggishly or not at all) can include:

- Fear of things which can't be understood with the physical senses
- Fear of religion and/or spirituality
- Intense worry
- Feeling alone and disconnected

Physical symptoms of when this chakra is unbalanced can include:

- Cerebral tumors
- Cranial pressure
- Headaches, migraines
- Mental disorders
- Scalp problems
- Sleep disorders

Benefits of a when this chakra is balanced can include:

- Having a magnetic personality
- A knowing of what your purpose is
- A strong desire to serve mankind and to be united with all people
- A sense of knowing that you are co-creating with cosmic consciousness consciously

Life Lesson: The life lesson in your seventh chakra is to create unity and oneness in all things. To live your life purpose in the joy of your true self while in the physical world.

Chapter 9

Right and Left Hemisphere of the Brain

We have already touched on ida nadi and pingala nadi as they relate to the left and right hemispheres of the body and brain. For greater understanding we will go deeper into the female pranic energy that runs through ida nadi, and the male pranic energy that runs through pingala nadi, and how they both relate to the brain.

The right hemisphere of the brain views reality through the female aspect. It controls the left side of your body and it is related to the ida nadi. The left hemisphere of the brain views reality through the male aspect. It controls the right side of your body. The reference to female and male has nothing to do with gender but simply the way you perceive and process reality.

In the female are your emotions and in the male your logic. The right female brain is much more concerned with experiencing something rather than understanding it. The left male brain is more concerned with understanding something rather than experiencing it.

For example, if you listen to a piece of music the female aspect would have an experience of feeling it move you emotionally in some way or it can be viewed by the male aspect as proportions and mathematics, counting the beats between notes and so forth. Even the way you process this workbook can give you insight into whether you most often come from the right brain or left brain. If you enjoy the information the most then you probably have tendencies toward the left brain, male aspect. If you like the experiences of the information the most you probably have tendencies towards the right brain, female aspect.

Almost everyone you know will be able to pinpoint whether they act most often from a male or female aspect regardless of their gender.

Conscious Breathing

Question:

- 1- Would you say you most often come from a female aspect, male aspect, or neutral? Explain your answer.

With this said our ideal place is to have our female and male aspects work together as one, whole and complete. This creates a neutralizing force that allows kundalini to awaken and ascend from the first chakra to the seventh chakra.

Kundalini Caduceus



Anyone who sees the Caduceus pictured above most often relates it to medical practices. If you look closely, you will recognize that it is modeled after the sushumna, ida, and pingala nadi. You will also notice that at the point where ida and pingala nadi meet with sushumna nadi, at the sixth chakra, there is an expansion of what looks like wings. This relates to the two petals on either side of the sixth chakra. This is a representation of lifting through the planes of being into enlightenment through the kundalini energy.

When it relates to the brain this point is also important because between the two hemispheres of the brain there is a band of fibers called Corpus Callosum. This band of fibers joins the two hemispheres of the brain. When one meditates and uses pranayama to increase the prana within and awaken kundalini, the two hemispheres of the brain begin to integrate and synchronize with each other. This is because the brain utilizes large amounts of prana. Pranayama practices increase the prana, and this then ignites the dormant areas of the brain because the brain has more prana to now be able to function fully.

The increased prana within the body and brain will then ignite the pituitary and pineal gland, which are connected to the sixth and seventh chakra, and make it possible to process higher levels of consciousness. In these higher levels of consciousness, you can utilize the gifts and senses that your true self has such as intuition.

Conscious Breathing

Chapter 10

Intuition: The Four Clairs

You will now begin to work more consciously with the subtle pranic energy within your body. It is important to gain an understanding of what this may look like and how it can show up for you. There are specifically four ways that you may tune into subtle energy and the intuition from your true self. These four ways that connect through your sixth sense are—visions, feelings, thoughts, and sounds. Most often one of these channels is going to be the strongest for you. These pathways of intuition are known as clairs which means clear. Everyone has a pathway that may be stronger than the other three and this is called your “primary clair.” The other three clairs will usually amplify and work with this primary means of divine communication. Be aware it is possible to have more than one clair that you feel closely connected to.

You’ve probably heard that some people are highly visual, while others are more auditory or kinesthetic and so on. These individual styles reflect how you take in the material world with your physical senses. The unique styles listed below may give you insight into how you tune into subtle energy and receive communication from your true self.

If you are a highly clairvoyant (clear seeing) person, intuition and subtle energy is experienced through mental images and visions. These are signs that you witness with your physical eyes or in your mind’s eye and can be anything that’s meaningful to you. It can also come in the form of repeating number sequences such as 111, 444, and so on. Other visual means can be seeing color around people or even in your personal meditations.

If you are a highly clairsentient (clear feeling) person, intuition and subtle energy is experienced through your feeling and body. You feel joy in your body, mind, and heart as an indicator that you’re on the right path; Fatigue as a clue that you need to take time for rest, play, and self-care. You can feel in your body what other people are feeling. You can also feel air-pressure and temperature changes when concentrating on subtle energy or communicating with spirit.

If you are a highly claircognizant (clear thinking) person, intuition and subtle energy is experienced through wordless impressions that you receive in your

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mind. You're able to mentally ask for information or help and receive it as divine instructions that suddenly appears in your thoughts. You receive brilliant ideas for inventions, teachings, and businesses that shouldn't be ignored. The "Aha" moments are clues to when you're connecting. As a claircognizant person, you can tend to assume that your knowledge is common information when it isn't.

If you are a highly clairaudient (clear hearing) person intuition and subtle energy is experienced through words that you hear inside or outside your mind. During emergencies, a loud voice outside of one ear may warn you of danger. The voice of your true self, unlike an auditory hallucination, is always loving, to the point, and inspiring—even when it asks you to do something heroic or function beyond what you believe you are capable of. Don't worry that you're making it up even if it sounds like your own voice. If the voice is loving and asks you to improve a situation, it's the true self's way of speaking directly to you. A clairaudient person can even hear the sound of the subtle energies around them and can choose to turn them off or on.

If you cannot guess right off what your primary clair is, I would suggest you notice how you watch a movie. If you are someone who gets into the imagery, effects, and the colors of the film, you are most likely drawn towards clairvoyant tendencies. If you are someone who feels every character and emotion in your body as if you are living the film, you are most likely drawn towards clairsentient tendencies. If you are someone who likes to know the background of all the characters, the ins and outs of the story line, and like to guess at how it will turn out then you most likely have claircognizant tendencies. If you are highly sensitive to the sounds of the film including the music and background noises, as well as the tone of the characters voices, you most likely have clairaudient tendencies.

You can have more than one clair, but most people have one which is stronger than the others and that is your primary clair.

Question:

- 1- If you had to choose what would you say is your primary Clair based on the way you most often take in the world around you? If you cannot decide which one is your primary list the ones you connect with most strongly. Explain your answer.

You are now going to work more deeply with the subtle energy of prana. This is why it is important to realize how you most often connect with subtle energy and intuition. Keep this in mind as you continue._

Conscious Breathing

Chapter 11

Pranayama: The Practice of the Breath

Pranayama is the practice of controlling prana, the life force energy within the body, mind, and subtle system. While prana represents the life force, ayama means to magnify or expand. Pranayama therefore indicates the practice of filling with breath, or life force. In practice, pranayama is a set of breathing exercises designed to bring more oxygen to the brain, activate the subtle energy system, and control the life energy in the body. You will begin to practice this through conscious breathing and then move to more advanced techniques.

Breathing is both a neurological and a motor activity that supports all bodily systems. The inhalation is critical for the health of the body and the mind. The exhalation is critical for releasing waste and toxins.

On average people take between ten and sixteen breaths a minute, at rest between six and eight. Your breath also moves in cycles between one nostril and the other. This relates directly to the use of either ida nadi or pingala nadi. When the breath is equal between both nostrils, the sushumna nadi is active and prana flows through here. It is important to note it is the prana as the individual life force which is different than kundalini. In the average person who does not practice conscious breathing, the nostrils habitually switch every one and a half hours leaving only a short amount of time, about 30 seconds for prana to use the pathway of sushumna nadi.

You will learn techniques of breathing that have a specific purpose in clearing and balancing the connection between ida nadi and pingala nadi. From here you can then open to the experience of awakening kundalini. The use of these breathing techniques also assists in clearing and balancing the chakras so that your body, mind, and subtle system can adjust to the increase of prana.

It is also interesting to note that the longer the air current, the more prana there is to utilize. Although the air is physical and prana is subtle, the two are connected. Prana is directly influenced through modifying breath and all functions of the physical body, including the brain and consciousness are affected too. When one works with prana on a conscious level through conscious breathing, the dormant areas of the brain are awakened. (Chapter 9)

Conscious Breathing

Normally one-tenth of the brain is active while the other nine parts of the brain remain inactive. This is because the brain utilizes the largest amount of prana. When there is not enough prana present consciousness is not able to access the totality of genius available. Pranayama practices bring in a greater supply of prana to support the genius function. It also clears the nadis that in turn allow more flow of prana to be present.

Because of its traditional placement after the physical postures one is finally in a state to begin to control prana consciously within the body and subtle system. Directing the body and specifically the mind you become aware of the subtle activities within. This initiates the union between all planes of being and the connection to your true self.

Chapter 12

Conscious Breathing

All the following lessons are meant to be done in a comfort zone. It is important to create an internal awareness, not only to embrace the awareness of your true self, but also to prevent injury to the body. Do these activities very gently, with conscious attention. The main way you can do these exercises wrong would be to try to hard or go unconscious. There are several symptoms that will let you know when you are performing them wrong. If you get tense or uncomfortable in anyway immediately pause and rest. Resume the activity only when you can do it more gently. Balance between pushing yourself beyond what you believe are your limits and knowing when to back off and nurture yourself are key. Listen to your own greater knowing throughout this workbook and follow that guidance.

Always be sure to check with your health care professional before starting any new regimen. This is doubly important if you are in treatment for any breathing problems or any diseases, such as diabetes, in which breathing problems are secondary symptoms. If you are asthmatic or experience other respiratory dysfunction, practice with cautious intention until you feel you are ready to dive in.

Diaphragmic Breathing

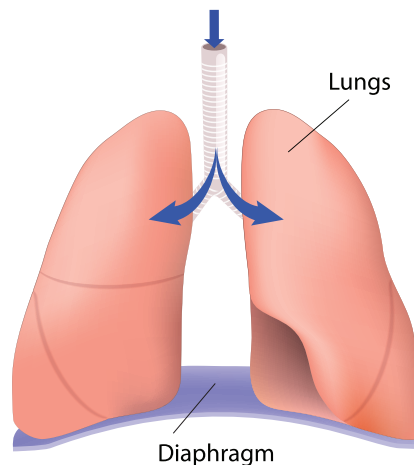
Diaphragmic breathing is the first step to conscious breathing and pranayama. From here you will then be ready for the advanced lessons.

This first lesson will show you how to get your breath farther down into your abdomen and how to move your diaphragm through its full range of motion. When you grasp this concept, you can use it to eliminate undesirable energy, increase the pranic life force in the body, and create balance on all planes of being.

It is important to realize the diaphragm is a muscle and can be trained and strengthened like any other muscle. Visualize a wide, fan-shaped muscle that separates the chest cavity (thorax) and its contents from the abdominal cavity. This is the main muscle of inhalation and exhalation. When viewed from below, the diaphragm would look like the underside of an arched dome. On an inhalation this dome becomes nearly flat, lowering the floor of the chest cavity. When

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descending the diaphragm presses on the liver, stomach, and other organs. This movement gently messages them, stimulating their action and encourages normal function. Internal organs need exercise and the diaphragm is nature's principle instrument for this internal exercise. Its motion vibrates the important organs of digestion and elimination, messaging and kneading them.



Also, note that because the diaphragm is a muscle, if you have not been consciously using this muscle it may be weak and seem more difficult to utilize. Stick with it and know the more you focus on the lessons below, the easier conscious breathing will become.

Part One

The first lesson will be done in two parts: a lying-down phase and a sitting up phase. The reason is because full diaphragmic breathing is easiest to learn lying down, but it is most effective when you are seated upright with your spine straight. You will first hone the skill lying down and then learn how to practice it in a seated upright position.

Breathing feels a little different lying down than it does in a seated upright position. This is because when you are lying down, you must lift the weight of the abdomen with each inhale, but the weight of the abdomen will also make the exhale out easier. These are not factoring when you are sitting.

It is also important to keep your spine as straight as possible. This applies whether you are lying down or seated upright. If the spine is not elongated and straight, a block will be created in the physical structure of the spine which can

then manifest in the subtle system. This block much like a dam will then stop the flow of pranic life force energy there. The flow of prana is affected by posture and this is another reason to be mindful of your posture.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Begin by lying down on your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor and tip the pelvis slightly by pressing the arch of the lower back downwards into the floor. Close your eyes and rest your hands lightly on your diaphragm. Bring your attention to the back of your neck and slightly tuck your chin toward the collar bone, find length in the back of your neck.

Now breathe into your lungs deeply, putting special attention on the diaphragm. It is not important currently whether you are utilizing the nose or the mouth, just focus on what comes naturally to you. As you inhale, feel the breath fill the bottom of the lungs first, then the middle of the lungs second, and finally the top of the lungs third. Then exhale all the air out.

Notice and feel the diaphragm expanding downwards and flattening out on the inhale, massaging the internal organs below, and rounding up like a dome towards the heart and lungs on the exhale. Feel yourself breath into the back and sides of your body just as much as you do into the front of your body. The breath in and out has a 360-degree expansion and contraction.

As you continue to breathe, and your breath gets deeper, you will even feel the rib cage expanding on the inhale and contracting on the exhale. Continue to use the diaphragm consciously to create the expansion and contraction of the breath within the lungs. When you are complete slowly open your eyes and come back.

Conscious Breathing

Questions:

- 1- How did it feel to utilize the diaphragm consciously?

- 2- Did you have any emotions come up as you practiced diaphragmic breathing?

If you note any emotions that you would label unpleasant realize that the breath is moving to release any mental or emotional energy that may be blocking the nadis. The best thing to do if this is occurring is to feel what you are feeling and then let it go through a big exhalation out of the mouth. Know that as you let it go you are clearing the pathway to your true self.

- 3- Would you say your diaphragm is strong or weak?

No matter how you answered the last question be aware that the more you work consciously with the diaphragm the stronger it will become. It is natural if you are not adept to increased large amount of oxygen and prana in the body to get light headed. If this occurs, you may stop rest and then continue again when you are ready.

Part Two

How the Breath Works

The way you breathe has a direct effect on how much prana you can channel in the physical and subtle body, this is what you are going to work on next. To continually increase the amount of prana within you, it is important that you inhale and exhale through the nose. The exception to this is on the rare occasion you inhale in through the nose and exhale out through the mouth. Inhaling and exhaling through the nose increases the prana in the physical and subtle body but when prana is increased it may encounter a block in its pathway through the nadis. If the prana should encounter any block, exhaling out through the mouth is a physical and subtle way of releasing the blocks.

Ujjayi Breathing

Breathing in and out through the nose is known as ujjayi breathing in Sanskrit, which translates to victorious breath. To support the mind in staying present, ujjayi breathing creates a unique hissing sound. This is caused by a slight constriction of the throat as the breath travels through the larynx and over the vocal cords. When you whisper, the same action that softens speech creates the sound in ujjayi breathing. As the throat passageway is narrowed, the velocity of the air traveling through it is increased. This is what generates the sound.

Listening to this sound enables you to practice conscious awareness because ujjayi breathing doesn't happen by itself. When you bring the mind under control through the breath you take the first steps to being able to harness and control the prana within. Although ujjayi is done with the mouth closed, it is easiest to learn at first with the mouth open. This is what you will be doing now.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Sit in an upright seated position and close your eyes. Make sure the lower spine is straight and the abdominal muscles are pulled in gently. The rib cage is slightly lifted, and the upper vertebrae are stacked on top of the lower vertebrae. Shoulders relax down and gently pressed back in a natural way. The cervical vertebrae of the neck are straightened, and the neck stretches gently upward. The chin is parallel with the floor, and slightly tucked in. The head is in line with the spine. Feel as though there is an imaginary string that is strung through the lower spine, middle spine, and upper spine. The string continues through the

Conscious Breathing

neck and out through the head. Imagine that this string is being gently pulled upward, straightening your posture in a gentle way.

Begin once again by tuning into diaphragmic breathing. Notice the expansion and contraction of the diaphragm, breath, and lungs.

Now imagine that there is a mirror in front of you. Continuing to use diaphragmic breathing and open your mouth exhaling making an “ahhh” sound as if you were fogging up the mirror. Completely empty the lungs with the sound. Close the mouth and then inhale in through the nose filling the lungs up completely with diaphragmic breathing, this time making an imaginary internal “eeee” sound with the inhale. The “eeee” can be imagined as a high-pitched e sound.

Continue exhaling out through the mouth fogging up that imaginary mirror and inhaling in through the nose filling up the lungs completely.

After doing this a few times, imagine as if you are still fogging up the mirror out through your mouth on the exhale but now do it with your mouth closed. With the mouth closed you are forced to move the inhale and exhale out of the nose, but the throat, mouth, and tongue are in a position to create ujjayi breathing. The front of your tongue should naturally press against the front of the palate on the roof of the mouth. Still imagining you are making an “ahhh” with each exhalation and “eeee” with each inhalation. Allow the space at the back of the mouth to be in the same position as it was when you were exhaling out through the mouth fogging up the mirror.

Visualize the breath now swirling at the top of the throat. As you exhale feel and hear the breath swirl at the top of the throat. The front of your tongue is still lightly pressed against the roof of your mouth (this is ideal but should also come naturally).

Now move to inhale in through the nose and exhale out through mouth this time. Feel and hear the breath just like the waves of the ocean coming outside your mouth. Exhaling out through the mouth may be necessary at times to releases any energetic blocks within the physical and subtle system. Once you feel the blocks are clear then you can continue once again to increase the prana by moving back to ujjayi breathing, in and out through the nose.

Continue for as long as you would like, traditionally this practice is to be done for twenty minutes morning and night. You can work your way up to twenty

minutes but also realize you can do this type of breathing anytime, anywhere, to increase the prana within you.

Questions:

1- What did you experience when you began to move into ujjayi breathing?
Note any physical, mental, or emotional sensations.

2- What did you experience inhaling in through the nose and exhaling out through the mouth?

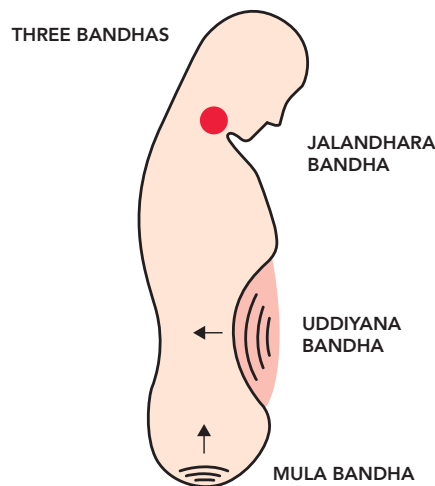
Conscious Breathing

Chapter 13

Bandhas: Body Locks

You will now learn how to work most effectively with your body to connect to and channel large amounts of prana. Bandha means to “bond” and the bandhas have the capacity to help you bond the koshas and individual pranas in the physical body. This supports your physical body to connect, attune, and flow to the highest planes of being available to you in this present moment.

The bandhas or body locks are certain combinations of muscle contractions that work with ujjayi breathing. Each lock functions to change blood circulation, nerve pressure, and the flow of cerebrospinal fluid. The bandhas also unite Prana Vayu and Apana Vayu leading to the awakening of Kundalini. There are three important locks you need to know: root lock (mula bandha), diaphragm lock (uddiyana bandha), and the neck lock (jalandhara bandha).



The bandhas are engaged through muscle contraction and just like the diaphragm if you have not been utilizing these muscles, they may appear weak and difficult to engage. If this is occurring don't get discouraged! Just keep practicing and you will build their strength and each engagement will get easier and easier.

Root Lock- Mula Bandha

The action of the root lock unites the two major energy flows of the body: Prana Vayu, the inflowing life force energy concentrated in the upper body and Apana Vayu, the out flowing life force energy concentrated in the lower body. It is the nature of Apana Vayu to contract and descend but through the practice of the bandhas, you bring the Apana Vayu up and link it with Prana Vayu.

The root lock specifically pulls the Apana Vayu up and the Prana Vayu down to mix in the navel. Bandha literally means “bond,” so what you are doing is bonding the two energies together. The combination generates heat called the yogic fire that can release the kundalini energy. With kundalini awakened, it begins its ascent through the first and second chakra. These chakras are also strengthened and cleared by applying the root lock. Strengthening this lock can also help one to avoid incontinence later in life.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Begin in a comfortable seated position with the spine straight. Cultivate deep ujjayi breathing. Now near the end of the exhale contract the rectum and genitals muscles by drawing them in and up, add to that a contraction of the sexual organs in and up. Lastly draw in the lower abdomen back and up toward the spine. The rectum and sex organs will be drawn up toward the navel point. As you inhale release the root lock ever so slightly so that there is still a light support in the lower pelvic region but not so much that it takes a large amount of effort.

When you inhale focus on the pranic energy moving up the spine, possibly even the kundalini, and end your inhale by concentrating on the sixth chakra. When you exhale once again apply the root lock and continue this sequence.

*Note that if you have not practiced root lock before you may feel as if you need to pull it in on your inhale. This can be due to the habit of feeling yourself lift upward on the inhale and collapse downward on the exhale. This is a habit of gravity and Apana Vayu in its characteristic to govern downward impulses. For the purpose of awakening kundalini, cleansing the chakras, and also the nadis it is imperative that you engage root lock on your exhale.

Diaphragm Lock- Uddiyana Bandha

The diaphragm lock helps to raise the kundalini through the sushumna nadi and up into the neck region. It strengthens the solar plexus and helps to clear the third chakra and the fourth chakra. It also gives a gentle massage to the heart muscles, which pranically clears and enlivens compassion in the fourth chakra. Use of this lock during chanting mantras also enhances their effectiveness.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Begin in a comfortable seated position with the spine straight. Cultivate deep ujjayi breathing. Near the end of the exhale pull the upper abdominal muscles back and up towards the spine, lifting the diaphragm up high into the thorax. Uddiyana bandha is applied on the exhale alone. Applying it forcefully on the inhalation can over pressurize the eyes and heart.

Once you get a feel for the diaphragm lock, on every exhale add to that the root lock. On every exhale engage both the root lock and diaphragm lock, paying special attention to engaging them fully on the end of the exhale. On the inhale, release the diaphragm lock completely, keeping the root lock engaged ever so slightly for support on the pelvic floor. Once again when you inhale bring your concentration to the sixth chakra.

Neck Lock- Beginners and Jalandhara Bandha

The neck lock supports the continued ascent of kundalini through the upper three chakras. This includes the fifth, sixth, and seventh chakra. It also helps the thyroid and parathyroid glands to secrete optimally and activates the higher functions of the pituitary. When working with ujjayi breathing to increase prana and the ascent of kundalini, the powerful energy generated can meet with some blocks. When this blocking happens, there can sometimes be a quick shift in blood pressure, causing dizziness. This can be avoided by applying the neck lock.

Technically, the neck lock is engaged either at the space between the inhale and/or the exhale where the breath is suspended. This is considered an advanced practice as it utilizes breath retention known as Kumbhaka. For the purpose of this workbook you will simply focus on what I like to refer to as the beginner's neck lock. This lock is the slight tuck of the chin toward the neck just enough to create an elongation in the back of the neck. This helps the flow of kundalini as

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it continues its ascent upwards. It also supports a natural increase of blood flow during conscious breathing techniques.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Beginners neck lock

Begin in a comfortable seated position with the spine straight. Cultivate deep ujjayi breathing. Bring your awareness to the back of your neck and engage the beginner's neck lock by allowing the chin to ever so slightly tuck, so that you feel length in the back of the neck. Keep the beginners neck lock engaged both on the inhale and the exhale. You will find that the chin is in alignment with the floor. Notice a flow of energy moving effortlessly through the back of the neck and up through the cranium.

Advanced neck lock-Jalandhara bandha

Again, this is an advanced practice and until you are adept to ujjayi breathing and the engagement of the lower two bandhas, it is suggested that you wait to add the full neck lock along with breath retention, Kumbhaka, into your pranayama practice. It should never be forced and will come naturally after adapting to the increase of prana and the strengthening of the bandhas.

I have added the instructions below as a reference in case you choose to move into the full neck lock in the Parvathi Padma Dhyana Meditation given after the Chakra Dhyana Meditation near the end of this workbook. Parvathi Padma Dhyana utilizes breath retention and it can be done also with the beginner's lock. Be aware if you have heart/blood pressure issue or are pregnant, it is best to avoid breath retention. If you suffer from asthmatic issues, stop when it causes discomfort. As always if you suffer from any physical ailments consult your physician before beginning any new physical activity.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Begin in a comfortable seated position with the spine straight. Cultivate deep ujjayi breathing. Exhale all your air out completely and hold it at the bottom of the breath. Contract your chin towards the throat and allow your sternum to elevate towards the chin. Allow your shoulder blades to drop back and down,

avoid pushing your front ribs forward. When done correctly you should feel the cervical bones straighten and lengthen the back of the neck allowing the increased flow of prana and kundalini to travel freely into the head.

As you inhale, release the neck lock by easing up on the contraction of the chin towards the throat but still maintaining an elongation of the vertebrae in the neck. This same breath retention can also be done at the top of the breath but again for the purpose of this workbook, we will not go into a great amount of detail about Kumbhaka.

It is an extremely powerful practice but without the foundation and time given to practice ujjayi breathing and bandhas, the greatest benefits may be missed. When you feel you want to move deeper into these more advanced techniques, you are welcome to move on to the Conscious Breathing Workbook: Level Two. These techniques include Kumbhaka and how to utilize it to the greatest benefit.

For now, continue to focus on prana, kundalini, ujjayi, and the bandhas utilizing the beginner's neck lock without conscious breath retention unless you choose to move into Parvathi Padma Dhyana Mediation. (Chapter 20)

The Great Lock- Maha Bandha

This is the combination of all three locks engaged at the same time. Remember that both the root lock and the diaphragm lock are only engaged with an increased amount of energy on the exhale. The beginner's neck lock is engaged both on the inhale and the exhale. When all the locks are applied, the nerves and glands are rejuvenated. Think and feel on every exhale pulling everything in and up and on every inhale feel the ascent of pranic energy and possibly kundalini upwards to the sixth chakra.

Exercise to experience Maha Bandha and Ujjayi Breathing

You will now move to connect ujjayi breathing with the bandhas. Note that pranayama and bandhas will be strongest near the beginning of a single practice but in that same practice, they may begin to lighten and not need as much emphasis on engagement. This is because the breath and bandhas have done the work necessary in clearing the nadis and chakras, awakening the kundalini, and supporting its ascent up the sushumna nadi.

Conscious Breathing

Think of the beginning of this exercise as clearing out and balancing the system. Once the work is done and the body, mind, and subtle system is balanced kundalini is then free to move up the spine and you can now more easily move into meditation.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

If you are in a chair rest your hands on your lap, fingers are interlaced palms up, and let the pinky fingers press lightly against the lower abdomen. If you are seated cross legged on the floor lightly cup your hands on your knees for more support on your spine.

Begin to move into ujjayi breathing. Feel the diaphragm as it expands and contracts on every inhale and on every exhale. Listen to the sound of the breath and feel it within the body.

Now add in the great lock, maha bandha, on every exhale. Feel all three bandhas engaging. As you inhale release the lower two bandhas and focus on your sixth chakra. Feel the sensation of breath and bandhas working together. Continue engaging bandhas along with pranayama until you feel your body and mind naturally fall into Dhyana, a meditative state. Stay here as long as you would like.

Questions:

- 1- How does it feel to engage all three bandhas on the exhalation?

Note that some people want to engage the bandhas naturally on the inhale. For the purpose of ascending kundalini, one must engage all three bandhas on the exhale.

- 2- Do your bandhas feel strong or weak? Which ones feel the strongest and which ones feel the weakest?

Note that just like the diaphragm bandhas are muscles. They are internal physical locks that utilize muscle control. Just like any other muscle, it may take time to get stronger. Just keep practicing!

- 3- Did you find yourself naturally falling into a more meditative state after pranayama and bandha practice? Describe your experience.

If you find your mind is still wandering while continuing pranayama keep the mind focused on the pathway of the breath as it flows in on the inhale and out on the exhale. Listen to the sound of the breath and feel the vibration until the mind is stilled into meditation.

Conscious Breathing

Chapter 14

Our Reality is Sound: Mantras

Everything in our world is a waveform sometimes called a sine-wave pattern. You can look at anything for example a cup and see it as tiny particles and atoms or you can look at it as vibration, a wave form, or even sound. Both are scientifically proven and valid. Every movement of energy creates sound and every sound has energy. In fact, there is an intimate relationship between sound and prana. In yoga science the divine, represented as cosmic consciousness, created Mahaprana from the first movement and in this movement, sound came into being. That first sound vibration that still permeates all existence is om. Because sound is so closely linked to prana, it is often utilized when working to link with cosmic consciousness and mahaprana on a conscious level.

Bell Laboratories discovered the wavelength of the om completely by coincidence. They were the first ones to put up the microwave system around the U.S. and when they went to turn it on, they found static in the entire system. The wavelength they chose was just above 7.23 cm, which happens to be the wavelength of om. They had the static everywhere because the wavelength or sound was coming from everywhere! To get rid of the static they upped it 50,000 times over what they would normally need so that the 7.23 cm wouldn't interfere.

Every movement of energy will create sound and sound scientifically creates physical and mental change in an organism. You can consciously create change in the physical and mental structure through specific sound vibrations. The unique sound vibrations that yoga utilizes are called mantras.

Mantras are sound vibrations used to connect with your true self and the divine. Mantra means mind projection; It is a technical device for regulating the body, mind, and subtle system. This is based on the belief that everything in the universe is energy. All energy vibrates, and each frequency creates a sound. In fact, frequency IS sound. Mantras affect the physical, mental, emotional, and subtle body because it attunes you to the energy of the sound itself on every plane of being.

When you add mantras to pranayama practices, you can move to unite the pranamaya kosha (sheath of the breath body) much more quickly to the other

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koshas that make up the whole which include: Annamaya (sheath of the physical body), manomaya kosha (sheath of the mind body), vijnanamaya kosha (sheath of knowledge body), and anandamaya kosha (sheath of the bliss body).

Normally sound is heard only within a certain range of decibels. However, when you begin to “tune-in” to prana and the subtle energy of the body, vibrations can begin to be heard through the sixth sense, which the five physical sense organs alone are incapable of hearing. What you can begin to hear are sound vibrations that are generated from within without any other outer influence. The specific sound vibrations that you will utilize in the form of mantras are from yogis and those who have adapted their senses beyond the five sense organs to hear the sound vibrations of prana and mahaprana. Most often, these are the sound vibrations heard from connecting to the causal body. These mantras are heard on the casual level or within the causal body and move through all planes of being.

There are thousands of mantras all of which hold a specific sound vibration. For the purpose of this workbook you will be focusing on the mantra om which is very effective in creating a pathway to connecting to the true self, along with the bija mantras that coincide to the seven chakras.

Bija means seed. There are seven seed or core sounds that pertain to each of the seven chakras. Each chakra has its own unique bija mantra that clears and energizes that specific chakra to its highest vibration. These can be chanted either internally or externally.

It is also effective to know the meaning behind the mantra because it brings that specific energy to our conscious awareness through the power of our thoughts, making it even more powerful.

Om/Aum

The mantra om is the universe. Whatsoever has existed, whatsoever exists, and whatsoever shall exist hereafter is Om. Om transcends past, present, and future.



Om can be viewed as divinity within the self and everything else. Om is the sound that represents the subtlest level of existence in the divine and the true self that permeates all planes of being.

Everything that surrounds you has an aspect of the divine cosmic consciousness within it, as do you yourself. It reminds you that you can move through your physical and mental states of consciousness and connect with divine cosmic consciousness. The chanting of the sound om reminds you of those connections to the divine and to each other.

The mantra om is composed of three distinct sounds that merge together. This is why you will sometimes see om spelled Aum. A, which is pronounced "aaah" is the initial sound. It stands for consciousness of the external world or everyday reality. U, which is pronounced "oooh" represents the dreaming state, the internal world of imagination, thoughts and dreams. M pronounced "mmm" stands for deep sleep or the dreamless state and close to enlightenment. You can also look at it as the conscious, unconscious, and super-conscious mind. Part of this mantra is also the space and silence after the "mmm" which represents cosmic consciousness itself.

The completed om sound vibration is a representation of the neutral point where you move out of duality represented in the ida and pingala nadis and move into union represented through the neutral sushumna nadi. The ascension of kundalini, the dormant cosmic life force, into the sixth chakra, is a representation of om. Om is in fact the seed sound, bija mantra, for the universe and the sixth chakra.

Conscious Breathing

Mantras can be chanted externally or internally. The most powerful thing beyond the sound vibration itself is also intention, the power of thought. Let the mantra penetrate not only through sound but also through your intention to create the union to the divine and your true self.

It is important to note also that chanting is about feeling the vibration. If you try to make it sound good rather than feeling the vibration of the mantra the intention may be missed. Commit to allowing the vibration of the mantra to move through you.

Exercise to Experience Om

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

External Chanting

Close your eyes and begin cultivating your ujjayi breathing. Be aware of the expanding of the diaphragm on the inhale, massaging those internal organs, and the contraction of the diaphragm on the exhale rounding up like a dome towards the heart and lungs.

On every exhale also tuning into the engagement of your bandhas. Remember engaging all your bandhas on the exhale when chanting mantras enhances their effect, especially the diaphragm lock. When chanting the mantra om externally you will focus your awareness on your sixth chakra both on the inhale and the exhale.

Inhale in and on the exhale form an O with your mouth and make the sound "ahhhh" and on the same breath, compressing your mouth to form the second part of the mantra, U which is pronounced "oooh." Then, finally allow your lips to close naturally to form the "mmmm." Feel the vibration in your lips and your entire body as the sound dies away into silence. Take a moment to savor the renewed sense of calm that comes from chanting the mantra om. Repeat the mantra for as long as you like, devoting an entire out breath to each om while focusing on the sixth chakra.

Question:

1- What do you feel after externally chanting the mantra om?

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Internal Chanting

Close your eyes and begin cultivating your ujjayi breathing. Be aware of the expanding of the diaphragm on the inhale, massaging those internal organs, and the contraction of the diaphragm on the exhale rounding up like a dome towards the heart and lungs. On every exhale also tuning in to the engagement of your bandhas. When chanting the mantra om internally you will focus your awareness on your sixth chakra both on the inhale and the exhale.

Conscious Breathing

Inhale in and using the exhale, internally chant the mantra Om for the entire length of the exhale and on the inhale simply concentrate on the sixth chakra, feeling the vibration of space after the “mmm”. Repeat the process exhaling to the internal mantra om in its three progressive stages of “ahhh” “uhhh” “mmm” to yourself. Repeat the mantra for as long as you like, devoting an entire out breath to each om while focusing on the sixth chakra.

Question:

- 1- What do you feel after internally chanting the mantra om?

Chapter 15

Bija Mantras and Chakra Meditations

Each Chakra has its own unique bija mantra that clears and energizes that specific chakra to its highest vibration. You will be utilizing the Bija mantras in the Chakra Dhyana Meditation. There are also individual chakra meditations utilizing bija mantra at the end of this chapter for those who feel they need to concentrate more deeply on one specific chakra.

The following bija mantras are pronounced by chanting the sound vibration of the first two letter and holding the “ng” as long as possible. Emphasis on the “ng” acts as a sound chamber and the pituitary gland receives stimulation. The exception to this is the sixth chakra, that holds “mmm”.

First Chakra Bija Mantra: Lang pronounced “Lung.” This stops our energy from descending beyond our foundation, the first chakra. This seed sound is generated by the earth element.

Second Chakra Bija Mantra: Vang pronounced “Vung.” This nourishes our body’s fluids and the flows of life. This seed sound is generated by the element water.

Third Chakra Bija Mantra: Rang, pronounced “Rung.” This provides you with courage and support. This seed sound is generated by the element fire.

Fourth Chakra Bija Mantra: Yung, pronounced “Yung.” This opens the heart. This seed sound is generated by the element air.

Fifth Chakra Bija Mantra: Hang pronounced “Hung.” This energizes and harmonizes the throat. This seed sound is generated by ether.

Sixth Chakra Bija Mantra: Om pronounced “Aum.” This connects the beginning and ending of all things. It moves one into perceiving the divine unity between all things. This seed sound is generated by light.

Seventh Chakra Bija Mantra: It is here that the greatest mantra of all can be received, which is silence. Much like it is the silence between the notes that creates the music, it is the silence moments between everyday living that empowers the seventh chakra.

Conscious Breathing

Note that for the purpose of the Chakra Dhyana Meditation, you will use the mantra Ogum Satyam om pronounced “oh-goom saught-yahm aum” for the seventh chakra. This mantra symbolizes the highest heaven, absolute truth, and the divine plane of being. It is chanted to connect all the chakras to the seventh chakra. This allows the knowing that lies within the seventh chakra to be absorbed into all the chakras.

Single Chakra Meditations with use of Bija Mantras

Utilize these single chakra meditations after pranayama practice when kundalini feels as if it is being blocked in one chakra. If this is occurring, you will notice it happening in the Chakra Dhyana Meditation that is given near the end of this workbook. It is best to do pranayama and then move into either the Chakra Dhyana Meditation or pick one chakra to meditate on at a single practice.

You can also continue to clear and balance all the chakras and promote the flow of kundalini if you only utilize the Chakra Dhyana Meditation. The choice is up to you. If you feel the desire through your own intuition to move into a single chakra meditation, they are here for you. In these single chakra meditation, you will notice the use of positive affirmations. You are welcome to use the ones provided or replace them with your own personal affirmation that relate to that specific chakra.

For guided meditations on each chakra: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

First Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now, center your attention on the first chakra, located at the base of your spine. See a brilliant ruby red vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you repeat the mantra “lung” internally or externally twenty-one times visualizing yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your first chakra, continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally: “I am safe and secure. I am grounded to mother Earth and know I belong. I am

supported and all my needs are provided for.” Now send healing red light to all parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in brilliant ruby red light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth, coming back when you feel you are complete.

Second Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the second chakra, located just below the navel in the pelvic area. See a vibrant orange vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks like. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now, repeat the mantra “*Vung*” internally or externally twenty-one times, visualizing yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your second chakra, continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, “I allow pleasure to flow through my life. I embrace my sexuality, emotions and creative energies. I am true to myself.” Now send healing orange light to all or parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in vibrant orange light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Come back when you feel you are complete.

Third Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the third chakra, located above the navel to the solar plexus in the upper abdomen region. See a bright yellow vortex of light.

Conscious Breathing

Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks like. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you repeat the mantra "*Rung*" internally or externally twenty-one times, visualize yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your third chakra. Continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, "I give and receive easily. I am clear and act on my goals and desires. I internalize and acknowledge my worth and value as I interact with others." Now send healing yellow light to all parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in bright yellow light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Come back when you feel you are complete.

Fourth Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the fourth chakra, located in the chest. See a beautiful jade green vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks like. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you repeat the mantra "*Hung*" internally or externally twenty-one times, visualize yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your fourth chakra. Continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, "I am filled with compassion for myself and others. I forgive myself and others easily. I love myself, unconditionally." Now send healing green light to all or parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in beautiful jade green light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely

surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Come back when you feel you are complete.

Fifth Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the fifth chakra, located in the throat. See a clear sky-blue vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks like. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you repeat the mantra “Yung” internally or externally twenty-one times visualizing yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your fifth chakra. Continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, “I communicate with ease from my heart. I easily express my thoughts, feelings, and desires. I listen when others speak.” Now send healing sky blue light to all parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in clear sky-blue light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Coming back when you feel you are complete.

Sixth Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the sixth chakra, located just between the eyebrows and slightly above. See a majestic indigo blue vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you repeat the mantra “Om” internally or externally twenty-one times visualizing yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your sixth chakra, continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

Conscious Breathing

After you have repeated the mantra twenty-one times, take three deep breaths clearing your mind completely. Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, "I now accept my ability to perceive. I am open to the bigger picture. I trust and follow my inner vision and guidance." Now send healing indigo blue light to all parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in majestic indigo blue light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Coming back when you feel you are complete.

Seventh Chakra Meditation

Sit in a comfortable seated position and close your eyes. Move into pranayama.

Now center your attention on the seventh chakra, located on top of the head. See a brilliant violet vortex of light. Notice how this area of your body feels and what it looks. Are there any dark areas or does the energy feel stuck and stagnant? Just notice without judgment or blame. Now as you listen to the silence visualizing yourself pulling or pushing any stuck, discolored and/or blocked energy out of your seventh chakra, continue to cleanse this chakra until the color becomes brighter and brighter.

Now affirm to yourself internally or externally, "I am open to all possibilities. I accept my true self. I am open to the knowledge that my true self has to offer." Now send healing violet light to all parts of your physical and the subtle body that you feel may deserve it. Imagine that area bathed in brilliant violet light.

Lying now on your back, take one more deep breath: inhale in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth, allowing yourself to completely surrender all thoughts and sensations. Enjoy the stillness as you relax down into the earth. Coming back when you feel you are complete.

Chapter 16

Mudras: Seals

A mudra is a hand position that applies pressure on certain areas of the hands and fingers. Each area of the hand has a reflex to a certain area of the body or brain. These areas represent different emotions and behaviors. There is an intimate relationship between the hands and the brain because what you do with your hands directly affects the nervous system and the cerebral cortex; This then has an influence on the conscious, unconscious, and super-conscious mind.

Mudra means “seal” and in affect a mudra is a technique for giving clear messages to the body-mind system through physical gesture. A mudra can also be a specific body position but most often mudras are related to the hands.

We are in fact always doing mudras unconsciously for example when someone is feeling uncomfortable, they often fold their arms to protect themselves. This creates both a physical and energetic protection. To consciously use a mudra, you can work with body and hand positions to create a shift in the body, mind, and subtle system. Each mudra has a certain characteristic. When you hold a mudra, prana must change its course and channel whatever energy that specific mudra calls forth. This is a way of affecting all the planes of being that initiates from the physical plane.

You will be utilizing each one of the following mudras in pranayama and to prepare for the Chakra Dhyana Meditation.

For guided meditations on each mudra: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Prayer Mudra- Anjali Mudra



Anjali means “divine offering” and Anjali mudra is often referred to as prayer mudra. The positive side of the body (right side, male, pingala nadi), and the negative side of the body (left, female, ida nadi) are neutralized by bringing the palms of the hands together and flat. The tips of the thumbs are lightly pressed on the sternum at the level of the heart. This space is a reflex point for the vagus nerve, one of the major nerves going to the pineal gland up the front of the body. This pressure immediately causes your pineal and the pituitary glands to secrete. When they secrete it creates a resonance in your brain that moves it out of its normal rhythm and into a more meditative state.

This mudra also allows you to come from the heart. It is most often always used when centering yourself and preparing for meditation or yoga.

Instructions:

Close your eyes and bring the palms of the hands together and flat at the center of the chest. The tips of the thumbs are lightly pressed into the sternum at the level of the heart. Take a few deep ujjayi breaths here and tune into the energy you feel when you hold this mudra. When you are ready open your eyes.

Question:

- 1- What do you feel in the body, mind, and subtle system when you hold prayer mudra?

Venus Mudra



Venus mudra derives its name from the fleshy mound at the base of the thumb, which is called the venus mound. Pressure is applied to this mound by the thumb of the opposite hand. This mudra promotes glandular balance. It also helps you to focus and concentrate more easily.

Instructions:

Place the palms facing each other. Interlace the fingers with the pinky finger on the bottom. Place the opposing thumb onto the webbing between the thumb and the index finger of the other hand. The tip of the thumb that is on the outside of the hand presses the fleshy mound at the base of the opposite thumb.

Now rest your palms on your lap facing skywards, the pinky fingers are lightly pressed against the lower abdomen. Take a few deep ujjayi breaths here and tune in to the energy you feel when you hold this mudra. When you are ready open your eyes.

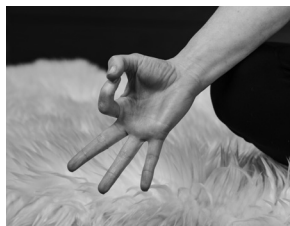
Question:

What do you feel in the body, mind, and subtle system when you hold venus mudra?

Gyan Mudra- Seal of Knowledge

Gyan mudra literally means, “the wisdom gesture”. True to its name, it increases wisdom and knowledge. When the index finger touches the thumb and forms a connection the prana that would normally dissipate out of the hands instead moves back into the body and brain.

There are two ways to hold gyan mudra: active and passive. Active Gyan mudra has a more active or projective energy. Passive Gyan mudra has a more calming or passive energy. Both are beneficial and either one serves in expansion and receptivity just simply through different pathways.

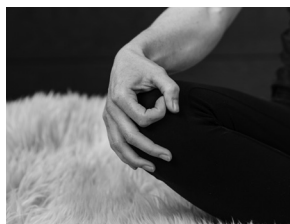


Active, Palms Up



Passive, Palms UP

Gyan mudra is most often held two ways on the physical body. One way is with the palms up and the other way is with the palms down. Each gesture is valid and has a different pathway to the same source of this mudra, which is wisdom and knowledge.



Active, Palms Down



Passive, Palms Down

With any of these variations of gyan mudra: active, passive, palms up, or palms down trust your intuition and do what feels good to you at any given moment.

Instructions:

Move into a comfortable seated position either on a chair or seated cross legged on the floor. Cultivate your ujjayi breathing for a moment.

Now to form active gyan mudra, curl the index finger under the thumb so that the fingernail is against the joint of the thumb. The thumb holds its place steady, while the index finger slightly pushes up against the thumb forming the active Gyan mudra. The other fingers are straight.

Now maintain that hand position, place the hands palms up on your knees if you are seated cross-legged or on your lap if you are seated in a chair. Breathe here for a moment and notice how you feel.

Keep the hands in active gyan mudra and place the palms down lightly cupping your knees if you are seated cross-legged or palms down on your lap if you are seated in a chair. Breathe here now for a moment and notice how you feel.

To form passive gyan mudra, curl the tip of the index finger to the tip of the thumb. The other fingers are straight.

Now maintain that hand position, place the hands palms up on your knees if you are seated cross-legged or palms up on your lap if you are seated in a chair. Breathe here for a moment and notice how you feel.

Keep the hands in passive gyan mudra, place the palms down lightly cupping your knees if you are seated cross-legged or palms down on your lap if you are seated in a chair. Breathe here for a moment and notice how you feel. When you are ready open your eyes.

Conscious Breathing

Question:

1- Which form of gyan mudra do you prefer, active or passive? Why?

2- In gyan mudra do you prefer your palms up or your palms down? Why?

As you continue, when you are instructed to hold gyan mudra intuitively move into either the active or passive form, palms up or down. Trust your intuition and hold what feels good to you in that moment.

Chapter 17

The Connection: Pranayama and Meditation Practice

Breath, Bandhas, Mantras, and Mudras

You will now move to create the connection between ujjayi breathing, bandhas, mantras, and mudras.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Sitting in a chair or cross-legged, rest your hands lightly on your lap in venus mudra. Take a moment to cultivate deep diaphragmatic breathing. Feel the diaphragm as it expands and contracts on every inhale and on every exhale.

Begin now to move into ujjayi breathing, inhaling and exhaling through the nose. Listen to the sound of the breath and feel it within the body. Knowing that you are free to inhale in through the nose and out through the mouth at any time you feel you need to. Then move back to ujjayi breathing.

Now place the hands in prayer mudra at the center of your chest, allowing the thumbs to lightly touch the sternum. Take three deep rounds of ujjayi breaths here. Then, on your next exhale, chant the mantra Om either externally or internally three times. Each Om takes up the length of the exhale.

Now, bring your hands to either gyan mudra or venus mudra. Pick the one that feels best to you at this moment. Continue to maintain ujjayi breathing and focus now on engaging the bandhas. On every exhale, engage maha bandha: the root lock- mula bandha, diaphragm lock- uddiyana bandha, and the beginners neck lock. On every inhale keep the beginners neck lock engaged, releasing the diaphragm lock, and relaxing the root lock slightly.

On every exhale feel as if the energy of the breath is concentrating in on the spine moving from the base of the spine at the first chakra all the way up to the sixth chakra.

Conscious Breathing

Continue this way until you feel the body and mind relax into meditation. From here you have a few options. You can either move straight into the Chakra Dhyana Meditation (Chapter 20), an individual chakra meditation (Chapter 15), or into your own personal meditation.

*Note that once you fall into a meditative state it may not be necessary to engage the bandhas so intensely. The breath may also become less engaged and move more internal.

When you are done with meditation move into Savasana, corpse pose, by lying down on your back and close your eyes. Take a moment to lift your chest off the ground, rotate your shoulder blades underneath you and come back down. Feel the chest and shoulders open. Allow your hands to relax palms up about a foot away from the sides of the body. The legs are straight and the feet about two feet apart, naturally falling open. Notice the back of your neck and slightly tuck your chin to lengthen it. Adjust the glutes towards the heels to take the excessive arch out of the low back. Relax for 5-20 minutes.

End your practice by sitting up and coming once again into prayer mudra and chant the mantra om externally or internally three times on each exhale. Seal the practice with gratitude.

Question:

1-How does it feel to engage ujjayi breathing with bandhas, mantras, and mudras?

The Connection: Pranayama and Meditation Practice

2-Did you find it easier to move into meditation after utilizing these aspects? Explain your experience.

Conscious Breathing

Chapter 18

The Eight Limb System of Yoga

In the science of yoga there are eight limbs. We have gone into great detail about one of these limbs which is pranayama. This limb has the capacity to guide you into the other four limbs that follow it.

The first two limbs of Yamas and Niyamas will manifest as you bring conscious attention in your everyday choices and actions. In the next chapter you will be taught the yoga asanas. The total eight limb system from beginning to end includes:

Yamas- The five restraints of injury to others, untruthfulness, stealing, unwisely expending sexual energy, and possessiveness.

Niyamas- The five disciplines of self-study, self-discipline, purity of mind and body, contentment, and contemplation on the divine.

Asanas- Postures designed to still and purify the body, mind, and subtle system and create correct posture so that the spine may remain straight for pranayama.

Pranayama- The control of the subtle life force energy, prana, within the body through the medium of the breath, which prepares one for the awakening of kundalini.

Pratyahara- Withdraw from the five sense organs that bind the consciousness to the human form alone, beginning the conscious awakening of kundalini.

Dharana- Concentration upon the awakened kundalini energy, cosmic consciousness, and the true self.

Dhyana- Conception, by feeling and intuition, of cosmic consciousness and the true self.

Samadhi- The ultimate realization of cosmic consciousness and the true self.

Conscious Breathing

Another way to see it is that Yama and Niyama prepare the physical body and mind to begin to unite through the Asanas, yoga postures, on a conscious level. The physical body and mind, once consciously united, then allow the conscious connection to prana in the subtle body to be realized with less distraction from the physical body through pain or discomfort.

Pranayama is then utilized to gain control of prana and create an opening for the awakening of kundalini energy consciously. Pratyahara is experienced when there is withdrawal from the five sense organs alone that root you only to the physical world. It is here the kundalini has now awakened and begins its ascent up sushumna nadi and through the seven chakras.

Through Dharana, continued concentrate on kundalini, cosmic consciousness, and the true self, you can then open yourself up to experience Dhyana-the actual conception through feeling and intuition, of cosmic consciousness and the true self on a conscious level. From Dhyana, you can then move to the ultimate realization, Samadhi, of cosmic consciousness and your true self.

Chapter 19

Asanas: Yoga Postures Series

Asana means posture in Sanskrit. The following yoga postures is a series that is focused on supporting the process of moving into your pranayama practice. It brings vitality to the spine and help to clear, rejuvenate, and align the physical body along with the subtle system. I would recommend you do this before you move into pranayama and meditation when time permits. It will also be easier to maintain and ascend the kundalini through a vessel, in this case the physical body, that is adept to movement, breath, and bandhas.

It is obvious that when the physical body is in pain, it is difficult to focus. Even when the breath, bandhas, mantras, and mudras move to create a healing effect in the body, the discomfort can create a distraction. This is exactly why yoga asanas were created.

As found in the detailed description of the first chakra on a pranic level, the reason it's important to pay attention to the physical is that the condition of your physical body determines in part how much prana you can hold on to. If you could plug a 120-volt desk lamp into a 240-volt outlet, the light bulb would burn out. Likewise, your body will channel only the amount of prana you are able to receive physically. Believe me, it does not serve anyone to explode when they touch cosmic consciousness and their true self. But it does serve greatly to be able to hold within the body the Mahaprana that comes with awareness of cosmic consciousness and your true self.

Asanas/Postures

It is important to note that all movement is done while ujjayi breathing except for the occasion when you feel you need to exhale out through the mouth. Also remember that with every exhale all bandhas are engaged, and the length of the neck is maintained by the beginner's neck lock, except on the occasion when you are consciously lifting the chin forwards and upwards.

Conscious Breathing

Instructions:

For guided Asana Practice: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Sit cross-legged, easy pose, knees relaxing downward and rest your hands on your lap in venus mudra or gyan mudra. Take a moment to cultivate deep diaphragmatic breathing. Feel the diaphragm as it expands and contracts.

Begin now to move into ujjayi breathing, inhaling and exhaling through the nose. Listen to the sound of the breath and feel it within the body. Connect to your bandhas and continue to cultivate ujjayi breathing. Engage maha bandha with every exhale and with every inhale focus on the sixth chakra. Once again feel free to inhale in through the nose and out through the mouth when you feel you get to and then move back to ujjayi breathing.

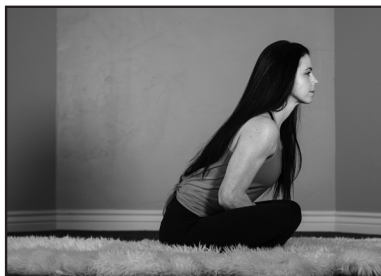
Now place your hands in prayer mudra and chant internally or externally the mantra Om one time.

Spinal Flex

Stay seated in easy pose with the knees continuing to relax downwards towards the floor, reach both hands around and grab your forward shin or ankle. The eyes may remain open or closed. As you inhale, push the chest forward and lift the rib cage. Relax the shoulders down the back and the chin may slightly tuck. As you exhale, round the spine back and allow the shoulders to round forward. The head will come forward slightly but keep the focus on rounding the spine and keeping the chin as level as possible. The focus is on stretching through the shoulder blades. Continue this movement with the breath for 1 to 2 minutes.



Step 1



Step 2



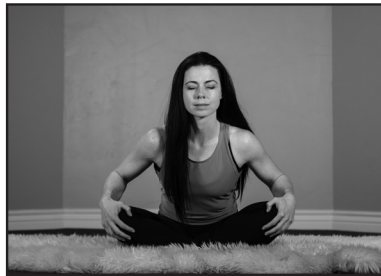
Step 3

Waist Rolls

The eyes may remain open or closed. Stay in easy pose and lightly cup your hands on your knees. Imagining as if your chin is a pencil and begin to draw a circle around the body with your chin. This circle can be as big or little as you would like. Inhaling draw the top half of the circle in front of your body and exhaling draw the back half of the circle behind your body, continue circling with your breath in a fluid motion. After 30 seconds reverse and go in the other direction.



Step 1



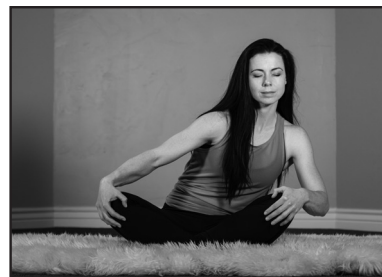
Step 2



Step 3



Step 4

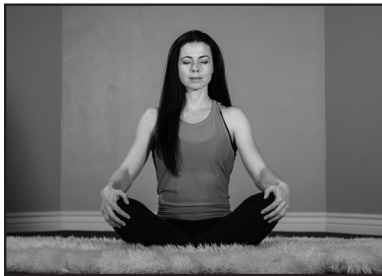


Step 5

Conscious Breathing

Upper Spine Flex

The eyes may remain open or closed. In easy pose, place your hands on your knees. On your inhalation, pull your body forward bending at your elbows. The chest will be lifted, and the shoulders press back. On the exhalation round the spine back, rounding through the shoulders, and straighten your elbows. Continue with fluid movement inhaling forward and exhaling back for 1-2 minutes.



Step 1



Step 2



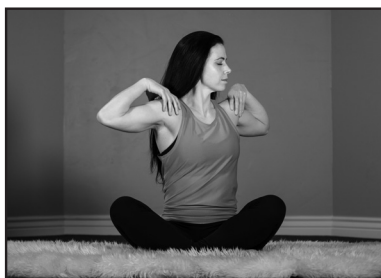
Step 3

Twist

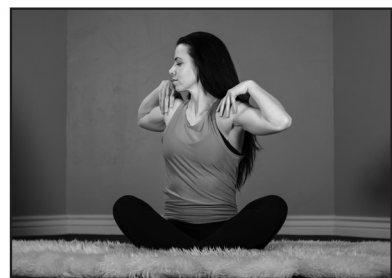
Still sitting, bring your hands up to the shoulders with the fingers in front and thumbs in back. Straighten the spine, close your eyes, and begin twisting side to side as far as you can in each direction. The upper arms are parallel to the ground and the head moves with the shoulders. On your inhale, you twist to the left and on your exhale, you twist to the right. Breathe rhythmically and continue in a fluid motion for 1-2 minutes.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

Neck rolls

Stay in easy pose, eyes open or closed. Keeping the jaw relaxed and the mouth slack, begin to rotate through the neck in a circular motion. Inhale as you round towards the back and exhale as you round towards the front. Move meditatively and slowly as if the weight of your head is taking your neck around. Do this 2 or 3 times and then reverse and go the other direction.



Step 1



Step 2



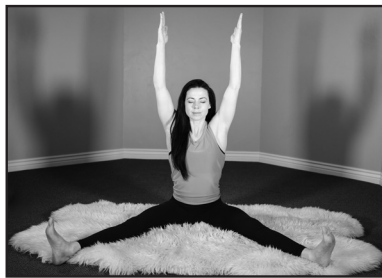
Step 3



Step 4

Straddle Stretch

From a seated position, move your legs far apart; Create a V-shape. Keep your toes flexed up to the sky and inhale your arms up overhead reaching the fingertips upward. Close your eyes. As you exhale, fold over the left leg and reach for the toes of the left foot. As you inhale, bring the arms back up over head to center. As you exhale fold over the right leg and reach for the toes of the right foot. Inhale back to center. To modify simply reach as far down the leg as you can. Continue this movement exhaling over the left leg, inhaling back to center, and exhaling over the right leg. Repeat for 1 minute.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



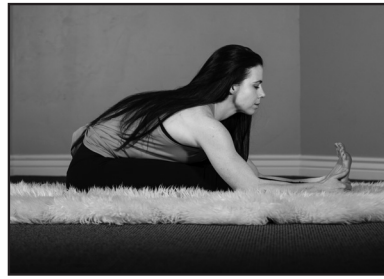
Step 4

Seated Forward Fold

From seated, straighten the legs in front of you and exhale fold forward. Continue to hold the forward fold inhaling and exhaling over the legs keeping your back as straight as possible. Hold for 30 seconds.



Step 1



Step 2

Bridge lifts

Lie down on your back, bend your knees, and plant your feet hip distance apart. Lift your hips and reach for the ankles grabbing the hands around the ankle. If this is not possible currently, reach your fingertips to touch the back of the ankles, palms down. Keep your hands where they are, and exhale lower the hips down. On your inhale, lift the hips up towards the sky. Continue this movement. Inhaling lift the hips up and exhaling lower the hips down all the while reaching for the ankles. Continue for 30 seconds.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

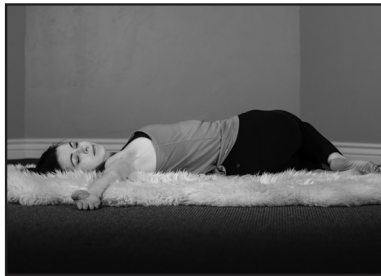
Conscious Breathing

Floor Spinal twist

Lie down on your back and hug your knees into your chest. On your exhale, drop the knees out to your right and look over your left shoulder allowing the arms to be straight out in a T-position, palms facing skywards. Hold for 20 seconds. On your inhale, bring the knees back up to center and exhale drop the knees to your left and look over your right shoulder. Hold for 20 seconds then coming back to center hugging the knees into your chest.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

Spinal rolls

On your back hug your knees into your chest. Now move to rock up and down along your spine. Do this 8-10 times.



Step 1



Step 2

Seated Forward Fold

Roll all the way up into a seated forward fold, round through the back by bending your knees and hug your arms underneath the hamstrings. Hold for 10 seconds then move into pranayama.



Step 1

Pranayama

Prepare and move into pranayama (Chapter 17) or proceed straight into the Chakra Dhyana Meditation (Chapter 20). If you feel you get to, you may also move into an individual chakra meditation (Chapter 15) or any other personal meditation.

Conscious Breathing

Chapter 20

Chakra Dhyana Meditation

Chakra Dhyana is a very ancient and powerful meditation over five thousand years old. It involves concentration on the seven chakras and kundalini energy. In doing this meditation, you can create union between all planes of being. This is done by cleansing, clearing, and energizing each chakra to its purest potential outside of the dualistic nature of ida nadi and pingala nadi. This is because after the chakra moves into its purest potential, the neutral point of the chakra can be opened. This neutral point is opened through sushumna nadi and then the kundalini energy can flow there.

The purification of each chakra is done by concentrating on the breath, bandhas, chakras, bija mantras, mudras and of course kundalini. To begin, you will concentrate on the first chakra. From there you will awaken kundalini and encourage its ascent through all the seven chakras, which also correlate to the koshas and planes of being, including the physical body, mind, emotions, spirit, and the true self in the divine.

The goal is to unite the kundalini within your body to its source in the seventh chakra, the all-pervading cosmic consciousness that is the essence of Mahaprana and your true self. This union is the realization of the self through all levels of being with the purpose of being the embodiment of your true self while walking on the earth.

It is important to approach this meditation with a childlike demeanor, open and unattached to the outcome, because everyone's experience will be different. It is of utmost importance that you keep your spine straight so that the flow of kundalini can be free to move throughout your chakras.

You can either perform Chakra Dhyana on your own or if you choose, you can follow the recorded meditation provided. If you are doing it on your own, you can chant the mantras internally or externally. The same is true if you choose to listen to the recorded guided meditation, with the added option of simply listening to the mantra but continuing the breath, bandhas, and concentration throughout the meditation.

Conscious Breathing

To perform Chakra Dhyana, you will concentrate on the name of that chakra in its Sanskrit form, visualize that chakra on the spot mentioned in the body and its corresponding color. As you focus on that area of your body and the chakra, the bija mantra is then chanted. Once again, the bija mantra represents the pure vibration of that corresponding chakra. You can chant along externally, internally, or just listen, silently visualizing the cleansing and energizing of that chakra. As you experience the bija mantra, visualize that chakra growing brighter and brighter to its corresponding color. The individual bija mantra for each unique chakra will be repeated seven times.

After each individual bija mantra is chanted, you will then call on the energy of kundalini after every one of the seven chakras by chanting kundalini aroharnam. Aroharnam means to climb or ascend in Sanskrit. As kundalini aroharnam is chanted, visualize that chakra being flooding with a bright golden light. The golden light represents the cosmic consciousness and union of body, mind, and spirit in that individual chakra. As you continue this process through all seven chakras, remember to surrender to the moment and be one hundred percent present.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

To Prepare for Chakra Dhyana-Pranayama

Sitting in a chair or in easy pose rest your hands lightly in your lap in venus mudra. Take a moment to cultivate deep diaphragmatic breathing. Feel the diaphragm as it expands and contracts on every inhale and exhale.

Begin now to move into ujjayi breathing, inhaling and exhaling through the nose. Listen to the sound of the breath and feel it within the body. Feeling free to inhale in through the nose and out through the mouth at any time during this meditation when you feel you get to. Then back to ujjayi breathing.

Now place the hands in prayer mudra at the center of your chest, allowing the thumbs to lightly touch the sternum. Take three deep ujjayi breaths here. Then, on your next exhale, chant the mantra om either externally or internally three times, each om taking up the length of the exhale.

Now bring your hands to either gyan mudra or venus mudra. Pick the one that feels best to you at this moment. Continue to maintain ujjayi breathing and focus now on engaging the bandhas. On every exhale engage the root lock- Mula bandha,

diaphragm lock- Uddiyana bandha, and the beginners neck lock. On the inhale, keep the beginners neck lock engaged, allowing the root lock and diaphragm lock to relax slightly.

Let the ujjayi breathing continue with the engagement of bandhas on every exhale. On every inhale, feel as if you are expanding in all directions and on every exhale, feel as if you are getting lighter and lighter. Now move into the Chakra Dhyana meditation.

Important Notes-

Note that the breath and bandhas may naturally get lighter, needing less effort of engagement the higher you move up the chakra system. This is because prana has increased within the body and subtle system and great effort of engagement in bandhas is no longer necessary. Also, realize that you may naturally want to suspend the breath, and this is the process of moving naturally into Kumbhaka, breath retention, but this is not the focus of the Chakra Dhyana Meditation. Just be aware it may occur through the process and notice your own sensations, feeling free to let it occur if it happens naturally.

When kundalini awakens true to its name as coiled it will begin to uncoil. If you feel you get to move your spine along with the movement of kundalini, feel free to do so as it supports its ascent up to the seventh chakra and is also a natural process. This may or may not happen with you. Just know it is a possibility and honor the movement if it occurs.

Also, note the unique mantra for the third chakra in this meditation. The reason for this is because there is a powerful gateway to pass through to connect to the fourth chakra. This gateway is opened by the mantra, "om mani padme hum," which represents generosity, ethics, patience, perseverance, and practice of wisdom. This replaces the Sanskrit name of calling on this chakra as Manipura. You will call on this chakra instead by saying, "om mani padme hum," and then continue to its bija mantra. This is noted below.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Chakra Dhyana Meditation

1. Begin with the first chakra, Muladhara, located in the region of the perineum, midway between your anus and genitals.

Chant "Om Muladhara". Visualize its red color. Slowly chant "Lang" (pronounced lung) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

2. Move to second chakra, Swadhisthana, located in the region of the lower abdomen, below the navel.

Chant "Om Swadhisthana". Visualize its orange color. Slowly chant "Vang" (pronounced Vung) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

3. Move to the third chakra, Manipura, located above the navel in the region of the upper abdomen.

Chant "Om Sri Mani Padme Hum". Visualize its yellow color. Slowly chant "Rang" (pronounced rung) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you say "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

Om: perfection in practicing generosity

Mani: pure ethics, tolerance, patience

Padme: perseverance, concentration

Hum: practice of wisdom

4. Move to the fourth chakra, Anahata, in the region of your chest.

Chant "Om Anahata". Visualize its green color. Slowly chant "Yang" (pronounced Yung) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

5. Move to the fifth chakra, Vishuddhi, in the region of your throat.

Chant "Om Vishuddhi". Visualize its sky-blue color. Slowly chant "Hang" (pronounced hung) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

6. Move to the sixth chakra, Ajna, located in the region between your eyebrows and slightly above.

Chant "Om Ajna". Visualize its indigo blue color. Slowly chant "Om" (pronounced aum) seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

7. Finally, move to the seventh chakra, Sahasrara, located in the top of your head and the region slightly above.

Chant "Om Sahasrara". Visualize its violet purple color. Slowly chant "Ogum Satyam Om" seven times, and then visualize the chakra turning liquid gold as you chant "Kundalini, aroharnam" seven times.

*Note for the purpose of the Chakra Dhyana Meditation, you will use the mantra Ogum Satyam om pronounced "oh-goom saught-yahm aum" for the seventh chakra. This mantra symbolizes the highest heaven, absolute truth, and the divine plane of being. It is chanted to connect all the chakras to the seventh.

8. Focus now on Sahasrara, the seventh chakra. Stay here as long as you would like, continuing to focus on the crown of your head. When you are ready lie down on your back moving into Savasana, corpse pose.

9. In Savasana, corpse pose, lying on your back, close your eyes. Take a moment to lift your chest off the ground rotate your shoulder blades underneath you and in towards the center of your spine. Come back down feeling the chest and shoulders opening, allowing the hands to relax palms up about a foot away from the sides of the body, with the legs straight and feet about two feet apart, naturally falling open. Notice the back of your neck and slightly tuck your chin to lengthen it. Slightly adjust the glutes towards the heels taking any excessive arch out of the low back. Relax for 5-20 minutes. Let go. Enjoy. Notice the dynamics of the energy in your body as the kundalini flows.

Conscious Breathing

Question:

1- What did you experience moving through the Chakra Dhyana Meditation?

2- Was there any individual chakra you felt kundalini energy not moving into or concentrating its energy on more intensely? If any list which ones below.

If this occurs, you may continue the Chakra Dhyana Meditation as suggested in the practice schedule guideline (Appendix 1) at least once a week with the added option of moving into the individual chakra meditation for the chakra you felt was not embracing kundalini. These meditations are found in Chapter 15.

Optional: Parvathi Padma Dhyana after Chakra Dhyana

After concentrating on the seventh chakra, you can also move into the continued meditation given below that includes breath retention, Kumbhaka.

Note this is an advanced practice. Until you are adept to ujjayi breathing and the engagement of the lower two bandhas, it is suggested that you wait to add the full neck lock, Jalandhara bandha, with Kumbhaka into your pranayama practice. Instructions for the neck lock and Kumbhaka can be found in Chapter 13. You can still perform this meditation with Kumbhaka while utilizing the beginners neck lock as an option.

Also, be aware if you have heart/blood pressure issue or are pregnant it is best to avoid breath retention. If you suffer from asthmatic issue stop when it causes discomfort. You may also practice this meditation without breath retention and simply use the visualizations.

Instructions:

For guided meditation: mymeditationshop.com/consciousbreathing

Parvathi Padma Dhyana

- 1.** Seated with your eyes closed, visualize a golden lotus at the seventh chakra, Sahasrara, with a stem flowing down through your spine and into your first chakra, Muladhara, at the perineum.
- 2.** As you inhale for the entire count of five visualize a golden energy flowing up the stem from the first chakra, Muladhara, towards the golden lotus in the crown of your head, Sahasrara.
- 3.** Retain your breath at the top of the inhale, Kumbhaka, for a count of five while holding the beginners or full neck lock. As you retain the breath, visualize the golden energy filling every petal of the lotus in the seventh chakra.
- 4.** As you exhale for the entire count of five, feel the energy coursing down through every cell in your body. Feel it flood each chakra as it moves down the spine and out through the arms and the legs.
- 5.** Repeat this cycle seven times.

Conscious Breathing

- 6.** Moving now to unite the heavens and the earth, bringing with you healing and transformational energy to the planet and all living creatures that live here. Inhale visualize the golden energy flowing up the spine into the golden lotus at the crown of your head.
- 7.** Retain your breath at the top of the inhale, Kumbhaka, for a count of five while holding the beginners or full neck lock. As you retain the breath, visualize the golden energy filling every petal of the lotus.
- 8.** As you exhale for the entire count of five, this time feel the energy coursing down through your entire body and out through the soles of your feet, into mother earth. All the way down to the core of the earth and out to all sentient beings living on the earth, turning the entire earth a golden light.
- 9.** As you inhale now bring the energy up through the soles of your feet, into the crown of your head, and out into the heavens.
- 10.** Retain your breath at the top of the inhale, Kumbhaka, for a count of five while holding the beginners or full neck lock. This time visualizing the golden light continuing to flow out the crown of your head reaching towards the heavens.
- 11.** As you exhale now allow your breath to become equal. Inhaling and exhaling for the same count, ideally for the count of five. Do this 3 times.
- 12.** As you exhale allow the energy of the golden light to move out the soles of your feet once again and root this energy down into mother earth, connecting, and breathing. Grounding this energy into your physical body and knowing that you are not only creating space for yourself to connect and heal but for every being on this planet to do so. Connecting with love, connecting with light. This is the golden light of love within all of creation.
- 13.** Staying seated as long as you like meditating on the crown of your head, Sahasrara. When you are ready move into Savasana for 5-20 minutes.

Question:

1- What was your experience of Parvathi Padma Dhyana?

2- What did you feel happening with breath retention?

Conscious Breathing

3- Did breath retention feel like it came naturally or was it forced?

If you felt it was uncomfortable and forced, skip Parvathi Padma Dhyana and instead go back to pranayama, Chakra Dhyana, or any other meditation until your body can adjust to the increased amount of prana within the body, mind, and subtle system. Be patient and know it will come naturally with continued practice on the foundational techniques.

Appendix 1

Practice Schedule Guideline

Week One:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19
Pranayama: 5-15 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17
Savasana: 5-15 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17
Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Week Two:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19
Pranayama: 5-20 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17
Savasana: 5-20 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17
Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Week Three:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19
Pranayama: 10-25 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17
Savasana: 5-20 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17
Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Week Four:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19
Pranayama: 10-25 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17
Savasana: 5-20 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17
Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Conscious Breathing

Week Five:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19

Pranayama: 10-30 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17

Savasana: 10-20 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17

Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Week Six:

Asanas: 15-20 minutes morning or night. Chapter 19

Pranayama: 15-30 minutes each morning and evening. Chapter 17

Savasana: 5-20 minutes following pranayama each morning and evening.
Chapter 17

Chakra Dhyana: 45 minutes at least once this week replacing the
pranayama practice. Chapter 20

Continued practice can repeat week six or simply by personal intuition. I would suggest you get a practice journal and write your experience with pranayama and meditation each day for greater self-awareness and insight. Take note that you can also practice pranayama, bandhas, internal mantras, and mudras anywhere you go including the car, store, etc.

Also remember this is a journey. Be aware not to get caught up in technique alone and forget the purpose of it all, to create union to the divine and your true self!

May that divine light within you that radiates from your true self and the divine continue to guide your way on. You are the light, Namaste.

Glossary

Anandamaya Kosha- Vital sheath of bliss that relates to the divine true self.

Annamaya Kosha- Vital sheath of the physical body.

Apana Vayu- Prana that fills the colon in the physical body. Apana Vayu plays a vital role in awakening kundalini energy.

Asana- Physical Posture or position.

Astral Body- Energy equivalent of the physical body, yet it can expand and contract.

Bandhas- Internal body locks.

Casual Body- Thought body for the astral and physical body.

Chakra- A vortex or pranic center in the subtle body that channel prana both in the physical body and subtle system.

Chakra Dhyana- Meditation that involves concentration on the seven chakras and kundalini energy.

Clairs- The four pathways that the sixth sense or intuition utilizes to communicate. They include clairvoyant (clear seeing), clairsentient (clear feeling), claircognizant (clear knowing), and clairaudient (clear hearing).

Consciousness- The sense of awareness and knowing.

Cosmic Consciousness- The conscious aspect of Mahaprana that extends into all levels of being.

Dhyana- Meditation

Divine- Of, from, or like God.

Embodiment- The representation or expression of something in a tangible or visible form.

Energy- Information that vibrates.

Conscious Breathing

Enlightenment- Is a final spiritual state in which everything is understood and known. It is the deepest of peace.

Ida Nadi- One of the channels used by prana that moves up the spine like a double helix and relates to the feminine, moon, yin, emotional, and mental life force energies.

Intuition- The ability to access knowledge, inner sensing, inner insight without the need of conscious reasoning or the logical mind alone. Also called the sixth sense.

Kinetic Aspect – Kinetic refers to motion. The kinetic aspect of creation is considered kundalini energy because as it moves it creates.

Kundalini- When kundalini is “sleeping”, it is considered the dormant cosmic life force energy that ties the spirit to the astral and physical form through connecting it to the five sense organs alone. When kundalini awakens, it moves from its dormant state to ascend back up the sushumna nadi to meet once again in the crown of the head, the seventh chakra, with Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness. This creates union to the true self.

Mahaprana- The cosmic life force energy of cosmic consciousness that extends into all levels of being.

Manomaya Kosha- Vital sheath of the mental body and conscious mind.

Mantra- A sound vibration used to regulate the body, mind, and subtle system.

Mudra- Hand or body positions that gives a clear energetic message to the body, mind, and subtle system.

Nadis- Channels that transport subtle and physical energy.

Pancha Koshas- Five vital sheaths that encase the physical body.

Pingala Nadi- One of the channels used by prana that moves up the spine like a double helix and relates to the masculine, sun, yang, logic, and vital life force energy.

Planes of Being- Levels of existence through consciousness. These include the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and the divine/true self.

Prana- Individual life force energy that enlivens the physical, mental, and subtle system.

Prana Vayu- Prana that fills the head, lungs, and throat in the physical body.

Pranamaya Kosha- Vital sheath of the breath body, sometimes called pranic body.

Pranayama- The practice of controlling prana in the body, mind, and subtle system through the medium of the breath.

Sushumna Nadi- The main nadi that runs through the spinal cord and the cerebral cortex. This is the pathway that kundalini energy takes when awakened to unite one again with Mahaprana and cosmic consciousness.

Static Aspect- Static refers to changeless. The static aspect of creation is considered cosmic consciousness because it always is. It is outside of time and space; It is changeless because it is what it is.

Subtle System- Refers to energy that vibrates both within the physical and beyond to the subtle levels of existence.

True self- That part of you that goes beyond the physical and merges with infinity yet again is also a part of the physical.

Ujjayi Breath- Victorious breath, created by breathing in and out through the nose and makes a slight hissing sound.

Vayus- Individual prana in the physical body that enlivens the physical form only.

Vijnanamaya Kosha- Vital sheath of the knowledge body that relates to the unconscious and superconscious mind.

Yoga- Union, refers to the union of body, mind, and spirit.

Notes

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About the Author

Holly Semanoff has been teaching and leading workshops in various yoga traditions for over fifteen years. She is also an accomplished international IFBB professional fitness competitor that has ranked top eighth in the world at international Arnold Sports Festivals.

Aside from all her physical accomplishments in the fitness industry, she is also a spiritual catalyst for awaking the body, mind, and spirit connection. A reiki master, clairvoyant, light healer, channeler, and founder of the Body of Light, she uses all her abilities and knowledge to teach others how to create their own connection with source.

Additional Recourses:

BodyofLight.com - For live workshops and consciousness retreats

MyMeditationShop.com – Guided meditations and products to support your meditation practice.

SpiritTalks.com – Connect with other spiritually minded people in your area.
Spirit Talks also include live events and online conversations.