

Pranayama homework weekend 7

Week 2

“When prana moves, chitta (mental forces) moves. When prana is without movement, chitta is without movement. By this steadiness (of prana) the yogi attains steadiness and should thus restrain the vayu (air)”

Hatha Yoga Pradipika, chapter 2 verse 2

Nadishodana Nadi= energy channel, shodana=purification

In pranayama we use mudras. Mudra means seal or gesture.

Mudras can involve the hands, eyes or the tongue.

Mudras enhance the flow of energy and intensify the effects of yoga and meditation.

The Theory

This pranayama is an alternate nostril breathing practice.

It purifies the nadis and balances the flow of the vital energy, prana through the ida and pingala nadis.

Also it balances the breath through the right and left nostril. When ida and pingala become balanced, movement is stimulated in shushumna nadi, so kundalini can start rising.

In Nadishodana we use **2 hasta (hand) mudras**:

1. Jnana mudra: Jnana means wisdom:

- Left hand in Jnana mudra on left knee: thumb and index finger together, palm is up.

Thumb: symbol of Supreme Consciousness, Brahman

Index finger: symbol of Individual Consciousness,

Jivanatman

This mudra helps to stabilize the mind, concentration and helps meditation.

2. Vishnu mudra: Vishnu symbolizes being the protector of the world and activates the first 3 chakras.

-Right hand in Vishnu mudra:

Index finger and middle finger on the mouse of hand. Using thumb and ring finger to close alternate nostrils

This hand mudras are used in Alternate nostril breathing as Nadishodana.

The Practice

We use a kumbhaka in between in and exhalation and ex- and inhalation.

As the Patanjali mentions: the retention of the breath is when meditation can happen.

In this practice we will use a count of 6: Inhale 6, hold for 6, exhale for 6, hold for 6.

You can take shorter counts or longer, making sure the counts are equal.

Do this pranayama for at least 10 rounds each time.

How to do:

- Sit in a steady comfortable position, spine elongated, eyes closed
- Bring your right hand in Vishnu mudra, left hand in Jnana mudra
- Inhale and exhale through both nostrils
- Hold your right hand next to your right nostril
- Closing with thumb the right nostril
- Inhale through left nostril count of 6
- Closing with ring-finger left nostril
- Exhale through right nostril
- Inhale through right nostril
- Close right, exhale left

- Inhale left, closing left exhale right
- This is 1 round
- Now continue
 - Ending with an exhale through the left nostril
 - Coming back to breathing naturally through both nostrils
 - Sitting still, and watch the natural breath, sensations, feelings and thoughts
 - Stay seated or after a while lay down into Shavasana

Time of the practice

Nadishodana is done before an asana practice, after Shavasana or before meditation

Homework:

Practice once a day.

- Sit in a quiet place, find a time, preferable same time daily
- Be aware that your shoulders stay relaxed otherwise change and start using the left hand in Vishnu mudra and the right Jana mudra
- Do this pranayama for 10-15 minutes.
 - Afterwards sit and meditate (relaxed awareness, without a focus) for 5 min.
- Rest in Shavasana for 5 min.
- Keep a diary.

You might start noticing small changes in the day.