

Beginner's Meditation Manual

Learn How to Meditate

By Anmol Mehta



For Joy Peace Health Compassion Wisdom

Zen – Mantra – Chakra – Mind - More

Fully Illustrated

Hosted on www.AnmolMehta.com

Dedicated to My Soul Mate

Trupti Mehta

Be a Light Unto Yourself

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PLEASE READ FIRST

Learn Meditation Program Overview:

How the Learn Meditation Program works is that every week you have certain chapters for study and certain techniques you must practice. These details are in the weekly syllabus chapter for each of the 4 weeks of the program. Just follow this syllabus for the 4 weeks and you will come out the other end a very strong meditator.

In addition to the meditation techniques and articles, I have also included simple yoga exercises and yoga breathing exercises for you in the manual. Although to meditate they are not specifically required, they can certainly supplement a meditation routine nicely, so are worth learning and incorporating into your daily practice.

If you have any questions or issues you may email me at anmol@anmolmehta.com and I will be glad to help. Sometimes I may take a few days to reply as there are many students enrolled in these programs.

How to Use This Manual:

I would like to mention a few important words about how to best use this training manual.

- Please note that this entire manual has active live links. All links are in [blue and underlined](#). When you move your cursor over the link, it will display the target page and change into a small hand. To visit the target page simple click the link and it will take you to the respective page on the website.

- Please note that this manual is a collection of articles from the Mastery of Meditation and Yoga website. These articles all put together, in the order given, create the Learn Meditation Program. I have preserved all the links within the original articles so you can easily access the related materials as well if it interests you. All this took a lot of work, I hope you all benefit from it 😊.
- The Learn Meditation Training Program also consists of 14 videos. These videos are obviously not in the e-book, but each chapter which has a video is clearly marked and you should click that chapter title or link provided to go to the website where you will find the video you need to watch. **All chapter titles in [blue](#) are links as mentioned above.**

All chapters with videos, alert you using the following statement:

“THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK”

How the Meditation Program Works in Detail:

As I mentioned above the learn meditation training program is designed for 4 weeks. Below is how it all works.

- For each week, certain objectives are set. These are listed in the respective weekly syllabus chapter as *Knowledge* objectives, things you must learn, and *Techniques* objectives, which are things you must practice.
- These objectives are met via a weekly study section and a practice section. The study section comprises of chapters you need to read and study for that week, and the practice section has the techniques you must practice.

- The practice section has a Pranayama (Breathing) Section, a Gentle Yoga Section and a Meditation Section. You need to practice these daily. I have given approximate times for each section, but this is a soft number. You may take a little more or little less time than the one suggested depending on your capacity and level.
- The approximate time for the study and practice sessions is 1-2 hours per day, depending on your previous knowledge and skill level.
- For each week there are also Optional Readings and Techniques listed. These will enhance your understanding, but are not required in order to learn the basics of meditation.

If you have enrolled in the program please go ahead and begin as soon as you are ready. Remember if you have any issues or questions, you can email me for help and support at anmol@anmolmehta.com.

All Good Wishes,
Anmol

You can get more information on meditation, yoga and spiritual growth on my website <http://www.AnmolMehta.com>. All information there, is available for free. I also welcome your feedback and you can email me at anmol@anmolmehta.com.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ

Please check with your health care professional before starting any exercise or yoga program. The information provided within is intended to be used under professional instruction and guidance. It is not a substitute for medical care and attention. Please use common sense and walk the middle path as you develop your spiritual practice. We are not responsible for the consequences of the exercises or programs. The same applies to all the other material provided here, it is provided AS-IS with no warranties or guarantees. We are not responsible for, and will not compensate in any way for, any loss or damage related directly or indirectly to the information on this site. Thank-you.

Chapter 1

Week 1 Syllabus:

Objectives:

Knowledge:

- Learn the basics of meditation
- Understand the basics of pranayama for meditation
- Understand the basics of yoga for meditation
- Learn safety rules for yoga and pranayama

Techniques:

- Learn Sound Awareness Meditation Technique
- Learn Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise
- Learn Spinal Warm-up Series

Articles for Study:

- [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#)
- [10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)
- [Beginner's Guide to Pranayama Practice](#)
- [How to Meditate](#)

Daily Practice:

Pranayama: 1-3 mins

- [Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise](#)

Yoga: 10 mins

- [Best Asana for Meditation](#)

- [Forward Bending Yoga Asana](#)
- [Spinal Warm-up Series](#)

Meditation: 20 mins

- [Sound Awareness Meditation Technique](#)

Chapter 2

Essential Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice

***Summary:** A beginner guide for those who are new to the world of yoga. This guide details the 3 most essential guidelines for doing yoga exercises, as well as lists the other important requirements you should know before starting your practice.*

Key Concepts: beginner yoga, yoga instruction, yoga guidelines, yoga practice, starting yoga, how to practice yoga, basic yoga, yoga tips

Although there is tons of information on Mastery of Meditation on yoga, I wanted to glean some of the most important information and compile it here for those of you who are beginners or new to yoga practice. This quick reference guide applies to all of you who are just starting your yoga practice and is independent of the type of yoga you are taking up.

Three Essential Guidelines of How to Practice Yoga:

Yoga is not just a series of exercises, poses or movements. As I have pointed out in the article [Comprehensive Guide to the World of Meditation](#), yoga is a type of body meditation. It is meditation in motion. For you to extract maximum benefit from your yoga practice, these three key elements are a must and never to be forgotten.

1. Do Yoga Exercises With Full Awareness:

Try to be as aware as possible of every posture and movement you are making during your practice. Check throughout your yoga session, as to where your mind is, and if it has wandered away, gently bring it back and focus again on the poses and the breathing. This is the

number one requirement of doing yoga, regardless of whether you are just a beginner yogi or a yoga master.

In addition, if certain feelings or energies awaken within you, bring your attention to them and observe them taking their course as you move through your practice.

2. Never Over Strain When Practicing Yoga:

As the requirement above, this guideline also applies to both beginner yoga practitioners as well as advanced yogis. When doing my yoga teacher's training course, what surprised me quite a bit, was how often these seasoned yogis were getting injured. Yoga is a journey, it is to be enjoyed and the sights and sounds taken in, it is not a competition.

If you are just beginning your practice, you need to give yourself time to gauge your capacity and limits. So start offering in the side of caution, rather than being over zealous. Learn to listen to your body. As you start to better understand your body and energy, you can start to explore your limits further and increase the challenge you place before yourself. Even as your yoga expertise develops, never forget this important rule of not overdoing it.

3. Yoga & Breathing Go Hand In Hand:

Don't forget to breathe! There are 2 aspects of breathing which every beginner yogi should be cognizant of:

First, yoga poses and exercises, generally have some breathing pattern associated with them. This breath component of the yoga posture should not be ignored. The breathing plays a very important role in yoga and in order to get the most out of your yoga practice, employ the correct breathing along with the movement.

Second, pranayama, or the science of expanding and controlling prana (chi/life-force) is a key aspect of yoga and should be an integral part

of your yoga practice. So, in addition to developing your physical yoga practice, be sure to also develop your expertise in pranayama. As a beginner, make sure you start off gently, as pranayama is a very powerful science and make steady progress over time.

A final word about yoga breathing, your breath can be a good anchor to help you retain your awareness when your mind is wondering. So it can go a long way in helping you with meeting the requirement of mindfulness, explained in guideline #1 above.

Other General Guidelines for Beginner Yoga Practitioners:

Having detailed the essential guidelines above, I will provide a bullet list below of some other general guidelines for the beginner yoga enthusiast to reference.

- Don't eat a big meal at least 2-3 hours before your yoga practice.
- Wear comfortable athletic or other loose clothing so that your movements are not restricted.
- Try to do your yoga practice early in the morning if possible.
- Make sure your yoga space is well ventilated.
- If you have medical conditions, select your yoga exercises accordingly.
- Drink plenty of water after practice to wash out toxins released by the yoga sets.
- It is fine to use yoga props to help you, such as blocks, blankets, cushions etc.

- It is fine to use music while practicing yoga, but not during silent meditation.
- If you find a great yoga teacher, awesome, if you don't, use your inner guru to guide you.
- It is recommended to start and end your yoga practice with a prayer to the Lord.

The most important requirement in order to benefit from yoga is to practice. So jump in and start your journey, everyone is welcome.

Chapter 3

10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice

10 Important Guidelines For Kundalini Yoga Practice

The following is a list of suggestions to help guide you on how to practice Kundalini Yoga, Kundalini Yoga Kriyas (sets) and Yoga sessions in general. To understand more about what Kundalini Yoga is and how Kundalini Yoga works, please read the following article [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#).

1. Kundalini Yoga Attire:

1. Clothing should generally be loose and comfortable. Unlike other schools of Yoga, in Kundalini Yoga it is advisable to keep the shoulders and spine covered, so practicing without any covering on the upper body is not recommended. This has to do with the awakening, flow and distribution of Kundalini Shakti up and down the back, specially its movement via the 3 main psychic channels (ida, pingala and shushumna) that lie in and along the spinal cord.
2. Kundalini Yoga is generally practiced barefoot.
3. A blanket can be used to cover the body after doing a Kundalini Yoga Kriyas, during the relaxation period. Most Kriyas are followed by a period of relaxation that is usually done in corpse pose (shav asana) and during this time the body temperature tends to drop, so a blanket (or shawl) can be used to stay warm and comfortable. You will fall asleep at least once, no worries we have all done it :-).

2. **Kundalini Yoga Diet:** This is a rather big topic, but here I will just provide some important highlights.

1. Try not to eat at least 2-3 hours before doing your Kundalini Yoga Kriyas and asanas. Given that Kundalini Yoga uses many different bandhas (body locks), pranayamas (breathing exercises), asanas and vigorous movement, you could be quite uncomfortable if your stomach is still full. Use a nutrient bar or other healthy snack if you feel you need some energy prior to your yoga set.
2. Although Yoga in general recommends a Sattvic diet (foods that promote calmness and clarity), and not Rajasic foods (energetic foods that promote activity) or Tamasic foods (foods that promote heaviness and dull the mind), due to the physical, energetic nature of Kundalini Yoga, including some Rajasic foods in your diet is not a significant issue. Still it is recommended that the bulk of your diet be Sattvic. Sattvic foods are generally fresh and sweet such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey etc. Rajasic foods are generally spicy and stimulating, such as onions, garlic, eggs, fish, tea etc. Tamasic foods are fatty foods, stale food, meat, etc.
3. Kundalini Yoga Kriyas are designed to force the organs, tissues, nerves and vessels to expel buried toxins out into the elimination systems of the body. So after any Kriyas or tough yoga set, one should drink plenty of water to help cleanse the body of the toxins and waste that have been released.

3. **Kundalini Yoga Breathing:**

1. Kundalini Yoga significantly relies on the Science of Pranayama (breathing exercises) to work its magic. Each

exercise and asana is accompanied by a specific pranayama. Unless it is specifically specified all pranayama should be done through the nose.

2. Although Jal Neti (washing the nostrils with saline water) is recommended for cleaning the nasal passageways to help maximize the benefits of the pranayamas, it is advisable as a minimum to keep a box of tissues handy.

4. Kundalini Yoga Safety:

1. Some Kundalini Yoga Kriyas can be quite challenging and it is recommended to always do warm-ups first before doing these tough sets and asanas. There are several good easy kriyas and sets, which work very well as warm-ups to the tough kriyas. It is especially important to do spinal warm-ups as charging the cerebrospinal fluid within the spinal cord and brain assists in the flow of awakened Kundalini Shakti.
2. This item can't be emphasized enough. Don't overdo it. Try to walk the middle ground between fanaticism and laziness. This goes for both, your overall practice and also for each kriya and asana you do. In other words, each exercise you do should not be too easy and not be too hard, and your overall sadhana (spiritual practice) should be equally balanced, between being ridiculously ambitious or excessively easy. With regard to your sadhana try to establish a steady, long-term daily practice, rather than doing 10 hours a day for 2 weeks and then nothing after that.
3. This is probably the most important guideline. Use common sense with regard to injuries. Use modifications that are provided for the difficult asanas and exercises and back off if you feel you are risking injury. Also, feel free to

increase the relaxation time between exercises or reduce the time suggested for doing a particular exercise to suit your pace. As my yoga teacher Ravi Singh used to say, Kundalini Yoga is all about you and you - it is not a competition - so listen to your body and let your inner voice guide and direct you.

4. The Kundalini Yoga teachings and methodology provided here have been perfected over the centuries to not only, optimize the benefits of the Kriyas, but, also to reduce any dangers and risks associated with awakening Kundalini Shakti. The general idea is not to activate the chakras by excessively using the Beej Mantas (seed sounds) associated with each chakra or other direct methods; the idea, instead, is simply to prepare the system physically, emotionally and mentally for greater and greater flow of Kundalini Shakti. The approach is to trust the Universe to awaken this energy in accordance with the level of preparation. This approach helps avoid many of the difficulties involved with the premature awakening of Kundalini that one sometimes comes across in literature.

5. Kundalini Yoga Teachings:

1. It is suggested to initially learn Kundalini Yoga from a teacher who can ensure that the knowledge is accurately transferred. If possible you should at least try to attend a few live yoga classes so that you can get a feel for the kriyas, asanas, and pranayamas. But keep in mind that the real Guru is within and is always available to guide you if asked.
2. There is also some good literature and websites available, which provide guidance and resources for practicing Kundalini yoga. You can look for books written by [Swami Satyananda Saraswati](#) and [Ravi Singh](#) or visit their

websites for more information. Of course you can also go to the [Kundalini Yoga Section](#) or the general [Yoga Section](#) of this website for plenty of good stuff too: -D.

6. When to Practice Kundalini Yoga: In general Kundalini Yoga should be practiced in the early morning hours. But if you can't do your sadhana at that time, it is fine to practice at other times of the day as well. Some Kriyas, such as those that help you sleep, etc. of course need to be practiced at the designated times. Below are some reasons to motivate you to practice in the early morning hours. You can also read [The Secret on How to Become an Early Riser](#) if this is something you want to accomplish.

1. Early morning is called brahmamuhurta in Sanskrit. It literally means "The Divine Time." This is the time of the day when the spiritual energy on our lovely planet is at its highest.
2. The air at this time is fresh and contains the greatest amount of prana (cosmic life force).
3. The mind is also fresh and unburdened with the worries of everyday life. This will help in the practice of concentration and meditation.
4. This is the time of day when you are least likely to be distracted by the hustle and bustle of everyday life.
5. The stomach is empty, which is necessary before practicing many of the Yoga asanas and pranayamas.

7. Where to Practice Kundalini Yoga: It is important for the place where you practice Kundalini Yoga to be neat, spacious and clean, but more importantly it should be well ventilated. You can also use a fan to keep the air fresh, but make sure it is

not pointed directly at you. Practicing outdoors is fine as well, although in direct sunlight it may become too warm due to the energetic pranayamas and exercises.

8. Tools for Kundalini Yoga Practice:

1. It is fine to use inspirational music when doing the Kundalini Yoga kriyas and sets, but music in general should not be used when doing the meditations, unless it is specified otherwise.
2. You can use a firm cushion, yoga block or folded blanket to sit on if it helps take the pressure off your knees, hips and back. You may also use a zafu, smile cushion and zabuton to practice the meditations or kriyas if you like. I have ordered my zafus and zabutons from here and have been very happy with them zafu.net.
3. It is recommended for obvious reasons to make sure you are not practicing on a slippery surface. A yoga mat or appropriate yoga rug should be used.
4. To help you stretch and hold certain asanas it is fine to use a yoga blocks or yoga straps.
5. Yoga neck pillows or folded blankets are fine to use to support your neck or lower back (by placing under your knees) during relaxation periods while in shav asana and similar asana.

9. Medical Conditions and Kundalini Yoga Practice:

1. Kundalini Yoga should never be practiced under the influence of alcohol or drugs. You are about to awaken the most potent force within yourself, trust me you wont need

to get a high of anything else once you start this journey.

2. If you are taking prescription medication, or are under medical supervision you should check with your health care provider before starting a Kundalini Yoga Program.
3. If you are pregnant you should check with your health care provider before proceeding. There are also Kundalini Yoga kriyas specifically designed for Pre-natal and Post-natal periods.

10. **Kundalini Yoga Attitude:** Be committed and trust in the Universal Forces to guide, nourish and deliver you. Kundalini Yoga is a very powerful science and you will find it an invaluable asset in helping you reach and surpass your maximum potential.

Chapter 4

Beginner's Guide to Yoga Breathing Exercises (Pranayama)

How to Practice Yoga Pranayama

The vast benefits of yoga pranayama, or yoga breathing exercises, are now starting to be discovered by mainstream society. It is inevitable; to those of us familiar with this profound science, that pranayama will gain equal, if not greater, popularity than the physical yoga exercises (Hatha Yoga Asanas) have done so far. This is because pranayama is absolutely something everyone can practice, regardless of age or physical prowess. If you can breathe, you can do pranayama.

The beauty with yoga breathing is that simple techniques can bestow terrific benefits and that learning and practicing these techniques is something well within reach of us all. Whether you are a beginner or advanced yogi, pranayama is something you will find to be a powerful tool to help you with your spiritual evolution. That being said, there are certain guidelines and recommendations that you should follow with regard to pranayama practice, and in this article I would like to provide those to you.

If you are an advanced yogi, from the point of view of Hatha yoga practice, and you have not done much pranayama, then you should approach this science with the same respect as a beginner would. This is because prana, or life-force, is the vast energy of atoms, and the body's capacity to handle such energy should be built up gently and systematically over time. Rushing pranayama practice can create imbalances in the systems and other problems that could easily have been avoided if an intelligent approach had been embraced.

Beginner's Guide to Yoga Pranayama Practice

1. **Clothing:**

Clothing should be loose, especially around the abdomen. This will ensure that the natural movement of the diaphragm is not impeded when doing the breathing exercises.

2. **Diet:**

You should not have eaten any heavy meal at least 2-3 hours prior to practicing pranayama. The stomach should be empty. It is fine to sip some water though during the practice to stay hydrated, especially when doing heat generating vigorous exercises. If your diet can consist of light, fresh food that will help the cleansing process as well.

3. **Time:**

Dawn is a terrific time to practice yoga and meditation, but this is more so for pranayama practice. This is because the early morning air is fresh and at this time the air contains the most amount of prana. Practicing at this time, will bestow benefits faster. Of course, if this is not feasible, no worries, practice when you can. Here is an article on [How to Help You Become an Early Riser](#).

4. **Posture:**

Always sit with your back as straight if possible. In addition, keep the chin slightly tucked in so that the back of the neck is aligned with the spine. This will help the flow of energy up and down the spine and up into the brain region. In addition, this will prevent you from getting dizzy during vigorous exercises.

5. **Illness:**

Whether you are a beginner or an advanced practitioner, do not practice any advanced pranayamas while you are unwell. Do the beginner versions of the breathing exercises or choose easy pranayamas to do instead. It is also fine to stop entirely until you have recovered fully.

6. **Effort:**

Again, regardless of if you are a beginner or advanced yogi you should never strain when practicing yoga. This is especially true when doing the breathing exercises. As indicated above, pranayama, which means the expansion and control of prana, deals with the nuclear energy of atoms and progress should be made gently and systematically.

This is even more applicable for any pranayama that requires you to hold your breath in or out for prolonged periods of time. If at all you feel uncomfortable while practicing a pranayama, stop, take a break and restart again when you feel ready.

7. **Cautions:**

Don't practice any heat generating pranayamas while sitting directly under the hot sun. This can aggravate the heat in the system (pitta). Similarly, choose pranayamas according to conditions and state of your health. In other words, don't practice [Sheetali Pranayama](#) if you are suffering from a cold or chest congestion, etc. The following [Overview of Ayurveda](#) can be a helpful guide to you on this topic as well.

8. **Location:**

Try to practice in a well-ventilated room with plenty of fresh air.

Summary

Yoga Pranayama is perhaps the best part of yoga. All the various types of yoga have contributed to this profound science and the following 2 e-books should give you plenty of techniques to incorporate into your daily practice: [Free Online Yoga Pranayamas E-Book](#) and [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises Videos](#).

If you are just beginning your yoga practice, definitely incorporate pranayama into it, if you are an adept yogi and have not indulged in pranayama, then it's overdue that you take advantage of this warehouse of profound wisdom.

Chapter 5

[How to Meditate](#)

Learn to Meditate

Meditation Instructions with Illustrations

Learning how to meditate is the most important part of being a human being. In fact, to uncover and embrace all that you are, meditation is the key. Meditation reveals to you the Truth of your infinite, divine nature, and there are absolutely no material equivalents to these discoveries. Along the way to Self-Realization, many other priceless benefits are also bestowed by meditation practice, and I have detailed those in the following article to help motivate you even further: [Top 10 Benefits of Meditation](#). So given how important meditation is, in this article, I would like to teach you step by step how to learn and practice this great art.

Preparation for Meditation:

One of the most important aspects of learning how to meditate and reaping the rewards of this spiritual science is to develop a consistent, daily practice. Without such a practice, you are unlikely to master this subtle art. I have previously discussed some tips on how to accomplish this in a few articles such as, [Tips and Tools for Daily Meditation Practice](#) and [How Much Time Should You Meditate for Daily](#), and I would like to summarize all that wisdom for you here today. So below are guidelines of what you need to set-up in order to maximize your chances of learning and succeeding in meditation.

1. Meditation Time:

To really increase the chances of meditation becoming an integral part of your life, set a particular time of day when you plan to meditate. Preferably this should be early in the morning if possible (See: [How to](#)

[Become an Early Riser](#)), but if not, then some other time of day when you can do your meditation consistently is also fine. For beginner's, the optimum configuration is 2 times per day, 20 minutes each session, once in the morning, once in the evening. This configuration has been proven time and again to be the best for those just learning to meditate.

2. Meditation Space:

Not far behind Meditation Time, is Meditation Space, if you want to learn meditation and establish a long-term, consistent practice. Having a space put aside for meditation, will make it much easier to do your daily meditation, and also help induce the right state of mind for meditation. The space should be inspiring, clean and simple, so that once you enter it, your mind reflects the outer order, thus making it easier to concentrate and penetrate beyond the superficial levels of consciousness.

3. Meditation Tools:

Don't underestimate the importance of simple meditation tools to help you learn and master this art. A good meditation cushion, or Zafu will help you with your posture and relieve you of back pain. Proper meditation attire will keep your blood circulating and prevent your legs from falling asleep. A stopwatch will help you stay focused during meditation, as it will relieve the need to constantly check the time. Some incense, or a candle, will help calm the mind and inspire your spiritual nature. So put these items in place, as they will not just inspire, but also help prevent some of the common pitfalls that derail an early meditation practice. The Tips & Tools article above, gives you more information on this.

You can purchase such items at your favorite yoga and meditation supplies store, or by visiting one of my partners if you like ([Yoga Accessories](#)).

Meditation Posture:

Once you have established your place and time. The next step is actually getting down to meditating. Although you can meditate sitting up straight on a chair or lying flat on your back, the traditional postures of meditation are sitting cross-legged with certain mudras (hand positions in place). These postures are the best for meditating and if you are learning how to meditate, I strongly suggest trying one of these sitting postures first.

Below I am going to show you three postures that are excellent for meditation. One is a basic posture, the second is a typical Hindu meditation posture, and the third is a typical Buddhist meditation posture.

How to Meditate Illustrations:



Basic Meditation Posture



Hindu Meditation Mudra - Gyan Mudra



Hindu Meditation Posture



Buddhist Meditation Mudra - Cosmic Mudra



Buddhist Meditation Posture

How to Sit for Meditation:

For all the postures above, following is common.

1. Sit up nice and tall, keeping your spine straight.
2. Pull your chin back slightly, like a soldier at attention, to align the back of the neck with the spine.
3. If possible sit in Burmese Style (or Full Lotus if you can). In Burmese Style fold your left leg in, and then place your right leg in front of it. The knees are touching the floor as shown above. This forms a very strong base, and also with the legs not on top of each other, prevents common leg issues, when meditating for longer periods of time.
4. For the hand position, there are 3 variations I have given above. Here are the details.
 - **Drona Mudra:** In this position (First Illustration), simply place your hands on your knees as shown.
 - **Gyan Mudra:** This is typically used in the Hindu/Sikh traditions, where your thumb tips and index finger are meeting and the other three fingers are extended as shown. This closes a particular subtle energy circuit in the body, and helps the mind go inward for meditation.
 - **Cosmic Mudra:** Place your right hand on your lap, and then gently place the left over it and have the thumb tips gently touching as I have demonstrated above. This is another excellent mudra for inducing a meditative state of mind. It is used in Buddhist meditation, especially Zen.

How to Meditate:

Now that you have got yourself into your meditative space and taken the right meditation posture, it is time to actually start meditating 😊. To do this, the final step is to choose what type of meditation you are going to practice. I have given a wide range of meditations in the [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-book](#) and I have also broken down meditations with regard to benefits, in the article [Meditation Techniques | the Ultimate Guide](#), but for those who are just learning to meditate I would suggest starting with Breath Meditation first. This is a simple technique with profound benefits. It is the meditation of Lord Buddha.

I have given details of this meditation in the article [Zen Meditation Technique](#), but I will offer them here as well.

- Once you take your posture, you can either close your eyes, or as it is in traditional Zen practice, keep them open with an unfocused gaze on the floor in front of you. Also, once you take your posture you should remain absolutely still, as if frozen in time.
- Next bring your awareness to your breathing and begin to count your breaths from 1 to 10, with each inhalation and exhalation incrementing the count. Once you get to 10, come back to 1 and start over. So you would do 5 complete breaths to get from 1 to 10.
- If your mind wanders during this time, simply see your thought, let it go and return to your count.
- If you get lost in your thinking, then again, simply see the thoughts that carried you away, let them go and return to 1, and start over.

Above are the basic instructions for breath meditation practice and it is a great way for you to learn how to meditate. The simple act of watching your breath in this way, will teach you great concentration, expand your awareness and give you mastery over your mind and body. As your meditation practice deepens, you can expand your awareness to be mindful of not just your breath, but of any sensations that arise in your body, any feeling or emotions that come up, and finally develop the art of watching and comprehending your thoughts from moment to moment. Perceiving your thinking mind and having direct insight into the false nature of duality and thoughts is the ultimate goal of meditation. For this advanced version of Insight Meditation, see the article [Silent Mind Meditation Technique](#).

How to Meditate Summary:

One of the most important goals of this website, is to help you master the art of meditation. As I mentioned at the very beginning, this is where the real treasures of life are found. Once you learn how to meditate, you will learn about your true infinite nature and see the perfection that is inherent in every moment of your life.

One final resource I would like to mention to help you learn to meditate if you are just getting started is the free online meditation class offered here on [Mastery of Meditation and Yoga](#). Below is the link to this class... enjoy!

[Learn How to Meditate | Beginner's Meditation Class](#)

Chapter 6

Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise

Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Breath of Fire Video - Free Online Yoga Videos](#)

What Is The Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

The first Yoga breathing exercise we will explore lies at the heart of Kundalini Yoga practice, it is the legendary Breath of Fire Yoga Pranayama.

As mentioned above this breathing exercise is absolutely essential to the practice of Kundalini Yoga. The roots of this pranayama are impossible to trace but I would like to thank my teacher [Ravi Singh](#) under whose expert guidance I learned this technique.

Tools Required for Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

Just your nose: -D.

Benefits of Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

Primary:

- Quickly oxygenates your blood, thus helping the body detoxify itself and remove waste more effectively.
- Builds lung capacity and helps purify the respiratory system.

- Generates heat and increases your level of energy by activating the energy flows in your body.
- Synchronizes your entire system under one rhythm, thus promoting greater internal harmony and health.

Secondary:

- Balances and strengthens the Nervous System.
- Magnifies the benefits of exercises done in conjunction with this breath.
- When done forcefully, the pulsating of the diaphragm massages the internal organs, thus improving the digestive system.

Cautions for Practicing Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga

Pranayama:

- If you feel dizzy when practicing Breath of Fire, you should stop and substitute normal breathing. If you suffer from vertigo, you should use caution in practicing this breathing exercise.
- If you are menstruating you should not practice Breath of Fire, use Long Deep Breathing instead.
- You should be careful practicing Breath of Fire if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy. Also, if you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution.

How To Do Basic Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- To practice this breathing exercise, sit up in a comfortable position.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position.
- Relax your stomach muscles.
- Now begin to breathe rapidly through the nose with equal emphasis on the inhalation and exhalation. It will be like very fast sniffing. Keep the breath shallow, just at the tip of the nose. Proceed at a comfortable pace and establish a steady rhythm. Pay no special attention to the chest or diaphragm other than staying relaxed. You will find the stomach will pulse on its own to the rhythm of the breath, continue for 1 minute. That's it.

How To Do Intermediate Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- Perform the breathing at a faster pace.
- Increase the duration of the exercise to 3 minutes

How To Do Advanced Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

- Build up the pace and power with which you do the breathing.
- Build up the time for this pranayama to 11 minutes.

Secret of Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama:

So the trick question is, "How many breaths are you taking when doing the breath of fire yoga pranayama"? This will be of some special

concern to those who believe in the idea that each of us is born with a preset number of breaths and once we finish our quota - the fat lady sings. So for those folks it would be rather alarming to practice this exercise regularly, as they would be drastically reducing their life span - but thankfully they need not worry. The beauty of this breathing exercise, aside from its lengthy list of benefits, is that it registers to the brain as only 1 breath. So put your worries aside and enjoy the practice of this pranayama, which I have found to be one of the real gems of Kundalini Yoga.

Chapter 7

[Best Yoga Asana for Meditation](#)

Kundalini Yoga Asana for Meditation Hatha Yoga Asana for Everyday Practice

Yoga Butterfly Asana (pose), just like [Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose](#), is recommended by kundalini yoga as an exercise that should be an integral part of your daily yoga practice. As this pose is part of both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga, it is part of both e-books, [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

Butterfly Pose, or Pooran Titali Asana, is how I always start my yoga practice. I remember doing this pose way back in high school during tennis warm-ups. I liked it back then and I still like it now.

This asana not only works to raise the frequency of your sexual energy, so that it can be used to enrich the higher centers, but it also promotes flexibility in the all important groin region and hips. Us marathon mediators understand well the importance of flexibility in these regions, as this helps us to sit for long periods of time. In fact, if there is one asana I was asked to recommend to help yogis sit in meditation, it would be Pooran Titali Asana.

Below you will find some illustrations of this simple yoga asana. I have shown two variations for the hand position and there are also two variations of how this stretch can be done, which I discuss in the practice section below.

Butterfly Yoga Asana for Meditation



Picture of Pooran Titali Asana 1



Picture of Yoga Butterfly Asana 2

Yoga Butterfly Asana for Meditation:

a. *Step-by-Step Instructions for Butterfly Asana:*

- Sit up straight and bring the soles of your feet together in front of you.
- Wrap your fingers around your toes (illustration #1) and gently pull your heels in towards your groin.
- Keeping your back straight, lean forward from the waist as far as comfortable.
- You should feel a good stretch in your groin region.
- Use your elbows as levers to push down on your calves or inner thighs.
- You may do this stretch with the [Breath of Fire](#) or with Long Deep Breathing.

b. *Duration for Butterfly Asana:*

- 1 - 5 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Butterfly Asana:*

- Excellent yoga asana to improve the flexibility in the groin and hips region. Both important regions for helping to sit in meditation.
- This asana transmutes sexual energy into higher frequencies, allowing it to be used to nourish and heal the higher chakra points. For more information on chakras you can read [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#).

d. Practice Tips for Butterfly Asana:

- A hand position variation you can use for this asana is shown in illustration #2. Here I wrap my hands around my ankles instead. This technique can sometimes provide a more intense stretch. Also, notice in illustration #2, how I am using my elbows to accentuate the stretch by pressing down on my inner thighs.
- Another variation to how this asana can be practiced is by bouncing your knees gently (like a butterfly flapping it's wings), instead of holding the stretch steadily. In this variation, make sure you don't force the legs too much. To assist in this variation you can also hold your knees and press down gently on the downward stroke. This technique helps open up the hips more.
- As the end of this asana, you can inhale deeply, hold your breath and apply root lock (or mula bandha) to help redirect the energy back into the spinal cord. Root lock is described in the following article: [Raja Yoga Set for Awakening Kundalini Shakti](#).

Chapter 8

[Best Hatha Yoga Pose for Spontaneous Healing](#)

Hatha Yoga Pose for Health & Healing Kundalini Yoga Posture for Self-Healing

If you decide that you are going to do just one hatha yoga pose a day, I would tell you to choose this one. It is called Paschimothan Asana, or simply The Forward Bend. This terrific posture also goes by some other names, such as Seated Head to Toe Pose and Back Stretching Pose.

This pose is also a key component of kundalini yoga and according to kundalini Yoga; it is a fundamental stretch that you should perform every single day. As this pose is part of both hatha yoga and kundalini yoga, it is part of both e-books, [Free Online Hatha Yoga Poses Galleries](#) and the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Poses E-Book](#).

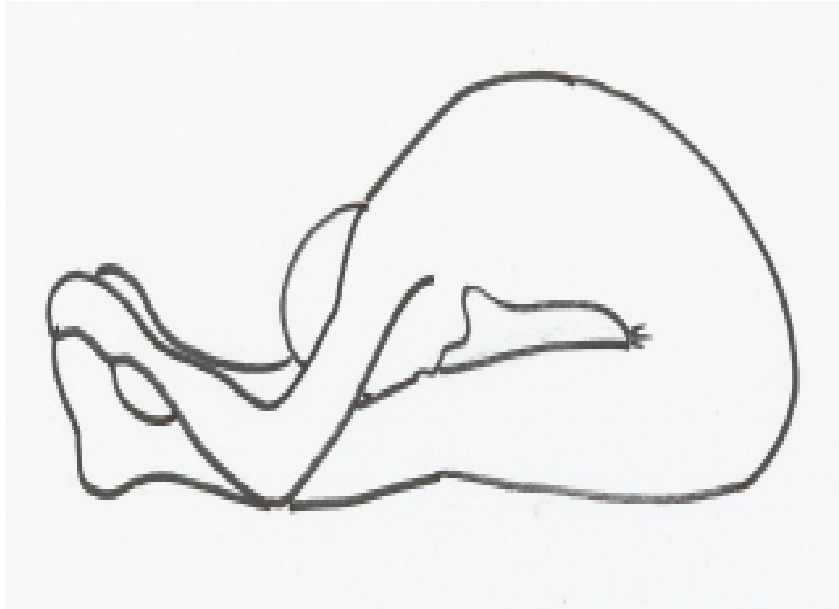
In hatha yoga, this yoga asana can be categorized as both, a forward bending posture or a seated posture.

The reason why this pose is so highly recommended is because when it comes to healing and longevity, no other posture is as effective. Spontaneous healing, miraculous healing, conscious healing has all been attributed to doing Paschimothan Asana. And, as if that was not enough, this pose also has other important health benefits, which are detailed below the illustration.

Thanks to my wife Trupti for the following fine illustration of Back Stretching Pose. Yes, I managed to tear her away briefly from the children to help with the blog again. You will find her singing contribution in the article, [The Greatest Vedic Devotional Mantra](#), and below I got her to put her artistic skills to good use as well... in

exchange, of course, for doing innumerable house hold chores and changing dirty diapers, so I hope you all appreciate the effort here: -D.

Back Stretching Pose for Health & Healing



Picture of Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose

Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose Practice Details:

a. Step-by-Step Instructions for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:

- Sit with both legs extended straight in front of you.
- Make sure the legs are parallel and feet pointing straight up.
- Reach forward with your hands and hold onto your legs as low as possible without bending the knees.
- If you can hold your toes that's great, if not, arch them back towards you while holding your shins, knees or thighs. This will

ensure you are stretching the calves and nerves.

- As you reach towards your feet, ensure you are bending from the waist and try to keep the back as straight as possible. Try to bring the forehead to the knees if possible.

b. *Duration for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:*

- 1 minute - 5 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:*

- Excellent yoga pose to promote natural and spontaneous healing.
- Bestows health and longevity.
- Expands your entire nervous system, especially stretching the sciatic nerve, whose length, according to kundalini yoga, is directly related to the length of your life.
- The asana also promotes flexibility and strength in the hamstrings and calves.
- The pose stretches the entire back, with emphasis on the lumbar spine.
- Excellent posture to tone and rejuvenate the entire digestive system and all the important digestive organs. The liver, spleen, pancreas, kidneys, intestines, stomach all benefit from this pose.
- Helps fight obesity.
- Helps dissolve blockages that run along the shushumna (primary psychic channel for the flow of prana and kundalini. For more on

this topic, see [Kundalini Seven Chakra System Overview](#)).

d. *Practice Tips for Hatha Yoga Back Stretching Pose:*

- Do not strain excessively when doing this stretch. When doing the pose, start off stretching gently and as your body gets warmed up, extend the stretch further.
- Try not to hunch over as much, instead try to concentrate of bending forward from the hips.
- As a variation to holding your toes, you can instead hold your big toes only and pull back on them.
- It is MUCH more important to keep your legs straight, than it is to reach your toes.
- Try to keep the back as straight as possible.
- As an additional chakra breathing meditation for this pose, as you inhale feel or visualize energy being drawn in from the soles of your feet, up along the back of your legs to the base of your spine, and then as you exhale, visualize the energy passing up the center of the spine and then out through the crown of your head. Continue to do long deep breathing in this manner as you hold the pose.

Chapter 9

[Spinal Warm-up Yoga Exercises](#)

Free Online Book of Kundalini Yoga Poses and Kriyas - Spinal Warm-up Yoga Exercise

Kundalini Yoga Kriyas: Hatha Yoga Poses: Yoga Meditation

The first Kundalini Yoga Kriya we will explore is a very handy set called the Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises.

Kundalini Yoga Kriya #1 - Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK

[Video of Spinal Warm-up Series](#) from the [Free Online Yoga Video](#) series.

Purpose of Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

This kundalini yoga kriya is a very good set for doing as a warm-up before doing more advanced kriyas or doing independently if one is starting to put together their yoga practice. It very effectively warms up the most important part of the physiology, which are the entire back and especially the spinal cord region. Through the spinal cord runs the main subtle energy channel (shushumna nadi), which is considered the most important conduit for the movement of kundalini energy throughout the body. Also, along the spine lie the primary energy centers (chakras) and as kundalini energy moves up and down the spine it activates and balances the chakras and the associated organs and glands of that region.

Description of Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

1. Yoga Stomach Grind:

a. *Guided Instructions for Yoga Stomach Grind:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed.
- Hold onto your on your knees.
- Grind your stomach in a big circle counter clockwise for half the time of the exercise. Visualize drawing a big circle with your naval.
- Switch after half the time and grind your stomach clockwise.

b. *Duration for Yoga Stomach Grind:* 1-3 minutes

c. *Benefits of Yoga Stomach Grind:*

- Excellent yoga exercise for your digestive system as it gives all your important digestive organs a massage, forcing out toxins and waste into the elimination systems of the body.
- Works on the ileocecal valve insuring the proper direction for the flow of nutrients and waste.
- Warms up and loosens the lumbar area of the back.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Stomach Grind:*

Make sure you are not leaning forward and back from the waist, this is the most common mistake people make. You have to arch your lower back as you move forward and arch back as you move in that direction.

2. Spine Flex Yoga Exercise: (also called Yoga Camel Ride)

a. Guided Instructions for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

- Sit up on your heels and rest your hands on your knees (rock pose).
- Inhale and arch your back forward pushing your sternum out. Exhale and bring your sternum in, arching your back out.
- Continue at a comfortable pace and rhythm.

b. Duration for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise: 1-3 minutes

c. Benefits of Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

- Stretches the middle back and spine.
- Opens up the solar plexus promoting better flow of energy between the lower and higher centers of the body.
- Improved emotional balance.

d. Practice Tips for Spine Flex Yoga Exercise:

If you have hard time sitting on your heels you can place a small cushion under your feet/ankles for added comfort.

3. Cat-Cow Yoga Exercise:

a. Guided Instructions for Cat-Cow Yoga Exercise:

- Come onto your hands and knees, placing your hands shoulder width apart and knees hip distance apart.

- Inhale as you arch your back by pushing your stomach down and bringing your head up. Open your eyes and look upward. This is cow pose.
- Now, while exhaling, arch your back up by pushing your stomach up and bringing your head down (like a cat).
- Continue at a comfortable pace and rhythm going between the 2 poses.

b. *Duration for Cat-Cow Yoga Exercise:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Cat-Cow Yoga Exercise:*

- Works on stretching your entire spine and strengthens all the nerve junctions that lie along the spinal cord.
- Give your entire system a glandular tune-up.
- Improves your eyesight and works on the optical nerve.

d. *Practice Tips for Cat-Cow Yoga Exercise:*

Make sure, you are not rocking back and forth, just your spine (and head) are moving.

4. Yoga Twist:

a. *Guided Instructions for Yoga Twist:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed.
- Hold your shoulders with your fingers in front and thumb in back.

- Your elbows should be parallel to the ground and at shoulder level.
- Inhale as you twist to the left; exhale as you twist to the right. Your head moves with your torso.

b. *Duration for Yoga Twist:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Twist:*

- Promotes flexibility in the entire back.
- Massages the inner organs.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga twist:*

The motion should be continuous and keep the pace at a level you are comfortable with. Slow down if you start to feel dizzy.

5. Yoga Neck Rolls:

a. *Guided Instructions for Yoga Neck Rolls:*

- Sit up with your legs crossed.
- Open your mouth as if in a half yawn.
- Roll your neck in a big circle going in one direction for half the time and then switch directions for the rest of the time.

b. *Duration for Yoga Neck Rolls:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Neck Rolls:*

- Releases tension in the neck and shoulders.

- Promotes better blood flow to the brain and higher centers.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Neck Rolls:*

Spend additional time working on areas, which feel particularly tight or knotted.

That concludes the Spinal Warm-up Kundalini Yoga Exercises.

Chapter 10

Sound Awareness Meditation Technique

Free Online Guided Meditation Book for Daily Practice

Background of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

This simple, yet profound meditation technique does not belong to any particular religion or sect. Its origins, generally, lie in the Eastern Philosophies and due to its effectiveness various schools of meditation have adopted it.

Tools required for Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

- An alarm clock, stopwatch or other time device.

Benefits of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Builds choiceless awareness of the present moment.
- Builds ability of detached observation - ability to let go.
- Silences the mind of thoughts.
- Provides insight into the workings of your mind.

Secondary Benefits:

- Develops the auditory system.
- Promotes health and wellbeing.

Cautions for Practicing Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

Your auditory system will improve significantly by practicing this meditation technique, so please protect your ears when exposing yourself to very loud places as you will be more susceptible to sound induced hearing damage or tinnitus (ringing in the ears). If you feel the place is way too loud (like a dance club, rock concert, etc.) just use a common pair of ear plugs, they work fine.

Guided Sound Awareness Meditation Technique: Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique.

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also lie on your back, sit on a chair or lean against a wall for this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.
- If sitting, elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position.
- Close your mouth, swallow your saliva creating a slight vacuum and place your tongue against the roof of your mouth. After this point there should be absolutely no more movement of the body. No fidgeting, scratching, shifting - nothing - be like you are frozen in time.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.

- Now bring your attention to your breath without trying to manipulate it further in any way, just become aware of its flow. Spend a few minutes just observing it intimately till it starts to become regular and relaxed.
- At this point turn your attention to the ambient sounds in the environment. Slowly expand your awareness to the most distant sounds you can hear and start to pay close attention to them. Just listen to the actual sounds that are taking place without getting thinking involved as best you can. If the sound is constant, just attend to it, if it rises and then dissolves, notice that. **The quality of your attention should be that of a detached witness - you are just standing apart and listening to the music of life.** If you find yourself lost in a mental story line, notice those thoughts and then gently return your attention to the sounds you were attending to. Spend some time, up to five minutes or so listening to the far away sounds and then slowly bring your attention to sounds closer and closer to you. Continue this till you are listening to the sound of your breath or other sound in very close proximity to you. That is all there is to this simple, yet very effective meditation.

Hints and Tips for Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

- You can practice this meditation technique anywhere, so take advantage and experiment with it in various areas of your life.
- Try this meditation technique when it is raining, using the sound of the rain as the object of your careful attention. It helped reveal to me the secret below.

Secret of Sound Awareness Meditation Technique:

This meditation technique is certainly designed to bring you into the present and develop your power of detached observation, but the illusion that this meditation works to dissolve is the illusion that there

is an inside and an outside. Listen very, very carefully and you will realize that all sounds are only taking place inside you. That everything is only taking place inside you. You are everything. Observer is the Observed. Tat Vam Asi - Thou Art That.

Chapter 11

Week 2 Syllabus:

Objectives:

Knowledge:

- Expand your knowledge about the art of meditation.
- Learn the principles of living.

Techniques:

- Learn a more gentle yoga pose for meditation.
- Learn Kapalbhatai Pranayama
- Learn So Hum Mantra Meditation.

Articles for Study:

- [5 Key Principles of Living an Enlightened Life](#)
- [The Top 5 Mistakes in Establishing a Daily Meditation Practice](#)
- Review the Articles from Week 1 so you have a sound foundation.

Optional Reading and Techniques:

- [3 Easy Kids Meditation Techniques](#)

Daily Practice:

Pranayama: 1-5 mins

- [Kapalbhatai Pranayama](#)

Yoga: 10-15 mins

- [Basic Yoga Poses](#): Poses 1-8 are gentle yoga, but if you are more fit you can do the entire set if you like.

Meditation: 20 mins

- [So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique](#)

Chapter 12

5 Key Principles for Living an Enlightened & Good Life

I think it's time to update the famous [Yamas](#) (Dos) & [Niyamas](#) (Don'ts) spelled out by the great [Yoga Sage Patanjali](#). These observances are the ethical and moral requirements generally accepted by Yogic teachings. Don't get me wrong, I am a big fan of Patanjali and the Yoga Sutras, but frankly, I was never very impressed with the Yama Niyamas that he laid out in the Sutras. Furthermore, recently I am seeing many attempts to broaden and reinterpret the meanings of these observances to make them "fit" better and be more comprehensive, and I think these arguments are getting a bit out of hand. For example, "celibacy" is being translated as healthy sex with your partner if you are married and between the ages of 25 and 50 with no adultery. I mean come on, let's just be brave and come up with a new model. It could very well be that in Patanjali's time these Dos and Don'ts made sense, or it could be that they were meant for a different purpose than what is currently thought (I suspect Ashram rules to assist in the study of Yoga), but, in any case I think it's time to put forth a new set of principles for [enlightened](#) living and that is the focus of this article.

The 5 Universal Principles below for living an enlightened and good life is the result of decades of spiritual exploration, experimentation and self-study. These are the principles that I live by. They are my [mantras](#), my vows and I have found them to be extremely helpful in navigating the waters of spiritual living and help forge a sweet life. First, I will just briefly list the original Yamas & Niyamas of Sage Patanjali, which can also be found in the article [Introduction to the Universal Principles of Yoga](#), and then I will go into my 5 principles for living an enlightened and good life.

Original Yamas Nyamas from the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:

- **Yamas:** Yamas are self-restraints. They are non-violence, truth, control of sexual desires, stealing and covetousness (non-greed).
- **Niyamas:** Niyamas are self-observances. There are 5 niyamas. These are contentment, self-study, austerity, purity and devotion to the Lord.

New & Improved 5 Key Principles for Living an Enlightened and Good Life:

1. Relax:

This principle is not to be brushed over. It is the key to developing the right approach towards life and all the twists and turns that inevitably come your way. If you can stay relaxed you will have a chance to break the reactive pattern of automatic response to conditions, thus, meeting more of the moment with more of your being. It all begins with having this ease of being. To relax means not to be easily swayed by the pull of dualities. Neither, buying excessively into the promises of gain nor fearing excessively the consequences of loss. Here are some articles that explore the concept of relaxation in more detail: [Embrace Reality and Let the Universe Fulfill Your Desires](#), [Shunryu Suzuki Speaks on Enlightenment & Zazen Practice](#) and [Today I Finally Passed the Test & Officially Became a Man](#).

2. Witness:

This is a big task I know. No human being ever has or probably ever will be able to bear witness constantly to all that is taking place within their mind and body. That being said, the more you can do it the more awareness will illuminate the inner walls of your mind, thinking and emotions. At the end witnessing is really all that is needed for enlightenment, so devote yourself to this practice of mindfulness. As

[Osho](#) and [Gurdjieff](#) describe it, look with double arrowed awareness. One arrow observing, that which is being done, thought and felt, while one arrow observing the doer, thinker and feeler. This is the secret to self-knowledge and being a light onto yourself.

In addition, witnessing is the basis of all insight meditation and you will find more details, hints and tips on this practice in the following articles: [Brain Development & Enlightenment - Insight Meditation - Part 3](#), [Silent Mind Meditation Program - The Silent Mind Meditation Chapter 12](#) and [The True Meaning of Laziness](#).

3. Affection:

Forgive, be kind, be thoughtful, be nice, be good, be sensitive, be loving, be compassionate. All in all, it's the practice of [Loving-Kindness Meditation](#). Let me tell you the hard part here. It is easy to do all of the above when things are going your way, but can you do all of the above when things are not? As they say a well-fed dog is friendly, but the real nature will be revealed when he is hungry. So it is with us. We can put up our best when all is good, but can you do the same when you don't get what you want? When someone insults you? When your ego takes a hit? Will you be able to side with affection under duress or will the subconscious, hidden, egotistical nature take control? That is the real test of adhering to this principle of affection; be warned it is not easy, but if you wish to ascend this practice must be mastered.

4. Honesty:

Absolute honesty I should say. In word, deed and behavior. You will have fun with this one. Just give it a try and you will be amazed by how much you learn about yourself. How hard the mind works to manipulate perception and procure security, without any consideration to what is true. I have gone into this concept in more detail in the following article so head on over to read the nitty gritty: [Silent Mind Meditation Program: Honesty - Chapter 6](#).

One additional helpful tip. In the article, [10 Things to do Everyday for A Happy, Meaningful & Good Life](#), which I hope you are all following religiously :-), item #7 speaks of doing your daily accounting at the end of the day. This is a great time to reflect on all the times during the day you were dishonest, insincere, hypocritical and pretentious. Please don't start judging yourself, simply maintain a healthy sense of humor and learn about the antics of your ego and mind.

5. Courage:

By courage here, I also mean self-confidence and self-belief. Courage is important on 2 fronts. First, the path to enlightenment is ultimately walked alone. Without courage you will not get very far, as at the first sign of danger you will balk. Second, to live a good life means to live according to your passion and if you lack courage you are going to play it safe always and never take the necessary chances to follow your heart.

This is another topic on which you can find lots more information here on Mastery of Meditation. I would suggest the following 4 articles to help explore this concept more: [Silent Mind Meditation Program: Confidence - Chapter 5](#), [Inspiring Osho Quote on How to Live Courageously](#), [New Kundalini Yoga Classes & the Courage to Live Dangerously](#) and [How to Escape Your Suffering - The Blind Man vs. The Cripple](#).

Conclusion:

So these are my 5 golden rules for living an enlightened and good life. I try to review them every morning and have them posted in handy places as reminders as well. If you have a set of observances you follow or other techniques, which have helped you in your life, please share them with us, so others can benefit.

Chapter 13

Top 5 Mistakes in Establishing a Daily Meditation Practice

I have been practicing meditation now for over 23 years — damn I must be getting old :-). In these 2 decades plus I have explored much of the spiritual landscape and discovered many of the profound treasures hidden there. Also, during this time I have made my share of mistakes and seen others make theirs. In this article I want to help you to avoid repeating some of these mistakes, especially those that are related to establishing a deep and strong Daily Personal Meditation Practice. Here are the top 5 mistakes people make when trying to setup their home meditation practice...

1. Procrastinate Starting Your Daily Meditation Practice:

As Lord Buddha said, "There are only 2 mistakes you can make in life. First mistake is not to take the first step and the second is that having taken the first step to not go all the way." I am amazed how few take the first step. Many people who talk and read about religion, spirituality, yoga, meditation, etc. never actually start a personal meditation program. They even come to me and discuss these matters in great detail, but never get down to doing it. Meditation in this regard is just like exercise, you can read every book on fitness, but until you break a sweat you will have zero benefits. You have to get started, you have to do it, and there is no other way. No one can do your meditation for you. The biggest mistake is to procrastinate starting your practice. There are endless excuses to delay, there is just one solution: START NOW.

2. Don't Prepare Your Meditation Environment:

Once you have decided to start your daily meditation practice the first thing you should do is create the necessary environment to make doing your daily practice easier. What does this mean? It means, at the minimum, the following...

- Create a space in your home where you will practice your meditation. The space should be quiet and exclusively used for only meditation and spiritual matters if possible.
- Get a meditation cushion and/or mat to help you sit. If you need to start with using a chair that is fine too.
- Place some items that inspire you in this location (picture, idol, saying, symbol, etc.)
- Get a stopwatch or setup another convenient time device.
- Put aside some clothes or get some that will help you sit comfortably.
- Make a silent, firm commitment to do your meditation practice regularly.

It is very important to do this. This is because it is very possible that at the time you decide to start your daily meditation program you are in a highly inspired state, which might not be sustainable over time. Having the meditation environment set-up will make it easier to maintain your consistency even during these "uninspired" periods. Having everything in place, believe me, dramatically increases the chance that you just plop down on your cushion and do your daily meditation.

3. Don't Set a Definite Time for Your Daily Meditation:

This is similar to mistake #2 in that setting a definite time for your daily meditation is a significant psychological factor in getting you to be consistent with your practice. Just trying to find random times in the day to do your meditation will generally work once in a while and usually only for a short period of time. You must set a time and if possible set this time to early in the morning, before all the distractions of life begin.

4. Think Meditation is Too Hard & Give-up:

Forget about all you have read with regard to how meditation is supposed to work and instead just do your best. Given that just sitting still and focusing on your breath can be hard, it is fully understandable that one is going to have trouble watching the swift and subtle mind. We all fail and fail repeatedly and there is no shame in that. The only mistake is to not get back up the next day and try again. So don't give up, just keep going and your mental muscles will develop. They have no choice. If you exercise them they develop. So don't judge yourself harshly and keep the golden rule of Meditation all the time in the back of your mind, it is — Keep Going!

5. Look for Immediate Results:

In our age of instant gratification, trying to get the fastest results possible with minimum effort seems to be the mantra. Diet pills, cosmetic surgery, mega millions lottery, medications for everything under the sun, recreational drugs, constant electronic stimulation, etc, etc. have made trying to get "the kick" the prime objective. Well sorry; meditation is like getting wet while walking in a misty fog. You don't even realize you are getting wet, but if you stay out there long enough you will be completely soaked. Meditation is the blossoming of goodness. It will happen on its own, in its own sweet time. Don't worry about the results just put your best foot forward and keep marching ahead. Soon you will find yourself standing on Heaven's

Doorsteps.

Conclusion:

So today, setup your environment, decide on a time, and don't worry about success or failure; JUST BEGIN YOUR DAILY MEDITATION PRACTICE. There is nothing in life more important than this.

Chapter 14

[3 Easy Kids Meditation Techniques with Videos](#)

Kids Meditations

Easy Meditation Videos

The popular article [How to Raise Enlightened Children](#) kicked off our kids' yoga and meditation section, developing which is a key goal of [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#). Towards that end I want to provide you some easy meditation techniques for kids and also some sample videos, which I hope will inspire and encourage your children to dive in and reap the enormous [benefits of meditation practice](#).

I will extensively cover guidelines for kids yoga and meditation in another article, once I start to provide kids yoga poses and exercises, but in general I have found the following 3 rules to work best when introducing your children to these wonderful spiritual practices. **Keep it fun, keep it simple and keep it open.** The more they enjoy the practice the more they will embrace it.

Easy Meditation Techniques Good for Adults Too:

The following 3 meditation techniques are not just good for kids, believe me they are good for adults as well: -D. Don't be misled by the fact that they are "easy", they are still top-notch techniques capable of rewarding you with all the benefits that meditation bestows. The chief difference between a kid practicing these techniques and an adult is generally the duration of the practice. A child may just do 15 seconds to a few minutes, while an adult may practice these techniques for up to an hour or more.

Benefits of Meditation for Kids:

- Helps kids build concentration and mental focus.

- Helps develop creativity and power of imagination.
- Helps children develop inner silence and calmness.
- Effective for developing [Brain Health](#) and Mental Sharpness.
- Builds self-confidence and self-awareness.
- Excellent for overall health and wellness.
- Helps develop emotional balance and removes negative emotions.
- Helps reduce stress.

3 Easy Kids Meditation Techniques:

I have found my son Shivum (nearly six now) is naturally drawn to the following 3 types of simple meditation and I feel these 3 techniques are a good way to get kids introduced to meditation practice. Below are the details of these 3 easy meditation techniques as well as video samples of Shivum demonstrating each one for you and your children. The biggest reason for having Shivum do these meditation videos is because I have noticed time and again, that one of the best ways to inspire kids to try something is to show them other children who are doing it. Children can start with as little as 15 seconds of meditation and build up from there to 5 minutes or more.

Best Way to Inspire & Teach Children to Meditate:

The number one way, I feel to inspire children to practice yoga and meditation is through example. If you have a strong practice, your children will likely be keen on exploring what mommy and daddy are doing started. I suggest the following 2 [free online courses](#) for those who are new to the practice of yoga and meditation.

- [Learn How to Meditate | Beginner's Meditation Class \(100\)](#)
- [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga & Meditation Class \(101\)](#)

Easy Kids Meditation Technique #1: OM Mantra Chanting:

I have covered the "adult" version of this timeless meditation in the article, [AUM Mantra Meditation to Open the Third Eye Chakra](#), but this meditation is definitely a favorite for children as well. I often hear this chant reverberating in the house as both Shivum and now his little 3-year-old brother, Taran; often seem to add it to their play spontaneously.

Keep the instructions easy for kids to understand. Simply ask them to do the following...

- Sit up straight.
- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra (thumb tip and index finger meeting with wrists resting on the knees) or have your hands folded in prayer pose.
- Close your eyes.
- Take a deep breath and chant the sound AUM out loud for as long as you can. Then take a deep breath again and repeat the chant.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Video of Kids Meditation Technique #1 - AUM Mantra Chant](#)

Easy Kids Meditation Technique #2: Gayatri Mantra Chanting

In this technique, have the child pick out any prayer that he enjoys and then have him sing it aloud. The mantra that Shivum is

demonstrating in the video below is the most revered Vedic Mantra. It is called the Gayatri Mantra and is often the vehicle of meditation practice. I will put together a separate article with details about this mantra in the near future.

Easy Kids Meditation Technique #3: Breath Awareness:

The formal practice of breath awareness meditation is the heart of Zen Buddhism. It is called Zazen and I have detailed it in the following article, [Zen Buddhism Meditation Technique - Zazen](#). Modify it though for children as follows...

- Sit up straight.
- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra (thumb tip and index finger meeting with wrists resting on the knees).
- Close your eyes and try not to move at all.
- Just breathe normally and feel your breath as it goes in and out of your nose. If you notice the child is too young and does not pick up on these instructions, just have them sit still without moving as best they can.

The video below demonstrates both the above techniques.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Video of Kids Meditation Technique #2 - Gayatri Mantra Chant](#)

Chapter 15

[Kapalbhati Yoga Breathing Exercise for Optimum Health & Healing](#)

Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Free Online Video of Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama](#)

What Is Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

Of the many wonderful [pranayamas](#) that [Yoga](#) gives us, Kapalbhati (aka Kapal Bhati) is one of my favorite breathing exercises. It is not at all complicated to do and yet, when done even for a short time consistently, the benefits are undeniable. If there was only one pranayama that you elected to do, Kapalbhati might well be the one to pick - it's that good!

Kapalbhati of course dates back to the [Yoga Sutras of Sage Patanjali](#), but recently its popularity has been revived by the work of [Ramdev Swamiji](#). Kapalbhati is part of Ramdev Swamiji's set of 6 pranayamas and the practice of this set has spread like wildfire across India as well as the rest of the world. Kapalbhati, in my view, is like the corner stone of this set and many of the absolutely unbelievable benefits that practitioners have been getting from practicing Ramdev Swamiji's set, I am sure, can be attributed to this powerful breathing exercise.

Below are the details of Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama.

Benefits of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

Primary:

- Works on the Heart Center ([Anahat Chakra](#)) and associated organs and systems of that region. Thus improving respiration, lung capacity and blood circulation. Kapalbhata helps cure associated diseases of this region (asthma, bronchitis etc).
- Works on the Naval Center ([Manipura Chakra](#)) and associated organs and systems of that regions. Thus improving digestion and elimination. Cures diseases and imbalances associated with this region such as indigestion, gas, diabetes, etc.
- Practiced over time, Kapalbhata Pranayama also helps reduce abdominal fat, fight obesity, tone abdominal muscles and bestow core abdominal strength and power.
- From an emotional stand point Kapalbhata Pranayama purges the system of accumulated emotional debris such as anger, hurt, jealousy, hatred etc., thus dissolving the blockages and removing the imbalances such emotional history causes in the energetic pathways. The cleansing of the energetic pathways ([nadis](#)) increases the magnitude and flow of prana (life-force) and [Kundalini](#) Shakti (energy) throughout all regions of the body.
- From a mental stand point Kapalbhata Pranayama assists in throwing out all negative thoughts from the psyche. thus, helping to cleanse and illuminate the mind.
- From a body stand point Kapalbhata Pranayama should be used to eject any illnesses, diseases, weaknesses from the body thus

allowing it grow in health, vitality and vigor.

Secondary:

- Generates heat in the system to help dissolve toxins and waste matter.
- Adds luster and beauty to your face.

Cautions for Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhata Breathing Exercise):

If you feel dizzy or nauseous you should slow down the force and pace of Kapalbhata pranayama or stop entirely and return to normal breathing.

- If you have acid or heat related gastric issues such as ulcers you should use caution with Kapalbhata Pranayama.
- Kapalbhata is not to be practiced by those suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke or epilepsy.

How To Do Beginner's Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapal Bhati Breathing Exercise):

To practice this breathing exercise sit up in a comfortable position, cross-legged is best.

- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Have your hands in Gyan Mudra. In Gyan Mudra have your thumb tips and index finger meeting, with the wrists resting

gently on the knees and the palms turned slightly upwards.

- Relax your stomach muscles.
- Now expel the air as forcefully as you are comfortable with through the nose. This should cause the abdominal muscles to contract sharply and should draw the abdomen inwards towards the spine (like when you suck in your stomach). Then allow the inhalation to occur completely passively without any additional effort. To repeat, the exhalation is done using conscious sharp force, while the inhalation is just a recoil action bringing the air back into the lungs. All the breathing takes place through the nose. Right after the passive inhalation, exhale again forcefully and continue at a steady rhythm.
- Do a round of 10 repetitions.
- Work your way up to doing 5 rounds, while taking a break between each round.
- Practice Note: Unlike doing [Bhastrika Yoga Pranayama](#) you use force during both the inhalation and the exhalation, in Kapalbhati force is only to be used during the exhalation.

How To Do Intermediate Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhati Breathing Exercise):

Once you feel comfortable with the Beginner's version of Kapalbhati Yoga Pranayama, perform the breathing exercise with more force if possible and also increase the number of repetition per round to 50. You may also prefer to do a single round, but with many more repetitions instead (up to 5 minutes worth)

How To Do Advanced Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhata Breathing Exercise):

Build up to doing this pranayama for 15 minutes straight or equivalent number of rounds with more repetitions per rounds.

Secret of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama (Kapalbhata Breathing Exercise):

The secret of the success of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama lies in where your *mind* is when doing this terrific breathing exercise. If you need to cure your body, then with every exhalation imagine that disease is being purged from your system. If you need to regain emotional balance, then again, with every exhalation visualize the negative emotions or weaknesses being thrown out of your system. If negative thoughts are the issue, let every exhalation expel them from your heart and mind.

The power of the mind has been well documented, you are read about some of it's incredible capability in this article [Mind Power to Manifest Intentions & Desires Instantly](#), so use your mind to help you accomplish that which you have intended and unleash the full potential of Kapalbhata Yoga Pranayama.

Chapter 16

[Yoga Positions for Beginners | Basic Yoga Poses](#)

Beginner's Yoga Poses

Basic Yoga Positions

It is time to expand the [Free Online Yoga & Meditation Classes](#) offered here at [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#), and the class I am planning to add next is a [Beginner's Yoga Class](#) (now online). The class will consist of the best yoga pranayama techniques for beginners and it will also incorporate the beginner's yoga positions that I have detailed below.

This yoga set, is built using basic yoga poses and exercises, but just because the positions used are not advanced or complicated, does not in any way lessen the value of this set. It is an excellent set to incorporate into your daily yoga practice and has been carefully designed to work on each and every aspect of your being.

This set will also make up Chapter 11 of our popular [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Sets E-book](#). The poses and positions that make up this set can be found in the following two free online books: [Free Online Kundalini Yoga Exercises E-book & Free Hatha Yoga Poses E-book](#).

Benefits of Yoga Positions for Beginner's | Basic Yoga Poses Set
As I mentioned above, this set has been carefully designed to be beginner friendly and also, designed to ensure that it works upon all major aspects of your being in a balanced and harmonious way. The detailed benefits of each exercises, along with cautions and practice tips, can be found in the article devoted to each pose, below though are the overall benefits that this set bestows when practiced consistently.

- Promotes overall flexibility and strength.
- Clears blockages and increases energy flow.
- Triggers the natural healing capacity of the body, promoting health and well-being.
- Promotes peace and emotional balance.
- Purifies one's energy and raises one's level of vibration and consciousness.
- Improves balance and coordination.
- Helps increase metabolism and assists in weight loss.
- Builds mental focus and concentration.

Yoga Positions for Beginner's Practice Details:

The following two articles are important for beginner's to read as they provide guidelines on how to practice yoga:

[Essential Beginners Guide to Yoga Practice](#)

[10 Important Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#)

Remember the golden rule is please do not overdo anything. Especially if you are a beginner, please use the beginner's version for the exercises wherever provided and back off if you feel uncomfortable or dizzy. Each exercise title is a link to the chapter with the details for that exercise. For all the poses in this set illustrations have also been provided.

You will also need to learn the Breath of Fire breathing exercise, which

is taught in the following video: [Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama](#). This breathing exercise is a fundamental breathing technique in Kundalini Yoga and is extensively used in conjunction with the yoga poses.

Yoga Positions for Beginner's | Basic Yoga Poses Set

Remember that each title is a link to the article with full details on each pose. Also, in each of those respective articles, modifications for beginners is given whenever required, so make sure you use those modifications as you start out.

1. [Kundalini Yoga Butterfly Pose:](#)

- Duration: 2 - 3 mins
- Breath: Breath of Fire



Butterfly Pose

2. [Kundalini Yoga Cat-Cow Pose:](#)

- Duration: 1 - 3 mins
- Breath: Inhale in cow pose, exhale in cat pose



Yoga Cat Pose (Exhale)



Yoga Cow Pose (Inhale)

3. [Yoga Cobra Pose:](#)

- This is a very basic yoga pose that is part of every school of yoga practice. It can be done with the elbows bent and also done with the elbow straight. Beginner's should be careful with their lower back and elbows, and should take frequent breaks if they get tired holding the pose.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins
- Breath: Long deep breathing.



Cobra Pose w/ Straight Elbows



Cobra Pose w/ Bent Elbows

4. [Yoga Baby Pose:](#)

- Another very basic yoga pose is the baby pose. It is pose #8 in the article. It is a good pose to relax in whenever you need to take break during your yoga session. In addition this pose will counterbalance cobra pose for you.
- Duration: Open
- Breath: Normal.



Baby Pose

5. [Basic Yoga Pose for Balance:](#)

- Be sure to use the modified versions if you find doing the full version difficult. This is a good pose for the elderly to do as well.
- Duration: 1 - 2 mins / side.
- Breath: Long deep breathing.



Basic Yoga Pose for Balance (Left Arm)



Basic Yoga Pose for Balance (Right Arm)

6. [Forward Bending Yoga Asana:](#)

- The important part of this position is to keep your legs straight. It is not necessary to reach your toes, which will happen over

time. Just reach forward as far as it is comfortable, while keeping your legs straight. For beginner's even reaching their knees or shins is fine. Curl your toes back towards you though, even if you do can't reach them to accent the stretch in your calves and hamstrings.

- Duration: 1 - 3 mins
- Breath: Do long deep breathing. As you make progress you can do this pose with breath of fire.



Forward Bending Yoga Pose

7. [Yoga Rock-n-Roll:](#)

- Good yoga exercise to help you transition between poses. It is also good for lengthening the spine and redistributing the cerebral-spinal fluid. It is exercise #6 in the Kids Yoga Article that it is linked to.
- Duration: 15 seconds - 1 min.
- Breath: Normal.



Yoga Rock-n-Roll

8. [Alternating Leg Lifts for Abdominal Strength:](#)

- Simply lie on your back, with your hands underneath your buttocks palms facing down to support your lower back. Then lift your left leg up to ninety degrees and lower it back down. Next lift your right leg up to ninety degrees and then back down. Continue on with these alternating leg lifts for the duration of the exercise. It is exercise #1 of the Abs Workout set which it is linked to.
- This set is an excellent set for beginners as well who want to tone their abs and build their core strength.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins.
- Breath: Inhale Up / Exhale Down.



Yoga Single Leg Lifts (Left Leg)



Yoga Single Leg Lifts (Right Leg)

9. [Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:](#)

- This is a terrific yoga posture; remember the beginner's version is to do one leg at a time instead. Again you can take breaks

during this pose when you tire. The full version is illustrated below.

- Duration: 1 - 3 mins
- Breath: Breath of Fire



Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose

10. Yoga Rock-n-Roll:

- Again we will use yoga rock-n-roll to help us transition to a new pose. See exercise #7 above for details.
- Duration: 15 seconds - 1 min
- Breath: Normal.

11. [Kundalini Yoga Frog Pose:](#)

- These can be a little tough for beginner's to do, but I wanted to include them in this set due to their enormous benefits. This

exercise will really help you tone and strengthen your legs and also it will give your heart a good workout. Do only a few at a time in the beginning and be sure to take lots of breaks. Build up slowly to 52 in a row over time.

- Duration: 11 - 52 repetitions
- Breath: Inhale Down / Exhale Up.



Yoga Frog Pose (Inhale)



Yoga Frog Pose (Exhale)

12. [Kundalini Yoga Archer Pose:](#)

- We will end this set with Archer's Pose. This pose is excellent for opening up your hips, strengthening your legs and helping you cope with stress. It is also good for the mind and developing confidence.
- Duration: 1 - 3 mins / side
- Breath: Long Deep Powerful Breathing.



Yoga Archer Pose

13. Corpse Pose:

- Once you are done with the Beginner's Yoga Set, make sure you relax on your back in corpse pose. For corpse pose just lie comfortably on your back and have your hands out to the sides or on your chest. Just let go during this time and let the Universe take care of you. Have no worries, anxieties or goals, and simply surrender to Infinity.
- Duration: 1 - 11 mins
- Breath: Relaxed

End of Beginner's Basic Yoga Poses Set.

Chapter 17

[So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique: Free Guided Meditation Book for Daily Practice](#)

Background of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

The simple, yet profound, So Hum Meditation technique is probably one of the most popular Mantra Meditations. It emerges from the Yoga school of Hindu Philosophy and belongs in the category of Japa Meditations (Meditations that require the chanting of Mantras).

The So Hum (aka So Ham, Soham or Sohum) Mantra Meditation, done sincerely, is very effective in bringing about a complete transformation of individual consciousness. So Hum literally means "That I am " (So = "That" or "Thou" or "Divinity"; Hum = "I am") and the mantra's aim is to bring about this union (yoga) between your individual consciousness and Divine Consciousness. Another way to interpret this is that the meditation brings about the realization that all that you see is yourself — The Observer is the Observed.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Video](#)

Tools Required for So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

- An alarm clock, stop watch or other time device.
- Or you can use a traditional bead necklace (Mala) to count repetitions if you prefer.

Benefits of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Realization of your Divine Nature.
- Realization of the non-dual Nature of Reality.
- Stress Reduction, Relaxation, Peace and Tranquility.
- Spontaneous Joy and Happiness.

Secondary Benefits:

- Promotes Self-Healing.
- Builds mental focus and concentration.

So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Cautions:

- None.

Guided So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique.

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also sit on a chair or lie on your back to practice this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 10 to 20 minutes. If using a Mala (rotary\prayer beads) do the appropriate count (for a traditional 108 bead mala its about 1 full cycle through the mala).
- If sitting, elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and

subtly bring your chin back and in, like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.

- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra (Gesture of Knowledge). Which is thumb and index finger lightly meeting, wrists resting gently on the knees and palms facing upward. The other 3 fingers are extended.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Try to remain as still as possible.
- Now inhale slowly while saying the sound "Sooooo" mentally and then slowly exhale while silently saying the sound "Hummmmm".
- After spending about half the time in meditation as described above, start with every cycle to feel your awareness expanding and merging with the Universe Consciousness. So as you continue to chant silently the mantra in rhythm with your breath, feel its real meaning acting upon you.
- Continue for the duration of the meditation.
- At the end of the meditation, try to remain with the all inclusive awareness and sense that all is included in you.

So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique Tips:

- Another way to practice the So Hum Mantra Meditation is to visualize life, light and Divine energy flowing into you when you inhale and mentally say "Sooooo" and to feel your ego-centric limited consciousness flow out and evaporate into the atmosphere as you exhale and mentally say "Hummmmm". This variation is also consistent with the meaning of the Mantra.

- At you develop this practice increase the exhalation phase such that it grows to about two times the inhalation phase.

Secret of So Hum Mantra Meditation Technique:

Where did this Mantra come from? That is the secret of this Mantra. It is actually the sound of the breath during inhalation and exhalation. Inhalation sounds like "Soooooo", while exhalation sounds like "Hummmmm". So this is the music of life and by practicing this meditation we can learn to dance in tune with it.

Chapter 18

Week 3 Syllabus:

Objectives:

Knowledge:

- Benefits of Meditation.
- Mastering Daily Meditation Practice.
- Mastering Daily Living.

Techniques:

- Learn gentler yoga poses for meditation.
- Learn Anuloma Viloma Pranayama
- Learn Zen Meditation - Zazen.

Articles for Study:

- [Top 10 Profound Benefits of Meditation](#)
- [Health Benefits of Meditation](#)
- [Top 5 Changes Meditation Demands from You](#)
- [11 Requirements for Becoming a Champion Meditator](#)
- [10 Things to Do Everyday for a Happy and Meaningful Life](#)

Daily Practice:

Pranayama: 3-5 mins

- [Anuloma Viloma Pranayama](#)

Yoga: 10 mins

- [Morning Wake-up Series](#)

Meditation: 30 mins

- [Guided Zen Meditation Technique](#)

Chapter 19

Top 10 Profound Benefits of Meditation

Benefits of Meditation

Meditation is an art that has been around since the dawn of the age of man. This is not a statement to be brushed over. After all, many things about mankind have changed over time, but the profound art of meditation is something we have clung to dearly. This is because there is no substitute for meditation. Nothing else, single handedly, bestows the many wonderful blessings that meditation brings... in fact nothing else even comes close. In this article I will outline the top 10 benefits that meditation brings and hopefully it will inspire all to learn and practice this timeless art.

1. Enlightenment:

This is the one ultimate purpose of meditation. To help you discover the True Non-Dual Nature of Reality. To make you realize that your True Self is Divine and One with God.

2. Peace & Tranquility:

The mind of one who meditates is like the easy, leisurely flow of the Ganges River, as compared to the ordinary mind, which is like Niagara Falls. In other words your mind is at peace, deeply silent and so you are at peace.

3. Wisdom:

Meditation opens up the channels of communication between all levels of your being. What this means is that you have access now to the guidance that is coming directly from your Divine Self. This link gives rise to the flow of intuition and wisdom.

4. Joy & Happiness:

Meditation strips away the layers of false identity that mask your True Self from shining through. Once you eliminate these false egos and stop catering to their nonsense you can reside in your True Nature. This brings forth joy and happiness as it allows you to be at ease with life, existence and yourself.

5. Love & Compassion:

As meditation reveals to you the interconnectedness of all humanity a great sense of compassion and love will spontaneously emerge. Knowing that deep within we are all divine in nature will change the way you view the apparent differences you see in others. This will also dramatically improve your relationships both intimate and casual.

6. Stress Reduction & Good Health:

This goes hand in hand. As meditation teaches you the art of living in the present moment, anxiety and worry fade more and more into the background. This state of relaxed awareness is most beneficial, to not only helping the body heal itself, but also for preventing illness and disease by eliminating the poison of stress.

7. Improved Brain Function:

All serious meditators know how much their brain function has been enhanced by meditation. Now, empirical studies every day are indicating this link. Meditation will undoubtedly increase your awareness and will significantly increase your intelligence.

8. Discover Your Purpose & Gifts:

As you start to drop those aspects of you that are artificial and pretentious you will get a chance to see the real you. The natural

parts that are not put on will emerge. This will give you insight into who you really are and what you really love in life. That is the secret of mastering the art of living and discovering your true talents, gifts and purpose. That which you love, you do for its own sake without the need for reward or accolades. Once this is discovered, life can be lived with passion, zeal and independence.

9. Yogic and Psychic Powers:

We currently use only about 10% of our brain capacity. The practice of Yoga and Meditation awakens those regions of the Brain that normally lie dormant. When these areas of the brain are activated the powers they hold are unleashed. Such powers, used wisely, can be of benefit to others and of help to you in making progress on the spiritual path.

10. Magnificence:

Charisma, Confidence, Courage, Character and Balance are all brought about by meditation. This leads to an individual who is immensely charming and magnetic. Best word I could think of to describe the collective affects of these personality improvements was Magnificent. Meditation will let your magnificence shine through.

Chapter 20

[Research on the Many Health Benefits of Meditation](#)

Research on Meditation and Health

The scientific support for the health benefits of meditation is growing on a daily basis, as more and more research is starting to validate what the spiritual community has already known for centuries. Today we will explore this topic further. As we know there are [many different meditation techniques](#) and although, all these are helpful in some degree from a health perspective, in this series, I will compile for you those techniques that are the best for health and healing.

This series will be in 2 parts. In part 1, I will highlight the health benefits of meditation as demonstrated by recent scientific research, while in part 2 we will provide you with the healing meditations themselves. Below are these benefits, knowing which I feel will be very inspiring to you for beginning a personal meditation practice.

Scientific Research Indicating Health Benefits of Meditation:

1. Reduce Anxiety & Stress:

Research has shown that meditation activates the left pre-frontal cortex, while diminishing activity in the right pre-frontal cortex of the brain. This shift is in line with reduced stress and anxiety, as the left frontal cortex is associated with calmness, peace, happiness and other positive feelings. This shift in brain activity also indicates meditation as a solution for depression.

For more details on using meditation and yoga to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, read [Best Treatments for Stress and Anxiety Disorder](#).

2. Reduce Blood Pressure:

Meditation has been shown to significantly reduce blood pressure, while at the same time improving circulation and heart health. Blood flow was shown to increase almost 200%, especially in the frontal cortex. Meditation has also been shown to reduce cholesterol, but most significant to heart health is the stress reducing power of meditation, as undoubtedly stress is the number enemy of good heart health.

3. Immune Health:

Research has shown, meditators to be significantly healthier than those who don't. 50% fewer doctor's visits, 55% fewer tumors and significantly reduced cases of infectious diseases as well.

4. Chronic Pain:

Meditation has been shown to be very effective in helping with pain management. Research has shown a 50% reduction in perceived pain when tackled using meditation.

5. Insomnia:

One of the areas where meditation has been extremely effective is in helping those suffering from insomnia. When trained in meditation, there was a 75% improvement in those suffering from this condition.

6. Intelligence, Awareness, Concentration and Performance:

Thickening of the brain as well as improved performance, concentration and intelligence has been attributed to meditation practice. These improvements were found to be valid with young adults as well ([Amazing Benefits of Meditation for Young People](#)). Another article previously published detailing how good meditation is

for the brain is [Brain Benefits of Meditation](#).

7. Aging and Addictions:

Meditation has been shown time and again to slow down the aging process, with those who meditate registering much younger effective ages than their chronological age.

8. Treating Habits and Addictions:

Meditation has been shown as an effective treatment for addictions and detrimental habits. There are also yoga and breathing techniques which are valuable for this, and you can find those in the article [Yoga to Stop Smoking and Breaking Addictions](#).

Summary of Health Benefits of Meditation:

Of course, the benefits of meditations are much more far-reaching than just good health, and you can read about all these benefits in the article, [Top 10 Profound Benefits of Meditation](#). The above list though should certainly be more than enough to motivate you to start practicing meditation as a tool to maintain good health and heal yourself of diseases. In part 2 of this series I will detail those meditation techniques, which are highly reputed for their healing capabilities.

Chapter 21

Top 5 Changes Meditation Demands From You

Art of Meditation

There is no substitute for meditation - if someone was to offer me 1 billion dollars, yes with all those zeros, and said that all I would have to do is give up meditation and the treasures of spiritual practice, not even 1 cell in my body would think... yeah maybe. All 10 trillion cells would be laughing at the offer. There is no material equivalent for the rewards of meditation – none. The difference is so enormous that I can't even come up with a suitable example — and believe me I tried. If life can be said to have any purpose, it is to discover the Truth and at the heart of this mission lies meditation. But, as you move ahead with your meditation practice and the rewards start to flow, you will notice an interesting phenomenon taking place — **You Are Being Held to Live to a Higher Standard.**

There is really not much choice in this matter. If you give yourself seriously to mastering the Art of Meditation, you will no longer be able to live the way you had been in the past. The practice demands its own discipline, not one artificially imposed, but a discipline that gracefully emerges as you move deeper into this profound science. Here is what I have found to be the top 5 changes that tend to take place in the lives of passionate aspirants who are being true to their meditation practice. These same changes generally also apply to those who practice other spiritual disciplines such as Yoga, Ayurveda, Reiki, Qigong, etc.

1. More Simple & Wholesome Life:

As your progress matures you will notice that you are more and more gravitating towards a simpler, more natural life. You find yourself

buying less and less into commercialism and materialism. Its not that you are becoming an ascetic and "renouncing the world", it's just that material possessions are loosing their grip on you. If you have them you enjoy them, if you don't have them no problem at all. In this way your life starts to incorporate more of what is natural and moves in a direction that is uncomplicated, but deep.

2. Waste Less Energy:

Meditation, Yoga and spiritual practices will make you realize that everything is energy. Energy is the name of the game. You are nothing but Energy and the Universe is nothing but energy. These fields all interconnect and intermingle. At an Energetic level, demarcations loose their definition and everything merges into each other. In addition to this, you start to realize one more important fact regarding meditation. It requires tremendous energy. The energy required for real meditation is available to a human being, but is not harnessed correctly. It is dissipated in contradiction and meaningless activity. This will have to stop if your practice is to penetrate deep into the mysteries and wonders of Reality. You will start to become more integrated as a person. You will start to stop wasting precious energy in endless gossip, immature pursuits and conflicting desires. You will start to become a charged being, capable of summoning intense energy of the highest vibration when required to penetrate the veil of illusion.

3. Better Diet & Fitness:

Along the lines of number 2 above, you will start to shift to a healthier lifestyle. You will realize the profound opportunity life and each moment offer and simply would like to make the most of this blessing of human life. Getting sick, being injured, lacking energy will not be acceptable and you will do what is necessary to have a fit, vibrant body. In addition, certain food groups will not suit you as they will make you lethargic and insensitive, so you will likely start to move to a lighter, more lean diet.

4. Ending Dependencies and Addictions:

For those on the spiritual path, freedom is valued above all. Things that make you dependent and bind you down will come under heavy scrutiny and in time be set aside. This goes for all things that make you dependent. Those far on the spiritual path realize their one to one relationship with life and Divinity and eventually embrace complete independence. This independence then allows for love to flow, as now, without dependency, there is no shadow of fear.

5. Becoming a Rebel:

It is inevitable. You will become a bit (or in some cases much :-)) of a rebel. Especially with regard to tradition and the so-called values of society. Society creates the need for so much artificiality and hypocrisy, which simply cannot be sustained under the heat of meditative awareness. In addition, the values that society holds in high esteem are seen for what they are — stupid — so that is the end of that.

Summary:

So there you have the top 5 changes that will be required of you as you move ahead with your spiritual growth. Some of these changes will happen on their own, below the radar of consciousness, while others will be conscious decisions you will have to make, as required by the demands of the meditation and spiritual practice. I would like to hear your thoughts on this interesting subject as I feel that others will benefit from the map that we draw together. So if you have noticed changes you have had to make in order to enhance your meditation, yoga or other spiritual practice feel free to share them with us. It could be as simple as, I had to watch less TV so I could sleep on time, to as complex as, I had to quit my job that became incompatible with my spiritual evolution.

Chapter 22

11 Requirements for Becoming a Champion Meditator

How to Master Meditation

During my teenage years I spent many summers at the Arsha Vaidya Gurukulam, run by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. It is an ashram devoted to the study of the Gita, Yoga, Ayurveda, etc., and is based on the principles of Advaita Vedanta or the school of non-dualism. The one thing I still remember from my time spent at the ashram, even so many years later, is that I had an incessant, deep, burning desire to become a master meditator.

Over the years, in the pursuit of this passion, I have learned what it takes in order to be such an expert, and in this article, I would like to share with you my findings. Hopefully, this experience will help you on your own such journey. There may be some surprises in the list below, also, if you like, feel free to share your thoughts on this topic in the comments section.

11 Requirements of Becoming a Master Meditator

1. Passion:

There is little chance of mastering the art of meditation, if you are not passionate about spirituality and the mysteries of life. A subtle art like meditation, and the consequential changes it brings, needs you to be in for the long haul. It is unlikely that a quick excursion into this spiritual science will yield a champion meditator. So you need the necessary interest to run the marathon required for this endeavor. You will notice conspicuously missing from this list will be willpower or discipline. This is because I feel that strong, abiding passion will forge the necessary practice you require for developing mastery in

meditation. For a more entertaining and detailed treatment of this topic, you can head over to read the story and article: [Stop the Madness of Self-Discipline](#).

2. Leisure:

Yes that is correct. For you to develop self-knowledge, leading to self-realization, you need free time to explore the inner walls of your mind. This may be the leading obstacle for spiritual growth today. We are all just way too busy, and the little free time we do have, we squander in mindless entertainment. The hard part here is that entertainment is also very important in order to live a balanced life, so to keep that, as well as have time for daily sadhana (spiritual work), you simply need to find ways to simplify your life, slow down and get more leisure out of your day.

Time and again, I see great spiritual growth and peace permeate people's lives when they downshift and make time for meditation and daily sadhana. And if you want to be a champion meditator and enjoy the benefits of that, then you too must back off from endless self-aggrandizing pursuits and re-evaluate your time and ambitions. There is no end to ambition and if you are not careful, you will end up old with nothing to show for all your struggles except a big pile of junk. For more on this topic, as well as how money can help, you can read the following article: [Money, Money, Money and the Path to Enlightenment](#).

3. Sacrifice:

Unfortunately this is part of the equation as well. This can be especially hard for those who have many varied interests and realize that to master meditation; you simply have to give up some of these hobbies in order to make time. To make matters worse, if you are a perfectionist or one who insists on doing things well, hobbies can become even more time consuming, thus requiring you to sacrifice them at least for a while.

In addition to giving up hobbies, other sacrifices are also often required. You may have to do without certain material amenities in order to work less, may have to give up certain friends who are incompatible with a spiritual life style, change your eating habits to have better more refined energy, drop the excessive boozing and drugging so you can purify your system, etc, etc.

4. Detachment:

Certain freedoms from material gains and certain aloofness to physical discomfort are also key elements of developing into a master meditator. The process of spiritual evolution is not always pleasant or easy on the body, so it demands being able to bear some of this pain of spiritual growth. In addition, not needing immediate gratification and rewards from one's meditation practice ensures you will be able to stay the course till the very end, patiently and persistently.

Here is a deeper look at this topic:

[4 Word Sacred Mantra to Trigger Enlightenment.](#)

5. Adequate Intelligence:

Ultimately, to master meditation you will have to learn to watch your thoughts very carefully and comprehend them via direct perception from moment to moment. Don't be intimidated by how that sounds. In general, the human being has this inherent capacity, although it is only developed by a few of us. To get a taste for what I am referring to and learn this highest form of meditation, you can head over and study the following technique: [Silent Mind Meditation Technique.](#)

6. Courage:

Meditation, can be defined in many ways and one way to look at it, is as a process of letting go. This letting go, also means being open to

the unknown, which requires courage and heart. It is easy to stay within the safety of your seeking, but to drop seeking, means to be totally open and vulnerable to what life has to offer. This is the essence of courage. Here is an inspiring Osho quote to inspire you to live courageously: [Osho Quote to Help You Live Courageously](#).

7. Self-Confidence:

This is closely related to courage above and is also almost as important. Finally, the journey back to the Source is a road walked alone. Teachers, gurus, guardian angels, spirit guides, etc, etc, can only take you so far. Finally, you have to cross the bridge, into the now, all by your alonesome. In addition, each journey to awakening is unique, which means you will have to trust yourself in finding your own way. Believe in yourself, rely on your intelligence and inner voice, and you will be fine.

Some nice yogic techniques to help you build your self confidence are the following. [Archer's Pose to Build Self Confidence](#) and [Eagle Pose for Powerful Aura](#).

8. Urgency:

If you want to be a Rafael Nadal of meditation, you can't be postponing starting or doing your daily spiritual work. Procrastinating your meditation practice, means you are putting on hold developing your real human potential. If you need inspiration check out the results of the following survey which asked the readers what their biggest mistake in life was: [Important Life Lessons from the Biggest Mistakes in Life Survey](#). Also, read [The Golden Rule to Stop Excuses and Start Meditation Now](#).

9. Health:

A certain degree of good health is needed to meditate well. You do not have to be [Bruce Lee](#), but for effective meditation you do need energy

for which a healthy system is important. Don't be discouraged though if your health is not in tip-top shape, just embrace your spiritual practice as best as you can, as that itself will help your body heal and rejuvenate. If you need help getting your body fit and healthy, here is a link to the [free online yoga and meditation classes](#) to help you get started.

10. Humor:

Yup, a good sense of humor will not only get you many dates, it will also get you through some tough phases you are sure to encounter on your spiritual journey. Being able to laugh at these situations and your petty little mind will go a long way in helping you stay sane on this roller coaster like journey. I discuss this more in the following article: [The Importance of Humor on the Road to Enlightenment](#).

11. Basic Needs:

This may not occur to many of us who live relatively wealthy lives, at least relative to the world poverty line, but let me tell you that it would be very difficult to devote yourself to mastering meditation, if you and/or your children were hungry and cold. So food, clothing and shelter, which is basically all you really need to survive, are also prerequisites to becoming a champion meditator. Here are some more of my thoughts on this topic: [Greed vs. Peace](#).

Summary:

The above requirements are not just for mastering meditation, in fact I guarantee that for mastering almost anything in life, you will need most of these characteristics. So even if meditation is not your passion, the list above most probably still applies to what you need in order to master that interest of yours. Of interest to you might also be the article, [4 Keys for Developing Mastery in Anything](#).

One final word is that you will notice that many of these requirements are developed by meditation itself. So if you feel you are lacking,

don't worry, jump in and just ask life for help. She is more generous
that you realize.

Chapter 23

10 Things You Should Do Everyday For a Happy, Meaningful & Good Life (Combined)

Art of Living

Part I:

Our good buddy Lazy Yogi Ponchie had just read a great blog on Meditation ;-), where the author had revealed the secrets of how to live a happy, meaningful and good life and the highly inspired Yogi Ponchie immediately went about implementing the recommendations — in his own special way of course. The article, he read, explained that the secret to a happy and fulfilling life was to live life one day at a time. Not only that, the author had provided his thoughts on what 10 activities one should include in one's life on a **daily basis** in order to accomplish this. Here was how Ponchie spent some of his day, which he felt met the requirements laid out in the post.

5:00 am: Ponchie checked the time and smiled 5:00 am Woo Hoo! The recommendation was to wake up early, but since waking up early was impossible for our lazy yoga friend, he had decided instead to stay up all night. Thus, he would be awake during the early morning hours and be able to take advantage of this most spiritual time of day.

6:00 am: Ponchie headed to the Gym to get his daily-recommended sweat. He spent the next hour in the sauna.

7:00 am: Ponchie listened to a meditation tape in his car on the way back home from the gym, thus meeting the most important criteria for doing his daily meditation practice.

8:00 am: Ponchie watched Sunrise Earth on Discovery by sitting very

close to the television... spending time with nature... done.

9:00 am: Ponchie called his dad and asked him to pay his credit card bills and help fix the leaky faucet in the kitchen. He told his dad that this had to be done today itself, since he was eager to meet the requirement of "completing your daily affairs" as had been suggested... that was easy.

So here we are, with Ponchie at the half way mark of meeting the daily activities that the article laid out. Let's summarize this article that has so profoundly inspired

Mr. Ponchie. Essentially, the secret to a Happy, Meaningful and Good Life, the article said, was to live one day a time. This did not mean not to plan; it meant not to obsess with the outcome. Put money away in the retirement fund, enroll in an MBA program, start a daily fitness routine, launch a new blog, sure do all these things, but don't focus on the results. Instead, just go about the business of life by living each day as well as you can. In addition, the article continued, try to incorporate the following 10 activities into each day, as they would go a long way in expanding your spiritual and personal growth and ensuring that you really maximize your human potential. In part 1, I will list 5 of the 10 daily suggestions that were made and here they are...

1. Wake up Early:

This gets the day off to a great start. The early morning hours are full of spiritual energy and prana (life force) and are an ideal time for your daily sadhana (meditation, yoga or other spiritual practice).

2. Sweat Everyday:

If possible try to break a sweat everyday, and a sauna does not count. This means to get some form of exercise and keep the body in tip top shape. The body is not you, but is the vehicle through which

you live and worship, so treat it like a temple and take care of it.

3. Daily Meditation:

This is the most important criterion. If you have come to the Mastery of Meditation website, something is stirring within. This invitation by the Divine should not be taken lightly. Not all receive the invite, or at least not all are aware of the beckoning, so if you are being roused from the dream by the gentle hand of your Divine Nature do everything you can Wake Up!

4. Spend Time in Nature:

The spiritual path can be described in 1 word – CONNECT. That one word describes all the Vedas, Gita, Upanishads, Bible, Koran, Tantras, etc. One of the best ways to connect is to be with Nature intimately. Hopefully the author will write an article on this topic of Connection as well as is it a very interesting and powerful concept :-).

5. Complete Your Daily Affairs:

Don't procrastinate, don't delay, don't put off what needs to be done. The old proverbs are very wise. "A stitch in time saves nine" and "Don't put off till tomorrow what can be done today". Life, the moment, provides challenges to you and when you meet them, life opens up. If they linger, they are like blockages, they prevent your life from moving forward. Your inner voice will constantly remind you what needs to be completed. Heed this suggestion and you will be surprised at the rewards.

In part 2 of this series I will go into the last 5 suggestions for what should be done everyday in order to live a happy, meaningful and good life, and we will also see how the rest of Lazy Ponchie's, I mean Yogi Ponchie's, day went.

Part II:

In part 1 of this series we followed lazy and crazy Yogi Ponchie through the first half of his day as he looked to complete the "10 must do everyday activities for a happy, meaningful and good life" that he had just read about. In part 2 of this series we will explore the final 5 daily recommendations and see how Yogi Ponchie manages them in his own unique way. In fact, I will just outline how Ponchie spends the rest of his day and see if you, the reader, can guess what requirement he is trying to meet by his activities.

We left Ponchie at 9:00 am when he was convincing his dad to pay off his bills and help with household chores. Once he managed to pull that off, here is how he spent the rest of his time...

10:00 am - 10:00 pm: A very tired Ponchie, from having stayed up all night, locked his puppy in the bathroom and hit the sack.

10:00 pm: Ponchie spent 2 minutes reflecting on how well he had slept.

11:00 pm: He called up his dad and asked his father to be grateful for being allowed to pay his credit card bills and for being asked to fix his leaky faucet.

12:00 am: He chugged down 2 bottles of wine.

1:00 am: He struggled hard to stay awake again, so he could once be awake for the early magical part of the day.

There you have it. The last 5 activities Yogi Ponchie indulged in, in order to complete the last 5 "must do everyday activities for a happy and successful life." Any guesses? Here are the suggestions from the author and how Ponchie thought he was meeting them.

6. Spend Some Time Alone:

Each day we should try to make some space for spending time alone. Not only that, we should spend this time not in entertainment. In other words sitting alone watching TV, or surfing the internet, or locking your puppy up in the bathroom and going to sleep does not count. One should try to just be alone without excessive stimulation and of course be Awake. When one is alone in this way, not escaping into some entertainment, it will give one visibility into the self in action. This is essential if one is to be a Light Onto Oneself.

7. Do Your Daily Accounting at the End of the Day:

This is a wonderful meditation to adopt into one's lifestyle. It does not require much effort to do and the rewards gained from this simple technique are enormous. At the end of the day spend some time and reflect back on the day chronologically, from the time you woke up to the present time. Look back and see how you acted, what you said, how you said it, what you felt, what you thought etc. Especially reflect on situations that posed a challenge or were emotional in nature. Were you overly reactive, did you respond too quickly, did you really listen, were you honest and forthright? So much self-knowledge can be gained by this simple accounting method. I cannot over emphasize the value of this meditation, so do your daily accounting. It will help balance your life, prevent incomplete emotions from spilling over into the subconscious mind and give you tremendous insight. Yogi Ponchie actually did this correctly, but since he had slept all day, there was not much for him to reflect on.

8. Do at Least One Good Deed:

Everyday do something good for someone else. Do something thoughtful, kind, and generous. Greed, aggression, competitiveness, arrogance, ambition are so widespread, take a moment and contribute to the energy of thoughtfulness, generosity, compassion, humility and giving. Do it without focusing on the reward. My grandfather would

daily, randomly and secretly give some money away to the poor who he would encounter on the street; because it was a nice thing to do. Our Yogi friend thought giving his dad a chance to do a good deed counted as doing a good deed — nope that is no good.

9. Get Some Entertainment:

You need to relax and enjoy yourself daily as well. You will find that when you don't endlessly pursue the pleasure principle all day, the time when you do indulge, is so much more fun and enjoyable. You will really be able to laugh and be happy. You will be full of joy and humor. Try to not go overboard during this time and chug down bottles of wine like our buddy, but do spend some time just in healthy entertainment everyday as well. It is important for your mind, body and spirit.

10. Do Something Difficult:

Everyday you should take on the challenge of doing something which is outside your comfort zone. It is easy to live in a cocoon, with a do not disturb sign on the door, but then chances are you are not growing and are instead falling into a pattern of reactive living. So have courage and take on the challenge of doing those things, which you know deep inside you need to do, but have been able to cleverly avoid. It does not have to be running the New York Marathon; it could be as simple as making a difficult phone call, to turning off the TV, to volunteering to change the stinky diaper. Ponchie struggled to stay up all night as his difficult daily deed, but perhaps the challenge he should have undertaken, was to go to sleep on time and wake up early instead.

So there you have it. The 10 activities you should do daily to have a happy, meaningful and good life. So take one day at a time the best you can and include in it these 10 pearls of wisdom. All another can do from the outside is guide and inspire you, the actual work you have to do yourself. So its time to walk the walk...

Chapter 24

[Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise - Breath Control & Yoga Pranayama Book](#)

Chakra Balancing | Anuloma Viloma Pranayama

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Video of Anuloma Viloma Pranayama](#)

To see the full version of this video please go here... [Free Online Yoga Video of Chakra Balancing Yoga Pranayama](#)

Background of Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

This is a wonderful and essential breathing exercise to practice before moving on to the practice of other more advanced pranayamas. This breath control technique comes from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and actually goes by several different names. It is called Nadi Shodhana Pranayama, Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama, Anuloma Viloma Pranayama, Alternate Nostril Breathing Technique, but I think the name that will describe it best is Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise. The version given here is the basic technique, which must be mastered first; later in this book I will give the more advanced versions of this pranayama.

Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise is designed to purify the psychic channels (nadis) through which Kundalini Energy and Prana (Life-Force) flow. There are 3 primary channels for the flow of this energy: Ida, Pingala and Shushumna. It is essential to balance the flow of energy between the Ida and Pingala channels, which run alongside and intertwine the spine. Through the spinal column runs the Shushumna Nadi, the central master channel. The Ida and Pingala can be considered the lunar and solar channels respectively. With the Ida

Nadi responsible for cooling, feminine, passive, mental energy and the Pingala Nadi responsible for hot, male, active, physical energy. As the flow through these 2 channels is harmonized, prana and Kundalini start to flow through Shushumna. This flow through the Shushumna Nadi activates and balances all the seven chakras.

Benefits of Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

Primary:

- Activates Kundalini Flow through the Shushumna, thus awakening the chakras.
- The flow of Kundalini through the Shushumna also induces meditative states of consciousness.
- Calms the mind, promoting peace and tranquility.
- Creates balance, harmony and rhythm in the entire system.
- Prepares the system for more advanced Pranayamas.

Secondary:

- Improves the respiratory system.
- Strengthens the nervous system.
- Purifies the body by oxygenating the blood supply.

Cautions for Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- **As with all breath control practice, only do as much as you are comfortable with.** Start slowly and build up steadily.

- Do not do this breathing exercise if one nostril is blocked or you are requiring force to breathe through it.

How To Do Simple Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- To practice this breathing exercise sit up in a comfortable position. Preferably in a variation of sukh asana (cross legged).
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Fold your index finger and middle finger into the palm of your right hand so just the thumb, ring finger and pinkie are extended. Hold your knee with your left hand.
- Close your eyes.
- Bring your attention to your breathing and take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you. For the rest of the exercise the attention should remain on your breath.
- Now with your right thumb gently close the right nostril and breathe in slowly and completely through the left nostril only counting mentally from 1 to 4.
- Now gently close the left nostril with your right ring finger and pinkie and releasing the right nostril breathe out through it only, counting mentally from 1 to 4.
- Now breathe in through the RIGHT nostril only, keeping the left closed, counting mentally from 1 to 4.

- Finally, re-close the right nostril and breathe out through the left only, counting mentally from 1 to 4. This completes 1 cycle of Anuloma Viloma Pranayama.
- Start with 5 rounds a day and start to add 1 additional round as you make progress. Also, start to add to the count, based on your level of comfort, by 1 for both the inhalation portion and exhalation portion till you reach a count of 12 for each phase. When you can comfortably manage that move onto Intermediate Anuloma Viloma Pranayama.

How To Do Intermediate Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- All steps are the same as above except you should now build up to 15-20 rounds a day and your count should be built up to 24:24 for inhalation and exhalation. After you reach 24:24 (even with less rounds if you don't have much time) you can progress to the Advanced version.

How To Do Advanced Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- In the advanced version you will introduce the optimum ratio for inhalation to exhalation. The ratio should be 1:2. In other words for every count of 1 for inhalation, exhalation should last twice as long. So now perform Nadi Shodhana Pranayama at the ration 12:24 (12 counts for inhalation phase and 24 for exhalation). Build up to 30 rounds a day, or as many as time allows you to do. The upper limit allowed is 80 rounds 4 times a day, so don't worry about over doing it unless you are hitting this limit.
- Later in the website I will introduce the versions of the Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise utilizing both, breath retention and bandhas (body locks). In general though the above breathing

technique should be practiced for at least 4-6 months first before combining with breath retention or body locks.

Hints and Tips Chakra Balancing Breathing Exercise (Anuloma Viloma Pranayama):

- 30 years. It took Yogi Bhajan 30 years to master and perfect the flow of breath through either nostril without the use of his hands. This is a worthwhile mental exercise to try. By bringing the power of your attention to the flow through a particular nostril see how well you can modulate it. Here is the link to [Yogi Bajan's Kundalini Yoga Website](#) if you want to explore.
- Apply the knowledge from this breath control technique to your everyday life and monitor the affects. If you are looking for active energy, breathe exclusively through the Right Nostril, on the other hand, if you are looking to relax or do mental work breathe exclusively through the Left Nostril. Experiment, learn and enjoy.
- To learn more about Anuloma Viloma Pranayama (called Nadi Shodhana Pranayama by this school) you can visit [Yoga Vision, Bihar School of Yoga](#).

Chapter 25

[Yoga Positions for Beginners for Daily Morning Practice - Kundalini Yoga Morning Wakeup Series](#)

Beginner Yoga Poses for Daily Morning Practice

The following beginner's Kundalini Yoga Set is also described in this post ([Morning Wakeup Kundalini Yoga Set](#)), but I am including here as part of the [Kundalini Yoga Kriyas Book](#) for the sake of completeness and better organization.

Even though this set of yoga positions and exercises is simple for the beginner yogi to do, it is not any less valuable than many advanced Kundalini Yoga Kriyas. It is an excellent yoga set with a wide range of great benefits. In fact, it is a set which encompasses many of the daily recommendations of Kundalini Yoga.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Beginner Kundalini Yoga Exercise Video](#)

The Pranayama (breathing exercise) used for most of this set is the Breath of Fire, which is described in [Breath Control & Yoga Pranayama Book - Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise - Ch 1](#). Here is also a video demonstration of Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise to help make sure you doing it correctly.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
[Breath of Fire Kundalini Yoga Pranayama Video](#)

Overview of Beginner's Morning Wakeup Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

The yoga postures and exercises below, should be done in sequence without taking a break in between if possible. The set can be done anytime of the day, although it is best done in the early morning hours. Even though this set is designed for beginners, I still recommend reading the [10 Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#) post first before starting it.

This set is ideal for beginning a Kundalini Yoga practice and done regularly can help form a very good foundation from which to progress to more advanced work. It is also suitable for doing prior to a meditation session.

In addition, this set has the advantage of not requiring much time so can be perfect for those with a busy schedule. Overall, the set works on your respiratory, digestive, immune and nervous systems.

How To Do Beginner Morning Wakeup Kundalini Yoga Exercises:

1. Yoga Rowing Exercise:

a. Instructions for Yoga Rowing Exercise:

- Sit up with both legs extended straight out in front of you.
- Extend the arms and have the thumbs facing up towards the sky, fingers extended forward and keep the elbows straight.
- Lean back 20-30 degrees - Inhale. Then lean forward about the same distance and exhale.
- Continue at a moderate pace.

b. *Duration for Yoga Rowing Exercise:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Rowing Exercise:*

- Opens up the Solar Plexus.
- Promotes flexibility in hamstrings and hips.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Rowing Exercise:* Your knees may bend slightly but elbows should remain straight. Curl your toes back towards you to accentuate the stretch in the calves.

2. Yoga Single Leg Extensions:

a. *Instructions for Yoga Single Leg Extensions:*

- Sit up with both legs extended.
- Raise your left leg. Hold your toes/foot with both hands. Begin Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise.
- Switch legs halfway through the exercise.

b. *Duration for Yoga Single Leg Extensions:* 1-3 minutes / leg

c. *Benefits of Yoga Single Leg Extensions:*

- Stretches the Sciatic nerve and hamstrings.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Single Leg Extensions:*

If you can't hold your toes, hold as far up your leg as you can and curl your toes back towards you. Your leg should be straight and you should try to sit up. If you are just beginning your yoga practice, be careful not to over stretch and incur injury.

3. Yoga Bridge Pose: (also called Yoga Table Top Pose)

a. Instructions for Yoga Bridge Pose:

- Raise yourself on your palms and feet keeping your torso parallel to the ground. You should be facing the sky. The feet are hip distance apart while the hands are shoulder width apart. Your fingers point away from you.
- Begin the Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise.

b. Duration for Yoga Bridge Pose: 1-3 minutes.

c. Benefits of Yoga Bridge Pose:

- Helps the immune system.
- Strengthens the arms and back.

d. Practice Tips for Yoga Bridge Pose:

Press your hips upwards towards the sky and try to keep your back straight. Rest your head on your collar muscles. For starters, take frequent breaks if the arms get tired and then restart the pose again when ready.

4. Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose: (Article: [Illustration of Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose](#))



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose



Picture of Beginner Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose

a. *Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:*

- Lie on your back.
- Place your hands under your buttocks palms facing down (to support your lower back).
- Raise your heels 6 inches, point your feet and toes away from you, raise your head slightly and stare at your toes.
- Begin Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:* 1-7 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:*

- Builds the Navel Center.
- This exercise works on your Manipura Chakra (aka. Nabhi Chakra) which is the seat of willpower. It is recommended to build this center early in your Yoga practice as it will give you the strength and character to see things through.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Stretch Pose:*

To modify this yoga pose you can do this position with your legs bent or do one leg at a time. As a beginner, it may take you some time to develop your abdominal strength, but if you stick with this exercise it will go a long way in helping you develop this important area.

5. Kundalini Yoga Tuck Pose:

a. *Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Tuck Pose:*

- Lie on your back.

- Bend your legs and bring your knees towards your chest.
- Wrap your hands around your knees, raise your head and bring your nose between your knees.
- Begin Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Tuck Pose:* 1-3 minutes.

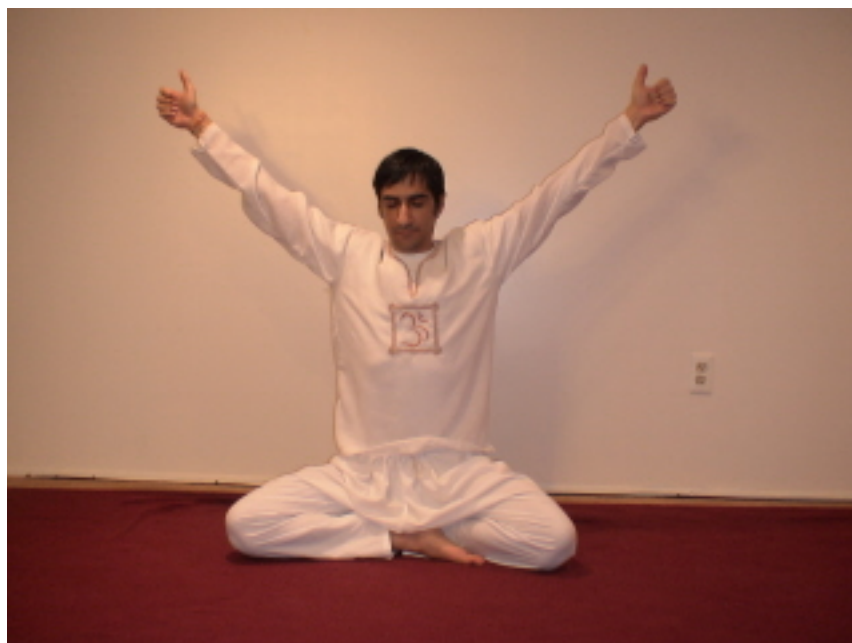
c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Tuck Pose:*

- Works on the digestive system.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Tuck Pose:*

If your back of neck hurts it means your digestive meridians need work. Often when starting a yoga practice, our weaknesses are exposed, look at this as an opportunity to get healthier and more fit.

6. Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:



Picture of Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose

a. *Instructions for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- Sit in Easy pose (cross legged simple, also called Sukh Asana).
- Raise your arms out to the sides and up 60 degrees.
- Curl your fingers in towards your upper palm (not quite, but like a fist) then point your thumbs up towards the sky.
- Keep your head up and elbows straight.
- Begin Breath of Fire Breathing Exercise.

b. *Duration for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:* 1-3 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

- Works on the Magnetic Field.
- Increases the power of your presence.
- Makes you charismatic.

d. *Practice Tips for Kundalini Yoga Eagle Pose:*

Try to keep your arms up and elbows straight. Don't give up at the first sign of discomfort. As you develop your yoga practice, try to hold this pose longer it will help develop your willpower and spirit, as a beginner don't over do it.

7. Yoga Corpse Pose: (also called Shav Asana)

a. *Instructions for Yoga Corpse Pose:*

- Lie on your back and have your arms out to your sides about six

to twelve inches away from your body.

- Turn your palms slightly upward.
- Relax your body and breath.

b. *Duration for Yoga Corpse Pose:* 5 minutes.

c. *Benefits of Yoga Corpse Pose:*

- Allows the body to consolidate the gains from the previous exercises.
- Helps the body heal and rejuvenate itself.
- Promotes relaxation and peace.

d. *Practice Tips for Yoga Corpse Pose:* Try to consciously relax your entire body. Release all your tensions and worries and stay in the present moment as best you can.

This concludes the Beginner Morning Wakeup Kundalini Yoga Exercises.

Chapter 26

[Zen Meditation Technique - Practice & Hidden Secret - Free Guided Meditation](#)

The Practice of Zen Meditation Technique - Zazen

The first meditation we will explore in the [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-Book](#) is the famous Zen Meditation Technique, also called Zazen or Breath Meditation. At the end of the meditation script I will reveal the real secret behind this most profound meditation technique.

**[THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK
Online Meditation Video Series for Daily Meditation Practice](#)**

Background of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

This was the meditation technique of Lord Buddha - I should have to say no more in order to motivate you to try this meditation. It is one of the most widely used meditations in the world and is the heart of Zen Buddhist teachings. If one was to make a short list of the best meditation techniques, Zazen would most certainly make the top 10 list.

Tools required for Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Zafu (traditional Zen Buddhist meditation cushion), Smile Cushion or other firm meditation cushion. I purchased mine from zafu.net. I also purchased a zabuton (meditation mat) from them, a zabuton though is optional.
- Loose comfortable clothing.

- An alarm clock, stop watch or other time device.

Benefits of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Primary Benefits:

- Builds Concentration and Focus.
- Self Knowledge - both, the workings of little self (ego) and awareness of the Big Self (True Divine Nature).
- Calmness.
- Compassion.
- Spontaneous Joy.

Secondary Benefits:

- Improves health and wellbeing.
- Increases willpower and builds character.
- Bestows psychic powers.

Cautions for Practicing Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

There are very few cautions with regard to Zazen practice, but the one I would like to point out has to do with emotional storms.

There can be periods of time, either during a single sitting or spanning across several weeks, when emotions you may have suppressed rise up to the surface and force you to deal with them. During these turbulent times, don't exacerbate the issue by chewing on the emotion laden thoughts that come up. Traumatizing yourself in this way has no value. Instead, sit with the emotions and related thoughts without

resistance, then let them go and return your awareness to your breath.

This emotional cleansing is due to the visibility of the subconscious mind once the conscious mind is quieted by the meditation. In the short term, this can be a difficult time to go through, but in the long term it's a necessary and healthy cleansing that will promote greater peace, depth, joy and clarity in your life.

Guided Basic Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Find a quiet place and sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. If using a zafu or similar meditation cushion, sit on the forward third of the cushion. The objective is for your hips to be raised above your knees and to form a three-point base with your knees and buttocks touching the floor/cushion (leave a comment below if you want to use a chair or meditation bench and would like me to explain those details).
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.
- Now elongate your spine upwards and to align it with the back of your head, subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. There will be a slight inward arch in your lower back.
- Now rock gently from side to side in big arcs, making them smaller and smaller till you drift to a stop. You should find yourself perpendicular to the floor with no tension or pull from either side.
- Have your eyes half open with an unfocused gaze on the floor in front of you. You should be looking down at a 45-degree angle about 2 to 3 feet in front of you. You may also close your eyes if you prefer.
- Bring your hands to your lap and place them in the cosmic

mudra. To do this rest your right hand on your lap, then rest your left hand on top of it and have your fingers overlap. Now bring the thumb tips together thus forming an oval frame.

- Close your mouth, swallow your saliva creating a slight vacuum and place your tongue against the roof of your mouth. After this point there should be absolutely no more movement of the body. No fidgeting, scratching, shifting - nothing - be like you are frozen in time.
- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Now bring your attention to your breath without trying to manipulate it further in any way, just become aware of its flow. Spend a few minutes just observing it intimately till it starts to become regular and relaxed.
- At this point begin counting your breath. Count an inhalation as one, then the exhalation as 2 and continue to count your breaths until you reach 10. At which point return to 1 with the next inhalation. If at any point you get caught in a mental story line and lose your count, gently, without passing any judgment, return to 1 and start over. That's it, continue for the duration of the meditation.

Guided Intermediate Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Follow all the steps for the Basic Zen Meditation Technique, except for the last step a complete inhalation and exhalation cycle should be counted as 1. So you will do 10 full cycles of inhalation and exhalation before returning to 1. You can also increase the time to 30 - 40 minutes.

Guided Advanced Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

Follow all the steps for the Basic Zen Meditation Technique, except for the last step instead of counting the breaths, just "be the breath". Don't try to jump to this step too soon, first build your concentration and focus. You can also increase the time to 1 hour.

Hints and Tips for Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

- Do some stretching or Yoga before sitting in zazen. It will help your body adjust better.
- Be regular, the benefits of this meditation are vast, but they take time to manifest.
- Some good internet resources and books on Zen meditation and Zen teachings are listed below...
 1. Charlotte Joko Beck's [Ordinary Mind Zen School](#) and her book *Everyday Zen: Love & Work*
 2. [Zen Mountain Monastery](#) - Mountain and Rivers Order of Zen Buddhism
 3. Shunryu Suzuki's [San Francisco Zen Center](#) and his book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

Secret of Zen Meditation Technique (Zazen):

The secret of zazen does not lie in the awareness of the inhalation or the exhalation. It lies in the gap *in between these breaths*. It lies when the breath is *spontaneously* suspended. It is in this gap where the mysteries of the Universe are hidden. This gap and the gap between 2 thoughts are best friends, and in this silence between 2 thoughts the absolute is revealed. Don't try to force this pause, just continue with your zazen, it will come about naturally.

Chapter 27

Week 4 Syllabus:

Objectives:

Knowledge:

- Deepen and Consolidate Meditation Knowledge.

Techniques:

- Supreme One Minute Breathing.
- Yoga for Meditation Set.
- Learn AUM Mantra Meditation.

Articles for Study:

- [How Much Time Should I Meditation For](#)
- [Tips and Tools for Meditation](#)
- [Meditation Help | Tips for Beginners](#)
- [No Shortcuts to Enlightenment](#)

Optional Reading and Techniques:

- [Gayatri Mantra Meditation and MP3 Download](#)

Daily Practice:

Pranayama: 3-5 mins

- [Supreme One Minute Breathing for Brain Development](#)

Yoga: 15-20 mins

- [Silentmind Meditation Program Appendix 1 - Yoga for Meditation](#)

Meditation: 20 mins

- [AUM Mantra Meditation Technique](#)

Chapter 28

How Much Time Should You Practice Meditation For Daily?

Meditation Guidance

There is a famous story of a Kundalini Yoga Master who was desperate to increase the amount of time he spent doing his daily meditation practice. The story says that the Yogi nailed his ponytail to the wall so that when he would start to doze off his contraption would rudely awaken him, and that this technique allowed him to successfully meditate for 22 hours daily. Are you ready for that :-)? Luckily, 22 hours of daily meditation is not a prerequisite for spiritual growth or enlightenment, but the point of the story is that the task is not cheap either. So for how long should one meditate daily?

Before we go into the numbers it is important to clarify exactly what type of meditation we are talking about here. There are many schools of meditation, each with their own techniques and methods. Here, we are referring to the meditations that are done being mostly physically still. So this would include zen meditation (zazen), vipassana, insight meditation, jyana yoga, the [Silent Mind \(SM\) Meditations](#), and meditations that utilize an object for concentration (3rd eye meditation, mantra meditation, visualization, sound, trataka (candle flame gazing), 3 step rhythmic breath (3srb) meditation or similar variation of breath meditation, etc). The other types of meditations involving dance (shiva tandava - dance of death), Osho's meditations (kundalini, dynamic, etc), laya yoga meditations, and other such meditations have specific time requirements to work their magic and I am not referring to them in this discussion. So, now on to the numbers.

The minimum time one should aim to set aside for daily meditation is 20 minutes. Let me tell you a true story. In my post graduate years I

was studying cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence, looking to actually do empirical studies on meditative states of consciousness. One of my philosophy professor's told me to join a Zen meditation club, which practiced zazen regularly on campus. Till then, I had only meditated on my back lying down or during long walks, but I decided to attend their zazen session. It was meant to be two 20-minute sessions and let me tell you I ran away after the first 20 minutes. I still to this day remember the sensei saying, "I guess he is leaving," as I snuck out the back door. Only later, after luckily coming across [Charlotte Joko Beck's](#) *Everyday Zen: Love and Work*, did I really start to establish a strong, regular zazen practice. The point here is that 20 minutes initially, if you have not done formal sitting meditation before, is much harder than you might think. So, if it takes you some time to get to 20 minutes of daily meditation that is perfectly fine. Start with less, but aim at building up your meditation to this amount of time. Read [The Golden Rule to Stop Excuses and Start Meditation Now](#) for more guidance to get your practice started if you need it.

Why 20 minutes of meditation? From my experience I can say that 20 minutes daily proved to be very effective; everything just started to transform. Others, over time, have also probably found that this amount of time has worked well for bringing about positive changes in themselves and so the number has become the de facto standard for a starting practice.

The next stage is 30 minutes, 2 times daily. On my trip to [Zen Mountain Monastery](#) for their Zazen Training program, 30 minutes was the minimum time requirement for any zazen session. I could relate to the difficulties some of the first timers were having with this length of time and unfortunately for them there was no back door to escape from either ;-). Also, interestingly at Zen Mountain Monastery, you could request to be struck with a cane on your shoulders (at special acupressure points) to help you stay awake, drain emotional junk out of your system or as an aid to go deeper. This is called Keisaku and it can work as an alternative technique for you if you don't have long hair like our Yogi friend above :-). So work your way up to 30 minutes

of meditation, and try to do that twice daily if possible.

Finally, you should build up to 1 hour of steady meditation practice everyday. For extracting the maximum benefit from a meditation program this is the golden number. To get to the experience of "Big Mind" as Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki describes the detached state, or the "Big Self" as described by the Advaita Vedanta teachers, or to get to the explosion of insight as put forth by [J. Krishnamurti](#) and the Silent Mind Meditations, 1 hour of meditation is usually needed. This is primarily because it takes some time for the thinking process to slow down and for us to extract ourselves out of the daily drama of our little egos. So there you have it. Start and aim for 20 minutes of daily meditation and then build up to 1 hour. You will find everything you are looking for, as you will discover that everything is you.

Chapter 29

[Essential Meditation Tips & Tools for Daily Practice](#)

Mastering Your Daily Meditation Practice Series

What are the key items you need in order to start or deepen your [daily meditation practice](#)? To help answer this question I thought it would be best if I simply shared with you my personal meditation tools and some tips that have helped me establish and benefit from a strong daily meditation practice. In the article [Top 5 Mistakes in Establishing a Daily Meditation Practice](#), mistake #2 was "Don't Prepare Your Meditation Environment." In that section I listed the essential tools of the trade for a successful meditator. Below are illustrations of these meditation tools straight from my meditation world. Hope it helps you to plan and set-up your own meditation room and environment.

My Meditation Space

1. My Meditation Space: Here is my favorite place in the Universe. Some items worth noting from this illustration are...

Related Meditation Tips:

Lamp: I use a touch lamp, which is within reach of where I sit. It has 3 levels of illumination and really helps set a very serene and inviting atmosphere to help my mind settle down quickly to prepare for meditation. It's really pretty cool as it works with touch so is easy to deal with in the dark as well.

Shawl: You will also see a shawl, which I drape over my legs to stay comfortable on cold mornings. Early mornings are by far the best time for meditation if you can manage it. Here is an article that expands on that more: [The Secret of How to Become an Early Riser](#).

Meditation Cushion & Zabuton

2. Meditation Smile Cushion & Meditation Zabuton: There were both purchased over the Internet from the website zafu.net.

Related Meditation Tips:

Meditation Smile Cushion: I also have a traditional round [Zen Meditation](#) Zafu, but I have found the smile cushion above to be more effective for me as it gives more support to the legs. If you were going to sit for 1 hour plus, without intermittent Kinhin (walking meditation) or other breaks, I would strongly recommend investing in a good meditation cushion.

Meditation Mat (Zabuton): I normally cover my zabuton with a towel when I sit, so I don't have to worry about it getting dirty often.

Meditation Clothing

3. Meditation Clothing: My wife was like, you are NOT going to put pictures of your self-tailored pajamas on the website are you? Well... yes I am and I am very proud of the design, which I am ultimately planning to sell to Armani for a fortune in the near future: -D.

Related Meditation Tips:

Meditation Pajamas: The shorts are really for the Yoga practice, which I do after my meditation practice. The custom butchered pajamas are for meditation and they serve 2 very important purposes. First, they are cut at the upper thighs so no material bunches up behind the knees to cut off blood supply to put my legs to sleep. Second, the waistband is not elastic, but instead uses a woven tape (nala), which I loosen once I sit so that my diaphragm and breathing are not impeded in any way.

Meditation Motivators

4. Meditation Motivators: These are just some items, which inspire me and help set the right atmosphere for spiritual work.

Related Meditation Tips:

Baby Proof Stuff: I have little ones who you can read about here: [How to Make a Baby the Right Way with Illustrations](#). So my incense box is baby proof, as is the lighter you will see in the picture below.

Meditation Tools

5. Meditation Tools: For [insight meditation](#) practice no music should be used, so the remote is much more important for the [Yoga](#) & [Pranayama](#) practice, specially if you are using rhythm for the breathing exercises. The most important item in the list above is the stopwatch.

Related Meditation Tips:

Stopwatch: Make sure you have a stopwatch, which counts down from a particular time period. This way you won't have to disrupt your practice by looking at a clock to determine the length of your meditation.

Conclusion:

One item I realized I forgot is my meditation journal. It sits right under my little table, or in my basket and any profound insights or [enlightenment experiences](#) I have I note them down there. I hope giving you this glimpse into my meditation practice inspires and helps you with your daily spiritual work.

You can also get more meditation hints and tips from this article: [Silent Mind Meditation Program - Practical Hints & Tips- Chapter 18](#).

Chapter 30

[Meditation Help & 5 Great New Meditation Tips for Beginners](#)

Meditation Help

In the 2 previous article, [Essential Meditation Tips & Tools for Daily Practice](#) and the [Top 5 Mistakes in Establishing a Meditation Practice](#), I shared many important meditation tips to help you establish a strong meditation practice. Today I would like to give you some more valuable meditation help. Today's article will give you tips, which are very practical in nature and should help you deal with common issues that many beginner meditators have.

First, I will do a quick review of the tips from the previous articles I mentioned above and then, I will move ahead to the new meditation tips I would like to share with you today. If you are familiar with the two articles above, then you can skip down to the New Meditation Help & Tips Section below.

Meditation Help for Beginners

1- Meditation Space:

This is a must. Gorilla meditation tactics, meditating here and there are everywhere and are usually just good for short bursts. If you are interested in a sustained campaign, designating a meditation space is a huge help. Those college students who complain to me about this suggestion due to living in a dorm, your entire room is your meditation space ... mine was. Of course, in this case just do the best you can.

2- Meditation Tools:

Loose fitting clothing, that doesn't bunch up behind your knees, an

alarm clock, good firm meditation cushion (preferably a Zafu or Smile Cushion) are all very helpful meditation accessories.

3- Set Meditation Time:

This should have been number 1, but I am feeling too lazy to cut and paste it up there now, so here it is incorrectly at number 3. Set a specific time to do your daily meditation practice. Preferably this should be early in the morning, earlier the better, but certainly before your day kicks into full gear. There are many good reasons for this and you can read about those in the article: [The Secret to Becoming an Early Riser](#).

4- Right Meditation Attitude:

Here are attitudes that get in the way of establishing a strong meditation practice. Some of these are the ones I listed in the meditation articles above, but some are from the comments of other meditators offering their ideas and meditation help.

- Think meditation is too hard and give up. Be patient, persist and do as much as you are comfortable doing. Overdoing it and not enjoying your practice becomes an obstacle to long-term practice.
- Want enlightenment or positive changes fast. The rewards take a little time to emerge, but they do come and are certainly worth it. Just keep going, without expectations or desire for lollipops and psychic powers.
- Try to Stop/Empty the Mind: It is ok for thoughts to come up; the Big Mind and unearthly silence will emerge. It just takes time for such evolution to happen.

Meditation Help & 5 New Beginner Meditation Tips

Here are 5 more helpful meditation tips, which should help you raise the level of your meditation practice. These are very practical tips and deal with difficulties both, beginners and others, will typically encounter during their actual meditation sessions.

Meditation Tip #1- Sitting Through Restlessness:

This is perhaps one of the most common difficulties encountered by beginner meditators. You have set the alarm for 20 minutes and about 10 minutes in, you are cruising along doing your [Zen Meditation](#) counting your breath, when you start to feel restless, start wondering how much time is left and start to feel the urge to get up and get busy with life... oh oh!

If this is happening to you, you are lucky. Yes that is correct, you are lucky and I am jealous. This is precisely why meditation, especially silent, still meditation, is so effective and why you will benefit so much from your early practice. At the very end, enlightenment is nothing but the art of being ok with "what is", no matter what that "what is" is. It is the art of embracing the present, and being empty of the desire to change or escape it. Guess what, here is your chance to develop that art.

You see, once you become an expert meditator, that restlessness and boredom tends to come up much less, so really you get less opportunity to practice this great art of staying with the unpleasant present. Developing this art is what Zen Meditation (or other such meditation) facilitates and that is precisely why it works wonders for you during the early days of practice.

So the next time you get the urge to end your session early, bear down... remember this is your chance to grow. Treat this unpleasantness as a gift and remain with it. Neither suppress, nor run away from it. Just observe it. You are now developing your highest

potential, the muscle of awareness... you are now developing the Witnessing Consciousness. You are now mastering the Art of Living.

Meditation Tip #2- Just Sit Down:

If you are a gym rat, you know that if you can just get to the gym, you will get some degree of workout done. Half the battle is won if you can just get there. The same is with meditation. If you can just get your butt down on the Zafu (meditation cushion), half the battle is won. And if you can remember meditation tip #1 above, well then the battle is really going to go well, as you are now probably going to complete the entire session.

This is further facilitated if you have a set meditation time and a set meditation space. Although, meditation is the ultimate science and bestows the ultimate freedom, if you need to respond like Pavlov's Dog (classical conditioning) did to the sound of a bell, in order to jump onto your cushion and start your meditation session, so be it. Just find a way to get on the cushion; the rest will start to take care of itself.

Meditation Tip #3- Make it Count:

Well since you have already sat down, you might as well make the most of it. Of course you could sit and spend the entire time thinking about all the things you need to do that day, but really that can wait till you have finished meditating. If many things are on your mind, then write them down before you sit and tell your mind that right after you are done, you will address those issues. This technique works great if you have insomnia from over thinking as well. It puts the mind at ease by telling it that it will get a chance to chew over all those problems later, so it leaves you alone to get your meditation done.

Also, always remind yourself how precious your time here is, remind yourself that life is short and you simply cannot afford to not use your meditation time as best as possible. As Zen Master Charlotte Joko

Beck points out, if you are going to sit and not apply yourself in any way to observe your mind or breath, you might as well be out playing golf. So apply yourself as best you can. Thus, you will be doing your part. The rest, as usual, will take care of itself.

Meditation Tip #4- Mind Over Body:

I know your knees hurt and oooooohhhh that aching back. No, that is not the reason to stop, in fact that is not even the reason to move or flinch. Unless you are going to blow out a knee and have to go to the emergency room, you are not to move unnecessarily. If its Zen Meditation or other such Insight Meditation Technique, then it is not necessary to move at all, so you should be as if you are frozen in time.... aching knees and all (see meditation tip #1 above for inspiration).

Once you give in and start adjusting during meditation, there will be no end to it. Why? Because the body knows then that it is still the master. It knows that it still calls the shots and by a little pain here, a little phantom itch there, a little phantom tickle here, it can still boss you around. Yes phantom sensations. The body is not going to like being subdued and made to be still at your command, so it is going to create ghost feelings to get back on top. Just say no.

If you can endure the first few attempts by the body to regain dominance, the body will understand that the true master is back in the house and it will stop troubling you. Try this and validate it for yourself.

Meditation Tip #5- No Negative Thinking:

I don't have the discipline. I don't have the gift of insight. I can't watch my thoughts. I am not intelligent enough. I can't concentrate. I am not flexible enough. I don't have the willpower. After all I am not the chosen one... Eddie Murphy is (The Golden Child).

Look, meditation is arduous. It is not complex, but at it's highest levels it is arduous, so don't make it harder than it is. The fact is you just don't know what is going to happen, so there is no need to think that the worst is going to happen or that you don't have what it takes to make the best happen.

This type of negative thinking just creates more obstacles and is totally worthless. It serves no good purpose, so just don't do it. I know those beginning meditation can have such discouraging thoughts and you should guard against believing them. They are just thoughts, don't give them life by buying into them. Just observe them, smile, and let them go. As I mentioned above, your job is simple; do your best. Leave the rest in the hands of the good Lord.

Summary of Meditation Help & Beginner Meditation Tips:

I think I will need another article on this topic as more and more great tips keep bubbling up into my mind (must be this creativity experiment I am doing, but that too is another article). But for now I think the above tips will go a long way in getting you started with your meditation practice and help make it into one that is strong and deep. If you have meditation help you can offer others, please do share them with us in the comments section below.

If you are looking for more meditation help or looking to enhance your current meditation practice, you can check out the [Meditation for Beginners | Learn How to Meditate Class](#) this is a part of the [Free Online Meditation Classes](#) offered here.

Chapter 31

No Short Cuts to Enlightenment

Enlightenment

A single Shakyamuni Buddha, a Lord Jesus Christ, a Saint Mahavira, a Lord Krishna, a Mahayogi Pantanjali, a Guru Nanak have a massive lasting impact on the whole of humanity, so tell me something, if there was a school, institute, program or person with a short cut solution for pumping out enlightened folks by the dozens would not humanity be in better shape than it is? Would not the message of love and peace spread and penetrate society at least to a larger extent than today, where it seems to be almost non-existent? OK, forget that argument, think about this, would not this saint-producing factory have a line twenty miles long outside of aspirants and be all over the news? This is the Internet age, the age of information, a time where multiple 24/7 news channels thrive, where small news in a remote corner of the world shows up at your doorstep almost instantly. So given that, would not this incredible nirvana factory be the talk of the town? Wouldn't all the spiritual junkies be flocking to it? But the last time I tuned into CNN, the news was still who just died, alas... I might have missed the grand opening. OK, forget that argument; think about this, the monks and yogis of old retreated to the mountains and forests for decades to practice meditation. Were they mad, incompetent, or masochistic? Were they just plain dumb and clueless to the fact that there was a quick fix available? Could it be that these potent, massive human beings just all kept missing the short cut? These fellows have practiced meditation for thousands of years and all of them never discovered the short cut! No, sorry my friend there is no short cut, but if you are still not convinced I will continue with some more reasons below.

Let's look at life. Getting in shape takes hard work, mastering an art can take a lifetime, learning a science, skill or language can take

years, but you figured that the greatest art of all, the highest accomplishment possible to man, would be made possible via a 20 minute CD!! Sorry, it will not be handed to you on a silver platter no matter what the salesman says. And speaking of salesman that is probably the best clue of all that something is amiss. The one trait that is common across all the definitions of enlightenment is compassion. Does it really make sense that a fully awakened enlightened person, who is supposed to be completely free, full of joy, bliss and compassion, decides he would rather be a businessman and only help you if you pay him? He decides to rake in the cash to buy his third BMW since he is just not quite satisfied with having a Buddha Mind? If the source feels more like a business than a genuine place to help guide you, be warned - you are about to be conned. No, my friend, don't waste your money, there are no short cuts and I will tell you something else, it is not even possible to have one; ever. Enlightenment cannot be brought about through any act of will. It comes on its own and goes on its own. No formula can produce it, no method can create it, and no path can take you to it. Any effort on your part to bring about enlightenment only strengthens the noose of desire and perpetuates self-centered activity, so no outside solution can possibly work for this condition. To illuminate this point the following traditional example is often used...

Think of your life as a movie. Reality is what is happening on the screen, everything that takes place is in the movie; the Truth is the screen itself. It is forever hidden by the images moving on it. It only becomes visible when the movie stops playing. Any willful attempt to stop the movie just adds another theme, another story line and the show goes on. Any angle you undertake is another scene in your movie. This movie has to stop itself and when it does the Truth becomes visible. All you can do is watch the movie. As you watch and study the movie you start to see its monotony and meaninglessness. You start to see the pettiness of being endlessly drawn into your self-centered drama. This is the beginning of the end. Keep watching carefully, meticulously, and diligently. This watching leads to the movie ending itself. Then you may be blessed with the Truth. So next

time someone comes up to you and tries to sell you magic beads of enlightenment, politely show them the garbage can.

Chapter 32

[Powerful Gayatri Mantra Download & Free MP3](#)

Gayatri Mantra Meditation & Videos

Of all the mantras in the Vedas, the most revered and powerful is the Gayatri Mantra. This mantra is certainly the most recited and also, perhaps has the widest range of applications. It is not just used to express one's devotion to the Lord, but is also used for japa meditation (mantra chanting), chakra meditation, naad yoga, putting the kids to sleep, etc. In addition to Hindus, Buddhists embrace the Gayatri mantra as well.

Another powerful Vedic mantra is the Lord Shiva Mahamritunjay Mantra and you will find details and free MP3 of this great mantra on the following page: [Lord Shiva Mahamritunjay Mantra MP3 Download](#).

You will find a video of the Gayatri Mantra being recited by my son Shivum in the article, [3 Easy Kids Meditation Techniques](#), and in this article I want to give you some additional recitations of this terrific mantra. Below you will also find a MP3 version of the Gayatri Mantra, chanted by my wife Trupti, which you are free to download. Before I jump ahead to all that though, here is the written text of the mantra, as well as an English translation.

Gayatri Mantra

Om Bhur Buvaha Svaha
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayath

Although there are several interpretations of this mantra, with subtle

differences between each, the one that I find most suitable is the following...

Gayatri Mantra English Translation

O Supreme Creator, Thou art the giver of life, the remover of pain and sorrow and the bestower of happiness; O Creator of the Universe, may we receive Thy supreme sin-destroying light; may Thou guide our intellect in the right direction.

You can get more information and translations at the [Gayatri Mantra Wiki Page](#) as well.

Gayatri Mantra Third Eye Chakra Meditation:

As I had mentioned above, there are many application for this wonderful mantra. One particular application that I would like to present to you is the use of the Gayatri Mantra to awaken [Ajna Chakra](#) or the Third Eye Chakra. To use the Gayatri Mantra to do this, you would follow the steps laid out in the [AUM Mantra Meditation](#) article, except use the Gayatri Mantra instead of the primordial sound AUM, to do the meditation.

So you would sit up comfortably, close your eyes and turn them upwards to look through your forehead (only hold this eye position as long as comfortable) and then chant the Gayatri Mantra, visualizing it emanating from the Third Eye (center of the forehead). As always, please don't over do such potent meditations, start slowly and build up your capacity gently over time.

1. Gayatri Mantra MP3 Download:

Here is the Gayatri Mantra chanted by my wife Trupti. I can hear her sing it even now as I write this since it's bedtime for the little ones. Thanks Trups! Right click link below and chose "Save Link As..." to save to your computer.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A MP3 BELOW IS THE MP3 LINK

[Free Gayatri Mantra MP3 Download](#)

2. Gayatri Mantra Videos:

There are also 2 excellent Gayatri Mantra videos on YouTube which I really like, so here are those videos for you to enjoy as well.

THIS CHAPTER HAS MORE VIDEOS BELOW ARE THE VIDEO LINK

[Powerful Gayatri Mantra Videos](#)

Chapter 33

Supreme Yogic Breath for Brain Development & Mind Control

1-Minute Yogic Breath

The mind and breath are intimately related. In fact, one of the best and most effective ways to silence the mind is by slowing down the breath, and the reverse is true as well, if your mind is calm and serene, your breath too will be slow and fine. Kundalini Yoga's 1 minute yogic breath is one of the most powerful techniques for creating this silencing affect on the brain, but like all powerful yoga pranayamas, this technique also demands that you approach it with respect and intelligence.

This pranayama takes some time to master. It is difficult and since it involves one of the more advanced aspects of yogic breathing, breath retention, it is prudent to develop this technique slowly and build up one's capacity steadily over time. Once mastered though, for brain development and mind control, this pranayama is one of the best. If you are new to yoga practice, I suggest incorporating this technique into your practice so that you can start to develop your expertise in it and therefore enjoy its great rewards in due course.

1 Minute Yogic Breath comes from the powerful school of Kundalini Yoga. Ravi Singh, who learned it from Yogi Bhajan, taught it to me. In [Mastery of Meditation & Yoga](#), this breathing technique will be chapter 11 on our ongoing [Free Online Yoga Breathing Exercises E-book](#).

Below are the bountiful benefits of this breathing technique, followed by step-by-step instructions on how to practice this pranayama.

Benefits of 1-Minute Yogic Breath:

- Gives one tremendous inner peace and tranquility.
- Helps rejuvenate the brain.
- Help one control the mind and thoughts.
- Helps you conquer fear and become courageous.
- Keeps the brain healthy.
- Calms the entire nervous system and helps dissolve stress.
- Excellent for inducing meditative states of consciousness.
- Develops willpower.
- Builds respiratory capacity.
- Expands and builds the pranic body (energetic body).

Cautions for 1-Minute Yogic Breath:

As the name implies the 1 minute yogic breath, is a single breath cycle done over the course of 1 minute: 20 seconds to inhale, 20 seconds hold breath in and 20 seconds to exhale. This is, as I mentioned above, not easy to do initially and as it involves breath retention, it should be approached cautiously and slowly. The pranayama should not be done using strain. You should start with only 5 seconds for each phase and build up gently from there.

From 5 seconds, work your way up to 10 seconds and then from there to 15 and finally to 20 seconds per phase.

Instructions for 1-Minute Yogic Breath:

This breath is not complicated at all, but yet it is immensely powerful.

- Sit in any comfortable posture and close your eyes. You may also lie down, but sitting is better.
- Take five long, deep, slow breaths to help relax you.
- Now start the pattern of inhaling slowly, holding breath in and exhaling slowly. As mentioned in the caution above, start with 5 seconds per phase and build up gently from there. Only when you are ready, should you be doing 20 seconds per phase.
- You may practice this pranayama from 1 minute all the way up to 31 minutes in a single sitting.

1-Minute Yogic Breath Tips:

Alternate Technique for Improving Capacity:

You may find over time that you are able to do the 20-20-20 cycles, but only for a few breaths. If that is the case, do a few such 1-minute cycles and then take a break by doing simple long, deep breathing and then return to the 1-minute breath.

Using 1-Minute Breath to Test Pranic Body:

I use 1-minute breath to test my pranic capacity from time to time. So even if I have not been doing this technique, I will sprinkle in 1-minute breath to see what my pranic status is. You will be surprised to find that even though you may not be explicitly doing this technique, a good yoga and pranayama practice builds and keeps your pranic (energetic) body in tip top shape, which will be verified by being able to do 1-minute yogic breath.

1-Minute Breath for Meditators:

If you are practicing Jyana yoga, awareness meditation, insight meditation, [silent mind meditation](#), [zazen or zen meditation](#), vipassana, etc., you will know the importance of spontaneous breath suspension. 1 minute yogic breath can be very helpful to you if you do practice such meditation techniques, as it assists in this suspension, which translates to greater gaps between thoughts and thus more access to one's silent nature within.

I hope you enjoy this wonderful pranayama and I hope it helps you awaken to your true Self - Sat Nam.

Chapter 34

[SM Meditation Program: Yoga for Meditation Set](#)

SM Meditation Program

This set should take you 40 minutes to do. It is to be done daily for the first 4 weeks as part of the Phase 1 Yoga for Meditation physical work.

1. Long Deep Breathing (LDB):

- a. Description: Sit in Sukh Asan (choose the leg position of your choice as described in [Chapter 7: SM Meditation Program Basic Meditations](#)) with your hands grasping your knees and breathe by taking full deep breaths through the nose. The key to LDB is to fill the lungs entirely on the inhalation and then empty them completely on the exhalation. The diaphragm is kept relaxed and the stomach expands out on the inhalation and back in on the exhalation.
- b. Breath: LDB
- c. Duration: 5 minutes
- d. Benefits: LDB is excellent for expanding ones lung capacity and bringing in maximum amount of oxygen in every breath. It promotes healing and helps build the nervous system.
- e. Notes: If you feel dizzy return to normal breathing, but in general LDB should not pose much difficulty for you. If 5 continuous minutes is too much intersperse with normal breathing as required.

2. Relax in Shav Asan:

- a. Description: Lie flat on your back in Shav Asan have your hands out to your sides with the palms facing slightly upward, the legs are shoulder width apart and everything should be relaxed.
- b. Breath: Normal Breathing
- c. Duration: 1 minute
- d. Benefits: Shav Asan is the best posture for relaxing completely as it provides maximum support to the entire spine and back. Relaxation between exercises gives the body a chance to consolidate the gains that the exercise produces and rejuvenate the areas of the body that are the focus of the exercise.
- e. Notes: Don't fall asleep. Especially if you are not used to waking up early and are trying to do the SM program in the morning.

3. Breath of Fire:

- a. Description: Sit up in Sukh Asan with your hands grasping your knees and begin breathing rapidly through the nose with equal emphasis on the inhalation and exhalation- like very fast sniffing. Keep the abdomen relaxed and allow it to pulse automatically with the breath. Remember that the breath is not taken in very deep and the pace is fast, about 3 cycles per second.
- b. Breath: Breath of Fire
- c. Duration: 5 minutes
- d. Benefits: Breath of Fire is the breath to do when you want to increase your energy and quickly oxygenate your blood. It generates heat in the body, helps detoxify your system and brings your entire system under one rhythm.

- e. Notes: If you feel dizzy slow down the force and/or speed at which you are doing the breathing. Or you can substitute Long Deep Breathing for BOF until you feel ready to switch to BOF again.

4. Relax in Shav Asan: [Repeat #2 again for 1 minute]

5. Butterfly Stretch:

- a. Description: Sit with your back straight and the soles of your feet together. Interlace your fingers around your feet and using your elbows as levers push down on your inner thighs or calves so your knees approach the floor.
- b. Breath: BOF
- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: This posture stretches the inner thighs and groin. It transmutes sexual energy to higher frequencies to be used for other bodily functions. It is a fundamental stretch for any meditator and helps one to sit cross-legged with greater ease.
- e. Notes: Don't press down to the point of pain, just enough to feel a good stretch.

6. Hamstring Stretch:

- a. Description: Sit up with your legs extended away from of you. Lean forward from the waist (don't arch your back down) and keeping your knees straight try to hold as far down on your legs as possible. If you can hold your toes pull them back towards you. If you can't hold your toes, arch your feet back towards you to impart a stretch on the calves.
- b. Breath: BOF

- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: This posture stretches the longest nerve in the body (sciatic nerve), which is important for longevity and overall health. It also stretches the entire back of the body and is a fundamental stretch that should be practiced daily.
- e. Notes: Don't bounce when doing this stretch. As you feel your muscles starting to relax accent the stretch further gently.

7. Knee to Chest:

- a. Description: Lie on your back and bring your right knee to your chest. Wrap your arms around your knee and pull down towards your chest to accent the stretch. Repeat with the left knee.
- b. Breath: LDB
- c. Duration: 1 minute / sided.
- d. Benefits: This helps loosen the hips and stretches the groin.
- e. Notes: This is a simple stretch but works on the all-important hip area which is often stiff and the culprit in many injuries.

8. Frog Stretch:

- a. Description: Continue to lie on your back and bring both legs up into the air with the soles of the feet pointing up towards the sky. Reach up with your arms and hold onto your feet and pull your knees down towards your armpits. The legs should be spread wide, creating a stretch in the groin area. You should be holding your feet from the inside such that the backs of your hands are facing each other and your fingers are curled around the arches of your feet.

- b. Breath: LDB
- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: Stretches the buttocks, groin and hips.
- e. Notes: This is a very comfortable stretch. Just be sure that you are holding onto your feet the right way (inside out).

9. Bridge Pose:

- a. Description: This pose is also called modified wheel pose or tabletop pose. Bring yourself up on the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet. You should be facing the sky. Press upwards with your hips such that your torso is parallel to the ground. Your fingers are pointing backwards (away from your feet).
- b. Breath: BOF
- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: Strengthens the lower back, arms, shoulders and nervous system.
- e. Notes: If you can't do 2 minutes at a stretch take a break and then come into the posture again. If you find this posture too difficult do the following modification. Interlace your fingers and bring your arms and hands under yourself. Now push up with your hips and raise them up while at the same time push down into the floor with your arms. Your feet are flat on the floor as before. Your chin should be tucked in towards your chest.

10. Relax in Shav Asan: [Repeat #2 again for 1 minute].

11. Cobra:

- a. Description: Roll onto your stomach, let your feet rest flat on the floor, place your hands under your shoulders and lift your chest and head up arching your back as you rise. Your hips should stay on the ground. Look up.
- b. Breath: LDB
- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: Adds flexibility and strength to your lower back. Improves your digestive system.
- e. Notes: Go only as far up as is comfortable and take a break if 2 minutes is too much.

12. Knee Bounce:

- a. Description: Sit up with your legs extended in front of you. Bend your left leg and place your left ankle high up on your right thigh. Hold onto your left knee with both hands and bounce the knee gently up and down. Repeat with the other leg.
- b. Breath: BOF
- c. c. Duration: 2 minutes / sided. Benefits: This exercise targets exactly what a meditator is looking for. Flexibility in the hips so that one can sit in Sukh Asan at ease.
- d. Notes: Let gravity do the work, on the way down don't push aggressively. Do not force the knee towards the floor.

13. Cradle Rock:

- a. Description: Staying in the same position as in 12 above cradle

your left leg. To cradle the leg hold onto the left leg with your left arm from underneath (your left elbow will be on the inside of the knee joint and you will be holding your left foot from underneath) and with your right hand hold the left foot. Then rock your leg back and forth bringing the ankle towards your chin. Repeat with the other leg.

b. Breath: BOF

c. Duration: 2 minutes / side

d. Benefits: This exercise perfectly complements the previous one and together they are meditators best friends.

e. Notes: Be careful of your knees, do not strain, and only bring your leg up as high as is comfortable.

14. Split Stretch:

a. Description: Now extend both legs out wide in front of you and lean forward from the waist and grasp as low on the legs as you can. If you can grasp the toes and pull them back towards you, if you are not holding your toes arch them back towards you to force a stretch in the calves.

b. Breath: LDB

c. Duration: 2 minutes

d. Benefits: This posture is often used as an indicator for determining a person's flexibility; it stretches all the lower muscles of the legs as well as the groin area.

e. Notes: Again be careful of your knees and groin, and don't overdo it.

15. Spinal Twist:

- a. Description: Sit up in Sukh Asan hold your shoulder with hands bringing your elbows out to the side and up to shoulder height and twist to the left and then to the right. You are twisting at the waist and your head goes with the direction of the twist. Twist at a moderate pace.
- b. Breath: Inhale when you turn left; exhale when you turn right.
- c. Duration: 2 minutes
- d. Benefits: This exercise loosens up your entire back and helps your digestive system.
- e. Notes: Breathe forcefully to get your energy going.

16. Relax in Shav Asan:

- a. Description: You are now ready for your Meditation Session. As you relax with every inhalation feel yourself being filled with health and awareness and with exhalation feel disease and ignorance leaving your body.
- b. Breath: Relaxed and Smooth.
- c. Duration: 3 minutes
- d. Benefits: Relaxes your mind and body and gets you ready for meditation.
- e. Notes: As you begin your meditation you may notice that quite naturally your breathing will switch to STB.

Chapter 35

[Opening Third Eye \(Ajna\) Chakra Meditation Technique for Psychic Powers](#)

Chakra Meditation Technique to Open Third Eye

The second guided meditation technique we will explore in the [Free Online Guided Meditation E-Book](#) is a widely used and accepted method for opening, activating and balancing the mysterious and powerful Ajna Chakra (Third Eye). It is the potent AUM Mantra meditation technique.

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK

[AUM Meditation to Rapidly Open Third Eye](#)

Background of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

The Ajna Chakra is the sixth chakra of the [Kundalini Seven Chakra System](#). A chakra is an energy vortex, which resides in a particular location of the body and governs the organs and glands of that region. A Chakra is also associated with certain traits and characteristics of the personality and forms a bridge between mind, body and spirit.

The Ajna Chakra (or Third Eye) eye lies at the very top of spine in the medulla oblongata. It relates to the pituitary gland, the pineal gland, the nasociliary nerve plexus and frontal lobes of the brain.

[Chakra Meditation](#) means to activate and balance a particular chakra, thus improving the functioning of everything in that particular region as well as refining the associated personality traits and characteristics. In some cases [psychic powers](#) associated with a particular chakra are also unleashed.

Ajna Chakra literally means "To Command". This chakra is also called the "Third Eye" as the activation gives one the power of intuitive knowledge. In addition, it is called the "Guru Chakra" as its activation connects one to the "Inner Guru". Similarly, it is also called "Eye of Shiva" or "The Divine Eye" for its awakening implies the higher stages of meditation and wisdom.

Each chakra can be activated by several means. In this guided meditation we will use the physical trigger point of the chakra (kshetram) as a point of concentration to activate it. In addition, each chakra is associated with a particular seed sound (Beej Mantra), which can be utilized to awaken it. For the Ajna Chakra the Beej Mantra is the primordial sound "OM" (AUM) and this guided meditation will be using that as well.

Tools required for Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

- An alarm clock, stopwatch or other time device.

Benefits of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Primary Benefits:

- Builds the power of intuition.
- Bestows and increases Psychic Powers.
- Increases and refines awareness.
- Provides clarity of thought, insights and wisdom.
- Allows one to connect to the "inner guru" or "higher self" for guidance and inspiration.

- Builds the Yogic Mind or Neutral Mind, which is free from attachments of the ego.
- Build the power to read others and detect their subtle and gross energetic conditions.
- Promotes flow of [Kundalini Energy](#) into the higher centers.

Secondary Benefits:

- Promotes the ability to have Lucid Dreams.
- Allows for non-verbal communication.
- Builds focus and ones pointedness of the mind.
- Improves your vision.
- Promotes health and wellbeing.

Cautions for Practicing Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Do not strain when holding shambhavi yoga mudra (detailed below).

Guided Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Follow the step-by-step guided meditation below to practice this technique:

- Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position. You may also sit on a chair or lean against a wall for this meditation.
- Set your alarm or other time device for 20 minutes.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly

bring your chin back and in, like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.

- Take 5 deep, slow breaths through the nose. This will oxygenate your blood and relax you.
- Keeping the head straight look up at an imaginary point in the middle of your forehead, just above the eyebrows. This eye position is called shambhavi yoga mudra. Close your eyes while holding this mudra. Do not strain excessively.
- Rest your hands in any comfortable position; you can place them on your knees.
- Try to remain as still as possible.
- Now inhale deeply and begin to chant in a soft, slow, steady voice the mantra OM (pronounced AUM). One chant of OM (AUM) Mantra should last for the entire exhalation. It is a long "Oh", followed by a semi long "Mmmm" during each exhalation. Once all the air has been expelled, inhale fully again and begin to chant the mantra once more. Visualize the OM sound coming from a point in the middle of the forehead just above the eyebrows and emanating throughout your entire body.
- Continue for the duration of the meditation. If your eyes tire from shambhavi yoga mudra release the mudra but continue to chant the OM (AUM) mantra as above. Reapply the mudra again when ready.
- Once you have completed the meditation, rub the palms of your hands together to make them warm and place them on your eyes as you open them slowly. This will relax and comfort your eye muscles.

Hints and Tips for Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

- There are many variations to OM (AUM) Mantra chanting for the activation of Ajna Chakra. I will provide a variation that only requires silently chanting OM Mantra and therefore can be practiced almost anywhere. Follow all steps from the guided meditation above except instead of chanting OM (AUM) Mantra out loud, as you inhale chant "Oh" silently, while visualizing the sound flowing into Ajna Chakra from your forehead and then silently chant "Mmmm" as you exhale, visualizing the sound leaving your forehead from Ajna Chakra. The rest is the same as the guided meditation above.

Secret of Ajna Chakra Meditation Technique (Third Eye):

Many women today are actually practicing Ajna Chakra Meditation without even knowing it. This is resulting from the tradition of wearing a bindi. A bindi is the colorful decorative dot placed in the middle of the forehead and was originally designed to provide continual stimulation to Ajna Chakra by way of its Kshetram (physical trigger point). So next time you wear a bindi, remember that not only does it look oh so fine, but it is also raising your level of awareness and consciousness - not bad for a dot.

Chapter 36

Bonus Material:

Knowledge:

- Below you will find some additional articles to help inspire you and deepen your understanding of meditation.

Techniques:

- The Silent Mind Meditation Technique is introduced, if you are looking to take your practice up to the next and final level.
- Also below you will find several more meditation techniques, as well as some more yoga breathing exercises.
- Some important links to all the free meditation and yoga resources from the website are also given below.

Chapter 37

[How to Do Advanced Jyana Yoga Meditation Videos | Silent Mind Meditation](#)

Advanced Meditation Videos

The advanced Jyana Yoga (yoga of intelligence and insight) meditation videos below are a detailed discussion of the seven steps used by the [Silent Mind Meditation Technique](#) to bring about the cessation of thoughts and the explosion of insight. Another videos series will also be uploaded soon, which is a general discussion of this technique, which can be considered the most advanced form of Jyana (Gyan) Yoga and is based on the Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhist concepts of no-mind, end of knowledge and negation (neti). This technique, as I have pointed out before, is an extension of the work done by J. Krishnamurti and is in my view, the ultimate meditation for Self Realization.

You are going to notice a flurry of activity on Mastery of Meditation and Yoga with regard to meditation, as my long term vision of offering a comprehensive multi-media meditation teacher's certification program is nearing completion. Although, I don't expect mastery of the advanced technique described here as necessary for certification, I do feel it is important for authentic meditation teachers to understand this approach and have a feel for what it entails. This technique is ultimately a life long practice of moment-to-moment awareness. A great many benefits that meditation bestows can be achieved with more basic techniques, that I have already detailed on the website previously, and of course, knowing them is part of the training program. But to encounter the state of mind described by Sage Patanjali as the still mind or Samadhi, or the Zen state of Satori or No-mind, this technique is the best. Therefore I consider this one of the highest forms of Gyan Yoga.

The Silent Mind Meditation (SM for short) is not really complex. It can be described in one line. *Comprehending the mind is action from moment to moment, via direct perception.* Even doing it is not complicated, but it requires great energy, awareness and tenacity. In the 2 part video series below, I explain the 7 steps, which I wrote about in chapter 12 of the Silent Mind Meditation Program, the [Silent Mind Meditations](#). What I hope is for you to once catch a glimpse of the "Fact in Action". See the actuality of the beast of desire, the fact of desire. It is mind blowing when you do. And if you can do it even one time, you will realize a human potential that you have to comprehend the fact directly, not just intellectually, and this will open up a new way of observing for you. All of us humans have this potential, but very few develop it. Developing it leads to transcendence.

I expect those taking the certification program, or those who are serious about meditation and Self Realization, to have questions about this technique. That is natural and healthy and I feel, since this is perhaps a new approach and subtle in nature, discussing it in many different ways is helpful in deepening our understanding regarding it. Once you understand completely what this technique is all about, you will have understood completely everything there is to understand (see the article [Asking the Right Questions](#) for more on this topic). After such understanding, you will have no more questions left. For a Gyan Yogi, mastering this technique and approach, should be the highest goal.

Below is a 2 part series where I am discussing the 7 steps needed to practice this most advanced Gyan Yoga meditation, the Silent Mind Meditation technique. Also, to read how these steps equate to Sage Patanjali's steps of Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, please read the following article [Most Advanced Mind Meditation Technique](#). For those who have inquired already about getting certified for teaching meditation, please be on the lookout for the teacher's training program that will be coming online in the next week or so.

The videos regarding the general discussion of Silent Mind Meditations

that I allude to in the videos below, will be uploaded soon as well.

7 Steps of How to Do Silent Mind Meditation Videos

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK

[Silent Mind Meditation Videos – Part 1 and 2](#)

Chapter 38

[3 Most Powerful Yoga Pranayamas and Kriyas - Sodarshan Chakra Kriya - Part 1](#)

Most Powerful Yoga Pranayama Video

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK

[Sodarshan Chakra Kriya Video](#)

Pranayama, the science of breathing and breath control, is undoubtedly one of the greatest arts one can learn and practice for spiritual growth and personal development. It holds within itself the power to transform the lowest most gross to the highest most refined. This transforming power of pranayama can act upon any and all levels of your being, whether that is physical, emotional, mental or spiritual (energetic). This science has been perfected over the centuries in the East and was mostly kept a secret, only handed down verbally from Guru to a deserving disciple. Now, it is much more available to those who seek it, but I still feel that the knowledge really only finds those who are deserving of it. Having said that, life has brought you here now, so take this opportunity and discover the tremendous power of the Science of Pranayama.

The 3 Pranayamas I am going to present here are typically not for beginners. Fortunately, all 3 have modifications, which you can start out with first before building up to the advanced techniques. I will also present these modifications here and I strongly suggest you start with them first before jumping ahead to the advanced techniques. In moving forward sanely, gently and systematically you will prepare the system to better handle the affects of the advanced forms. This systematic approach is not only much safer, but is also better for

extracting the full benefits of the pranayamas. Part 1 of this series is about Sodarshan Chakra Kriya. Before I go into Sodarshan Chakra Kriya, I want to give some quick guidelines that should be followed for all 3 pranayamas in this series.

Basic Guidelines for practicing Pranayama:

- Do not practice any advanced pranayama if you are unwell. Only do light easy pranayamas.
- Clothing should be loose and should not restrict the movement of the abdomen. Our breathing is already very shallow, we don't need to compound the issue further by hampering the natural movement of our diaphragm.
- Your stomach should be empty. Which means you need to wait at least 2-3 hours after a meal before practicing pranayama.
- If possible practice in the early morning. Early morning is the best time to practice your sadhana (spiritual work). For more information and help on this you can read [The Secret on How to Become an Early Riser.](#)
- You should sit in a comfortable position, preferably in some variation of cross-legged (sukh asana). For more information on sukh asana or other positions you can sit in (like a chair) see [Silent Mind Meditation Program: Basic Meditations - Chapter 7.](#)
- Most importantly, **DO NOT STRAIN**. I cannot emphasize that enough. Take your time, you will enjoy your practice more and you will be able to establish a regular routine, as you will not dread doing your daily work.
- One last thing. The pranayamas being taught here, when practiced sincerely over time, can bestow great power to the practitioner. Normally, these techniques were not transcribed

and as mentioned earlier, were taught only to those held in great trust, so I ask you to respect that trust and agree to **not in any way misuse the powers** obtained from the practices described below.

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Background:

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya (set) was taught to me by my Kundalini Yoga teacher [Ravi Singh](#) who studied it under the guidance of [Yogi Bhajan](#). It dates back a few thousand years and is reputed among all the known Yogas, including Kundalini Yoga, to be the most powerful Pranayama exercise there is. You will notice that it is called a kriya, although a kriya typically is a complete set of asanas and yogic exercises (see [Introduction to Kundalini Yoga](#) for more information on kriyas and how Kundalini Yoga works in general), it also applies in some cases to a single exercise, which is very complete in and of itself. Sodarshan Chakra Kriya is a pranayama exercise that is exactly that, very complete and also very powerful.

Benefits of Sodharshan Chakra Kriya:

The superlatives describing Sodarshan Chakra Kriya are lavish to say the least. In Yoga terms it will give you Nao Niddhi (the nine precious virtues) and Artha Siddhi (the 18 occult powers). These 27 facets contain all of human life and in acquiring them you perfect all that can be perfected in a human. Given this Kriya's reputation for bestowing Psychic and Yogic Powers, it is often practiced by those interested in acquiring these Siddhis (powers). There is no harm in this, as long as these powers are used for the benefit of others and to assist you in your spiritual progress. This kriya, though, is equally valuable to those interested in the final goal of human life - to see and merge with the Divine Non-Dual nature of Reality. This is because, it is very effective in dissolving the blockages (granthis) caused by frozen emotional debris in the nadis (the channels for the movement of Kundalini

Energy) and as the channels are purified greater flow of kundalini is facilitated allowing for the chakras (energy vortexes) to be activated and balanced. In turn, the activation of the chakras and this greater flow of Kundalini Shakti (energy) leads to the refinement of awareness, which allows one to penetrate the veil of illusion - that Reality consists of duality.

Sodarshan Chakra Kriya also dramatically improves your physical wellbeing. In fact, as you practice it you will start to feel quite invincible over time. It expands your nervous system, respiratory system and helps your digestive system. I find that the most profound health benefit is a boost to the immune system when I practice this kriya regularly. Overall the kriya promotes peace, joy and strength.

Description of Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Sit up straight, have your spine erect and bring head back slightly (not up) so your chin is subtly drawn in and back like a soldier at attention. This aligns your spine with the back of your head and is also called Jalandhara Bandha. Your eyes should be 1/10th open looking down at the tip of your nose. Rest your left hand on your left knee. Block your right nostril with your right thumb and have the remaining fingers pointing upwards. Now breathe in deeply through the left nostril filling your lungs to capacity. Lower your right hand now and place it on your right knee. With your breath held in (Antar Kumbhaka) begin to pump your stomach (pulling in the abdominal muscles) to the mantra "Wahay Guru". You will pump your stomach 3 times for each iteration of Wahay Guru. Once for Wa, once for Hay and once for Guru. The mantra should be chanted mentally of course, since the breath is held in. Chant for a total of 16 Wahay Gurus, so for a total of 48 stomach pumps with the breath held in. Then raise your right hand, close off the left nostril with your right pinkie and breathe out of your right nostril. This completes 1 cycle - breathe in through left nostril, hold and pump, breathe out through right nostril. Continue to repeat this cycle for the duration of the kriya.

Duration:

There is no formal time duration for Sodarshan Chakra Kriya; it is left up to the practitioner to determine what is right for them. Below I will give the recommendations when I discuss the modifications.

Beginners Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Modify kriya as follows: Do only 1 pump for each chant of Wahay Guru. So in total with your breath held in you will do 16 pumps per cycle. Also, reduce the force of the pump to where you are comfortable. Start with 3 minutes and build up to 11 minutes. The kriya should be practiced daily.

Intermediate Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Modify kriya as follows: Do only 2 pumps for each chant of Wahay Guru. One for Wahay and one for Guru. So in total you will do 32 pumps with your breath held in per cycle. Pump your stomach with a moderate force. You should try to do 11 minutes, and then go to 22 minutes and then to 31 minutes daily.

Advanced Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Do the kriya as described above in the description section. You should be pumping your stomach with full force and you should do 31 minutes daily. The commitment should be to do 40 days without missing a day, 31 minutes each day. This was exactly the requirement by Ravi for his Kundalini Yoga teacher's training course as well. If you miss a day, you go back to 1 and start over till you complete 40 days.

Perfected Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

Yes there is more, you are not done yet: -D. To do the perfect and complete kriya and thus extract the maximum benefit and reach super human caliber, the requirement is to do 62 minutes per day and build

it up to 2 1/2 hours everyday. If you can discipline yourself to do that, the kriya will provide everything needed in all areas of your life.

Design of Sodarshan Chakra Kriya:

This kriya bestows its many blessings by taking full advantage of many important aspects of Pranayama and Yoga numerology. Below are some of the details behind this successful design.

- Breathing in through the left nostril activates the right hemisphere of the brain. This hemisphere is responsible for your meditative, creative and artistic powers. Activating it helps unleash and grow these aspects of your nature.
- The number 16 is associated with the Ajna Chakra; also known as the Third Eye, Divine Eye or the Eye of Shiva. Chanting the mantra Wahay Guru 16 times activates Ajna Chakra, which is responsible for many psychic abilities and the power of intuition and wisdom.
- The mantra itself, Wahay Guru, means ecstasy beyond words and represents one's higher consciousness. Chanting this mantra attracts this divine energy towards one.
- Pumping the navel helps ignite and awaken Kundalini Shakti so she can make her ascent up the primary Nadi (Shushumna) all the way up to the Crown Chakra (Sahasrara Chakra) activating, rejuvenating, balancing and healing all the other Chakras and associated organs in her path.

Chapter 39

[Meditation Techniques, Types and Practice - A Comprehensive Guide](#)

Best Meditation Techniques, Types & Practice

There are as many types of meditation techniques as there are wonderful flavors of ice cream. This allows each person to find a flavor that is delicious to him or her. This article is the combined result of the 3 part series "Comprehensive Guide to the World of Meditation Practice". I created this one article out of those three to provide a single document, which one can refer to for an introduction to all the important meditation techniques and types available. This article provides this overview of all the significant meditation techniques and hopefully this will help you find the style that is sweetest to you.

Some meditation styles suit those of an intellectual disposition, while others are more attracted to those who prefer the path of love and surrender. Still others, with an active approach to life, may like the meditation techniques involving movement, while those with a strong mind would enjoy the approach of thought, mantra, visualization or concentration. Overall, there are several broad categories under which we can capture most of these different meditation practices and this article will explore each of these types of meditation techniques.

1. Insight Meditation Techniques:

These are the meditations of choice for the Gyan Yogis or those drawn to the intellectual path. It incorporates the advanced meditation techniques from the Zen school of Buddhism, the Advaita Vedanta school of Hinduism, and certain schools of Western Religions among others.

1. **WHO AM I Meditation Technique:** This technique comes from the school of Advaita Vedanta (Non-Dualism / End of Knowledge). The meditation was popularized by [Shri Ramana Maharishi](#) and is based on negation of the false self in order to realize one's True Nature. Here is an example of my experience with [WHO AM I Meditation Practice](#).
2. [Koan Meditation Technique](#): These meditations come from the [Zen School of Buddhism](#) and are designed to break down the ordinary pattern of conceptual, dualistic thinking. By breaking down the interference created by the thinking mechanism the practitioner is brought to confront the non-dual reality of "what is" directly and thus Awaken.
3. **Contemplation Meditation Technique:** These meditations utilize introspection, self-study, reflection, study of spiritual texts and contemplation to cut through the layers of false conditioning and false understanding that deludes the mind. These meditations have their roots in many Western Religions and are also a part of Eastern philosophies.
4. **Silent Mind Meditation Technique:** This meditation technique is my contribution to this category and it involves directly perceiving the fact of what is by acute observation of the thinking process. This is the flavor that I enjoy best and I have explained it in detail in [The Silent Mind Meditations](#), which are part of the [Silent Mind Meditation Program](#). These meditations are an extension of the teachings of [Jiddu Krishnamurti](#).

2. Sound (Mantra) & Thought Meditation Techniques:

The meditations that fall under this category use the science of sound and thought vibrations (Naad Yoga), along with rhythm and music (Laya Yoga) to purify the heart and mind. These meditations have a wide range of applications, from bestowing Enlightenment, to

improving health, wealth, happiness, peace etc...

1. **Mantra Japa Meditation Technique:** This meditation method uses the repetition of a mantra (a particular sound, word or phrase) verbally or mentally to create the necessary conditions for purification, refinement or expansion to take place. Mantras are essentially keys, which allow one to tune into the individual energy field or tune into the Universal Energy field to produce certain desired results. Here is an example of using [OM Mantra to activate the Third Eye Chakra](#).
2. **Rhythm Meditation Technique:** This form of meditation uses the combination of rhythm, chanting, music and breath to calibrate and perfect the system. The excellent [Three Step Rhythmic Breathing \(3srb\)](#) meditation technique of Sage Patanjali and many Kundalini Yoga meditations fall under this category, among others.
3. **Meditation via Song:** Most of the meditations from the path of Devotion (Bhakti Yoga) and Love, designed to dissolve the ego belong in this category. This is a path most dear to those who are emotional in nature and feel a deep love for the divine. Christianity, Gospel, Sufi Meditations, [Hare Krishna Meditations](#), Kirtans and Bhajans are some examples of techniques in this category.
4. **Meditation via Prayer:** All religions have meditations involving prayer and worship. This may be the most practiced form of meditation.
5. **Thought Power Meditation Technique:** The power of thought is becoming well-recognized world over and many of the ancient Eastern techniques using this science are starting to gain popularity in the West now as well. Meditations that use the power of intention, law of attraction, desire manifestation, self-hypnosis, positive thinking, [laughter as meditation](#), etc. belong

in this category. These meditations can be useful to everyone.

- 6. Feeling and Emotion Meditation Technique:** In these meditations one uses the combined power of feelings and attitude to produce the desired affects. This type of meditation technique is usually combined with and is a part of other types of meditations, but can be done independently as well. Meditation such as Zen's Loving Kindness, Osho's crying meditation and many meditations which deal with maintaining an attitude of surrender, giving, gratitude, forgiveness etc, fall under this category.

3. Concentration and Visualization Meditation Techniques:

These are probably the most common and well know of all the meditations and often meditation is defined by these kinds of meditations exclusively. They are closely related to the Insight Meditation Techniques with the difference being that Insight Meditation Techniques utilize the active application of intelligence and discernment, while the Concentration Meditation techniques use the power of focused attention to a greater degree. To some extent these meditations lay the groundwork for the Insight Meditations, which need a high degree of concentration as a prerequisite to being effective.

- 1. Breath Meditation Technique (Zazen):** The heart of [Zen Meditation](#) is Zazen, the meditation of the Buddha. In this meditation awareness and concentration are brought to the breathing process to help build mastery over the mind and free the system from dualistic thinking. An in-depth look of this meditation can be found in the popular article [Zen Meditation Technique \(Zazen\) - Free Book of Guided Meditations](#). Another breath-based meditation is Vipassana. In Vipassana one extends one's awareness from one's breath, to the body and the sensations that rise and fall within it. The objective being to have insight into the workings of the mind through self-

observation. This form of meditation is also called Insight Meditation as it helps one develop insight into the true nature of things.

2. **Concentration Meditation Technique:** There are many meditations that utilize an external object as a focus point for the mind. Zazen/Vipassana belong in these sections as well, but due to their widespread use I mentioned them separately. The objects of focus can be anything from a point on the ceiling, to a flower, to external sounds in the environment. These meditations all develop focus, concentration, self-knowledge, calmness and the witnessing consciousness. Their ultimate objective, though, is to have the meditator finally drop the object of concentration and encounter the non-dual nature of Reality directly. Some examples of these meditations can be found in the following articles: [Sound Awareness Meditation Technique](#) and candle flame gazing (Trataka) as described in [Brain Development and Enlightenment - Awaken the Senses](#).
3. **Visualization Meditation Technique:** This meditation technique is suitable for those who are creative and perceptive. In this technique the meditator uses visualization techniques to produce the desired results. These can range from simply moving awareness to various areas of the body, to visualizing internal flows of light, to imagining mental places etc. Many internal Chakra Meditations, [Kriya Yoga Meditations](#), [Kundalini Yoga Meditations](#), Yantra (geometric shapes) Meditations fall under this category. In additions meditations on the image of God, visualizing places of power or peace, etc, belong in this category as well.
4. **Mindfulness Meditation:** This is a wonderful meditation technique and one that can be practiced throughout the day. Mindfulness meditation means to have moment-to-moment flowing awareness of your physical, emotional and mental activities. In other words, to be aware of what is transpiring in

the here and now. This is ultimately the goal of all meditation — to awaken you to the present. Others definitions of this meditation are [J. Krishnamurti's](#) Choiceless Awareness, [Osho's](#) Double Pointed Awareness, [Gurdjieff's](#) Self-Remembrance and [S. N. Tavariva's](#) Awareness of the Divine Fragment. An article demonstrating this meditation technique in action is [The True Meaning of Laziness](#).

4. Body Meditation Techniques:

These meditations and practices may suit those inclined to physical activity, but as you will see from the list below there are meditation techniques using the body, which can easily be enjoyed by all. In addition, the meditations of this type almost all have the added benefit of keeping us fit and healthy.

1. **Yoga as Meditation:** All forms of physical yoga are to be done with full awareness of the postures and movements. In addition breath is combined with the movements and poses to help open up the energy channels and free the system from the debris of the past. There is no prerequisite for the practice of Yoga, such as flexibility or diet, and all can benefit from the blessings this ancient and powerful technique bestows.
2. **Walking Meditation Technique:** This form of meditation should not be underestimated. It is really a treasure. In Zen, walking meditation has been formalized and is called "Kinhin". There are many styles of walking meditation, but for all these styles, awareness is a key component. In walking meditation you can either be fully tuned it to the physical process of walking, or you can be fully aware of the environment, either inner or outer, as you just walk. In either case, the objective is to be in the present moment as best you can.
3. **Dance Meditation Technique:** The only prerequisite to Meditation by dance is that you are alive. The range of this

meditation done via this technique is quite remarkable. There is the Dervish dancing of the Sufi mystics, the Dance Meditation of Master Gurdjieff, Osho's famous meditations using dance and movement, Lord Shiva's Cosmic Dance — the Tandon and the list go on and on. Dance Meditation is not only for celebrating life, but is a valid and powerful method to build awareness, induce catharsis and encounter Reality. An article that gives my experience with dance meditation technique is [My Time at an Osho Retreat when my Body Disappeared](#).

4. **The Martial Arts as Meditation:** "Grasshopper... life is a dream within a dream." For those of us who grew up watching the TV show "Kung Fu" know well the intimate relationship between the martial arts and meditation. Zen Archery, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and other related techniques all belong here in this category. Common to all these techniques understand the intimate connection between the breath, the life force it contains (Qi, Chi, Prana), the mind and the concept of Oneness.

5. **Sex as Meditation (Left hand of Tantra):** No I did not forget this most profound, yet very misunderstood, type of meditation. Tantra and tantric sex have been gaining notoriety over the past few decades as spirituality, tantra yoga and enlightenment have moved into the mainstream, where now most aspirants are married and sexually active. This meditation technique requires first the disciplining of the mind and control over one's passions. Then one can learn the techniques of vajroli and sahajoli along with the various bandhas (body locks) and yoga asanas, which help to maintain the height of sexual charge and the use of that energy to activate the higher centers. This method of meditation is indeed wonderful and if two like-minded people come together for its practice, for the right purpose, it can provide a powerful and potent vehicle for the attainment of enlightenment.

So there you have it, to satiate your meditative appetite all the main flavors of ice cream available. Most important thing for you to do is indulge. Your soul craves meditation like children crave ice cream, so go ahead and take a bite — I promise, you will absolutely get addicted and it will be the most beneficial addiction you can ever have.

Internet Resources for Meditation:

[Yoga Meditation Tips](#): There are many positive benefits and advantages, which come from Yoga Meditations; however it is important to understand the basics of the activity before becoming involved in it.

Chapter 40

[Beautiful Light Meditation for Developing Intuition, Joy and Creativity](#)

Light Meditation Technique

Visualization Meditation Technique

Today we will explore the Light Meditation Technique, which is part of the 10 Bodies of Light Yoga model. The 10 Bodies of Light is the basis of Yoga Numerology and a great way to understand what your strengths, weaknesses and challenges are in this life, thus helping you achieve your highest human potential. I have spoken about this model on the following page and talked about how it is used in Numerology, in relation to your Master Numbers and birth date ([Numerology Readings and Master Number Analysis](#)). In my view, a key aspect of such readings is the techniques one uses to balance and heal the indicated bodies. This is what I call a transformation program. The transformation program generally consists of meditations, yoga poses and breathing exercises from the rich schools of Kundalini Yoga and Hatha Yoga, such as this Light Meditation.

The Light Meditation is used to heal and balance the Subtle Body, which is the ninth body in the 10 Bodies of Light model. This is the beautiful technique and it is excellent for those interested in expanding their artistic, creative, intuitive and subtle aspects.

The Light Meditation Technique falls under the category of visualization meditations and is suitable for anyone to practice. As it involves imagination and visualization though, it is particularly enjoyable to artists, psychics, creative personalities and those who are visually or mentally oriented. The meditation involves certain mudras (hand and body positions) to help it achieve its goals, but it's primary mechanism lies in your ability to use your mind and creative powers.

Light Meditation Technique will be the 17th entry in our ongoing and popular [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques E-book](#). As it is also considered a Kundalini Yoga Kriya, I will include it in the [Free Illustrated Kundalini Yoga Kriyas E-Book](#), as well as the newly launched [Free Kundalini Yoga Meditations E-book](#). Also, as always please follow all guidelines for meditation and yoga practice as I have laid out in the [Beginner's Guide to Yoga Practice](#) and [Guidelines for Kundalini Yoga Practice](#).

Benefits of Light Meditation Technique:

1. Increases intuitive abilities and psychic powers.
2. Helps one penetrate the mysteries of the Universe.
3. Promotes joy and inner peace.
4. Increases one's artistic and creative abilities.
5. Helps expand awareness.
6. Promotes radiance and inner light.
7. Helps one develop mastery over the subtle sciences.

How to Do Light Meditation:

- Sit with your legs crossed with the hands in Gyan Mudra (thumb tip and index finger meeting, other three fingers pointing forward). You can also sit on a chair for this meditation.
- Place your hands in front of you as if holding a book for reading (elbows are bent, the forearms are angled upwards and palms facing you). Now slide the right hand about six inches further up than the left hand. The fingertips of the left hand will be in line

with the wrist of the right hand. Hold this position.

- Now visualize yourself walking at the break of dawn in an open field. See above you a single morning star shining brightly in a still dark early morning sky. The light of a new day is just breaking in. Spend a few moments and immerse yourself fully into this scene.
- Now visualize a beam of pure white light emanating from the star and penetrating your Heart Chakra (middle of your sternum). Allow this beam of light to be a pathway leading up to the star and begin to walk up this pathway of light. Feel great calm and peace as you ascend this pathway of light.
- As you make your way up towards the morning star, repeat silently to yourself, "I am beautiful, I am light." Continue to walk on this beam of light repeating this phrase mentally. Feel yourself merging more and more into the light, feel yourself become more subtle, more light, more aware, more beautiful, as you continue your journey upwards.
- Finally, take some deep breaths, holding each breath in for as long as comfortable and feel yourself becoming one with light. Feel yourself becoming a being of pure light, beauty and awareness.
- To end, feel bright, beautiful and full of light.

Summary of Light Meditation:

You will notice that no time limit has been given for Light Meditation, as that is open and up to you. Do the meditation for as long as you enjoy 😊. I would suggest starting with at least 3 minutes though. For those who have inquired, I am putting together a comprehensive training program on how to become a Master Numerologist, so that those of you, who are interested in learning this great science, will

have the opportunity to do so. The Light Meditation above is an example of a transformation technique that will of course be included in the certification program. The program is not just designed to teach you Numerology, but in it I will also share my knowledge on how to succeed in this arena. One last note is that a good Numerologist should also have refined intuitive abilities, and for that this Light Meditation is a great technique to practice, so while you wait for the program to go live, I suggest giving this meditation some serious attention 😊.

Chapter 41

[Powerful 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise for Vitality](#)

Video of 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise

THIS CHAPTER HAS A VIDEO, BELOW IS THE VIDEO LINK

[From Yoga Pranayama Video Series - Deep Breathing Exercise](#)

Background of 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

This is the yoga breathing technique that my Kundalini Yoga teacher, Ravi Singh, almost always started our classes with. This is because despite being a simple breathing exercise, its ability to open up and get one's energy going is astonishing.

In addition to awakening one's energy, this particular yoga pranayama also has other significant benefits, which I will detail below. Whether you are new to Yogic breathing techniques or an expert, this particular breath control exercise should be a permanent member in your goodie bag, which you can pull out anytime you need to fire up and vitalize your pranic body (energetic body).

Benefits of Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

Primary:

- Rapidly oxygenates your blood, thus helping the body heal, detoxify and remove waste more effectively.
- Increases the amount of Prana (life-force) you are bringing into your system.

- Improves the elasticity of the lungs and increases respiratory capacity.
- Activates the energy flows in your body.

Cautions for Practicing Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

- If you feel dizzy when practicing this breathing technique, you should stop and substitute normal breathing. If you suffer from vertigo, you should use caution in practicing this breathing exercise.
- You should be careful practicing this pranayama if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or suffer from stroke or epilepsy.

Step-by-step Instructions for Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

- To practice this breathing exercise, sit in a comfortable position.
- Elongate your spine upwards, lengthen your neck and subtly bring your chin back and in like a soldier at attention. This will align the spine with the back of your head.
- Close your eyes.
- Bring the palms of your hands together at sternum level (like when you pray), but have them 2-4 inches away from your chest. Your elbows should be up such that your forearms are parallel to the ground.
- Press the palms of your hands together applying equal pressure to both sides. The pressure should be firm but not excessive.
- Relax your diaphragm and stomach muscles.

- Now inhale in 4 sniffs and exhale in 4 sniffs. So you are breaking up 1 inhalation into 4 equal parts and breaking up 1 exhalation into 4 equal parts. By the fourth sniff, during the inhalation, you should have completely filled your lungs with air and by the fourth sniff, during the exhalation, you should have completely expelled all the air. Completely inhaling and exhaling by the last sniff is a key part of this breathing technique. Continue for 1-5 minutes. That's it.

Secret of Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise:

The real benefit of this yoga pranayama is hidden in benefit number three listed above (increases lung capacity). According to Yoga, your evolution can be triggered simply by the capacity of your respiratory system. When it reaches a critical threshold relative to your size, you evolve. By partitioning the breath, this particular breathing technique forces you to maximize the use of your lungs. Thus, helping them expand and absorb more prana (life-force) from the air.

Generally, in everyday life we don't use our full lung capacity and over time this capacity diminishes. So take a bold step towards your spiritual growth and include the Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise into your daily yoga practice. It is a great way to start and will go a long way in helping you finish.

This concludes the Yogic 4 Part Deep Breathing Exercise.

Chapter 42

[Meditation for Improving Concentration](#)

Concentration Meditation Technique - Trataka

Trataka Meditation Technique to Improve Concentration:

I have mentioned this timeless meditation technique briefly in several articles on Mastery of Meditation before, but now I would like to provide all the details regarding it, in order to help you learn and master it.

This meditation method is called Trataka or candle flame gazing, and it was introduced in the following 2 articles: [Brain Development & Enlightenment Series Part 1: Awaken the Senses](#) and [Yoga Meditation Techniques - The Top 3](#). It is now the eight guided meditation of our [Free Online Guided Meditation Techniques Book](#).

Although Trataka is famous for being a meditation to build concentration, it has a solid list of other great benefits as well, which I will detail below. This meditation technique comes from the school of Yoga, and has been widely embraced due to its simplicity and effectiveness.

Tools for Trataka - Concentration Meditation Technique:

- Candle, candleholder and lighter/matches.

Benefits of Trataka - Concentration Meditation Technique:

Primary Benefits:

- Terrific for building and improving concentration.

- Builds mental fortitude, mental focus and willpower.
- Calms the mind and bestows inner peace and silence.
- Stimulates and activates the Third Eye Chakra (Ajna Chakra) to bestow wisdom, intuition and psychic powers.
- Helps penetrate the veil of duality and see the non-dual nature of Reality.

Secondary Benefits:

- Improves the visual system.

Cautions for Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Be careful not to strain the eyes excessively when practicing this method.

Instructions for Practicing Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Sit up in any comfortable relaxed position, preferably with the spine straight. You may also sit on a chair to practice this meditation.
- To practice this meditation you must hold absolutely still.
- Place your hands in Gyan Mudra. Such that the thumb tips and index finger are meeting, while the other three fingers are extended. Rest your wrists gently on your knees with the palms facing slightly upward. Gyan mudra will help you with your concentration.

- Make sure the room is darkened and there is no breeze of any kind.
- Light the candle and ensure that it is about 3 feet away from you and at eye level. You may need to use a long candleholder to accomplish this.
- Begin to gaze, without blinking, steadily at the candle flame for as long as comfortable.
- Once the eyes tire or start to tear up, close them and then position the afterimage of the flame between the eyebrows at the center of the forehead (the physical trigger point of the Third Eye Chakra).
- Focus on this afterimage, trying to keep it steadily fixed in the region of the Third Eye Chakra described above. Your level of concentration will determine the clarity of the afterimage. If the image wavers, moves or loses clarity, just reapply your concentration and restore the position.
- Once the image fades out completely, open your eyes and begin again focusing on the candle flame.
- Continue this cycle for 5-10 minutes.
- As your capacity to concentrate and meditate grows, increase the time by increments of 5 minutes till you reach 20 minutes. You may do this meditation even longer if you like. It is not uncommon to practice this technique for up to 1 hour, by those who are passionate about building concentration and mental focus.

Meditation tips for Trataka - Meditation for Concentration:

- Try to get a decent size flame (make sure the wick is of good length). It will help prolong the afterimage and make it easier to practice the concentration portion of the meditation.
- Don't strain the eyes during the gazing period. Over time your eyes will adjust and allow you to concentrate on the flame for longer periods of time.

Chapter 43

5 Major Obstacles to Self-Realization & Enlightenment

Importance of God Realization *Obstacles to Spiritual Enlightenment*

"Hitch your wagon to a star!" is a famous Ralph Waldo Emerson quote urging you to aim high and have soaring aspirations. I would like you to actually raise the level of your aspirations even higher, I would like you to raise the level of your aim to the very highest achievement possible in life, I would prefer if you "Hitch your wagon to infinity!" Why even settle for a star?

Before all the experts on non-duality start clamoring that there should be no purpose to life, you should not set goals, etc, let me say that if there is any purpose at all to life, then it is Self-Realization, or to put it another way, it is to find God. Everything else is immature. So you must make the most of this chance. No matter if you believe in reincarnation or not, this life is a golden opportunity to achieve this highest possible purpose of human life. For those who believe reincarnation exists, you know how very precious and rare a human birth is, and for those who believe there is just one go around, well you certainly don't want to waste this opportunity then for sure. Either way, since you are here anyway, why not shoot for highest high.

In this article, I would like to discuss the 5 major obstacles that often prevent you from fulfilling this great journey to God Realization.

5 Major Obstacles to Self-Realization:

1. Ignorance:

By ignorance here I mean that folks are just not aware that they actually have an infinite, divine aspect, which can be discovered and abided in. I remember speaking to a close relative once, who was surprised that there were people today who had awakened to their Infinite nature and lived life from there.

You don't have to believe that there is an eternal aspect to your being, although doing so and clinging to that belief is a valid Advaita Vedanta technique for enlightenment, but what you have to consider is that there is this possibility, and then explore your inner walls to discover if there is any truth to this claim.

If you outright reject that such an aspect to your being exists, life does not care, it does not matter to anyone else, it only means *you* will miss the whole point of being born.

One other point I would like to make with regard to ignorance has to do with the pursuit of wealth, power, fame, etc. Without getting into a big debate regarding the Easterlin Paradox (the research that says, money cannot buy you happiness), I would like to point out that chasing these material pleasures can potentially make your dream world nicer, but they do little for you in terms of waking up to the Truth.

This waking up, or Self-Realization, is worth it because it means you are now finally free from delusion, and can fully express your true self and live the life you were meant to live. So if you want to pursue just material pleasures, in lieu of Enlightenment, then please go ahead and do so, just understand that this is ignorant and only manipulation of a dream reality.

Just to be clear here, I am not against material gains, wealth, power, fame, etc, what I am saying is that if you just chase that, you will go through life asleep. Also, one other secret I will share with you is that all these material rewards are likely to be yours anyway, if you truly walk the path to Enlightenment. After all, who is more famous than Lord Jesus and Lord Buddha!

2. Compromising:

Just don't do it. Don't settle. I know life and society wears you down slowly. Chipping away at your heart and soul. The uncompromising attitude, fire and exuberance of youth are slowly smothered by the endless responsibilities and difficulties of life, but don't give up. Research finds that men in their 40s and 50s, are quite prone to depression, and this is primarily because they are starting to feel that the great life they aspired to live, won't be realized anymore. They feel they must swallow the bitter pill of "reality" and practicality. This is rubbish. Remain inspired, keep going, fight, and don't settle. Find ways to stay on course. The only answer ever is God; everything else will fall into its right place when Self-Realization is the underlying theme of your life. Let this great work, light your way forward. If you are young, choose wisely. I hope you find great teachers who will guide you well, so that you don't find yourself so mired in financial commitments and other responsibilities that you no longer have time to think about your divine nature. You are blessed with abundant energy and death is far on the horizon, you have no excuse to not walk the walk.

3. Confusion:

Worse than the ignorant are the confused. They really piss me off. The confused are those who have health, know Self-Realization is the purpose of life, have food, clothing and shelter, but find excuses to run after other things endlessly. What is wrong with you all? Stop it. At least the ignorant were clueless, they simply did not know better, but you do. You know and yet you don't do what is necessary.

Sometimes, at one point or another we all make this mistake repeatedly 😊. I know I have and when I do, I get mad at myself too. What the hell am I doing? Not doing my daily meditation, not doing my yoga, not staying aware from moment to moment. What am I doing? Blogging and working all the time. It's pathetic and I yell at myself and get back on to the right path. You must do the same, and if you need someone to yell at you, call me 😊.

So confused means you lose sight of the fact that the true purpose of life, if any, is God Realization, Self-Realization, Enlightenment. This must be the guiding force of your life. Don't worry, life will give you everything else you need, she is our mother, and she won't abandon us. You just keep your eye on finding Dad 😊.

4. Laziness:

Perhaps I should categorize these folks with the confused, but I wanted to give them their very own space so they could feel truly pathetic. The ignorant don't know better, the confused are at least trying to build an empire or something, what in the world are you folks doing?

You know what is at stake, have time and health, but are just mindlessly wasting precious time. There are a million forms of mindless entertainment to keep you drugged and serving the purpose that society wishes from you. But from this you must break free. Come on yaar (friend), make some effort, show some willpower, turn off the TV, stop browsing the web, the sports matches can wait, infuse some balance into your life. Once you start to gather momentum and break the cycle of inertia you will be unstoppable, so let's get going. For more on this topic, here is an interesting read on how Zen views laziness: [The True Meaning of Laziness](#).

5. Impatience:

It is unlikely that the highest achievement in life is going to be easily accomplished by you overnight. We are being trained to become quite an impatient and instant gratification society. This can be easily seen not only in the use of medicinal drugs for muscle building, fat loss, pain, etc, but is also more subtly visible in relationships that today tend to skip romance all together and go straight to sex.

This attitude has spilled over into the spiritual arena as well, and I have written about this in the article, [No Shortcuts to Enlightenment](#). Essentially, the point here is that for Self-Realization, you will have to stay on the path for as long as it takes. Another secret I would like to share with you here is that the path itself is really a lot of fun, Enlightenment is great, but so is the work leading up to it.

Summary:

In the article, [How to Discover Your Divine Nature](#), I wrote about how to recognize your Higher Self by experiencing an aspect of it. The key to such awakening is meditation and I want to stress that this is the real reason for human birth. Although Enlightenment has absolutely no material value, without it life is absolutely useless. If you don't want to have lived such a meaningless life, you need to wake up and claim your birthright of knowing you and God are One. Let's get to it.

Resources:

To get you started on meditation, you might want to sign up for the [free online yoga and meditation classes](#) offered here. Also, here is the link to the [Beginner's Meditation Class](#). If you are an advanced yogi or meditator, I challenge you to take a swing at the [Silent Mind Meditation Technique](#).

Chapter 44

5 Dangers of Not Meditating

Signs of Not Meditating

Many popular articles on [Mastery of Meditation](#) expound on the benefits of meditation, such as [Top 10 Benefits of Meditation](#) and [10 Amazing Benefits of Meditation for Students and Young People](#), but today I want to present you with another view of meditation. I want to explore the dangers of not meditating. I want to discuss what happens when you don't meditate and what are the signs that are yelling at you to start meditating immediately.

5 Dangers of Not Meditating:

1. Anger:

Every time you lose it. It does not matter what the reason is, this is a clear signal to you that you need to start meditating. Meditation means residing deep within, in your center, where you are infinitely at peace and have great composure, and the more you live from this center the less the storms on the periphery disturb you.

This goes for irritation as well. Getting irritated with the children, co-workers, other drivers, spouses, etc., all mean the same thing. You are not meditating enough. Not that meditation alone will cure all irritation, as there can be bio-chemical reasons for this as well, but it will certainly help a whole lot. So next time you feel that anger creeping up, don't react, watch the energy carefully and set your alarm clock thirty minutes earlier for the next morning 😊.

2. Jealousy:

Clearly a sign that you are on the wrong track, with the wrong perspective and wrong attitude is if you are a frequent victim of jealousy. In fact, this is so good an indicator of you not meditating enough, that I felt it was a good way to actually test your spiritual level. You will find the details of how to test yourself using jealousy in the article, [How to Test Your Spiritual Growth](#).

3. Stress:

Are you and Mr. Stress the best of buddies? Inseparable are you? Well if you want to end this relationship with Mr. Stress you have to start meditating. The key to a long, healthy life is to live stress free. An [Ayurvedic](#) Doctor I recently met told me that 80% of the problems that patients came to see her with were stress related. So a big danger of not meditating is ending up hanging out with Mr. Stress. And where Mr. Stress hangs out, Mr. Disease is not too far away.

To help motivate you and give you some solid techniques to live stress free, here is a great resource: [Best Treatments for Stress & Anxiety Disorder](#). You will notice I grouped anxiety along with stress, and I just want to mention that this is another sign that you are not meditating enough. If you suffer from panic attacks and anxiety, you need to start a meditation program. There is ample evidence showing the benefits of meditation with regard to anxiety as well.

4. Restlessness | Insecurity | Fear:

Are you feeling your life is meaningless? Feeling you are not doing anything special in life? Feeling you are not achieving your true potential? These are signs that you are not meditating. Meditation puts you in touch with your infinite nature, and from there you realize that there is nothing lacking whatsoever in you. You are perfect and life is perfectly fine just the way it is. This realization is the reward of

meditation, and the further you are from this realization, means the further you are from meditation.

Related signs to restlessness are the feelings of self-doubt, insecurity and fear. These are other dangers you will have to face if you decide to not meditate. The ego is insecure. It endlessly seeks security and safety. Meditation helps you de-emphasize your egocentric mind, and instead reside in your simple witnessing awareness. This living in the witnessing consciousness, in the here and now, weakens the ego and thus, relieves you of the feelings of insecurity, fear and self-doubt.

5. Hatred:

As Yogi Bhanan states, "If you don't see God in all, you don't see God at all." I love that saying, and can't put it any better way than that. Hatred is born of fear and is only possible when you emphasize differences. The more you break up Reality and side with different fragments, the more you open the door to hatred and fear.

Eyes that see the world and humanity as one big family, in fact, eyes that see the whole world as just your family, are eyes that are going to be full of compassion and love. Meditation is responsible for opening your eyes to this view. So if you are filled with fear and hatred, the red flag is up, you need to start meditating. Looking around at the state of world today, I wish along with prescribing a daily multivitamin, everyone was prescribed thirty minutes of daily meditation as well.

Dangers of Not Meditating Summary:

I can always tell when I have drifted away from my meditation practice. Invariably one of the signs above will light up and remind me of what is the most important thing in life - meditation. I suggest the same for you. Keep an eye out for these danger signs above, if you notice their presence getting stronger, you know it is time to get back to meditating. If you are new to meditation and are looking to start this profound practice, whose rewards have no material equivalent, I

suggest you try some of the free online meditation classes offered here on this site. Below are some helpful links in this regard.

[Free Online Yoga & Meditation Classes](#)

[Free Beginner's Meditation Class | Learn How to Meditate](#)

Chapter 45

[3 Keys for How to Live a Blessed Life](#)

How to Live Life

Enlightenment may seem a daunting task initially, but if you can just figure out how to live life well, you will be well on your way to fulfilling this great destiny of yours. In the past, I have given some guidelines on how to live in order to facilitate spiritual growth, and enjoy a happy and meaningful life, but in today's article I want to give you the absolute basic life keys to get you started on your journey to Enlightenment.

The previous 2 articles I was alluding to above are also of course worth reading and learning from and here are the links to them: [5 Principles of Living an Enlightened and Good Life](#) and [10 Things You Should Do Everyday for a Happy and Meaningful Life](#).

Without a doubt living life with full awareness, watching the ego in action, meditating and having a personal spiritual practice are big factors in your spiritual growth, but not everyone is able to establish all these aspects right away. So for those just getting their feet wet, what is the best way to start? For those eager to take this great journey back to their original, infinite nature, how should they begin? Here is the answer to that question. Start by living peacefully, honestly and in an orderly way. This is something most everyone can aspire to and being able to live life in this way sets the stage for deeper and wider growth. Below, I will expand on these simple but important keys on how to live well and begin the journey to Self-Realization.

3 Keys for How to Live Life Well:

1. Live Life Peacefully:

The amount of conflict and violence in the world is appalling to say the least. In response to this, all decent people undoubtedly want wars and hatred to end, and the first step to this is to stop contributing to the state of human violence by living peacefully ourselves. I know there are deeper and wider meanings to conflict, in which "what should be" conflicts with "what is", but here I am suggesting a more simple thing - which is just to live at peace with everything and everybody around us. That is the starting point.

Peaceful living softens the heart and teaches us how to diffuse our reactive nature so that we can become masters of our emotions. When the winds of conflict start to stir within, if you can remember your determination to live peacefully, it will lead you to becoming conscious and awake during such tumultuous times. Once conscious, you will be able to retain your composure and act intelligently, instead of becoming a slave to the storm of feelings conflict evokes. This ability to witness the ways of the ego and emotions puts you on the path to awakening.

Learning how to live peacefully, will also teach you the art of forgiveness and the art of compassion. I have written about these topics previously and you can read about them in the following 3 popular articles.

[The Secret to Compassion](#)

[My Simple Rule for a Peaceful Life](#)

[The Time I Met God, Good News and Bad News](#)

2. Live Life Honestly:

The road to enlightenment is a path of negation. This is a very crucial understanding in order to make the right progress. What this

essentially means is when all that is false is taken away, what remains is your true, non-dual, already perfect nature. You are the substratum on which the game of life is being played out, and to encounter this timeless aspect of yourself, you need to shed all the masks you have put on. For that you have to learn how to live life honestly.

This is not as easy as it may sound initially. To live honestly you will have to shatter many images of yourself that you hold dear and face many aspects of who you are, which will downright appall and even disgust you. But this cleansing, this dying of our many false selves is a necessary part of the process. Real honesty leads to real simplicity and innocence, which is essential for walking this path to your Natural Self.

To work on yourself, you have to first see things as they are, even if they are a mess. This is the first step and as your understanding deepens, you will come to realize that the way to break through is to totally accept the actuality of "what is", without any attempt to change or escape it. A prerequisite for such action is brutal honesty. The mind is a master at deception and the practice of honesty in all forms is the beginning of clarity.

This is also a topic I have written about in the past and you can find more of my thoughts on it in the following article:

[Silent Mind Meditation Program - Chapter 6 - The Importance of Honesty](#)

3. Live Life with Order:

One great advantage that monks and yogis have when they live in an ashram or monastery, is that their lives have great order. This structured living then helps them establish internal order and helps them establish a strong spiritual practice. So try to adopt some of these aspects into your life as well and therefore benefit from such structure as the monks and yogis do.

The more such order emerges from your passion and your practice the more natural and effective it will be. Allow your practice to thus shape your life and structure your days so that you can move forward systematically and gracefully. Generally, you will find setting up a consistent time for your practice, waking up early, getting proper exercise, eating healthy, spending time in nature and other such wholesome activities becoming a natural part of your life as you progress.

Small things you do will matter also. Cleanliness, simplicity, balance, promptness, diligence, thoughtfulness will all start to emerge as you put your life in order. Also, order does not mean an absence of spontaneity. Being simple and making time for leisure will promote spontaneity, as will living in the moment, with honesty. So start to organize yourself and your time and get your life in order. You will be pleasantly surprised by how much this will help you in your personal as well as spiritual growth.

So how to live life in order to begin the great adventure to enlightenment? Live peacefully, honestly and with great order, and surely you will find yourself on the path to awakening and Self-Realization.

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God Bless You All