

Practical Guide
for
Students of Yoga



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INDIA

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In the forests and caves of the hoary Himalayas was born this marvellous science of Yoga which holds the key to health and long life. Practising Yoga the great Rishis of yore lived for centuries, literally, enjoying radiant health and mental vigour. Lord Siva Himself is said to be the primordial Founder of the School of Hatha Yoga. And it has been handed down to the present day through a succession of great Yogis like Gorakhnath and Matsyendranath.

All through the ages, only a handful could learn this Yoga; for one had to renounce the world, take to the life of a monk, approach an adept teacher and then learn from him when he is pleased with one's service. There were no texts; and the teachers themselves were very few.

The printing press solved part of the difficulty. The secrets of Hatha Yoga could be broadcast for the benefit of the entire mankind. But, then, baseless fears of the dangers of practising even simple Asans and mild Pranayama, with the help of none but a book to follow, prevented many from revealing the secrets without demanding a heavy price in the shape of almost impossible prerequisites like selection of an ideal place with an ideal climate, living on ideal foods, and leading an ideal life—all far beyond the reach of an ordinary individual today.

The compassionate saint of Rishikesh, Sri Swami Sivananda, has boldly come forward to break this citadel of secrecy, and to dismiss the meaningless fears that assailed one who would practise these Yogic Kriyas. With the wisdom of a sage, Swami Sivananda has carefully taken out of this extremely intricate and highly technical system of Yoga those practices that were needed only by one who would make it the sole concern of his life, as distinct from those that could be practised by everyone who wished to enjoy health and long life, the Yoga-way. At the same time, the Swami points out that this system is more than mere physical culture; and if you care to, you can derive higher spiritual benefits also from it. Therefore, in this book valuable guidance has been given to suit both these categories of Sadhakas—the whole-timed Sadhaka who wishes to attain Yoga-Siddhi through the practice of Hatha Yoga, and the Sadhaka who pursues other Paths but would like to practise some of the Hatha Yogic methods for maintaining a high standard of physical and mental health.

During Swami Vishnudevananda's global tour, hundreds of students were trained by him in the practical side of Yoga in all the countries he visited. This book has been specially edited by him as a self-guide for the Yoga students of East and West. Swamy Vishnudevananda is a prominent disciple of H. H. Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. All the Poses illustrated in this book are by Swami Vishnudevananda.

FOREWORD

by

Mr. WEI TAT, M.A.

Yogi Raj Swami Vishnudevananda has done me the honour of inviting me to write a foreword to this volume. I accept his invitation with genuine pleasure, partly because I have been profoundly interested in the study and practice of Yoga for the last thirty years of my life and partly because I have been one of his students in Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga ever since his arrival in Hong Kong in June last.

Swamiji's visit to these shores and his prolonged stay here constitute, indeed, an epoch-making event in the history of spiritual and physical culture in Hong Kong. Apart from giving public lectures on Yoga and demonstrations of Yoga-asanas to large audiences in various clubs and associations, he has, during the last seven weeks, given most generously of his time and energy in conducting as many as four public Hatha Yoga classes of more than fifty students each every day, except Sundays, at the Hindu Temple, Happy Valley. These classes are unique in that they consist of students of both sexes and of all ages, races, religions and professions, all gathered together like members of a large family to learn and practise, according to their individual capacities, the Asanas, the Mudras, the Bandhas, the Shad Kriyas, and the different forms of Pranayama assigned by the Preceptor. With infinite patience, boundless benevolence and inexhaustible energy, Swamiji gives his best attention now to the individual members, now to the group as a whole, until, at the end of the lesson, they all sit in the Padmasana posture to join him in Om-chanting, silent meditation, and the recitation of the Universal Prayer. It is indeed true that in these assemblies all distinctions of sex, race, creed and social status are transcended, so that the members live and move on a higher and wider plane of being, in a spirit of equality and fraternity before their esteemed and revered Guru.

As a result of Swamiji's inspiration and direction, The Divine Life Society (Yoga Institute), Hong Kong, has been established. This will function as a regional centre, affiliated to the Shivananda Ashram in the Holy Himalayas. It is most auspicious that the first item in the programme of activities of this Society should be the publication of Swamiji's present masterpiece on Yoga. This work of Swamiji's is compiled from over two hundred published and unpublished works of his Guru, H. H. Swami Sivananda, Chancellor of Yoga Vedanta Forest University and Founder of The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh (Himalayas), India. Consisting as it does of sixteen chapters on various aspects of Yoga, this book verily represents the cream or the quintessence of the spiritual teachings of Swami Sivananda. As copies of this work will accompany him on his present world tour in Asia, Europe and America, we have reason to think that this *magnum opus* will be a great contribution towards the dissemination of Divine Wisdom in many countries of the world.

Inasmuch as this treatise contains a lengthy account of the anatomy and physiology of the human body, detailed descriptions of a large number of Yoga-asanas and over a hundred illustrations of these Asanas, it appears that the major portion of its pages is devoted to the exposition of the fundamental principles and methods of Hatha Yoga to the exclusion of the other schools of Yoga. This, however, is not the case, for the book contains long chapters on Mind-control and Meditation and adequate descriptions of practically all the other forms of Yoga, namely, Raja Yoga (Mind), Kundalini Yoga (Serpent Power), Bhakti Yoga (Devotion), Jnana Yoga (Knowledge), and Karma Yoga (Works), thus forming one of the most comprehensive works on Yoga. In this connection it may be pertinent to give here, by way of introduction, a brief exposition of the principles and methods of the different schools.

The principle of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching the Divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means, vehicle, path. In a synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation.

In Hatha Yoga the instrument is the body and the life-force. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama. This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being, i.e. at the Muladhara Chakra, — for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life, — rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the heart of emotion and ordinary mentality, the speech, sight, will, the higher knowledge, till through and above the brain it meets with and becomes one with the divine consciousness.

In Raja Yoga the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified and directed towards the Divine Being; then by a summary process of Asana and Pranayama the physical force of our being is stilled and concentrated, the life-force released into a rhythmic movement capable of cessation and concentrated into a higher power of its upward action; the mind, supported and strengthened by this greater action and concentration of the body and life upon which it rests, is itself purified of all its unrest and emotion and its habitual thought-waves, liberated from distraction and dispersion, given its highest force of concentration, gathered up into a trance of absorption. Two objects, the one temporal, the other eternal, are gained by this discipline. Mind-power develops in another concentrated action abnormal capacities of knowledge, effective will, deep light of reception, powerful light of thought-radiation which are altogether beyond the narrow range of our normal mentality; it arrives at the Yogic or occult powers around which there has been woven so much quite dispensable and yet perhaps salutary mystery. But the one final end and the one all-important gain is that the mind, stilled and cast into a concentrated trance, can lose itself in the divine consciousness and the soul be made free to unite with the Divine Being.

The triple way takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge (Jnana) selects the reason and the mental vision, and by purification, concentration, and a certain discipline of a God-directed seeking, makes them its means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works (Karma) select for their instrument the will of the doer of works; they make life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead, and by purification, concentration, and a certain discipline of subjection to the divine Will, they make it a means for contact and increasing unity of the soul of man with the divine Master of the universe. Devotion (Bhakti) selects the emotional and aesthetic powers of the soul and by turning them all Godward in perfect purity, intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or unity of the human soul with the supreme Spirit.

A disciple, contemplating his Guru from the angle of his love for him, is apt to perceive only the ideal aspects of his character and so to exhibit him as all hero or all saint. But, in the case of Swami Vishnudevananda, I feel sure that I am not exaggerating when I say that his aim in life is not Self-Realization through Hatha Yoga alone but Self-Perfection through a synthesis of all forms of Yoga. In the first instance, as a Master of Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga, he is undoubtedly an adept in the realm of Raja Yoga. Secondly, as his students are all well aware, he conducts Hatha Yoga classes not for personal remuneration but as a dedication to the Divine within him, to the universal All and to the transcendent Supreme. In this respect is he not an ideal Karma Yogin? Lastly, as a devoted lover and worshipper of God, as the daily chanter of His Holy Name, and as a lecturer on the Upanishads and Vedantic

philosophy in all the countries he visits, is he not treading the Path of Bhakti and Jnana Yoga? Let us therefore pay him homage as a Master of Hatha-Raja-Jnana-Karma-Bhakti-Kundalini Yoga, i.e. a Master of Integral and Synthetic Yoga.

Blessed are those who have had the great good fortune of sitting at the feet of Swamiji and now come in possession of his present work on Yoga. Besides serving as a constant reminder of their revered Teacher and a permanent record of the Asanas they have learned from him, the book will furnish them with priceless spiritual instruction, leading them

From the Unreal to the Real;
From Darkness to Light;
From Death to Immortality.

Let me end with an ancient prayer: Let all be happy, let all be healthy, let all see the face of happiness, let no one be unhappy. Peace! Peace! Peace!

sarve bhavantu sukhinah,
sarve santu niramayah,
sarve bhadrani pasyantu,
ma kascit dukkhabhag bhavet.
santih! santih! santih!

WEI TAT

Hong Kong, 21st July, 1957.

INTRODUCTION

I bow with folded hands crores of times to Brahman, the Supreme Consciousness, the destroyer of all fears, miseries and tribulations of those who betake themselves to Him, which though absolutely unborn appears by the power of His greatness to pass into birth, which appears as if in motion, though always at rest and which though one appears as many to those whose inner vision is dimmed by the perception of an endless variety of illusory appearances.

I salute thee first Lord Siva who taught to Parvati the Hatha Vidya that is a step to the attainment of the most excellent Raja Yoga.

Goraksha and Matsyendra the great teachers of Yoga knew well the Hatha Vidya. Yogi Swatmarama learnt it from them by their favour. To those who wander about in the darkness of this science or branch of Yoga, unable to obtain any knowledge of Hatha Yoga, the most merciful Swatmarama Yogi offers the Light of Hatha Vidya or knowledge of Hatha Yoga.

The goal of life is self-realisation. All systems of Indian philosophy have one goal in view, the liberation of the soul through perfection.

Every man wants happiness. He shuns pain. No one teaches anyone to seek happiness. It is the innate inherent nature of everyone to seek happiness, because his real nature is perfect Bliss.

The happiness that you get from sensual objects is fleeting and transitory. For a philosopher it is not happiness at all. It is like scratching the skin when you get itching. Sensual happiness is attended with severe exertion, sin, fear, pain, worry and evils. Amidst the din and boisterous bustle of worldly activities there come moments of tranquillity and peace when the mind, for the time being, however short it may be, soars above the filthy worldly things and reflects on the higher problems of life—viz., "Who am I? Where Whither? Why the Universe? etc. The sincere enquirer becomes serious and extends his reflections. He begins to search and understand the truth. Discrimination dawns on him. He takes to the study

of Soul or the Spirit within him, reflects, meditates, purifies his mind and eventually attains the highest knowledge of the self. But the man whose mind is saturated with worldly Vasanas and cravings is quite heedless and is irresistibly carried away by the two currents of love and hatred and tossed about helplessly in the tumultuous Samsaric stream of birth and death with its concomitant evils.

There are four paths to suit people of four kinds of temperament. They all lead to the same goal, the attainment of ultimate Reality. Roads are different but the destination is the same. The four paths that are inculcated for the achievement of this ultimate Truth from the different standpoints of the man of action, the man of devotion, the mystic man and the philosopher or the man of reason, are respectively termed Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yogi, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. The four paths are not antagonistic to one another, but, on the other hand, they are complementary. They only indicate that the different methods of the Hindu religion are in harmony with each other. Religion must educate and develop the whole man, his heart, intellect (head) and hand. Then only will he reach perfection. One-sided development is not commendable. Karma Yoga or the path of action removes impurities of the mind and develops the hand. Bhakti Yoga destroys tossing of the mind and develops the heart. Raja Yoga, the mystic path, steadies the mind and makes it one-pointed. Jnana Yoga removes the evil of ignorance, develops will and reason and brings in knowledge of Self. Therefore one should practise the four Yogas. You can have one Yoga as the main one and practise the other Yogas as auxiliaries to get rapid progress in the spiritual path.

The word Yoga means union between Jivatma and Paramatma or individual soul and Supreme Soul. Hatha Yoga concerns the physical body and control of breath. Raja Yoga deals with the mind. Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga are necessary counterparts of each other. No one can become a perfect Yogi without a knowledge of the practices of both. Raja Yoga begins where properly practised Hatha Yoga ends.

Hatha is considered to be a compound word formed of two syllables Ha and Tha; Ha means the moon (Ida Nadi) and Tha means the sun (Pingala). These correspond to the breaths which flow through the left and right nostrils. Hatha Yoga teaches the way to unite the sun and the moon, the Prana and Apana through the regulation of breath.

Ordinary physical exercises develop the superficial muscles of the body only. One can become a Sandow. But Asanas are intended for the thorough exercise of the internal organs, viz., liver, spleen, pancreas, intestines, heart, lungs, brain and the important ductless glands of the body viz., thyroid and parathyroid at the root of the neck, adrenals in spleen, pituitary and pineal glands in the brain, which play a very important part in the economy of nature in maintaining health in metabolism and in structure growth and nutrition of different kinds of cells and tissues of the body.

The postures are as many in number as there are number of species of living creatures in this universe (84 lacs of bodies). There are 84 lacs of Asanas or postures described by Lord Siva.

Among them eighty four are the best and among these 84, thirty two have been found very useful for mankind.

A Vedantin or a philosophical student on Yoga is afraid to do Asanas and Pranayama or breathing, on the ground that the practice will intensify his attachment to the body and militate against his practice of renunciation. I have seen many Vedantins in a sickly condition with a very poor physique and dilapidated constitution. They hardly do any kind of intense spiritual

practices. The body is closely related to the mind. A weak sickly body means a weak mind also. Though the body is insentient and useless, yet it is an important instrument for self-realisation. The instrument must be kept clean, strong and healthy. This body is a horse for you to take you to the goal. If the horse tumbles down you cannot reach the destination. If this instrument breaks down, you will not reach the goal of Self-Realisation.

This system of Yogic exercises of the Indian Rishis and Yogins of yore is based on exact principles. There is no vague doctrine here. It imparts to every practitioner definite, practical knowledge, fine health, longevity, strength, vim and vitality. Any trouble is removed from its starting point by the practice of Asans. This is accompanied by Pranayam or regulation of breath also. By practising the Asans regularly, men and women will acquire a figure which will enhance their beauty and that suppleness which will give charm and elegance to every movement of theirs.

This is the perfect system of physical culture. This is the king of all systems of physical culture. This is the best of all systems of exercises. There is no use in theorising. What is wanted is regular, systematic, sustained practice. Many people practise these exercises by fits and starts and give up the practice after some months and hence they do not derive the maximum benefits of this system of exercises. He who practises regularly will be endowed with a peculiar glow in his face and eyes and a peculiar charm in his smile. He will always laugh heartily and radiate joy, strength and vigour wherever he moves. He will look very young even at the age of sixty.

STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

(Sri Sivaprem, Editor, "The Divine Life")

From the beginning of history, India has ever been known as a protagonist of universal peace, goodwill and happiness. As a democratic, sovereign republic centuries before Christ, she has demonstrated to the world repeatedly that the only certain path to cosmic common weal lay through individual spiritual evolution. This was indeed the glorious contribution to world-welfare made by India; and the message has been redelivered in the accents of the day by various prophets from time to time, Mahatma Gandhi among others.

Of this apostolic line of succession comes Sri. Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, whose many-sided spiritual activities are so well known in this country as well as abroad. His whole life may be said to be devoted to the holding up to the present generation and to posterity the heritage that has been left to us by the Great Souls of Vedic India millennia ago. In the words of General Cariappa, the Indian High Commissioner in Australia "The joys and glories of the spiritual heritage of our country are being passed by the great Swamiji to the people of the world with the object of helping mankind. . . . I see the guidance he gives in this respect reaches almost every nook and corner of this vast universe."

A Fascinating Story:

How the influence of a soul that first saw the light of the day at Pattamadai, a lovely, quiet village in the extreme south of India, came to be felt in "every nook and corner of the vast universe" makes a fascinating story, into the details of which we need not enter here.

How a young doctor in Malaya, with mounting success in his chosen vocation, with gathering reputation in medical circles and with all reasonable prospects of a glorious career of glittering fame, suddenly threw up all these advantages and embraces the order of Sannyasa in 1924 at the early age of 36, is nothing short of a miracle; and the story has been told elsewhere and is well-known now all over the world.

The twelve years from 1924-36 formed a period of constant, rigorous spiritual discipline in seclusion, from which he emerged to take up the divine mission of serving the suffering

humanity and bringing into being in 1936 the Divine Life Society to form his vehicle of work. Today, the Society has become an international organisation with its numerous centres spread all over the world. Its headquarters are situated amidst the enchanting and picturesque surroundings of the Himalayan ranges, in the valley of Munikireti, about two miles north of Rishikesh. Its saintly founder directly supervises its multifarious activities without sparing himself in the least, without a thought of even a brief holiday.

Divine Activities:

Behold him there, down on the Ganges front! The Swami is seated on a rock in the profound stillness of meditation. The dawn breaks through the lofty summits of the surrounding hills. Some moments roll by, suddenly you become aware that the Swami is not there "Oh, where is he?"

"He is on the way to the Ashram's Free Hospital." You find the Swami briskly striding along the road, his tall and majestic form of golden hue radiant with a divine glow; and soon he is busy treating patients. Anon he will be found, in childlike mood, surrounded by students at the Free School on the hill-top; 9 a.m. sees him arriving for the classes of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, which, under his guidance is a centre of international learning and trains students in the Vedic tradition.

Thus, Swami Sivananda attends to every detail of the work that goes on in Ananda Kutir, the Society's headquarters. Here he has also established the All-world Religions Federation and the All-world Sadhus' Federation to foster the unity of religions and to bring all renunciate monks into an organised body.

There is also a Yoga Museum, which serves as a unique means by the aid of which all Yoga Sadhanas can be learned visually at a glance.

Swami Sivananda is a true friend of the common man, as appreciated by the reputed economist, Sri Manu Subedar. "From the point of view of the common man in India, who is in very great mental agony, Swami Sivananda has been engaged for over 20 years, by writings,

personal contact, and by the personal model offered by himself, in creating a counter-current of powerful thought on the basis of ancient Indian Teachings."

His writings are soul-elevating, lucid and simple. He is the author of nearly two hundred works of various sizes, many of which have begun to command a market in foreign countries also. Sri C. Rajagopalachari expressed himself characteristically thus: "Gold beaten into all sorts of shapes gives joy. So have you beaten the Upanishads into new and artistic shapes. I am amazed at your energy". They have similarly impressed the former President of the Indian National Congress, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who wrote: "I keep your books by my side and refer to them off and on as dictionaries than as text books."

They are a store-house of ancient wisdom made available to the unbelieving modern generations who have not been divorced entirely from their own culture, hoary with age and sanctified by tradition."

No wonder, that one of the works of Swami Sivananda has been adopted as a textbook of the Stanford University of California in the U.S.A.

Miracle Maker!

Is Sivananda a miracle-maker? Yes, and no! Time and again he has declared that a true Yogi or Sanyasi should never openly display his spiritual powers. For all his spiritual achievements go in vain if they are exhibited in the market of inquisitive onlookers. But Truth can seldom remain hidden for long. Numerous episodes of amazing faith and devotion pour forth from all parts of the world, testifying the unique, hidden spiritual spark of Swami Sivananda. And he becomes mute when curious visitors and correspondents press and badger him to tell them the secret of what is called his "Miracles". On rare occasions he would smile charmingly and say politely: "It is all God's Grace!" Yes! disciples of Swami Sivananda are intensely aware of his miracles, though he has never openly displayed them.

And so the Swami goes ahead with his Mission, dynamically disseminating the spiritual culture of India, employing various modern, and up-to-date means such as films and slides

(on Yoga exercises), phonographic records (of speeches and songs), loud-speakers, monthly and weekly journals and other means.

The Only Way:

His one aim is to spread the Gospel of spiritual evolution and universal peace and love; and never was the need for peace and good-will among nations so great or so urgent as at present. If the world is to save itself from the physical devastation and the other calamities of a third world war, there is only one way, as pointed out in a recent message by Sri. M.S. Aney, Governor of Bihar. He said; "The world is full of struggle, and the apostles of peace only can send influence that will destroy the factious spirit and instil in the hearts of men the spirit of universal brotherhood."

Yes, to listen to the message of the most promising way by which mankind can save itself, we can only hope that the Almighty will give humanity the wisdom to do so.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and Prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient;
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.
Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the
mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, anger, greed,
hatred and jealousy.
Fill our heart with divine virtues.
Let us behold Thee in all these names and
forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and
forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy Glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

MAHA MRITYUNJAYA MANTRA

Om Trayambakam yajamahe
Sugandhim pushti vardhanam
Urvaarukamiva bandhanaat
Mrityormuksheeya maamritat

MEANING

We worship the three-eyed One (Lord Siva) who is fragrant and who nourishes well all beings; may He liberate us from death for the sake of Immortality even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (to the creeper).

BENEFITS

1. This Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra is a life-giving Mantra. In these days, when life is very complex and accidents are an everyday affair, this Mantra wards off deaths by snake-bite, lightning, motor-accidents, fire-accidents, cycle-accidents, water-accidents, air-accidents and accidents of all descriptions. Besides, it has a great curative effect. Again, diseases pronounced incurable by doctors are cured by this Mantra, when chanted with sincerity, faith and devotion. It is a weapon against all diseases. It is a Mantra to conquer death.

2. It is also a Moksha Mantra. It is Lord Siva's Mantra. It bestows long life (Deergha Ayush), peace (Santhi), wealth (Aishwarya), prosperity (Pushti) satisfaction (Thushti) and Immortality (Moksha).

HARI OM TAT SAT

1. As the spike in the nave of a wheel, so all are centred in Prana the verses of the Rig Veda, Sama Veda, sacrifices, Kshatriyas and Brahmanas.

2. As Prajapathi (lord of creatures), thou movest about in the womb, thou indeed art born afterwards. To thee, O Prana, who dwelleth together with the other Pranas (senses), these creatures offer oblation.
3. Thou art the best carrier to the Gods, the first oblation to the forefathers. Thou art the true active principles of the senses (pranas) which are the essence of the body.
4. O Prana! Thou art Indra, thou art Rudra by prowess, thou art the protector; thou movest in the sky, thou art the Sun, the Lord of all lights.
5. When thou showerest down rain, O Prana, these creatures of thine sit delighted, hoping that there will be food as they desire.
6. O Prana! Thou art a Vratyta (unpurified one), thou art the fire Ekarshi, the consumer of everything, the good lord of the world. We are the givers of oblations. O Matarishwan! Thou art our father.
7. Make propitious that body of thine which abides in speech, in the ear, in the eye and also which pervades the mind; do not go out.
8. All this is within the control of Prana and also all that is in the third heaven. Protect us like a mother. Give us prosperity and wisdom.

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Chapter I

WHAT IS YOGA?

"Health is Wealth". Good health is the greatest asset for you. Without good health you can hardly expect success in any walk of life. Even for spiritual pursuits, good health is the pre-requisite. Without good health you cannot penetrate the hidden depths of the vast ocean of life within and attain the final beatitude of life. Without good health you cannot wage war with the turbulent senses and boisterous mind.

Hatha Yoga is a Divine Blessing for attaining good health. Body and mind are instruments which the practice of Hatha Yoga keeps sound, strong and full of energy. It is a unique armour of defence to battle the opposing forces in the material and spiritual fields. By its practice you can annihilate Adhi—Vyadhi and attain radiant health and God-realisation.

Hatha Yoga is a perfectly practical system of self-culture. You can attain harmonious development of your body, mind, intellect and soul by the practice of Yoga. It is an exact science. Hatha Yoga deals with a system of Yogic exercises of the Indian Rishis and Yogins of yore based on scientific principles. There is no vague doctrine here. It imparts to every practitioner definite practical knowledge, fine health, longevity, strength, vim and vitality. You can acquire absolute control over the whole of nature by the practice of Yoga. It will help you to attain ethical perfection, perfect concentration of the mind and unfold various psychic powers. Yoga brings message of hope to the forlorn, joy to the depressed, strength to the weak and knowledge to the ignorant. Yoga is the secret master-key that unlocks the realm of Elysian bliss and deep abiding peace.

Shad Kriyas, Asans, Pranayama, Mudras, Bandhas, exercises in concentration and meditation, constitute Hatha Yoga, which leads to the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti and ultimate union with God in Samadhi. Shad Kriyas are preliminary purificatory processes. Asans pertain to the physical body, and the nerve centres. They render the body firm and steady and eradicate physical ailments and inertia. Pranayama aims at the control of the vital breath. Bandhas pertain to the Prana. That which binds Prana is a Bandha. They do not allow the Prana to

move upwards and the Apana to move downwards. They bind and unite the Prana with the Apana and send the united Prana-Apana along the Sushumna Nadi. Mudras concern the mind. They represent seals. Mudra means a seal. They seal the mind with the soul or Atma. They do not allow the mind to wander outside towards objects. They direct the externalising mind towards Atma in the chambers of the heart and fix it there. A combination of these is essential.

Hatha Yoga itself is an indispensable part of Raja Yoga. The aim of Hatha Yoga is Raja Yoga, viz., Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Hatha Yoga is a great help to the practice of Raja Yoga. It removes Tamas (inertia) and Rajas (restlessness of the mind and the body). It gives one easy mastery over the turbulent senses. He who practises Asans and Pranayama regularly will very soon be established in Yama-Niyama.

Asans are a great help to the aspirant on the path of Raja Yoga. No one should neglect the practice of Hatha Yoga, be he a Raja Yogi, Vedantin or Bhakta.

You do not need bar-bells, springs, weights and parallel bars for constructing the Yogi's gymnasium. At the most what you need is a simple, soft blanket to practise Asans over.

You are not practising Asans and Pranayama in order to gain big muscles. Muscles do not mean health. The healthy and harmonious functioning of the endocrine glands, and the internal viscera, and more so of the nervous system and the mind—this is what you need and what the regular practice of Yoga Asans and Pranayama will bestow upon you.

For this purpose, it is good to possess a few internal accessories to the practice of these wonderful exercises.

An abiding faith in God and a great love for the repetition of His name. Contemplating upon God and mentally uttering His Name while you are practising the Asans and particularly Pranayama will greatly enhance their value and utility.

Punctuality and regularity. Nothing is ever achieved by the unpunctual and irregular man. What he gains when he does Sadhana, he loses when he does not; and he loses more, the very tendency to do Sadhana! Practise for five minutes a day. But never miss a day's practice. In due time you will realise that these five minutes have greatly enriched the rest of the day's activity. You will then want to increase the period of practice.

Brahmacharya: A bachelor should not even entertain lustful thoughts. A house-holder

should exercise as much control as possible over sex-relations. Then you will derive the maximum benefit from these Asans and Pranayama. These practices will themselves help you in maintaining Brahmacharya.

Sincerity, earnestness and zeal are the three great equipments that would soon transform you into a great Yogi. Even if you take up these practices for the sake of health and long life, you will soon aspire to realise God through them if you are sincere, earnest and zealous.



Instructions to Yogic Students

The proper regulation of food, work and rest is of paramount importance if you are to achieve success in Yoga. "Yoga becomes the destroyer of misery to one who is well controlled in eating, working and sleeping," says the Lord in the Bhagavad Gita.

Do not load your stomach with food. Take half-stomachful of food, a quarter-stomachful of water and leave the rest free. Take food as His Prasad, by first offering it to Him. Eat only to live, not for the pleasure of it. Avoid too much of salt, chillies, tamarind, etc. Shun onions and garlic. Meat-eaters should immediately give up this most unhealthy and unspiritual habit. Do not take any stimulants; draw energy, vitality and inspiration from Pranayama. Take plenty of milk ghee, butter, honey, wheat, rice and vegetables.

Work is necessary; but avoid overwork. Take a lively interest in whatever you do; do your work as worship of the Lord. Such service purifies the heart. Work keeps Tamas away.

Sleep is nature's tonic for a healthy life. The more sound sleep one has, the more healthy he will be. Sleep for six hours is quite sufficient for every individual. Go to bed at 10 o'clock and get up at 4 a.m. Too much sleep makes a man dull and lethargic. What is required is quality of sleep. Repeat some prayer or sublime Slokas of Gita or Upanishads before you go to bed. Do Japa. Do not build castles in the air. Give up scheming and planning now. If you have ill feeling towards anyone, forget. You will enjoy sound sleep and get up thoroughly refreshed. You will be at once ready for your morning practice.

The ideal is to secure a place where the Sadhaka will not be disturbed by too many people, animals or insects, and where nature would favour his Sadhana. The Kutir should give no cause for the aspirant's anxiety and therefore be free from destruction by landslides, flood and fire. Damp, marshy ground would only breed mosquitoes and other disease-producing agents; so the Kutir should be far away from them. It would be excellent if the place chosen enjoys an equable climate.

The Yogi's hut should be small and elegant. It should have good ventilation without too many windows. There should be no room for the eyes to wander about; and there should not be too many things in the room lest they should distract his attention. The room should be kept scrupulously clean. It may be surrounded by a garden of sweet-smelling and beautiful flowers. A good well within the outer compound is a useful addition.

It is not always possible to have such an ideal place for practising Yoga. The basic principles should be borne in mind. Peaceful atmosphere, solitude, freedom from distractions—if these are ensured, you can convert your own room into an ideal Kutir for the practice of Yoga.

THE SADHAK'S DAILY ROUTINE

Here is an ideal daily routine for a whole-time Sadhaka. He who adheres to this routine will easily attain Siddhi within a year.

Get up at 4 a.m. Meditate upon your Guru and pray to him for success in your Sadhana.

Clean your teeth, hands, feet and face. Go into your Sadhana-room. All the time repeating the Ishta-Mantra, sit down on your Asan. The ideal seat has been described in the Gita as Kusa-grass, deer-skin and cloth placed one over the other. Recite some Guru Stotras.

Then, meditate upon Adi-Sesha, the Supreme Yoga Guru. Then commence the practice of Asans. Whenever you feel fatigued, do Savasan for a few minutes. Conclude this practice with Viparitakarani. Once again seat yourself and do Achamana. Meditate upon your Guru once again and commence the practice of Pranayama, sitting on Siddhasan or Padmasan. Perform at least ten Pranayamas to begin with (gradually increasing the number to eighty). After this practise the Ashta-Kumbhakas, commencing with the Kevala Kumbhaka by the right and then the left Nadis. Then Suryabhedhi, Ujjayi, Sitkari,

Sitali and Bhastrika, etc. These should be followed by the Mudras. After this practise concentration; you will easily be able to hear the Anahat sounds now. At the conclusion of this practice, offer your Sadhana to the Lord as Iswararpana.

This is the routine; and all these should be done four times a day—in Brahmamuhurtha, at midday, in the evening, and at midnight.

After the Brahmamuhurtha practice is concluded, take bath in lukewarm water and then engage yourself in your daily duties. After the midday practice, take a little rest and then take your meals. After this engage yourself in the study of sacred books, or do Japa. An hour and a half before sunset, commence your evening practice. Viparitakarani should not be practised either in the evening or after a meal.

Chapter II

THE SCIENCE OF BODY STRUCTURE

1. BODY AND MIND

The mind is intimately connected with the body. The body helps the mind and the mind helps the body. The health of mind and the body are undoubtedly bound up in each other. The mind acts upon the body and the body reacts upon the mind. If the body is sick, the mind also becomes sick. If the body is strong and healthy, the mind also becomes healthy and strong. Understand the nature of the mind and keep it in a very healthy condition. Be always cheerful. Cheerfulness is the best mental tonic.

The mind has a great influence over the whole body. Grief in the mind weakens the body. Body influences the mind also in its turn. A healthy body makes the mind healthy. A pain in the stomach causes a mental depression. The body is the shadow of the mind. It is a mould prepared by the mind into which it pours forth its energies. A pure mind means a healthy body.

When the mind is agitated, then the body also is agitated. Wherever the body goes, the mind follows. When the body and the mind are agitated, the Prana flows in a wrong direction. Instead of pervading the whole body steadily and equally, it will vibrate at an unequal rate (unrhythmically). Then, food is not digested properly. Diseases originate. If the primary cause be removed then all diseases will soon disappear.

To know and practise Yoga one should have a preliminary knowledge of body and its structure and function.

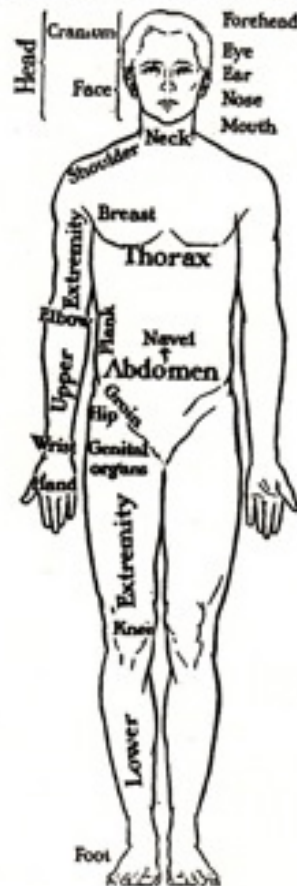
2. THE SKELETON

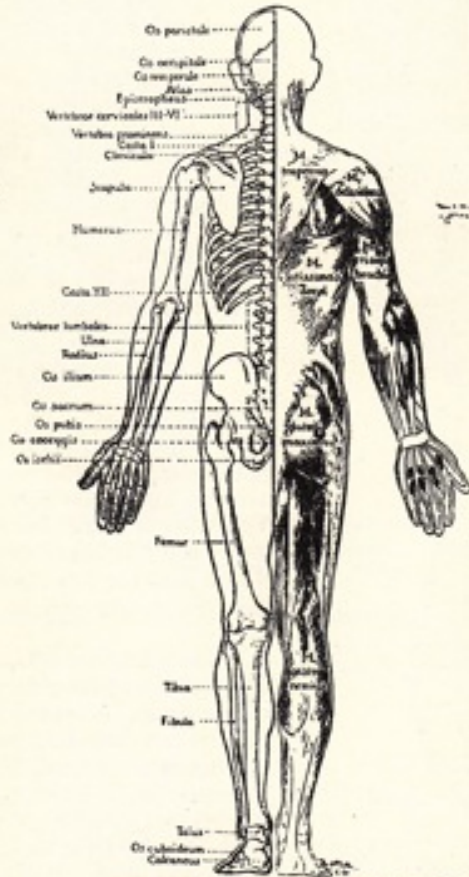
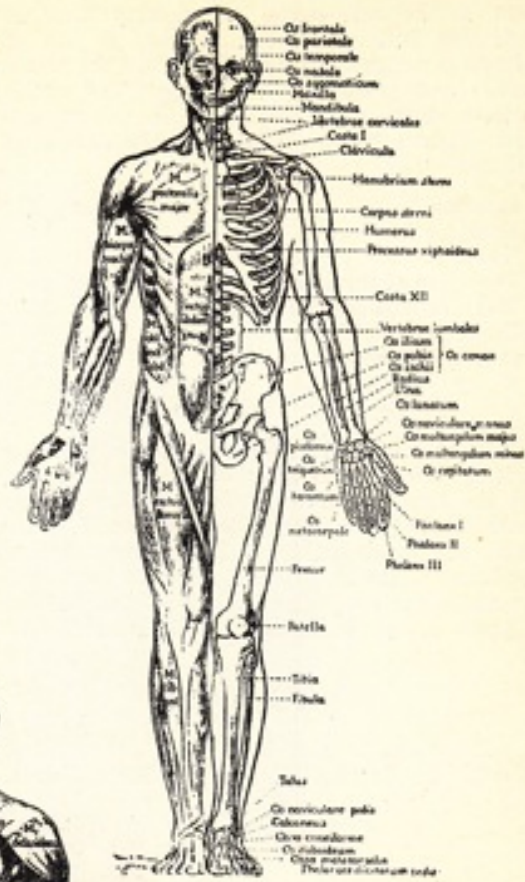
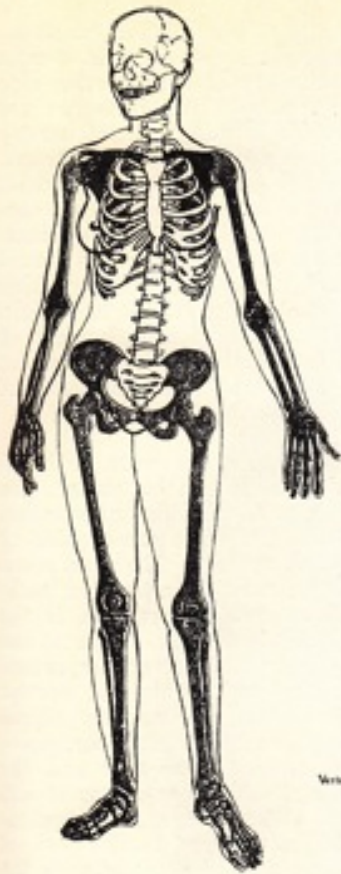
A mason builds a house out of stones, small bricks, chunam (lime) and cement. He uses big pieces of stones for the construction of the main walls and puts small bricks and pebbles to fill up the crevices in the walls, plasters the walls with chunam and eventually puts a layer of cement. He polishes the walls with finishing touches and gives a colouring in the end to attract the eye. Even so the Divine Architect, Ishwar, has constructed this human body with the help of Mother Prakriti. The bones repre-

sent the big stones, the muscles represent the pebbles; the fat the bricks; the dermis or white skin is comparable to chunam; the skin or epidermis to the cement; the pigment of the skin to the colouring matter. Look at the marvellous skill of the Divine Engineer, the Engineer of engineers! The muscles are fixed to the bones by means of tendons. The joints are kept intact by ligaments. Deposition of fat gives good shape to the limbs, the trunk and the abdomen and gives beauty to the body.

The bones are the principal organs of support, and the passive instruments of locomotion. Connected together in the skeleton, they form a framework of hard material, affording attach-

Anatomic Position; Regions of the Body





THE FRAME WORK OF THE BODY
(SKELETON)

ment to the soft parts, maintaining them in their due position, sheltering such as are of delicate structure, giving stability to the whole fabric, and preserving its shape. The entire skeleton in the adult consists of about two hundred distinct bones. They are distributed as follows:

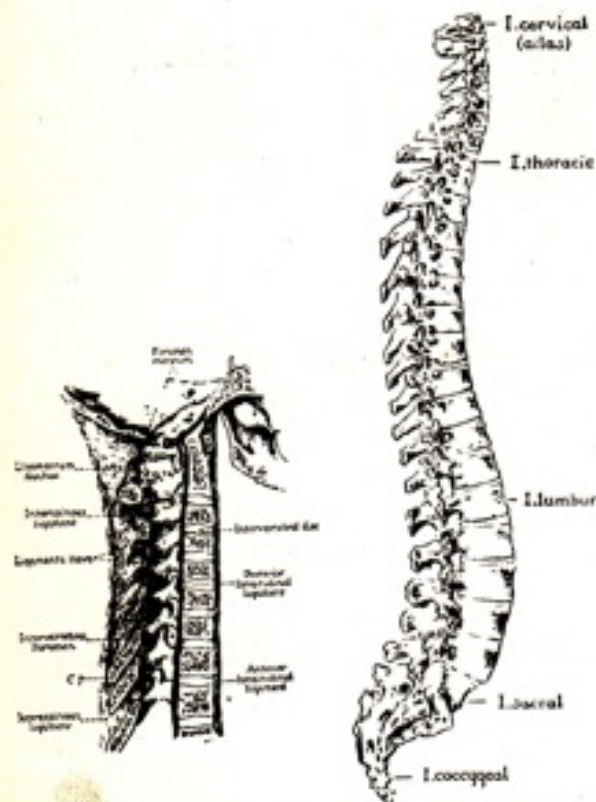
Cranium	8
Face	14
Hyoid	1
The spine (Sacrum and coccyx included)	26
Sternum and ribs	26
Upper extremities	64
Lower extremities	62

Total 201

In this enumeration the Patellae or kneecaps or knee-caps are included as separate bones, but the smaller Sesamoid (shaped like sesame seed) bones consisting of several small bones which are found embedded in tendons covering the bones of the knees, hand and foot bones and the malleus bones of the middle ear, viz., Malleus 2, Incus 2, and Stapes 2, are not included.

(a) Spine

The spine is also known as the vertebral column. In Sanskrit it is called Meru Danda.



Lateral View of Adult Vertebral Column.

It is made up of a row of bones called vertebrae. It is about twenty-eight inches long in a man of average height and reaches from the hips to the head. The bodies of the vertebrae are piled one upon another forming a solid, strong pillar for the support of the head and trunk. The neck spine contains seven bones. The chest spine contains twelve bones. The waist contains five bones. The hip contains five bones. The tail contains four bones. There is a tunnel or tube in the centre of the column along which passes the spinal cord which takes its origin from the brain. From between each pair of spine bones small bundles of nerves pass out on either side to reach the different parts of the body which they control.

The spine can be bent forwards or backward or to either side. It can be turned also from its middle position to one side or the other. The different parts of the spine are capable of differing amounts of movement. The chest spine moves less than the waist spine in bending backward. The amount of motion permitted is the greatest in the region of the neck. Care of the spine is very necessary. It is a very important structure as it shelters main groups of nerves. You must keep it healthy, strong and supple by bending and stretching it in all directions— forwards and backwards, to one side and the other and by twisting it round as far as it will go once every day. Whenever a movement is limited, the circulation of blood to the part of the body is slower and smaller. Consequently the joints and muscles are not properly nourished. They are also not properly cleansed of their waste products. If the spine is supple, then alone will you be able to hold it straight.

(b) Chest

The thorax or chest cavity is an elongated bony cage. The chest contains the most important organs—the heart and the lungs. There are two lungs, the right lung and the left lung. The heart is placed between the two lungs. The lungs and the heart are important not only for health but for life itself. It behoves therefore that you should have as good a chest as possible.

The chest has walls and a floor. The walls are formed by a part of the spine, usually 12 of its bones, to which are attached 12 ribs on each side. The first seven ribs are joined to the breast-bone, sternum, by bands of cartilage. The next three are attached to the band of the seventh. The ends of the last two float more freely in the muscles. They are called floating ribs. The floor of the chest cavity is formed by the diaphragm or dome-shaped midriff.

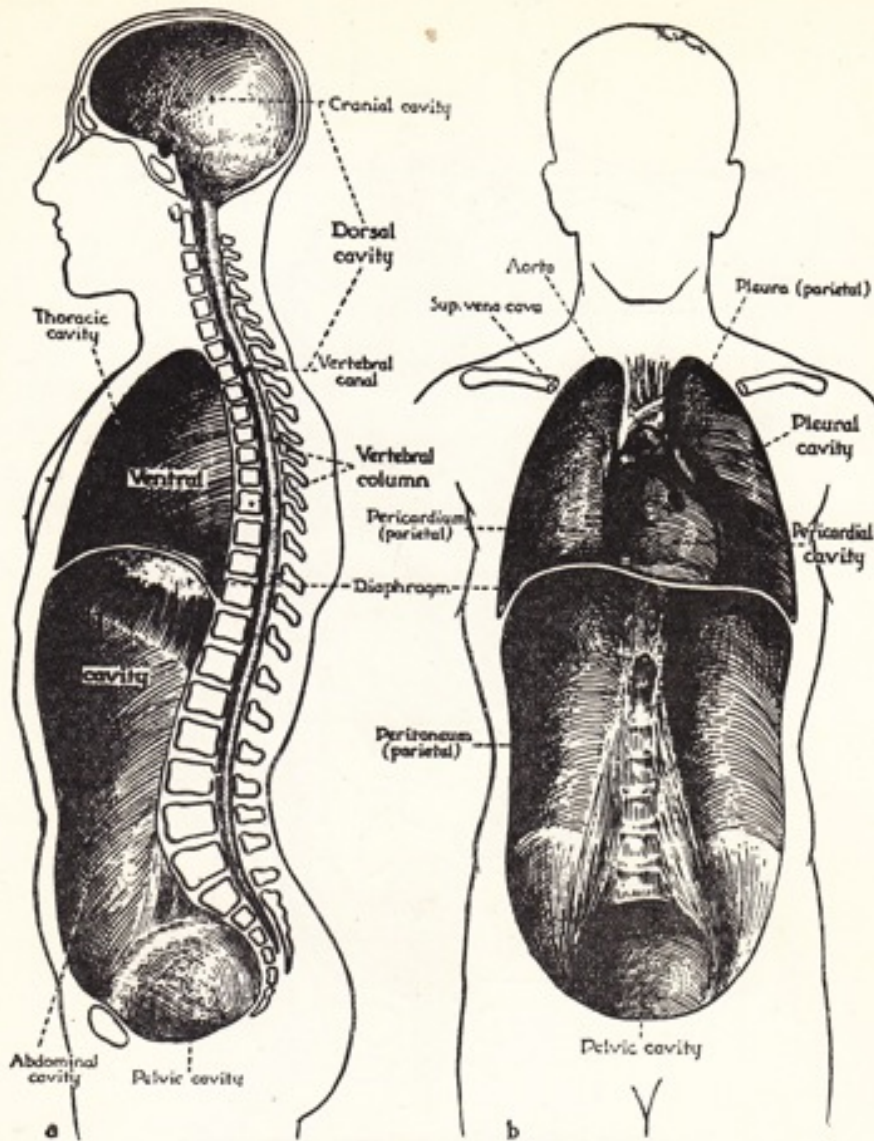


Diagram of Vertebrate Structure of Man.

(a) The vertebral column, the dorsal cavity and the ventral cavity are shown.

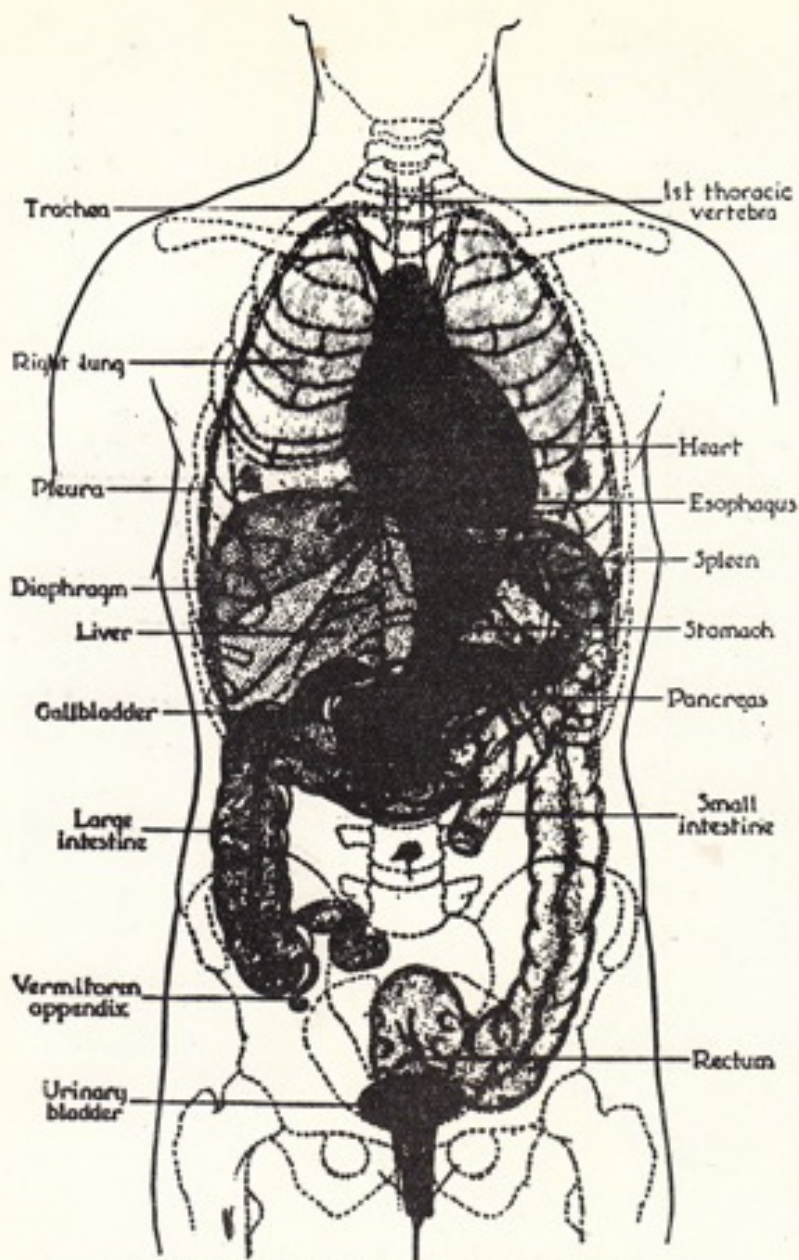
(c) Abdomen

The abdomen extends from the tip of the breast bone or sternum right down to the hips. The pelvis also is a portion of the abdominal cavity. Its top is the dome-shaped diaphragm. Its walls are formed partly of bones and partly of muscles. Inside the abdomen are located many vital organs. The stomach lies close under the left side of the diaphragm. On the right side is the liver. Below these two lie the intestines in a long and twisted course. Low down in the front is the bladder. Behind are

two kidneys. Good abdominal movements mean good digestion and circulation and more effective excretion.

(d) Legs and Arms

The arm has a single bone known as the Humerus. The forearm is made up of two bones, viz., Radius and Ulna. The Radius is on the outer side and the Ulna is on the inner side of the forearm. The thigh has one bone, Femur. The leg is made up of two bones like the forearm, viz., Tibia on the inner side and Fibula



The anterior surface projection of some of the thoracic, abdominal and pelvic viscera.

on the outer side. The legs are in some ways similar to the arms. The hip bones and the shoulder blades both have a socket or hollow in which moves the rounded head of the single bones of the upper part of the limbs. The sockets or hollows on the hip bone are very deep. Into them fit the rounded head of the thigh bones. The socket of the shoulder-blade is very shallow. The feet with five toes and the hands and a thumb are similar in their arrangement. Legs bear the weight of the body. Their movements are neither so fine nor so varied as those of the arms. The shoulder-blades move in many directions but the hip bones are fixed on to the

spine. Your whole carriage is built on your feet.

3. MUSCLES

The muscles are fastened to the bones by means of ligaments and tendons. You must correct the faults which your habitual positions cause in your muscles and make the short longer and the long shorter. If you do not use a muscle it will become smaller. If you use it very much it will grow larger. You can develop all the muscles by suitable exercises. "Loosening exercises," such as shaking, vibration, swinging,

make the muscles loose and supple. These exercises eliminate from the joints and muscular tissues the waste products that induce fatigue.

A muscle becomes shorter when it receives a nerve-message. When a muscle which is fastened on the two bones becomes shorter, it pulls the bones towards each other. Then the bones move. When the nerve stops sending the message the shortened muscle relaxes and the bones are pushed back to their original position. Another group of muscles do this part of the work.

(a) Muscles of the Back

The muscles of the back are disposed in five layers, one beneath the other. The two largest and most superficial muscles are: Trapezius and Latissimus dorsi. The trapezius is a very large muscle and covers the other muscles of the upper part of the back and neck, as well as the upper part of the latissimus dorsi. The latissimus dorsi muscles act upon the bones of the upper extremities. They elevate the shoulders, move the arms and assist in drawing up the body in climbing.

(b) Muscles of the Chest

The chief bulk of the anterior muscular wall of the chest is made up of the pectoral muscles, viz., Pectoralis major and Pectoralis minor. The Pectoralis minor is underneath and entirely covered by the Pectoralis major. These muscles move the arms.

(c) Muscles of the Thorax

The muscles of the thorax are chiefly concerned with the movements of the ribs during respiration. They are the intercostals and Levatores Costarum. The intercostals are found filling the spaces between the ribs. Each muscle consists of two layers, one external and one internal. There are eleven internal spaces on each side and two muscles on each space. Therefore there are 44 intercostal muscles. The fibres of these muscles run in opposite directions. The action of the external fibres is to pull the ribs upwards and outwards thereby increasing the chest cavity. The action of the internal fibres is to depress the ribs. The Levatores Costarum muscles are the lifters of the ribs. They assist in elevation of the first ten ribs and with the other muscles draw the lower ribs backwards.

(d) Muscles of the Diaphragm

The diaphragm is a thin, musculo-fibrous partition between the thoracic and abdominal cavities. It is dome-shaped, and has three openings for the passage of Aorta, the large artery in the body, the inferior Vena Cava, one of the largest veins in the body and the oesophagus or

gullet. The diaphragm is the great respiratory muscle of the body.

The mechanical act of respiration consists of two sets of movements, viz., those of inspiration, in which air is successfully drawn into the lungs and expelled from them by the alternate increase and diminution of the thoracic cavity. In the act of inspiration the diaphragm contracts and in contracting flattens out and descends, the abdominal organs are pressed downwards, and the thorax is expanded vertically. The diaphragm is an expulsive as well as the chief respiratory muscles of the body.

(e) Muscles of the Abdomen

The muscular walls of the abdomen are mainly formed by three layers of muscles, the fibres of which run in different directions, those of the superficial and middle layers being oblique and those of the innermost layer being transverse. The chief muscles of the abdomen are external oblique, internal oblique, rectus abdominis and transversalis. Linea Alba or white line is a tendinous band formed by the union of the aponeuroses of the oblique and transverse muscles. It extends perpendicularly down the middle line from the sternum to the pubis.

The abdominal muscles compress the abdominal organs by constricting the cavity of the abdomen. They give assistance in expelling the foetus from the womb, the excreta or faeces from the rectum, the urine from the bladder and the contents of the stomach in vomiting. They are much assisted by the descent of the diaphragm. The abdominal muscles raise the diaphragm and assist in expiration. They draw the pelvis upwards as a preparatory step to the elevation of the lower limbs in the action of climbing.

(f) Muscles of the Upper Extremities (Upper Limbs)

The most prominent muscles found in the upper limbs are the Deltoid, Biceps, Triceps, Pronators, Supinators, Flexors and Extensors. The deltoid is a coarse triangular muscle that covers the top of the shoulder. It raises the arms from the sides so as to bring them at right angles to the trunk.

Biceps: This is a long fusiform muscle. It occupies the whole of the anterior surface of the arm. It is divided above into two portions or heads, hence the name biceps. It flexes the forearm on to the upper arm.

Triceps: This muscle is situated on the back of the arm. It is of a large size and divided above into three heads. Hence the name triceps. It is the extensor muscle of the forearm. It is the direct antagonist of the biceps.

The extensor muscle is the one that helps in the extension of the limbs.

The muscles that cover the forearm are disposed in groups, the pronators and flexors being placed on the front and inner part of the forearm and the supinators and extensors on the outer side and back of the forearm. They are antagonistic to one another. The pronators turn the palm of the hand backwards and when the elbow is flexed, downwards or prone. The supinators turn the palm of the hand forwards, and when the elbow is flexed, upwards or into the supine position. The flexors and extensors serve to flex and extend the wrist and fingers.

(g) Muscles of the Lower Extremities (Lower Limbs)

These include the muscles of the hip, thigh, leg and foot. The most important of these muscles are: Glutei or gluteal muscles, Psoas Magnus, Posterior Femoral, Anterior Femoral, Internal Femoral, Tibialis Anterior, Extensors, Peroneal Gastrocnemius, Soleus, Flexors, Tibialis Posterior.

If we compare the muscles of the shoulder, arm and fore-arm with those of the hip, the thigh and the leg, we shall see that the anterior muscles of the former correspond roughly with the posterior muscles of the latter and the muscles of the hip, thigh and leg are larger and coarser in texture than those of shoulder, arm and forearm.

Glutei: Three gluteal muscles—Gluteus maximus, Gluteus medius and Gluteus minimus—form the chief prominence of the buttocks. The Gluteus medius and Gluteus minimus are under the Gluteus maximus. These muscles support the trunk upon the head of the femur and bring the body into the erect position when the trunk is bent forwards upon the thighs.

Psoas Magnus: This is the great loin muscle. Its action is flexion and external rotation of the thigh.

Posterior Femoral: Posterior femoral or the hamstring muscles cover the back of the thigh. There are three of these muscles—the biceps, the semitendinosus and the semimembranosus. The chief of these is the biceps, and is somewhat analogous to the biceps covering the front of the arm. The action of the hamstring muscles is to flex the knee and extend the thigh.

Anterior Femoral: The Principal anterior femoral muscles are the Quadriceps and Sartorius.

Quadriceps: This is a four-headed muscle that covers the front of the thigh, and is analogous to the triceps covering the back of the arm. Each head is described as a separate mus-

cle: (1) Rectus Femoris, (2) Vastus Externus, (3) Vastus Internus, (4) Vastus Intermedius. The quadriceps is the great extensor of the leg. It also flexes the thigh and antagonises the action of the hamstring muscles.

Sartorius: This muscle, Sartorius, is often called the "Tailor's muscle." It is a long ribbon-like muscle. It is the longest in the body, and is the muscle principally concerned in producing the posture assumed by the tailor in sitting cross-legged and hence its name.

Internal Femoral: The internal femoral is otherwise known as adductor muscles. These muscles are also adductors of the thigh.

The Tibialis anterior, the extensors and the peroneal muscles cover the front and outer side of the leg. The Gastrocnemius and the Soleus, the Flexors and the Tibialis Posterior cover the back of the leg.

The action of the Tibialis anterior and one of the three peroneal muscles (Peroneus Tertius) is to flex the ankle, while the action of the Tibialis Posterior and the other Peroneal muscles (Peroneus Longus, Peroneus Brevis) is to extend the ankle. The flexors and extensors act on the toes.

The Gastrocnemius muscles form the calves of the legs. They possess considerable power, and are constantly in use while standing, walking, dancing or leaping.

4. MUSCLES AND NERVES

The function of the muscles is to contract so that their two ends are drawn together, and a movement is thus produced which by various systems of levers can be converted into the particular form of motion required. For example, the contraction of the muscles of the calf draws the heel upward, and in this way causes the whole body to be elevated on the toes.

In order to bring about a muscular contraction the muscle must first be stimulated. The way in which the muscle is normally stimulated is through its nerve, which conducts the nerve impulses from the central nervous system to the muscle fibres. Arriving at the latter, the nerve impulses bring about the complex chemical changes upon which the contraction of the muscle depends. When the nerve impulses cease, the muscle relaxes again.

5. BRAIN AND NERVES

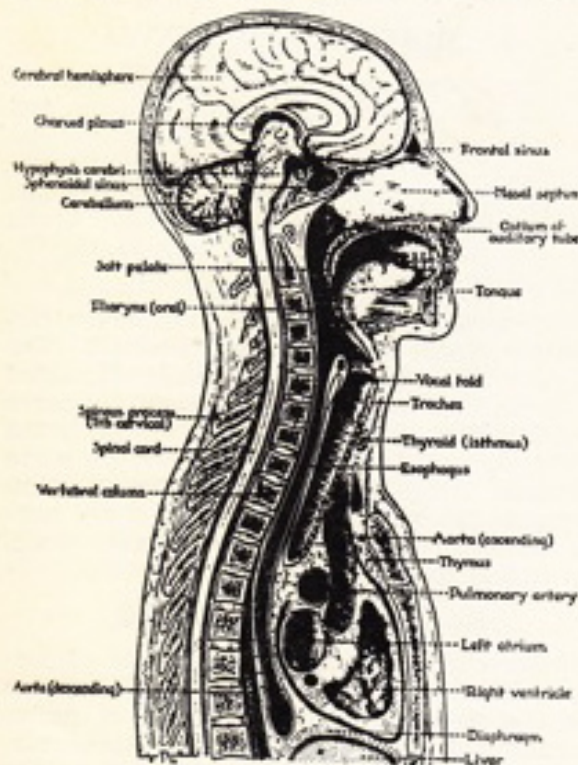
The nervous system is a collection of nervous tissues set apart as a special apparatus for the reception and transmission of nerve-impulses. This apparatus consists of the brain, and the spinal cord which is attached to the brain, many nerve trunks emerge from both and

go to all parts of the body and eventually terminate in nerve-endings. The nerve-fibres are in connection with aggregations of nerve-tissue called nerve-ganglia. A ganglion is a small collection of cell-bodies connected by means of nerve-fibres and dendrites with other ganglia and with the central nervous system. The whole nervous system itself is made up of tiny microscopic elements called neurones.

The brain and the spinal cord constitute the central nervous system. The brain is placed in the cranial cavity. The spinal cord extends from the brain, runs along the vertebral canal of the vertebral bones or the spinal column. There are 31 pairs of spinal nerves.

The brain is the most complex and the largest mass of nervous tissues in the body. It is contained in the cranial cavity. It is made up of white and grey matter. It is divided into four principal parts, viz., the cerebrum, the cerebellum or "little brain," the pons varolii and the medulla oblongata.

The medulla oblongata is the seat of several important or vital centres. It contains the respiratory centres for regulating the functions of respiration; the cardiac centres which control the rate and force of the heart's action; the vasomotor centre to regulate the size of the small arteries or blood vessels in any part of the body at any particular time, thus controlling the amount of blood furnished to that part;



Midsagittal Section of Head, Neck and Trunk.

other centres, such as the vomiting centre, heat controlling centre, etc. If the medulla is seriously injured, death will result immediately.

The cranial nerves, twelve in number on each side, arise from the base of the brain and medulla oblongata and pass out through openings in the base of the skull. They are (1) Olfactory (sensory); (2) Optic (sensory); (3) Oculo-motor (Motor); (4) Trochlear (Motor); (5) Trifacial or trigeminal (mixed, but mainly sensory); (6) Abducens (motor); (7) Facial (motor); (8) Auditory (sensory); (9) Glossopharyngeal (mixed); (10) Pneumogastric or vagus (mixed); (11) Spinal accessory (motor); (12) Hypoglossal (motor).

The olfactory is the special nerve of the sense of smell. The optic nerve is the special nerve of the sense of sight. The oculo-motor nerve supplies all the muscles of the eye except the superior oblique and external rectus. The trochlear nerve supplies only the superior oblique muscles of the eye. The trifacial is the largest of the cranial nerves. The ophthalmic, the superior maxillary and the inferior maxillary are the three branches of the trifacial nerve. The abducens nerve supplies the external rectus muscle of the eye. The facial nerve is the motor nerve of all the muscles of expression in the face.

The auditory nerve is the special nerve of the sense of hearing. The glossopharyngeal nerve is distributed to the tongue and the pharynx, being the nerve of sensation belonging to the mucous membrane of the pharynx, conveys motion to the muscles of the pharynx and is the special nerve of taste belonging to a part of the tongue.

The pneumogastric nerve has a more extensive distribution than any other cranial nerves. It passes through the neck and thorax to the upper part of the abdomen. It contains both motor and sensory fibres. It supplies the organs of voice production and respiration with motor and sensory filaments and the pharynx, oesophagus, stomach and heart with motor fibres (cardiac inhibitory).

The spinal accessory nerve consists of two parts, one the spinal portion and the other the accessory portion of the tenth nerve. It is a motor nerve. It supplies certain muscles of the neck, and arises from the spinal cord. The hypoglossal nerve is the motor nerve belonging to the tongue.

It will be observed that of the 12 pairs of cranial nerves, four and a part of the fifth are distributed to the eye, viz., the optic, motor oculi, trochlear, abducens and the ophthalmic branch of the fifth. The ear has one special nerve, the auditory, and is sparingly supplied

with motor and sensory fibres from other nerves. The nose also has one special nerve, the olfactory, and is more abundantly supplied than the ear with motor and sensory fibres from other nerves. The tongue has two special branch nerves of taste—the lingual, a branch of the fifth, and the glossal, a branch of the ninth; it has also its own motor nerve, the hypoglossal.

It is difficult to answer what the nature of the nerve impulse is. The nerve-fibre serves as a conveyor of nerve impulses. The speed at which an impulse travels along an efferent nerve-fibre is about 140 feet per second. An afferent impulse travels somewhat slower, 110 feet per second. Efferent nerves carry the nerve impulses from the nerve-cell to the nerve-endings, i.e., from the brain towards the skin. Those in which the impulses travel in the reverse direction from the skin towards the brain are called the afferent nerves. It is the afferent nerve that carries the sensation of pain from the finger to the brain when a scorpion stings the finger! It is the efferent nerve that carries the impulse from the brain towards the finger which makes us take the finger away from the scorpion. Everything is done in the fraction of a second. The afferent impulse goes to the spinal cord from the skin and from the spinal cord it is transmitted to the brain. The efferent impulse comes from the brain to the spinal cord and from the spinal cord it is transmitted to the skin. The spinal cord is thus the *via media* between the brain and the skin.

Other sets of nerves carry on the function of digestion, circulation, etc. They perform their work independently. You need not think about them at all. They go on with their work whether you are asleep or awake. These are the self-governing nerves that belong to the sympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic system sends motor impulses to the involuntary muscles, conveys sensations from the different organs, controls the vasomotor system, the heart's action and secretion.

The brain is divided into two halves by a fissure or groove in the middle. The left side of the brain transmits messages to the right side of the body and vice versa. The main nerves of the central nervous system control all voluntary movements of the body. Through the play of these nerves we move our limbs, walk, run, jump, etc. All the nerves are in direct communication with the sympathetic nervous system which controls the involuntary functions, such as digestion, circulation of blood, etc. The two nervous systems are inter-dependent. The sympathetic depends for its energy and efficient working on the central nervous system. The central nervous system is sustained and built up by the blood manufactured and circulated through the agency of the sympathetic. Lower-

ing of vitality of the sympathetic system will react on the central nervous system.

The sympathetic system is made up of a chain of nerve fibres which run down each side of the spine. Just in front of it, there is a ganglion in each fibre. All these nerve fibres form the "solar-plexus" which governs the function of the digestive organs, the liver, kidney, etc. If there is any disorder in the sympathetic system ganglia or the 'solar-plexus' you will suffer from torpidity of the liver. The kidneys will not perform their function efficiently. You will experience some congestion here, a pain or irritation there, a little swelling in the feet or the cheeks, a little burning in the stomach and so on.

The sympathetic and the para-sympathetic constitute the automatic system which is to some extent independent of the central nervous system. The action of the sympathetic fibres is antagonistic to the action of the fibres of the para-sympathetic. The sympathetic nerves accelerate the heart's action, while the para-sympathetic system retards the action of the heart. The sympathetic chain is a system of a ganglia vertically arranged on both sides of the spinal column. The major part of the para-sympathetic system is made up by the vagus.

A Yogi can control the automatic nervous system. By suppressing all voluntary and involuntary actions he can bring the working of the human machine to a standstill. In the year 1926 under the auspices of the Bombay Medical Union, Deshbandhu demonstrated certain Yogic feats, such as the stopping of the radial and the temporal pulse on both sides at will. He stopped the beatings of the heart for a few seconds. Through the practice of Kechari Mudra and Pranayama, Yogis have buried themselves for days and even months.

6. HEALTH AND HORMONES

Hormones are the products secreted by the endocrine glands. They are internal secretions. The endocrine glands are ductless glands which discharge their several products or internal secretions directly into the blood stream and thereby influence all the regions of the body. These secretions affect every function of the body both physiological and psychological.

These endocrine glands are small wonderful chemical factories which manufacture very potent substances called hormones. These hormones regulate the chemistry of our lives. They markedly influence our structure, our health, and our whole personality.

The most important advance in Medical Science made during recent years is the discovery of the inner glands of the body and their importance to life. It has been proved that the

glands control our entire life, energy, and mental and physical activity.

The body is a very intricate and complex machine. Hormone regulation is very important in the normal functioning of the human organism. Height, stature, the shape of the face, the appearance, intelligence, bodily development, the complexion, colour, and the characteristic differences between men and women, such as the temper, the voice, the growth of the hair, mental and physical capacity, the formation of the body and even the emotions are regulated by the functioning of these mysterious glands. Even the individual, radical characteristics of every man, woman and child are attributed to the varying amounts of hormones manufactured by the endocrine glands of their bodies.

How wonderful is this magical machine—the human body, the moving temple of God or the chariot for the soul! Mother Prakriti has exhibited her marvellous skill and maximum dexterity in constructing this marvellous machine. If you seriously ponder for a while over the structure and working of this wonderful machine that is our body you will be struck with awe and wonder.

The cells of these glands are endowed with marvellous intelligence. There are many endocrine glands and they all work in perfect unison and harmony with each other and thus the normal functioning of the body is maintained. If the function of one gland is disturbed a vicious circle will be formed. These internal secretory glands pour directly into the blood stream their secretions in such quantities as are necessary to keep up a balance of bodily activity.

The various ductless glands of the body are pineal, the pituitary, the thyroid, the parathyroid, the thymus, the adrenals or the suprarenals, the gonads or the generative glands, and the islets of Langerhans. Chemists are now manufacturing some of these glandular products artificially from lower animals. Doctors administer these extracts or solutions to patients either by means of injections or by mouth to replace the secretions of the patients' glands when they are not functioning properly. Pituitrin, the active principle of pituitary gland, pancreatic extract, known as insulin, for the treatment of diabetes, adrenalin, the active principle of the adrenal glands, thyroxin, the active principle of the thyroid gland, and the Parathormone from the para-thyroid have been prepared by the chemists.

The pineal gland or pineal body is of the size of a pea, and has the shape of a cone. It is imbedded in the brain above the top of the spinal column near the middle of the skull. It

contains some gritty calcareous particles called brain sand. It is the receiving instrument of the wireless telegraphy of the mind. It receives the thought messages from distant telepathists. Some regard the pineal gland as the seat of the soul. It functions most vigorously in the practice of telepathy, and plays a tremendous part in thought-transference. Occultists consider this as the sixth sense.

The pituitary gland is located at the base of the brain and produces several kinds of hormones. It has two lobes, viz., the anterior lobe and the posterior lobe. This gland has much to do with the development of our height, weight and general contour, the character of the hair, the texture of the skin and the cast of features. This is a small body weighing six grams. Research workers are not in agreement regarding the number of hormones produced by the anterior lobe of the pituitary, but in general four are recognised, viz., the growth gonadotropic, lactogenic, thyro-tropic principles. The anterior lobe of the pituitary body promotes skeletal growth. Hyper-activity of the anterior lobe is a cause for premature sex development. The important functions of the posterior lobe are stimulation of the non-striated muscle fibres and control of the carbohydrate metabolism. Any deficiency in the secretion of the posterior lobe causes muscular weakness and a slowing up of carbohydrate metabolism with greatly increased sugar tolerance. Excessive functioning of this gland cause gigantism or unusually large hands, feet or nose, aggressiveness and persistence. Any deficiency produces a normally intelligent, obedient, good-natured and fickle-minded man. It also leads to dwarfism, excessive obesity and retardation of sexual development.

The pituitary gland functions more vigorously after the removal of the thyroid. But it does not take over all the duties of the thyroid. If the function of the pituitary gland is impaired or lost, the thyroid gland begins to function more vigorously. This is a balancing action on nature's part. Similarly, when the kidneys are in a diseased condition the skin works more vigorously and vice versa. In summer the skin functions more energetically and so we perspire more profusely. In winter the activity of the kidneys is accelerated and we pass more urine. Micturition is more frequent also. This sort of balancing work in the harmony of nature is done by the intelligent Prakriti under the direct guidance of the Lord of all nature. The Sattwa Guna of the Prakriti is characterised by intelligence.

The thyroid gland consists of two lobes which are attached to the sides of the lower portion of the larynx. In a normal individual it weighs from 20 to 25 grams. The secretion

of this gland plays a very vital part in keeping up a proper balance over nutritional and growth process in human beings. The active principle of the secretions of this gland is called thyroxin. The general effect of the thyroid hormone on metabolism is a regulation of the rate of oxidation in the body. A lack of thyroid secretion results in dwarfism, deficient muscular activity, lower bodily temperature, slower breathing rate, a depressed activity and underdeveloped and functionally deficient sex-glands. Goitre is a morbid enlargement of the thyroid gland. This is due to complete absence or marked deficiency of the iodine necessary for the normal functioning of the gland. Regular consumption of foods rich in iodine will help in preventing goitre. Children who suffer from cretinism show considerable improvement if they take thyroxin. Excessive functioning of the thyroid induces rapid physical development and sex-changes, increased restlessness and irritability.

The para-thyroids are closely attached to the thyroids. They are four in number. They weigh in all not more than two grains. The secretion from the para-thyroid controls the calcium content of the blood. The proper functioning of the glands is of paramount importance. Calcium helps the clotting of blood, and the muscular tone and the formation of the skeleton. An insufficiency of calcium in the blood is shown by the appearance of certain diseases. Complete removal of these glands results in a condition known as tetany which is characterised by painful spasmodic contractions of the muscles of the extremities, i.e., hands and legs. The calcium content of the blood is considerably diminished. The heart, lungs and the temperature of the body are also affected. The patient dies if proper treatment is not given. Administration of an extract of para-thyroid promptly restores the sufferer to a normal condition.

The thymus is situated in the upper region of the chest along the trachea or wind-pipe. Removal of the thymus in human beings induces disordered development of the skeleton and results in defects like ricket, etc. The thymus is particularly important in childhood as it helps the physical and mental development. Early decline of thymic activity results in sexual precocity, whereas persistent thymus activity causes delayed puberty.

The adrenal glands are of yellow colour. They are two in number. Each weighs about four grams. Each is situated above the kidney. They produce two major hormones, viz., adrenalin and cortin. The secretion from the medullary portion of the adrenal gland is called adrenalin. This is widely used as a drug. It stops bleeding by inducing contraction of the

arteries and capillaries and maintains muscular tone. A deficiency of adrenalin causes lowered blood pressure, lack of muscular tone and loss of strength. The secretions of the cortex control sexual maturity. Over-activity of the cortex portion of the adrenal causes masculine traits in women, such as the growth of a beard, harsh voice, etc. Hypertrophy of the cortex causes precocious sexual development. Morbid affection of the cortical portion causes Addison's disease. When cortical extract is injected, the patient shows signs of improvement. The adrenal glands assist in sexual development especially in early life, maintain muscular tone, including arterial tension and exert a protective influence against bacterial infection.

The generative glands (Gonads) produce internal secretions which affect the individual both mentally and physically. The gonads exercise deep psychological and physiological influence on men. These secretions determine the proper development of the specific male and female characteristics, such as voice, hairy condition, bodily outline, size, etc.

The pancreas is a gland that secretes a digestive juice called pancreatic juice which is poured through the pancreatic duct into the small intestines. In the midst of the lobules which secrete the pancreatic juice there are small tissues known as the islets of Langerhans. These tissues secrete a substance called insulin which is directly absorbed in the blood. This hormone plays a very important part in the metabolism of carbohydrates. If there is any deficiency of this hormone insulin through disease of the islets of Langerhans, diabetes-mellitus is produced. The chief symptom of diabetes is increase of sugar in the urine. Doctors inject now an extract known as Insulin prepared from the pancreas of healthy animals for the treatment of diabetes-mellitus.

A hormone does not influence directly the endocrine gland from which it originates. On the contrary the active principles secreted by a gland may strikingly influence certain other endocrine glands. For instance, the ovarian follicular hormone does not affect the ovary directly, but exerts its effect upon the secondary sex organs. The ovarian hormone exerts a restraining effect on the anterior pituitary.

The internal secretions or hormones play a very important role in influencing the structure of our body, health, complexion, personality. Each endocrine gland must play its part in perfect tune and harmony with its companion. Then only will there be physiological harmony. Then only will the internal administration or government within the body run smoothly. Then only will you enjoy perfect health and peace.

Chapter III

SOORYA NAMASKAR OR SUN EXERCISES

This exercise is called Soorya Namaskar because it is practised in the early morning hours facing the Sun. Sun is considered to be the deity for health and long life. So in ancient days they practised this exercise daily as routine in their daily spiritual practices. One should practise this at least 12 times by repeating 12 Names of the Lord Sun. This exercise is a combined process of Yoga Asanas and breathing. It reduces abdominal fat, brings flexibility to the spine and limbs and increases breathing capacity; it is easier to practise Asana after doing Soorya Namaskar.

Technique and breathing.

Position No. 1.

Face the sun. Fold the hands. Legs together and stand erect.

Position No. 2.

Inhale and raise the hands. Bend backwards.

Position No. 3.

Exhale and bend forward till the hands are in level with the feet. Bring the head down and touch the knee. In the beginning, knees may be bent slightly to get the head to the knees. After some practice knees should be straightened up and the head should be brought down to the knees.

Position No. 4.

Inhale and take the right leg away from the body. Keep the hands and left foot firm on the ground raising the head up. Left knee should be between the hands.

Position No. 5.

Inhale and hold the air inside. Take the left foot away from the body and raise both knees from the ground. Now rest on the hands and keep the body in a straight line from head to foot.

Position No. 6.

Exhale and bring the body down to the floor. In this position the whole body should not touch the ground. This position is known as Sashtanga Namaskar or eight curved prostration. Only 8 portions of the body come in contact with the floor; viz., two feet, two knees, two hands, chest and forehead. Abdominal region is raised and, if possible, the nose also kept away from the floor, touching with forehead only.

Position No. 7.

Inhale and bend backward as much as possible giving the spine maximum bending.

Position No. 8.

Exhale and lift the body. Keep the feet and heels flat on the ground.

Position No. 9.

Inhale and bring the right foot along with level of hands, left foot and knee should touch the ground. Look up giving a slight bend to the spine. (Same as the Position No. 4.)

Position No. 10.

Exhale and bring the left leg forward. Keep the knees straight and bring the head down to the knees as in third position. (Same as the Position No. 5.)

Position No. 11.

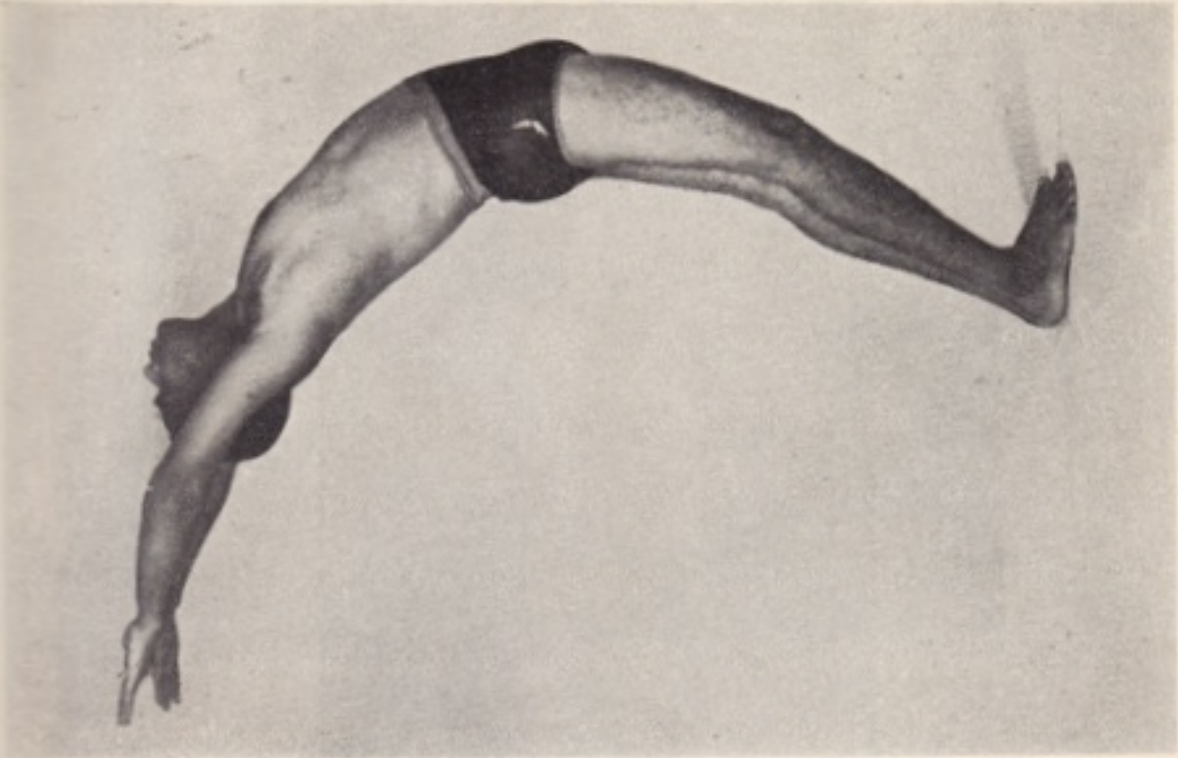
Inhale and bend backward. Raise the hands along with the head as in position No. 2.

Position No. 12.

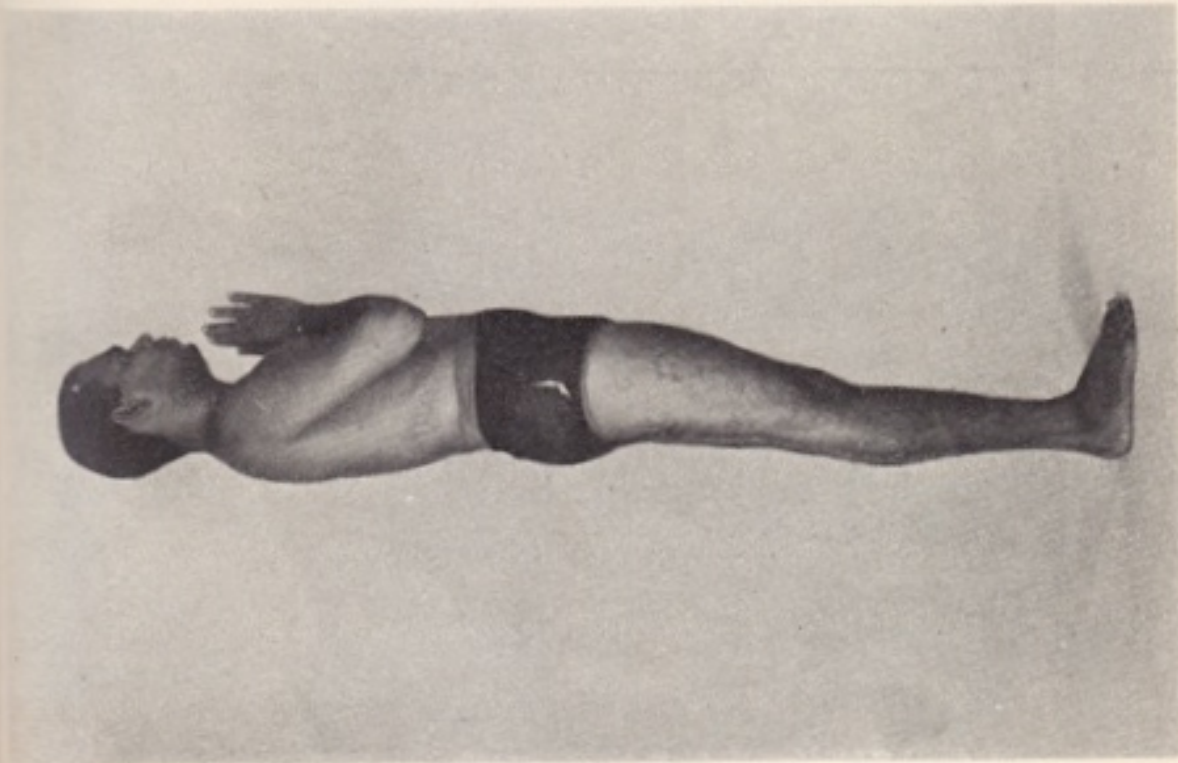
Exhale and leave the hands down and relax.

The above 12 positions make one full round of Soorya Namaskar. Repeat 12 times daily.

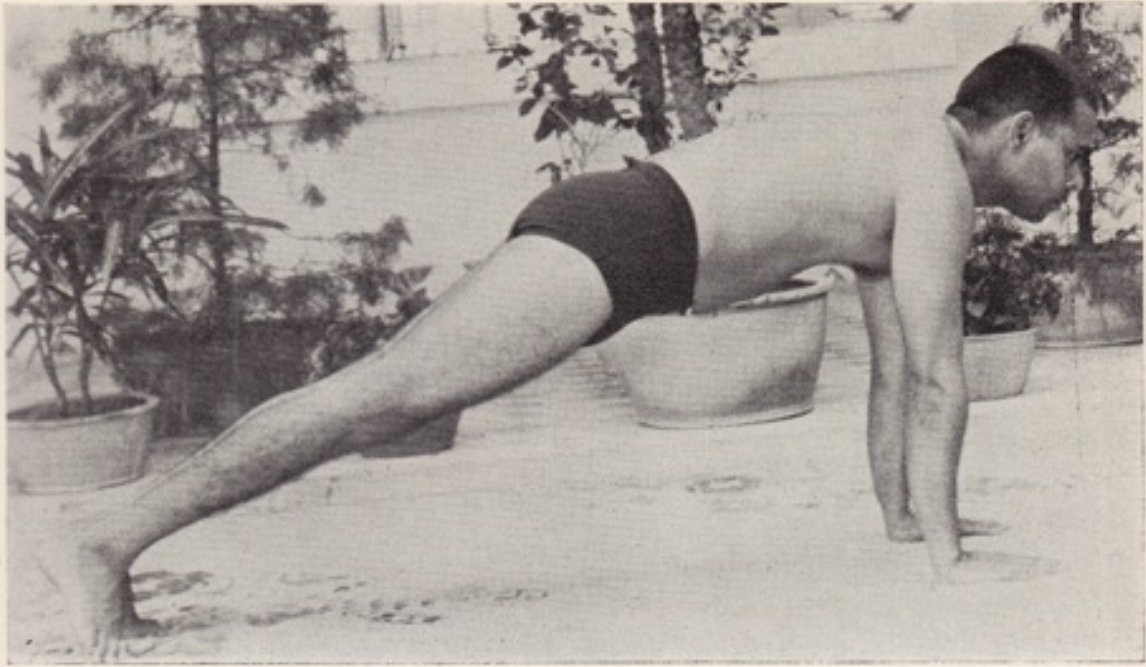
SUN EXERCISE



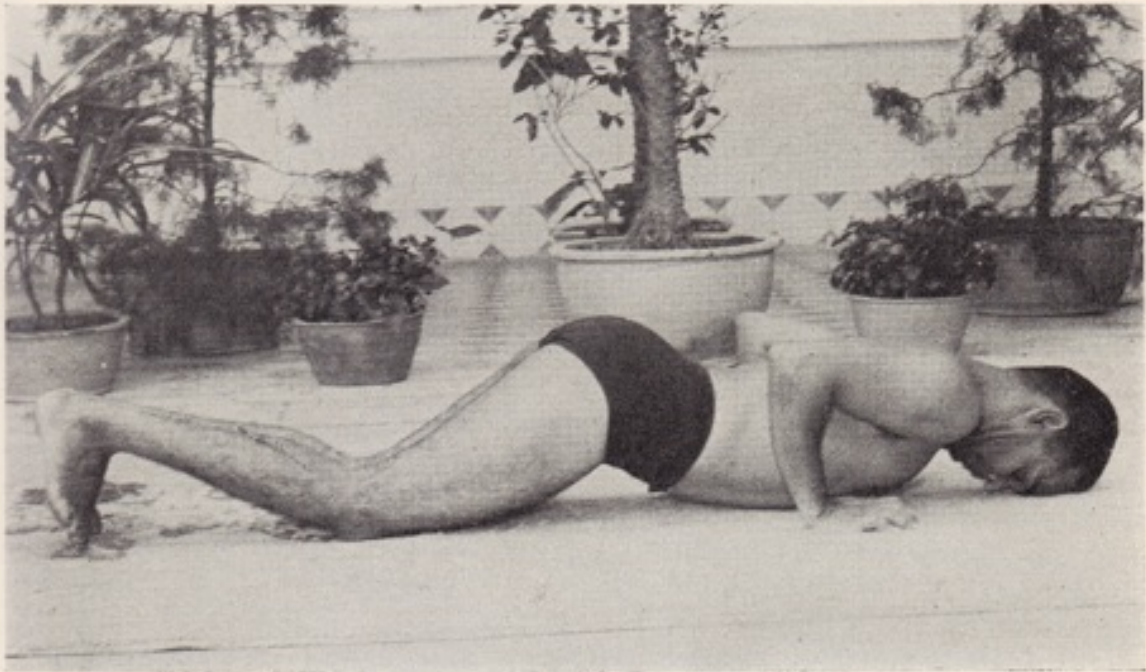
Stage 2



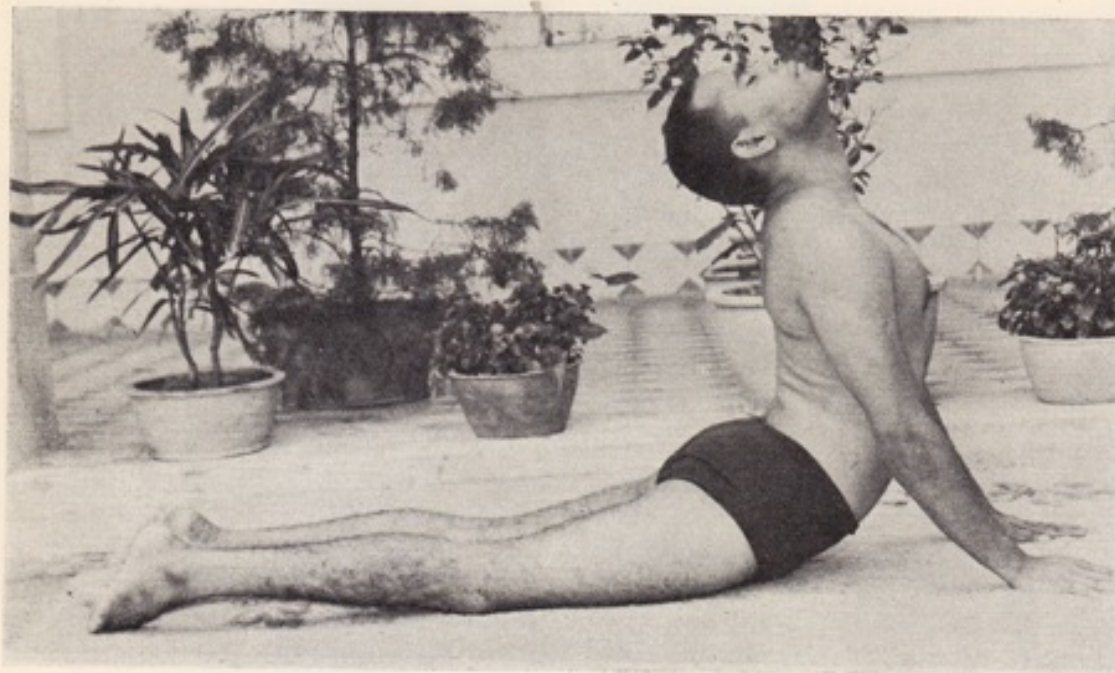
Stage 1



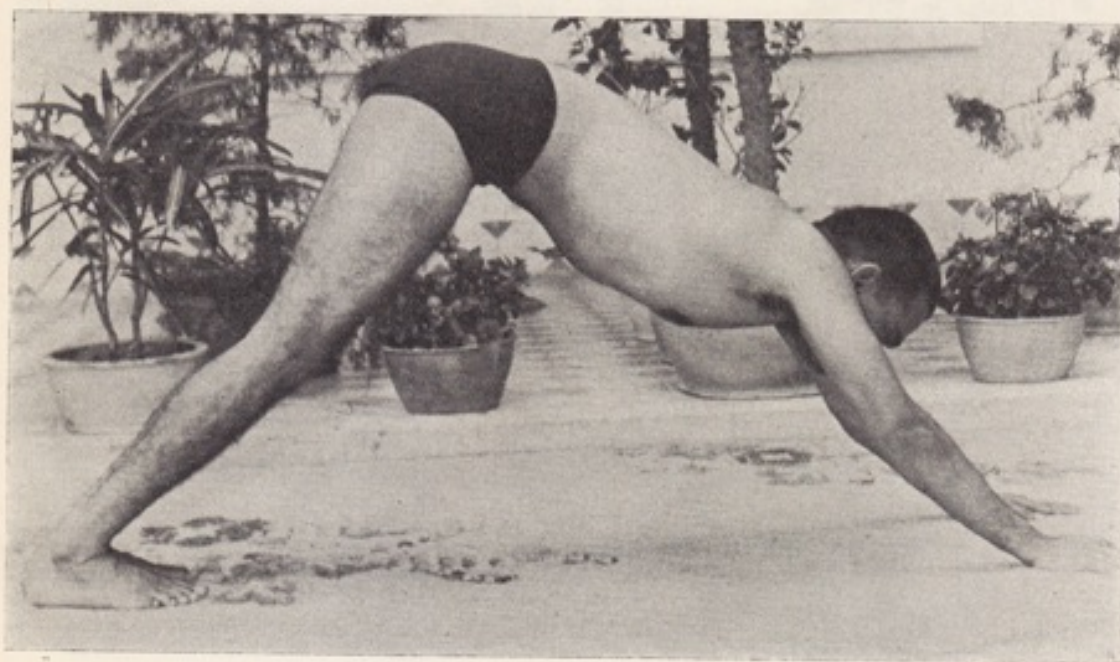
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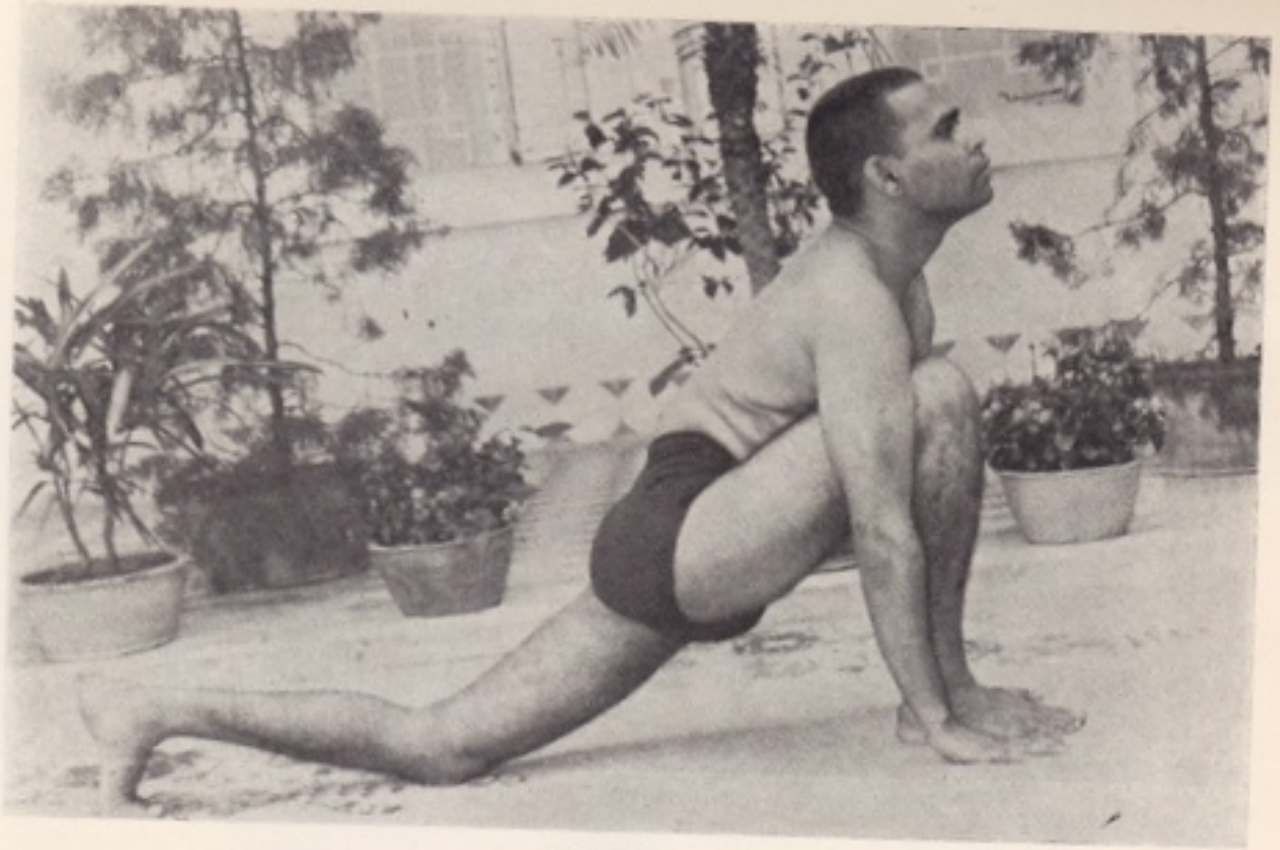
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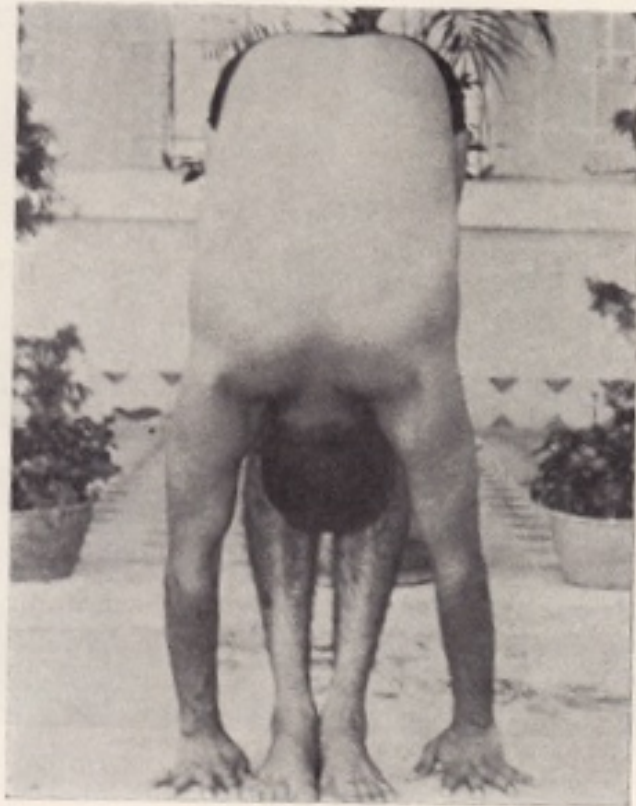
Stage 7



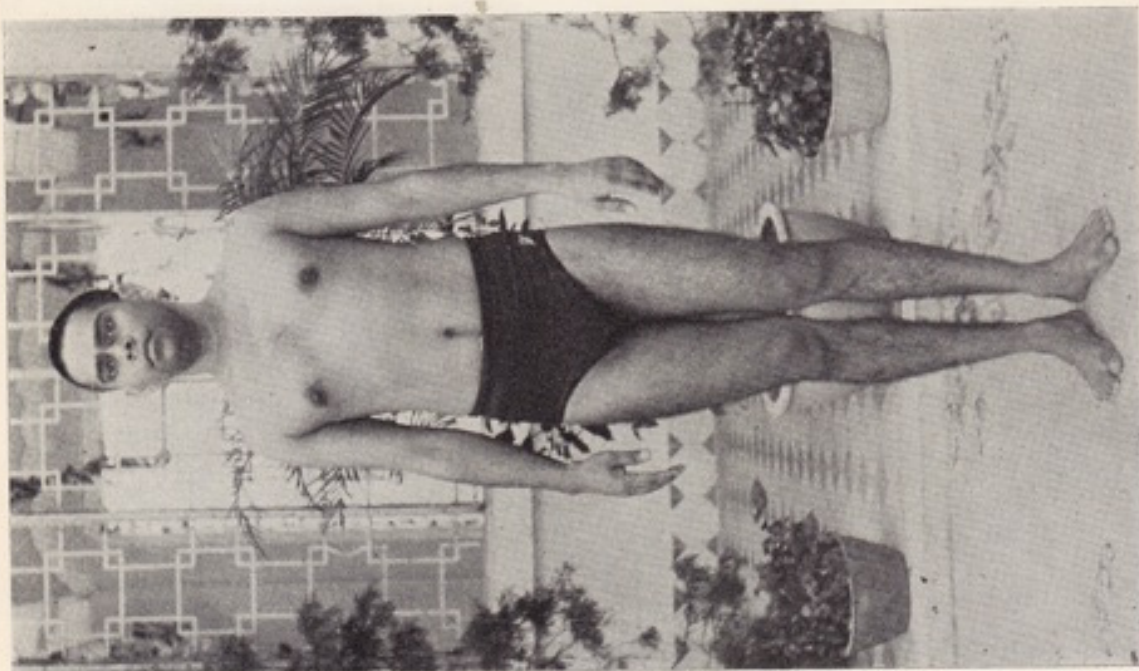
Stage 8



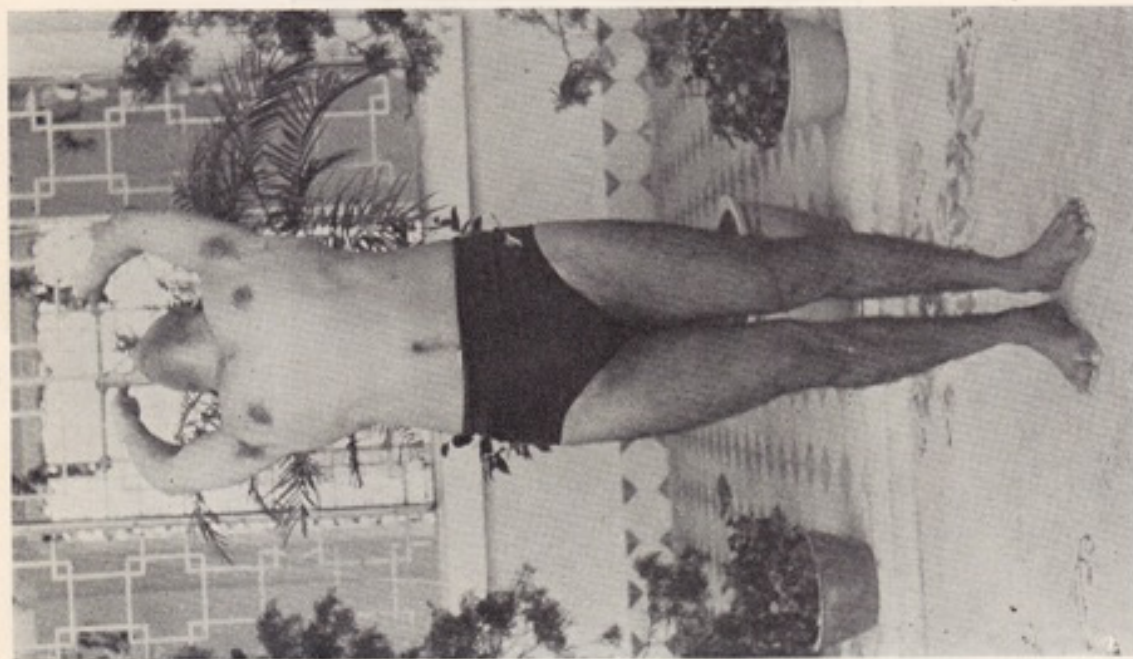
Stage 9



Stage 10



Stage 12



Stage 11

Chapter IV

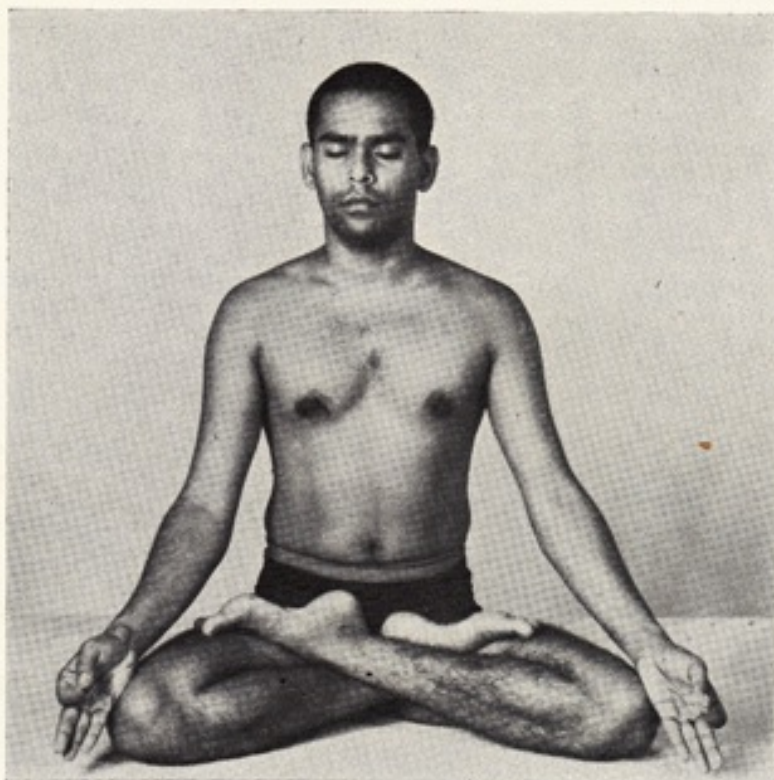
YOGIC EXERCISES

MEDITATIVE POSES

Yogic Culture is divided into eight Angas (limbs or steps), viz., Yama, Niyama, Asan, Pranayam, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Yama is the practice of Ahimsa (non-killing or non-injuring), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy), Aparigraha (abstinence from greed).

Niyama is the practice of Saucha (internal and external purity), Santosh (contentment), Tapas (mortification), Swadhyaya (study of scriptures), Ishwarapranidana (self-surrender). Asan is the third stage. If you want to enjoy the full spiritual benefits of Asans, you must first practise well the first two steps, Yama and Niyama.

PADMASAN



Asans can be divided into two broad divisions, viz., meditative poses and poses for health and strength. According to Yoga Shastras there are four excellent meditative poses: Padmasan, Siddhasan, Swastikasan and Sukhasan.

You must be able to sit in one of these four Asans at a stretch for full three hours without shaking the body. Without securing a steady

Asan, you cannot get on well in meditation. The more steady you are in your Asan, the more you will be able to concentrate and make your mind one-pointed.

Select any one of the four that is suitable to you and sit for fifteen minutes and gradually increase the period to three hours. When you sit in the Asan, keep the head, neck and trunk in one straight line. Do not bend the back.

When you sit for meditation in the Asan, close your eyes and gently concentrate on Trikute (the space between the two eyebrows). Tip of the nose, Anahata Chakra (the lotus of the heart) are other places for concentration.

This is one of the most important poses. When Padmasan is demonstrated, it gives the appearance of a lotus. In Sanskrit Padma means lotus. The two feet on the opposite thighs represent the petals of a lotus.

Amongst the four poses prescribed for meditation, Padmasan comes foremost. It is the best Asan for contemplation. Rishis like Ghernada, Sandilya and others speak very highly of this vital Asan. It is suitable for householders, men and women.

These four Asans, viz., Padmasan, Siddhasan, Swastikasan and Sukhasan, are practised for Japa and meditation. In your meditation room, in front of the picture of your Ishta Devata or Guru, spread a Kusa seat (seat made of Kusa grass) and over this a deer or tiger skin. You can spread a piece of cotton cloth on this deer or tiger skin and then sit for meditation. Or spread on the ground a four-folded blanket and over this a cloth. This also will serve you well.

1. PADMASAN

Sit on this seat and stretch the legs forward. Take hold of the right foot with the two hands, folding the leg at the knee, place the foot on the left thigh. Similarly fold the left leg and place it on the right thigh. Keep the body erect and place the hands between the heels, one over the other. If this is not suitable to you, you can keep the hands on the knees. The left knee or thigh should not be raised from the ground.

These meditative poses are highly suitable for Japa and contemplative purposes. They increase the digestive fire and give good appetite, health and happiness. They remove rheumatism. They keep the wind, bile and phlegm in proper proportions. They purify and strengthen the nerves of the legs and thighs. They are suitable for keeping up Brahmacharya (celibacy).

2. SIDDHASAN

"Siddha" means an adept in Sanskrit. Since great adepts used this Asan, it bears the name Siddhasan. Siddhas (perfected Yogins) speak very highly of this Asan. Young Brahmacharins and those who attempt to get established in celibacy should practise this Asan.

Sit on your seat. Stretch the legs forward. Bend the left leg at the knee and place the heel at the soft portion of the perineum, the space between the anus and the scrotum. Then fold the right leg and place the heel against the pubic bone or just above the genitals. The genitals should be nicely arranged in such a manner that no pressure is felt. Keep the body erect and place the hands as in Padmasan.

3. SWASTIKASAN

"Swastika" means 'prosperous' in Sanskrit. This Asan brings prosperity and success to the practitioner. Hence this pose bears the name Swastikasan.

Sit on the seat. Stretch the legs. Bend the right leg at the knee and keep the heel against the groin of the left thigh so that the sole will be lying in close touch with the thigh. Similarly bend the left leg and set it against the right groin. Insert the toes of the left leg between the right calf and thigh muscles. Now you will find the two feet between the calf and thigh muscles. This is very comfortable for meditation. Keep the hands as instructed in Padmasan.

4. SUKHASAN

An easy, comfortable sitting posture for Japa and meditation is Sukhasan, the important point being the head, neck and the trunk should be in a line without any curve.

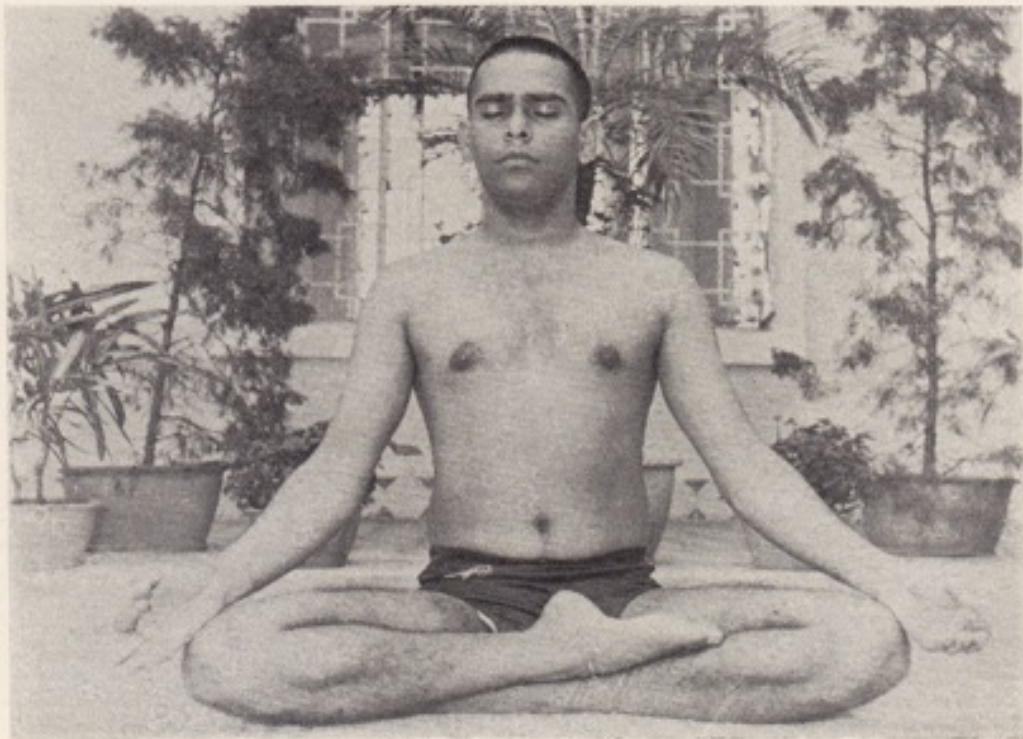
5. VAJRASAN

Kneel down. Sit on the heels. Spine erect.

SIDDHASAN

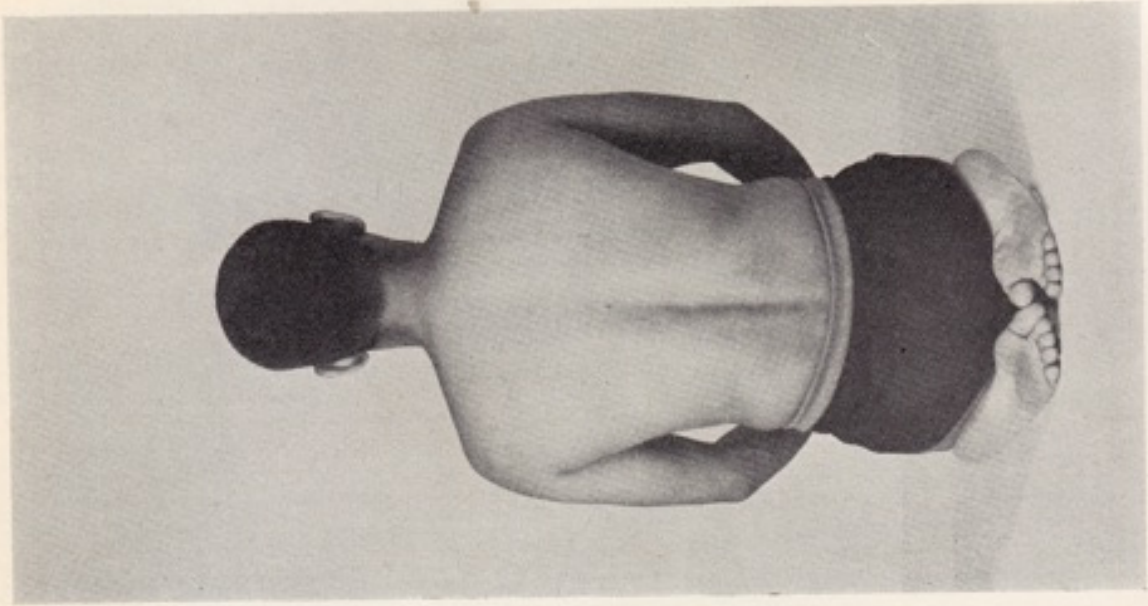


Stage 1

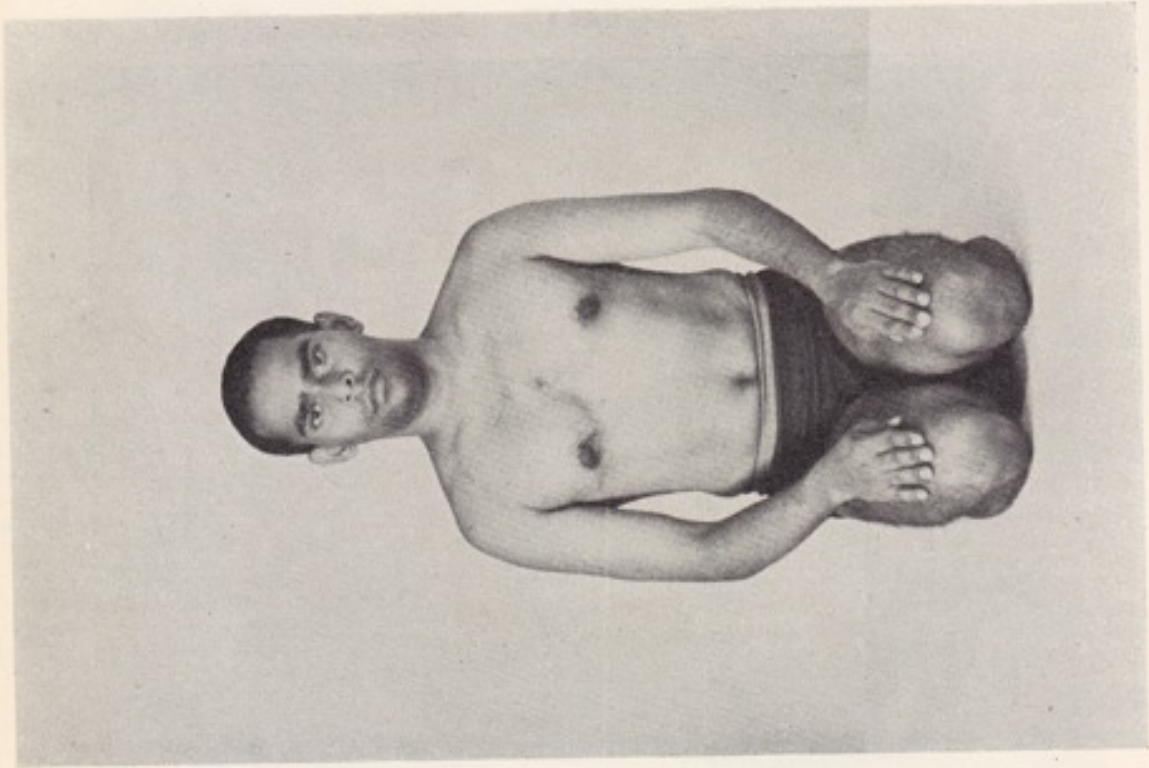


Final Stage

VAJRASAN



Back View



Front View

Chapter V

CULTURAL POSES

SIRSHASAN

In Sanskrit 'Sirsh' means head. As you have to stand in this Asan on your head in a topsy-turvy manner, it is called Sirshasan. The practitioner gets the maximum physical and spiritual benefits through this Asan. So this is the most important one. This is the King of all Asans.

Technique

The skull has to bear the whole weight of the body in this Asan. You should use a soft cushion or a four-folded blanket. Spread the blanket on the ground. Sit on the knees. By interweaving the fingers make a finger-lock and keep it on the carpet in such a way that the locked hands serve as a vertex and the two elbows as the base enabling the forearms to balance the body. The top of the head may be supported from behind by the finger-lock while doing this Asan.

Then keep the top of your head on the carpet close to the finger-lock. The parietal (frontal) portion of the top of the head should be placed on the carpet and not the portion nearer to the forehead. This will help you to keep the spine erect in this Asan. If the portion nearer to the forehead is used, the spine will suffer a curvature in balancing the whole body.

Now the knees are brought close to the body and the toes allowed to touch the ground for balancing. When the trunk is sufficiently thrown back you can slowly remove the toes from the ground. Slowly raise the legs high up in the air till the whole body becomes erect. Stand in the Asan for five seconds only and gradually increase the period to 15 minutes. In well-regulated systematic Asan exercises, even five minutes will be quite sufficient to derive the maximum benefits.

Always breathe through the nose only and never through the mouth. In the beginning for a few days you will find difficulty in breathing through the nose. In a few days, this trouble will pass away.

In learning the Asan in the above manner, you will not require any help. You yourself can learn the method of balancing by repeated attempts. Instead of a finger-lock method, you can keep the palms of your hands on the ground one each side. You will find this quite easy. When you have learnt to balance the whole body, you can take to the finger-lock method. Or you can take the help of a wall. Try to remove the legs from the wall. Or you may ask a friend to support the legs and to leave you when you have learnt how to balance yourself.

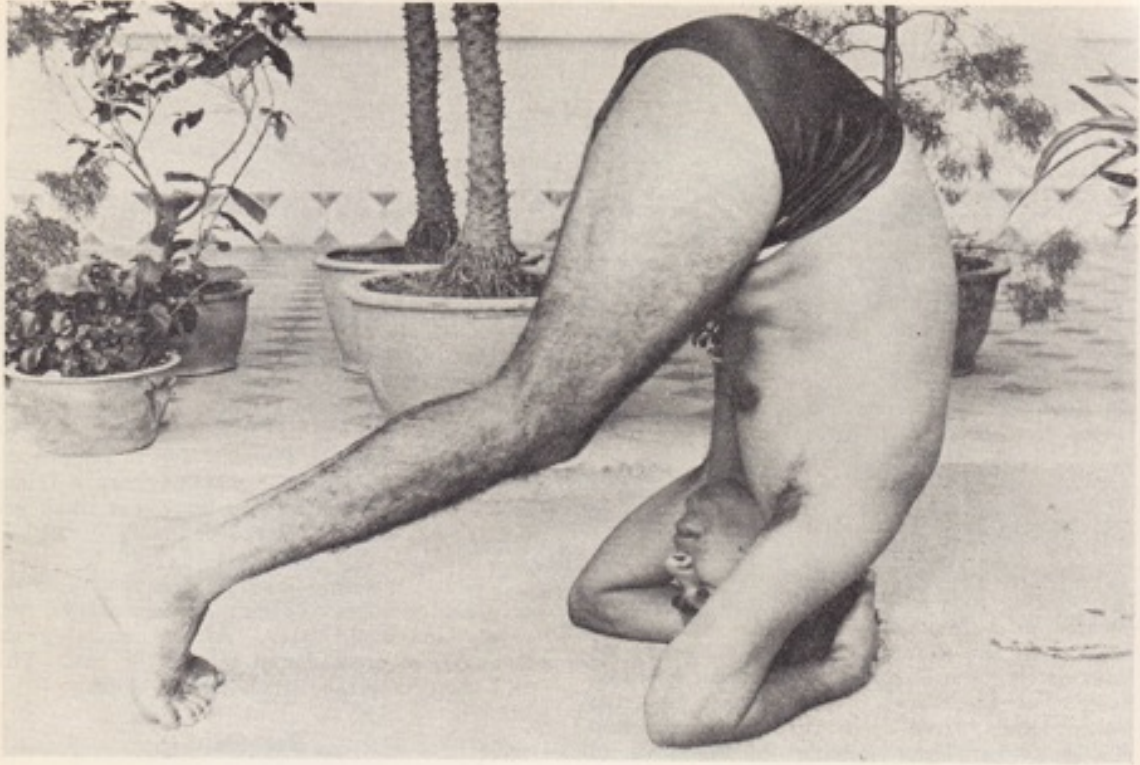
Bring the legs slowly to the ground to the original position. Lower the legs very, very slowly and avoid jerks. After completing the Asan stand erect for a minute or two. This will harmonise the circulation of blood.

Benefits

In this pose the whole body is inverted. Owing to gravitation, the arch of the aorta, the common carotids, the innominate and the sub-clavian are flooded with rich arterial blood and in this Asan alone can the brain draw a rich supply of pure blood. The importance of the brain, the root of all nerves, can be very well understood from the Chapter on "Brain and Nerves." The 12 pairs of cranial nerves, the spinal cord, the 31 pairs of the spinal nerves and the sympathetic system get sufficient nourishment. All the defects of the nerves, eyes, nose, throat and ears are completely removed by the practice of this Asan. It is a powerful nerve tonic. The whole nervous system is nourished and toned. All the venous blood that has to rise against gravity is now helped by the force of gravity and so the veins and their valves get ample rest. So this Asan will serve as a cure for varicose-veins.

This is extremely useful in keeping up Brahmacharya. The seminal energy is transmuted into Ojas Shakti. This is called sex-sublimation. Persons suffering from wet-dreams or spermatorrhoea will derive very great benefit from this Asan. The seminal energy is converted into Ojas Shakti and flows towards the brain so that it may be stored up as a spiritual force which may be used for a contemplative purpose, Dhyana.

SIRSHASAN



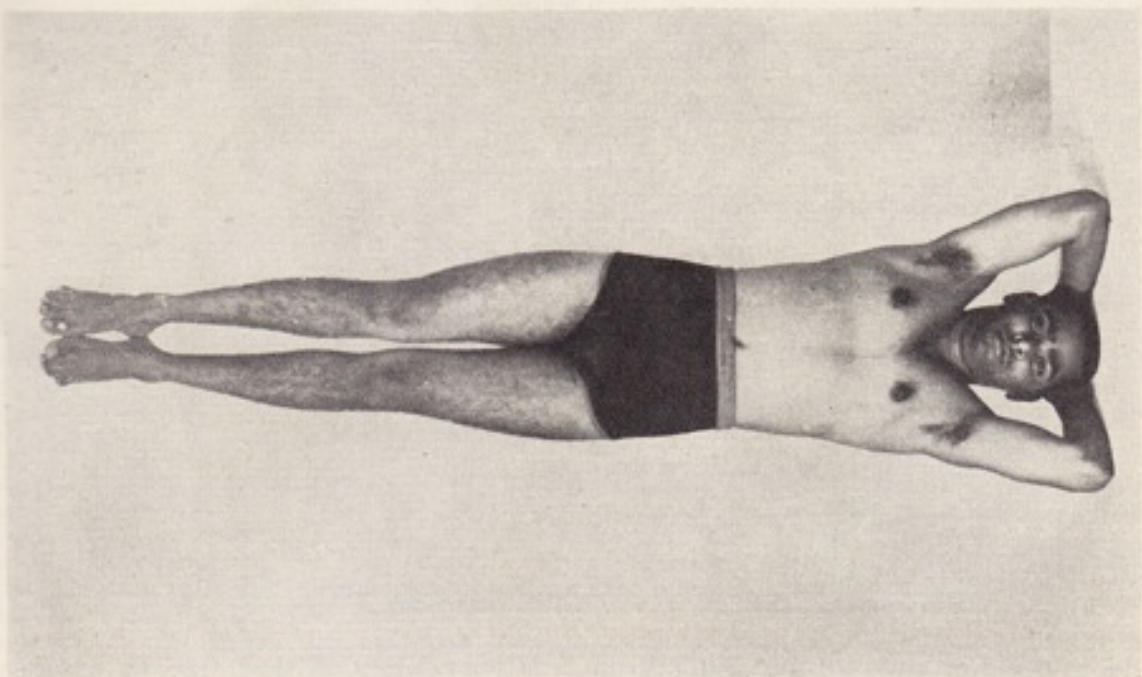
Stage 1



Stage 2



Variation, Oordhwa Padmasana

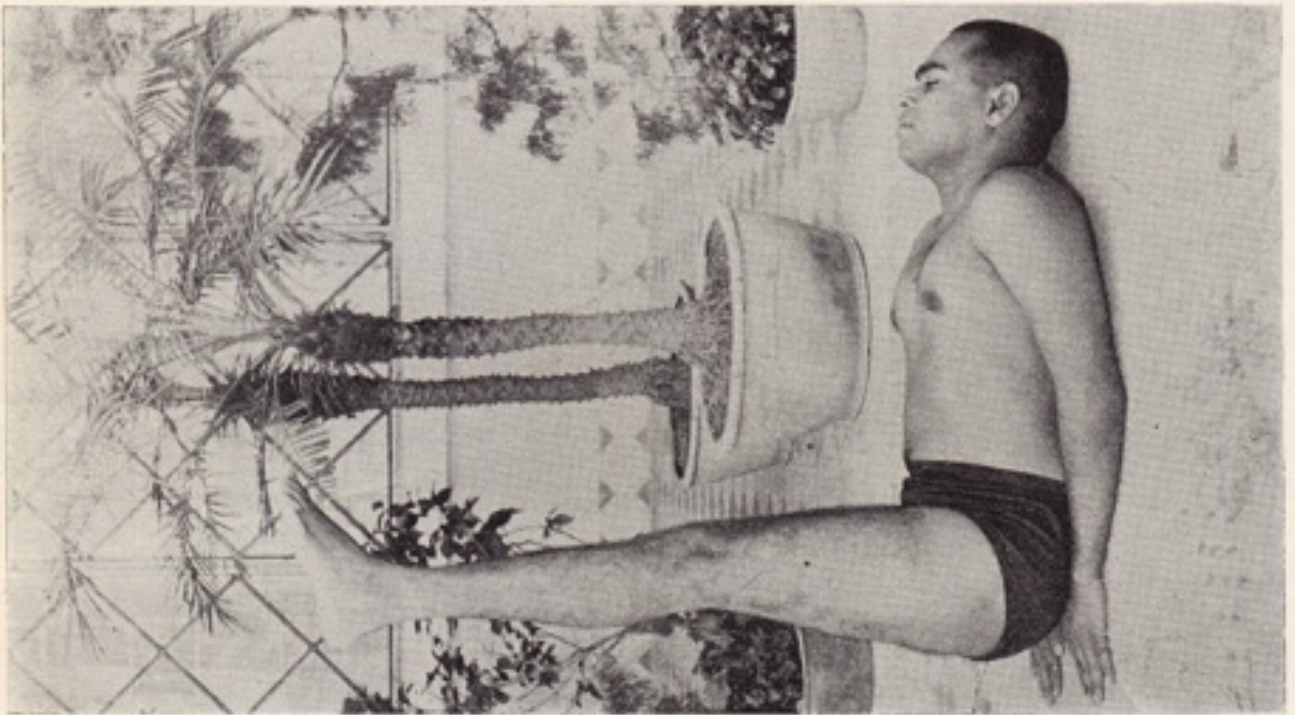


Final Stage.

SARVANGASAN



Stage 2



Stage 1

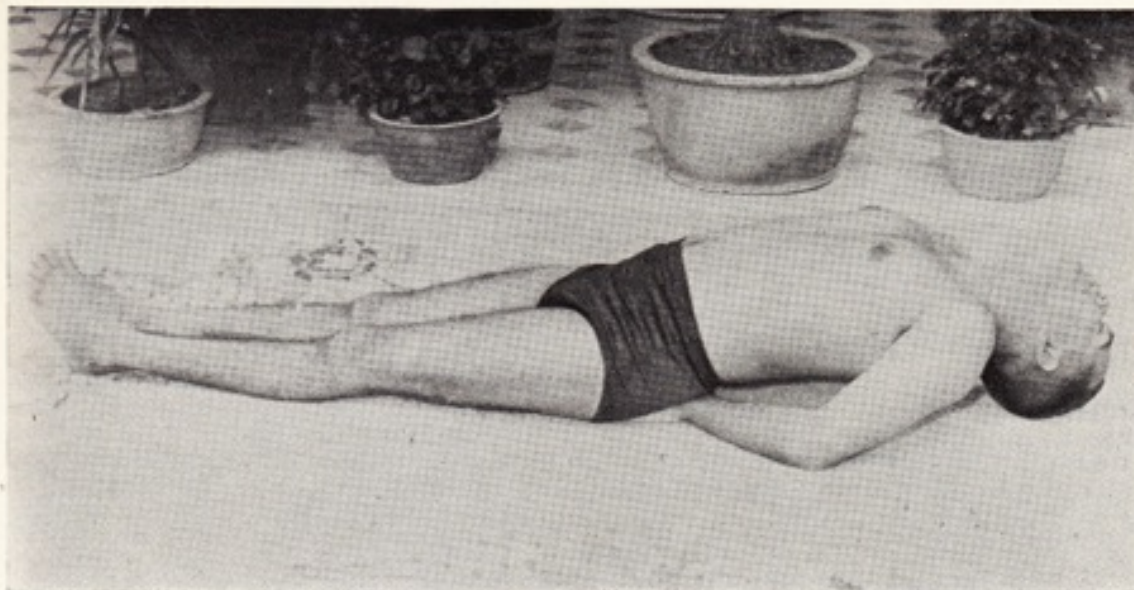
Sirshasan invigorates, energises and vivifies. It is a panacea (cure-all) for all human ailments. It is a powerful blood purifier. It cures all the diseases of the liver, spleen, lungs and the genito-urinary system. It cures renal colic, deafness, diabetes, piles, pyorrhoea and constipation. The digestive power will improve. This Asan is best suited for ladies also. Many uterine and ovarian diseases are cured. It is not advisable for ladies to practise this Asan during the monthly periods and pregnancy.

Sterility disappears. Memory improves admirably. Lawyers, occultists and thinkers will

find it extremely useful. If you observe the breath, you will notice that it becomes finer and finer. This Asan leads to natural Pranayam and help in awakening Kundalini Shakti that lies dormant in the Muladhara Chakra or basal Lotus.

SARVANGASAN

"Sarvang" means 'all parts'. So the very name suggests that this pose is concerned with all the parts of the body. It is one of the unique poses which rejuvenates the whole system.



Matsyasan For Beginners

Technique

Spread a thick blanket on the ground. Lie quite flat on the back. Slowly raise the legs. Lift the trunk, hips and legs quite vertical. Rest the elbows on the ground firmly and support the back with the two hands. Raise the legs till they become quite vertical. Press the chin against the chest. This is the chin-lock. While you perform this Asan the back of the neck, the posterior part of the head and the shoulders should touch the ground. Breathe slowly and concentrate on the thyroid glands which are situated in the neck. Do not allow the body to shake to and fro. When the Asan is over, lower the legs very slowly and with elegance. Avoid jerks. Do the Asan very gracefully. In this Asan the whole weight of the body is thrown on the shoulders. You can do this Asan twice daily, morning and evening. Immediately after performing this Asan, you

will have to do Matsyasan to derive the full benefit from it. Remain in this Asan for two minutes and gradually increase the period to 30 minutes.

Just as Sirshasan is intended to tone up the whole nervous system, this easy and wonderful Asan is intended to promote the secretion of the thyroids and through it the whole body and all its functions. The thyroids are the most important glands of the endocrine system. In this Asan the thyroid glands receive a rich supply of blood. Healthy thyroids mean healthy functioning of the circulatory, respiratory, alimentary and genito-urinary systems of the body.

This Asan is a good substitute for modern thyroid treatment. It cures the dreadful leprosy. The patient will have to live on milk during the whole period of treatment. Milk helps the thyroid to secrete its juice in sufficient

quantity to help the economy of nature in its restorative function and regeneration. If the patient takes a sun bath morning and evening, his recovery will be hastened.

This Asan keeps back the ravages of old age and keeps a man young always. Those young men who have lost weight of the testes owing to bad habits like masturbation, sexual excess, etc., will retain the weight by this Asan. They can combine Uddiyana Bandha and Nauli Kriya and regain their lost vitality and energy.

Sarvangasan cures dyspepsia, constipation, appendicitis, other gastro-intestinal disorders and varicose-veins. It supplies a large quantity of blood to the spinal roots of the nerves. It is this Asan which centralises the blood in the spinal column and nourishes it beneficially. Except through this Asan, the nerve roots cannot receive an adequate blood supply. It keeps the spine quite elastic. Elasticity of the spine means everlasting youth. It prevents the bones from early ossification (hardening). Sarvangasan awakens Kundalini and augments the digestive power.

MATSYASAN

In Sanskrit "Matsya" means a fish. A person can float on water without swimming for a long time like a fish.

Technique

Spread a blanket on the ground and sit on it with the legs stretched. Bend the right leg and place the heel on the left hip joint. Again bend the left leg and place the heel on the right hip joint. This is Padmasan or foot-lock.

Then lie on the back. The Padmasan should not be raised from the ground. Rest the elbows or hands on the ground. Now lift the trunk and head. Rest the top of the head on the ground by bending the back well and throwing the neck well behind. Then catch hold of the toes. This is Matsyasan. It is performed immediately after Sarvangasan. Remain in this Asan for 2 or 3 minutes.

Those fatty persons who find it difficult to form a foot-lock, may simply bend the legs at the knees and so practise it.

Benefits

This Asan relieves the cramp and stiffness in the neck caused by Sarvangasan. Matsyasan naturally massages the congested parts of the neck and shoulders. In Sarvangasan the neck is bent well forwards whereas in Matsyasan the neck is bent backwards.

In Matsyasan also the thyroids and parathyroids receive plenty of blood. The waist, the back and the neck will grow strong. In this Asan the practitioner can breathe freely and deeply, as the larynx or wind-box and trachea or windpipe are thrown open widely. The apices of the lungs which are located just behind and above the clavicular bone or collar bone in common parlance, receive a proper amount of fresh air and a sufficient supply of pure oxygen. The cervical and upper dorsal nerves are nourished with a good quantity of blood and so toned up properly. The endocrine glands, and the pituitary and pineal glands that are located in the brain are also stimulated and toned up. These glands play a vital part in the physiological functioning of the various systems of the body. In this pose the abdominal muscles are exercised. So this Asan removes constipation and massages the abdominal viscera or organs.

HALASAN

On completion this pose gives the exact appearance of a plough. 'Hala' means a plough.

Technique

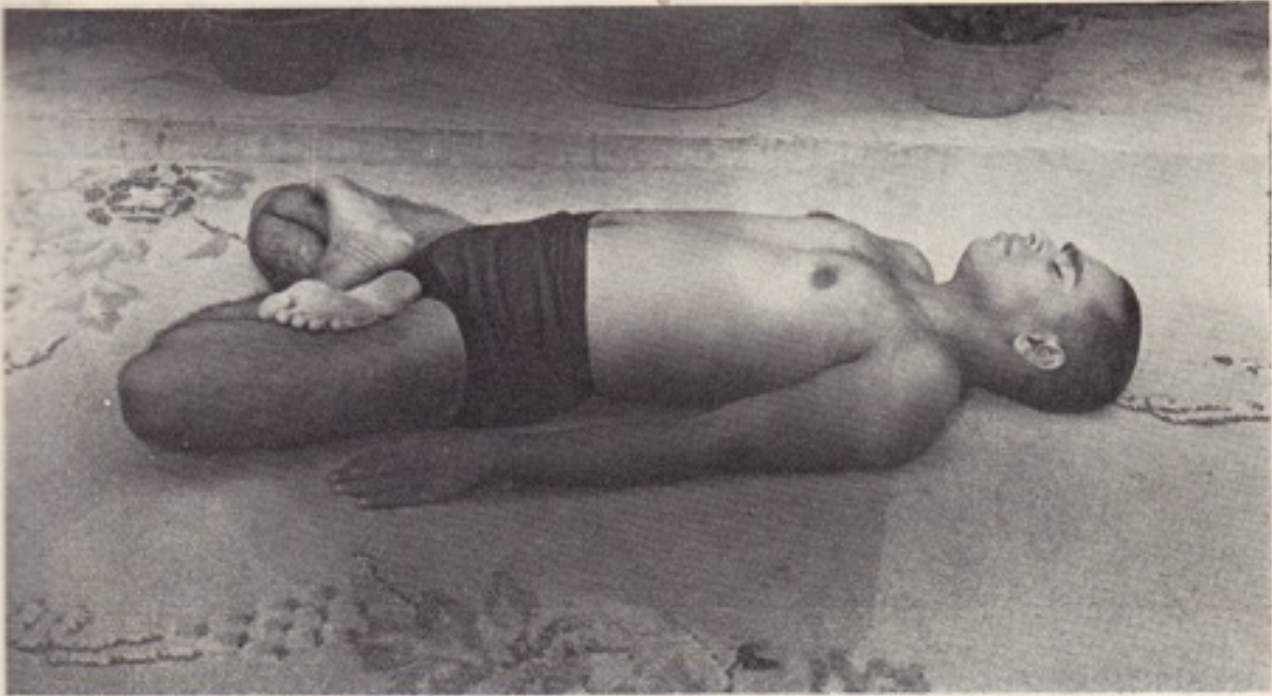
Lie flat on your back on a carpet. Keep the two hands near the thighs, the palms towards the ground. Without bending the legs, slowly raise them higher up. Do not raise the hands but raise the hips and the lumbar part of the back also and bring down the legs still the toes touch the ground beyond the head. Keep the knees quite straight and close together. The legs and thighs must be in one straight line. Press the chin against the chest. Breathe slowly through the nose. This is Halasana. Remain in this Asan for two minutes. Then slowly raise the legs and bring them to the original position of lying on the ground flat.

There is a better variety of this Asan. When the toes reach the ground, remove the hands and catch hold of the toes. The pose can be repeated 3 to 6 times with advantage. For attaining spiritual benefits, the pose should be maintained for a long time at a stretch.

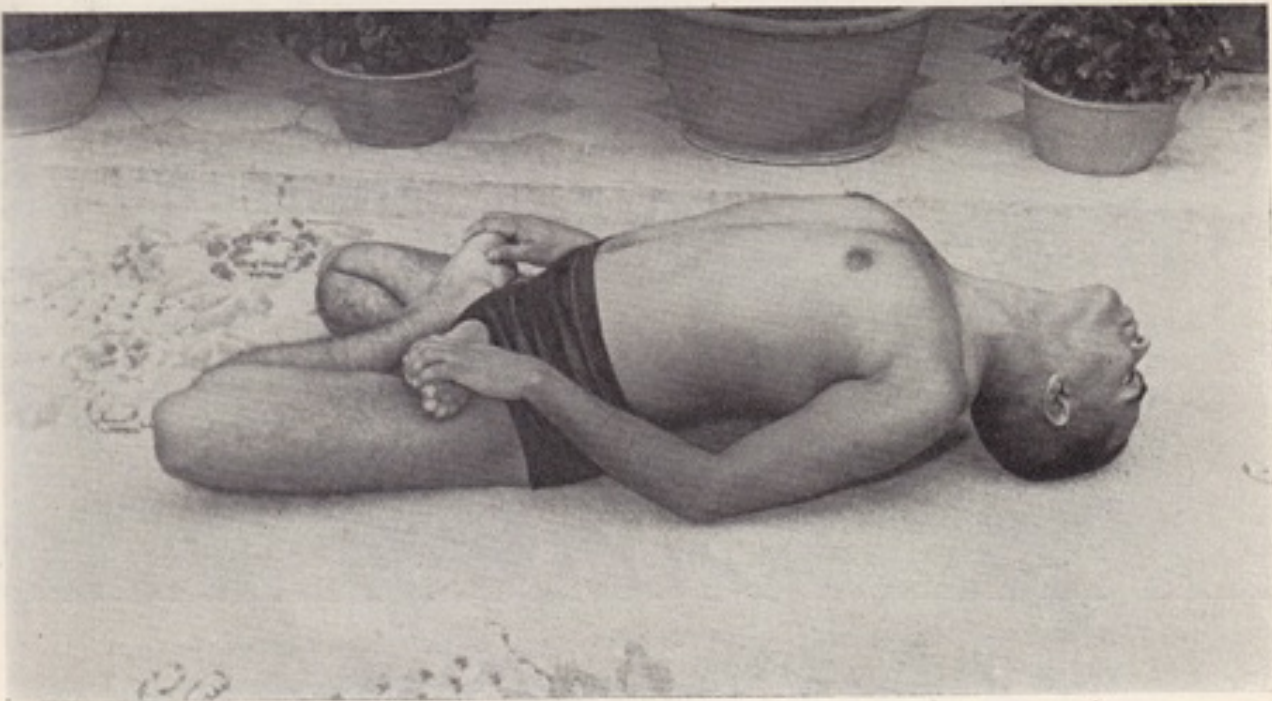
Benefits

In Bhujang, Salabh and Dhanurasan the deep and superficial muscles of the back are contracted and relaxed, but in Halasan these muscles are fully stretched and relaxed. These muscles of the back are responsible for the healthy condition of the spine. The abdominal muscles contract vigorously and become very strong. The whole spine is steadily pulled posteriorly. Every vertebra and ligament that

MATSYASAN

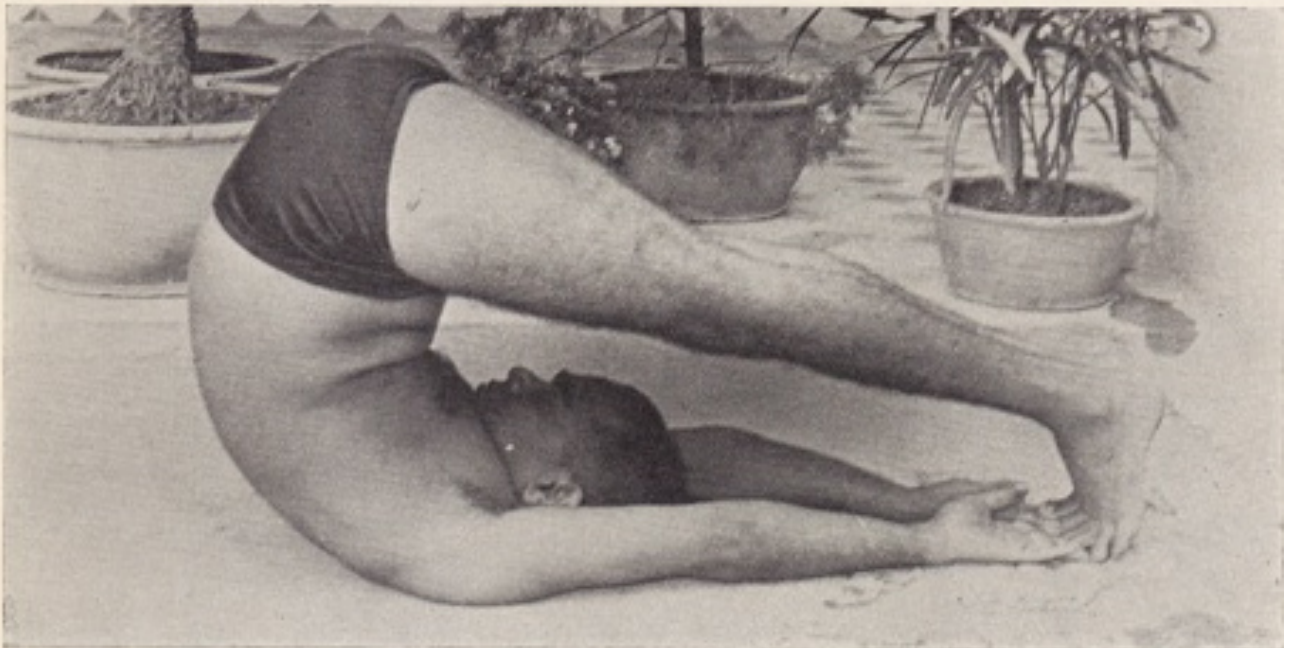


Stage 1



Final Stage.

HALASAN



Variation

is attached to it receive plenty of blood and become healthy. All the 31 pairs of spinal nerves and the sympathetic system are well nourished by a copious blood supply and so are toned up. This Asan prevents the early ossification of the vertebral bones. He who practises this Asan is very nimble, agile and full of energy. Various sorts of myalgia, lumbago, sprain in the neck, neuralgia, etc., are cured. Obesity or corpulence and habitual or chronic constipation, gulma (chronic dyspepsia), liver and spleen complaints are also cured.

PASCHIMOTTANASAN

Lie flat on the back (supine) on the carpet. Keep the legs and thighs fixed to the ground. Stiffen your body. Slowly raise the head and chest and assume a sitting pose. Now exhale and bend yourself further till you are able to catch hold of your toes. You may even bury your face between the knees. Remain thus for 5 seconds and then slowly raise the body and resume the supine position. You should now inhale. Repeat this Asan 3 or 4 times.

Benefits

This is an excellent Asan. It makes the breath flow through the Brahma Nadi or Sushumna Nadi and rouses the gastric fire. All the abdominal muscles get vigorously contracted. This is a powerful abdominal exercise. This Asan stimulates the abdominal viscera such as the kidneys, liver, pancreas. It cures piles and diabetes. This Asan is a good preventive of nocturnal emissions. It is a very good Asan for stretching the posterior muscles of the body. The hamstring muscles at the back of the knees are strengthened. The epigastric nerves, the bladder, the prostate, the lumbar nerves and the sympathetic are all toned up and kept in a sound condition. The spine becomes elastic and thereby perennial youth is established. Halasan and Paschimottanasan bend the spine anteriorly in a perfect manner.

BHUJANGASAN

When this Asan is fully done, it gives the appearance of a hooded cobra. The raised trunk, neck and head, represent the hood. Hence the significant name.

Technique

Lie down on the blanket face downwards. Relax all the muscles completely. Place the palms below the corresponding shoulders on the blanket. Raise the head and upper portion of the body slowly just as the cobra raises its hood. Bend the spine well. Do not raise the body

suddenly with a jerk. Raise it little by little so that you can actually feel the bending of the vertebrae one by one and the pressure travelling downwards from the cervical, dorsal and lumbar regions and lastly to the sacral regions. Let the body from the navel downwards to the toes touch the ground. Retain the posture for a minute and slowly bring down the head little by little. You may repeat the process 6 times.

Benefits

All the Western physical culturists unani- mously acclaim the importance of rendering the spine supple and elastic. Elasticity of the spine means health, vitality and youth to the individual. The deep and superficial muscles of the back are well toned up. This pose relieves the pain of the back that may have been caused by overwork. The abdominal muscles are pulled and thereby strengthened. The intra-abdominal pressure is increased to a very high degree and so constipation is removed. All the abdominal viscera are toned up. Every vertebra and its ligaments are pulled backwards and they get a rich blood supply. It increases bodily heat and destroys a host of ailments. It gives good appetite.

Bhujangasan is particularly useful for ladies in toning up their ovaries and uterus. It is a powerful tonic. It will relieve amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea, leucorrhoea and various other utero-ovarian troubles.

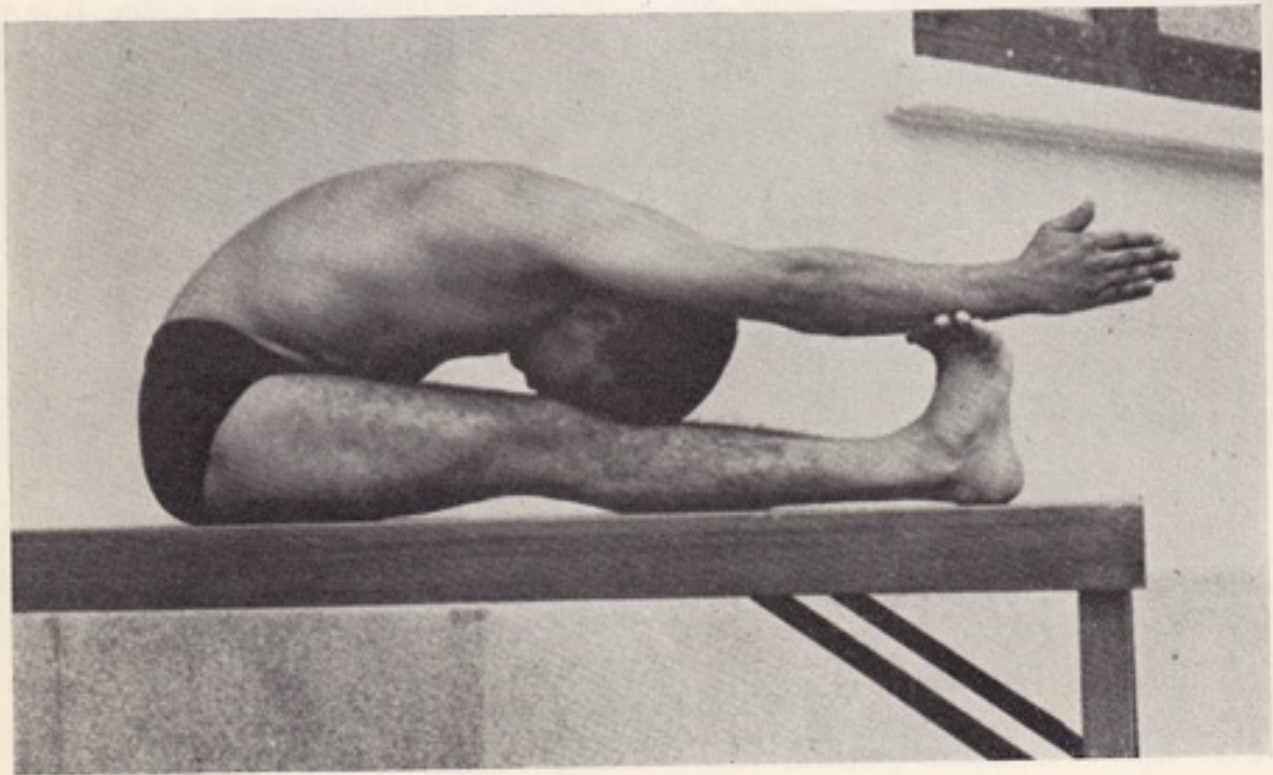
SALABHASAN

"Salabha" means a locust in Sanskrit. When the pose is demonstrated, it gives the appearance of a locust with its tail raised.

Technique

Lie prone (on the face) on the blanket and keep the hands alongside the body, palms facing upwards. Rest the chin on the ground by raising the head a little higher up or rest the chin, the mouth and the nose on the ground. Now inhale slowly. Stiffen the whole body and raise the legs high. The knees should be kept straight. The sacrum too should be raised a little along with the legs. Now the chest and the hands will feel the burden of the legs. Keep the thighs, legs and toes in a straight line. Remain in the pose for 20 seconds and slowly bring down the legs, and then exhale slowly. Repeat the process 3 or 4 times according to your capacity. Do not go so far as to induce fatigue. Bhujangasan exercises the upper part of the body and Salabhasan the lower extremity of the body.

PASCHIMOTTANASAN

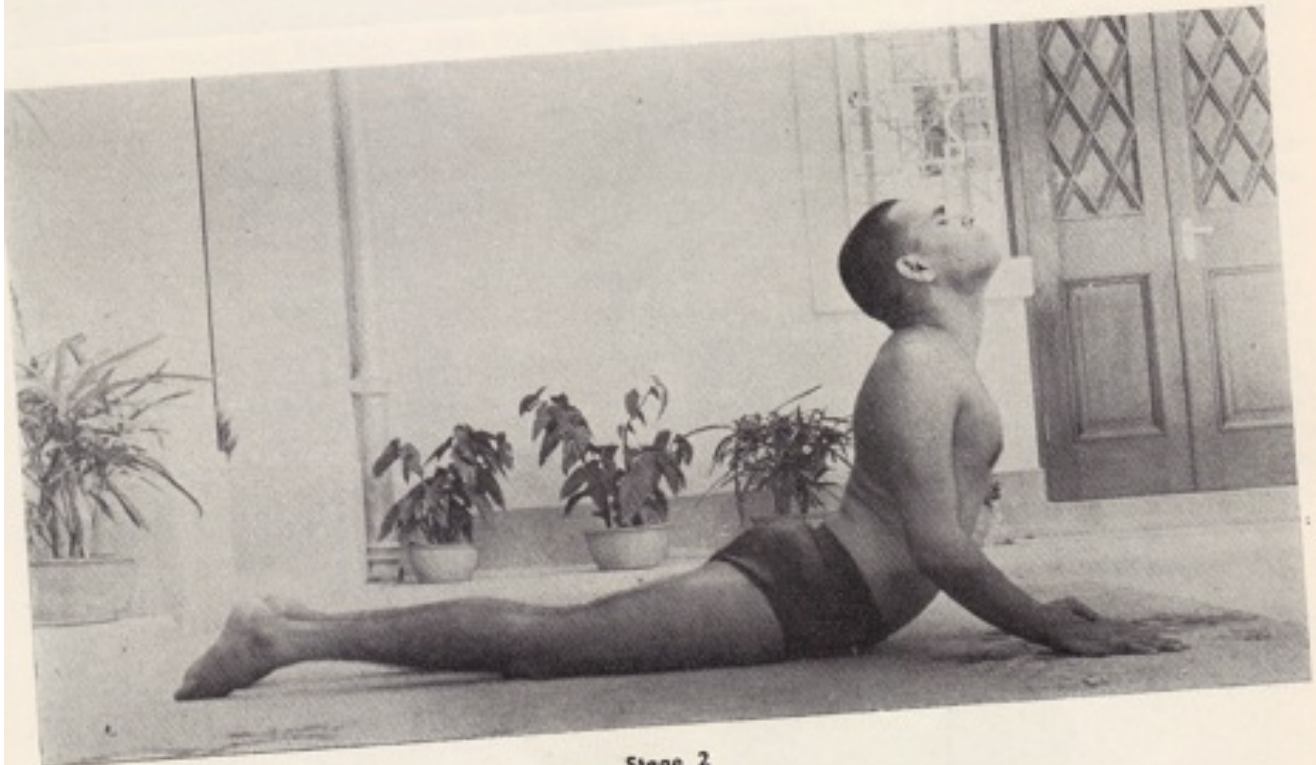


Variation

BHUJANGASAN

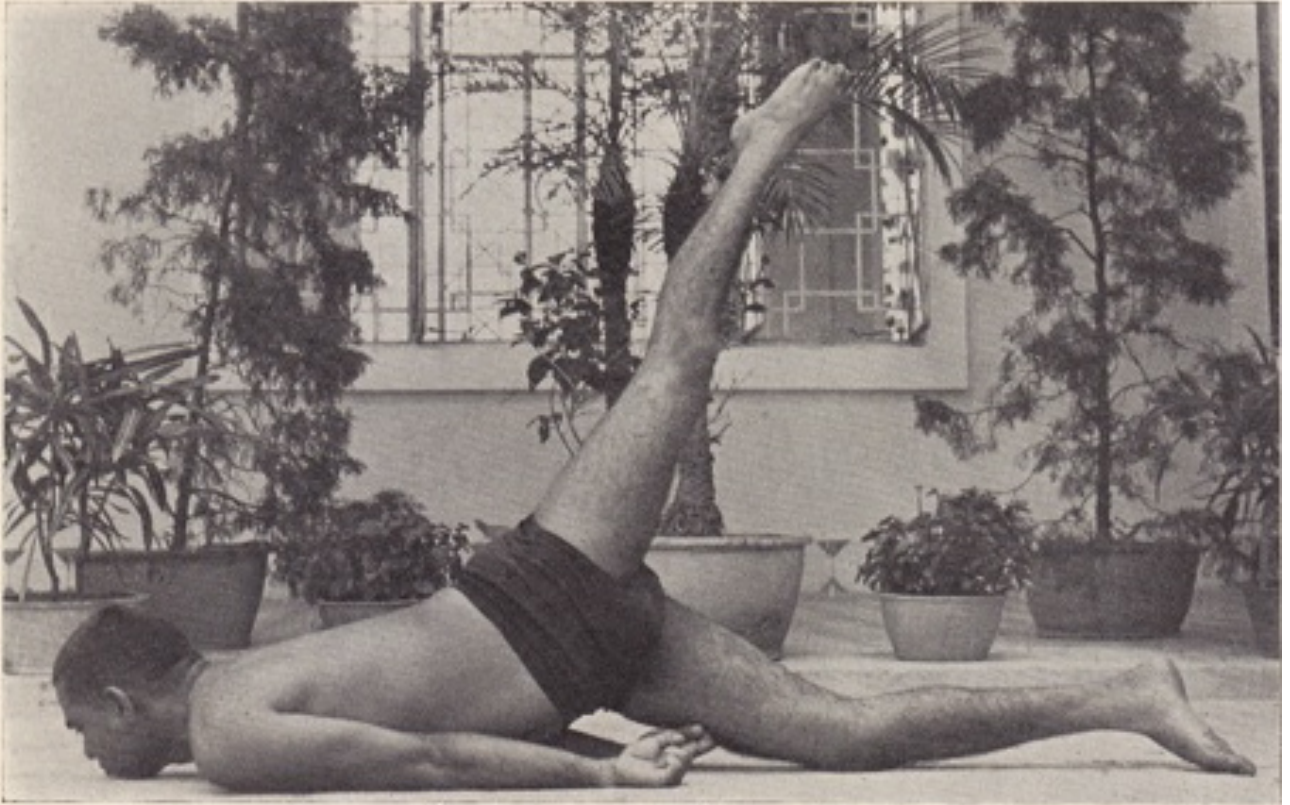


Stage 1



Stage 2

SALABHASAN



Half Pose



Full Pose

Benefits

The intra-abdominal pressure is increased to a very high degree. It relieves constipation and tones up the liver, pancreas and kidneys. All the abdominal muscles are strengthened to a very great degree. The vertebra of the lumbar and the sacrum bone also get toned up. The sacral, coccygeal and the lower part of the lumbar regions receive plenty of blood and so become healthy and strong. Owing to the Kumbhak done during this pose, the lungs expand and become strong.

DHANURASAN

When this Asan is performed, it gives the appearance of a bow. 'Dhanur' means a bow. The stretched hands and legs represent the string of a bow; and the body and the thighs represent the bow proper.

Technique

Lie prone on the blanket. Relax the muscles. Now bend the legs over the thighs. Catch hold of the right ankle with the right hand and the left ankle with the left hand firmly. Raise the head, body and the knees by tugging at the legs with the hands so that the whole burden of the body rests on the abdomen and the spine is nicely arched backwards like a bow.

Maintain the pose for a few seconds and then relax the body. You can either make a retention or breathe normally. Even weak persons can do this Asan easily. To perform the Asan a sudden movement of the body is to be avoided. Be steady. Do not jerk the body.

Dhanurasan complements or supplements Bhujangasan. We can say it is a combination of Bhujang and Salabha Asan with the addition of catching the ankles. Bhujang, Salabha and Dhanur Asans form a valuable combination. They always go together. They form one set of Asan. Dhanurasan should be repeated 3 or 4 times.

Benefits

The very appearance of the pose gives one the idea that it is a combination of Bhujangasan and Salabhasan. All the benefits of Salabha and Bhujang Asans can be derived to a greater degree in Dhanurasan. The back muscles are well massaged. This removes constipation and cures dyspepsia, rheumatism and gastro-intestinal disorders. It reduces fat, energises digestion, invigorates appetite and relieves congestion of the blood in the abdominal viscera. This Asan is highly suitable for ladies.

ARDHA-MATSYENDRASAN

"Ardha" means half. This is half of Matsyendrasan. This Asan takes its name from the Rishi or Yogi Matsyendra, who first taught this Asan to the students of Hatha Yoga.

Technique

Spread a blanket on the ground and sit on it with the legs stretched out. Bend the right leg at the knee and set the heel against the perineum. Do not allow the heel to move from this space. Now bend the left leg at the knee and with the help of the hands, arrange the foot to rest on the ground by the external side of the thigh. Then passing the right hand over the left knee, catch hold of the left foot firmly by the right hand. The left knee is now placed at the right axilla. In order to have more mechanical advantage for twisting the spine, the left hand is now swung back and the right thigh is caught. Now steadily pull and twist the spine. To help the spine to twist evenly all through, the neck too is turned towards the left shoulder. Keep the chest erect and forwards. Remain in this pose for 5 seconds. Then release the hands and legs. Repeat the same process, twisting the spine on the right side by changing the limbs, thus accomplishing the twist on both sides. This will complete the whole spinal twist.

Benefits

Ardha-matsyendrasan keeps the spine elastic and well massages the abdominal organs. Lumbago and all sorts of muscular rheumatism of the back muscles are cured. The spinal nerve-roots and the sympathetic system are toned up. They draw a good supply of blood. This is very good Asan for constipation and dyspepsia. In this Asan every vertebra is rotated on both sides. The ligaments too that are attached to the vertebra get this movement and so receive a rich supply of blood. All the spinal nerves are toned up. The Asan gives lateral movement to the spine to a great extent.

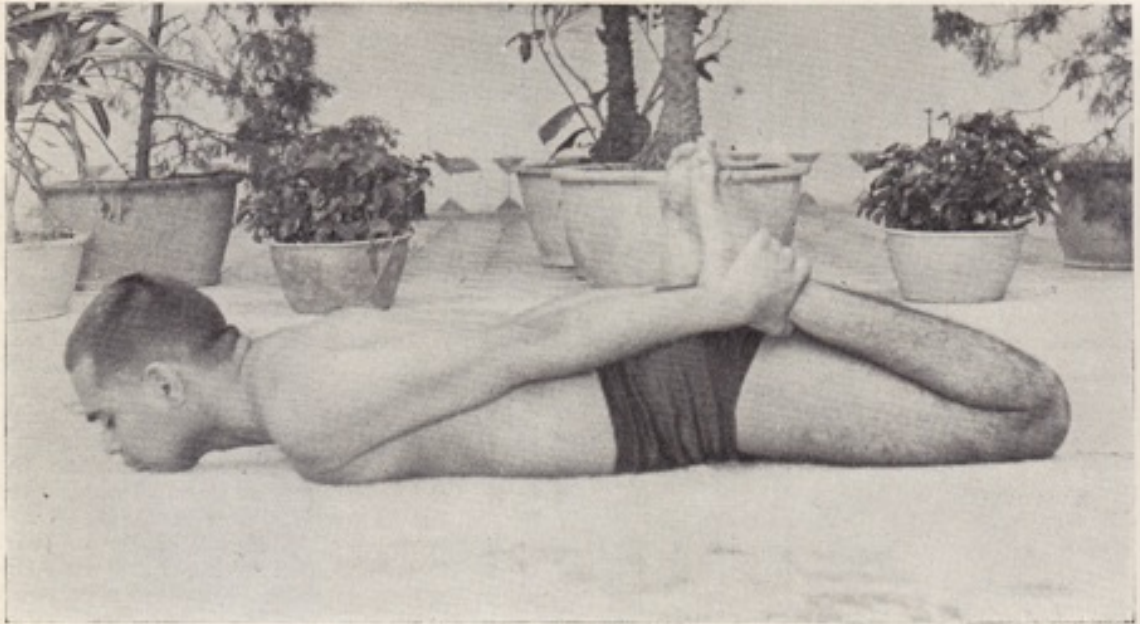
MAYURASAN

In Sanskrit "Mayur" means peacock. When this Asan is exhibited the body resembles a peacock which has spread out its bundle of feathers at the back.

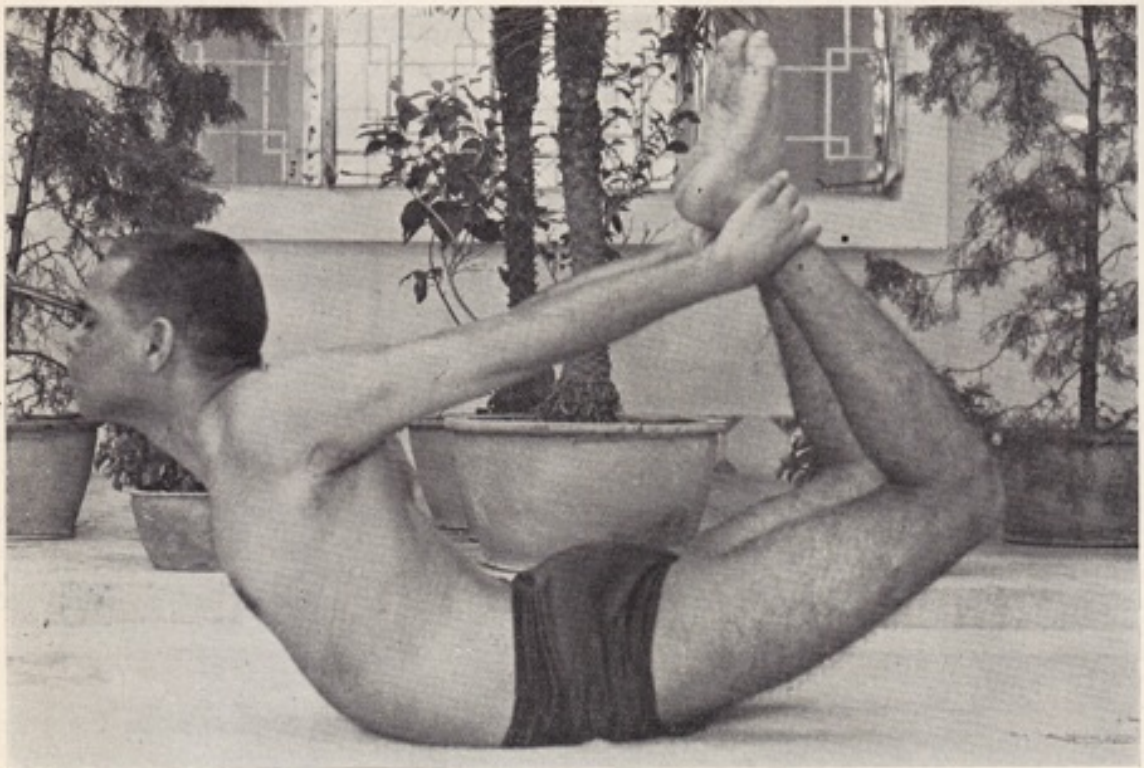
Technique

Kneel on a blanket. Join the two arms together and rest them on the ground, palms turned down. You may curve the fingers slightly. This facilitates balancing. Keep the

HAHA... DHANURASAN



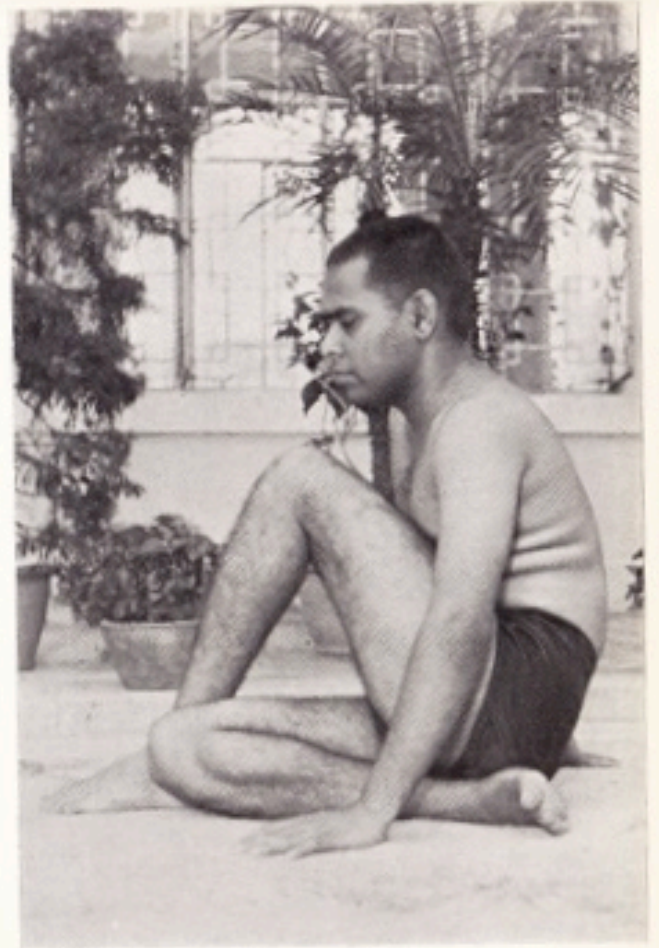
Stage 1



Stage 2



Step 1



Step 2

ARDHA—MATSYENDRASAN



Final Stage—Back View



Front View

hands firm. Now you have steady and firm forearms for supporting the whole body. Bring down the abdomen slowly against the conjoined elbows. Support your body on your elbows. Then stretch your legs. Inhale and raise the legs together from the ground. Raise the legs straight on a level with the head, parallel to the ground. Keep the posture steady for 5 seconds and then rest the toes on the ground and exhale. This is Mayurasan. Rest for a few minutes.

Benefits

This is the best Asan known for all stomach disorders. Owing to the pressure of hands on the stomach below the navel, the abdominal aorta is partially compressed and the blood that is thus checked is directed towards the digestive organs. The liver, pancreas, stomach, kidneys are toned up. The intra-abdominal pressure is increased to a very high degree and the abdominal viscera is toned up. Mayurasan awakens the Kundalini Shakti.

Mayurasan has got a charm of its own. It braces you up quickly. It serves like a hypodermic injection of adrenalin or digitalin. This is a wonderful Asan for improving digestion. Sluggishness of the liver or hepatic torpidity disappears. This one Asan can give you maximum benefit in a minimum space of time; a few seconds daily are enough.

PADAHASTHASAN

This can be styled as "Standing Paschimottanasan." In Sanskrit "Pada" means 'feet' and "Hastha" means 'legs'.

Technique

Stand erect. Raise your hands over your head and inhale deeply. Then exhale slowly and while exhaling bend the body till the hands reach the toes and the nose touches the knees. The raised hands should be in contact with the ears all throughout, even while bending the body. After a little practice you will be able to bury the face between the knees and keep the palms firmly on the ground. Remain in this pose for 5 seconds. Then slowly raise your body and come to the standing position. When you raise your body, you should inhale slowly. Repeat this pose 4 times.

Benefits

All the benefits of Paschimottanasan are derived from this Asan. The spine becomes supple and is lengthened. It is also an excellent exercise for increasing your height. The

adipose tissue on the abdomen will disappear. This Asan is very suitable for ladies for reducing any excess of fat and for developing a graceful figure. You will feel much invigorated after performing this Asan. The body will be rendered light.

TRIKONASAN

"Trikona" means triangle. Since this Asan when demonstrated gives the appearance of a triangle, it bears the name Trikonasan.

Technique

Stand erect keeping the feet two or three feet apart. Now stretch your arms wide on the sides in a line with the shoulders. The palms should fall downward. Bend to the left slowly and touch the left toes with your left hand. Remain thus for 5 seconds and slowly return to your standing position. Do not bend your legs or hands when you bend down or when you get up. From the standing position bend to your right next and touch your right toes with the right hand. Remain for 5 seconds in this position and then come back to your original standing position. Repeat thus 4 times. This is Trikonasan.

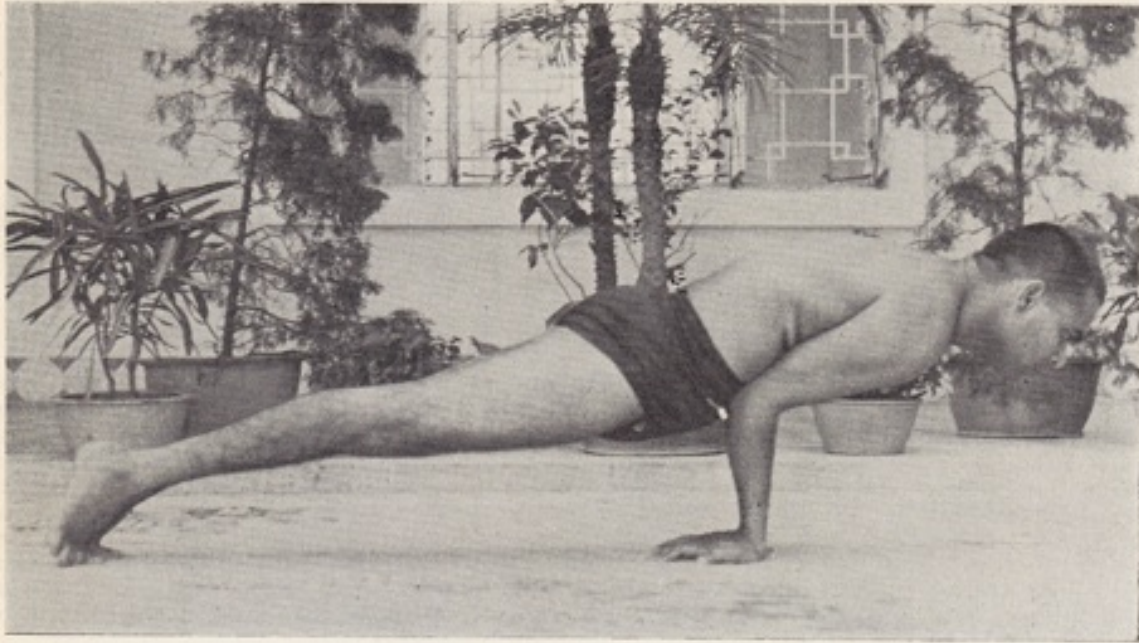
Benefits

Trikonasan tones up the spinal nerves and the abdominal organs, increases peristalsis of the bowels and invigorates the appetite. Constipation is relieved. The body becomes light. Those who suffer from a shortening of the legs due to a fracture of the hip or thigh bone or bones of the leg will be benefited by this Asan. The trunk muscles are contracted and relaxed and stretched. The spine is bent laterally on both sides and the muscles are fully stretched. This Asan keeps the spine very elastic.

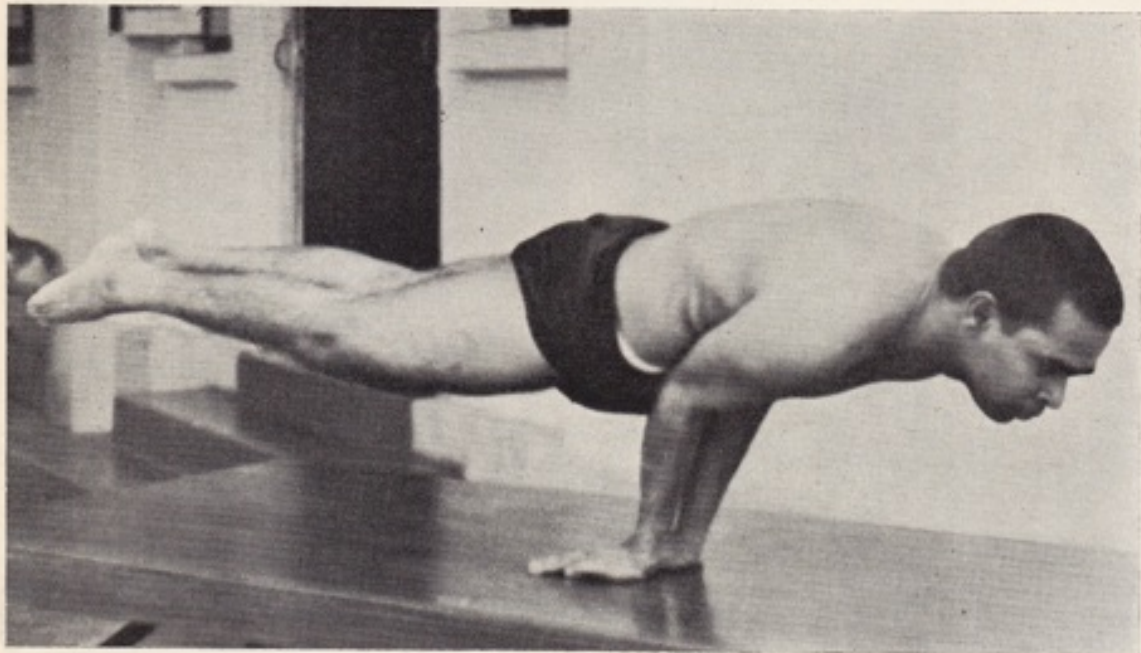
YOGA MUDRA

Sit on a blanket. Form a foot-lock (Padmasan) by placing the right foot over the left thigh and the left foot over the right thigh. Slowly bend forward and touch the ground with the forehead. Take your hands to the back and catch hold of the right hand wrist by the left hand. As you bend down, exhale slowly. Remain in this pose for 10 seconds and then assume the original sitting posture and inhale slowly. Repeat the Mudra six times. This is very useful for rousing the Kundalini Shakti. This pose removes all kinds of disorders of the abdominal viscera.

MAYURASAN

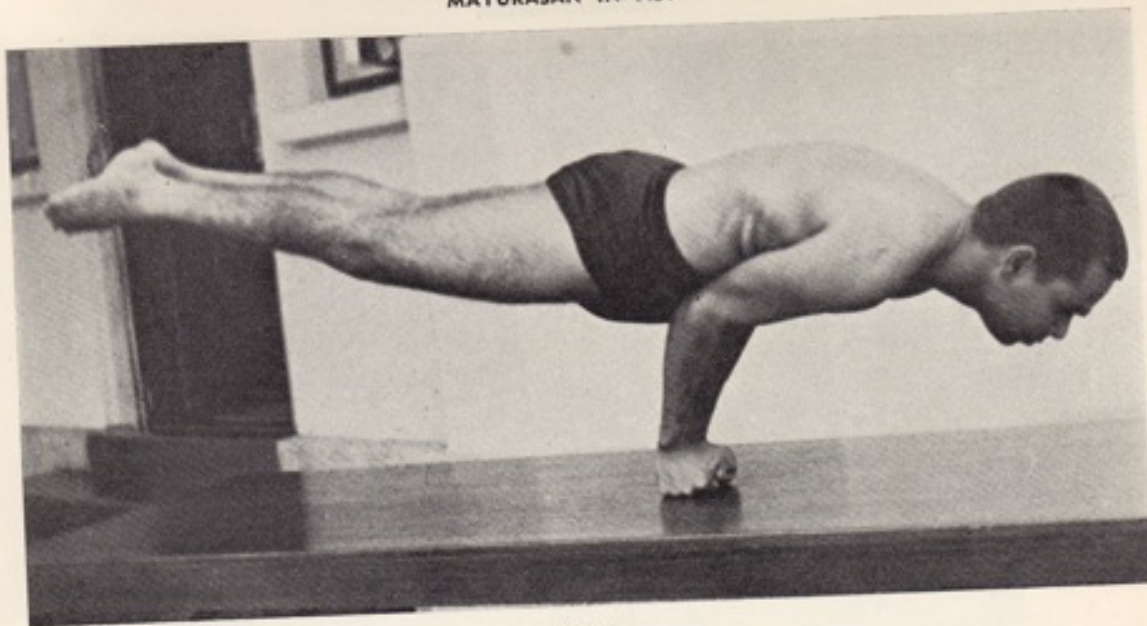


Stage 1



Stage 2

MAYURASAN IN FIST



Variation



Lolosan

PADAHASTHASAN

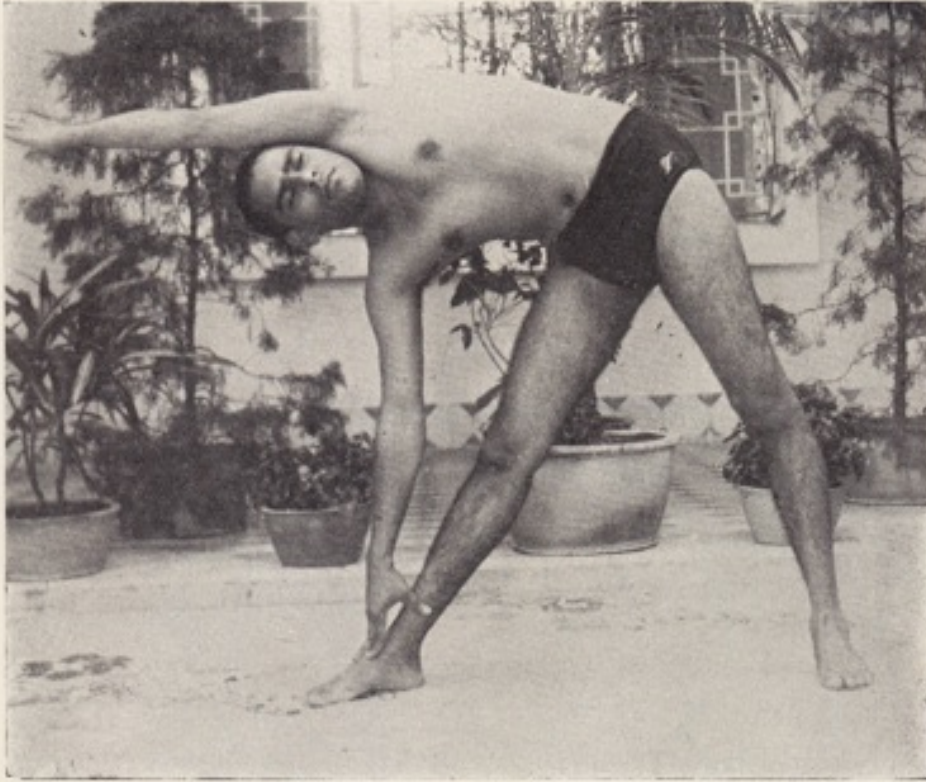


Stage 2

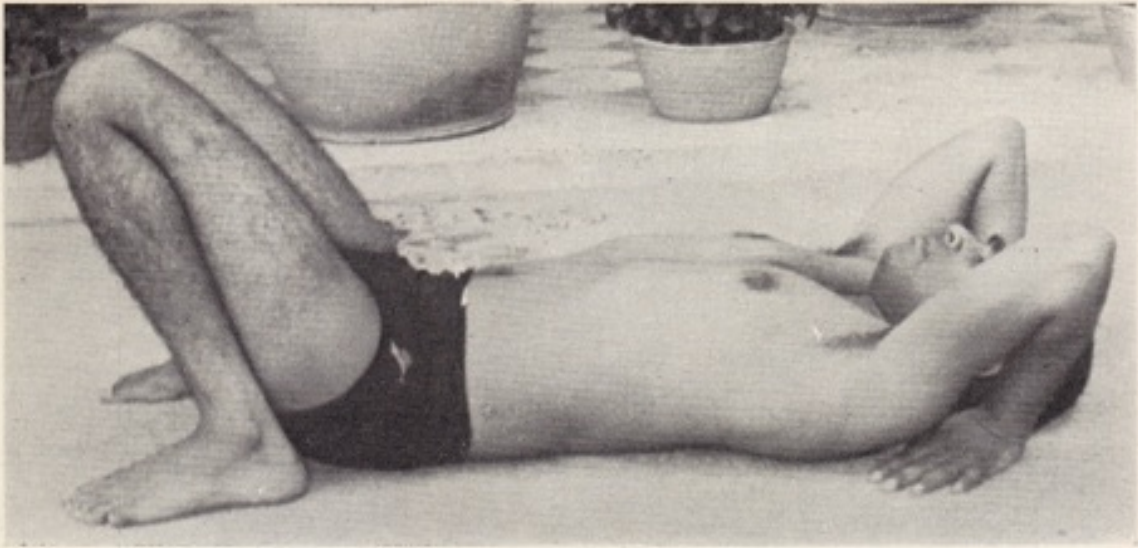


Stage 1

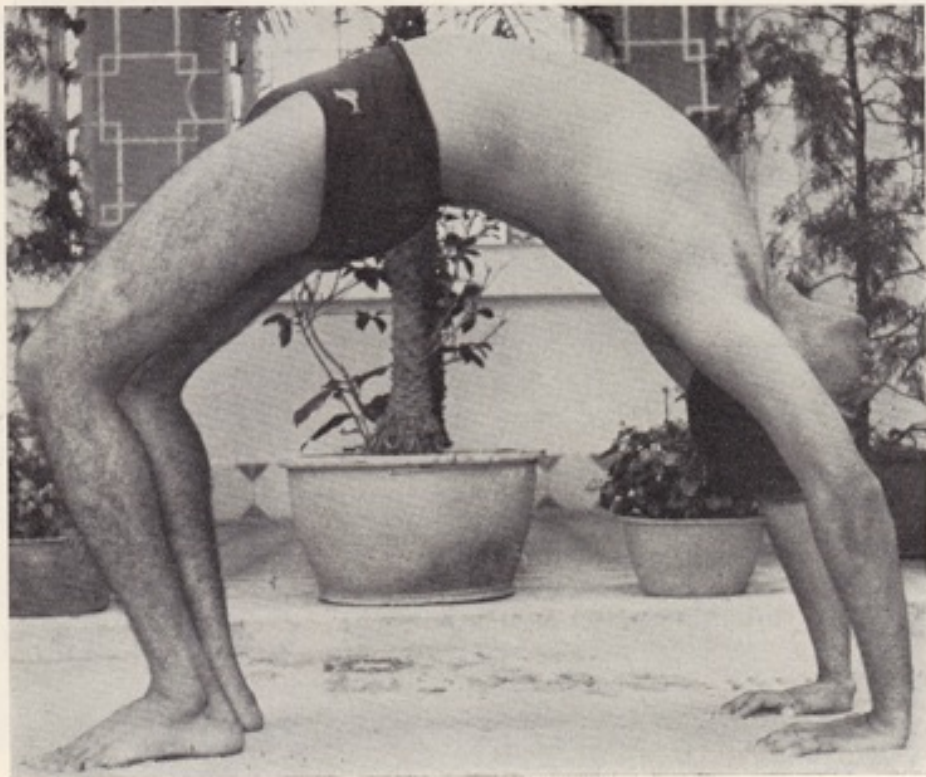
TRIKONASAN



CHAKRASAN



Stage 1



Final Stage

CHAKRASAN

Lie down. Bend the hands and legs. Raise the body resting on the hands and legs.

SAVASAN

"Sava" means 'dead body'. When one performs this Asan it gives the appearance of a dead body. So it is named Savasan. This is a closing pose. You should do this after doing every other exercise for relaxation.

Technique

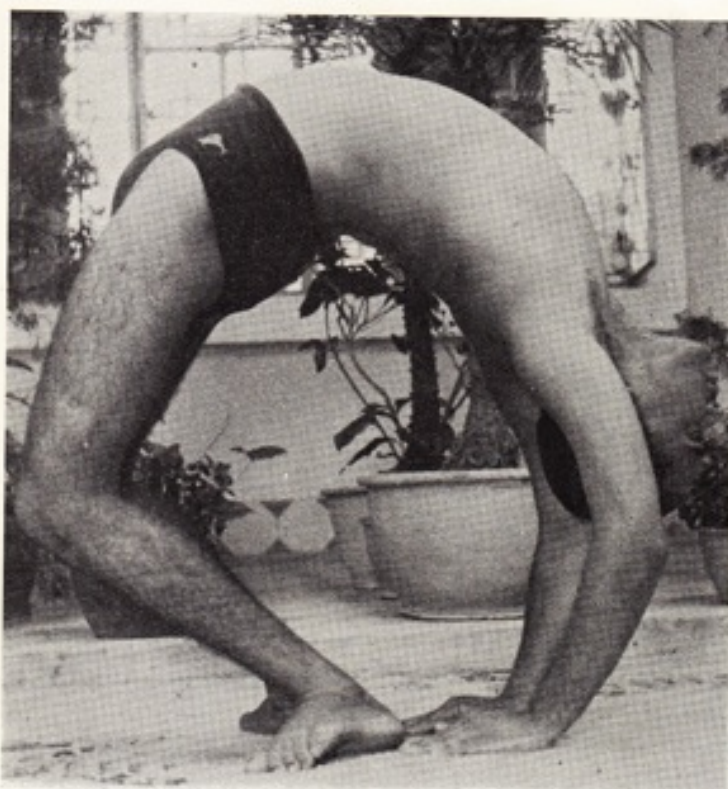
Spread a soft blanket and lie supine (on the back). Keep the hands on the ground by the sides. Let the legs be straight. Keep the heels together and the toes separated. Now relax all the muscles of the body. Breathe slowly and rhythmically. Give up planning and scheming.

Keep your eyes closed. Relax all the muscles, the nerves and the organs. Start the relaxation process from the toes upwards. Then proceed to the calf muscles, gastronemius, soleus and plantaris muscles, muscles of the neck, face, etc. Decide on a system. See that the abdominal organs, the heart, chest and the brain are also relaxed. Do not sleep. In this pose you will enjoy perfect peace, ease, comfort and relaxation.

Benefits

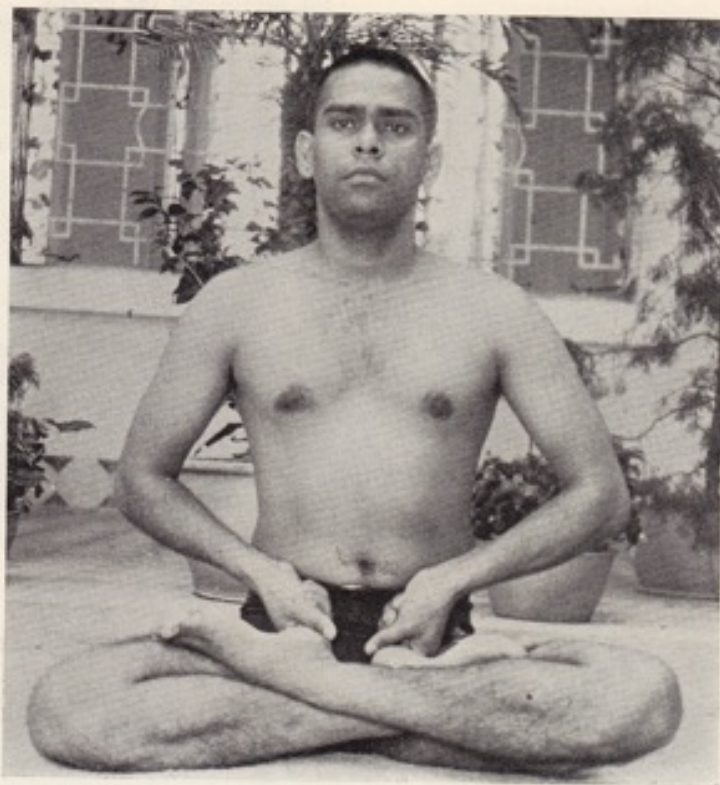
The pleasant and exhilarating feeling can only be realised by those who can successfully perform this Asan. Words cannot adequately describe the peace which the practitioner enjoys. Every one of you should enjoy it. If you are tired from hard work, perform this Asan for 5 minutes. You will be fit again to consider your hard work with the same old vigour. This is a blessing for all hard workers.

CHAKRASAN

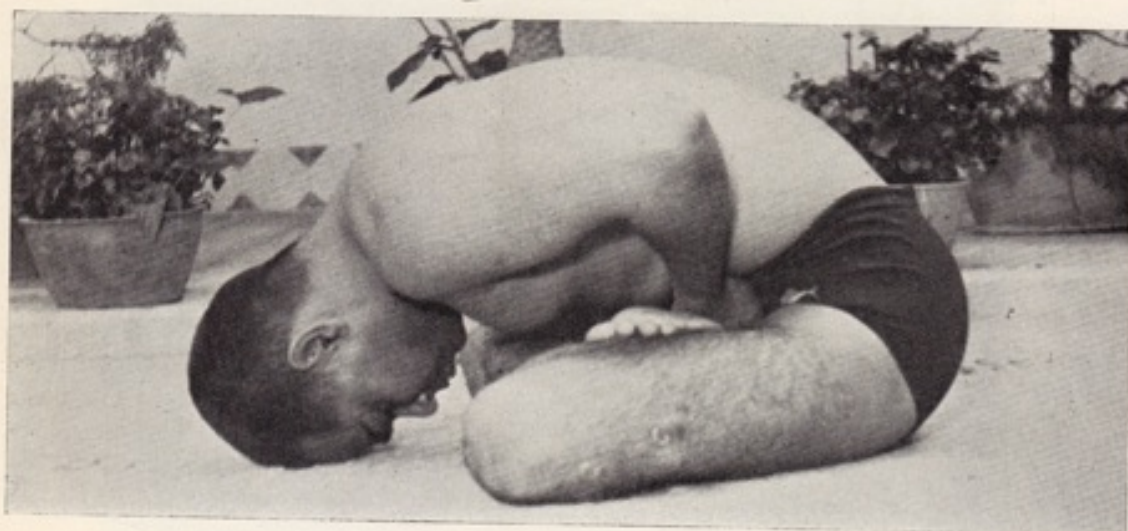


Variation

YOGA MUDRA

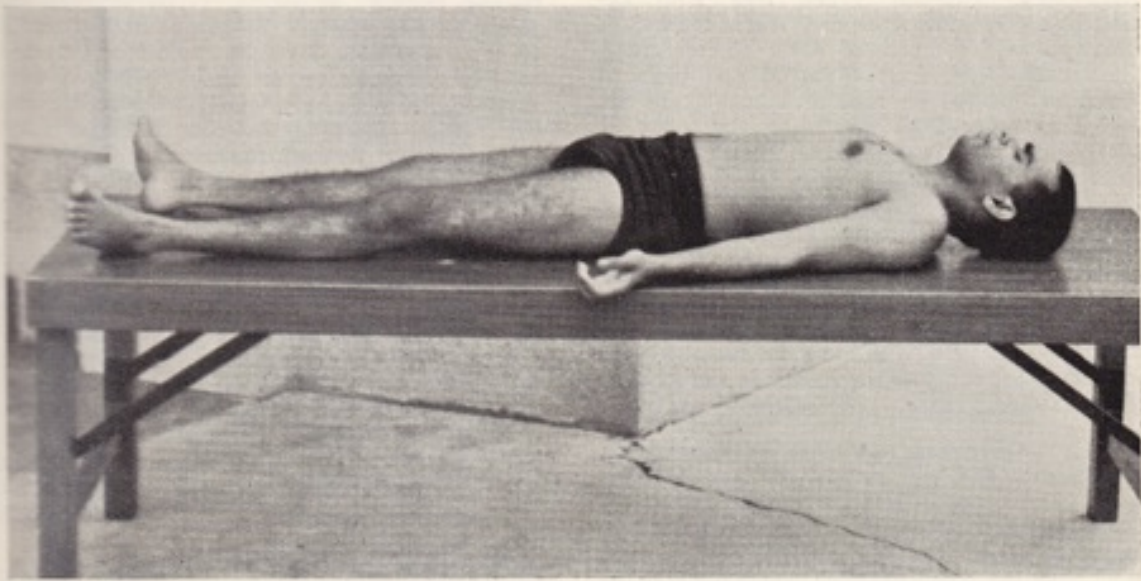


Stage 1



Stage 2

SAVASAN



Chapter VI

RELAXATION

SCIENCE OF RELAXATION

Life has become very complex in these days. The struggle for existence is very acute and keen. There is very unhealthy competition in every walk of life. The bread problem has become very difficult. There is unemployment everywhere. Brilliant young men with extraordinary qualifications and recommendations alone get a job in these days. Therefore a great deal of continuous mental and physical strain is imposed on modern humanity by its deadening daily work and unhealthy mode of life.

Action produces movement; movements cause habits. Man has acquired many artificial habits. He has allowed nature's original habits to lapse. He has brought tension to many muscles and nerves through incorrect habit-positions. He has forgotten the first principles of relaxation. He will have to learn lessons from the cat, dog and the infant in the Science of Relaxation.

If you practise relaxation no energy will be wasted. You will be very active and energetic. During relaxation the muscles and nerves are at rest. The Prana or energy is stored up and conserved. The vast majority of persons who have no comprehensive understanding of this beautiful science of relaxation simply waste their energies by creating unnecessary movements of muscles and by putting the muscles and nerves under great strain.

Some persons shake their legs unnecessarily while sitting. Some play Mridang or Tabla (drum) with their fingers on the table when their minds are idle or vacant. Some whistle. Some shake their heads. Some tap their chests or abdomen with their fingers. Energy is thus dissipated through unnecessary movements of the different parts of the body on account of lack of knowledge of the elementary principles of the science of relaxation.

Do not mistake laziness for relaxation. The lazy man is inactive. He has no inclination for work. He is full of lethargy and inertia. He is dull. Whereas a man who practises relaxation takes only rest. He has vigour, strength, vitality and endurance. He never allows even

a small amount of energy to trickle away. He accomplishes wonderful work gracefully in minimum amount of time.

When you wish to contract a muscle in order to perform an action an impulse is transmitted from the brain through the nerve to the muscle. Energy or Prana travels through the motor nerves, reaches the muscle and causes it to draw its ends together. When the muscle contracts it pulls up the limb which you wish to move. Now you can perform the action with ease. First there is thought. Thought takes form in action through contraction of muscles.

Suppose you wish to lift up a chair. The desire creates an impulse in the brain. The impulse is transmitted to the muscles of the arms from the brain through the motor nerves. A current of Prana or energy is transmitted along the nerves from the brain. The muscles contract and you perform the action of lifting up the chair. Similarly all other actions, conscious or unconscious, are performed by you. If the muscles are overworked more energy is spent and you feel fatigue. There is much wear and tear in the muscles through overwork, strain and tension on account of heavy expenditure of Prana or energy.

When you perform an action consciously a message is given to the mind and the mind immediately obeys by sending a current of energy to the desired part. An unconscious act is done instinctively or mechanically. The mind does not wait for orders. When the scorpion stings your fingers, the finger is at once withdrawn. You do not argue here. This is an instinctive or mechanical movement.

A man of easily irritable nature cannot have peace of mind. His brain, nerves and muscles are always under high tension. He is wasting every minute abundant muscular and nerve energy and brain-power. He is a very weak man though he may be endowed with physical strength, because he loses his balance of mind very easily. If you really want to enjoy unruffled peace and abiding joy you must try to possess a calm, controlled and balanced mind by eradicating worry, anxieties, fear, anger impulses and repressing impulses.

You do not gain anything by worrying yourself unnecessarily and manifesting anger for nothing at all. Anger belongs to a brutal nature. Anger does positive injury to the brain, the blood and the nerves. You do not profit a bit by exhibiting anger. By repeating an action, a habit is formed in the mind. If you worry yourself frequently, a worrying habit is developed. Your vitality and energy are simply drained by worry, anger and fear. Why should you be afraid of anything at all, when everything is nothing but your own self! Fear, anger and worry are the products of ignorance. The muscles and nerves of a victim of anger and worry are always under contraction and high tension.

The action of one set of muscles can be checked by the operation of another set of muscles. One impulse may try to put one set of muscles in motion, and, by sending another repressive impulse through another set of muscles, you can counteract the action of the first set of muscles. If a man abuses you, you may jump at once to beat him. An impulse has already put one set of muscles in motion. You may check the impulse through discrimination and reflection: "I do not gain anything by beating him. He is an ignorant man. He does not know how to behave. Let me forgive him now." A repressive impulse will check at once the operation of the first set of muscles by another set of muscles. Raising of impulses and counter-impulses or repressing impulses cause high tension in nerves, muscles and brain. A large number of people are slaves of impulses; hence they do not enjoy peace of mind. They are tossed hither and thither.

The science of relaxation is an exact science. It can be learnt very easily. Relaxation of the muscles is as important as contraction of the muscles. I lay great emphasis on the relaxation of the mind, nerves and the muscles. Relaxation is of two kinds, viz., Mental Relaxation and Physical Relaxation. There is another classification. If you relax certain muscles of certain parts only, it is partial relaxation. If you relax all the muscles of the whole body, it is complete relaxation.

PHYSICAL RELAXATION

Exercise No. I

You must know how to relax all the muscles of your body after you have finished your daily course of exercises. The practice of relaxing the muscles of the body will bring rest to the body and the mind also. The tension of the muscles of the body will be relieved. People who know the science of relaxation do not waste any energy. They can meditate well.

After finishing your exercises and Asans, lie down flat on your back. Keep the hands on the sides quite relaxed. Keep quite loose. You may practise Savasan or Murdhasan. Relax all the muscles from head to foot. Roll the mind over the body from top to toe. You may find that certain muscles are not completely relaxed. Relax them also.

Roll on to one side and then relax as thoroughly as you can. Do not strain any muscles. Relax completely. Roll on to the other side and then relax again. This is done naturally by all during sleep. There are various exercises for relaxation for the particular muscles of the different parts of the body. You can relax the head, the shoulders, the arms, the forearms, the wrists, fingers, thighs, legs, ankles, toes, knees, elbows, the waist, etc. Yogis and Phaliwans know the science of relaxation thoroughly. When you practise these various exercises in relaxation, you must bear in your mind a picture of calmness and strength.

If you like you can do relaxation by lying in an easy chair after finishing your Asan or exercises. Those who know relaxation can take a short nap of ten minutes or so at any time they like. Busy people, doctors and lawyers should know the science of relaxation. They can relax the mind also and take rest in the waiting rooms of railway stations and bar rooms as well. They will thus be quite fit for further activity in the courts or the dispensary. Relaxation refreshes a man completely.

Students, journalists, busy lawyers, doctors and business men should know the science of mental relaxation. They should practise it daily. Those who do not possess a knowledge of this science of internal and external relaxation waste their physical and mental energy considerably. Those who practise relaxation can conserve their physical and mental energy and utilize it to their best advantage. Yogis know this science well. They are perfect masters of this useful science. Those who practise relaxation will never experience fatigue. They can close their eyes for a few minutes even while standing and so prepare themselves for further work. Energy flows in their nerves when they relax just as water flows when the tap is turned open.

Exercise No. II (For Women)

The woman who can never relax, never take a real rest, will not retain beauty. Her face will show signs of the fatigue her body is undergoing. Her body will lack poise. By being in a continual state of nervous tension (as many women are) she will grow old before her time, lose her locks, find that the tension has sapped all her strength away.

Once in the morning and once in the afternoon, relax completely for ten minutes at least. No matter how urgent the task, stick to this rule. Sit on a very comfortable chair, or lie flat on a mattress; propping up the legs about eighteen inches from the ground with a stiff cushion under the knees, and let every muscle go 'flop.' A cushion under the head, if lying on the mattress, will relax the neck muscles. Close the eyes. Make the mind blank.

The idea of propping up the legs is to make the spine lie flat and to cool the feet by letting the blood run away from them. When resting in chair, propping up the legs and relax every muscle. It will not be easy at first, but it can be turned into a habit.

There are many jobs which can be done in a sitting position—darning, mending and sewing machine work. Be careful to sit correctly in order to avoid fatigue. Only a few women are aware of the fact that a faulty position may enlarge the hips. Never sit on the edge of a chair. Place the body well back and have a firm cushion to support the lower part of the back. Another thing to remember is to choose a chair of the correct height. Do not cross the legs. Sit with the knees and feet close together and firmly planted on the floor or on a stool.

Fatigue can be avoided at other tasks by adopting a correct standing posture. When a job necessitates your being on the feet for a long time, keep the knees and heels close together. This makes a pillar on which the body can rest. The weight of the body is not thrown on one leg or the other, but is distributed evenly on both.

MENTAL RELAXATION

Exercise No. I

Just as you relax your muscles after having finished your Asans and physical exercise, so also you will have to relax the mind and rest it after concentration and meditation, after the practice of memory training and will-culture. Relaxation of the muscles brings repose to the mind. Relaxation of the mind brings rest to the body as well. The body and mind are intimately connected. The body is a mould prepared by the mind for its enjoyment.

The mind gathers experiences through the body and works in conjunction with the Prana, the senses and the body. The mind has influence over the body. If you are cheerful the body also

will be healthy and strong. When you are feeling depressed, the body cannot work. Conversely the body has some influence over the mind. If the body is healthy and strong, the mind will also be happy, cheerful and strong. If there is stomachache, the mind cannot work. Thought takes form in action and action reacts on the mind. The mind acts on the body and the body reacts on the mind. Removal of tension in the muscles brings repose and calmness to the mind.

By relaxation you give rest to the mind, tired nerves and the overworked muscles. You will get immense peace of mind, strength and vigour. When you practise relaxation of either body or mind, the brain should not be occupied with various sorts of loose extraneous thoughts. Anger, disappointment, failure, indisposition, misery, sorrow, quarrels cause internal mental strain. The practice of relaxation of mind will remove internal mental strain and will fill the mind with new mental energy and will make you cheerful and happy.

Mental poise and calmness may be brought about by the eradication of worry and anger. Fear really underlies both worry and anger. Nothing is gained by worry and anger, but on the contrary much energy is wasted by these two kinds of lower emotions. Be careful and thoughtful. All unnecessary worries should be avoided. Expel from you all fear, worry and anger. Think of courage, joy, bliss, peace and cheerfulness. Sit for fifteen minutes in a relaxed state and an easy comfortable position. You can lie on an easy chair. Close your eyes. Withdraw the mind from outside objects. Still the mind. Silence the bubbling thoughts.

Exercise No. II

Close the eyes. Think of anything that is pleasant. This will relax the mind in a wonderful manner. Think of the mighty Himalayas, the sacred Ganges, and striking scenery in Kashmir, the Taj Mahal, the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, a lovely sunset, the vast expanse of ocean or the infinite blue sky. Imagine that the whole world and your body are floating like a straw in this vast ocean of Spirit. Feel that you are in touch with the Supreme Being. Feel that the life of the whole world is pulsating, vibrating and throbbing through you. Feel that Lord Hiranyagarbha, the ocean of life, is gently rocking you on His vast bosom. Then open your eyes. You will experience immense mental peace, vigour and strength. Practise and feel this.

Chapter VII

KRIYAS OR PURIFICATION EXERCISES

UDDIYANA BANDHA

Empty the lungs by strong and forcible expiration. Now contract and forcibly draw up the intestines and also the navel towards the back, so that the abdomen rests against the back of the body high up in the thoracic cavity. He who practises this Bandha constantly conquers death and becomes young. This helps a lot in keeping up Brahmacharya. Uddiyana Bandha is practised during Rechak and at the end of Rechak (exhalation). Uddiyana can be done in a sitting or a standing posture. When you practise this in the standing posture, place your hands on the thighs. Keep the legs apart and bend your trunk slightly.

Uddiyana Bandha imparts good health, strength, vigour and vitality to the practitioner. When it is combined with Nauli Kriya which consists in churning the abdomen, it serves as a powerful gastro-intestinal tonic. Uddiyana Bandha and Nauli Kriya are two potent weapons of the Yogi for combating constipation, weak peristalsis of the intestines and the gastro-intestinal disorders of the alimentary system.

NAULI KRIYA

Nauli Kriya is intended for regenerating, invigorating and stimulating the abdominal viscera and the gastro-intestinal or alimentary system. For the practice of Nauli, you should know Uddiyana Bandha well. Uddiyana Bandha can be done even in a sitting posture; but Nauli should be done only while standing.

Expire forcibly through the mouth and so keep the lungs completely empty. Contract and forcibly draw the abdominal muscles towards the back. This is Uddiyana Bandha.

For practising Nauli, stand up. Keep the right leg a foot apart from the left leg. Rest your hands on the thighs. Slightly bend forward. Then do Uddiyana Bandha. Now allow the centre of the abdomen to be free by contracting the left and right side of the abdomen. You will have all the muscles in the centre in a vertical line. This is Madhyama Nauli.

Contract the right side of the abdomen and allow the left side to be free. You will have all the muscles on the left side only. This is Vama Nauli. Again contract the left side muscles and allow the right side to be free. This is Dakshina Nauli. By carrying out such graduated exercises you will understand how to contract the muscles of the central, left and right side of the abdominal muscles. You will also notice how they move from side to side. In this stage you will see the abdominal muscles only in the central, the right or on the left side.

Keep the muscles in the centre. Slowly bring them to the right side and then to the left side in a circular way. Do this several times from right to left and then do it in a reverse way from the left to the right side. When you advance, you may do these more quickly. This last stage of Nauli will appear like 'churning' when the abdominal muscles are isolated and rotated from side to side.

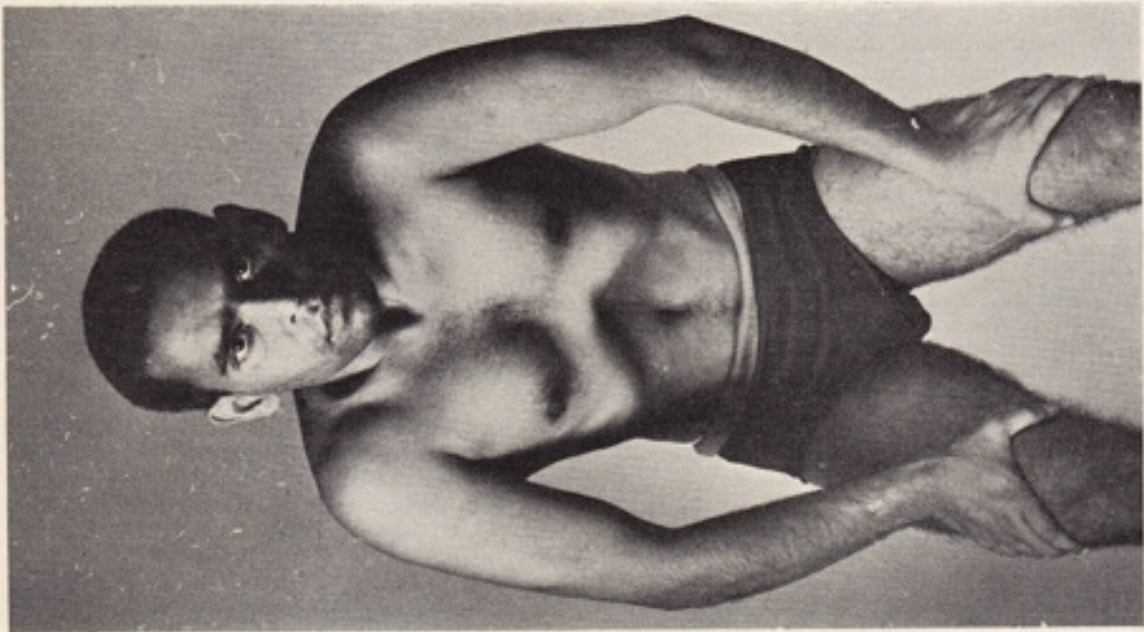
When Nauli is demonstrated by advanced students, the onlookers will be extremely surprised to see the movements of the abdominal muscles. They will feel as if an engine were working in the abdominal factory. Those who have a tender body, can very easily learn and perform this Kriya in a short time.

DHAUTI

Purification is of two kinds: Antar Dhauti (internal cleaning) and Bahir Dhauti (external cleaning). Antar Dhauti can be made in three ways. Take a fine piece of muslin cloth, 3 inches wide and 15 feet long. The borders should be stitched well and no pieces of loose thread should be hanging from its sides. Wash it with soap before use and make it clean. Dip it in tepid salt water. Squeeze out the water and swallow one end of it little by little. On the first day swallow only one foot. Keep it there for a few seconds and then take it out very slowly. On the next day swallow a little more and keep it for a few minutes and then take it out slowly. Thus, little by little, you can swallow the whole length, retain it for about 5 minutes and then take it out. Do not be hasty. Do not injure your throat by rough handling. When the Kriya is over drink a cup of milk.



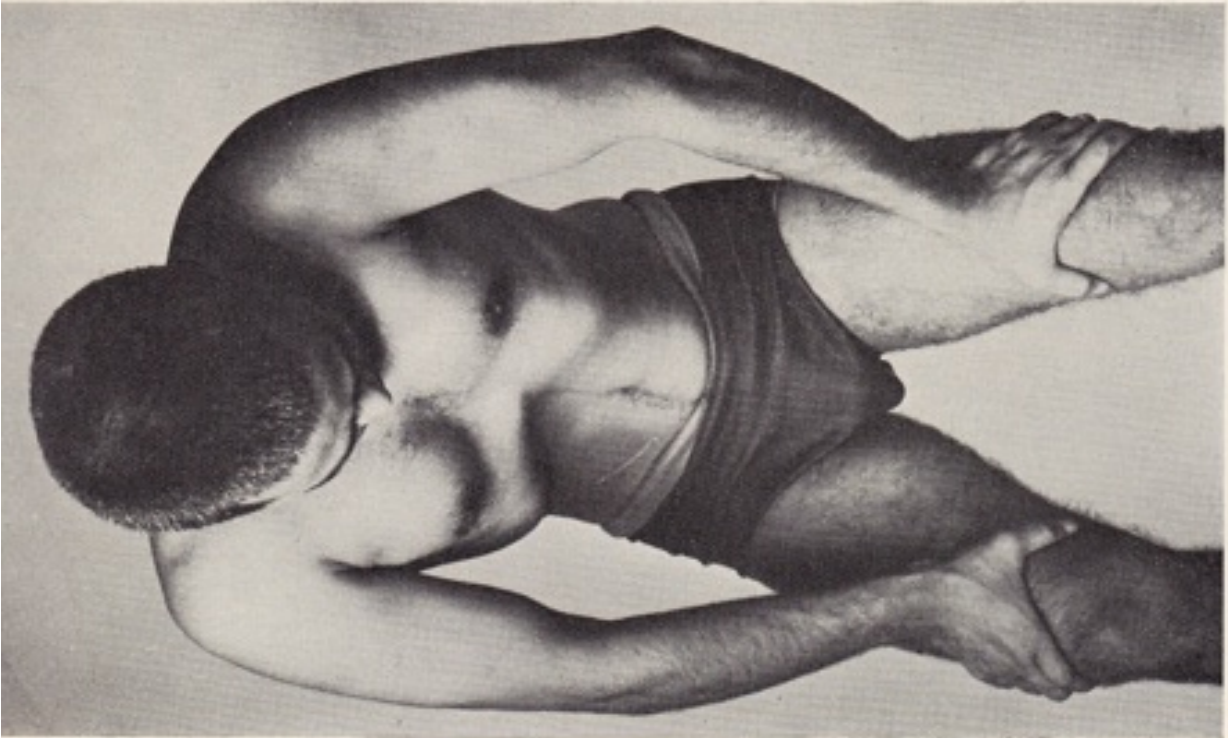
NAULI KRIYA—Central



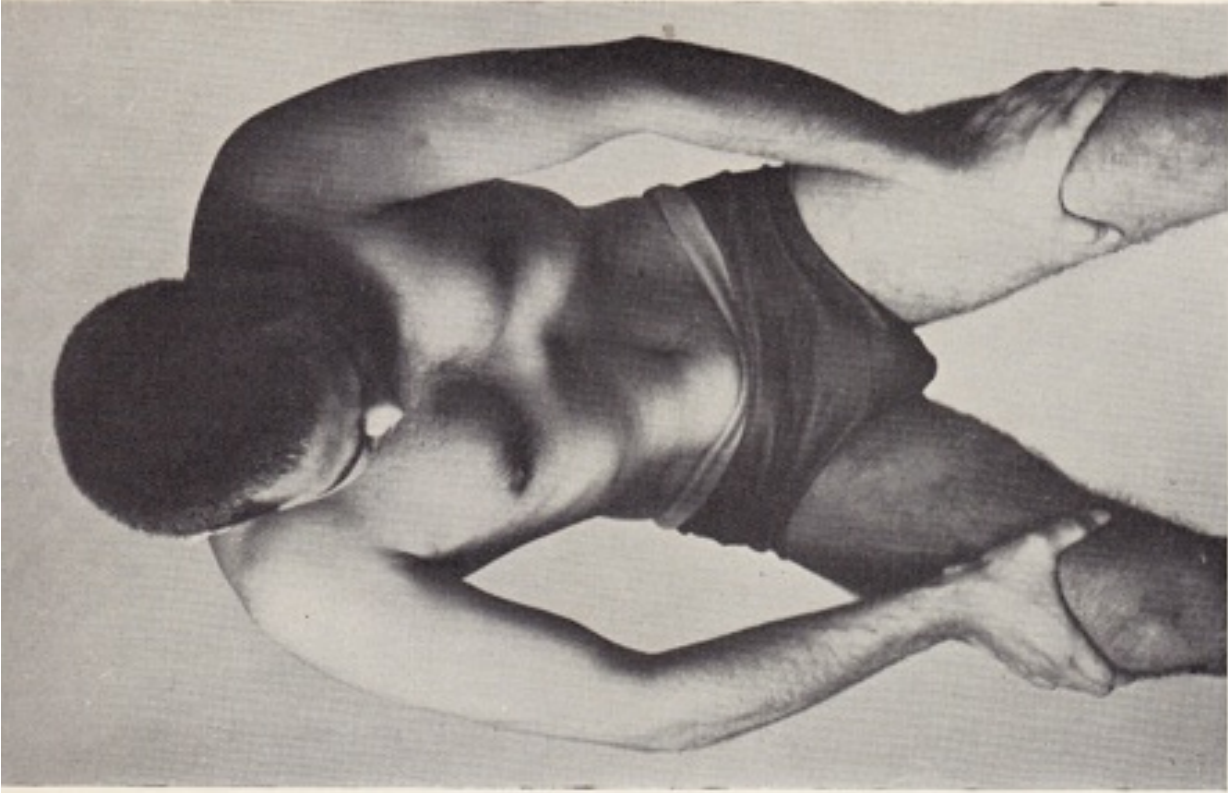
UDDIYANA BANDHA



NAULI KRIYA—Sitting



NAULI—Right



NAULI—Left

This is a sort of lubrication for the throat. This exercise should be done when your stomach is empty. Morning time is good. Get advice from a teacher to practise.

You need not practise this every day. Once in 4 days or a week is sufficient. This exercise cannot at all do any harm if gradually practised. Everyone will feel a little vomiting sensation on the first 2 or 3 attempts. As soon as the Kriya is over, wash the cloth with soap and keep it always clean. This is an excellent exercise for those who are of a flabby and phlegmatic constitution. Gradual steady practice cures gulma, gastritis, dyspepsia, diseases of the stomach and spleen, disorders of phlegm, and bile. This exercise is also known as *Vastra Dhauti*. This is one variety of *Antar Dhauti*.

Drink a large quantity of salt water and shake the abdominal portions. Contract the stomach and vomit the water. This exercise goes with the name "*Kunjar Kriya*." This is also a kind of purificatory exercise.

DHAUTI



NETI

"Neti" exercise is intended for the purification of the nostrils. The nostrils must be kept always clean. Unclean nostrils will lead you to irregular breathing. Irregular breathing will make you sick.

Take a fine piece of thread about 12 inches long. There should not be any knots in the middle of the thread. It should not be too thin and weak. Insert one end of it into the right nostril and catch hold of the other end firmly. Make a forcible, continuous inhalation and pass it inside. Then slowly pull it out. Again in the same way pass it through the left nostril and take it out slowly. Do not injure your nostrils through violent pulling. After some practice, pass the thread through one nostril and take it out through the other. In the beginning you will begin to sneeze profusely when you insert the thread into the nose. This passes off after 3 or 4 attempts. This can be practised when you find that your nostril is blocked from cold. Dip the thread in salt water before inserting. Practise it under a guide.

There is another easy method of cleaning the nostrils. Take some cold salt water in your hand or in a wide-mouthed cup. Draw the water slowly through the nose and expel it forcibly through the nose. There are many who can do this quite easily. After one or two attempts some persons may suffer from slight cold and cough when they begin to learn this. As soon as they are all right again, they can practise. Always try to use salt water.

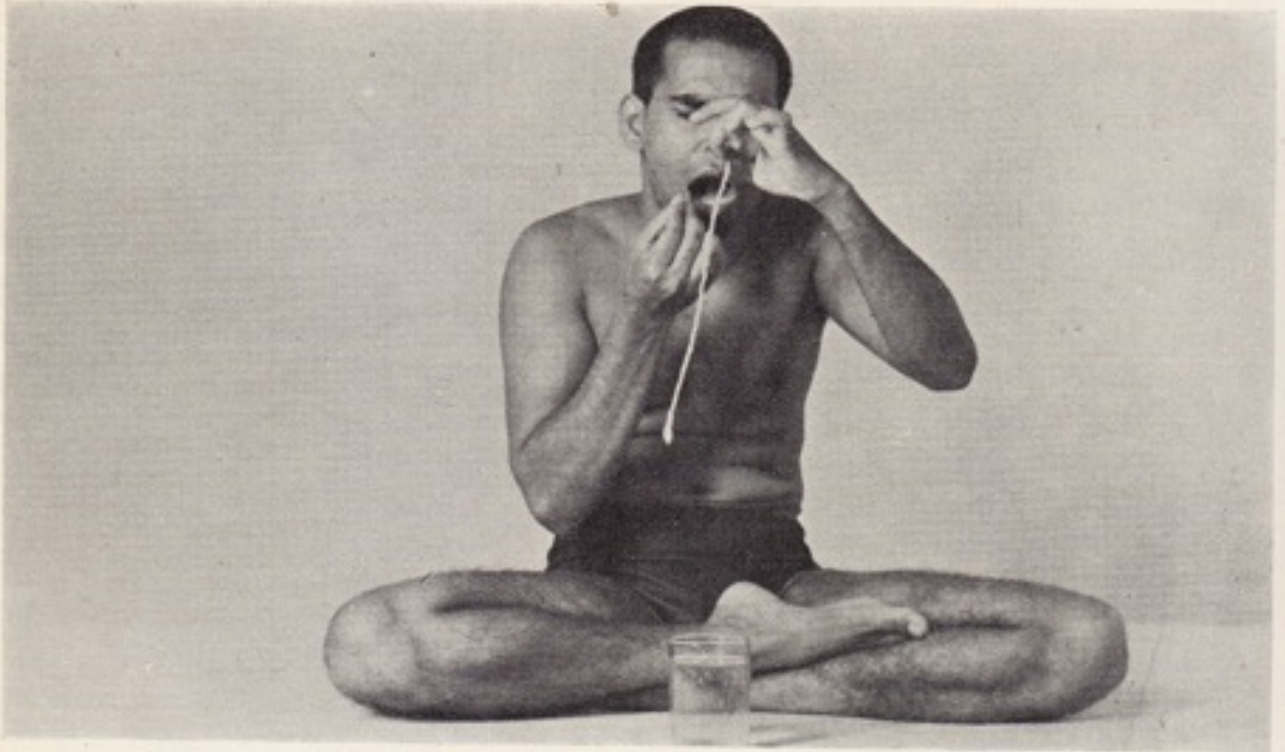
You have seen many who draw the smoke of a cigarette through the mouth and pass it by the nose quite easily. If cigarette-users try, they can draw the smoke through one nostril and pass it out by the other nostril or by the mouth. In the same way water also can be passed quite easily.

Drawing water and expelling it through the nose is known as "*Seet-Krama*." If you draw water through the nose and expel it through the mouth, it is called "*Vyut-Krama*." In *Gheranda Samhita* it is stated that this *Neti Kriya* purifies the skull and produces clairvoyance (*Divya Drishti*). All the above exercises should be done under the guidance of a teacher.

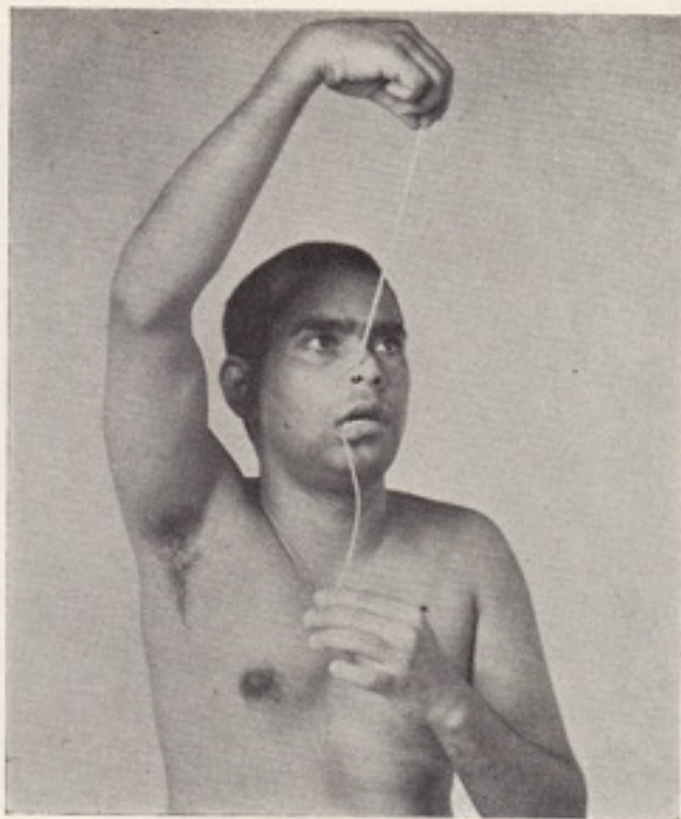
TRATAK

"Tratak" is steady gazing at a particular point or object without winking. Though this is one of the six purificatory exercises, it is mainly intended for developing concentration and mental focussing. It is very useful for the students of Hatha Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Raja Yoga. There is no other effective method for the control of the mind. Some of the students who claim that they belong to Jnana Yoga, neglect such important exercises since they are described under Hatha Yogic portions. Sri Ramana Maharishi, the famous Jnani of Thiruvannamalai, is doing this exer-

NETI



Stage 1



Final Stage

cise even today. When you visit his Ashram you can see this clearly. When he is seated on his sofa in his room, he gazes on the walls. When he sits on the veranda in an easy chair, he steadily looks at the distant hills or at the sky. This enables him to keep up a balanced state of mind. Nothing can distract his mind. He is very calm and cool always. He is not at all distracted by anyone even though his Bhaktas might be talking and singing by his side.

KAPALABHATI

Kapalabhati is an exercise for the purification of skull and lungs. Though this is one of Shat Karmas (six purificatory exercises), yet it is a variety of Pranayama exercises.

Sit in Padmasana or Siddhasana. Keep the hands on the knees. Perform Purak (inhalation) and Rechak (exhalation) rapidly. For those who can do Bhastrika, there is a Kumbhak (retention of breath) for a long time at the end of the required rounds. But in Kapalabhati

there is no Kumbhak. Again in Kapalabhati, Purak is very long and mild, but Rechak is quick and forcible. In Kapalabhati, Rechak should be done forcibly and quickly by contracting the abdominal muscles with a backward push. To start, have only one expulsion per second. In the beginning do 10 expulsions to each round till you get 120 expulsions for each round.

It cleanses the respiratory system and nasal passages. It removes spasm in bronchial tubes. Consequently Asthma is relieved and cured also in course of time. Consumption is cured by this practice. Impurities of the blood are thrown out. The circulatory and respiratory systems are toned up to a considerable degree.

Shat Karmas are intended for the purification of the body. When Nadis are impure, Kundalini cannot pass from the Muladhara to the Sahasrara Chakra. Purification of Nadis is effected through Pranayama. For Pranayama, you should know well about Prana.

Chapter VIII

ADVANCED YOGIC EXERCISES

PURNA SUPTA VAJRASAN: This is the full Supta Vajrasan pose. Sit on Vajrasan (kneeling on the ground and sitting over the heels). Lie down backward; rest the crown of the head and the elbows on the ground. Keep the hands near the head and slowly bend the spine and bring the head between the feet. Now catch hold of the thighs. This is a marvellous exercise for the spine; a healthy spine is an insurance against all diseases and old age.

UTTHIDA-KURMASAN: Sit down and stretch the legs forward. Catch hold of the right foot and take it over the head so that the ankle rests on the back of the neck. In the same way, take the left leg behind the ankle of the right foot. Now raise the body with the help of the hands. The Asan has innumerable benefits. It strengthens the abdominal viscera, as well as the hands; and it greatly helps in Brahmacharya continence.

ANJANEYASAN: Stand erect. Take a big step forward with your right leg. Now slowly lower the body by gradually 'gliding' the feet away from each other. (Then do it with the other leg.) There is no Asan which can equal this in helping the aspirant maintain perfect Brahmacharya.

HASTHAPADASAN: Sit down. Stretch the legs forward. Catch hold of the toes and draw the feet away from each other, as much as possible. Bend forward and rest the chin on the ground. The knees and hands should not be bent. This is a combination of Paschimotanasan and Anjaneyasan.

VIPAREETA-HALASAN: Lie on the ground, face downwards, with hands at sides. Press the ground with the hands and raise the legs. Bend the spine and legs till you touch the ground over the head with the toes. No Asan equals this in its beneficent action upon the abdominal viscera. The spine also is fully exercised. The practitioner will enjoy good digestion and perfect assimilation. He will possess sound health of body and mind.

It is not advisable however to practise these more difficult Asans without the help of an expert teacher. I would request those who

attempt them to be very cautious that they do not strain themselves.

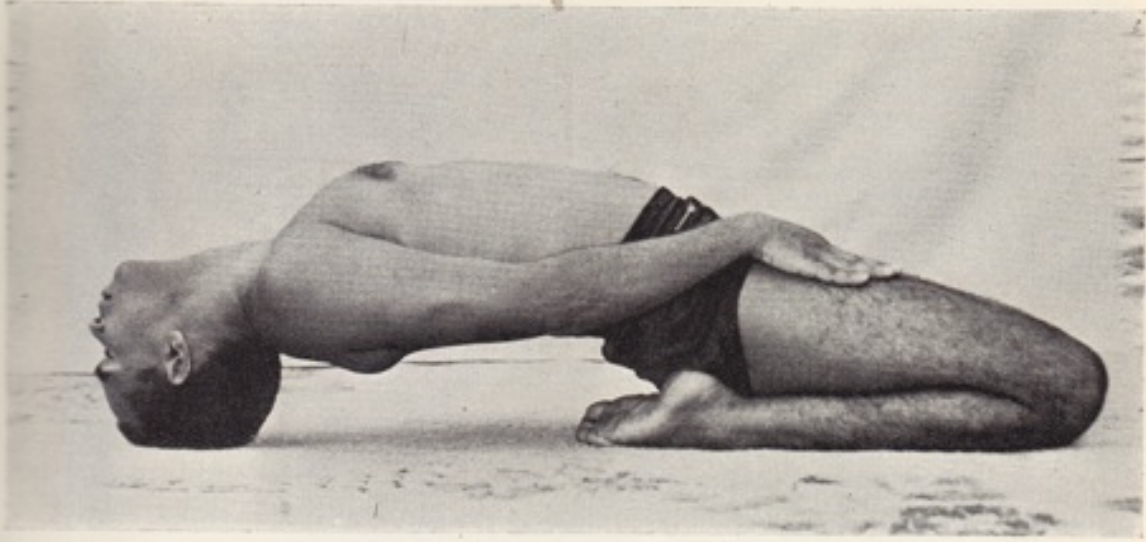
VRISCHIKASAN: Kneel on the ground as in Vajrasan. Bend forward and place the forearms on the ground, palms facing downwards. Press the ground with the forearms and throw the legs up, straighten them and then bring them down over the head which must all the time be above the ground, face parallel to the ground. Slowly touch the crown of the head with the soles of the feet. This Asana gives the maximum bending to the spine and imparts balance and harmony to the entire system. It should be practised only after acquiring maximum proficiency in Sirsasana and Chakrasana. Even then practise near a wall so that you may not have a fall. Ask your friend to help you get a proper balance.

PURNA DHANURASAN:— Lie on the ground, face downwards. Flex the knees. Catch hold of the ankles with the thumbs inside. Pull the feet towards the head, bending the spine all the time. Touch the crown of the head with soles of the feet. You can practise this Asana only after attaining perfection in Dhanurasana and Supta Vajrasana. Even then you have to be cautious lest you should dislocate the shoulder joints. In this Asana you derive the maximum benefits of Dhanurasana.

SETHU-BANDASAN:— Stand in Sarvangasana. Now bend the legs and hip "outside" till the feet rest on the ground. The hold on the hips with the hands, however, should not be released. Now the whole body will assume the position of a bridge with elbows on one side and the feet on the other. The back of the head will also rest on the ground. This is an excellent exercise for the spine as it gives the spine a double-twist—at the neck and along the trunk. You will enjoy everlasting youth if you regularly practise this Asana. The lung power will greatly improve.

YOGA-DANDASAN:— Squat on the ground the right leg in front, flexed at the knee and the left one flexed at the knee and bent double so that the heel is in contact with the buttock. Raise the right foot and rest the arm-pit on it.

PURNA SUPTA VAJRASAN

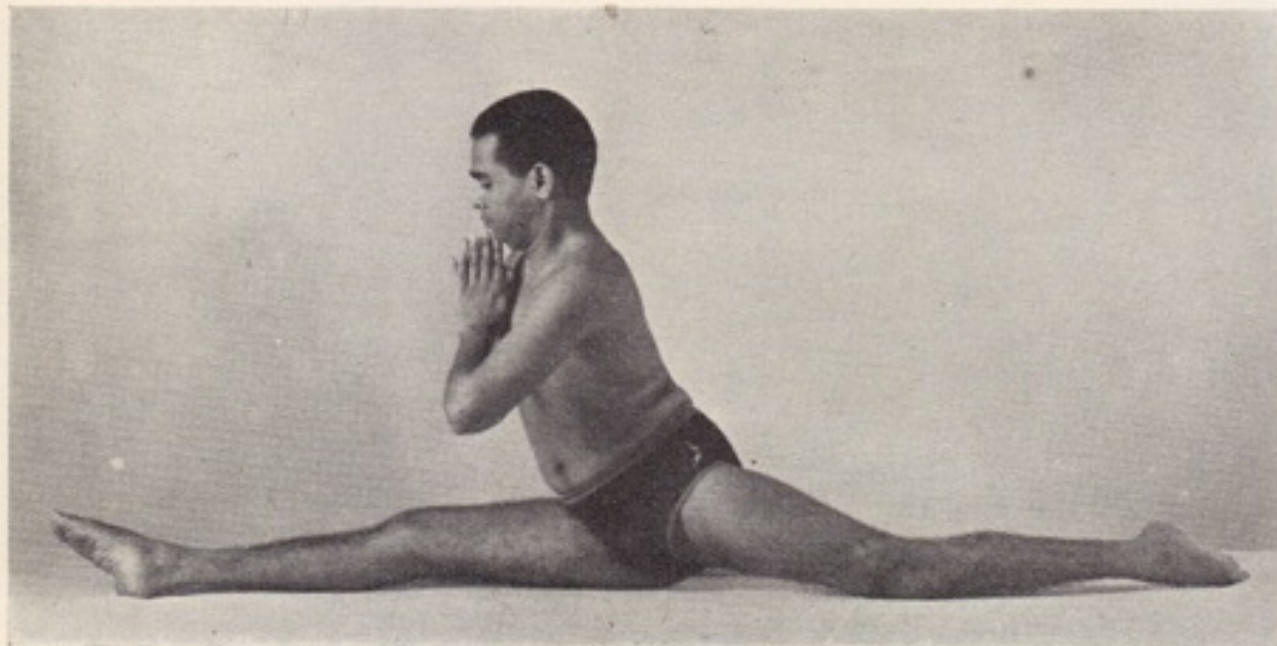


Half Pose



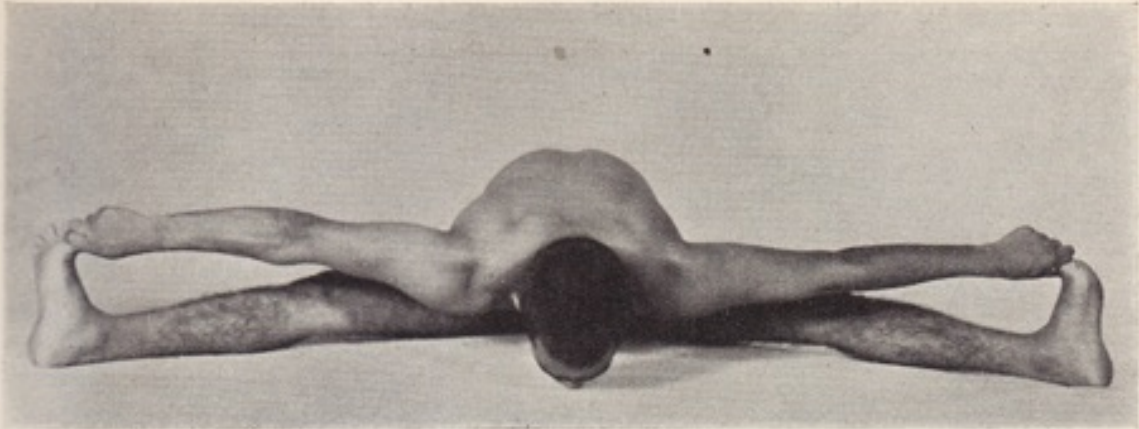
Full Pose

ANJANEYASAN



Variation

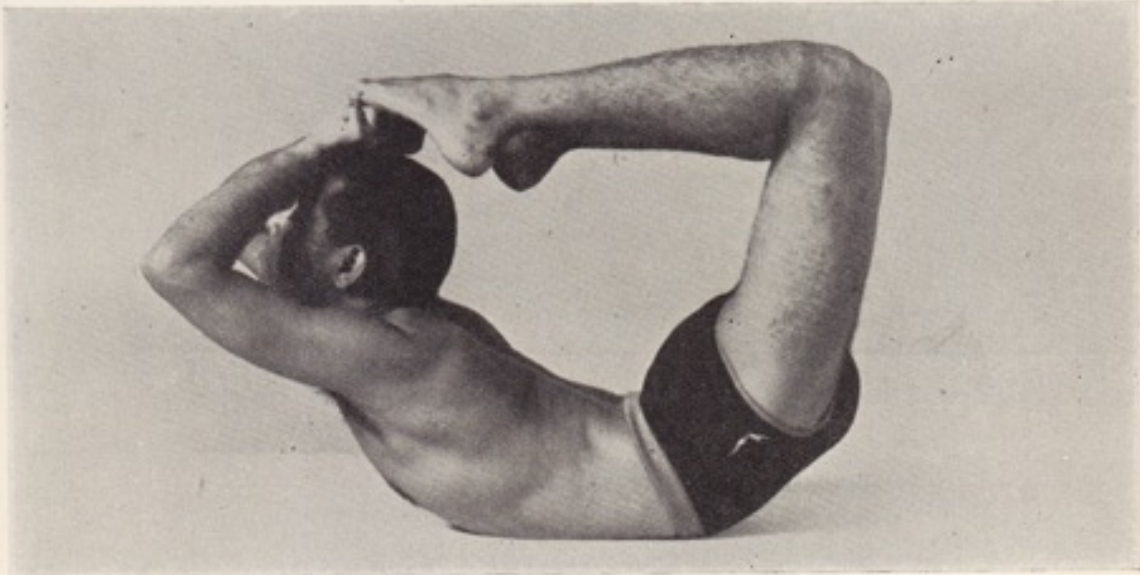
HASTHAPADASAN



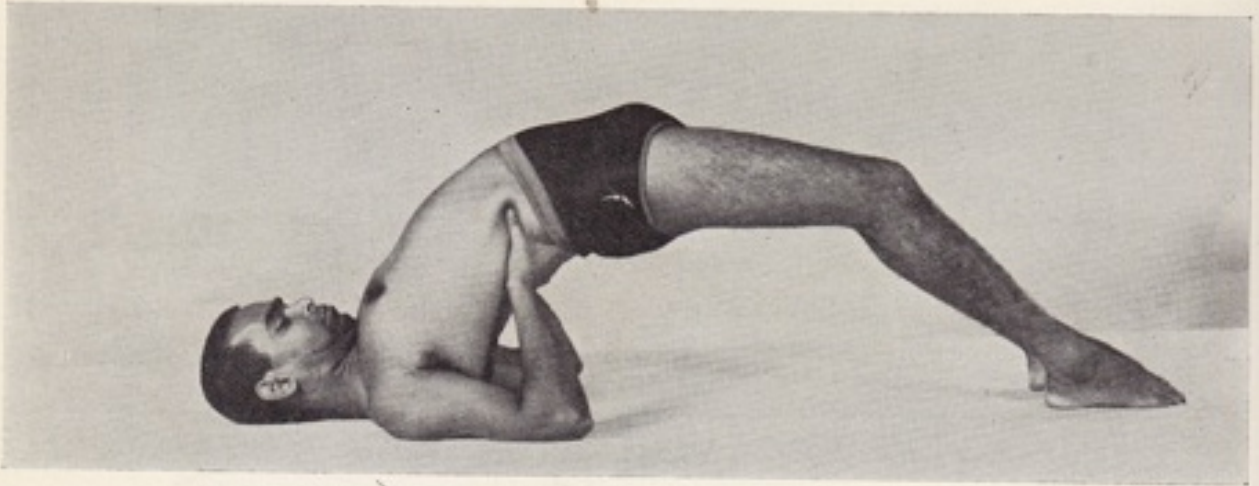
VRISCHIKASAN



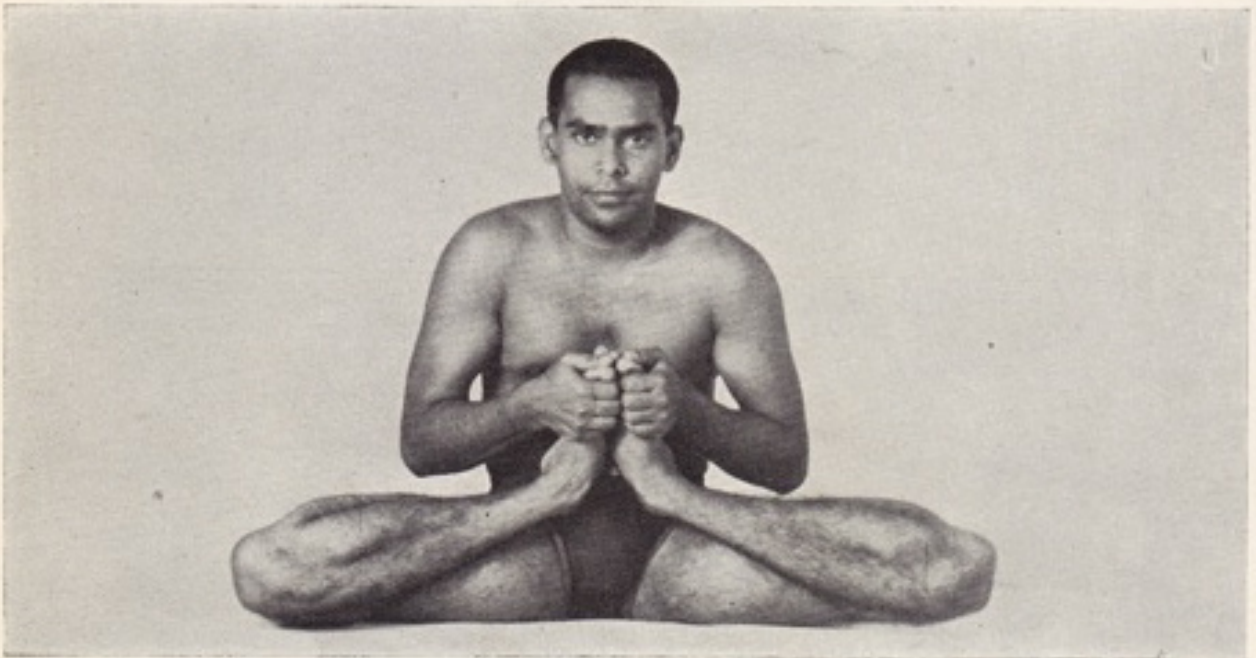
PURNA DHANURASAN



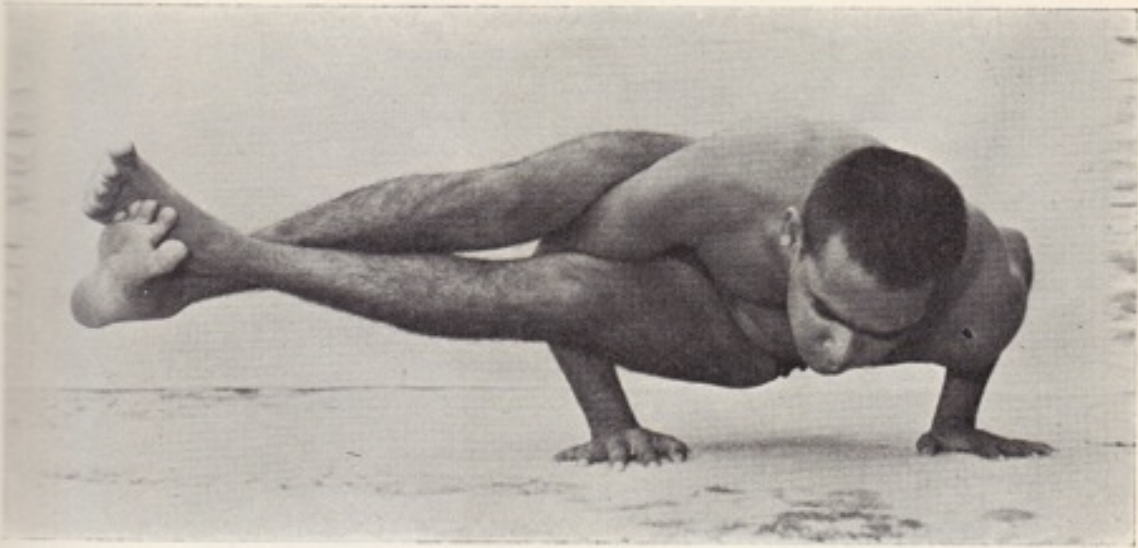
SETHU—BANDASAN



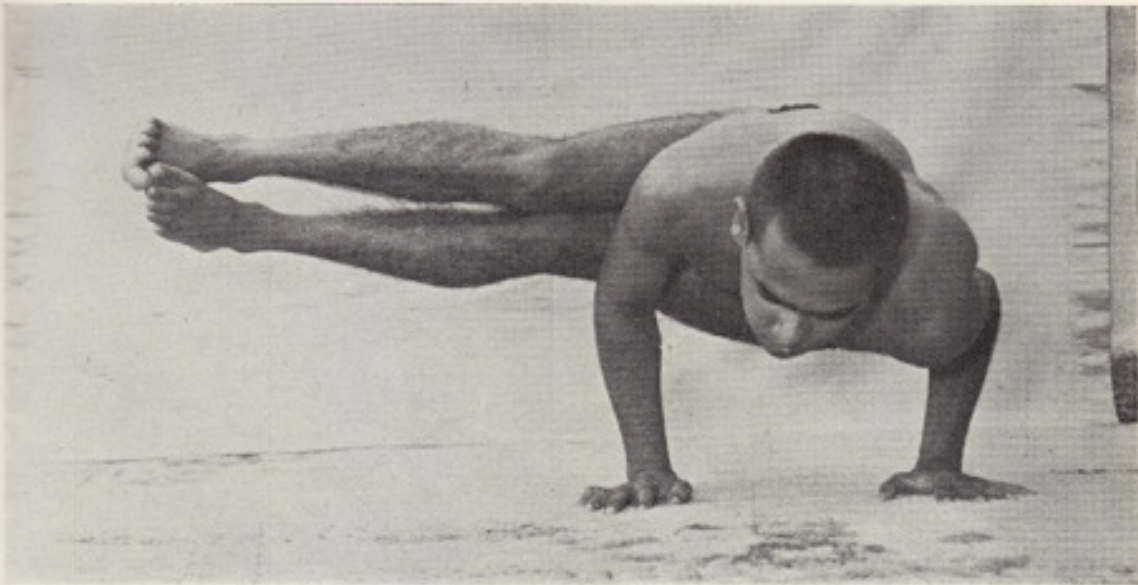
NABHI—PEEDASAN



ASHTAVAKRASAN

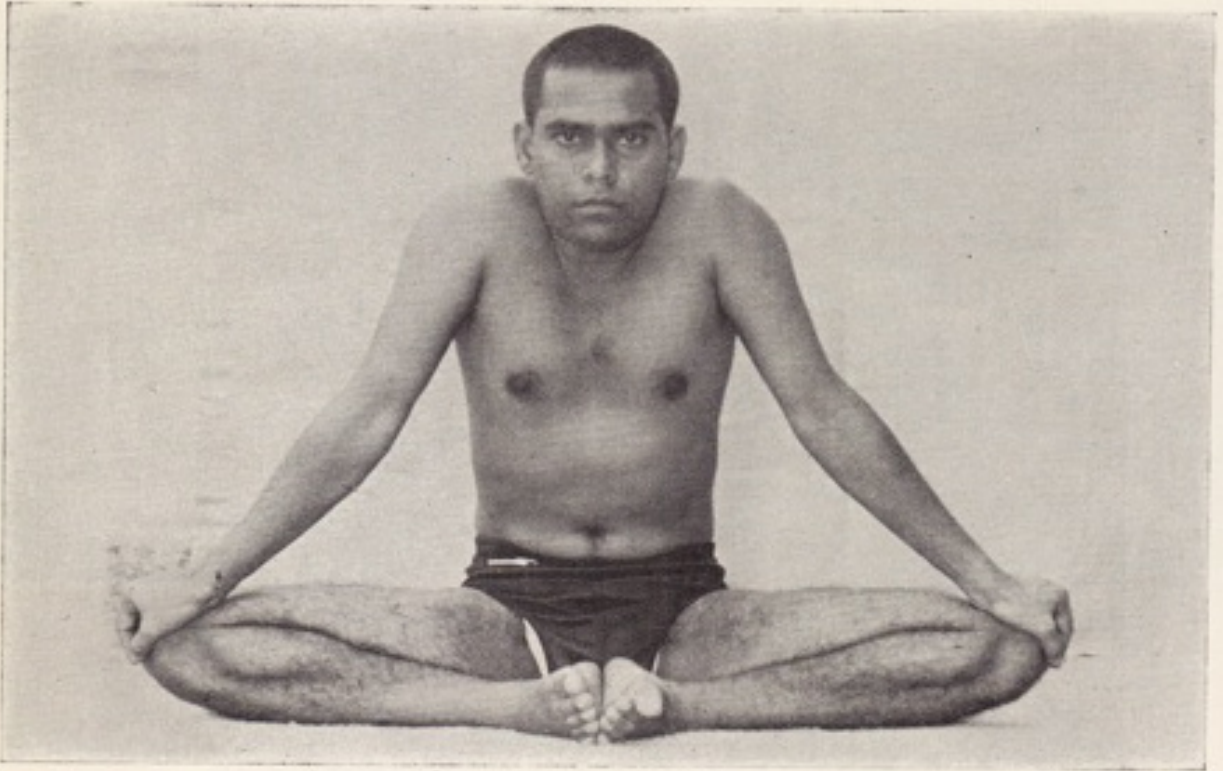


VAIKARASANA

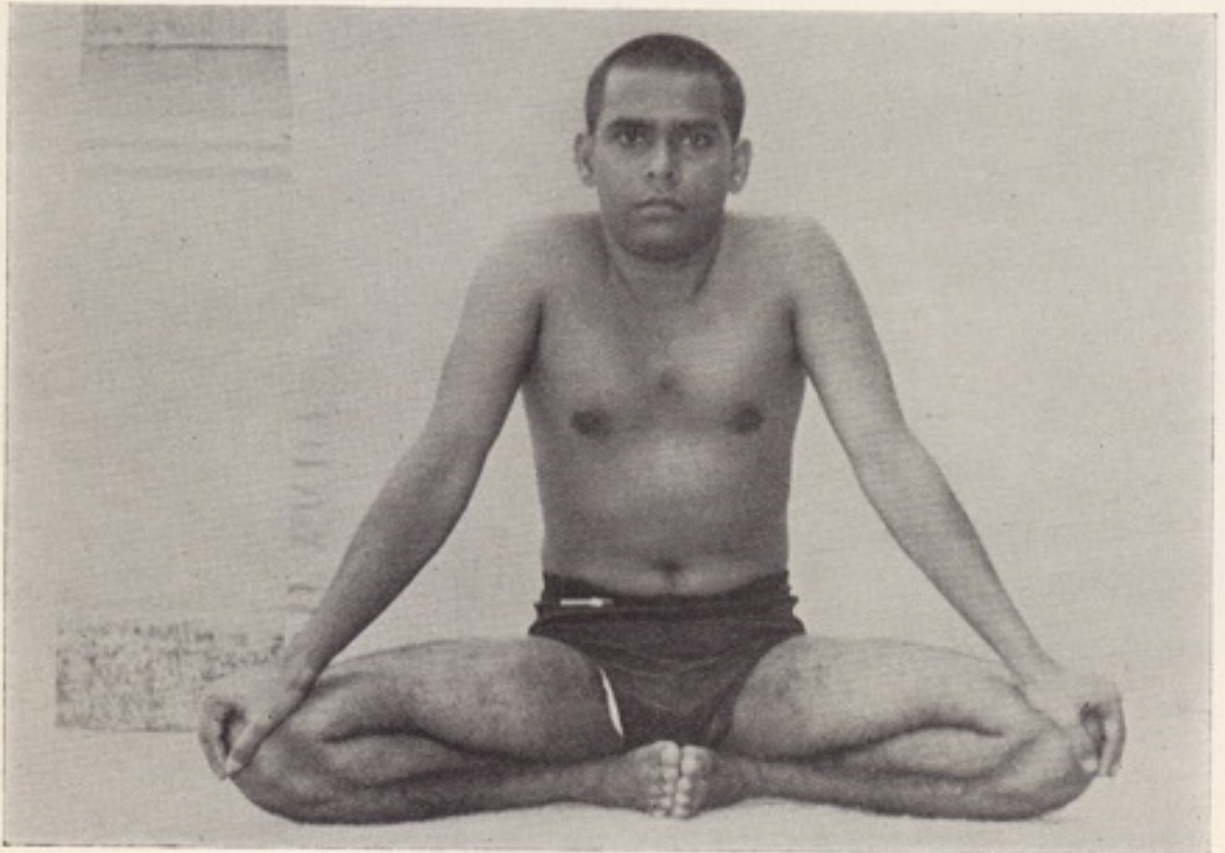


Variation

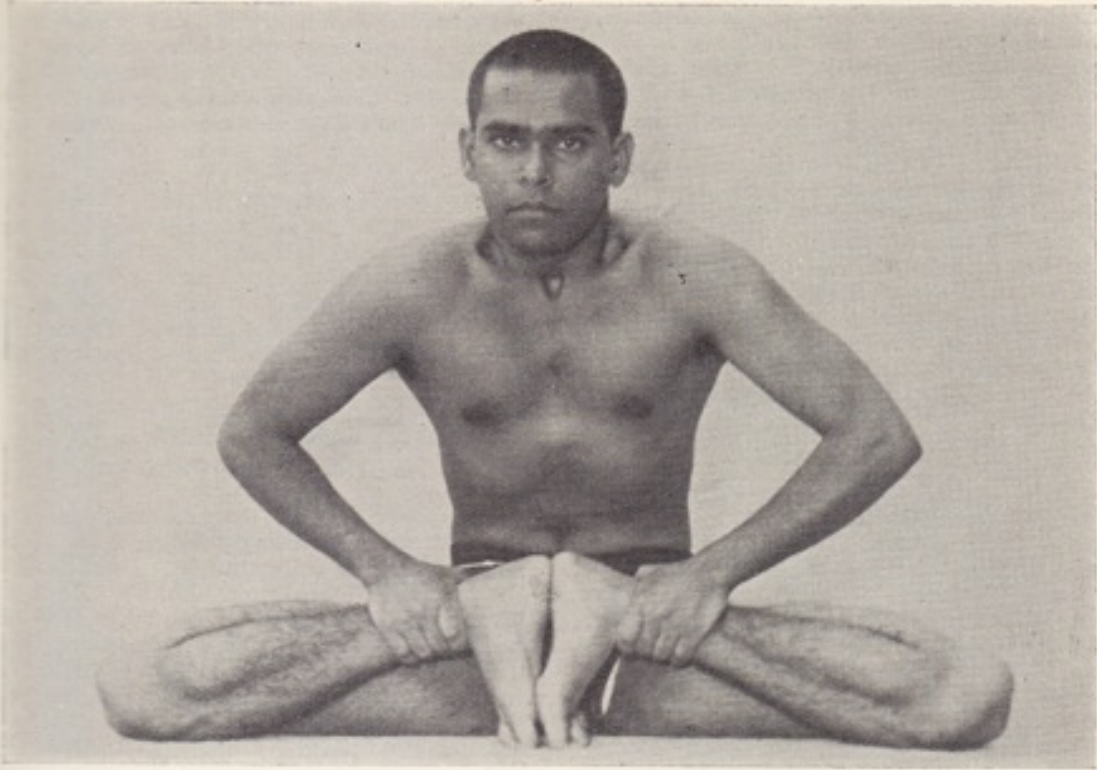
BHADRASAN



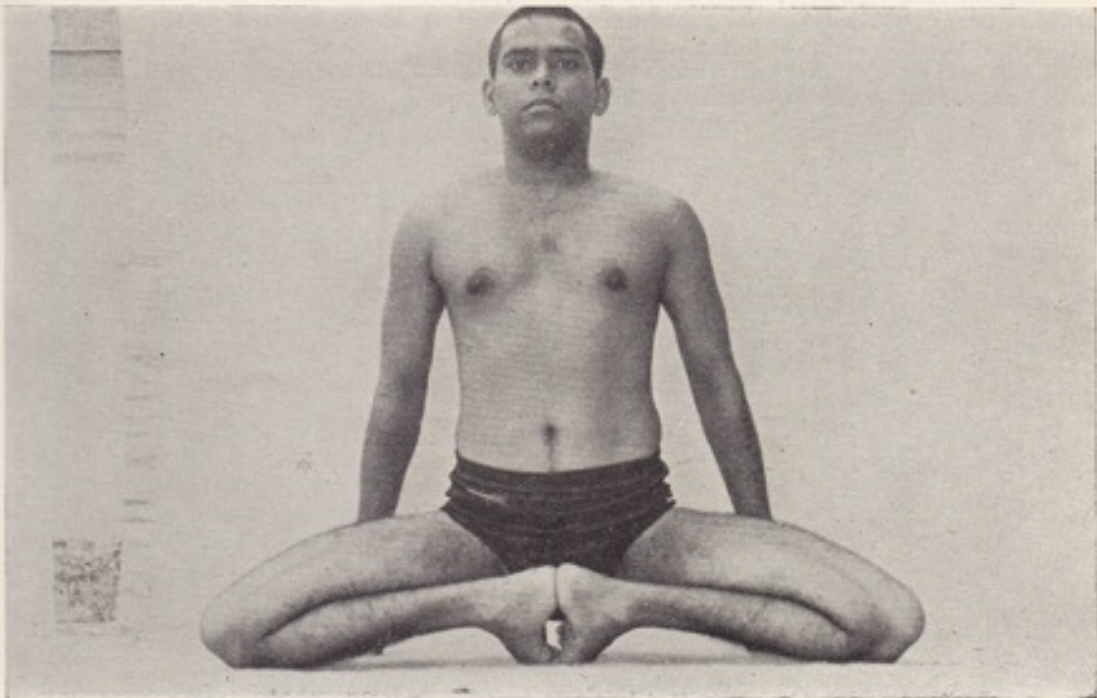
GORAKSHASAN



SAKTHI CHALINI ASAN



KHANDA PEEDASAN



keep the right knee and thigh on the ground. Turn to the left side. Catch hold of the hands with each other behind the back.

NABHI-PEEDASAN:— Sit in Bhadrasan. Catch hold of the feet with the hands and pull them towards the navel. This Asan gives a thorough massage to the gonads and therefore helps in the maintenance of Brahmacharya.

ASHTAVAKRASAN:— Sit with the feet stretched together towards the right. Lean on the left hand placed on the ground. Raise the thighs and calf-muscles from the ground. Thrust the right hand between the thigh; at the same time make an ankle-hook. Rest right palm on the ground. Now raise the feet entirely from the ground. You are now resting on the two palms with the feet stretched to the right parallel to the ground. This Asan wonderfully exercises the arms and the hip joints.

KHANDA PEEDASANA

I shall detail the technique stage by stage. (1) Sit in Bhadrasan. Stretch the legs, the soles of feet touching each other squarely. Fold the legs at the knees. Without letting the soles leave contact, draw them towards the body, and place the heels under the perineum. Press knees with the respective hands so that the feet touch the ground flatly. This is Bhadrasan, the first stage for getting proficiency in Shakti-Chalani Mudra. (2) Pass the hands through the space between the calf-muscles and thighs (if necessary by relaxing the Bhadrasan a little, but keeping the soles together). Now catch hold of the toes firmly with both hands. Now draw the feet towards the body, at the same time twisting the feet at the ankles in such a way that the heels are above and the toes are touching

the ground—and the joined soles of the feet are perpendicular to the ground. Release the hands now; take them away from the legs, cross them and catch hold of the opposite ankles. The soles must be intact and the toes pressed firmly on the ground. You will find that you will need to press the heels with the abdomen. This is Shakti Chalani Asan. Now do Bandha-Traya in this position. Chalani Mudra. (3) Take away the hands from the ankle. Raise yourself slightly from the ground and “move” forward with the toes in contact the ground. Now sit over the feet. The toes are pointing backwards now and the heels are in front. The feet joined together, soles facing each other, will now press against the Khanda, i.e., the perineum or the space between the two legs and the generative organ and anus. Catch hold of the toes with the hands.

JANUSIRASANA

(Head Knee Pose)

Sit down. Press the perineal space with your left heel, stretching your right leg at full length. Keep it quite straight. Catch hold of the foot with both hands. Exhale. Draw the belly inwards, slowly bend down the head and touch your right knee with the forehead. Keep that position for 5 to 10 seconds. Gradually increase the period. Then slowly raise the head to its former, normal position. Take rest for a few minutes. Again practise this Asan. Do this 5 or 6 times. Change the sides alternately. When you practise, retain the nerves of the anus upwards. Feel that the seminal energy is flowing upwards to the brain as Ojas Shakti, or spiritual force. Those who practise this Asana will find it easy to practise Paschimotanasana.

JANUSIRASAN



VARIATIONS

Instead of keeping the heel under the perineal space keep it on the right thigh. Now catch hold of the left foot with both hands and bring the head down to the knee. This gives more pressure on the internal organs.

KURMASANA (Tortoise Pose)

Keep the legs apart. Bend your head and take the hands under the thighs. Keep the hands firm on the ground. Stretch the legs. Keep the chin on the ground.

This exercise is very good to give maximum forward bending to the spine. Also it increases the intra-abdominal pressure.

KAKASANA (Crow Pose)

Sit on your toes keeping the knees apart. Now keep the hands firmly on the ground. Rest knees on the respective arms. Now raise the toes and slowly balance yourself. Stand as long as possible. Repeat 3 or 4 times.

PARSWA KAKASANA (Crow Pose Variations)

Put the hands firm on the ground. Now put both knees on right thigh and balance. Repeat the same exercise on the other side also.

KAKASAN Crow Pose



PARSWA KAKASAN



BADDHA PADMASANA

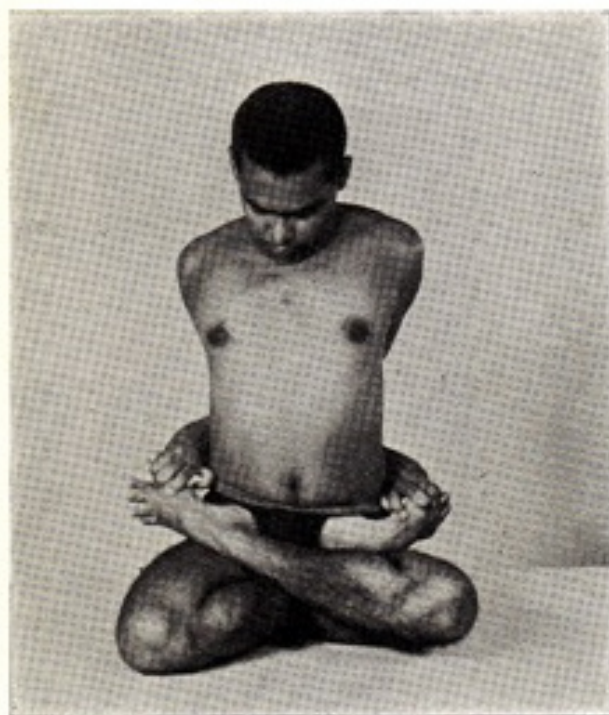
(Modified Lotus Pose)

Sit on Padmasana with legs crossed. The heels should touch the lower part of the belly abdomen. Then take your right hand behind the back. Catch hold of the toe of the right leg with the fore-finger and middle finger of the right hand. Then take your left hand behind the back and catch hold of the toe of the left leg with the fore-finger and middle finger of the left hand.

Some people find it difficult to catch hold of the two toes at a time. They can practise Ardha Baddha Padmasana (half pose) to start with for a month. Practise this half pose alternately.

Chronic diseases of the stomach, liver, spleen and intestines that are pronounced incurable by Allopaths are cured by a steady practice of this Asana. As it keeps the Spine erect, hunchback is removed. The nerves of the waist, hip, feet and legs are purified. Enlargement of the liver and the spleen is cured.

BADHA PADMASAN



KUKKUTASANA

(Cock Pose)

First do Padmasana. Introduce your two arms one by one as far as the elbow joint into the space between the calves. Place the palms on the ground, fingers pointing forwards. Raise the body from the ground as shown in the picture. The lock of the feet should come as far as the elbow joint. Remain in this Asana as long as you can. All the benefits of Padmasana can be derived from this Asana. Biceps of the hands, deltoid of the shoulders, pectoralis major and minor, etc. are developed well. The chest becomes broad.

GARBHASANA

(Child in the womb pose)

When this Asana is demonstrated, it resembles the position of the child when it is in the womb. Hence this is called Garbhasana. As described in Kuktasana introduce both hands in the space between the thighs and calves. Bring out the elbows of the two hands. Catch hold of the right ear with the right hand and the left ear with the left hand. You should perform the last stage of this Asana with great care. Because when you try to catch hold of the ears with the hands, you may fall down backwards. By practice you can slowly balance the body on the buttocks. The body will remain steady after a few days' practice. Remain in the Asana for 2 to 3 minutes.

The digestive power is augmented. Appetite increases. The bowels become quite free. You will get clear motions. Many intestinal diseases are removed. Hands and legs will become strong. Hip joints will get sufficient movement and blood circulation will increase.

All these advanced exercises should be practised under an expert teacher. Otherwise you may sprain your muscles here and there. It is easier to practise these exercises after getting the correct technique from the teacher. Only after mastering the preliminary lessons should one go to the advanced poses. Flexibility of the spine by the above exercises brings quick purification of the nerve centres and the awakening of the spiritual force lying at the lowest centre of the spine.

KUKUDASAN



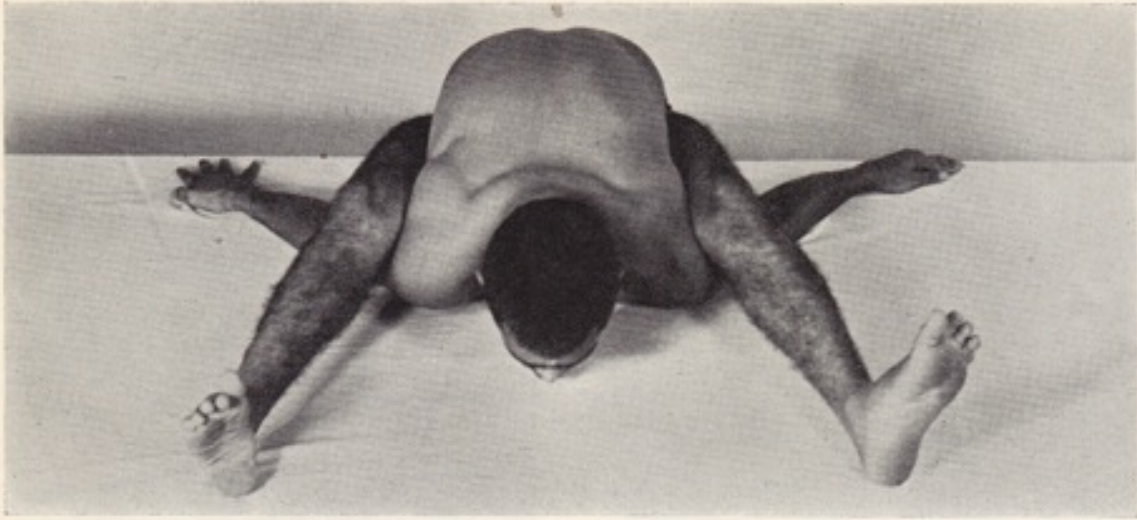
GARBHASANA



EKAPADASAN



KURMASAN



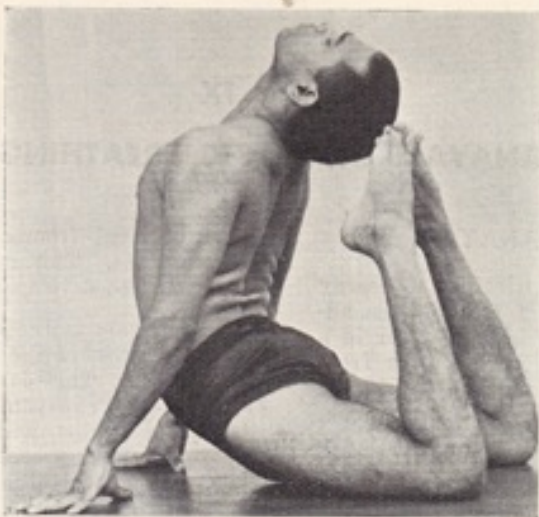
NATARAJASAN



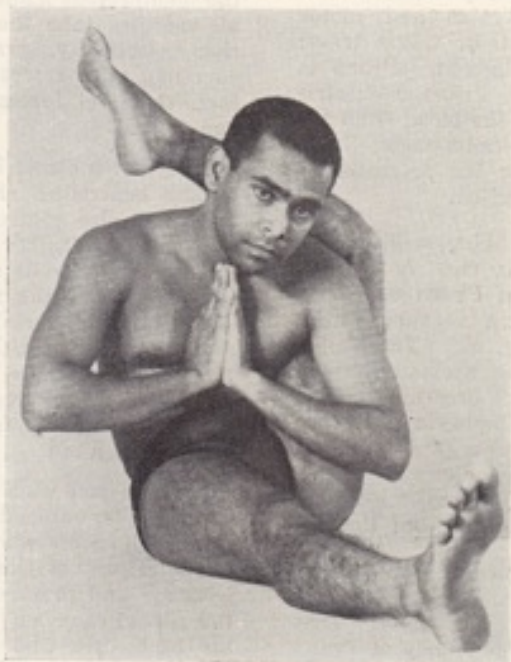
GARUDASAN



OORDHWAMUKA ASAN



EKAPADA SIRASAN



Chapter IX

PRANAYAM OR YOGIC BREATHING

PRANA AND PRANAYAM

Prana is the universal principle of energy or force. It is the vital force. It is all-pervading. It may be either in a static or in a dynamic state. It is found in all forms from the highest to the lowest, from the ant to the elephant, from the unicellular amoeba to man, from the elementary forms of plant life to the developed forms of animal life. It is Prana that shines in your eyes. It is through the power of Prana that the ear hears, the eye sees, the skin feels, the tongue tastes, the nose smells, the brain and the intellect do their functions. The smile in a young lady, the melody in the music, the power in the emphatic words of an orator, the charm in the speech of one's beloved are all due to Prana. Fire burns through Prana. Wind blows through Prana. River flows through Prana. The aeroplane moves in the air through Prana. Trains and motor cars move through Prana. Radio waves travel through Prana. Prana is electron. Prana is force. Prana is magnetism. Prana is electricity. It is Prana that pumps the blood from the heart into the arteries of blood-vessels. It is Prana that is responsible for the processes of digestion, excretion, and secretion.

Prana is expended by thinking, willing, acting, moving, talking, writing, etc. A healthy, strong man has abundance of Prana or nerve-force or vitality. The Prana is supplied by food, water, air, solar energy, etc. The supply of Prana is taken up by the nervous system. The Prana is absorbed by breathing. The excess of Prana is stored in the brain and nerve centres. When the seminal energy sublimates, or transforms, it supplies abundance of Prana to the system. It is stored up in the brain in the form of Ojas. Ojas is nothing but Prana.

The Yogi stores abundance of Prana by a regular practice of Pranayam just as a storage battery can be made to store electricity. That Yogi who has stored up a large supply of Prana radiates strength and vitality all round. He is a mighty power-house. Those who come in close contact with him imbibe Prana from him, and get strength, vigour, vitality and exhilaration of spirits. Just as water flows from one vessel to another, Prana actually flows like a

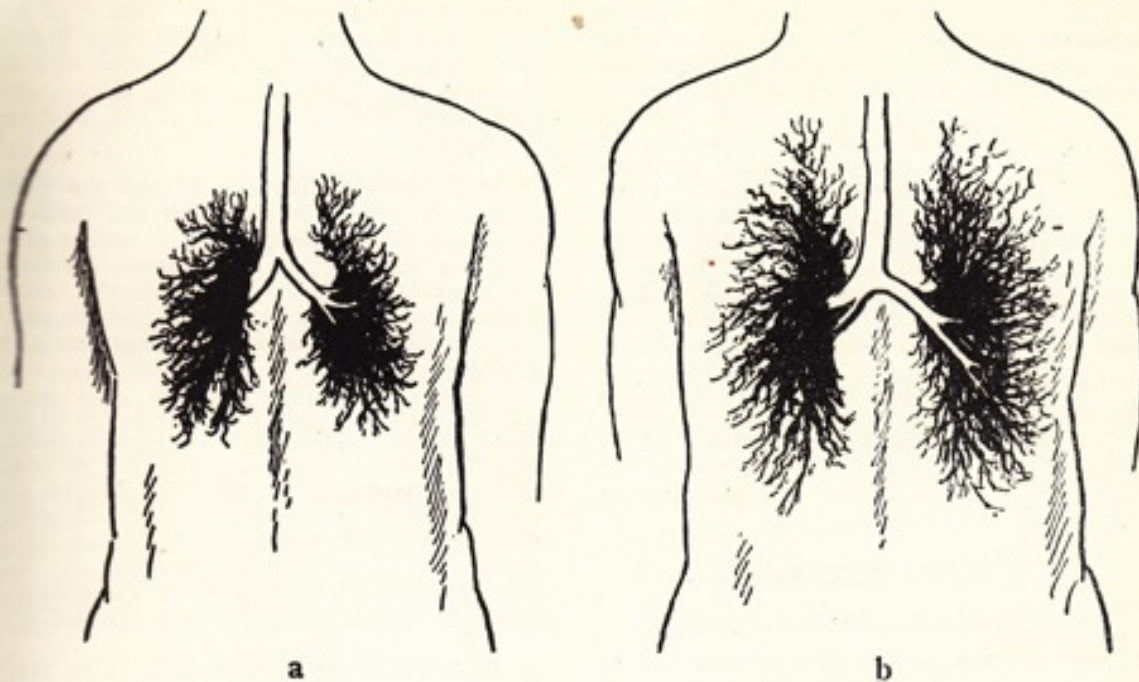
steady current from a developed Yogi towards weak persons. This can be actually seen by the Yogi who has developed his inner Yogic vision.

Pranayam is the control of the Prana and the vital forces of the body. It is regulation of the breath. This is a most important step. The aim of Pranayam is the control of Prana. Pranayam begins with the regulation of the breath for having control over the life-currents through the control of breath. Breath is the external manifestation of the gross Prana. A correct habit of breathing must be established by the regular practice of Pranayam. In ordinary, worldly persons the breathing is irregular.

If you can control the Prana you can completely control all the forces of the universe, mental and physical. The Yogi can also control the omnipresent manifesting power out of which all energies take their origin, whether magnetism, electricity, gravitation, cohesion, nerve-currents, vital forces or thought vibrations; in fact, the total forces of the universe—physical and mental.

If one controls breath or Prana, the mind is also controlled. He who has controlled his mind has also controlled his breath. If one is suspended, the other is also suspended. If the mind and the Prana are both controlled one gets liberation from the round of births and deaths and attains immortality. There is an intimate connection between the mind, Prana and semen. If one controls the seminal energy, the mind and Prana are also controlled. He who has controlled his seminal force has also controlled his Prana and mind.

When you wish to hear a faint sound, the breath gets automatically suspended for short time. The cooly who carries heavy bags of rice at the railway station instinctively fills his lungs with air and practises unconscious retention of the air (Pranayam) till the bag is lifted onto his back. He who crosses a small rivulet by jumping, he who practises long jump and high jump and various exercises with the parallel bars practises retention of breath instinctively. This retention of breath augments his vitality, strength. It provides abundance of energy immediately.



Bronchial tree (a) in full expiration, (b) in full inspiration.

Just as a goldsmith removes impurities from gold by heating it in a hot furnace and by blowing strongly through a blow-pipe, so also the Yogic student removes the impurities of the body and the Indriyas by blowing his lungs, i.e., by practising Pranayam.

The chief aim of Pranayam is to unite the Prana with the Apana and take the united Prana-apanas slowly upwards to the head. The effect or fruit of Pranayam is awakening of the sleeping Kundalini.

Pranayam, though it concerns the breath only, gives good exercise also to the various internal organs and the whole body. Pranayam removes all sorts of diseases, improves health, energises digestion, invigorates the nerves, removes passion and awakens Kundalini Shakti. It bestows good health and a steady mind. A Pranayam practitioner can stop his breath. People can break stones on his chest. He does not feel anything because he has controlled his Prana. A Pranayam practitioner will have a light body free from diseases, a very fair complexion, a sweet melodious voice, and a pleasant smell from his body.

He who practises Pranayam will have good appetite, cheerfulness, a handsome figure, great strength, courage, enthusiasm, a high standard

of health, vigour and vitality and good concentration of the mind. This Pranayam is quite suitable for people in the West and East, men and women.

A Yogi measures the span of his life not by the number of years but by the number of breaths. You take in a certain amount of energy or Prana from the atmosphere along with each breath. Vital capacity is the capacity of a man to inhale the largest quantity of air after the deepest possible exhalation. A man takes fifteen breaths in a minute. So the total number of breaths amounts to 21,600 per day.

The room in which you practise Pranayam must not be damp or ill-ventilated. It must be dry and airy. You may practise by the side of a river or lake, in the corner of a garden in the open air, when there is no chill or draught of cold air or on the top or the foot of a hill. The practice of Pranayam should be performed daily with the mind firmly fixed on Truth. Then the Chitta is absorbed in the Sushumna. Consequently the Prana becomes steady. It does not fluctuate. Pranayam requires deep concentration and attention.

There should be no strain at any stage in the practice of Pranayam. You should ex-

perience joy and pleasure in doing the same. You should not feel any undue strain. Always inhale and exhale very very slowly. Do not make the least sound. Whenever you feel uneasy, depressed, or dejected, practise Pranayam.

The practice of Kumbhak (retention) in Pranayam produces heat and thereby the Kundalini Shakti is awakened and passes upwards along the Sushumna Nadi. Kumbhak increases the period of life also. Mild Kumbhak during the practice of Asan augments the efficacy of Asans and gives increased power and vitality. During the practice of Pranayam repeat your Ishta Mantra (Japa). That will be pure Yoga.

As there is always some drowsiness when one gets up from bed, it is advisable to do a few Pranayams, 10 to 20 mild Kumbhak just to drive off drowsiness and to make you fit for meditation. The mind gets one-pointed after the practice of Pranayam.

SUKH PURVAK

(Easy Comfortable Pranayam)

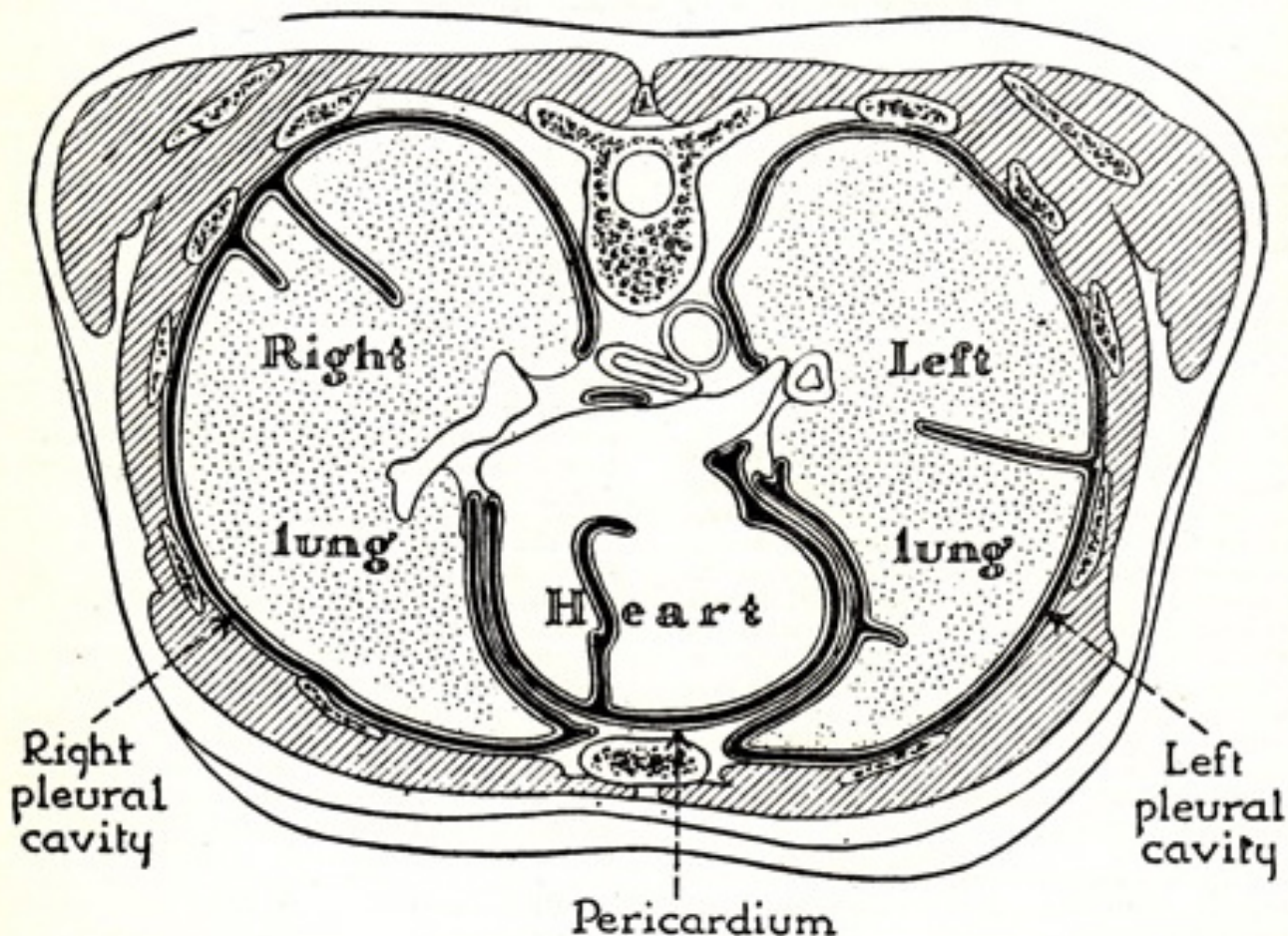
Sit in the Padmasan or Siddhasan pose in your meditation room. Close the right nostril

with the right thumb. Draw in the air very slowly through the left nostril. Then close the left nostril also with the little and ring fingers of the right hand. Retain the air as long as you can comfortably keep. Then exhale very very slowly through the right nostril after removing the thumb.

Then draw in the air through the right nostril. Retain the air as before and exhale it very very slowly through the left nostril after removing the little and ring fingers. All these six processes constitute one Pranayam. Do 5 Pranayams to start with and increase the number gradually. You can do 20 Pranayams at a sitting.

Have a Bhav (mental attitude) that all the Daivi Sampat (Divine qualities) such as mercy, love, forgiveness, Santi, joy, etc., are entering into your system along with the inspired air and that all the Asura Sampat (devilish qualities) such as lust, anger, greed, etc., are being thrown out along with the expired air. Repeat OM mentally during Purak (inhalation), Kumbhak (retention) and Rechak (exhalation).

This Pranayam removes all diseases, purifies the Nadis, steadies the mind in con-



centration, improves digestion, increases the digestive fire and the appetite, helps to maintain Brahmacharya and awakens the Kundalini Shakti. Purification of Nadis will set in rapidly.

For Purak, Kumbhak and Rechak, the ratio is 1: 4: 2. If you inhale for 4 seconds, retain the air for 16 seconds and then exhale for 8 seconds. You can gradually increase these to 16, 64 and 32 seconds respectively.

UJJAYI

Adopt the Padmasan or the Siddhasan pose. Close the mouth. Inhale slowly through both the nostrils in a smooth uniform manner till the breath seems to fill the space between the throat and the heart. Retain the breath as long as you can comfortably and then exhale through the left nostril by closing the right nostril with your right thumb. Expand the chest when you exhale. During inhalation a peculiar sound is produced owing to the partial closing of the glottis. The sound produced during inhalation should be of a mild and uniform pitch. It should be continuous also. This Pranayam can be practised even while walking or standing. Instead of exhaling through the left nostril, you can exhale slowly through both nostrils.

This Pranayam removes the heat in the head. The gastric fire is increased. It removes phlegm from the throat. Asthma, consumption and all sorts of pulmonary diseases are cured. Everything is accomplished by Ujjayi. The practitioner is never attacked by diseases of phlegm, nerves, dyspepsia, dysentery, enlarged spleen, consumption, cough, or fever. Perform Ujjayi to destroy decay and prevent death.

SITALI

Protrude the tongue a little away from the lips. Fold the tongue like a tube lengthwise. Draw in the air through the mouth with the hissing sound SI. Retain the breath as long as you can with comfort. Then exhale slowly through both the nostrils. Practise this 6 times. You can do this even while standing or walking.

This Pranayam purifies the blood. It quenches thirst and appeases hunger. It destroys Gulma (chronic dyspepsia), inflammation of various chronic diseases, fever, consumption, indigestion, bilious disorders, etc. You will find this extremely useful in summer.

BHASTRIKA

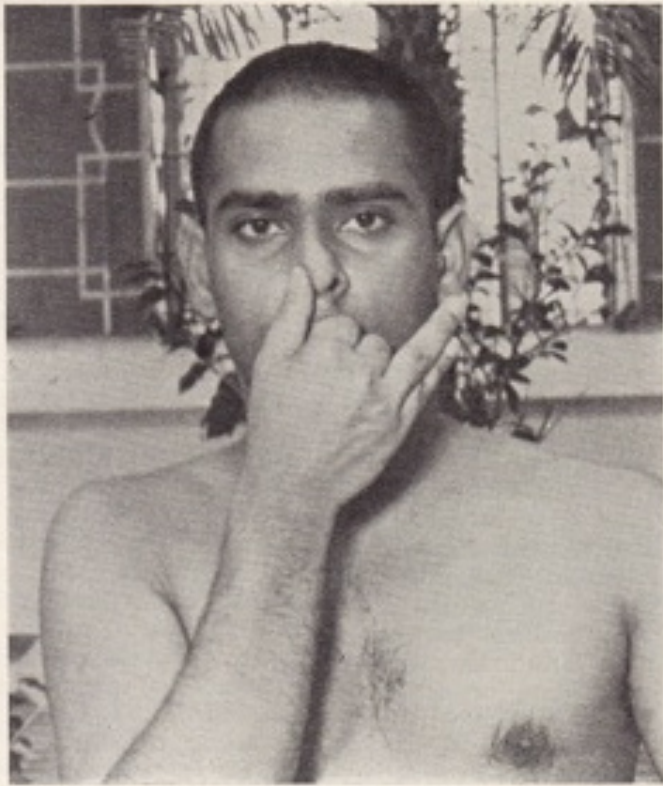
In Sanskrit "Bhastrika" means bellows. Rapid succession of forcible expulsions is a characteristic feature of Bhastrika. Just as a blacksmith blows his bellows rapidly, so also you will have to move your breath rapidly.

Sit in Padmasan. Keep the body, neck and head erect. Close the mouth. Now inhale and exhale quickly ten times like the bellows of a blacksmith. Constantly dilate and contract the chest. Forcibly and quickly inhale and exhale ten times and then make a deep inhalation through both the nostrils. Retain the breath as long as you can do with comfort and then exhale completely. This is one round of Bhastrika. You can do this 4 times. After some practice, you can gradually increase the number of expulsions to 20. You can do two rounds in a sitting. You will not feel any fatigue, if you take a little rest after each round. Take a few normal breaths after each round. Then you will be fresh for the next round. The number of expulsions for each round is determined by the strength and capacity of the practitioner. You must not go to extremes. Practise regularly every day and gradually increase the number of rounds.

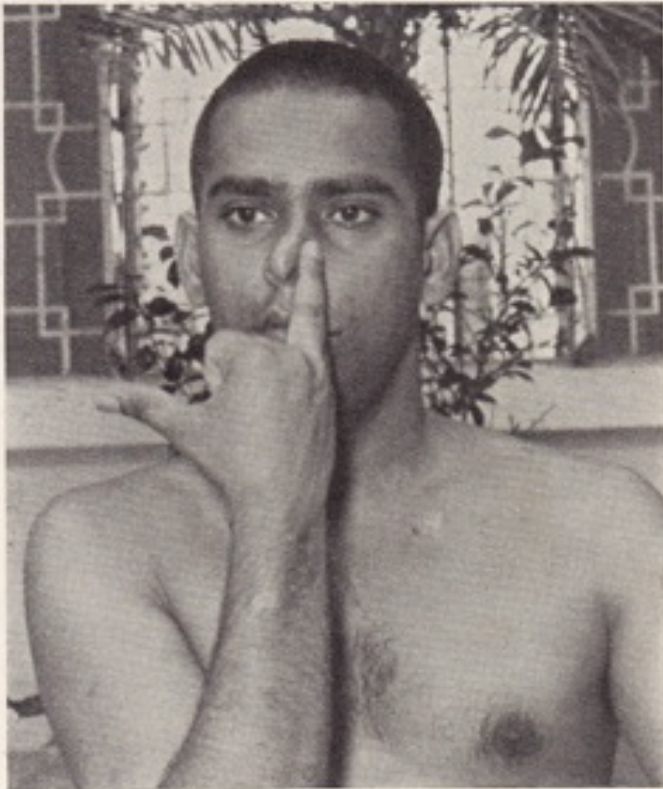
There is another variety of Bhastrika wherein only one nostril is used for breathing purposes.

Bhastrika is a powerful exercise. It relieves inflammation of the throat, increases the gastric fire, destroys phlegm, removes diseases of the nose and chest and cures asthma and consumption. It removes all diseases which arise from an excess of wind, bile and phlegm. It gives warmth to the body. It purifies the Nadis considerably. It is the most beneficial of all Kumbhaks. It awakens Kundalini Shakti quickly. For health and strength, practise Bhastrika.

PRANAYAN MUDRA



Closing right nostril with the thumb.



Closing the left nostril with little finger and ring finger.

Chapter X

THE ORDER OF EXERCISES AND DURATION

The following table gives a list of exercises with their minimum and maximum durations. Those exercises which cannot be prolonged for longer time can be "repeated" as shown below.

	DURATION	
	Minimum	Maximum
Sirshasan	10 Mts.	15 Mts.
Sarvangasan	10 Mts.	15 Mts.
Halasan	Repeat 3 or 4 times	
Matsyasan	3 Mts.	4 Mts.
Paschimottanasan	Repeat 4 to 5 times	
Bhujangasan	Repeat 4 to 5 times	
Salabhasan	Repeat 4 to 5 times	
Dhanurasan	Repeat 4 to 5 times	
Ardhamatsyendrasan	Repeat the Asan twice both ways.	
Mayurasan	As long as possible	
Padahasthasan	Repeat 3 to 4 times	
Trikonasan	Twice	
Chakrasan	Twice	
Savasan	5 Mts. to 10 Mts.	
Kapalabhati	4 Rounds to 10 Rounds	
Anuloma-Viloma Pranayama	20 Rounds to 40 Rounds	
Ujjayi	10 to 20 Rounds	
Bhastrika	5 to 10 Rounds	
Sitali	10 to 20 Rounds	
Mahamudra	6 to 12 times	
Mahavedha	6 to 12 times	

Then, Concentration and Meditation.

PRELIMINARY KRIYAS

Neti	
Dhauti	
Nauli	6 to 10 times
Moola-Bandha	
Jalandhra-Bandha	
Uddiyana Bandha	6 to 10 times

YOGIC ALPHABET

Asans make you strong and healthy and eradicate many diseases.

Bhastrika Pranayama develops the lungs and destroys the germs of tuberculosis and augments lung-power and lung-capacity.

Constipation is removed by the practice of Bhujang, Salabh and Dhanur Asans.

Dhanurasan is a combination of Bhujang and Salabh Asans.

Eating in moderation, simple living and high thinking help the Yogic student to attain his goal quickly.

Fasting eliminates poison, purifies the whole bodily system and invigorates the cells.

Garbhasan augments the digestive power, increases the appetite and removes many intestinal diseases.

Halasan makes the spine very elastic and very supple.

Indriyas should be controlled by the practice of Pratyahara and Dama.

Japa of OM or Hari OM should go hand in hand with Asan and Pranayama.

Kumbhak helps to attain longevity and awaken the Kundalini.

Lolasan strengthens the muscles of the arms and forearms.

Mind can be controlled by Vairagya, Abhyasa, Sat Sang, Vichara, eradication of Vasanas, destruction of egoism, Pranayama, meditation and cultivation of virtues such as mercy, complacency, self-denial, Santi and Santosh.

Nadi Suddhi can be obtained by the practice of Pranayama.

Oordhva Padmasan check wet-dreams, transmutes the sexual energy into Ojas.

Paschimottanasan removes fat, increases the gastric fire and cures diseases of the stomach.

Quetta Earthquake is nothing when compared to the agitation caused in the mind by the turbulent senses.

Regularity in the practice of Asan and Pranayama is an indispensable requisite for quick and solid progress.

Sirshasan is King of All Asans. It transmutes seminal energy into Ojas, develops memory and intellectual capacity and cures a host of ailments.

Tratak helps concentration of the mind and removes diseases of the eyes.

Uddiyana Bandha imparts beautiful health, strength, vigour, and vitality and removes the disorders of the alimentary system.

Vajrasan removes drowsiness, strengthens the spine, helps digestion and is very useful for meditation.

Winter is the best time for a rigorous practice of Yoga.

Xerostomia or abnormal dryness of the mouth can be removed by the practice of Sitali and Sitakari Pranayama.

Yoga Mudra cures the disorders of the abdomen and awakens the Kundalini.

Zerosis is a disease of the eye caused by a deficiency of vitamin 'A'. This is removed by the practice of mild Tratak and Sirshasan.

Chapter XI

YOGA FOR HEALTH

1. Yoga for Health

1. Most of the diseases take their origin in over-eating, sexual excess and outbursts of anger and hatred. If the mind is kept cool and calm at all times, you will have wonderful health, strength and vitality. Energy is depleted by fits of anger. The cells and tissues are filled with morbid, poisonous materials, when one loses one's temper and entertains deep hatred. Various sorts of physical ailments crop up. The blood becomes hot and thin and consequently night-pollutions result. Various kinds of nervous diseases are attributable to excessive loss of the seminal energy and frequent fits of explosive anger or wrath.

2. Let any disease remain in your body. Do not bother much. Do not fret and fume. Develop the power of endurance and resistance. Strengthen your body, mind and nerves. Take plenty of open-air exercise, substantial nutritious food, medicated oil bath and plenty of rest. Have mental and physical recreation. Lead a well-regulated life. Be moderate in food, drink and enjoyments. Lead a spiritual life. All diseases will leave your body by themselves. All microbes will die, when your vitality, vigour and strength are at a flood tide. This is the secret of health and happiness.

3. Do not be carried away by the pompous advertisements made by quacks and charlatans. Lead a simple natural life. You will become all right soon. Do not spend any money in purchasing the so-called patent medicines and specifics. They are worthless. Quacks try to exploit the credulous and the ignorant. Beware. Do not go to the doctors very often. Endeavour to qualify yourself as your own doctor. Understand the laws of nature and the principles of hygiene and health. Do not trespass against the laws of health.

4. Bask in the sun. Expose your body to the rays of the sun for a short time daily. This is heliotherapy or sun-treatment. The sun is the source of energy and power. You will derive energy and power from the sun.

5. Soak 12 almonds at night. Remove the skin and take the almonds with some sugarcandy

in the early morning. Or you can make a refreshing beverage by grinding these almonds along with a little black pepper and sugarcandy. This is called "*tandai*" by the Punjabis. This is a fine, cooling and strength-giving tonic.

6. Rest in bed is necessary. Adjust your diet. Take simple, wholesome, easily digestible, bland and non-irritating food. Give up hot, pungent curries, chutnies and chillies. Rest the stomach and the small bowels by having recourse to partial fasts. If you can fast for a whole day, it is all the better. Fasting eliminates poisons and overhauls the system thoroughly. You can take sago and milk, barley water, and fruits like sweet oranges, grapes, etc. If you are thirsty, you can take lemon or orange juice with sugarcandy.

7. Observe Brahmacharya. Get up at 4 a.m. and practise Japa of "*Hari Om*" or any Mantra and also meditation for one hour. The Name of the Lord is the best medicine or tonic in the world. You should have intense faith in the power of the names of the Lord. Incurable diseases are cured by Japa or singing Hari's name. Meditation creates new, healthy vibrations in all the cells of the body and removes any kind of disease. All the tissues are bathed in the nectar that flows during meditation. All germs that cause diseases are destroyed. The rationale of this kind of Yogic or spiritual treatment is yet unknown to the medical profession.

8. Why do you unnecessarily introduce foreign drugs into the system? Resort to Nature-cure and Yogic-Chikitsa. Practise regularly Pranayam, breathing exercises, Asanas, concentration and meditation. This is the ideal treatment. Do not think too much of the disease and too much of the body. Too much thinking of the disease will intensify the malady. Keep the mind fully occupied in some way or the other. This is very important. Turn away the mind from the body and think of the diseaseless ATMA or Soul within, the bed-rock or substratum for the body and mind. Friend, cultivate this kind of Atma-chintan and attain the *Anamayapada* or Painless Seat—Param Dhama or Immortal Brahman. Cheer up yourself. Have a cheerful countenance always.

Meditate on OM. Think of OM. Sing OM. OM is thy real name. OM is the best tonic, specific or sheet anchor, *panacea* or cure-all 'pick-me-up' or sovereign remedy for all diseases. Smile and laugh. Thou art bodiless, undying Soul. Never, never forget this.

9. May God bless you with perfect health, high standard of vigour, strength, vitality and longevity! May you prosper gloriously! OM Santi! Santi!! Santi!!!

2. Essence of Sadhan

1. Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is *Brahmamuhurta* which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.

2. Asan:— Sit on *Padma*, *Siddha* or *Sukha Asan* for *Japa* and meditation for half an hour facing East or North. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do *Sirshasan*, *Sarvangasan* for keeping up *Brahmacharya* and health. Take light physical exercise as walking etc. regularly. Do twenty *Pranayamas*.

3. *Japa*:— Repeat any Mantra as pure OM or OM *Namo Narayanaya*, OM *Nama Sivaya*, OM *Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*, OM *Saravanabhavaya Namah*, *Sita Ram*, *Sri Ram*, *Hari OM* or *Gayatri* according to your taste or inclination from 108 to 21,600 times daily (200 *Malas* x 108=21,600).

4. Dietetic Discipline:— Take Sattvic food (*Shuddha Ahara*). Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (*Mithahara*). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, dal and bread without any chutnie. Do not ask for extra salt for dal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.

5. Have a separate meditation room under lock and key.

6. Charity:— Do charity regularly every month or even daily according to your means or one anna in a rupee.

7. *Swadhyaya*:— Study systematically *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavatam*, *Vishnu Sahasranama*, *Lalita Sahasranama*, *Aditya Hridaya*, *Upanishads* or *Yoga Vasishtha* from half an hour to one hour daily and have *Shuddha Vichara*.

8. Preserve the vital force "*Veerya*" very, very carefully. *Veerya* is God in motion or

manifestation, *Vibhuti*. *Veerya* is all power. *Veerya* is money. *Veerya* is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.

9. Get by heart some prayer *Slokas*, *Stotras* and repeat them as soon as you sit on the *Asan* before starting *Japa* or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.

10. Give up bad company (have constant *Satsangh*), smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habit.

11. Fast on *Ekadasi* or live on milk and fruits only.

12. Have a *Japa Mala* (rosary) in your neck or pocket or underneath your pillow at night.

13. Observe *Mauna* (Silence) for a couple of hours daily.

14. Discipline of Speech:— Speak the truth at any cost. Speak little. Speak sweet.

15. Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have simple living and high thinking.

16. Never hurt anybody (*Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*). Control anger by love, *Kshama* (forgiveness) and *Daya* (compassion).

17. Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.

18. Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily a self-correction register as Benjamin Franklin did. Do not brood over the past mistakes.

19. Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (*Sadachara*).

20. Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (*Saranagathi*).

This is the essence of all spiritual *Sadhanas*. This will lead to *Moksha*. All these *Niyamas* or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give leniency to the mind.

3. Gist of Karma Yoga

1. *Karma Yoga* is selfless service unto humanity. The important point is to serve humanity without any attachment or egoism. The central teaching of the *Gita* is non-attachment to work. Lord Krishna says: "Work

incessantly. Your duty is to work but not to expect the fruits thereof."

2. The mind is so framed that it cannot work without expectation of fruits or anticipation of rewards or even appreciation. You will have to train the mind to work disinterestedly. Worldly people cannot understand the spirit of Nishkamya Karma Yoga as their minds are charged or saturated with impurities. Do vigorous service for some time. You will grasp the spirit of selfless service.

3. A Karma Yogi should be absolutely free from greed, lust, anger and egoism. Then only he can do real useful service. If there are traces of these Doshas, he should try to remove them one by one.

4. A Karma Yogi should have an amiable, loving, social nature. He should have perfect adaptability, tolerance, sympathy, cosmic love and mercy. He should be able to adjust himself to the ways and habits of others. He should have an all-embracing and all-inclusive heart and equal vision. He should have a cool and balanced mind. He should rejoice in the welfare of others. He should have all the organs under perfect control. He should lead a very simple life. He should bear insult, disrespect, dishonour, censure, infamy, disgrace, harsh words, heat and cold, and the pain of diseases. He should have power of endurance. He should have absolute faith in himself, in God, in scriptures and in the words of his Guru. Such a man becomes a good Karma Yogi and reaches the Goal quickly.

5. The man who serves the world really serves himself. He who helps others really helps himself. This is an important point. When you serve a man, when you serve your country, always think that the Lord has given you a rare opportunity to improve, correct and mould yourself by service. Be grateful to that man who has given you a chance to serve him.

6. Karma Yoga prepares the mind for the reception of Light or Knowledge. It expands the heart and breaks all barriers that stand in the way of unity or oneness. Karma Yoga is the effective Sadhan for Chitta Shuddhi.

7. By doing selfless service you purify your heart. Egoism, hatred, jealousy, idea of superiority and all the kindred negative qualities will vanish. Humility, pure love, sympathy, tolerance and mercy will be developed. Sense of separateness will be annihilated. Selfishness will be eradicated. You will get a broad and liberal outlook of life. You will begin to feel oneness and unity. Eventually you will obtain knowledge of the Self. You will realise 'One in All'

and 'All in One.' You will feel unbounded joy. The world is nothing but a manifestation of God. Service of humanity and country is service of God. Service is worship.

8. Generally people are impatient and they expect Siddhis after doing a little service. The real Karma Yogi who serves people with humility and Atma Bhav (seeing God in every face) becomes a real ruler of the world. He is honoured and respected by all. The more service you do with Atma Bhav, the more power, energy and capacity you will get. Practise this and feel.

9. When the thought of doing good to others becomes part and parcel of a man's very being, then he will not entertain any selfish motive at all. He takes immense delight in serving others, in doing good to others. There is a peculiar joy and Ananda in the vigorous Nishkamya service. He gets inner spiritual strength and power by performing motiveless and selfless actions.

10. Never grumble or murmur when you do service to others. Take delight in service. Be ever ready to serve others. Watch for opportunities to serve. Never miss a single opportunity. Create opportunities. Create the field for good service.

11. In the practice of Nishkamya Karma Yoga, there is no loss of effort. There is no harm. There is no transgression either. Even a little of this practice can protect you from the great fear of birth and death with its concomitant evils. You will reap the fruits of Karma Yoga, viz., Jnana. There is no uncertainty here. The path of Karma Yoga eventually leads to the attainment of Bliss of the Self.

4. Bhakti Yoga Sadhan

1. Bhakti is the slender silken thread of Prem or Love that binds the heart of a devotee to the Lotus Feet of the Lord. Bhakti is intense devotion and supreme attachment to God. It is the spontaneous out-pouring of love towards God. It is pure, unselfish, Divine Love or Shuddha Prem. Bhakti is the sacred, higher emotion of sublime sentiments that unites the devotee with the Lord. It has to be experienced by the Bhaktas.

2. Human love is hollow. It is mere animal attraction. It is passion. It is carnal love. It is selfish love. It is ever changing. It is all hypocrisy and mere show. The wife does not care for her husband when he is in the role of unemployment. She frowns at him. Likewise, the husband dislikes his wife when

she loses her beauty on account of some chronic disease. You can find real, lasting love in God alone. His love knows no change.

3. Bhakti is the basis of all religious life. Bhakti destroys Vasanas and egoism. A life without Bhakti faith, love and devotion is a dreary waste. Bhakti softens the heart and removes jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, egoism, pride and arrogance. It infuses joy, Divine ecstasy, Bliss, Peace and Knowledge. All cares, worries, anxieties, fears, mental torments and tribulations entirely vanish. The devotee is freed from the Samsaric wheel of births and deaths. He attains the Immortal Abode of everlasting Peace, Bliss and Knowledge.

4. Sa-kamyā Bhakti is one where the Bhakta worships God for getting riches, son or for removal of sufferings from diseases. Vyabhicharini Bhakti is one in which the devotee worships or loves God for some time and then his wife, children and property for some time. To love God and God alone for ever and ever is Avyabhicharini Bhakti. Prahlad in the advanced stage of devotion meditated on his own Self as Lord Hari. This is Abheda Bhakti.

5. The Bhakta remains in the Loka where Lord Vishnu resides, like an inhabitant of a state. This is Salokya Mukti. In Samipya Mukti, the Bhakta remains in close proximity with the Lord, like the attendant of a king. In Sarupya Mukti he gets the same form like that of the Lord, like the brother of a king. In Sayujya Mukti, he becomes one with the Lord, like salt and water. Thus there are four kinds of Mukti for the Bhaktas.

6. Out of love, the formless Brahman assumes the form of Lord Hari to please His devotees. God is an embodiment of mercy. The Lord runs after his devotees with food and water in his hands to the forests. He becomes a slave of His devotees. Lord Vishnu says to Prahlad: "Dear, you are too tender of age and too delicate of body to stand the terrible tortures inflicted on you by your hot-headed father. A parallel of his atrocious deed I have never seen before. Pray, therefore, excuse me if I was late in coming to your rescue." Again Lord Krishna says: "I am not in My control. I am under the complete control of My Bhaktas. They have taken entire possession of My heart. How can I leave them when they have taken entire possession of My heart? How can I leave them when they have renounced everything for My sake? He who seeks Me in all things, all things in Me, to him I am never lost, nor is he lost to Me."

7. By following these nine modes of worship (Nava-vidha Bhakti), you can develop Bhakti and attain God-realisation: Sravan (hearing the Lilas of God); Kirtan (singing his praise); Smarana (remembering His name); Padasevan (worshipping His Lotus Feet); Archan (offering); Vandan (prostration); Dasya (service); Sakhya (friendship); and Atmanivedan (complete self-surrender). Study Gita Ramayan, Bhagawatam. Have Sat Sangh. Visit holy places (Yatra). Do Japa. Meditate. Sing His Name. You can develop Bhakti and have His Darshan.

8. Do you really want God? Do you really thirst for His Darshan? Have you got spiritual hunger? You may deliver thrilling lectures on Bhakti. You may write several volumes on Bhakti, and yet you may not possess even a grain of true devotion. He who thirsts for Darshan of God will develop Bhakti. If there is sincere demand for God, then the supply will come. By regular steady Sadhan, may you attain Peace, Bliss, Knowledge, Perfection and God-realisation!

9. The Name of God chanted in any way, correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknowingly, carefully or carelessly is sure to give the desired result. The glory of the Name of God cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can certainly be experienced or realised through devotion, faith and constant repetition of the Name. Every Name is filled with countless potencies or *Shaktis*. The power of the Name is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. The efficacy and inherent Shakti of the Name of God is unfathomable.

10. Just as fire has the natural property of burning inflammable things, so also the name of God has the power of burning the sins, *Samskaras* and *Vasanas*, and of bestowing Eternal Bliss and everlasting peace on those who repeat the Name of the Lord. Just as the burning quality is natural and inherent in fire, so also is the power of destroying sins with their very root and branch and of bringing the aspirant into blissful union with the Lord through Bhava Samadhi natural and inherent in the Name of God.

11. O Man! Take refuge in the Name. Nami and Name are inseparable. Sing the Lord's Name incessantly. Remember the Name of the Lord with every incoming and outgoing breath. In this iron age Namsmaran or Japa is the easiest, quickest, safest and surest way to reach God and to attain Immortality and perennial Joy. Glory to the Lord. Glory to His Name. Sing Hari OM, Sri Ram, Radheshyam, or

Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.

5. Pearl Drops of Prem

1. Every aspirant in the spiritual path becomes a victim to the mood of depression in the beginning of the Sadhan period. You will have to overcome this mood through discrimination, reflection, Vichar, singing Hari's Name, prayer, etc. This mood is like a passing cloud. You should not be unnecessarily alarmed. It will pass off soon if you are vigilant.

2. Do not mistake emotion for devotion. Whenever you get the mood of depression, sing Hari's Name vigorously by sitting alone in your room, with a melting heart. You may sing silently. This is an easy method to drive away this undesirable mood.

3. Try to control wild out-bursts of weeping. This is a weakness and negative state. But allow the pearl-drops of Divine thrill or ecstasy to trickle down occasionally when you are in a profound prayerful mood or meditative state.

4. Shed the precious tears of Divine Prem when you are alone, when you are in communion with the Lord. Do not weep in the presence of others. The rare pearl-drops of Divine Prem are the outcome of melting of the heart by the fire of devotion and the fire of Viraha or painful separation from the Lord. Many people develop a habit of weeping and tears flow on account of frequent irritation of lachrymal glands that secrete or manufacture the tears but not on account of pure devotion.

5. Sometimes man feigns to be a devotee and sheds false tears just to make his neighbours think that he is a great devotee and on account of sympathetic action his neighbours also begin to weep. You may witness a nice scene of a band of weeping people in a Sankirtan gathering but with regard to their heart there will be not even an iota of devotion. Devotion is a very rare gift from God. Weeping is not by itself a criterion to judge the devotional nature of a man or a woman. Do not mistake the crocodile tears of a hypocrite Bhakta for the genuine pearl-drops of Divine Prem which inspire and elevate the bystanders. One may not weep outwardly and yet he may be a genuine silent devotee.

6. Open the doors of your heart. Let the lightning spark of love arise in your heart. Let the love pierce you through and through. Let

the heart sing to heart. Let your soul mix with the Supreme Soul. Let the heart-lotus blossom and waft its sweet Divine fragrance. Let the Divine thrill strike the strings of your heart. Let the tears flow now down your cheeks. Let the Divine ecstasy fill your whole being.

7. Lord Hari is an ocean of mercy. He has boundless love for his devotees. He is a purifier of the sinful and the fallen. He accepted even Ajamila and that fallen woman Pingala. He drove the chariot of Arjuna in the battle-field. He ran to save Draupadi and Gajendra. Though He is the master of the three worlds, He is a slave of His devotees.

8. Sit silent. Collect the dissipated rays of the mind. Become serene. Repeat God's Name: Hari OM or Sri Ram or OM Namasivaya. Your happiness will know no bounds. God will dwell in your heart.

9. May Lord Narayana take you to His bosom and bathe you in the sacred water of Divine Prem and transcendental Bliss!

6. How to spend your Holidays

1. In the whirlpool of fleeting sensual pleasures you have forgotten the purpose of life and the goal. You live more for the body than for the soul. In your pursuit after the phantom shows of worldly vanities, you have annihilated the spiritual instincts and longing of the soul. What a sad state! Mysterious is Maya! Mysterious is Moha! Open your eyes now. Wake up from the long slumber of ignorance. Realise the ultimate Reality and enjoy eternal bliss.

2. Spiritual wealth is the real inexhaustible wealth. Spiritual knowledge is the real knowledge. Spiritual life is the real life. Aspire. Know the Self and be free. Regain the Divine Glory. Meditate and realise the Immortal Atma, the Indweller of your heart, the Inner Ruler, the self-existent, self-contained, self-luminous Imperishable Soul.

3. Raja Janaka realised his Self within the twinkling of an eye. Raja Katwang attained Self-realisation within a Muhurta or two hours and forty-eight minutes. Raja Parikshit achieved the final beatitude of life within a week. You can also have Self-realisation within a week if you thirst for God and if you apply yourself diligently to spiritual Sadhan in earnest with the right attitude of mind.

4. Holidays are not meant for playing cards, idle gossiping, feasting, sight-seeing or aimless wanderings. It is very difficult to get a human birth. The aim of life is to attain God-Consciousness. Holidays must be well spent.

Every second must be utilised in worship and meditation. Delay in Self-realisation is practical death. You have wasted already your life till now. Will you waste the remaining portion of your life also? Will you waste your holidays also? Now wake up. Gird up the loins. Whenever you get holidays start your Sadhan with zeal and enthusiasm and march direct to the goal.

5. Here is a daily routine for you. Follow this tenaciously with faith and earnestness. You can select a quiet solitary room for you in your own house. If you can conveniently manage, you can do your Anushtan either in Rishikesh, Prayag, Banaras, Nasik or you can select any convenient place on the banks of the Ganges, Yamuna or Narmada or Kaveri. You will have pure spiritual vibrations in these places. These vibrations help a lot in your spiritual practices. The mind will enter into the meditative mood without any effort. You can put a small grass hut there. Live on milk and fruits. If you find it difficult to live on this regimen, you can take a little rice, vegetable, dal and bread. Have a very very moderate diet. Live alone. Observe complete silence for a week. Shut yourself in the room. Plunge yourself in Japa and meditation. You can do Japa of either OM, OM Namasivaya, OM Namo Narayanaya, OM Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Hari OM, Sri Ram or Gayatri according to your taste or temperament or repeat your Guru Mantra. Have sleep for three to four hours. You must get up at 3 or 4 a.m.

6. If you are not able to spend the whole time in Japa and meditation, you can combine Kirtan and study of religious books such as Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavatam, Upanishads, etc. Whenever the mind gets tired take to Kirtan for one or two hours. Then study religious books. Then write your Ishta Mantra in a note book for one hour. This will be a sort of relaxation for the mind. Again sit for meditation. Then again have Kirtan, study of books and Mantra writing. Rotate in this manner. Have as many sittings as you can. You will have good spiritual experiences.

7. Wake up from your long sleep of ignorance. Get knowledge of the Self. O wanderer in this quagmire of Samsara! Go back to you original abode of eternal peace, the fountain of infinite Joy and Power, the spring of boundless ecstasy, the source of life, the origin of light and love, the immortal blissful Brahmic seat of illimitable splendour and pristine glory. Fill the mind with thought of Self. Saturate your feelings with purity, divinity. Let the Light of lights shine in every hair on your body. Let the infinite Godhead vibrate in every cell of your body. Let every breath sing the song of infinity and eternity with Soham or Shyam or Ram!

8. On some holidays you can arrange for a Sankirtan Sammelan or Religious Conference. You can invite great men, Sadhus and Sannyasins for Kirtan and lectures. On such occasions feed the poor, Sadhus, Sannyasins, Mahatmas, Brahmins and students. Publish some leaflets and pamphlets on Bhakti Yoga and Vedant for free distribution. Thousands of people will take part and get spiritual benefits. This is a wonderful way of spending the holidays through which the whole city will be spiritually benefited.

7. Message to Retired People

1. Here is a good practice for retired people. After retiring from service you should live for one or two months in Prayag or Rishikesh or in a solitary place on the banks of the Narmada or the Ganges or Yamuna where you can get Satsangh of Mahatmas. You should live alone. If you do not know how to cook your food, and if you can afford you can have a cook. Then only you can destroy Moha and attachment for your wife and children. Then only you can have good concentration and solid spiritual practice. You can return to your home. Live now in a solitary place that is situated a mile away from your house. Construct a small Kutir. Ask your people to send the food to your place. Sometimes you can take your food in your house. Then again come back to the banks of the Ganges.

Chapter XII

GIST OF KUNDALINI YOGA

YOGA NADIS

Nadis are the astral tubes made up of astral matter that carry psychic currents. The Sanskrit term "Nadi" comes from the root 'Nad' which means 'motion.' It is through these Nadis (Sukshma, subtle passages), that the vital force or Pranic current moves or flows. Since they are made up of subtle matter, they cannot be seen by the naked physical eyes and you cannot make any test-tube experiments in the physical plane. These Yoga Nadis are not the ordinary nerves, arteries and veins that are known to the Vaidya Shastra (Anatomy and Physiology). Yoga Nadis are quite different from these.

The body is filled with innumerable Nadis that cannot be counted. Different authors state the number of Nadis in different ways, i.e., from 72,000 to 3,500,000. When you turn your attention to the internal structure of the body, you are struck with awe and wonder. Because the architect is the Divine Lord Himself who is assisted by skilled engineers and masons—Maya Prakriti, Viswakarma, etc.

Nadis play a vital part in this Yoga. Kundalini, when awakened, will pass through Sushumna Nadi and this is possible only when the Nadis are pure. Therefore, the first step in Kundalini Yoga is the purification of Nadis. A detailed knowledge of the Nadis and Chakras is absolutely essential. Their location, functions, nature, etc., should be thoroughly studied.

The subtle lines, Yoga Nadis, have influence in the physical body. All the subtle (Sukshma) Prana, Nadis and Chakras have gross manifestation and operation in the physical body. The gross nerves and plexuses have close relationship with the subtle ones. You should understand this point well. Since the physical centres have close relationship with the astral centres, the vibrations that are produced in the physical centres by prescribed methods, have desired effects in the astral centres.

Whenever there is an interlacing of several nerves, arteries, and veins, that centre is called "Plexus." The physical material plexuses that are known to the Vaidya Shastra are:— Pam-

piniform, Cervical, Trachial, Coccygeal, Lumbar, Sacral, Cardiac, Esophageal, Hepatic, Pharyngeal, Pulmonary, Lingual, Prostatic Plexus, etc. Similarly there are plexuses or centres of vital forces in the Sukshma Nadis. They are known as 'Padma' (Lotus) or Chakras. Detailed instructions on all these centres are given elsewhere.

All the Nadis spring from the Kanda. It is in the junction where the Sushumna Nadi is connected with the Muladhara Chakra. Some say that this Kanda is 12 inches above the anus. Out of the innumerable Nadis 14 are said to be important. They are:—

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| (1) Sushumna | (8) Pusha |
| (2) Ida | (9) Sankhini |
| (3) Pingala | (10) Payaswini |
| (4) Gandhari | (11) Varuni |
| (5) Hasthajiva | (12) Alambhusha |
| (6) Kuhu | (13) Vishvadhara |
| (7) Saraswati | (14) Yasasvini |

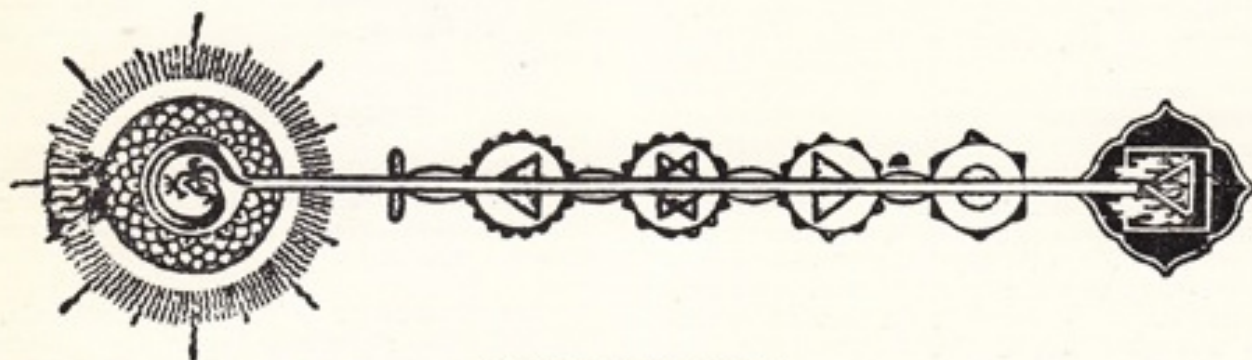
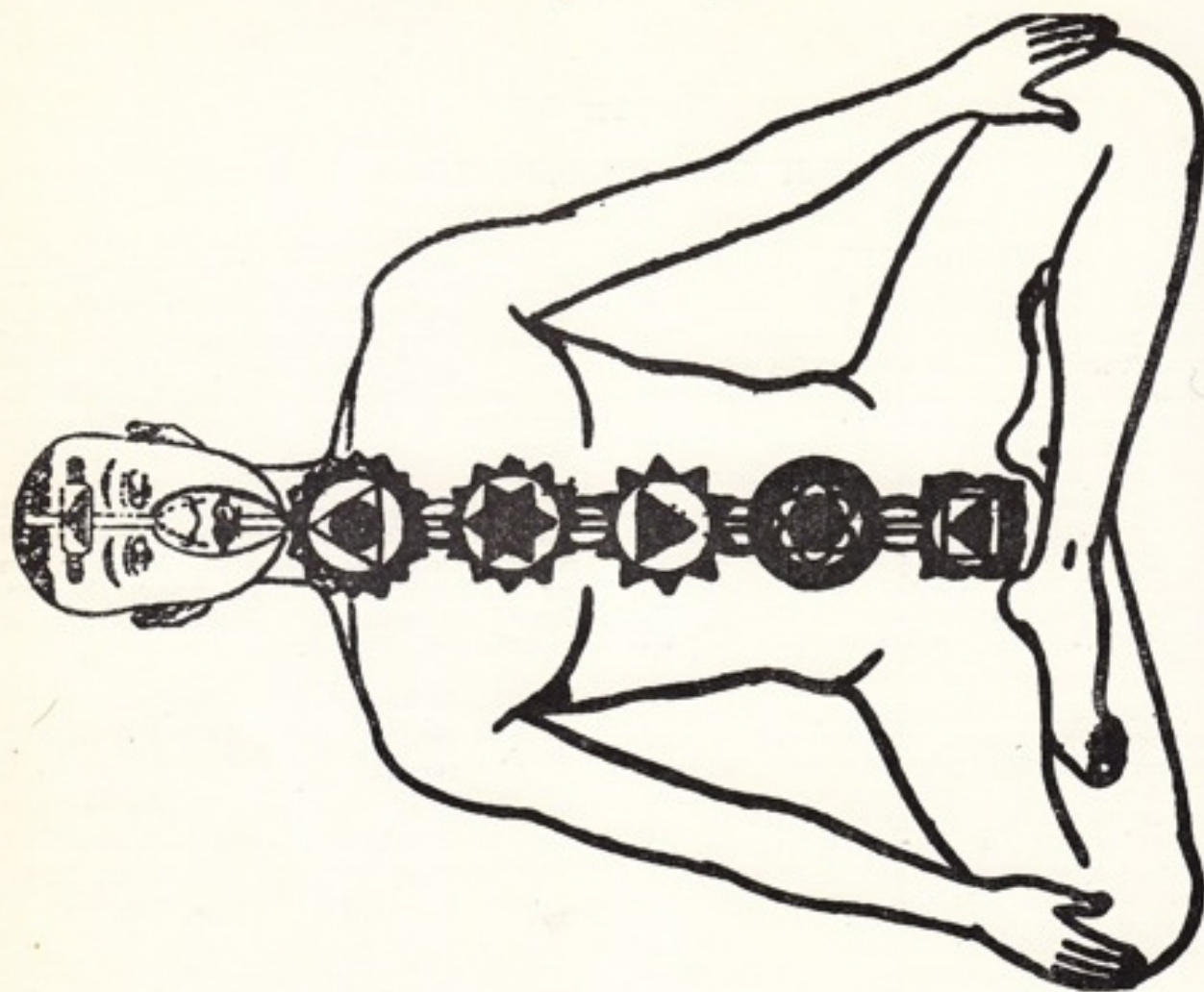
Again Ida, Pingala and Sushumna are the most important of the above 14 Nadis, and Sushumna is the chief. It is the highest and most sought by the Yogis. Other Nadis are subordinate to this. Detailed instructions on each Nadi and its functions and the method of awakening the Kundalini and passing it from Chakra to Chakra are given in the following pages.

SPINAL COLUMN

Before proceeding to the study of Nadis and Chakras, you will have to know something about the Spinal Column, as all the Chakras are connected with it.

The spinal column is known as Meru Danda. This is the axis of the body just as Mount Meru is the axis of the earth. Hence the spine is called "Meru." The spinal column is otherwise known as spine, axis-staff or vertebral column. Man is microcosm (pinda—Kshudra—Brahmanda). All things seen in the universe, mountains, rivers, Bhutas, etc., exist in the body

IDA, PINGALA, SUSHUMNA NADIS.



KUNDALINI, SUSHUMNA
AND CHAKRAS.

also. All the Tattwas and Lokas (worlds) are within the body.

The body may be divided into three main parts:— head, trunk and the limbs, and the centre of the body is between the head and the legs. The spinal column extends from the first vertebra, Atlas bone, to the end of the trunk.

The spine is formed of a series of 33 bones called vertebrae; according to the position these occupy, it is divided into five regions:—

- (1) Cervical region (neck) 7 vertebrae.
- (2) Dorsal region (back) 12 vertebrae.
- (3) Lumbar region (waist or loins) 5 vertebrae.
- (4) Sacral region (buttocks, Sacrum or gluteal) 5 vertebrae.
- (5) Coccygeal region (imperfect vertebrae Coccyx) 4 vertebrae.

The vertebral bones are piled one upon the other thus forming a pillar for the support of the cranium and trunk. They are connected together by spinous, transverse and articular processes and by pads of fibro-cartilage between the bones. The arches of the vertebrae form a hollow cylinder or a bony covering or a passage for the spinal cord. The size of the vertebrae differs from each other. For example, the size of the vertebrae in cervical region are smaller than in dorsal but the arches are bigger. The body of lumbar vertebrae is the largest and biggest. The whole spine is not like a stiff rod, but has curvatures that give a spring action. All the other bones of the body are connected with this spine.

Between each pair of vertebrae there are apertures through which the spinal nerves pass from the spinal cord to the different portions and organs of the body. The five regions of the spine correspond with the regions of the five Chakras:— Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata and Vishuddha. Sushumna Nadi passes through the hollow cylindrical cavity of the vertebral column and Ida is on the left side and Pingala on the right side of the spine.

SUKSHMA SARIR

The physical body is shaped in accordance with the nature of the astral body. The physical body is something like water, Sthula form. When water is heated, the steam or vapour corresponds to the astral body. In the same way the astral or Sukshma body is within the gross or physical body. The gross body cannot do anything without the astral body. Every gross

centre of the body has its astral centre. A clear knowledge of the gross body is of utmost importance as this Yoga deals with the centre of the astral body. In subsequent chapters you will find, therefore, a short description of the centres of the gross body and their corresponding centres in the Sukshma Sarir (astral body). You will find the descriptions of the astral centres and their connected functions in the physical body.

KANDA

This is situated between the anus and the root of the reproductory organ. It is like the shape of an egg and is covered with membranes. This is just above the Muladhara Chakra. All the Nadis of the body spring from this Kanda. It is in the junction where Sushumna is connected with Muladhara Chakra. The four petals of the Muladhara Chakra are on the sides of this Kanda and the junction is called Granthi Sthan, where the influence of Maya is very strong. In some Upanishads you will find that Kanda is 9 digits above the genitals.

Kanda is a centre of the astral body from where Yoga Nadis, subtle channels, spring and carry the Sukshma Prana (vital energy) to the different parts of the body. Corresponding to this centre, you have 'Cauda equina' in the gross physical body. The spinal cord extending from the brain to the end of the vertebral column tapers off into a fine silken thread. Before its termination it gives off innumerable fibres, crowded into a bunch of nerves. This bunch of nerves is 'Cauda equina' in the gross body. The astral centre of 'Cauda equina' is Kanda.

SPINAL CORD

The central nervous system consists of the brain and the spinal cord, the cerebro-spinal centre or axis. The continuation of the Medulla oblongata or the Bulb is a connecting medium between the brain and the spinal cord. The centre in the Medulla oblongata is closely connected with the involuntary functions of breathing and swallowing. The spinal cord extends from the top of the spinal canal to the second vertebra of the coccygeal region where it tapers off into a fine silken thread, called Filum terminale.

The spinal cord is a column of very soft grey and white brain-matter. The white matter is arranged on the sides of the grey matter. The white matter is of medullated nerves while the grey is of nerve-cells and fibres. This is not tightly fitted with the spinal canal, but suspended or dropped, as it were, into the spinal canal just like the brain in the cranial

cavity. This is nourished by the membranes. Spinal cord and brain float in the cerebro-spinal fluid. The fluid prevents, therefore, any injury done to them. Further the spinal cord is protected by a covering of fatty tissue. It is divided into two symmetrical halves by an anterior and posterior fissure. In the centre there is a minute canal called *canalis centralis*. *Brahmanadi* runs along this canal from the *Muladhara* to *Sahasrara Chakra*. It is through this *Nadi* that *Kundalini*, when awakened, passes to *Brahmarandhra*.

The spinal cord is not divided or separated from the brain. It is continuous with the brain. All the cranial and spinal nerves are connected with this cord. Every nerve of the body is connected with this. The organs of reproduction, micturition, digestion, blood-circulation, respiration are all controlled by the spinal cord. The spinal cord opens out into the fourth ventricle of the brain in the *medulla oblongata*. From the fourth ventricle it runs along the third, then the fifth ventricle of the brain and finally it reaches the crown of the head, *Sahasrara Chakra*.

SUSHUMNA NADI

When we study the construction, location and function of the Spinal Cord and the *Sushumna Nadi*, we can readily say that the Spinal Cord was called *Sushumna Nadi* by the *Yogins* of yore. Western Anatomy deals with the gross form and functions of the Spinal Cord, while the *Yogins* of ancient times dealt with all about the subtle (*Sukshma*) nature. Now in *Kundalini Yoga*, you should have a thorough knowledge of this *Nadi*.

Sushumna extends from the *Muladhara Chakra* (second vertebra of coccygeal region) to *Brahmarandhra*. Western Anatomy admits that there is a central canal in the Spinal Cord, called *Canalis Centralis* and that the cord is made up of grey and white brain-matter. The Spinal Cord is dropped or suspended in the hollow of the spinal column. In the same way, *Sushumna* is dropped within the spinal canal and has subtle sections. It is of red colour like *Agni* (fire).

Within this *Sushumna* there is a *Nadi* by the name of *Vajra* which is lustrous as the *Surya* (sun) with *Rajasic* qualities. Again within this *Vajra Nadi*, there is another *Nadi*, called *Chitra*. It is of *Sattwic* nature and of pale colour. The qualities of *Agni*, *Surya* and *Chandra* (fire, sun and moon) are the three aspects of *Shabdha Brahman*. Here within this *Chitra*, there is a very fine minute canal (which is known as *Canalis Centralis*). This canal is known as *Brahmanadi* through which *Kundalini*, when awakened, passes from *Muladhara* to

Sahasrara Chakra. In this centre exist all the six *Chakras* (lotuses), viz., *Muladhara*, *Swadhishtana*, *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Vishuddha* and *Ajna*.

The lower extremity of the *Chitra Nadi* is called *Brahmadwar*, the door of *Brahman*, as *Kundalini* has to pass through this door to *Brahmarandhra*. This corresponds to *Haridwar* which is the gate of *Hari* of *Badrinarayan* in the macrocosm (physical plane). The *Chitra* terminates in the *Cerebellum*.

In a general sense the *Sushumna Nadi* itself (gross Spinal Cord) is called *Brahma Nadi* because, *Brahma Nadi* is within the *Sushumna*. Again the canal within the *Chitra* is also called *Sushumna*, because the canal is within the *Sushumna*. *Ida* and *Pingala Nadis* are on the left and right sides of the spine.

Chitra is the highest and most beloved of the *Yogis*. It is like a thin thread of lotus. Brilliant with five colours, it is in the centre of *Sushumna*. It is the most vital part of the body. This is called the *Heavenly way*. It is the giver of *Immortality*. By contemplating on the *Chakras* that exist in this *Nadi*, the *Yogi* destroys all sins and attains the *Highest Bliss*. It is the giver of *Moksha*.

When the breath flows through *Sushumna*, the mind becomes steady. This steadiness of the mind is termed "*Unmani Avastha*," the highest state of *Yoga*. If you sit for meditation when *Sushumna* is operating, you will have wonderful meditation. When the *Nadis* are full of impurities, the breath cannot pass into the middle *Nadi*. So one should practise *Pranayama* for the purification of *Nadis*.

Para-sympathetic and Sympathetic System

On either side of the spinal cord run the sympathetic and para-sympathetic cords, a double chain of ganglia. Ganglia means a collection of nerve-cells. These constitute the *Autonomic System* which supplies nerves to the involuntary organs, such as heart, lungs, intestines, kidneys, liver, etc., and controls them. The *Vagus nerve* which plays a vital part in human economy comes out of this sympathetic system. Sympathetic system stimulates or accelerates. Para-sympathetic system retards or inhibits. There are nerves to dilate or expand the arteries which carry pure oxygenated blood to nourish the tissues, organs and cells of different parts of the body. These are called *Vaso-dilators*. The left and the right sympathetic chains are connected by filaments. These cross from the right to the left side and vice-versa, but the exact places where these cross are not known,

though several have attempted to find out. M'Kendrick and Snodgrass in their "Physiology of the Senses" write:—"Where the sensory fibres cross from one side to the other is not known..... In some parts of the spinal cord the sensory fibres do cross from the right to the left side and vice versa."

Ida and Pingala Nadis

Ida and Pingala Nadis are not the gross sympathetic chains. These are the subtle Nadis that carry the Sukshma Prana. In the physical body these tentatively correspond to the right and left sympathetic chains.

Ida starts from the right testicle and Pingala from the left testicle. They meet with Sushumna Nadi at the Muladhara Chakra and make a knot there. This junction of three Nadis at the Muladhara Chakra is known as Mukta Triveni. Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati dwell in Pingala, Ida and Sushumna Nadis respectively. This meeting place is called Brahma Granti. Again these meet at the Anahata and Ajna Chakras. In the macrocosm also you have a Triveni at Prayag where the three rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati meet.

Ida flows through the left nostril and Pingala through the right nostril. Ida is also called Chandra Nadi (moon) and Pingala as Surya Nadi (sun). Ida is cooling and Pingala is heating. Pingala digests the food. Ida is of pale, Shakti Rupa. It is the great nourisher of the world. Pingala is of fiery red, Rudra Rupa. Ida and Pingala indicate Kala (time) and Sushumna swallows time. The Yogi knows the time of his death; takes his Prana into Sushumna; keeps it in Brahmarandhra, and defies time (Kala-death). The famous Yogi Sree Chand Dev of Maharashtra fought against death several times by taking the Prana into Sushumna. He was a contemporary of Sri Jnana Dev of Alandi, near Poona. It was he who had Bhuta Siddhi, control over wild animals, through his Yogic practices. He came on the back of a tiger to see Sree Jnana Dev.

Swara Sadhana

Swara Sadhana, practice of breath, is the revealer of Satya, Brahman and bestower of the Supreme Knowledge and Bliss. Perform calm acts during the flow of Ida and harsh acts during the flow of Pingala. Do acts resulting in the attainment of psychic powers, Yoga, meditation, etc., during the flow of Sushumna. If the breath rises by Ida (moon) at sunrise and flows throughout the day, and Pingala (Sun) rises at sunset and flows through the night it confers considerable good results. Let

the breath flow through Ida the whole day and through Pingala the whole night. He who practises thus is verily a great Yogi.

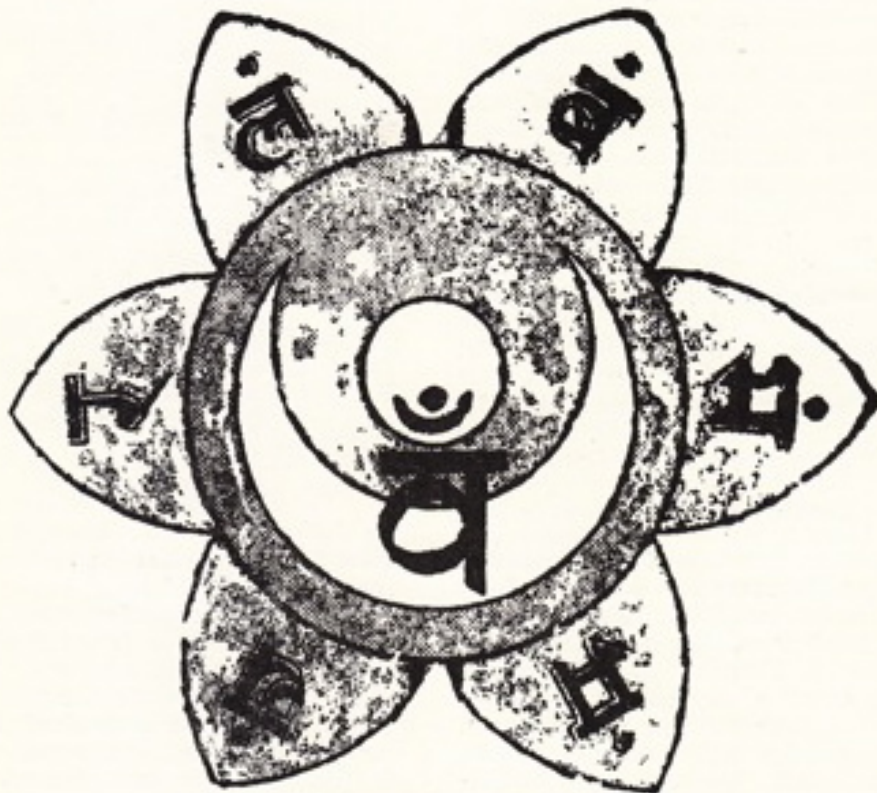
How to change the flow in Nadis

The following exercises are for changing the flow from Ida to Pingala. Select any one of the methods that suits you best. For changing the flow from Pingala to Ida, just do the same exercise on the opposite side:—

1. Plug the left nostril with a small piece of cotton or fine cloth for a few minutes.
2. Lie down on the left side for ten minutes.
3. Sit erect. Draw the left knee up and keep the left heel near the left buttock. Now press the left arm-pit, Axilla, on the knee. In a few seconds the flow will be through Pingala.
4. Keep the two heels together near the right buttock. The right knee will be over the left knee. Keep the left palm on the ground a foot away and let the weight of the trunk rest on the left hand. Do not bend at the elbow. Turn the head also towards the left side. This is an effective method. Catch hold of the left ankle with the right hand.
5. The flow of breath can be changed by Nauli Kriya also.
6. There are some who are able to change the flow by will.
7. Place the Yoga Danda or Hamsa Danda (a wooden stick of about 2 feet in length with a rest of the shape of U at one end) at the left arm-pit and lean on it by the left side.
8. The most effective and instantaneous result is produced in changing the flow through Kechari Mudra. The Yogi turns the tongue inside and blocks the air passage by the tip of the tongue.

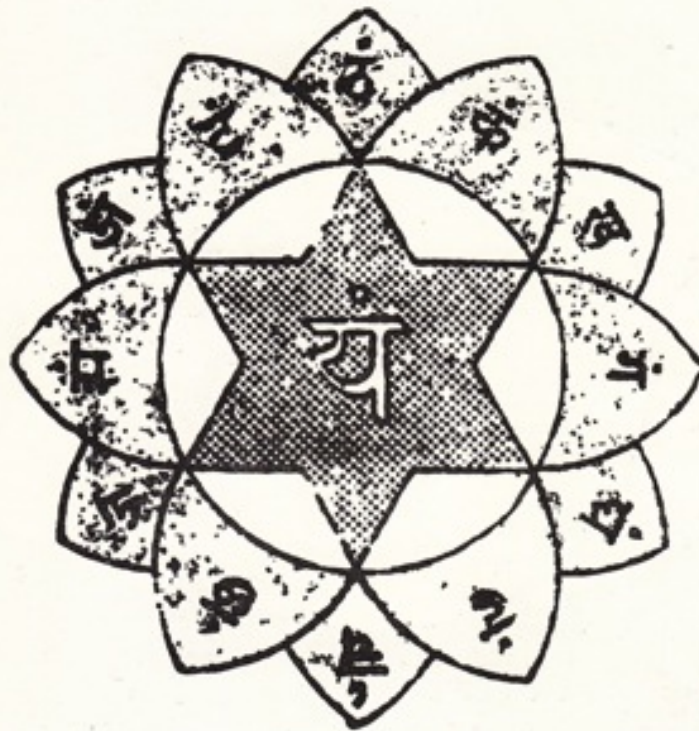
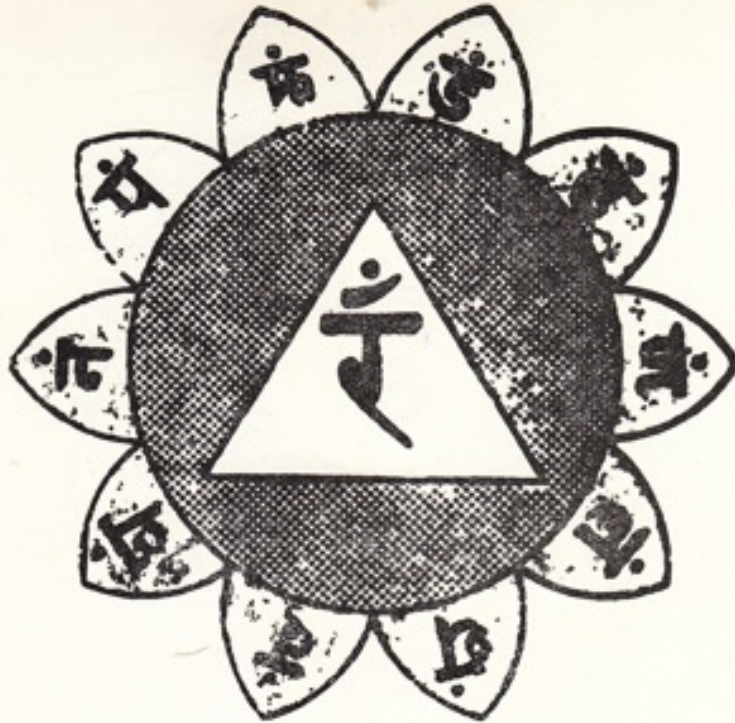
The above exercise is intended for general regulation of breath. Many other special exercises for the purification of Nadis and awakening Kundalini will be given in the subsequent chapters. A knowledge more secret than the science of breath, a friend more true than the science of breath, has never been seen or heard of. Friends are brought together by the power of breath. Wealth is obtained with comfort and reputation through the power of breath. The knowledge of the past, present and the future and all other Siddhis are acquired and a man reaches the highest state by the power of breath.

MULADHARA CHAKRA.



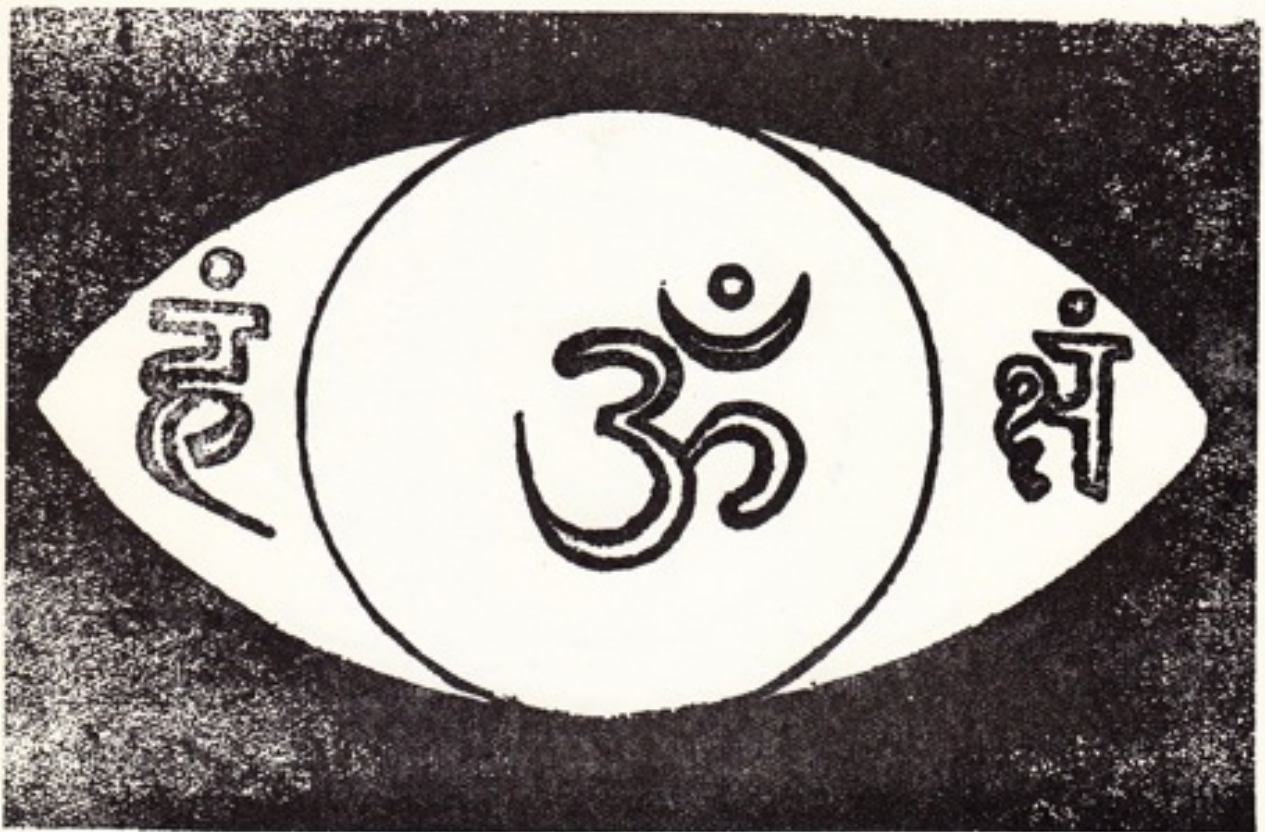
SUADHISHTANA CHAKRA.

MANIPURA CHAKRA



ANAHATA CHAKRA

VISHUDDHA CHAKRA



AJNA CHAKRA.

I want you to practise every day the Swara Sadhana systematically and regularly, that is, to allow the flow of breath through the left nostril throughout the day and through the right nostril throughout the night. This will doubtless bestow on you wonderful benefits. Wrong Swara is the cause of a host of ailments. Observance of right Swara as described above leads to healthy and long life. Verily, verily, I say this unto you, my dear children! Practise this. Practise this from to-day. Shake off your habitual sloth, indolence and inertia. Leave off your idle talk. Do something practical. Before you begin the practice, pray to Lord Siva, who is the giver of this wonderful science by uttering Om Nama-sivaya and Sree Ganesh, the remover of all obstacles.

OTHER NADIS

Gandhari, Hasthajihva, Kuhu, Saraswati, Puhsa, Sankhini, Payaswini, Varuni, Alambusha, Vishvodhara, Yasaswini, etc., are some other important Nadis. These have their origin in Kanda. All these Nadis are placed on the sides of Sushumna, Ida and Pingala, and proceed to different parts of the body to perform certain special functions. These are all subtle Nadis. Innumerable minor Nadis spring from these. As the leaf of the Aswattha tree is covered with minute fibres, so also this body is permeated with thousands of Nadis.

PADMAS OR CHAKRAS

Chakras are in the Linga Sarira (Astral body). Linga Sarira is of 17 Tattwas, viz., 5 Jnana Indriyas (Ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose); 5 Karma Indriyas (Speech, hands, legs, genitals, anus); 5 Pranas (Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana, Samana); Manas (mind); and Buddhi (intellect). These have corresponding centres in the spinal cord and the nerve-plexuses in the gross body. Each Chakra has control and function over a particular centre in the gross body. These cannot be seen by the naked eyes. Some foolish doctors search for the Chakra in the physical body by dissecting the dead body. They cannot find them there. Since they cannot find any Chakra in a dead body, they lose faith in Shastras and Yogic Kriyas.

Sukshma Prana moves in the nervous system of the Linga Sarira (astral body). Sthoola Prana moves in the nervous system of the gross physical body. The two courses are intimately connected. They act and react upon each other. The Chakras are in the astral body even after the disintegration of the physical organism at death. According to a school of thought, the Chakras are formed during con-

centration and meditation only. This is not possible. The Chakras should exist there in subtle matter. Without the subtle, the gross body is impossible. The meaning of this sentence should be taken to be that one can feel and understand the Sukshma Chakras during concentration and meditation only.

Wherever there is an interlacing of several nerves, arteries and veins, that centre is called Plexus. The physical gross plexuses that are known to the Vaidya Shastra are Hepatic, Cervical, Brachical, Coccygeal, Lumbar, Sacral, Cardiac, Epigastric, Esophageal, Pharyngeal, Pulmonary, Lingual, Prostatic, etc. Similarly there are plexuses or centres of Sukshma Prana in the Sushumna Nadi. All the functions of the body, nervous, digestive, circulatory, respiratory, genitourinary and all other systems of the body are under the control of these centres in Sushumna. These are subtle centres of vital energy. These are the centres of Consciousness (Chaitanya). These subtle centres of Sushumna have their corresponding centres in the physical body. For examples, Anahata Chakra which is in the Sushumna Nadi has its corresponding centre in the physical body at the heart (Cardiac Plexus).

The subtle centres in the Sushumna Nadi are otherwise known as Lotus or Chakras. A particular Tattwa preponderates at every Chakra. There is a presiding deity in each Chakra. In every Chakra a certain animal is represented. It denotes that the centre has the qualities, Tattwas or Gunas of that particular animal. There are six important Chakras:— Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha and Ajna. Sahasrara is the chief Chakra. It is in the head. These 7 Chakras correspond to the Lokas (Bhu, Bhuvan, Swar, Maha, Jana, Tapo and Satya Lokas). Muladhara to Vishuddha are the centres of Pancha Bhutas (five elements):— earth, water, fire, air and ether.

When the Kundalini is awakened it passes on from Muladhara to Sahasrara through all the Chakras. At every centre to which the Yogi directs the Kundalini, he experiences a special form of Ananda (Bliss) and gains special Siddhis (Psychic powers) and knowledge. He enjoys the Supreme Bliss when Kundalini is taken to Sahasrara Chakra.

The following are some other Chakras:— Adhara (another name for Muladhara Chakra), Amrita, Ananda, Lalita, Balwana, Brahmawara Chandra, Dipaka, Karnamula, Gulhaha, Kuladipa, Kundali, Galabaddha, Kaladanda, Kaladhara, Karangaka, Kalabhedan, Lalna, Mahotsaha, Manas, Talana, Mahapadma, Nirad-

hara, Naukula, Prana, Soma, Triveni Urdhva-randhra, Vajra, etc. Some of these names refer to the six important Chakras only. There are also many minor chakras. Some Hathayogis hold that there are forty-nine chakras while the ancient yogis taught that there are 144 chakras). Talana chakra with its twelve red petals is located near the base of the palate and Manas chakra with its six petals is closely associated with sensations, dreams and astral travelling. Detailed instructions of each Chakra are given in the foregoing chapters.

PETALS ON CHAKRAS

Each Chakra has a particular number of petals with a Sanskrit alphabet on each petal. The vibration that is produced at each petal is represented by the corresponding Sanskrit letter. Every letter denotes the Mantra of Devi Kundalini. The letters exist in the petals in all latent form. These can be manifested and the vibrations of the Nadis felt during concentration.

The number of petals of the lotuses varies. Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha and Ajna Chakras have 4, 6, 10, 12, 16 and 2 petals respectively. All the 50 Sanskrit letters are on the 50 petals. The number of petals in each Chakra is determined by the number and position of the Yoga Nadis around the Chakra. I will make it still clearer. From each Chakra a particular number of Yoga Nadis crop up. The Chakra gives the appearance of a lotus with the Nadis as its petals. The sound produced by the vibrations of the Yoga Nadis is represented by the corresponding Sanskrit letter. The Chakras with their petals hang downwards when Kundalini is at the Muladhara Chakra. When it is awakened, they turn towards Brahmrandhra. They always face the side of Kundalini.

MULADHARA CHAKRA

Muladhara Chakra is located at the base of the spinal column. It lies between the origin of the reproductory organ and the anus. It is just below the Kanda and the junction where Ida, Pingala and Sushumna Nadis meet. Two fingers above the anus and about two fingers below the genitals, four fingers in width is the space where the Muladhara Chakra is situated. This is the Adhara Chakra (support) as the other Chakras are above this. Kundalini, which gives power and energy to all the Chakras, lies at this Chakra. Hence this, which is the support of all, is called Muladhara or Adhara Chakra.

From this Chakra four important Nadis emanate which appear as petals of a lotus. The subtle vibrations that are made by each Nadi is represented by the Sanskrit letters:— Vam, Sam, Sham and Sam. The Yoni that is in the centre of this Chakra is called Kama and it is worshipped by Siddhas. Here Kundalini lies dormant. Ganesha is the Devata of this Chakra. The seven underworlds: Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talatala, Rasatala, Mahatala and Patala Lokas are below this Chakra. This Chakra corresponds with Bhu Loka or Bhu Mandal, physical plane (region of earth). Bhuvu, Swa or Swarga, Maha, Jana, Tapo and Satya Lokas are above this Chakra. All the underworlds refer to some minor Chakras in the limbs which are controlled by the Muladhara Chakra. That Yogi, who has penetrated this Chakra through Prithvi Dharan, has conquered the Prithvi Tattwa. He has no fear of death from earth. Prithvi is of yellow colour. The golden Tripura (fire, sun and moon) is termed the 'Bija.' It is also called the great energy (Parama Tejas) which rests on the Muladhara Chakra and which is known as Swayambhu Linga. Near this Linga is the golden region known as Kula and the presiding deity is Dakini (Shakti). Brahma Granthi or the knot of Brahma is in this Chakra. Vishnu Granti and Rudra Granti are in the Anahata and Ajna Chakras. Lam is the Bija of Muladhara Chakra.

The wise Yogi, who concentrates and meditates on the Muladhara Chakra, acquires the full knowledge of Kundalini and the means to awaken it. When Kundalini is awakened, he gets Darduri Siddhi, the power to rise from the ground. He can control the breath, mind and semen. His Prana enters the middle Brahma Nadi. All his sins are destroyed. He acquires knowledge of the past, present and future. He enjoys the natural Bliss (Sahaja Ananda).

SWADHISHTANA CHAKRA

Swadhishtana Chakra is located within the Sushumna Nadi at the root of the reproductory organ. This corresponds to Bhuvan Loka. This has control over the lower abdomen, kidneys, etc., in the physical body. Jala Mandal (region of water—Apas Tattwa) is here. Within this Chakra there is a space like a crescent moon or the form of a conch or Kunda flower. The presiding deity is Lord Brahma and Devata is Goddess Rakini. Bijakshar (Vam), the Bija of Varuna, is in this Chakra. The colour of the Chakra is pure blood-like red or the colour of Chendur (vermillion). From this centre six Yoga Nadis emanate, which appear like the petals of a lotus. The vibrations that are pro-

duced by the Nadis are represented by Sanskrit letters:— Bam, Bham, Mam, Yam, Ram and Lam.

He who concentrates on this Chakra and meditates on the Devata has no fear of water. He has perfect control over this water element. He gets many psychic powers, intuitional knowledge and a perfect control over his senses. He has full knowledge of the astral entities. Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada, Matsarya and other impure qualities are completely annihilated. The Yogi becomes the conqueror of death (Mrityunjaya).

MANIPURA CHAKRA

Manipura is the third Chakra from the Muladhara. It is located within the Sushumna Nadi, in the Nabhi Sthana (region of navel). This has its corresponding centre in the physical body and has control over the liver, stomach, etc. This is a very important centre. From this Chakra emanate ten Yoga Nadis which appear like the petals of a lotus. The vibrations that are produced by the Nadis are represented by the Sanskrit letters:— Dam, Tam, Nam, Tham, Ttham, Dam, Dham, Nam, Pam and Pham. The Chakra is of the colour of dark clouds. Within this there is a space triangular in form. It is the Agni Mandala (region of fire—Agni Tattwa). The Bijakshara (Ram), the Bija of Agni, is here. The presiding deity is Vishnu and Goddess is Lakshmi. This Chakra corresponds to Swa or Swarga Loka and to Solar Plexus in the physical body.

The Yogi who concentrates on this Chakra gets Patala Siddhi, can acquire hidden treasures and will be free from all diseases. He has no fear at all from Agni, (fire). "Even if he is thrown into the burning fire, he remains alive without fear of death." (Gheranda Samhita).

ANAHATA CHAKRA

Anahata Chakra is situated in the Sushumna Nadi (Sukshma centre). It has control over the heart. It corresponds to the Cardiac Plexus in the physical body. This corresponds to Maha Loka. The Chakra is of deep red colour. Within this Chakra there is a hexagonal space of of smoke or deep black colour or the colour of collirium (used for the eyes). This Chakra is the centre of Vayu Mandal (region of air, Vas Tattwa). From here 15 Yoga Nadis emanate. The sound that is produced by each Nadi is represented by the following Sanskrit letters:— Kam, Kham, Gam, Gham, Cham, Chham, Jam, Jham, Tam and Tham. The Bijakshara (Yam),

the Bija of Vayu, is here. The presiding deity is Isha (Rudra) and Devata is Kakini. In the Muladhara Chakra there is Swayambhu Linga and in Anahata Chakra we have Bana Linga. Kalpa Vriksha, which gives all the desired things, is here. Anahata sound, the sound of Shabda Brahman, is heard at this centre. You can very clearly hear this when you intently concentrate on this centre. When you do Sirshasan for a long time, you can distinctly hear this sound, Vayu Tattwa is full of Sattwa Guna. Vishnu Granti is in this Sthana.

He who meditates on the Chakra has full control over Vayu Tattwa. He gets Bhuchari Siddhi, Kechari Siddhi, Kayu Siddhi, etc., (flying in air, entering the body of another). He gets cosmic love and all other divine Sattwic qualities.

VISHUDDHA CHAKRA

Vishuddha Chakra is situated within the Sushumna Nadi at the base of the throat, Kantha-mula Sthana. This corresponds to Jana Loka. It is the centre of Akasa Tattwa (ether element). The Tattwa is of pure blue colour. Above this, all other Chakras belong to Manas Tattwa. The presiding deity is Sadasiva (Itara Linga), and the goddess is Shakini. From this centre emanate 16 Yoga Nadis which appear like the petals of a lotus. The vibrations that are produced by the Nadis are represented by the 16 Sanskrit vowels.

Akasa Mandal (the region of ether) is round in shape like the full-moon. The Bija of Akasa Tattwa (Ham) is in this centre. It is of white colour. This Chakra corresponds to Laryngeal Plexus in the physical body.

The concentration on the Tattwa of this Chakra is called Akasi Dharan. He who practises this Dharan will not perish even in Pralaya. He attains the highest success. He gets the full knowledge of the four Vedas by meditation on this Chakras. He becomes a Trikala Jnani (who knows the past, the present and the future).

AJNA CHAKRA

Ajna Chakra is situated within the Sushumna Nadi and its corresponding centre in the physical body is at the space between the two eye-brows. This is known as Trikute. The presiding deity, Paramasiva (Shambho), is in the form of Hamsa. There is goddess Hakini (Shakti). Pranava (Om) is the Bijakshara for this Chakra. This is the seat of the mind. There are two petals (Yoga Nadis) on each

side of the lotus (Chakra) and the vibrations of these Nadis are represented by the Sanskrit letters (Ham) and (Ksham). This is the Granthi Sthana (Rudra Granthi). The Chakra is of pure white colour or like that of the full moon (on the Purnima day). Bindu, Nada and Shakti are in this Chakra. This Chakra corresponds to Tapo Loka. The corresponding centre in the physical body is at the Cavernous Plexus.

He who concentrates on this centre destroys all the Karmas of the past lives. The benefits that are derived by meditation on this Chakra cannot be described in words. The practitioner becomes a Jivanmukta (liberated man while living). He acquires all the 8 major and 32 minor Siddhis. All Yogis and Jnanis too concentrate this centre on the Bijakshara, Pranava. This is called Brumadhya Drishti (gaze at the space between the two eye-brows). More details of this important Chakra will be given in the subsequent lessons.

THE BRAIN

Brain and cranial nerves are the chief parts of the whole nervous system. It is a mass of nervous tissue made up of soft gray and white matter. It occupies the whole of the cranium. The cranium is like the iron safe to keep up the treasure "brain." It is surrounded by three membranes or Meninges, viz., (1) dura mater, the fibrous connective tissue by the side of the cranial bones; (2) pia mater, the connective tissue containing a network of blood vessels, which penetrates and nourishes all the parts of the brain; and (3) arachnoid, a very fine membrane around the brain. Below the arachnoid there is the space which contains the cerebro-spinal fluid that is intended to prevent any injury to the brain. The brain looks as if it is floating on this liquid.

The brain can be divided into two halves, right and left hemispheres, by a central sulcus or tissue. There are several lobes or smaller portions in the brain such as the parietal and temporal lobes on the sides, the occipital lobe at the posterior portion of cerebellum, etc., there are many convolutions or Gyri in every lobe. Again, for the sake of study, we can divide the brain into four sections:—

1. **CEREBRUM:** It is the anterior, oval-shaped, larger part of the brain. It is situated in the upper portion of the cranial cavity. This contains the important centres of hearing, speech, sight, etc. The pineal gland which is regarded as the seat of the soul and which plays a prominent part in Samadhi and psychic phenomena is situated here.

2. **CEREBELLUM,** the little or hind brain: This is the main portion of the brain, oblong-shaped, situated just above the fourth ventricle and below and behind the brain. Here the gray matter is arranged over the white matter. It regulates the muscular co-ordination. Mind rests here during dreams.

3. **MEDULLA OBLONGATA:** It is the beginning place of the spinal cord at the cranial cavity, where it is oblong-shaped and wide. It is between the two hemispheres. Here the white matter is placed over the gray matter. This contains the centres of important functions such as circulatory, respiratory, etc. This portion must be carefully protected.

4. **PONS VAROLII:**— It is the bridge that lies before the Medulla Oblongata. It is made of white and gray fibres that come from cerebellum and medulla. This is the junction where cerebellum and medulla meet.

There are five ventricles of the brain. The fourth is the most important one. It is situated in Medulla Oblongata. The fourth ventricle is the name of the central canal of the spinal cord, "Canalis Centralis" when it enters the cranial cavity. Here the tiny canal becomes bigger in size.

Every nerve of the body is closely connected with the brain. The 12 pairs of cranial nerves proceed from both hemispheres through the openings at the base of the skull to different parts of the body:— Olfactory; Optic; Motor Oculi; Pathetic; Trifacial; Abducens; Facial; Auditory; Glossopharyngeal; Pneumogastric; Spinal accessory; and Hypo-glossal. These are the nerves that are connected with the eye, ear, tongue, nose, pharynx, thorax, etc. For a detailed study of this section refer to any book on anatomy. Here I have given you the portions that are connected with Kundalini Yoga.

BRAHMARANDHRA

"Brahmarandhra" means the hole of Brahman. It is the dwelling house of the human soul. This also known as "Dasamadwara," the tenth opening or the tenth door. The hollow place in the crown of the head known as anterior fontanelle in the new-born child is the Brahmarandhra. This is between the two parietal and occipital bones. This portion is very soft in a babe. When the child grows, it gets obliterated by the growth of the bones of the head. Brahma created the physical body and entered (Pravesh) the body to give illumination inside through this Brahmarandhra. In some of the Upanishads, it is stated like that. This is the most important part. It is very

suitable for Nirguna Dhyana (abstract meditation). When the Yogi separates himself from the physical body at the time of death, this Brahamarandhra bursts open and Prana comes out through this opening (Kapala Moksha). "A hundred and one are the nerves of the heart. Of them one (Sushumna) has gone out piercing the head; going up through it, one attains immortality." (Kathopanishad).

SAHASRARA CHAKRA

Sahasrara Chakra is the abode of Lord Siva. This corresponds to Satva Loka. This is situated at the crown of the head. When Kundalini is united with Lord Siva at the Sahasrara Chakra, the Yogi enjoys the Supreme Bliss, Param Anand. When Kundalini is taken to this centre, the Yogi attains the super-conscious state and the Highest Knowledge. He becomes a Brahma-vidyarishta or a full-blown Jnani.

The words Sahasrara Padma denote that this Padma has 1000 petals. That is, one thousand Yoga Nadis emanate from this centre. There are different opinions about the exact number of petals. It is quite sufficient if you know that innumerable Nadis proceed from this centre. As in the case of other Chakras, the vibrations that are made by the Yoga Nadis are represented by the Sanskrit letters. All the 50 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet are repeated here again and again on all Yoga Nadis. This is a Sukshma centre. The corresponding centre in the physical body is in the brain.

The term "Shat Chakra" refers only to the six chief Chakras, viz., Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha and Ajna. Above all these we have Sahasrara Chakra. This is the chief of all the Chakras. All the Chakras have their intimate connection with this centre. Hence this is not included as one among the Shat Chakras. This is situated above all the Chakras.

Lalna Chakra

Lalna Chakra is situated at the space just above Ajna and below Sahasrara Chakra. Twelve Yoga Nadis emanate from this centre. The vibrations that are made by the 12 Nadis are represented by the Sanskrit letter:— Ha, Sa, Ksha, Ma, La, Va, Ra, Ya, Ha, Sa, Kha and Phrem. It has OM as its Bija. At this centre the Yogi concentrates on the form of his Guru and obtains all knowledge. This has control over the 12 pairs of nerves that proceed from the brain to the different sense-organs.

SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS LESSONS

Aspirants must have all the Sattwic qualities and should be quite free from impurities. Sat Sang, seclusion, dietetic discipline, good manners, good character, Brahmacharya, Vairagya, etc., form the strong foundation of a Yogic life. The help of a Guru, who has already trodden the path is absolutely necessary for quick progress in the spiritual path. Places of cool, temperate climate are required for Yoga Abhyasa.

Nadis are the Sukshma (astral) channels through which Prana (vital energy) flows to different parts of the body. Ida, Pingala and Sushumna are the most important of the innumerable Nadis. All Nadis start from the Kanda. Kanda is located in the space between the origin of the reproductory organ and the anus. Sushumna Nadi is situated within the Spinal Column, in the spinal canal. Within the Sushumna Nadi there is a Nadi by the name of Vajra. Chitra Nadi, a minute canal, which is also called Brahmanadi, is within this Vajra Nadi. Kundalini, when awakened, passes through Chitra Nadi. These are all Sukshma centres and you cannot have any laboratory tests and test-tube experiments. Without these subtle centres, the gross physical body cannot exist and function. Muladhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, Ajna and Sahasrara are the important Chakras. When Kundalini passes on from Chakra to Chakra, layer after layer of the mind becomes opened and the Sadhak enters into higher states of consciousness. At every Chakra he gets various Siddhis. Ida, Pingala and other Nadis are on the sides of the spine. Ida flows through the left nostril and Pingala through the right nostril. In Swara Sadhana the breath should flow by the left nostril throughout the day and by the right nostril throughout the night.

GRADATIONAL ASCENT OF THE MIND

The Chakras are centres of Sakti or Vital force. In other words, these are centres of Pranasakti manifested by Pranavayu in the living body, the presiding Devatas of which are the names for the Universal Consciousness as it manifests in the form of these centres. The Chakras are not perceptible to the gross senses. Even if they were perceptible in the living body which they help to organise, they disappear with the disintegration of organism at death.

Purity of mind leads to perfection in Yoga. Regulate your conduct when you deal with others. Have no feeling of jealousy towards others. Be compassionate. Do not hate sinners. Be kind to all. Success in Yoga will be

rapid if you put in your maximum energy in your Yogic practice. You must have a keen longing for liberation and intense Vairagya also. You must be sincere and earnest. Intent and constant meditation is necessary for entering into Samadhi.

The mind of a worldly man with base desires and passions moves in the Muladhara and Swadhisthana Chakras or centres situated near the anus and the reproductive organ respectively.

If one's mind becomes purified it rises to the Manipura Chakra or the centre in the navel and experiences some power and joy.

If the mind becomes more purified, it rises to the Anahat Chakra or centre in the heart, experiences bliss and visualises the effulgent form of the Ishta Devata or the tutelary deity.

When the mind gets highly purified, when meditation and devotion become intense and profound, the mind rises to Visuddha Chakra or the centre in the throat, and experiences more and more powers and bliss. Even when the mind has reached this centre, there is a possibility for it to come down to the lower centres.

When the Yogi reaches the Ajna Chakra or the centre between the two eye-brows, he attains Samadhi and realises the supreme Self or Brahman. There is a slight sense of separateness between the devotee and Brahman.

If he reaches the spiritual centre in the brain, the Sahasrara Chakra, the thousand-petalled lotus, the Yogi attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi or superconscious state. He becomes one with the non-dual Brahman. All sense of separateness dissolves. This is the highest plane of consciousness or supreme Asampragya Samadhi when Kundalini unites with Siva.

The Yogi may come down to the centre in the throat to give instructions to the students and do good to others (Lokasangraha).

EXPERIENCES ON AWAKENING OF KUNDALINI

During meditation you behold divine visions, experience divine smell, divine tastes, divine

touch, hear divine Anahat sounds. You receive instructions from God. These indicate that the Kundalini Shakti has been awakened. When there is throbbing in Mooladhar, when hair stands on its root, when Uddiyana, Jalandhar and Moolabandha come involuntarily, know that Kundalini has awakened.

When the breath stops without any effort, when Kevala Kumbhak comes by itself without any exertion, know that Kundalini Shakti has become active. When you feel currents of Prana rising up to the Sahasrara, when you experience bliss, when you repeat Om automatically, when there are no thoughts of the world in the mind, know that Kundalini Shakti has awakened.

When in your meditation the eyes become fixed on Trikute, the middle of the eye-brows, when the Sambhavi Mudra operates, know that Kundalini has become active. When you feel vibrations of Prana in different parts inside your body, when you experience jerks like the shocks of electricity, know that Kundalini has become active. During meditation when you feel as if there is no body, when your eye-lids become closed and do not open in spite of your exertion, when electric-like currents flow up and down the nerves, know that Kundalini has awakened.

When you meditate, when you get inspiration and insight, when the nature unfolds its secrets to you, when all doubts disappear, when you understand clearly the meaning of the Vedic texts, know that Kundalini has become active. When your body becomes light like air, when you have a balanced mind in perturbed condition, when you possess inexhaustible energy for work, know that Kundalini has become active.

When you get divine intoxication, when you develop power of oration, know that Kundalini has awakened. When you involuntarily perform different Asans or poses of Yoga without the least pain or fatigue, know that Kundalini has become active. When you compose beautiful sublime hymns and poetry involuntarily, know that Kundalini has become active.

Chapter XIII

MIND, ITS MYSTERIES AND CONTROL

1. Facts on Mind

1. Mind is not only daily made, but hourly made. In every minute it changes its colour and shape like a chameleon. It is very wavering and unsteady (Chanchalam and Asthiram) *Gita* Ch. VI—26.

2. The mind has a pernicious habit of externalisation from time immemorial. The constant utterance of Holy Names of God as Hari OM, Narayana, Rama, Siva, etc., purifies the mind-stuff and helps to make the mind introspective (*Antarmukha Vritti*).

3. Time is but a mode of mind. It is *Kalashakti*. It is also illusory like the objects. When your mind is deeply concentrated, a period of two hours appears like five minutes. If the mind is distracted and wandering, half an hour appears as two hours. This is everybody's experience. In dream also many events that last for fifty years take place within ten minutes. Through the play of the mind a *Kalpa* is considered by it as a moment and vice-versa.

4. Perception through the finite mind or cognition of experience takes place serially and not simultaneously. Simultaneous knowledge can only be had in *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* where past and future merge in the present. A *Yogi* only will have simultaneous knowledge. A man of the world with a finite mind can have a knowledge in succession only. Though several objects may come in contact simultaneously with the different sense organs, yet the mind acts like a gate-keeper who can admit only one person at a time inside the gate. The mind can send only one kind of sensation at a time into the mental factory inside for the manufacture of a percept and a concept.

5. There is a secretion from endocrine glands which are ductless, viz., Thyroid, Thymus, Parotid, Pineal, Supra-renal, etc. These secretions are directly absorbed into the blood. They play a vital part in constituting the temperament of every individual. The temperament of a man can be greatly modified by environments, education, and experience. It can hardly be changed in toto. That is the reason why the *Gita* says: "Sadrisham chestate swasya prakriter jnanana-

vanapi." Even the man of knowledge behaves in conformity with this own nature. *Gita* Ch. III—33.

6. It took me many years to understand thoroughly the secret, subtle workings of the mind. Mind havoc through the power of imagination. Imaginary fears of various sorts, exaggeration, concoction, mental dramatization, building castles in the air, are all due to the power of imagination. Even a perfect, healthy man has some imaginary disease or other due to the power of imagination of the mind. A man may have a little weakness or *Dosha* (fault). When he becomes your enemy you at once exaggerate and magnify his weakness and *Doshas*. You even superimpose or concoct many more weaknesses and *Doshas*. This is due to the power of imagination. Much energy is wasted on account of imaginary fears.

7. Belief, reasoning, knowledge and faith are the four important psychic processes. First you have belief in a doctor. You go to him for diagnosis and treatment. He examines you and then prescribes certain medicines. You take it. You reason out: "This is the disease. The doctor has given me Iron and Iodide. Iron will improve my blood. The Iodide will stimulate the lymphatics and absorb the exudation and growth in the liver." Then the disease is cured by a course of these drugs for a month. Then you get knowledge and perfect faith in the medicine and the doctor. Then you recommend to your friend this doctor and the drugs. "Dr. James is a clever man. He is an expert. Huxley's tonic is a very good nervine and blood tonic."

8. The mind wants always to be doing something and when it attaches itself with the objects it cherishes, it feels amused and happy. A play at cards has nothing in it but the attachment and attention gives pleasure. It is difficult to divert the mind which from infancy has fallen into the pernicious habit of seeking pleasure outwardly and it shall ever persist in doing so, unless you give it something superior to be amused with and a greater form of pleasure to delight in.

9. The mind in the vast majority of persons has been allowed to run wild and follow its own sweet will and desires. It is like a spoiled child who is given to much indulgence by its parents or a badly trained animal. The minds of many of us are like menageries of wild animals each pursuing the bent of its own nature and going its own way. Restraint on the mind is a thing unknown to the vast majority of persons.

10. You know the experience of a tree through the mind only. You must have an intellectual grasp, intellectual conviction and comprehensive understanding of Brahman first through the purified mind. The help of the mind is always needed either for perception of an object or the understanding of Brahman. Meditation proceeds from the mind only.

11. Mark how one Sankalpa expands into many Sankalpas (Visthara) in a short time. Suppose you get a Sankalpa to have a tea-party for your friends. One thought of tea invites instantaneously the thought of sugar, milk, tea-cups, tables, chairs, table cloth, napkins, spoons, sweetmeats, salted things, etc. So this word is nothing but the expansion of Sankalpas. The expansion of thoughts of the mind towards the objects is bondage (Bandha). Renunciation of all Sankalpas is liberation (Moksha). You must be ever watchful in nipping the Sankalpas in the bud. Then only you will be really happy. Mind tricks and plays. You must understand its nature, ways and habits. Then only you can control it very easily.

12. The mind assumes the shape of any object it intently thinks upon. If it thinks of an orange, it assumes the shape of an orange. It thinks of Lord Krishna with flute in hand, it assumes the shape of Lord Krishna. You must train the mind properly and give it proper Sattwic food for assimilation. Have a Sattwic background of thought or mental image.

13. If you have tasted ovaltine for a month, "mental adhesion" to ovaltine comes in the mind. If you are in the company of Sanyasins, if you read books on Yoga, Vedanta, etc., a similar mental adhesion takes place in the mind for attaining God-consciousness. Mere mental adhesion will not help, Mumukshutva, capacity for spiritual Sadhan, intense and constant application and Nidhidhyasan (meditation) are needed. Then only Self-realisation is possible.

14. The form which the endless Atma (Supreme Spirit) assumes through Sankalpa is Manas (mind). The mind attains the quiescent state of Para-Brahman through its enemy of

discrimination. It first turned its back upon discrimination and hence entangled itself in the folds of Vasanas of objects.

15. Mind is ever changing and wandering. This wandering habit of the mind manifests itself in various ways. You will have to be on the alert always to check this wandering habit of the mind. A householder's mind wanders to cinema, theatre, circus, etc. A Sadhu's mind wanders to Banaras, Vrindavan and Nasik. Many Sadhus never stick to one place during Sadhan. The wandering habit of the mind must be controlled by making it stick to one place, one method of Sadhan, one Guru, and one form of Yoga. A rolling stone gathers no moss. When you take up a book for study you must finish it before you take up another. When you take up any work, you must devote your whole-hearted attention towards the work on hand and finish it before you take up another work. "One thing at a time and that done well is a very good rule as many can tell." This is a Yogi's way of doing.

16. If all the thoughts are eliminated, then there remains nothing which can be called the mind. So thoughts are the mind. Again there is no such thing as the world independent of and apart from thoughts.

17. The mind is generally attracted by brilliant light, beauty, intelligence, varied colours and pleasant sounds. Do not be deceived by these paltry things. Enquire within. What is the Adhishtan or background for all these things? There is one Essence at the back of the mind and all objects of this seeming sense universe. That Essence is all-full (Paripoorna) and self-contained. That essence is the Brahman of the Upanishads. That essence verily you are. 'Tat Twam Asi,' my dear readers.

2. Thought Culture

1. When you sit for meditation, thought of your friends and office work, memory of conversation that took place in the previous evening with your friend and relatives will disturb your mind and cause distraction. You will have to withdraw the mind again and again, cautiously from these extraneous wordly thoughts and fix it again and again in your Lakshya or point. You will have to disregard and ignore the worldly thoughts. Be indifferent. Do not welcome these thoughts. Do not identify yourself with these thoughts. Say within yourself: "I did not want these thoughts. I have nothing to do with these thoughts." They will vanish gradually.

2. The mind is a mischievous imp. It is like a jumping monkey. It must be disciplined daily. Then it will gradually come under your control. It is only by the practical training of your mind that you can prevent bad thoughts and actions from arising and can prevent bad thoughts and actions that have arisen from recurrence. It is only by the practical training of your mind that you can encourage good thoughts and actions to arise and can maintain good thoughts and actions when they have arisen.

3. Watch your mind always very carefully. Be vigilant. Be on the alert. Do not allow waves of irritability, jealousy, anger, hatred, lust to arise in the mind. These dark waves are enemies of meditation, peace and wisdom. Suppress them at once by entertaining the sublime and divine thoughts. Evil thoughts that have arisen may be destroyed by originating good thoughts and maintaining them by repeating any Mantra or name of the Lord, by doing good action, by dwelling on the misery that arises from evil thoughts, by abstracting the mind, by analysing the origin of the thoughts, by enquiry of 'Who am I?' or by the force of the will resolving to suppress the evil thought. When you attain the state of purity, no evil thoughts will arise in your mind. Just as it is easy to check the intruder or enemy at the gate, so also it is easy to overcome an evil thought as soon as it arises. Nip it in the bud. Do not allow it to strike deep root.

4. In the beginning all sorts of evil thoughts will arise in your mind as soon as you sit for meditation. Why does this happen during meditation when you attempt to entertain pure thoughts? Aspirants leave their spiritual practices of meditation on account of this. If you try to drive a monkey, it attempts to pounce on you with vengeance. Even so, the old evil Samskaras and old evil thoughts try to attack you with vengeance and redoubled force only at the time when you try to raise good, divine thoughts. Your enemy endeavours to resist you vehemently when you try to eject him out of your house. There is a law of resistance in nature. The old evil thoughts assert and say: "O man! do not be cruel. You have allowed us to stay in your mental house from time immemorial. We have every right to stay here. We have helped you up to this time in all your evil actions. Why do you want to oust us from our dwelling place? We will not vacate our abode." Do not be discouraged. Go on with your practice of meditation regularly. These evil thoughts will be thinned out. Eventually they will all perish.

5. Positive always overcomes the negative. This is the law of nature. Negative evil thoughts cannot stand before positive good thoughts. Courage overcomes fear. Patience overcomes anger and irritability. Love overcomes hatred. Purity overcomes lust. The very fact that you feel uneasy now when an evil thought comes to the surface of the mind during meditation indicates that you are growing in spirituality. In those days you consciously harboured all sorts of evil thoughts. You welcomed and nourished them. Persist in your spiritual practices. Be tenacious and diligent. You are bound to succeed. Even a dull type of aspirant will notice a marvellous change in him, if he keeps up the practice of Japa and meditation for 2 or 3 years in a continuous stream. Now he cannot leave the practice. Even if he stops his practice of meditation for a day, he will actually feel that he has lost something on that day. His mind will be quite uneasy.

6. If you place a big mirror in front of a dog and keep some bread in front, the dog at once barks by looking at its reflection in the mirror. It foolishly imagines that there is another dog. Even so, man sees his own reflection only, through his mind-mirror in all the people but foolishly imagines like the dog that they are all different from him and fights on account of hatred and jealousy.

7. You will be able to enter into deep meditation only if you lead a moral life. When you have led the moral life, you may try further to build up discrimination and the other steps in your mind. You can cultivate the mind in concentration and can finally devote yourself to meditation. The more you lead the moral life, the more you meditate, the greater likelihood will there be for you to enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi, which can liberate you from the round of births and deaths and can confer on you eternal Bliss and Immortality.

3. Control of Thought

1. The mind is like a wheel which revolves endlessly with tremendous velocity. It generates new thoughts with every revolution. This wheel is set in motion by the vibration of psychic Prana or subtle Prana. The practice of Pranayam lessens the velocity of the mind, slows down the wheel gradually. Perfect control of Prana will bring the wheel to a standstill.

2. Alcohol, meat, Rajasic foods, cinema, novel-reading, obscene songs, obscene sights, evil company, obscene talks will make the wheel of mind revolve very rapidly; whereas fruits, Sattvic food, company of Mahatmas, study of religious books, solitude, Japa, Kirtan, concen-

tration, meditation, enquiry of "Who am I?" will slow down the wheel and eventually bring it down to a standstill.

3. Identify yourself with the Immortal Self. Enquire 'Who am I?' whenever thoughts arise in your mind. All the thoughts will gradually die.

4. Fewer the desires, lesser the thoughts. Become absolutely desireless. The wheel will stop entirely. If you reduce your wants, if you do not try to fulfil your desires, if you try to eradicate your desires one by one, your thoughts will diminish in frequency and length. The number of thoughts per minute will also decrease. Fewer the thoughts, greater the peace. Remember this always. A wealthy man who does speculation in a big city and who has a large number of thoughts has a restless mind, in spite of his comforts, whereas a Sadhu, who lives in the cave of the Himalayas and who is practising thought control, is very happy in spite of his poverty.

5. Concentration will increase by lessening the number of thoughts. Certainly, it is an uphill task to reduce the number of thoughts. In the beginning it will be taxing you much. The task will be very unpleasant. But later on you will rejoice, as you will get immense strength of mind and internal peace by reduction of thoughts. Armed with patience, perseverance, vigilance, fiery determination and iron will, you can crush the thoughts easily just as you crush a lemon or an orange with ease. After crushing, it will be easy for you to root them out. Mere crushing or suppression will not suffice. There may be again resurrection of thoughts. They should be totally eradicated, just as a loose tooth is rooted out.

6. When you give a blow on the head of a snake with a stick and crush its head, it remains absolutely motionless for some time. You think it is dead. All of a sudden it raises its head and runs swiftly. Even so the thoughts that were once crushed and suppressed by you regain strength and raise up their heads. They must be destroyed totally beyond resurrection.

7. It is very difficult to fix the mind on one thought in the beginning. Diminish the number of thoughts. Try to have thoughts on one subject. If you think of a rose, you can have all sorts of thoughts connected with the rose only. You can think of different kinds of roses that are grown in different parts of the world. You can think of the various preparations that are made out of roses and their uses. You can allow even thoughts of other kinds of flowers to enter; but do not entertain thoughts of fruits

and vegetables. Check the aimless wandering of the mind. Do not have thoughts at random when you think of a rose. Gradually you can fix the mind on one thought. You will have to discipline the mind daily. Eternal vigilance is needed in thought-control.

8. Fewer the thoughts, greater the mental strength and concentration. Suppose, the average number of thoughts that pass through your brain within one hour is one hundred. If you succeed in reducing them by constant practice of concentration and meditation to ninety, you have gained ten per cent of power of concentration of mind. Every thought that is reduced adds strength and peace to the mind. Reduction of even one thought will give you mental strength and peace of mind. You may not be able to feel this in the beginning as you do not possess a subtle intellect; but there is a spiritual thermometer inside to register the reduction of even a single thought. If you reduce one thought, the mental strength that you have gained by this reduction will help you to reduce a second thought easily.

9. In rubber plantation, planters take recourse to the method of thinning out the rubber trees by cutting the small surplus trees which stand in the vicinity of big trees. By so doing they can tap more milk or rubber juice from the big trees. Even so you must thin out the thoughts by destroying them one by one to drink the ambrosial milk or nectar of Immortality.

10. When the tail of a lizard is cut, the cut end will flutter about for some time, as there is still a little residual Prana in the tail. After one or two minutes all motion will cease. Even so, even after thinning and reduction of thoughts, some thoughts will move about like the tail of the lizard. But they are powerless. They cannot do any serious havoc. There is no vitality in them. Just as the drowning man tries to catch anything to save himself, so also these lifeless thoughts try their level best to come back to their previous state of life and vigour. If you go on with your daily practice of concentration and meditation regularly, they will die by themselves like an oil-less lamp.

11. In the beginning of your practice of thought control, you will experience great difficulty. You will have to wage war with them. They will struggle their level best for their own existence. They will say: "We have every right to remain in this place of mind. We have a sole monopoly from time immemorial to occupy this area. Why should we vacate our dominion now? We will fight for our birthright till the end?" They will pounce upon you with great ferocity. When you sit for meditation only, all

sorts of evil thoughts will crop up. As you attempt to suppress them, they want to attack you with redoubled force and vigour. But the positive always overcomes the negative. Just as darkness cannot stand before the sun, just as a leopard cannot stand before the lion, so also all these dark, negative thoughts, these invisible intruders, enemies of peace, cannot stand before the sublime divine thoughts. They must die by themselves.

12. Just as the warrior chops off the heads of his enemies one by one, when they come out of a fortress through a trap door, so you also chop the thoughts one by one when they emerge out through the trap door to the surface of the mind.

13. The substitution method is very easy and effective in the destruction of evil thoughts. Cultivate positive virtuous thoughts of mercy, love, purity, forgiveness, integrity, generosity, humility in the garden of your mind. The negative vicious thoughts of hatred, lust, anger, greed, pride will die by themselves. It is difficult to destroy the evil thoughts by attacking them directly. You will have to tax your will and waste your energy.

14. Suppose the evil thoughts stay in your mind for twelve hours and recur every third day. If you can make them stay for ten hours and recur once a week by daily practice of concentration and meditation, that is a decided improvement. If you continue your practice the period of stay will be gradually lessened. Eventually they will disappear altogether. Compare your present state of mind with that of last year or year before last. You will be able to find out your progress. The progress will be very slow in the beginning. It will be difficult for you to gauge your growth and progress.

15. Thoughts gain strength by repetition. If you entertain an evil thought or a good thought once, the evil thought or good thought has a tendency to recur again. Thoughts crowd together. Just as the birds of the same feather flock together, so also if you entertain one evil thought all sorts of evil thoughts join together and attack you. If you entertain a good thought, all good thoughts join together.

16. Like attracts like. If you entertain an evil thought, that thought attracts all sorts of evil thoughts from others. You pass on that thought to others also. Thought moves. Thought is a living dynamic force. Thought is a thing. If you allow your mind to dwell on a sublime thought, this thought will attract good thoughts from others. You pass on good

thoughts to others. You pollute the world with your bad thoughts. You help the world with your good thoughts.

17. When you reach the spiritual summit of "thoughtlessness" you will reach the abode of Immortality and eternal peace and supreme bliss. O Man! Start your homeward journey. March boldly in the spiritual path. Be not afraid of difficulties. Be bold. Ascend peak after peak. Cross the deep ravines of subtle Moha and pride that come in your way. Take a long jump and cross the mystic frontier of Avyaktam. Chop off the thoughts that wage again and again a guerilla war. Enter now the infinite domain of pure bliss and highest knowledge. Regain your old pristine divine glory. Rest in your Sat-chitananda Swaroop.

4. Purification of Mind

1. You must have a pure mind if you want to realise the Self. Unless the mind is set free and you cast away all desires, cravings, worries, delusion, pride, lust, attachment, likes and dislikes, it cannot enter the domain of Supreme Peace and unalloyed felicity or the Immortal Abode.

2. Mind is compared to a garden. Just as you can cultivate good flowers and fruits in a garden by ploughing and manuring the land and removing the weeds and thorns and watering the plants and trees, so also you can cultivate the flower of devotion in the garden of your mind by removing the impurities of the mind such as lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, etc., and watering it with Divine thoughts. Weeds and thorns grow in the rainy season, disappear in summer; but their seeds remain underneath the ground. As soon as there is a shower, the seeds again germinate and sprout out. Even so the Vrittis or modifications of the mind manifest on the surface of the conscious mind, then disappear and assume a subtle seed-state, the form of Samskaras again become Vrittis either through internal or external stimulus. When the garden is clean, when there are no weeds and thorns you can get good fruits. So also when the mind is pure, when the mind is free from lust, anger, etc., you can have the fruit of good deep meditation. Therefore, cleanse the mind of its impurities first. Then the current of meditation will flow by itself.

3. If you want to keep a garden always clean, you will have to remove not only the weeds and thorns and other small plants but also the seeds that lie underneath the ground which again and again germinate during rainy season. Even so, you will have to destroy not only the big waves or Vrittis of the mind, but

also the Samskaras which are the seeds for births and deaths, which germinate the Vrittis again and again, if you want to enter into Samadhi and attain liberation or perfect freedom.

4. If you apply fire to green wood it will not burn but if you apply fire to a piece of dry wood, it will at once catch fire and burn. Even so, those who have not purified their minds will not be able to start the fire of meditation. They will be sleeping or dreaming or will be building castles in the air if they sit for meditation. But those who have removed the impurities of their minds by Japa, service, charity, Pranayama, etc., will enter into deep meditation as soon as they sit for meditation. The pure ripe mind will at once burn with the fire of meditation.

5. If you do not clean a plate daily, it will lose its lustre. It is the same with the mind too. The mind becomes impure if it is not kept clean by the regular practice of meditation. Meditation removes the dross of the mind in an effective manner. Therefore, practise meditation in the early morning regularly.

6. Do not cause pain or suffering to any living being from greed, selfishness, irritability, annoyance. Give up anger or ill-will. Give up the spirit of fighting, heated debates. Do not argue. If you quarrel with somebody or if you have a heated debate with anybody, you cannot meditate for 3 or 4 days. Your balance of mind will be upset. Much energy will be wasted in useless channels. The blood will become hot. The nerves will be shattered. You must try your level best to keep a serene mind always. Meditation can proceed from a serene mind only. A serene mind is a valuable spiritual asset for you.

7. You must practise austerity of speech if you really want to attain quick progress in meditation. You must always speak sweet loving words. You must always speak truth at any cost. You must not speak any harsh word or any indecent word that is calculated to hurt the feelings of others. You should weigh your words well before they are spoken. You must speak a few words only. This is austerity of speech or Vak Tapas that will conserve energy and give you peace of mind and inner strength.

8. Examine your character. Pick up the defects in it. Find out its opposite. Let us say that you suffer from irritability. The opposite of irritability is patience. Try to develop this virtue by meditating on the abstract virtue of patience. Regularly every morning sit

down at 4 a.m. in Padma or Siddha Asan in a solitary room for half an hour and begin to think on patience, its value, its practice under provocation, taking one point one day, another on another day, and thinking as steadily as you can, recalling the mind when it wanders. Think of yourself as perfectly patient, a model of patience and end it with a vow: "This patience which is my true Self, I will feel and show from to-day."

9. For a few days probably there will be no change perceptible. You will still feel and show irritability. Go on practising steadily every morning. Presently as you see an irritable thing the thought will flash into your mind: "I should have been patient." Still go on with the practice. Soon the thought of patience will arise with the irritable impulse and the outer manifestation will be checked. Still go on practising. The irritable impulse will grow feebler and feebler until you find that irritability has disappeared and that patience has become your normal attitude towards annoyances. In this manner you can develop various virtues such as sympathy, self-restraint, purity, humility, benevolence, nobility, generosity, etc.

10. It is the actions of the mind that are truly termed Karmas. True liberation results from the disenthralment of the mind. Those who have freed themselves from the fluctuation of their minds come into possession of the supreme Nishta (meditation). Should the mind be purged of all its impurities, then it will become very calm and all the Samsaric delusions attended with births and deaths will soon be destroyed.

11. Concentration of the mind on God after purification can give you real happiness and knowledge. You are born for this purpose only. You are carried away to external objects through Raga and Moha. Dive deep. The Divine Flame, the light is burning there. Plunge deep. Merge within.

5. How to Steady the mind

1. The external objects are continuously acting upon the brain. The sense impressions reach the brain through sense-avenues and produce mental stimuli. Now you are conscious of the external objects. Consciousness may be caused by an awakening either by external stimulus i.e., stimulus from a sense-impression or an internal stimulus through memory. Each simple sense-impression is a highly complex bundle of afferent stimuli. "Afferent stimuli" mean stimuli that are carried from outside towards the brain. A stimulus is an awakening in the substratum of the mind. The associations of awakenings which arise from a single sense-impression are very complex.

2. When you meditate, disregard the substratum awakenings in the mind that arise out of the senses. Avoid carefully the comparisons with all other cross references and memories of ideas. Concentrate the whole energy of the mind on the one idea of God or Atma itself without any comparison with any other idea.

3. Avoid all other sense-impressions and ideas. Prevent the complications that arise out of correlated action in the substratum of the mind. Concentrate the mind on the one idea alone. Shut out all other processes of mentation. Now the whole mind will be filled with the one idea only. Nishta will ensue. Just as the recurrence or repetition of a thought or action leads to perfection of that thought or action, so also does the recurrence of the same process or the same idea lead to the perfection of abstraction, concentration and meditation.

4. You will find very often these terms in Gita: "Ananya Cheta (not thinking of another); Machitta; Nitya Yukta; Manmana; Ekagram Mana; Sarva Bhav." These terms denote that you will have to give your full mind, entirely 100 per cent of mind to God. Then only you will have Self-realisation. Even if one ray of mind runs outside it is impossible to attain God-consciousness.

5. You cannot enjoy peace of mind and practise meditation if there is Vikshep (tossing) in your mind. Vikshep is oscillation of mind. Vikshep is Rajas. Vikshep and desire co-exist in the mind. If you really want to destroy Vikshep, you must destroy all mundane desires and cravings through dispassion and self-surrender to the Lord.

6. To practise meditation or contemplation in a mind unprepared by non-adherence to the moral precepts is like building a house on a rotten foundation. You may build up the house, but it will surely fall. You may practise meditation for many years, but you will not realise any tangible result or fruit, if you have no ethical foundation. You will fall down. Therefore, mental purity through ethical training is of paramount importance if you wish to achieve success in meditation and Samadhi. Before you attempt to practise meditation, you must lead the necessary correct moral life. You must have the necessary right understanding. Then only you will have sanguine success in meditation. Much more time is required in the preparation of the mind for meditation than for the actual practice.

7. Drive off all negative thoughts. Become positive always. Positive overpowers negative. You can do nice meditation when you are positive.

8. If the mind constantly dwells on sensual objects, the conception of the reality of the universe will surely increase. If the mind ceaselessly thinks of Atma (Absolute), the world appears like a dream.

9. Free yourself from the base thoughts of the mind, the various useless Sankalpas (imagination). Make ceaseless enquiry of Atma. Mark the word 'ceaseless.' This is important. Then only there will be the dawn of spiritual knowledge. The Jnana Surya (the sun of knowledge) will arise in the firmament of Chidakasa (knowledge-space).

10. Just as you render the turbid water pure by the addition of clearing-nut (strychnos potatorum), so also you will have to make the turbid mind filled with Vasanas and false Sankalpas pure by Brahma Chintan (thinking and reflecting on the Absolute). Then only there will be true illumination.

11. Just as the man who foolishly runs after two rabbits will not catch hold of any one of them, so also a meditator who runs after two conflicting thoughts will not get success. If he has Divine thoughts for ten minutes and then worldly conflicting thoughts for the next ten minutes, he will not succeed in attaining the Divine Consciousness. You must run after one rabbit only with vigour, strength and one-pointedness. You are sure to catch it. You must have only Divine thoughts at all times. Then only you are sure to realise God soon.

12. Just as you saturate the water with salt or sugar, you will have to saturate the mind with thoughts of God and Brahman, with Divine glory, Divine presence, with sublime, soul-awakening spiritual thoughts. Then only you will be established in the Divine Consciousness always.

13. In Nidhidhyasan (meditation) you will have to develop the Swajatheeya Vritti Pravaha. Make the thoughts of Brahman or Divine Presence flow like inundation of flood. Do Vijatheeya Vritti Tiraskar. Renounce the thoughts of objects. Drive them away with the whip of Vivek and Vichara. There is struggle in the beginning. It is trying indeed. But later on as you grow stronger and stronger and as you grow in purity and Brahma Chintan, Sadhan becomes easy. You rejoice in the life of unity. You get strength from Atma. Inner strength grows when all the Vishaya Vrittis are thinned out and the mind becomes one-pointed (Ekagrata).

14. During meditation note how long you can shut out all worldly thoughts. Watch the mind very carefully. If you meditate for twenty

minutes try to increase the period to thirty or forty minutes and gradually to 2 or 3 hours. Fill the mind with thoughts of God again and again.

15. The mind can be controlled by continuous practice. You must keep it always occupied in Divine contemplation. If you slacken your efforts, idle thoughts will at once enter. Continuous practice can bring the mind under control, quite easily. Samadhi is possible by the practice of continuous meditation with a light diet.

16. Put a piece of iron rod in the blazing furnace. It becomes red like fire. Remove it. It loses its red colour. If you want to keep it always red, you must always keep it in fire. Even so, if you want to keep the mind charged with the fire of Brahmic wisdom, you must keep it always in contact or touch with the Brahmic fire of knowledge through constant and intense meditation. You must keep up an unceasing flow of the Brahmic consciousness. Then only you will have the Sahaja Avastha (natural state).

17. Sit at ease. Close your eyes. Look within. Withdraw the rays of the mind. Silence the thoughts. Meditate on Atma or the Absolute. Chant OM. Sing OM. Feel OM. Mentally repeat OM. The mind will move now to its centre or source slowly. You will forget the body and the world. The breathing will become very slow. The breath will move within the nostrils. Your heart will be flooded with joy and bliss. Divine nectar will trickle down. Drink it to your heart's content, and attain immortality. Divine peace, eternal tranquillity will roll over your head, wave after wave. Plunge deep in the ocean of peace. Swim freely and rejoice. What a magnanimous, happy state! What a blissful freedom!! What a wonderful perfection and independence!!!

18. The fight between old evil Samskaras and new Sattwic Samskaras will come to an end now. The eternal war between Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas will cease. The rebellious mind and senses will be obedient captives now. The conflict between evil and sublime thoughts will terminate. Impulses and emotions will vanish in toto. How pleasant and delightful is the eternal life in the Atma! How sweet and enjoyable is this Divine Life! Realise this and be free.

6. Control of Indriyas

1. Many aspirants fail to enter into Samadhi or Brahmic Bliss on account of restlessness of any one of the Indriyas (senses). Control of Indriyas is indispensably requisite for spiritual Sadhan.

2. Develop Vairagya. Without Vairagya, restraint of Indriyas, no meditation or Samadhi is possible. Energy will leak out if Vairagya wanes. Vairagya is non-attachment to sensual objects. It is a mental state.

3. Control the Indriyas. Through introspection find out which Indriya is troubling you and curb it ruthlessly. Give up the objects which the particular Indriya tries to grasp. Destroy the thirsting for objects and sense-enjoyments. Then you will be established in Samadhi or Supreme Peace.

4. Discipline the Indriyas. Speak truth. Talk little. Observe Mauna for two hours daily. Speak sweet, loving, soft words. Don't utter harsh words. Don't abuse anybody. This is the discipline of Vak Indriya, the organ of speech.

5. Don't go to Cinemas. Don't look at ladies with a lustful look. When you move in the streets look at the tip of the nose or big toe and walk. Don't look hither and thither. This is the discipline of the eye, the organ of sight.

6. Don't attend nautch party and don't hear vulgar music. Give up musical entertainments. Don't hear worldly topics. This is the discipline of the ear, the organ of hearing.

7. Don't use scents. This is the discipline of the nose, the organ of smell. Give up salt and sugar for a week. Live on simple food. Fast on Ekadasi days or live on milk. This is the discipline of the tongue, the organ of taste.

8. Observe Brahmacharya. This is the discipline of the reproductive organ. Sleep on a hard mat. Walk bare-footed. Don't use umbrella. This is the discipline of the skin, the organ of touch.

9. Fix the mind on your Ishta Devata. Bring it back again and again when it wanders and fix it on the image. This is the Sadhan for checking the wandering mind and developing concentration. By constant, regular practice, you can fix the mind on God steadily.

10. You may think or falsely conjecture that the senses are under your control. You may be duped. All of a sudden you will become a victim or a slave. You must have control of not one Indriya but also Param Vasyam or supreme control of all the Indriyas. **THE SENSES MAY BECOME TURBULENT AT ANY TIME. REACTION MAY SET IN! BEWARE!**

May the Lord bestow on you Vairagya, Vivek and inner spiritual strength to control the senses and enter into Samadhi.

7. Conquest of Mind

1. The mind can be controlled by Abhyasa and Vairagya. Abhyasa is constant effort to fix the mind on God or Atma. Vairagya is dispassion or non-attachment to sensual objects.

2. Enquire "Who am I?" Do Vichara. Do mental Japa of OM and meditate on Atma. All thoughts will die by themselves. You will rest in Sat-chitananda Atma.

3. Sit alone and watch the Vrittis of the mind. Be indifferent. Remain as a Sakshi. Don't identify yourself with the Vrittis. The mind will come under your control.

4. Destroy the fuel of desire, the fire of thought will be extinguished. With the annihilation of Sankalpa, the reality of Brahman will shine.

5. Cultivate Divine qualities such as friendliness, mercy, gladness and indifference towards happiness, pain, virtue and vice. You will get peace of mind.

6. Don't think of the past. Don't plan for the future. Do not allow the mind to build images. Live in the solid present.

7. Do a good thing which the mind does not want to do. Do not do a bad thing which the mind wants to do.

8. Don't try to fulfil your desires. Don't hope. Don't expect anything. Destroy the vicious desires through virtuous desires and

destroy the virtuous desires also through one strong desire for liberation.

9. Practice of Pranayama destroys Rajas and Tamas and makes the mind steady and one-pointed.

10. Study of religious books, Tapas, charity and Sat-sangh with Mahatmas, Sadhus and Sannyasins overhaul worldly vicious Samskaras and pave a long way in the control of the mind.

11. Japas of any Mantra and Upasana destroy the impurities of the mind, make the mind inward, induce Vairagya, help concentration and eventually lead to control of mind and attainment of God-consciousness.

12. "Kalau Kesava Kirtanat." In this Kali Yuga the easiest way for controlling the mind and attaining Moksha is Kirtan or singing the names of the Lord.

13. Food has influence over mind. Sattwic food (milk, fruits, etc.) calms the mind. Rajasic food (meat, alcohol, etc), excites the mind. Take Sattwic food. Have Mithahara (moderation in diet).

14. Destroy evil habits. Control the lower instinctive mind through the higher Sattwic mind.

15. Don't wrestle or struggle with the mind. Be regular in your concentration and meditation. May Peace, Joy, Bliss and Immortality abide in you all for ever! OM Santi!

Chapter XIV

HOW TO PRACTISE MEDITATION

What is Meditation

1. Meditation is the flow of continuous thought of one thing or God or Atma. Meditation is the keeping up of one idea of God alone always like the continuous flow of oil (Taila Dharavat). Yogins call this 'Dhyana'. Jnanins term this 'Nidhidhyasan'. Bhaktas style this 'Bhajan'. Concentration is fixing the mind on a point or object, either internal (in the body) or external (on any outside object or image). Meditation follows concentration. In Dhyana all worldly thoughts are shut out from the mind. The mind is filled or saturated with Divine thoughts, with the Divine Glory, the Divine Presence.

Place

2. Have a separate meditation room under lock and key. Do not allow anybody to enter the room. Keep it holy. Burn incense in the morning and evening. Keep a photo of Lord Krishna, Siva, Rama, Devi or your Ishta Devata or Guru. Place your Asan (seat) in front of the picture. Keep some books also such as Gita, Ramayana and other scriptures. When you repeat the Mantra or the Name of the Lord, the powerful vibrations will be lodged in the ether of the room. In six months' time you will feel peace and purity in the atmosphere of the room. Whenever your mind is much disturbed by worldly influence, sit in the room and repeat the Name of the Lord for half an hour; then you will find an entire change in the mind immediately. Practise and feel the soothing, spiritual influence yourself. Nothing is like spiritual Sadhan. You will find a local Mussorie, Himalayas, in your own house.

3. Solitude and intense meditation are two important requisites for Self-realisation. The banks of the Ganges or Narmada, Himalayan scenery, lovely flower gardens, sacred temples—these are the places which elevate the mind in concentration and meditation. Have recourse to them.

4. A solitary place, spiritual vibratory conditions as at Uttarkasi, Rishikesh, Badri Narayan, a cool place and temperate climate—these conditions are indispensably requisite for concentration of mind.

5. Just as the salt melts in water, the Sattwic mind melts in silence during meditation in Brahman, its Adhistan (substratum).

Time

5. Get up at 4 in the morning in Brahmamuhurta. It is very favourable for spiritual contemplation and to start worship of God. In the early morning the mind is calm, pure and quite refreshed after slumber. The mind is like a blank sheet of paper and comparatively free from worldly Samskaras (mental impressions). It can be moulded very easily at this time. The atmosphere also is charged with more Sattwa at this particular time. Wash your hands, feet and face with cold water if you find it difficult to take a bath. This will suffice.

6. Always choose that part of the day or night when your mind is clear and when you are least likely to be disturbed. You can have a sitting just before retiring to bed. The mind will be calm at this time.

7. You can have good meditation on Sundays because this is a holiday, and the mind is free. Do vigorous meditation on Sundays. You can have good meditation when you live on milk and fruits alone or when you fast. Use your commonsense always and try to bring out good outturn in meditation.

Where to Concentrate

8. Concentrate gently either on the lotus of the heart (Anahata Chakra) or at the space between the two eye-brows (Triakute). Close your eyes.

9. The seat of the mind is the Ajna Chakra at Triakute. The mind can be easily controlled if you concentrate on Triakute. Bhaktas should concentrate on the heart. Yogins and Vedantins should concentrate on Ajna Chakra.

10. The crown of the head (Sahasrara) is another seat for concentration. Some Vedantins concentrate here. Some Yogins concentrate at the tip of the nose (Nasikagra Drishti). Stick to one centre in concentration. Cling to it

tenaciously. If you concentrate on the heart, stick to it. Never change it. Your Guru will select the centre for concentration, if you are a student full of faith. If you are a man of self-reliance, you can select it yourself.

Yogic Diet

11. Take Mithahara, Sattwic diet. Overloading the stomach with rice, vegetable, dal and bread brings sleep and interferes with Sadhan. A glutton or a sensualist, a dullard or a lazy man cannot practise meditation. A diet of milk renders the body very light. You can sit on one Asan for hours together with ease and comfort. If you feel weak, you can take for a day or two a little rice and milk or barley and milk or any light diet. Those who are in the field of service and who do platform lectures and other intense spiritual propagandic activities need solid, substantial food.

Asan

12. Asan steadies the body; Bandhas and Mudras make the body firm; Pranayam makes the body light; Nadi Shuddhi produces steadiness of the mind. Having acquired these qualifications you will have to fix the mind on Brahman. Then only meditation will go on steadily with ease and happiness. For meditation, concentration and Japa, Padmasan or Siddhasan is prescribed. For general health and keeping up of Brahmacharya, Sirshasan, Sarvangasan, Matsyasan, Paschimottanasan are good. A short description of these Asans and the benefits that are derived by the practice of them are given in Chapter VIII of this book.

2. Benefits of Meditation

1. This world is full of miseries and sufferings. If you want to get rid of the pains and afflictions of the Samsara, you must practise meditation. Meditation is the pathway to Divinity. It is the royal road to the Kingdom of Brahman. It is a mysterious ladder which reaches from earth to heaven (Vaikunta or Kailas or Brahman), from error to truth, from darkness to light, from pain to Bliss, from restlessness to abiding Peace, from ignorance to knowledge, from mortality to Immortality. Meditation leads to knowledge of the Self which brings about eternal peace, supreme Bliss. Meditation prepares you for the integral experiences or direct intuitive knowledge.

2. Truth is Brahman. Truth is Atma. Truth is quite pure and simple. You cannot realise the Truth without reflection and meditation. Be silent. Know thyself. Know That. Melt the mind in That.

3. Without the help of meditation you cannot attain Knowledge of the Self. Without its aid you cannot grow into the Divine state. Without it you cannot liberate yourself from the trammels of the mind and attain immortality. If you do not practise meditation, the supreme splendour and unrivalled glories of Atma will remain hidden from you. Tear the evils that cover the soul by practising regular meditation. Rent asunder the five sheaths that screen the Atma by constant meditation and then attain the final beatitude of life.

4. The fire of meditation annihilates all foulness due to vice. Then suddenly comes knowledge or Divine Wisdom which directly leads to Mukti or final emancipation.

5. There are many valuable trainings of the mind which are essential to mental culture, for instance, the training of the memory, cultivation of reflection, discrimination, Vichara or enquiry of: "Who am I? The practice of meditation itself is a potent clarifier of the memory. The practice of memory-culture powerfully helps the attainment of meditation.

6. Meditation is a powerful tonic. It is a mental and nervine tonic as well. The holy vibrations penetrate all the cells of the body and cure the diseases of the body. Those who meditate save the doctor's bills. The powerful, soothing waves that arise during meditation exercise a benign influence on the mind, nerves, organs and cells of the body. The Divine energy freely flows like Tailadhara (flow of oil from one vessel to another) from the feet of the Lord to the different systems of the Sadhak (aspirant).

7. If you can meditate for half an hour you will be able to engage yourself with peace and spiritual strength in the battle of life for one week through the force of this meditation. Such is the beneficial result of meditation. As you have to move with different minds of peculiar natures in your daily life, get the strength and peace from meditation and you will have no trouble and worry then.

8. A Yogi who meditates regularly has a magnetic and charming personality. Those who come in contact with him are much influenced by his sweet voice, powerful speech, lustrous eyes, brilliant complexion, strong healthy body, good behaviour, virtuous quality and Divine nature. Just as a grain of salt dropped in a basin of water dissolves and becomes distributed throughout the whole water, just as the sweet fragrance of jasmine pervades the air, so also his spiritual aura becomes infiltrated to the minds of others. People draw joy, peace and

strength from him. They are inspired by his speech and get elevation of mind by mere contact with him.

3. Kinds of Meditation

1. There are different kinds of meditation. A particular kind is best suited to a particular mind. The kind of meditation varies according to taste, temperament, capacity and type of mind of the individual. A devotee meditates on his tutelary deity or Ishta Devata. A Raja Yogi meditates on the special Purusha or Ishwar who is not touched by the afflictions, desires and Karmas. A Hatha Yogi meditates on the Chakras and their presiding deities. A Jnani meditates on his own Self or Atma. You will have to find out yourself the kind of meditation that is suitable for you. If you are not able to do this, you will have to consult a teacher or preceptor who has attained Self-realisation. He will be able to know the nature of your mind and the correct method of meditation for you.

2. The mind assumes the form of the object it cognises. Then only perception is possible. A Bhakta constantly meditates on the form of his tutelary deity or Ishta Devata. The mind always takes the form of the Deity. When he is established in his meditation, when he attains the stage of Para-Bhakti or supreme devotion, he sees his Ishta Devata only everywhere. The names and forms vanish. A devotee of Lord Krishna sees Lord Krishna only everywhere and experiences the state described in Gita: "*Vasudeva Sarvam Iti—Everything is Vasudeva (Krishna) only*". A Jnani or a Vedantin sees his own Self or Atma everywhere. The world of names and forms vanishes from his view. He experiences the utterances of the seers in the Upanishads: "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahman—All indeed is Brahman.*"

3. Meditation is of two main kinds, viz., Saguna (concrete) meditation and Nirguna (abstract) meditation. In concrete meditation the Yogic student concentrates on the form of the Lord, Krishna, Rama, Siva, Hari, Gayatri or Devi. In abstract meditation he concentrates the whole energy of the mind on one idea of God or Atma and avoids comparisons of memories and all other ideas. The one idea fills the whole mind.

4. When you see the concrete figure of Lord Krishna with open eyes and meditate, it is the concrete form of meditation. When you reflect over the image of Lord Krishna by closing your eyes, it is also concrete form of meditation but it is more abstract. When you meditate on the infinite abstract light it is still more abstract meditation. The former two types belong to Saguna form of meditation, the

latter to Nirguna form. Even in Nirguna meditation there is a concrete form in the beginning for fixing the mind. Later on this form vanishes and the meditator and the meditated become one. Meditation proceeds from the mind.

5. Saguna meditation is meditation on a Murthy or form of the Lord. This is a concrete form of meditation for people of devotional temperament. This is meditation with Gunas or attributes of God. Repeat the Name of the Lord or pure OM. Think of His attributes, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, etc. Your mind will be filled with purity. Enthroned the Lord in the lotus of your heart amidst a blazing light. Mentally think of His feet, legs, chest, head, hands and the ornaments and dress, and again come to His feet. Again and again repeat this process.

6. This is one kind of meditation for beginners. Sit on Padmasan in a solitary room. Close your eyes. Meditate on the effulgence in the sun, splendour in the moon, glory in the stars, beauty in the sky.

7. Meditate on the magnanimity of the ocean, its infinite nature. Compare the ocean with the infinite Brahman, the waves, foams and blocks of ice to the various names and forms. Identify yourself with the ocean. Become silent. Expand. Expand.

8. This is another kind of meditation. Meditate on the Himalayas. Imagine that the River Ganges takes its origin from the icy region of Gangotri, near Uttarkashi, flows through Rishikesh, Banaras and enters the Ganga Sagar in the Bay of Bengal. Himalayas, Ganges and the sea, these three thoughts only should occupy the mind. First take your mind to the icy Gangotri, then along the Ganges and finally to the sea. Then again take it to the icy Gangotri. Rotate the mind in this manner for 15 minutes.

9. Imagine that there is a fine garden with lovely flowers. In one corner there are Jessamine flowers. In another corner there are beautiful cabbage roses. In the third corner there is the "lady of the night." In the fourth corner there are Champak flowers. First meditate on Jessamine. Then take the mind to the rose, then to the 'lady of the night' and finally to the Champak. Again rotate the mind as above. Do this again and again for 15 minutes. Gross meditation like these will prepare the mind to finer abstract meditation on subtle ideas.

10. Have the figure OM in front of you. Concentrate on this. Do Tratak also with open eyes (steady gazing without winking, till tears flow profusely). This is both Saguna and

Nirguna meditation (with and without attributes). Keep a picture of OM in your meditation room. You can do Pooja for this symbol of Brahman. Burn incense, etc., and offer flowers. This suits the modern educated persons.

11. This is abstract meditation on Nirguna Brahman. Repeat OM mentally with Bhava (feeling). Associate the ideas of Sat-chit-ananda, Purity, Perfection, "All-joy I am," "All Bliss I am."

12. "There is no world. There is neither body nor mind. There is one Chaitanya (pure consciousness). I am that pure consciousness." This is Nirguna meditation (without attributes).

13. Meditation on Mahavakyas tantamounts to meditation on OM. You can take up either "Aham Brahma Asmi—I am Brahman" or "Tat Twam Asi—That thou art." These are the Mahavakyas or the great sentences of the Upanishads. Meditate on their significance. Deny or negate or throw out the Koshas and identify with the one essence that lies behind them.

14. Meditate. Purify your mind. Practise concentration in a solitary room. Then squeeze out the Upanishads and Gita from your heart. Don't depend upon imperfect commentaries. If you are sincere, you will understand the real Sankalpa (thoughts) of the Rishis of the Upanishads and Lord Krishna, what they really meant when they uttered those wise Slokas (verses) in scriptures.

15. Unfold the Divinity that is lurking in your heart by concentration and meditation. Don't waste your time. Don't waste your life. Meditate. Meditate. Don't lose even a single minute. Meditation will remove all the miseries of life. That is the only way. Meditation is the enemy of the mind. It brings about Manasa or the annihilation of the mind.

4. Obstacles in Meditation

1. Laziness (Alasya) and fickleness of mind are two great obstacles in meditation. Light Sattvic diet and the practice of Pranayam will remove laziness. Do not overload the stomach. Walk briskly in your compound hither and thither for half an hour. As soon as you have made a firm resolve, you must carry it out promptly at any cost. This will remove fickleness of mind and develop your will power.

2. Pray. Combat against lust and ambition, the two chief obstacles in Yogic practices. Discipline the body, mind and Indriyas. Abstain

from worldly objects. Concentrate, Meditate. Realise.

3. Social nature is good for doing Karma Yoga. But it is extremely bad for practising Dhyana Yoga. It drags you out. It makes your mind restless. It invites many friends who disturb you in a variety of ways.

4. Rajas and Tamas try to obstruct meditation. The mind that was calm owing to the preponderance of Sattwa during the course of meditation begins to tremble and quiver owing to the entry of Rajas in excess. Sankalpas (thoughts) increase in number. Restlessness increases. Thoughts of action manifest. Planning and scheming come in. Take a little rest. Again do Japa. Pray and meditate. Take a little walk.

5. Laya, Vikshepa, Kashaya and Rasaswada are the other four obstacles. Laya is sleepiness. Vikshepa is excessive tossing of mind from one object to another object. This is the excessive monkey-nature of the mind. Kashaya is Goodha Vasana (hidden subtle desires). Rasaswada is the bliss of Savikalpa Samadhi (lower Samadhi). This itself is an obstacle so long as it prevents you from enjoying the Highest Nirvikalpa Bliss. Vichara, discrimination, prayer, Pranayam, further earnestness and struggle in meditation will remove the above four obstacles.

6. Doubt (Samsaya Bhavana), Asambhavana (another kind of doubt), Vipareetha Bhavana (wrong feeling that I am the body), are three other obstacles. Sravana (hearing of the scriptures) will remove Samsaya Bhavana, Manana (meditation) will remove Asambhavana, Nididhyasana (meditation) and Sakshatkara (realisation) will remove Vipareetha Bhavana.

7. Disease, indifference in the mind. Bhranti, imaginary fear, tendency of the mind to run outside to enjoy objects, drowsiness, falling from a particular elevated state in spiritual Sadhan are some other obstacles. Carefulness, thoughtfulness, increased Vairagya, rest, intense application of Sadhan will obviate these obstacles.

8. Just as clouds screen and obstruct the sun, the cloud of sickness, the cloud of gloom and despair will stand on your way of practice. Even then you must not leave the practice of Japa, concentration and meditation. These small clouds of sickness and despair will pass off soon. Give the suggestion to the mind: "EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY". Just as you do not leave your food even for a day so also you should not leave off your spiritual practices even for a day. The mind is ever

ready to deceive you and to stop you from the practice. Do not hear the voice of the mind. Hear the sweet, shrill voice of the soul.

9. Never wrestle with the mind. Do not use any violent efforts in concentration. Relax all muscles and nerves. Relax the brain. Gently think of the Lord. Slowly repeat your Guru Mantra with Bhav and meaning. Still the bubbling mind. Silence the thoughts.

10. Make no violent efforts to control the mind, but rather allow it to run along for a while and exhaust its efforts. It will take advantage of the opportunity and will jump around like an unchained monkey at first, until it gradually slows down and looks to you for orders. It may take some time to tame it down at first, but each time you try, it will come round to you in a short time.

11. If evil thoughts enter the mind do not use your will force in driving them. You will only lose your energy. You will only tax your will. You will fatigue yourself. The greater the efforts you make, the more the evil thoughts will return with redoubled force. They will return more quickly also. The thoughts will become more powerful. Be indifferent. Keep quiet. They will pass off soon. Or substitute good counter thoughts (Pratipaksha Bhavana method) or think of the picture of God and the Mantra again and again forcibly or pray.

12. Dash cold water in the face to drive off drowsiness. Stand up for 15 minutes. Or lean upon an improvised swing for 10 minutes and move yourself to and fro. Do 10 or 20 mild Kumbhaks, Pranayams. Do Sirshasan or Mayurasan. Take only milk and fruits at night. By these methods you can combat against sleep. Stroll for about 10 minutes. Keep the light burning if sleep comes.

13. Very often depression comes in meditation for neophytes owing to the effect of previous Samskaras, influence of astral entities, evil spirits, bad company, cloudy days, bad stomach and loaded bowels. It must be removed quickly by cheerful thoughts, a brisk walk, singing, laughing, prayer, Pranayam, purgative and a dose of carminative mixture.

14. When a bee finds that its feet are stuck in the honey, it slowly licks its feet several times and then flies away with joy. Even so, extricate yourself from the mind's sticking and clinging to this body and children—owing to Raga and Moha (attachment and attraction) through Vairagya (dispassion) and meditation, fly away with joy from this cage of flesh and bone to the source Brahman or Absolute.

15. No more words. Enough of discussions and heated debates. Retire into a solitary room. Close your eyes. Have deep silent meditation. Feel His presence. Repeat His presence. Repeat His Name OM with fervour, joy and love. Fill your heart with Prem (love). Destroy the Sankalpas, thoughts, whims, fancies and desires when they arise from the surface of the mind. Withdraw the wandering mind and fix it on the Lord. Now Nishta, meditation, will become deep and intense. Do not open your eyes. Do not stir from your seat. Merge in Him. Dive deep into the innermost recess of the heart. Plunge into the shining Atma (Soul) within. Drink the nectar of Immortality. Enjoy the silence now. I shall leave you there alone. Nectar's son, rejoice. Rejoice. Peace. Peace. Silence. Silence. Glory. Glory!

5. Hints on Meditation

1. What does a passionate man do? He repeats the same ignominious act again and again and fills his stomach as many times as he can. What does an aspirant with burning desire for Self-realisation do? He takes a little milk and repeats the process of meditation again and again whole day and night and enjoys the eternal bliss of the Self. Both are busy in their own way. The former is caught up in the wheel of births and deaths (Samsara Chakra), and the latter attains Immortality.

2. A glutton or a sensualist, a dullard or a lazy man cannot practise meditation. He who has controlled the tongue and other organs, who has an acute acumen, who eats, drinks and sleeps in moderation, who has destroyed selfishness, lust, greed and anger, can practise meditation and attain success in Samadhi.

3. Just as you require food for the body so also you require food for the soul in the shape of prayers, Japa, Kirtan, meditation, etc. Just as you are agitated when you do not get food in time, so also you will be agitated when you do not pray in the morning and evening at the proper time after you have kept up the practice of prayer and Japa for some time. The soul also wants its food at the proper time. The food for the soul is more essential than the food for the body. Therefore do your prayers, Japa and meditation regularly.

4. When you are a neophyte in meditation, start repeating some sublime Slokas, Stotras (hymns) for ten minutes as soon as you sit for meditation. This will elevate the mind. The mind can be easily withdrawn from the worldly objects. Then stop this kind of thinking also and fix the mind on one idea only by repeated and strenuous efforts. Then Nishta will ensue.

5. You must have a mental image of God or Brahman (concrete or abstract) before you begin to meditate.

6. When you start a fire, you heap up some straw, a piece of paper, a thin piece of wood. The fire gets extinguished quickly. You blow it again several times through the mouth or the blow pipe. After some time it becomes a small conflagration. You can hardly extinguish it now even with great efforts. Even so, in the beginning of the practice of meditation neophytes fall down from meditation into their old grooves. They will have to lift up their mind again and again and fix it on the Lakshya. When meditation becomes very steady, they get established in God eventually. Then the meditation becomes Sahaja (natural). It becomes habitual. Use the blow-pipe of Theevra Vairagya and intense meditation to kindle the fire of meditation.

7. You will have to note very carefully whether you remain stationary in the spiritual path even after many years of spiritual practice or whether you are progressing. Sometimes you may go downwards also if you are not vigilant and careful, if your Vairagya wanes and if you are irregular in meditation. Reaction may set in. Some practise meditation for a period of 15 years and yet they have not made any real progress at all. Why? This is due to lack of earnestness, Vairagya, keen longing for liberation and intense, constant Sadhan (spiritual practice).

8. During meditation when your mind is more Sattwic you will be inspired. The mind will be composing fine poems and solving some problems of life. Stamp out these Sattwic Vrittis also. This is all dissipation of mental energy. Soar higher and higher to Atma only.

9. You will get the full Ananda of the Divine Glory only when you dive deep, when you merge deep into silent meditation. When you are on the borderland of Divinity or God, when you are at the gate or threshold of God, when you are in the outer skirts, you will not get the maximum peace and bliss.

10. Before saturating the mind with the thoughts of Brahman you will have to assimilate the divine ideas first. Assimilation first and then saturation. Then comes realisation at once without a moment's delay. Remember the triplet always: "ASSIMILATION — SATURATION — REALISATION."

11. There is always a complaint amongst the aspirants: "I have been meditating for the last 12 years. I have not made any improvement. I have no realisation." Why is it so? What is the reason? They have not plunged themselves into deep meditation, into the innermost recesses of the hearts. They have not properly assimilated and saturated the mind with the thoughts of God. They have not done regular, systematic Sadhan. They have not disciplined the Indriyas perfectly. They have not collected all the outgoing rays of the mind. They have not made the self-determination: "I will realise this very second." They have not given the entire hundred, per cent of their mind to God. They have not kept an unceasing flow of Divine Consciousness.

12. Meditate for 2 or 3 hours. If you get tired, take rest for half an hour. Take a cup of milk and then again sit for meditation. Repeat the process of meditation again and again. You can have a stroll on the verandah in the evening. You need not go for a walk when you are meditating seriously. Do not allow the mind to have any worldly thought even for a few minutes. The above method will keep the mind very very busy and entrap it within a short period. Practise this and you can enter into Samadhi within forty days. Householders can convert a room into a forest and can achieve this end at their very threshold. You will be able to sit continuously even for 14 hours at a stretch after some practice.

13. You will have to pass through six stages of meditation and finally you will enter into perfect Nirvikalpa Samadhi or super-conscious state. Form-perception and reflex-perception will totally vanish. There is neither meditation nor the meditated now. The mediator and the meditated have become one. You will attain now the highest knowledge, eternal and supreme peace. This is the goal of life. This is the aim of existence. This is the final beatitude of life. You are an established sage or illumined Jivanmukta now. You are liberated while living. Hence you are called a Jivanmukta. You are absolutely free from pain, sorrow, fear, doubt and delusion. You have become identical with Brahman. The bubble has become the ocean. The river has joined the ocean and has become the ocean. All differences and distinctions will totally vanish. You will experience: "I am the Immortal Self. All indeed is Brahman. There is nothing but Brahman."

Chapter XV

GIST OF VEDANTA

1. Gist of Vedanta

1. The Veda exclaims from time immemorial: "Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti—Existence is one; Sages call it by different names" Rig Veda I—164-46. God, Brahman, Allah, Ishwar, Jehova, Ahurmazda etc., are one. I offer my worship to that Supreme Being. One Eternal homogeneous essence, indivisible mass of bliss and intelligence—whom sages describe in a variety of ways through diversity of intellect.

2. Vedanta is the religion of the Upanishad. It is the property of all. It has no quarrel with any religion whatsoever. It preaches universal principles. It inculcates the idea of that universal religion which is the fountain-head of all the religions of the world. It unites all. It shows the easy means to attain Eternal Happiness, Peace and Bliss, the goal of human existence.

3. The fundamental principles of Sri Sankara's system of Vedanta are beautifully summarised in the following couplet: "I express in half a verse what has been said in crores of books: Brahman is real; the world is phenomenal (Unreal); and the soul (Jiva) is none else than Brahman."

4. Realisation of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme soul eradicates totally the miseries born of the relative existence and removes the veil of ignorance in the individual soul. This realisation can come by meditation or the right enquiry into: "Who am I? What is this Universe? What is Atma or Soul? What is the relation between individual soul and the Supreme Soul? Whence have I come? Whither will I go?"

5. Self is pure, eternal, unchanging, Immortal, Self-luminous, Infinite and all-pervading. He is Bliss absolute. But the body is impure, changing, perishable, insentient and finite. It is composed of flesh and bones. And yet the ignorant man identifies the two. Can there be any ignorance worse than this?

6. The eye cannot perceive Him. The mind cannot reach Him. The gross worldly intellect cannot grasp Him. The speech cannot describe Him. The speech returns back along with the mind, as it is not able to describe Him in adequate terms. Sages declare: "We are baffled in our efforts to describe Him. His glory is indescribable. To describe Him is to deny Him." How can a finite mind grasp the infinite. But He can be directly realised by that aspirant who is equipped with the four means of salvation, who does constant meditation, who has a sharp, subtle, pure intellect.

7. The notion of duality of the apparent world of names and forms must be dissolved. The names and forms should be subjugated and the hidden essence must be grasped. See the Self in all. Ignore the names and forms. Unite with all. Love all. Destroy all differences. Serve the Self in all. See the Self in all, in all actions. This is Vedantic Sadhan.

8. Behind this world-show, behind these physical phenomena, behind these names and forms, behind the feelings, thoughts, emotions and sentiments there dwells the silent witness, thy Immortal Friend and real well-wisher, the unseen Governor or Master, the invisible power of Consciousness or hidden sage. He is called the Supreme Being, Atma, Brahman or the Infinite Self or the Immortal Soul. Know: Thou Art That—Tat Twam Asi and be free for ever. You should live in the very spirit of Vedanta by destroying I-ness and mineness, selfishness and attachment. Then alone you can be really happy even while discharging the duties of your daily life. All-embracing, all inclusive love must be cultivated and developed. That is all. Then you can feel the Self in the one in all. Vedanta is not a mere concept or a dogma. It is neither a mere theory nor dry philosophy. It is a living experience, the melting of the individual soul in the ocean of Divine Consciousness or the Supreme Soul. Negate the body, identify yourself with the eternal Soul. Repeat mentally OM. Meditate on the Self and rest in your own Sat-Chit-Ananda Swaroop. May you live drowned in the Ocean of Brahmic Bliss in an illumined state!

2. Practical Vedanta

1. You must be a practical Vedantin. Mere theorising and lecturing is only intellectual gymnastics and lingual warfare. This will not suffice. If Vedanta is not practicable, no theory is of any value. You must put Vedanta into daily practice, in every action. Vedanta teaches oneness or unity of Self. You must radiate love to one and all. The spirit of Vedanta must be ingrained in your cells, tissues, veins, nerves and bones. It must become part and parcel of your nature. You must think of unity, speak of unity and act in unity. If you deliver a thrilling lecture on the platform on Vedanta and say: "I am all. I am the one Self in all. There is nothing but myself" and show in the action next moment a different attitude of selfishness and separateness, you will not produce any impression on the public. You will be called a dry Vedantin only. Nobody will care for you.

2. See how Raja Janaka lived. He lived the life of a practical Vedantin while ruling the kingdom. You cannot conceive of any man busier than Raja Janaka. He was ruling over millions of people and yet he was a sage, a deep thinker, a profound philosopher and a practical Vedantin. He had no attachment to his property or body or his family people. He shared what he had with others. He moved with all. He had equal vision and a balanced mind. He led a very busy life amidst luxuries. He was not a bit affected by external influences. He always kept up a serene mind. He held discussions with various sages on transcendental matters. This is the reason why he still lives in our hearts.

3. Vedanta or knowledge of the Self is not the sole property of Sannyasins or recluses who live in forests or caves of the Himalayas. Study the Upanishads and you will find that many Kshatriya kings who were very busy in their daily affairs of life were in possession of Brahma Gyana. They gave instructions to Brahmin priests even.

4. Svetaketu Aruneya (grandson of Aruna), repaired to the assembly of the Panchalas, Pravahana Jaivali (the king of Panchala, a Kshatriya) asked him: "Boy, has your father instructed you?" "Yes, Sir," he replied.

5. Do you know to what place men go from here?" "No, Sir," he replied. "Do you know how they return again?" "No, Sir," he replied. "Do you know where the path of the Devas and the path of the Fathers diverge?" "No, Sir," he replied. "Do you know why that world (that of fathers) never becomes full?" "No, Sir," he replied. "Then why did you say

that you had been instructed? How could anybody who did not know these things say that he had been taught?" Then the boy troubled in mind came to his father's place and said: "Though you had not taught me, you said you had instructed me. That fellow of a Rajanya (King, Kshatriya) asked me five questions, and I could not answer even one of them."

6. Then Gautama went to the King's palace and when he reached the palace, the king offered him proper respect. In the morning, he went to the King who was in his assembly. The King said to him: "Sir, Gautama, ask a boon of such things as belong to the world of men." He replied: "Let such things as men possess remain with you. Tell me the same speech which you addressed to my boy."

7. The King was perplexed. He commanded, "Stay here for some time." Then he said: "As to what you have said to me, Gautama, this knowledge did not go to any Brahmana before you; and therefore this teaching belonged among all the people to the Kshatriya alone."

8. Suka Deva had to go to Raja Janaka to have confirmation of his knowledge and realisation. He was tested by Janaka in his Durbar. Raja Janaka arranged for music and dancing parties all around his palace to distract the attention of Suka Deva. There were various kinds of shows and entertainments. Suka Deva was asked to carry in his hand a cup of milk that was filled to the very brim round his palace and to make three rounds without allowing even a drop to overflow and fall on the ground. Suka had complete success in his attempt as he was fully established in his Self. Nothing could distract his mind.

9. An Englishman, a Collector of a District, saw a sick patient on the roadside lying in a dying condition. He was a very sympathetic man. He carried the patient to the neighbouring hospital on his own shoulders. Look at his feeling of oneness. He is a practical Vedantin whether he knows the Upanishads or not. Many people and even Sannyasins say: "Mahatma Gandhiji was a simple Karma Yogi only. He was not a Vedantin." There was no practical Vedantin greater than Gandhiji. He lived, in every moment of his life, the life of a practical Vedantin. He lived for the well-being of the world only. He was a nerve centre for this world. He was one with all. He embraced all with pure love. Self-sacrifice, service, non-violence, truthfulness, purity, unity were his creed. But he never put on the label of a Vedantin. He never advertised: "I am Brahman. Aham Brahma Asmi."

10. The sun, the flowers, the Ganges, the sandal tree, the fruit-bearing trees, the cows—all these teach practical Vedanta to the world. They live for serving the humanity in a disinterested spirit. The sun radiates its light alike over a cottage of a peasant and a palace of a Maharajah. The flowers waft their fragrance to all without expecting anything. The cool, refreshing waters of the Ganges are drunk by all. The sandal tree wafts its aroma even to the man who cuts it with an axe. All fruit-bearing trees behave in the same manner. They please the gardener who nourishes them as well as the man who cuts them. The cows live to nourish the babies, the children, the invalids and the convalescents. Imagine for a moment that the world is devoid of cows for six months or the race of cows has become extinct. How miserable and weak you will become! The world will abound with anaemic patients. O selfish ignorant man! Learn lessons from these practical Vedantins and become wise.

11. If a Yogi or a Sannyasi, who is able to keep up serenity of mind while living in a cave in the forest, complains of disturbance of mind when he lives in the bustle of a city, he has no control over his mind. He has no inner spiritual strength. He is not a practical Vedantin. He has no Self-realisation. He has not attained the goal of life. He is still within the domains of Maya. A real Yogi or a practical Vedantin is one who can keep perfect calmness of mind while performing intense activities amidst the bustle of a city. This is the central teaching of Gita. Lord Krishna says: "Remember me at all times and fight." Lord Krishna imparted his instructions to Arjuna in the battlefield. Though Arjuna was despondent in the beginning, he gained spiritual strength and fought on the battlefield with perfect tranquillity of mind. He became a practical Vedantin eventually.

12. Behold the one homogeneous Self in all. Mentally repeat the formula or Mantra: "OM Ek Sat-chit-ananda Atma" whenever you perceive any form. Negate the illusory name and form and try to be one with the underlying, immortal essence. Serve all with Atma Bhav. Melt all illusory differences. Annihilate separateness. Destroy all unreasonable dislikes or prejudices. Mix with all. Include all. Embrace all. Share what you have (physical, mental, moral, spiritual) with all. Never remain idle even for a moment. Lead a life of intense activity, but in the midst of it keep always a calm mind and thus become a practical Vedantin. Glory to such practical Vedantins! May they radiate Joy, Peace and Love everywhere! May they move about as torch-bearers of Truth, Divine Light and Divine Splen-

dour! May they demonstrate a life of practical Vedanta by their very exemplary living!!

3. Who Am I?

I

1. This is a world of diversity. Intellects are different. Faces are different. Religions are different. Sounds are different. Faiths are different. Colours are different. Faculties are different. Tastes and temperaments are different. But one thing is common in all. Every one of us wants Nitya Sukha (eternal happiness), infinite Knowledge, Immortality, freedom and independence. These things can be obtained by knowledge of the Self alone.

2. Everybody wants eternal happiness that is not mixed with sorrow and pain. Every effort is to achieve this happiness. But he does not know the place wherefrom he can get the supreme bliss. If you want to enjoy supreme bliss you will have to realise the Self, or get knowledge of Atma. The best means to acquire this knowledge is the enquiry of "Who am I?" This enquiry has the potentiality of producing the quiescence of mind which will enable it to wade through this ocean of Samsara. It demands a subtle, sharp, pure, intellect, bold understanding and gigantic will. Enquiry of "Who am I?" is the Vedantic method or Atma Vichara.

3. This common place "I" that everyone is glibly talking about and relishing acutely every moment of his life, from the babbling baby to the garrulous old man must be clearly analysed.

II

1. This physical body or Sthula Sarira is not the 'I'. It is the product of food. It comprises the material sheath. It is called by the name Annamaya Kosha or food-sheath. It lives on food and dies without it. It is made up of seven components or Dhathus or five elements. It is a bundle of skin, flesh, fat, bones, marrow, blood and lot of other filthy things.

2. It does not exist before birth or after death. It lasts only for a short intervening period. It is transient. It undergoes change such as childhood, youth and old age. It has the six changes (Shad Vikaras), viz., existence, birth, growth, modification, decay and death. It is not of one homogeneous essence. It is manifold, inert or insentient (Jada). It is an object of perception like the table or chair. You continue to live even when hands or legs are gone.

3. How can the body, a bundle of flesh, bones, fat and filth be the self-existent, eternally pure Atma, the knower, the silent witness of changes that take place in the body and all things, the inner ruler of all? That the Atma is certainly different from the body, its characteristics, its activities and its states, is self-evident and needs no demonstration.

4. This perishable body is not 'I'. It remains like a log of wood after the Prana has departed from the body. It decomposes and disintegrates. It cannot move. It cannot talk. In dream or sleep state the body remains like a log of wood on the bed. Even if the leg is amputated, the 'I' still remains. The body is ever changing. It is Jada. It has a beginning and an end. It is the result of Karma. It is an effect of Avidya. It is a modification of Tamo Guna. It is an object, Drishya (that can be seen by the physical sense). It has a cause. You say always: 'My body'. This indicates that you are different from the body and the body is your instrument. It indicates that the body is the property and the possessor is distinct from the body. You are holding it just as you hold a walking stick in the hand. Occultists have demonstrated in the West of their existence apart from the physical body by separating the astral body from the physical and showing it to the audience. In dreams you operate through the astral body without having any concern with the fleshy body. Sri Sankara, Hastamalaka and Vikramaditya had separated themselves from their physical bodies and entered other bodies (Parakaya Pravesha). Spirits materialise. Various photographs of spirits have been taken. They possess media and prescribe medicine as doctors do in clinics of England. They typewrite and do various sorts of activities. These instances demonstrate that you are entirely distinct from the physical body and mistake it for the real, 'I' which is ever pure, all-pervading, self-existent, self-luminous and self-contained, which has neither beginning nor middle nor end, which is changeless, which is beyond time, space and causation, and which exists in the past, present and future (Sat, Satta-samanya, Chit-samanya).

5. Yogi Sadasiva Brahman of Karur, Trichinopoly District, who is the author of Adwaitamanjari and who has written a Vritti or gloss on the Brahma Sutras, Mansoor, Shams Tabriez, the Sufistic Fakirs of Multan, practically demonstrated their existence apart from the body. A Nawab cut one hand of Sadasiva Brahman. He was not in the least affected as he was dwelling in Brahman or Supreme Self. He went away in a laughing mood. When Mansoor was skinned out, he did not express any pain at all. He uttered 'Analhaq' which cor-

responds to the Hindu 'Soham' (I am He). Every drop of blood that fell on the ground produced the sound 'Analhaq.' So, body is not 'I'. Body is like the shell of a coconut. It is a house in which the Atman lives.

6. Hence this body is not 'I'. How can you apply the term 'I' to the body which is inert and ignorant. If the body is the soul, your hopes and expectations must increase or decrease if the energy increases or decreases on account of good health or disease. But this is not so. Even if you are in a dying condition your hopes do not come to an end. You still hope to get better. You do not like to part with your possessions. This clearly indicates that the soul in the body must be quite distinct from the body itself. It does not come to an end even if the body perishes.

7. You say "I am a Brahmin. I am a house-holder. I am a Hindu. I am a Raja. I am a doctor." This clearly proves that 'I' is a separate entity. Brahmin, house-holder, Hindu, Raja, Doctor are various descriptive epithets. How can 'I' be a 'Brahmin' or a 'House-holder.' 'I' is one thing. Brahmin is entirely another thing. 'I am' gives the clue to the existence of the real immortal Self or Atma. All the epithets are added by ignorance to 'I am.' There is an inherent feeling in everybody 'I am,' 'Aham Asmi.' You can never think of your entire annihilation. No one feels 'I am not,' or 'I do not exist!' 'I am' is always constant. Body only always changes. It does not shine by itself. It only shines by the light of the 'I am.' It appears in the Jagrat state or waking condition and disappears in sleep.

8. The stupid man thinks he is the body. The man of book learning takes himself for a mixture of body, mind and soul. The sage who has Self-realisation knows he is distinct from the body, looks upon the eternal Immortal Atma as his own Self and feels 'I am Brahman.'

9. You may know the whole Vedanta Sutras and the Upanishads by heart and yet there is no hope of salvation for you if you identify yourself with the physical body and if you do not attain the knowledge of the Self.

10. The identification of 'I' with the body causes the bondage. After the idea of the little 'I' vanishes, the mind beholds all things equally. After this idea of 'I' is destroyed through Atma Gyana or the enquiry of "Who am I?" this idea which is the source for all pains, the seed for birth and death—then this very destruction is the seat of the stainless Jivanmukti state.

11. O foolish man! do not identify yourself with this bundle of flesh, fat, bones, skin, blood and filth. Destroy this strong Deha Adhyasa. The identification with the body is the root cause for human sufferings and for birth and death with its concomitant evils. If you give up this identification, you will be freed from the round of births and deaths. Identify yourself with the self-effulgent Atma, the Self of all, Inner Ruler of beings, and thus attain eternal bliss and supreme peace.

III

Again, can the term 'I' be applied to the ten organs which vitalise the body, the five organs of knowledge, viz., ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose, the five organs of action, viz., organ of speech, hands, feet, genitals and anus? No, the ten inert organs are moved by the mind. They are the products of the Tanmatras. They are inert. They are not self-luminous. They are not self-sustained. They cannot work without the help of the mind. They have a beginning and an end. The five organs of knowledge are the effects of Sattwa Guna. The five organs of actions are the effects of Rajo Guna. Even if the eyes, hands or feet are removed, the 'I' still remains. In deep sleep the senses do not function. Yet when you wake up you say: 'I enjoyed a sound sleep last night.' This blissful experience is not possible if the senses go to constitute the 'I'. You say 'My eye.' This gives the clue that the organs are the instruments or the property and the possessor is distinct from the senses. Therefore organs are not the 'I'.

IV

Again, can the term 'I' be applied to Prana or the life breath which vitalises the body? Prana also is not the 'I'. It is an effect of Rajo Guna. It is Jada or insentient. When you are sleeping, your breath cannot welcome your friend and say: "Take your seat Mr. Ramkrishna." It does not know either its own weal and woe or those of others. The physical body permeated by Prana engages itself in all activities as if it were living. Prana has a beginning and an end. You can control or suspend the breath by the practice of Pranayama. This indicates that the controller is distinct from the controlled. Some Yogis bury themselves underneath the ground for a month. Their breathing gets completely suspended. Yet they wake up with a continuing sense of personality, Yogi Hari Singh who was buried in a box in Ranjit Singh's court for some months woke up with a continuing sense of individuality. The drowned man in whom there is total suspension of breathing is resuscitated by artificial breathing. He comes back to life with the continuing sense of personality. You say 'My

Prana'. This indicates that Prana is the instrument or property and the possessor is distinct from the Prana. Therefore Prana is not the 'I'.

V

1. Again, can the term 'I' be applied to the mind? Mind also is not the 'I'. It is Jada. The mind is a bundle of thoughts. All the thoughts are connected with the personality. The root of all thoughts is the 'I' thought. There is no thought without a thinker. All the thoughts are centred round this 'I' thought. Mind gropes in darkness. It forgets. It is changing every second. If food is withdrawn for a couple of days, it cannot think properly. There is no functioning of the mind during deep sleep state (Dridha Sushupti). It is full of impurities, Vasanas, Trishnas (cravings). It gets puzzled during anger. In fear, it trembles. In shock, it sinks. How can you take the mind then as the pure Self?

2. The mind is an effect of Sattwa Guna. It is your instrument. You say: 'my mind'. The mind is, therefore, different from the 'I'. It has a beginning and an end. It is full of changing ideas. It is subject to modification. It is characterised by pain and suffering. It is an object cognisable by the Self. It can never be identified with the object of knowledge. Again you can control the mind and the thoughts. The controller is different from the controlled (mind). It is as much your property and outside of you as the limbs, hands etc., or the dress, tables, chairs or the house you live in. In sleep, there is no mind. Yet, you wake up with a feeling of continuing sense of personality. In coma or the state of unconsciousness, you wake up with a feeling of continuing sense of personality. Watch the cases of delirium and those cases wherein partial and complete paralysis of mental functions take place. They lose their memory and other faculties partly or entirely, yet 'I' remains. Sometimes they regain their lost mind.

3. When your mind goes in the wrong direction to do some evil action, it is checked or threatened by conscience or Self. This goes to prove that you are distinct from the mind. So the mind also is not the 'I'.

VI

Buddhi is subject to change. It is insentient. It is a limited thing. It is an object of the senses. It is not constantly present. It is not present during deep sleep. It has a beginning and an end. It is the effect of Sattwa Guna. It is not self-existent or self-sustained. It borrows its light from the Self within. Therefore it cannot be the 'I'. Intellect is not the essential being of a man. It is an instru-

ment only. It is finite. It is conditioned in time, space and causation. It is not self-luminous. It borrows its light from the self-luminous Atman within. It cannot solve the riddle of life or the riddle of the Universe. It will take you to the door of intuition. It will guide you sometimes. It may betray or mislead you at other times.

VII

1. Anandamaya Kosha is the Karana Sarir or causal body. It is also known by the name Moola Ajnana. This has its fullest play during deep sleep. When you return from sleep you have no illumination of spiritual knowledge. During waking and dreaming state also the Anandamaya Kosha has a partial play. This is a modification of Prakriti. It is endowed with changeable attributes. It is Jada or insentient. It has a beginning and an end. Therefore Anandamaya Kosha is not the 'I'.

2. When I say 'I', I really feel 'I am' or 'I exist,' (Sat aspect). I understand or comprehend that 'I am'. I feel: 'I am pure consciousness'. (This is Chit aspect). I feel 'I am all bliss' (Ananda aspect). By careful analysis and by introspection this little 'I' dwindles into an airy nothing just as an onion is reduced to nothing when the different layers are peeled off. But we get at the 'core' or 'essence', the big infinite 'I' Sat-chit-ananda Brahman, the substratum or background for all these appearances, the many little 'I's'!

3. There is no 'I' for a block of stone. Thus proceeding with the analysis of 'I' and endeavouring to discover the core of the 'I' by peeling off, as it were, the gross sheaths, and then the fine, finer, and finest sheaths just as you peel off the different layers of the onion, we have found out now that the core or essential nature of 'I' is Sat-chit-ananda. The little 'I' or ego that has been troubling you from time immemorial has dwindled now into an airy nothing and we have come across a very big infinite 'I' which exists in past, present, and future, which is changeless, birthless, deathless and decayless, which is beyond time, space and causation. This is your real nature. That is your Swaroop. Just as you have forgotten the chain on your neck, so also you have forgotten your real nature. You have to know now your essential nature by removing the evil of Ajnana. That is all. It is not a thing to be achieved.

VIII

1. Albeit everything is transitory in this world, people purchase enormous plots of land, build bungalows in various places and erect ten-storied houses. They want to establish eternal life in this sense-universe. This is the

Sat-aspect. This indicates that in essence they are immortal. Owing to Anyonya Adhyasa or mutual superimposition they have mistaken the Anitya (non-eternal) for the Nitya, Asuchi for Suchi (Purity, pure Atma), Dukkha (misery) for Sukha (happiness), Anatma (non-self) for Atma (pure Self). This Anyonya Adhyasa is due to Avidya. That is the reason why a man thinks 'I am holy, I am beautiful' even though he knows that the body is full of impurities. Even though a man knows that he will die at any moment, still he thinks that he will live for ever and makes very grand arrangements to perpetuate his life here. This is also the Sat-aspect of the essential Sat-chit-ananda.

2. Even a fool thinks he is very wise because in essence he is all wisdom. This is the Chit aspect of Sat-chit-ananda. A growing child is full of curiosities. It worries the mother whenever it comes in contact with any new thing, "Mamma, what is this?" There is an intense craving for knowledge. This is also the Chit aspect. Everybody desires for knowledge. This is the Chit-aspect.

3. Everybody wants eternal life, infinite knowledge and infinite Ananda (bliss). This is Sat-chit-ananda. Everybody runs after pleasure. This is Ananda aspect. You love a mango fruit because it gives you pleasure. Amongst all things, you love your Atma most. This gives the clue to the fact that the nature of the Atma must be Ananda Swaroop (all bliss), Ananda Ghana (mass of bliss). Brahman is Sat-chit-ananda. Sat is Truth. That which exists in the past, present and future is Sat. It has no beginning, middle and end. It is Swayambhu (self-existent, self-created). It is that which never changes (Nirvikara, Kutastha). In truth the world abides, from Truth the world comes forth, and in truth the world is again dissolved. Truth is the only Essence or Substance that underlies and pervades this world of beings. Truth gives immortality and fearlessness (Amritatvam, Abhayam of Upanishads). Chit is self-knowledge. There are no Indriyas in Chit. It is self-luminous and imparts light to mind, Buddhi, Indriyas, skin of the body, sun, moon, stars, fire, lightning, and all objects. Ananda is Bliss itself or self-delight. There is no enjoyer in Ananda. It is enjoyment itself. This 'I' is connected with existence, knowledge and bliss.

4. Everybody wishes to be independent. Everybody wants to be a supreme ruler. Everyone wishes others to be guided by him and to follow his wishes. No one likes to be guided by the wishes of others. Everybody in his heart of hearts really desires to rule over all others, if only he could. Everybody wishes to have no rival to himself. The real cause is

that there is in you the immortal, self-effulgent soul or Atma which is one without a second, which has no rival, which is the Inner Ruler, which is the support for the whole universe. In reality you are this Atma. That is the reason why you have such a feeling and desire. Suzerainship is quite natural to you. Suzerainty is an attribute of Atma. On account of ignorance you have mistaken the body for Atma, and you try to have no rivals to the body, in business, in office, in college, in games, in dominions and in any field of activity. You can have absolute suzerainty only by realising the Atma. Atma-Swarajya only can make you absolutely independent. Atma Swarajya only can make you the supreme ruler or absolute monarch of the whole universe. Therefore realise this wonderful Atma and become a veritable, mighty potentate of the three worlds.

IX

1. What varies not, nor changes in the midst of things that vary and change, is different from them. Therefore, the 'I' consciousness which persists unchanged and as one throughout the changes of the material body and all its surroundings is different from them all. 'I' who played and leapt and slept as an infant in my parent's lap so many years ago have now infants of mine. What unchanged and persistent particle of matter continues throughout these years in my physical organisms? What identity is there between that infantine and this adult body of mine? But 'I' has not changed. It is the same. Talking of myself I always name myself as 'I' and nothing more or less. The sheaths in which I am happy, I am young, I am old, I am black, I am white, I am a Brahman, I am a Sannyasin, are incidents in the continuity of the 'I.' They are ever passing and varying. The 'I' remains the same. Conditions change, but they always surround the same 'I,' the unchanging amidst the changing.

2. The house, the town, the country, the earth, the solar system in which 'I' live and with which I identify myself persist with the 'I,' unchanged through all their changes. 'I' am never and can never be conscious of myself as having even been born or dead or can never experience a beginning or an end. 'I' is indeed the very foundation of all existence.

3. Ask anyone and everyone in the dark standing behind a screen through a closed door: "Who is that?" The first impulsive answer will be: 'It is I.' So potent is the stamped impress, the unchecked outrush, the irresistible manifestation of the common 'I' that is expecting others to recognise it as surely as it recognises itself.

4. The immortality of the 'I' necessarily follows from and is part of the very nature of the 'I.' What does not change, what is not anything limited, of which we know neither the beginning nor the end, that is necessarily immortal.

5. We say, "Our world, our consciousness." That another has a consciousness, that another has a world, that there is another at all, is still only our consciousness. As this holds true for every point, it follows that all these 'every ones' are only one, that all this 'one' consciousness, which makes all this appearance of mutual intelligence and converse possible is really only the one taking to itself in different guises.

6. Everybody has an innate feeling: 'I exist—Aham Asmi.' Close your eyes and imagine for a moment that you are dead. You can never do so. You will be still watching the dead body of yours that is lying down. This clearly shows that you are always the Sakshi or Drishta or the subject.

7. Birth and death belong to the physical body. Hunger and thirst are Dharmas of Prana. Harsha and Sokha (joy and grief) are attributes of the mind. Sleep belongs to the Anandamaya Kosha (Karana Sarir). You are entirely different from these sheaths.

8. You dream sometimes that you are dead and that your relatives are weeping. Even in that supposed death state you see and hear them weeping. This clearly indicates that even after apparent death, life really persists. You exist even after the physical sheath is thrown off. The existence is Atma or the big 'I'.

9. In Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 11—4, 13—you will find: "Then by what should we see whom?" This clearly indicates that Atman is not an object of perception. It is always the knowing subject. There is neither an agent nor an object of action, nor an instrument. In the physical plane only there is the Triputi or the triad, viz, seer, sight, and seen.' Who can know the knower? How should one know him by whom all this is known? You cannot see the seer of sight; you cannot hear the hearer of the hearing; you cannot perceive the perceiver of perception; you cannot know the knower of knowledge.

10. Believe in the glory of your own Self. "Thou art That". This Atman was never born and will never die. Abandon all superstitions and doubts. Scorch out all wrong Samskaras and wrong suggestions. Man or woman can realise this Atman. Burn all false differences. There is no low, no big, no great, no superior, no inferior, no animate, no inanimate. Behold your own Self everywhere. There is nothing but Self.

X

1. If you are equipped with the four-fold discipline, Vivek, Vairagya, Shad Sampat and Mumukshutwa, you will be able to make enquiry into 'who am I?' Only if you have proper ethical training will you be able to practise deep meditation. If you possess moral qualifications, you will be able to comprehend the deep truths of the truth 'I'. Only if you have moral stamina will you be eligible to approach Brahman or the Absolute. Ethical discipline is an indispensable requisite for the enquiry of "Who am I?" You can be a wonderful scientist or a philosopher of great repute without any moral qualification, but you cannot be a student on the path of knowledge without ethical discipline. An immoral man can never realise his Self.

2. Give up identification of yourself with the physical body. Identification of one's self with the body is the greatest crime. Give up planning and scheming. Abandon speculation. Relinquish cherished hopes and expectations and worldly ambitions. Give up completely thinking about yourself. Do not expect appreciation or approbation. Burn the desire for name and fame. Scorch the fears of disease and public criticism. Do not hoard up wealth or anything. Do not care for the morrow. Do not pay any attention to insults or stinging remarks or abuses. Become impervious to ridicules and rebukes. Give up your rights and claims to worldly possessions. Burn all worldly attachments. You can enter now the vast domain of eternal bliss or kingdom of Truth. You will be the emperor of the three worlds. All Devas will pay their homage unto you now.

3. Wake up from the dream of forms. Give up this clinging to false names and forms. Do not be deceived by these illusory names and forms. Always cling to the solid, living Reality only. Love your Atma only. Atma or Brahman is the living Truth, Atma only persists. Live in Atma. Become Brahman. This is real life.

XI

1. The mind is like a wheel which revolves endlessly with tremendous velocity. It generates new thoughts with every revolution. This wheel is set in motion by the vibration of psychic Prana or subtle Prana.

2. The idea of 'I' is the seed of the tree of mind. The sprout which at first germinates from this seed of Ahamkara originates without form and is ascertainable only by internal experience. This sprout is Buddhi or intellect. From this sprout the ramifying branches called Sankalpas or thoughts take their origin.

3. Daily chop off the branches of this dire tree of mind and finally destroy the tree at its root completely. If you destroy the idea of 'I' at the root of the tree (mind), then it will not again spring up. The chopping off of the branches is only a secondary thing. The primary thing is the eradication of the tree at its root.

4. Sankalpa is Samsara. Its destruction is Moksha. It is Sankalpa destroyed beyond resurrection that constitutes the immaculate Brahmic seat. As the cause of bondage is Sankalpa, you should root it out from you as completely as possible. This destruction of Sankalpa should be intelligently practised. Do not become the form of object or the knower enjoying the same. Where there exists the conception of the objects and the enjoyer of the same, you should gradually and at all times destroy this Sankalpa. After destroying all Sankalpas become that which remains.

5. When you reach the spiritual summit of thoughtlessness you will reach the abode of Immortality and eternal peace and supreme bliss.

6. Therefore this 'I' should be identified with that which remains after eliminating all the above five illusory sheaths. It is by nature Sat-chit-ananda. This is the Immortal Soul, Atma or Brahman. Through ignorance, through superimposition you have mistaken these five illusory sheaths for the pure immortal Atma. Transcend these five sheaths by attaining knowledge of the Self and be free. Rest in your own Sat-chit-ananda Swaroop by knowing "Who and I?"

4. Silence

1. Once the disciple Bhaskali approached his Guru, Bhava, and asked him where that eternal, the Supreme Infinite, the Brahman of the Upanishads was? The master spoke not. The disciple asked him again and again but the master did not open his mouth. He kept perfect silence. At last the teacher said: "I have been telling you again and again but you do not understand me. What am I to do? That Brahman, the Infinite, Eternal cannot be explained but by deep silence know It. There is no other place for Him to dwell in, but the one eternal deep silence! Ayam Atma Santo—This Atma is silence."

2. Silence is Atma. Silence is Brahman. Silence is Truth. Silence is immortal Soul. Silence is God. Silence is the substratum for this body, mind, Prana, and senses. Silence is the bliss or background for this sense-universe. Silence is Power. Silence is a living Force. Silence is the only Reality. The peace that

passeth all understanding is Silence. The goal of your life is Silence. The aim of life is Silence. The purpose of your existence is Silence. Silence is within. It can be felt or realised by silencing the boisterous mind. If you can feel it within, you can surely express it without.

3. The message of the desert Sahara is Silence. The message of Himalayas is Silence. The message of the Avadhooth who lives stark naked at the icy Gangotri or Kailas is Silence. The message of Lord Dakshinamurthy to his four disciples Sanak, Sanandan, Sanatan, and Sanatkumara was silence. When the heart is full, when you get overjoyed, there is silence. Who can describe the glory of this silence?

4. There is no healing balm better than silence for those persons who have a wounded heart from failures, disappointments and losses. There is no soothing panacea better than silence for those who have wounded nerves from the turmoil of life, from friction, rupture and frequent domestic quarrels.

5. In deep sleep you are in close touch with this stupendous silence, but there is the evil of Avidya. The Silence that you enjoy during deep sleep and the silence that you experience at dead of night give the clue to the existence of that Ocean of Silence or Brahman.

6. Silence is golden. Silence is more eloquent than words. Seers and sages do not talk. Silence is the means of communication. This is a strange but powerful mode of conversation. Real aspirants who are pure and who live with sages only know this unique language of Silence. In that stupendous silence you will find the proof of the existence of God. Learn to enter into the silence daily in the morning at 4 a.m. for one hour, by withdrawing the senses and mind from the external objects. The language of God is silence. Try to learn this language of silence. Listen to its soundless Voice by stilling the mind. Hear the voice of the silence with rapt attention. It will guide you. It will remove your doubts. It will inspire you. Learn all about Silence from the new-born baby and become wise.

7. In the beginning when darkness was rolling over darkness there was Silence only. This Silence is Sat. This Silence is Chit. This Silence is Ananda. This Silence is pure, all-pervading, invisible Consciousness. Maya lies hidden in a corner of this Silence in a seed state during cosmic Pralaya. In the beginning of Maha Kalpa, Brahman wills and a vibration (Spandan) arises. The equilibrium of the three Gunas is thereby disturbed. Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas manifest. Then the Samsaric wheel is set in motion. It is the Rajas that generates much activity and much noise in the world.

8. In common parlance to sit quiet without talking to anybody is silence. If your friend does not write to you for a long time you will say: "My friend is keeping icy silence. I don't know why?" If none speaks or makes noise in a big lecture hall for some time when there is a thrilling lecture, you say: "There was pin-drop silence last evening when the Philosopher delivered his lecture." When the boys make much noise in the class the teacher says to the boys: "Silence please." When you come across two Sadhus, one Sadhu tells: "The other Sadhu is a Mowni. He is my friend. He has observed the vow of silence for the last six years." This is all physical silence.

9. If you do not allow the eyes to see objects and if you withdraw them from objects through the practice of Pratyahara or Dama, this is silence of that particular sense, eye. If you do not allow the ears to hear any sound, it is silence of that particular Indriya. If you observe complete fast on Ekadasi days without taking even a drop of water, it is silence of the Indriya, tongue. If you do not perform any work and if you sit on Padmasan for three hours, it is silence of the feet and hands.

10. What is really wanted is silence of the bubbling mind. You can observe the vow of silence but the mind will be building images. Sankalpa will be cropping up. Chitta will be developing memories. Imagination, reasoning, reflection on various other functionings of the mind will be going on continuously. How can you have real peace or silence now? Intellect should cease functioning. The inner astral sense should be at perfect rest. All the waves of the mind should completely subside. The mind should rest in the Ocean of Silence or Brahman. Then only you can enjoy real everlasting Silence.

11. Of course much depends upon the practice. You know that practice makes the man perfect. Feel the thrill of extreme joy that dawns when you near the goal. You will experience a wonderful calm now. Drink the nectar in the deep silence. In the profound silence the mysteries of Atma will be revealed unto you like an Amalaka fruit in the palm of your hand. Avidya and Maya and their effects, Moha, fear, etc., will take to their heels. There will be light, knowledge, purity and bliss only everywhere.

12. Purify the mind and meditate. Be still and know that you are God. Calm the mind. Silence the bubbling thoughts and surging emotions. Plunge deep into the innermost recess of your heart and enjoy the magnanimous Silence. Mysterious is this Silence. Enter into Silence. Know that Silence. Become Silence itself. Become a Maha Mowni. You are a Jivanmukta or liberated sage now.

Chapter XVI

VEDANTA FOR BEGINNERS

Vedanta is the end of the Vedas. It is entering into the study of Brahman. It is the science which raises man above the plane of worldliness. It is the rational method of meditating on the Supreme Absolute, the Eternal, the Infinite. Vedanta is the culmination of human experience and is the end of the faculty of thinking. It is the greatest and the highest knowledge. This wisdom was revealed to the ancient sages.

The Rishis and sages of yore have made experiments and researches in meditation and given to the world their spiritual experiences. These are all authoritative. You must not spend much time in making the preliminary experiments once more. Your whole life time is not sufficient in making these experiments and researches. The experiences of sages are like ready-made compressed tablets. You will have to simply follow their instructions implicitly with perfect, unswerving faith and devotion. Then alone you can make any progress in the spiritual path and attain the goal of life.

1. Karma

A Vasana or desire arises. Then you exert to possess the object. This is Karma. Then you enjoy the object. This is Bhoga. This Bhoga strengthens and fattens the Vasana. The Chakra or wheel of Vasana, Karma, Bhoga is ever revolving. Give up Bhoga. Practise renunciation, discrimination and dispassion. Destroy the Vasanas by eradicating Ignorance, (Ajnana) through Brahma Jnana, Knowledge of the Imperishable. Then alone the wheel which binds a man to this Samsara will stop.

2. Who is a Killer of Atma?

Forgetting the Self by indulging in sensual pleasures, is killing of Atma. Even after somehow getting this rare human birth, with an innate tendency for Nivritti, he who does not strive for the liberation of his soul is a killer of Atma.

3. Renunciation

You have enjoyed sensual objects in millions of births. You have enjoyed the sensual objects for the last fifty years in this birth. If there has not come satisfaction in you till now, when

will it come then? Do not run after the mirage of sensual objects. The senses are deluding you. Develop dispassion and renunciation. Realise your Atma. Then only you will get eternal satisfaction, everlasting peace, and immortal bliss. Wake up from your slumber of ignorance, O worldly fool!

If your body-clothes catch fire you want to run towards water to save yourself. You must feel like this from the burning fire of Samsara. You should feel that you are roasted in the fire of Samsara. Vairagya (dispassion), and Mumukshutwa (strong yearning for liberation) will dawn in you.

Enjoyment of objects strengthens the Vasanas or Trishnas (cravings) and makes the mind more restless. Enjoyment cannot bring satisfaction of desires. Further Trishna drains the energy and weakens the senses.

When you dream you see the events of fifty years, within an hour. You actually feel that fifty years have passed. Which is correct, the time of one hour of waking consciousness or the fifty years of dreaming consciousness? Both are correct. The waking state and dreaming state are of the same quality or nature. They are equal (Samana). The only difference is that the waking state is a long dream or Deerghaswapna. It will be realised that this life on earth is only a fantastic dream of the mind, when the Supreme Absolute Brahman is realised.

4. Upasana

Upasana is of various kinds, viz., Pratika Upasana, Pratima Upasana (worship of Murti), Panchopasana (worship of the five dieties, Ganesha, Siva, Vishnu, Durga, and Surya), worship of Avataras like Rama, Krishna, and Ahamgraha Upasana.

Ahamgraha Upasana is Nirguna Upasana. The aspirant meditates on his own self as Brahman. He identifies his individual self with the Supreme Self or Brahman. He tries to take out the Self that is hidden within the body of five sheaths. Hence the significant name, 'Ahamgraha' Upasana.

'Annam Brahma' Food is Brahman. 'Akasa is Brahman'. 'Surya (Sun) is Brahman'. 'Mind is Brahman'. 'Prana is Brahman'. All these are Upasana Vakyas of the Upanishads. These are all Pratika Upasanas. Pratika is a symbol of Brahman. All these are symbols of Brahman. You can realise Brahman through worship of these Pratikas. You will have to feel that Brahman is hidden in these Pratikas. You will have to think that the Adhithana or substratum of these Pratikas is Brahman.

5. Control of the Senses

Eyes and ears also are as much turbulent and mischievous as the tongue. Eyes always want to see new forms, new scenes, new pictures and new places, which the mind has heard during conversation with other people. If you have not seen Kashmir, if you hear from those who visited Kashmir, "Kashmir is a lovely place. The springs and sceneries are wonderful," the eyes helped by the mind will agitate you again and again till you actually see Kashmir.

The two most troublesome of the senses are the tongue and the genital. One who has got an appetite for the objects of the tongue and the genital is unfit for practice of Vedantic Sadhana. The four means of Sadhana should be well practised and only a master of these Sadhana can take up the practice of Vedantic Sadhana.

6. The Mind and its Work

Mind is Jagat. Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation. A keen study of the mind and its work is necessary for the study of Vedanta.

The presiding deity of the mind is Moon or Soma. Moon is cool. It is formed of Apas Tattwa (water). Water has a tendency to run downwards. So also the tendency of the mind is always to run downwards towards sensual objects.

The external ear, eye balls are only instruments. They are not the real senses, or Indriyas. The real centres or senses are in the brain or most correctly in the astral body (Sukshma Sarira). If the auditory nerve or the vision centre in the brain is affected you can neither hear nor see.

During a dream the mind itself does the function of all the senses, despite the absence of the external instruments, and the senses, such as eye balls, etc. In the mind all the senses are blended. Really it is the mind that hears, tastes, feels, etc. This proves that the real senses are within. The eye-balls, tongue, external ears, nose, hands, legs, etc., are mere instruments (Karanas).

The mind does the function of Sankalpa and Vikalpa. "Should I go to Dehra Dun or not?". The Buddhi or intellect decides, "I must go." Ahamkara, the self arrogates. Chitta which is the storehouse of Samskaras or impressions makes the preparation and gives orders to the senses. Then the senses act. The legs move. The eyes see. After you reach Dehra Dun, the Vritti or wave of thought that was agitating you to see Dehra Dun subsides or gets dissolved (Laya). Then you get temporary peace, after the gratification of your desire.

Strike a vessel made of bell metal with the tuning fork. It will vibrate. Even so the mind vibrates if anyone abuses or praises you; if you feel pleasure or pain. During praise and pleasure, the mind expands. During censure and pain it contracts.

Mind is miniature-Maya. When the functioning of the mind stops, and when the mind is dissolved into the Absolute, there is Self-realisation.

7. The Guru and the Disciple

The aspirant in olden days used to approach the Guru with a bundle of sticks (Samit) in his hand for spiritual instruction. What does this indicate? He prays to his preceptor, "O adorable Guru! Let my bundle of sins and worldly Vasanas be burnt in the fire of Wisdom through thy grace. Let the divine flame grow in me. Let me attain the highest illumination. Make me realise the Inner Self-effulgent Atman. Let my senses, mind, prana and egoism be given as oblation in the fire of wisdom. Let me shine as the Light of lights!"

It is the Guru's grace that removes the veil of the disciple. The Guru's grace penetrates the heart of the disciple and raises the Brahmakara Vritti. The highly exalted Brahmanishtha Guru for whom there is no world, comes down from his exalted state to teach the disciple.

8. Vedantic Ethics

If you want to practise Vedanta or Jnana Yoga, smile always, be cheerful always. He who is gloomy, he who is cheerless, he who has a castor-oil face or Sunday face cannot become a Vedantin. He is not an Adhikari or qualified person for the practice of Vedanta. Such a man should be shut up in a cell, as he is a source of infection or contamination for others. Shun the company of such a negative person. A man of Viveka alone is fit for the practice of Vedantic Sadhana and a man of Viveka is always peaceful and joyful.

9. The Nature of Brahman

Brahman is the Absolute Existence which is of the Nature of Knowledge-Bliss!

The world itself shines as Brahman when the veil of ignorance is torn down by the dawn of knowledge of the Imperishable. See Brahman in your Guru, Brahman in the world, Brahman in everything.

In reality there is no creation. The world itself is an appearance of Brahman. The world is superimposed upon Brahman through Adhyaropa. Through Apavada Yukti the superimposition is sublated or negated and everything is realised to be the absolute Brahman.

The train only moves, but you do not move. The boat only moves but you do not move. Even so the body only moves. The Indweller or the Silent Sakshi, which is identical with the Absolute Brahman, the Witness or Atma, never moves.

The word 'Atma' is used with reference to the individual. The term 'Brahman' is used with reference to the soul of all beings and objects.

10. Brahman is Bliss

The king returns from his long journey to his palace at night. He is dead tired. He wants immediate rest. He does not want any food. He does not want to talk to the Maharani or queen. The objects do not afford him any pleasure. He wants to enjoy the bliss of sleep wherein he comes in contact with the All-blissful Supreme Soul and refresh and strengthen himself. Brahman is the source of all peace and bliss.

11. Ishwara and Jiva

The causal body (Karanasarira) of the individual soul and Ishwara are one and the same. In the Jiva it is Anandamaya Kosha. Ishwara's causal body is cosmic.

The Jiva is called Viswa, Taijasa and Prajna in the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep experiences, and the corresponding name for the Cosmic Principle is Virat, Hiranya-garbha and Ishwara. The Kutastha in the Jiva is identical with Brahman the Absolute.

12. The Nature of Maya

Maya is Trigunatmika. Tamoguna is inertia. Rajoguna is passion. Sattwaguna is divine (purity).

You cannot detect your own faults on account of the force of Avidya. Avidya is the name for Maya in the individual or the Jiva. You always think that you are free from defects, that you are full of virtuous qualities, that you are the most perfect man in the world. This is Maya.

Maya is Satyam or Truth for a worldly minded man. It is Anirvachaneeya for a Viveki or a man of discrimination. It is Tucchā or nothing for a liberated sage or Jivanmukta who is identifying himself with Satchidananda Brahman.

Vasanas or desires and cravings (Trishnas) can only be destroyed in toto by annihilating Avidya or Ajnana, the sources for this Samsara, just as the tree can only be destroyed by annihilating its root. If you cut the branches of a tree, again they will grow. Avidya can be destroyed by knowledge of the Imperishable or Brahman, and not by the suppression of the senses.

Destruction of Avidya will lead to the destruction of Raga-Dweshā. Raga and Dweshā are the modifications or effects of Avidya or ignorance.

Ajnana is absence of Knowledge of Brahman. Just as the trees born on the soil of the mountain hide the mountain, just as the clouds born through the sun's rays hide the sun itself, so also Ajnana born from the Sakti of Brahman hides the Chaitanya or Brahman.

Tools Ajnana is individual ignorance. Moola Ajnana is Samashti or cosmic ignorance.

13. The Projection of the World

In summer the whole earth is parched. As soon as there is a shower the grain and other plants come out. They were in an unmanifested state (Avyakta) before the rains. Even so the world which is in a manifested state has an unmanifested state. It has come out of Maya, the causal body of Ishwara.

The earth, water, fire, air and ether are all productions of Maya. Water is more subtle and pervasive than earth. Fire is more subtle and pervasive than water. Air is more subtle and pervasive than fire. Akasa is more subtle and pervasive than air.

If you keep some jasmine flowers on your table, the aroma or fragrance spreads, throughout the room. The fragrance is more pervasive than the flower. The flower is in one spot. The moisture of vapour is more pervasive than the earth. Sun's light is more pervasive than

water. Akasa which is the mother substance for the other four Tattwas is all-pervading. All the four elements are rooted in the all-pervading Akasa.

From Brahman or the Supreme Being sprang the five elements. Akasa was born first. Akasa is ether or space. It is Akasa or space that is the abode for the four other elements. It is the vessel or the container. There was Gati or motion in Akasa. Vayu or air was born. That motion is air. There was heat during motion of air. Fire was born from air. Fire cannot burn without air.

14. The Sheaths of the Body

Five sheaths are covering the individual soul. They are the Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya Koshas. The Antahkarana or the internal organ takes four forms, viz., mind, intellect, ego and subconscious mind (Chitta).

Ahamkara has connection with the intellect. Their abode is the Vijnanamaya Kosha. Mind has connection with the Chitta. Their abode is in the Manomaya Kosha.

The light of Surya brightens the intellect. The heat of Surya gives heat to Prana and thus maintains the heat of the body.

Just as the mind is the dividing wall between soul and body, so also Prana (vital air, energy) is the boundary wall between mind and body.

Above the mind is the Buddhi. Buddhi or intellect is made up of fire Tattwa. Below the mind is Prana which is also made up of fire. Between fire (intellect above), and Prana (fire below) is the mind (water). The presiding deity of the mind is moon (Chandra). Dry up this mind (water) through the fire of Vichara (intellect) or the fire of Prana (Pranayama) or of both. You will attain eternal peace, everlasting bliss.

15. Samadhi

Samadhi is the Turiya or the fourth State of Consciousness where there is only the Absolute and no tinge of dual consciousness.

Raja Yogins practise Nirodha Samadhi. Jnana Yogins or Vedantins practise Badha Samadhi. In the practice of Nirodha Samadhi the Raja Yogi stops all Vrittis of the mind by concentrating on one form. In the practice of Badha Samadhi the Jnana Yogi abandons all names and forms and takes up the one essence, viz., Sat-Chid-Ananda Brahman that is the substratum for all these names and forms. There

is Vyapakata in the Sadhana of a Jnana Yogi. He does Sadhana even while walking. Whenever he sees he tries to see the one underlying essence and rejects the names and forms. Whereas a Raja Yogi sits and meditates. He is in need of a steady, definite pose.

In Vedanta meditation is termed as Nididhyasan. One who has experienced Nirvikalpa Samadhi will not return to the state of embodiment once again.

16. Method of Vedantic Sadhana

Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana are the three aspects of Vedantic Sadhana.

Sravana is hearing of the Truth. The Abheda-Bodha-Vakya should be heard from the Brahmanishthaguru. Then Vedantic scriptures and treatises have to be carefully studied for the purpose of properly grasping the meaning of the great Mahavakyas.

Vedantic Granthas are of two kinds. The Pramanagranthas and the Prameyagranthas. One should always study standard works on Vedanta. A complete and exhaustive treatise on a subject has to be studied with the greatest accuracy. Then only the full knowledge of Vedanta will dawn. Works like the Advaita-siddhi, Khandanakhandakhadya, Brahmasutras, etc., are Pramanagranthas for they refute other theories and establish the Advaita Tattwa through logic, argumentation and reasoning. Works like the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and the Yogavasishtha are Prameya-granthas for they merely state the Absolute Truth with authority and do not indulge in refuting or establishing anything through reasoning. They are intuitional works, whereas the former are intellectual.

The mind should be pure and tranquil before starting Vedantic Sadhana. Keeping the Vasanas in the mind is keeping a black cobra within and feeding it with milk. Your life is ever in danger. Kill these Vasanas through Vichara, Vairagya, and meditation on the Atma.

The Sruti texts that deal with creation such as "from Brahman sprang Akasa, from Akasa air, from air fire", etc. are only intended for giving preliminary instructions to the neophytes or young aspirants. They cannot grasp at once the Ajatavada or the theory of non-evolution. When you read the passages which treat of creation, always remember that all is Adhyaropa. Never forget this. Never forget this. Never think even for a second that the world is real. Through Apavadayukti alone you can establish the Kevala Advaita Siddhanta. If the world is real you cannot have experience of Advaitic Realisation.

If the impurity of egoism is destroyed, the other two impurities, viz., Kama-Mala (impurity of desires) and Karma-Mala (the impurity of action) will be destroyed by themselves. How then can there be Prarabdha for a Jivanmukta or the liberated sage? He is one with the Supreme Absolute.

17. Obstacles in Vedantic Sadhana

Ahamkara is the greatest obstacle to Self-realisation. "I know everything. My view or opinion only is correct. What I do is right. That man does not know anything. Everybody should follow what I say. Everybody should obey me. I am free from any kind of fault. I am full of auspicious qualities. I am very intelligent. That man is very stupid. That man has got many defects. I am wise. I am beautiful." Thus says the egoistic man. This is the nature of Rajasic Ahamkara. He hides his own faults. He exaggerates and advertises his own abilities and qualities. He belittles others. He condemns others. He superimposes faults on others which they have not got. He sees only faults in others. He superimposes on himself several good qualities which he does not possess. That man cannot practise Vedantic Sadhana. He is unfit for the path of Jnana.

Raga-dwesha constitutes the great Samsara of the Jiva. They have to be destroyed through knowledge of the Supreme Brahman. Either through proper understanding and discrimination or through Pratipaksha-Bhavana method these currents should be destroyed. Liberation is attained by simplicity, by carefulness, by purity, by controlling the passions and by following on the footprints of saints and sages.

Through Vedantic Sadhana the Brahmakara Vritti is generated. The bamboo strikes against other bomboos and fire is generated. The whole forest is burnt. There is a huge conflagration. The fire subsides by itself. Even so the Brahmakara Vritti that is generated in the Sattwik mind through meditation on Brahman or the significance of the 'Tat Twam Asi' Mahavakya destroys Avidya or ignorance and its defects and leads to the attainment of Brahma Jnana and finally dies by itself when the Supreme State is attained.

The paste of strychnos potatodum (nirmal seeds) removes all dirt in the water and helps it to settle at the bottom of the vessel. Along with the dirt the paste also disappears. Even so the Brahmakara Vritti destroys all worldly (Vishayakara) Vrittis and finally perishes by itself after the dawn of the knowledge of the Imperishable.

18. The Nature of the Jnani

The Jnana Yogi practises neither Pratyahara nor Chittavrittinirodha like the Raja Yogi. He tries to behold the One Undivided Essence of Satchidananda behind all names and forms. He stands as a witness or Sakshi of all the Vrittis. All Vrittis gradually die by themselves.

There is no body from the Drishti or view of the sage. How can there be Prarabdha then, for a Jnani?

The Jnani is one with the Absolute and hence no change takes place in his being. He is Santam, Sivam and Adwaitam.

The Jnani is a Jivanmukta. He is liberated in this very life itself. His body is like a burnt cloth or a sword that is changed into gold through the touch of the philosopher's stone. His body and ego is only an appearance. The ego of the Jnani has the power just to sustain the body until the exhaustion of the Prarabdha Karma but has no power to bind him to rebirth and embodiment again. His ego is burnt by the fire of Supreme Wisdom.

19. Vedantic Assertions

1. Consciousness is Brahman.
2. I am Brahman.
3. That thou art.
4. This Atma is Brahman.
5. All, indeed, is Brahman.

Om Santi! Santi!! Santi!!!

ILLUSTRATIONS IN VEDANTA

Vedanta Philosophy is best taught through practical illustrations of daily life, because the abstract truths of existence cannot be understood by the finite intellect very easily. The main purport of Vedanta is to prove that Brahman alone is real and the whole world of appearance is unreal and that the Jiva is nothing but Brahman Itself. This abstruse theory cannot be comprehended by ordinary men of small understanding who are so much immersed in the life of relativity and ignorance. To them this sublime Truth is taught in the form of relative illustrations suitable to them, in order to aim at this Common Reality through various angles of vision.

Section I

1. Rajjusarpa-Nyaya

In the twilight a man treads upon a rope and mistaking it for a poisonous snake, jumps in a hurry, and cries out in fear. His heart throbs quickly. But when a light is brought by a friend of his, he finds that it is not a snake but only a rope and then all his fears vanish. This is to illustrate the unreality of the world and its superimposition on the supreme Brahman. Brahman is the Reality and the world is only a superimposition on Brahman just as the snake is a superimposition on the rope.

2. Mrigatrishnika-Nyaya

In the desert a traveller sees at noon a mirage where water, meadows, trees and mansions are seen. He believes the sight to be a true one and pursues the spot. The nearer he thinks he is to the spot the further it retreats from him. He leaves his way out far and wanders in the desert. Then he realises that he has made a mistake in straying away from his path in search of this false appearance of water. He does not get deceived again by this kind of mirage. This is given, in Vedanta, to illustrate the falsity of the universe which appears to give pleasure with objects for indulgence to the wanderer, the Jiva. When the Jiva realises through Jnana or Knowledge of the Self, that this world is unreal and that he had made a mistake in turning away from the true path to his original State of Perfection or Swaroopaa, he stops from running after the false mirage of this life of sensual pleasure on earth. The world is only an appearance just like a mirage which is only an appearance of the sun's rays.

3. Suktirajata-Nyaya

This is similar to 'Akasanili-Nyaya' or 'Stambhe-Nara-Nyaya' (Man in the post). These are also similar to Rajjusarpa-Nyaya. These illustrate the superimposition of the unreal on the real. The mother of pearl is mistaken for pure silver, the attributeless sky appears blue due to its farness and imperceptibility, the post is mistaken for a man at night. The knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, the Reality, comes after proper understanding through discrimination, patience, endurance, renunciation and meditation. The world is an appearance of Brahman just as man is only an appearance of the post.

4. Kanakakundala-Nyaya

This is similar to Mrittika-Ghata-Nyaya and the analogy of Iron and implements. All the ornaments are made of one type of gold,

but they are of diverse forms. They are all gold only in reality. There are various kinds of jars, pots and vessels, big and small, round and narrow, and of all forms, but all of them are mud only in reality. Various kinds of implements and tools are manufactured, with various forms and uses, but all of them are iron only in reality. The names of those various formations and their forms are false since they are in reality only the original source, the gold, mud or iron. This is to illustrate that the various names and forms of this world and its contents are simply false for all are in essence Brahman only. Brahman alone is appearing in many names and forms.

5. Samudrataranga-Nyaya

There are countless waves rolling over the vast ocean. Each wave is distinguished from the other, and each wave can be perceived separately one by one. But all are water only and are not separate from the great ocean. All are one in reality. The difference is only apparent. This illustrates that all the innumerable Jivas that appear in this universe, though perceived apparently to be separate from one another, are in reality that one Ocean of Satchidananda and are all identical with it. There is no difference or diversity.

6. Sphatikavarna-Nyaya

This is the analogy of colour in crystals. The Sphatika or the brilliant crystal is pure in itself and has no particular colour of its own. But when a coloured object is brought near it, it reflects the same colour and itself appears to be of that colour, blue, red or whatever it be. In the same manner, the illustration is that Brahman or the Atman is colourless, taintless and attributeless, but only the Upadhis or the limiting adjunct make it appear as different and of various qualities, names and forms.

7. Padmapatra-Nyaya

This is the analogy of the lotus and water. Rain-water often falls on a lotus leaf but the water drips down and the leaf does not get stained by or attached to the water on it. In the same manner, this Atma or Brahman is untainted though there are countless worlds rolling upon it, and countless bodies are seen to be put on by it.

8. Vatagandha-Nyaya

The wind carries whatever scent is exposed to it and spreads it everywhere. But the air is pure and is not defiled by the bad scent or ornamented by a good scent therein. This is

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just similar to the illustration of the lotus-leaf and water to show the unattached state of the Atma or the Brahman, though it puts on various names, forms and actions in the appearance of phenomena.

9. Oornanabhi-Nyaya

The spider brings forth the thread from its mouth to build its web and withdraws it again into its mouth. But the thread is nothing but the body of itself and is one with it. Even so this world is projected forth by Brahman and then again withdrawn by Brahman. But the world is nothing but the Being of Brahman only appearing. This shows that all is Brahman alone in reality.

10. Surya-Bimba-Nyaya

There is only one sun illumining all the worlds. But there are perceived as many different suns by the physical eye as there are ponds, tanks, rivers, mirrors, etc. The sun is reflected in all waters, but there is only one real Sun. Likewise there is only one Supreme Existence, Absolute, the infinite Brahman, but that One Reality is reflected through the Upadhis of Maya and Avidya as various worlds and Jivas. This is false for it is only the appearance of reflections. The Truth is only One.

11. Ghatakasha-Nyaya

This is the analogy of ether in pot. There is the great Ether or the Mahakasha pervading the whole space and there is the same ether inside a jar also. But the ether in jar can be differentiated from the great ether on account of the ether being enclosed and contained by the jar. But the ether is in no way affected in the least by the partitions made by the walls of the jars. When the jar is broken, the ether in the jar becomes one with the great ether, having undergone no change at any time. Even so the Atma in the individual is partitioned by the mind and the body, but in reality it is one with the great Paramatma, the Supreme Soul. When the body is broken and the mind is destroyed, the Atma becomes one with the Supreme Brahman, having undergone no change due to the appearance of the mind and the body, the products of Avidya or Upadhi of ignorance.

12. Bhamara-Kita-Nyaya

The Bhamara or the Wasp is said to hit the insects or the Kitas which it brings to its hive and through poisoning them and biting them makes them feel the Wasp alone everywhere at all times. The insects, so to say, meditate on the presence of the Wasp at all times, and in turn become themselves wasps.

This is to show that by meditating on the formula 'Aham Brahma Asmi' or 'I am Brahman' the Jiva becomes Brahman Itself in the end.

13. Dagdhapata-Nyaya

This is the analogy of the burnt cloth. If a cloth is burnt you will see even afterwards that there is the same form of the cloth appearing. But when touched with the hand even slightly, it is reduced to ashes. Even so is the body of the Jnani or the Jivanmukta. He does possess a body but it is like the burnt cloth. It is burnt by the fire of Wisdom and there is no ego to sustain it. The Jnani is untouched by worldly taints and, leaving that appearance of a body, he attains Sadyo-Mukti or Kaivalya-Mukti.

14. Arundhati-Nyaya

To show a person which is the star Arundhati in the sky, one points out at first to a tree and says that the star is just above the tree. This is akin to Shakha-Chandra-Nyaya. After finding out the position, the person is led to a big star near it and is told that that is the Arundhati. Then slowly the real star is shown. Even so, the aspirant is at first shown a physical method of approaching the Reality through service and formal worship of God, but afterwards he is led gradually to the Supreme Truth, the Absolute.

15. Bija-Vriksha-Nyaya

The Seed is the cause of the tree and the tree is the cause of the seed. It cannot be said which is the cause of which. This is to illustrate that every question and statement has got a counter-question and counter-statement, that every *this* is also every *that*, and that the Ultimate Truth is Silence, which Dakshina-murthy followed.

16. Markata-Kishora-Nyaya

The child of a monkey catches hold of the mother's breast and never leaves it even in times of extreme danger. It does not rely upon the mother for its safety but struggles itself. This is to illustrate the nature of the aspirant in the path of Jnana-Sadhana who does not rely upon any external help or Divine Grace for his salvation, but struggles himself independently and attains Wisdom of the Self.

17. Ashma-loshtra-Nyaya

This is the analogy of stone and mud. Mud is hard when compared to cotton but it is soft when compared to stone. This is to show that a thing may be bad as compared

with better things, but is good when compared with inferior things. This is used to illustrate that there is no quality in things by themselves, that there is no plurality in life, and that difference is caused only through imagination.

18. Kakadanta-Nyaya

This is akin to Vandhya-putra-Nyaya, Gaganaravinda-Nyaya or Sasavishana-Nyaya. It is useless to search for the teeth of a crow for it has no teeth. Similar is the case with the son of a barren woman, a lotus grown in the sky, and the horns of a hare. This is to show that it is meaningless to question the contradictions and mysteries of existence like "Why did the Perfect God create an imperfect world?" etc., for there is no real change and there is no creation at all in reality.

19. Dandapooa-Nyaya

When many cakes are tied to a stick and one says, "the stick has been pulled down and is not to be found", it naturally follows that the cakes also are missing. This is to illustrate that all doubts are cleared and desires pacified when it is known that Existence is Eternal, Infinite and Changeless, Undivided, Intelligence and Bliss! For doubts and desires arise only when there is change or evolution.

20. Kshaurikaputra-Nyaya

A king asked a barber to bring the most beautiful boy in his kingdom. The barber searched the whole country but could not find a really beautiful one. He felt very sorry and came to his house in distress. But finding his own son in his house, who was actually an embodiment of ugliness, thought he is the most beautiful in the world and brought him to the king. This is to illustrate that whatever is dear to one and whatever is much attached to, is found to be the best and the most precious, and that men have love for the world only because they are strongly attached to it. Everyone is shut up within his own limited individual experience.

21. Vishakrimi-Nyaya

Worms revelling in poisonous materials are not affected by poison and are happy there. This is to denote that though a thing is worthless and low to one it may be very good and be the very thing the other wants and craves for. It illustrates that creatures of the world are happy in it for they know not anything higher.

Section II

1. Butter in Milk

Butter or ghee exists in milk. But where is it? It cannot be perceived. But it is present everywhere in milk, in each and every drop of milk. There is no particle in milk where butter or ghee is not present. In the same manner Brahman is present everywhere and there is no speck of space where Brahman is not. But Brahman cannot be perceived and it seems to be nowhere. It is the very essence or cream of this existence but it is nowhere visible to the eyes of a worldly-minded man. This illustrates the omnipresence of Brahman.

2. Fire in Wood

Fire is present in all parts of wood just like butter in milk. It is only one fire that is existent in all woods, but it becomes various in name, form and action when it manifests into visible fire. Even so Brahman which is the Reality in all things appears as many in name, form and action when manifest in various Jivas and countless worlds. But the Truth is only One, only it appears to be many.

3. Smoke and Fire

Smoke emanates from fire. The dense smoke covers up the bright fire and the fire cannot be seen. But the smoke comes only from the fire and is only part of the burning fire. It is one with fire. Similarly Maya projects itself forth in the being of Brahman and clouds the appearance of Brahman so that Brahman is not perceived and there is variety in existence. But Maya is one with Brahman and is Brahman only appearing, the Effulgent, Consciousness-Bliss!

4. Thread and Necklace

The necklace contains many beads of various forms but there is one single thread that connects them all and keeps them in unity. The thread is their very support and being. Even so in the diverse Jivas and worlds that exist, there is one common Life-Principle, the Supreme Brahman as it is called, that unifies the entirety of Existence, and is the very support and being of all that exists.

5. Wearer and Apparel

The old and used clothes are thrown away and new clothes are put on by man. In the Bhagavadgita this is given to illustrate that the Jiva throws off an old and used-up body and assumes a new one, and that the Jiva therefore never dies.

6. The Chameleon

The chameleon is an animal which changes its colour at any time according to the colour of the surface it moves on. A person who has seen the chameleon when it is assuming the colour red says the chameleon is red. But the other one who has seen it only when it is assuming the colour green says that the chameleon is green. But a person who has watched the chameleon all along carefully under the tree, knows all its colours and does not have any more doubts. This is to illustrate that people who have only a partial understanding of the nature of God quarrel among themselves that this is right and this is wrong, God is like this, God is like that, etc. But a Brahmajnani who has calmly watched the nature of the whole existence knows its true nature and does not any more have doubts regarding the nature of the Absolute.

7. Salt and Water

A particle of salt dropped in a large vessel of water dissolves itself in the water and is no more perceivable to the eye. But any part of that water, if tasted, is felt to be saltish. In the same manner the Jiva when attaining Wisdom dissolves itself in the Ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss and becomes one with the All. All is felt to be Supreme Bliss. It is everywhere the same.

8. Two thorns

If a thorn gets stuck to the leg, it is carefully removed with the help of another thorn. But after the work is over, both the thorns are thrown away and the person is happy. Even so, the evil qualities and ignorance born of Avidya should be removed by virtuous qualities and knowledge and after attaining Peace, one has to discard them both and transcend all differences.

9. The Sword and the Philosopher's Stone

At the very touch of a philosopher's stone the sharp iron sword is turned into gold and afterwards it does not cut even if it has the appearance of a sword. Even so the ego of the Siddha-Jnani or the Jivanmukta, though it has the appearance of individuality and presents a physical body, cannot bind the Siddha again to re-

birth, for it is transformed into Suddha-Sattwa by the touch of Supreme Wisdom of the Absolute.

10. The Chandelier and Electricity

In a chandelier various bulbs of different colours are seen and there is a grand diversity in their forms. But the basis of the entire light is the one power of electricity charged from the dynamo which is the common force of all bulbs, and which has no colours or varieties. Even so there are various worlds and creatures of multifarious names and forms, but all are having their basis or support in the one Power, the Supreme Brahman which is Indivisible and Attributeless, Nameless and Formless.

11. The Two Birds

Two birds live in the same tree as comrades. But one of them eats the sweet fruit of the tree and gets bound in delusion. But the other bird does not eat anything and remains an eternal witness. This analogy occurs in the Mundaka-Upanishad. This is to illustrate that the Jiva and the Paramatman are both in the same body but the Jiva enjoys the pleasures through the senses and gets bound whereas the Paramatman or the Supreme Soul, the Kutastha, remains as a Sakshi or a witness and exists ever in Absoluteness.

12. The Man and the Necklace

A person wears round his neck a gold necklace and in excitement and deluded anxiety searches for that necklace here and there. He walk and runs this side and that side but nowhere finds the necklace, though it is round his own neck. Similarly the individual or the Jiva searches for Perfection and Bliss outside everywhere, forgetting the fact that the Immortal Seat of Brahman is its very being itself and that it is identical with that Brahman.

13. The Silk worm and the Cocoon

The silk-worm oozes out certain thread from its mouth and binds itself within a cocoon, and thus gets itself destroyed in course of time. Similarly the Jiva binds itself through ignorance created by imagination and suffers from bondage of embodied life through birth and death!

Appendix

SADHANA TATTWA

or

THE SCIENCE OF SEVEN CULTURES

for quick evolution of the human soul

by

Sri Swami Sivananda, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh

INTRODUCTION

(a) *An ounce of practice is better than tons of theory. Practise Yoga, Religion and Philosophy in daily life and attain Self-realization.*

(b) *These 32 instructions give the essence of the Eternal religion (Sanathana Dharma) in its purest form. They are suitable for modern busy householders with fixed hours of work. Modify them to suit your convenience and increase the period gradually.*

(c) *In the beginning, take only a few practicable resolves which form a small but definite advance over your present habits and character. In case of ill-health, pressure of work or unavoidable engagements replace your active Sadhana by frequent remembrance of God.*

HEALTH CULTURE

1. Eat moderately. Take light and simple food. Offer it to God before you eat. Have a balanced diet.

2. Avoid chillies, garlic, onions, tamarind, etc., as far as possible. Give up tea, coffee, smoking, betels, meat and wine entirely.

3. Fast on *Ekadashi* days. Take milk, fruits or roots only.

4. Practise *yogic asans* or physical exercises for fifteen to thirty minutes. Take a long walk or play some vigorous games daily.

ENERGY CULTURE

5. Observe silence (*mouna*) for two hours daily and four to eight hours on Sundays.

6. Observe celibacy according to your age and circumstances. Restrict the indulgence to once a month. Decrease it gradually to once a year. Finally take a vow of abstinence for whole life.

ETHICAL CULTURE

7. Speak the TRUTH. Speak little. Speak kindly. Speak sweetly.

8. Do not injure anyone in thought, word or deed. Be kind to all.

9. Be sincere, straightforward and open-hearted in your talks and dealings.

10. Be honest. Earn by the sweat of your brow. Do not accept any money, thing or favour unless earned lawfully. Develop nobility and integrity.

11. Control fits of anger by serenity, patience, love, mercy and tolerance. Forget and forgive. Adapt yourself to men and events.

WILL CULTURE

12. Live without sugar for a week or a month. Give up salt on Sundays.

13. Give up cards, novels, cinemas and clubs. Fly from evil company. Avoid discussions with materialists. Do not mix with persons who have no faith in God or who criticise your *Sadhana*.

14. Curtail your wants. Reduce your possessions. Have plain living and high thinking.

HEART CULTURE

15. Doing good to others is the highest religion. Do some selfless service for a few hours every week, without egoism or expectation of reward. Do your worldly duties in the same spirit. Work is worship. Dedicate it to God.

16. Give two to ten per cent of your income in charity every month. Share what you have with others. Let the world be your family. Remove selfishness.

17. Be humble and prostrate to all beings mentally. Feel the Divine Presence everywhere. Give up vanity, pride and hypocrisy.

18. Have unwavering faith in God, *Gita* and your *Guru*. Make a total self-surrender to God and pray: "Thy Will will be done; I want nothing." Submit to the Divine Will in all events and happenings with equanimity.

19. See God in all beings and love them as your own self. Do not hate anyone.

20. Remember God at all times or, at least, on rising from bed, during a pause in work and before going to bed. Keep a *mala* in your pocket.

PSYCHIC CULTURE

21. Study one chapter or ten to twenty-five verses of *Gita*, with meaning, daily. Learn *Sanskrit*, at least sufficient to understand the *Gita* in original.

22. Memorise the whole of *Gita*, gradually. Keep it always in your pocket.

23. Read *Ramayan*, *Bhagavat*, *Upanishads*, *Yogavasishta* or other religious books daily or on holidays.

24. Attend religious meetings, *kirtans* and *satsangs* of saints at every opportunity. Organise such functions on Sundays or holidays.

25. Visit a temple or place of worship at least once a week and arrange to hold *kirtans* or discourses there.

26. Spend holidays and leave periods, when possible, in the company of saints; or practise *Sadhana* at holy places in seclusion.

SPIRITUAL CULTURE

27. Go to bed early. Get up at four o'clock. Answer calls of nature, clean your mouth and take a bath.

28. Recite some prayers and *kirtan dhvanis*. Practise *pranayam*, *japa* and meditation from five to six o'clock. Sit on *Padma*, *Siddha*, or *Sukha asan* throughout, without movement, by gradual practice.

29. Perform your daily *Sandhya*, *Gayatri-japa*, *Nityakarma* and worship, if any.

30. Write your favourite *mantra* or name of God in a note book for ten to thirty minutes.

31. Sing names of God (*kirtan*), prayers, *stotras*, and *bhajans* for half to one hour at night, with family and friends.

32. Make annual resolves on above lines. Regularity, tenacity and fixity are essential. Record *Sadhana* in a spiritual diary daily. Review it every month and correct your failures.

SWAMI SIVANANDA

Note: Frame this *Sadhana Chart* (or paste on card-board and display it in a prominent place. Read it frequently. Spread this spiritual knowledge.