

Yoga Nidra practice 2

Preparation - *shavasana*

Preparatory Relaxation - *three breaths, breath awareness*

Sankalpa - *resolution*

Rotation of Consciousness

Opposites - *heaviness/lightness, cold/heat, pain/pleasure*

Breath - *navel, chest & nose, counting 27-1*

Visualisation - *rapid visualisation*

Self - *moon, crystal ball, flame, mirror*

Sankalpa

Returning

Preparation - *shavasana*

Make yourself ready for a 30 minute practice of Yoga Nidra. Lie down on your back in the pose called shavasana, the corpse pose. In this position the body should be straight from head to toe, the legs slightly apart. The arms a little away from the body, with the palms of the hands turned upwards. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. Adjust everything, your position, clothes and blanket, until you are completely satisfied. Close your eyes.

Preparatory Relaxation - *three breaths, breath awareness*

Take a deep breath in, hold it a moment, and as you breathe out feel yourself letting go. Take another long, deep breath, hold, then as you breathe out feel the concerns and pressures of the day flow out of you. Take a full and complete breath, hold, and as you breathe out, feel calmness spreading throughout the body. Feel the breath calming down, becoming regular and returning to normal.

Be aware of the natural rhythm of the breath, the spontaneous, effortless breath. Do not try to change the rhythm, the breathing is natural, automatic, you are not doing it, there is no effort. Keep watching each and every breath.

Sankalpa - *resolution*

We can use this relaxed state here in the beginning of Yoga Nidra to influence our life in a positive way by making a resolution, known as a sankalpa. A short and precise statement that articulates a heartfelt desire. You can decide on a sankalpa now, or wait until later. It should be repeated several times with awareness, feeling and emphasis. Try to discover one naturally and develop a resolve to say at this time. If you can't put it into words, then visualise it.

Take this time to be completely honest, and ask yourself, 'what is it I desire the most', and distill these thoughts in to one motivating statement. Repeat it to yourself several times. The sankalpa you make during yoga nidra is a seed that you plant in your mind and grows in your daily life. Keep the same sankalpa until it has been fulfilled. When yoga nidra is over you'll hear me say Om Tat Sat to signify the end of the practice, and then again you will have the opportunity to repeat your sankalpa.

Rotation of Consciousness

We now take a mental journey through the body. Let your mind jump freely from one part to the next. Repeat the part to yourself as you become aware of it. The body remains motionless, while consciousness moves.

Bring awareness to the right hand. The right hand thumb. Feel it, sense it and say it to yourself, in whichever language you prefer. The right hand thumb. Then move your attention to the next one, the index finger, go to the middle finger, ring finger, little finger, back of the hand. Palm, center of the palm, the whole right hand, wrist, lower arm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder, armpit, right side of the rib cage, waist, hip, the right thigh, knee, back of the knee, shin, calf muscle, ankle, heel, top of the foot, sole of the right foot, the whole sole, big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe. Feel this whole right side of the body we've just been through.

Become aware of the left hand thumb, index finger, middle finger, ring finger, little finger. Palm, center of the palm, the whole left hand, wrist, lower arm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder, armpit, left side of the rib cage, waist, hip, the left thigh, knee, back of the knee, shin, calf muscle, ankle, heel, top of the foot, sole of the left foot, big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe. Now feel this whole left side of the body.

Then a journey up the back and down the front. Feel the right buttock, left buttock, right side of the lower back, left side of the lower back, right shoulder blade, left shoulder blade, the spine, go up and down the spine. The whole back together. Back of the neck, back of the head, top of the head.

The forehead, right eyebrow, left eyebrow, the space between the

eyebrows, right eye, left eye, right temple, left temple, right ear, left ear, right cheek, left cheek, right nostril, left nostril, the whole nose, nose tip, upper lip, lower lip, both lips together, all the teeth, tongue, tip of the tongue, jaw, chin, throat, right collarbone, left collarbone, right side of the chest, left side of the chest, middle of the chest, right side of the abdomen, left side of the abdomen, the whole abdomen, navel, pelvis.

Now feel the whole right leg, the whole left leg, both legs together. The whole right arm, the whole left arm, both arms together. The whole of the back, buttocks, spine, shoulder blades. The whole of the front, abdomen, chest. The back and front together. The head, top, back, sides and face. The whole head.

All these individual parts form a wholeness, your body. The whole body, together. From the soles of the feet, out to the palms of the hands, up to the top of the head, and everything in between. The whole body together.

Opposites - *heaviness/lightness, cold/heat, pain/pleasure*

Manifest the feeling of heaviness in the body. The arms are heavy. Both the legs are heavy. Heaviness in the face, around the eyes, the jaw. Heaviness at the abdomen. The back is heavy. The whole body is so heavy.

Go to the opposite, to a feeling of lightness in the body. A sensation of weightlessness in all parts of the body, becoming lighter and lighter. Both arms are light, both legs are light. The head is light, the back is light. The body becoming weightless, rising upwards and floating away.

Awaken the experience of bitter coldness in the body. Imagine you are walking on a cold stone floor without shoes or socks, the soles of your feet are very cold. Feel coldness on the palms of the hands, a coolness on the forehead, a shivering sensation in the spine. Your whole body is being chilled as though you are lying in snow. Accept it and let it go to the marrow of your bone. The experience of coldness.

Recall the opposite sensation of heat. Remember a hot summer when you were out in the sun without shade. Heat all over the body, heat all around the body. Feel heat at the navel, and that it

spreads outwards, sending out waves of warmth to the rest of the body. Become enveloped in an atmosphere of heat throughout the whole body, that your body is glowing with intense heat. Awareness of heat.

Recall an experience of pain, concentrate and try to remember the experience of pain. Any pain you have experienced, mental or physical, recollect the feeling of pain, such as hitting the thumb with a hammer. Remember that pain, feel that pain. Try to make that experience of pain as clear as possible, deepen your awareness and feel that pain intensely, acutely. Awareness of pain.

The feeling of pleasure, of being happy, of being content, with yourself and everybody that you know. Maybe you are happy right now, or recall a time when you were, as a child for example, when you were given your first bicycle. You were very happy for that bicycle, but true happiness is something that comes from inside, and not from some external object. You are the source of your own happiness that you can bring forth now, and experience that you are happy, you are content.

Breath - *navel, chest & nose, counting 27-1*

Discover that the body is breathing, it has been doing it all the time, continuously. It requires no effort or control, just awareness of the spontaneous process of the body breathing naturally.

Focus on the navel, and observe the subtle rising and sinking with each breath. As you inhale it rises slightly, and as you exhale it sinks back down. Start counting your breaths backwards from 27 to 1, like this: 27 rising, 27 sinking, 26 rising, 26 sinking, 25 rising, 25 sinking, and so on. Say it mentally to yourself as you count the breaths and focus on the movement at the navel. If you make a mistake, go back to 27 and start again. (*3 minutes silence*)

Leave the counting at the navel and shift attention to the chest. Feel that it expands and contracts with each and every breath. Again start counting backward from 27 to 1 as before: 27 expanding, 27 contracting, and so forth. Mentally repeat the counting, and if you make a mistake, go back and start from 27. (*3 minutes silence*)

Move attention to the nose and be aware of the breath moving in and out of the nostrils. Concentrate on the movement in the nose

and again from 27 to 1, breathing in and out. (*3 minutes silence*)

Stop the counting and leave the breath to take care of itself.

Visualisation - *rapid visualisation*

Bring awareness to the present and make sure that you are not sleeping. As I name each of the objects, simply follow in the form of a vision or an awareness of the item named.

A sunrise over an ocean, a boat sailing, people swimming, a white sandy beach, the sea breeze on your skin, a farmer ploughing his fields, an ancient forest with tall trees, a tiger in the forest, elephant, a galloping horse, an eagle, snow capped mountains, a beautiful sunset, evening in a moonlit valley, a lonely wooden hut, a burning camp fire, hear a bell ringing.

Self - *moon, crystal ball, flame, mirror*

Picture a mountain lake at midnight with the full moon above, and tiny shining stars glistening in the heavens. See the full moon reflected on the still surface of the mountain lake.

See a clear crystal ball, which you gaze into. A tiny flame in a dark space. Think of a mirror, maybe one that you know well. See yourself in that mirror, your smiling face. Yourself. Your Self.

Sankalpa

Om Tat Sat Repeat your resolve, your sankalpa several times. The same one made at the beginning of the practice.

Returning

Om Tat Sat Yoga Nidra is over. Become aware of this physical body, of its position lying on the floor in shavasana. Listen to the sounds and become aware of the space around you. Then when you feel ready, move the body, have a little stretch if you like. Open the eyes and sit up, take in your surroundings.

Hari Om Tat Sat