

Yoga Nidra practice 5

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Self - *stillness*

Sankalpa

Returning

Preparation - *shavasana*

Assume a comfortable position. Make sure that the spine and head are in line. Close your eyes and keep them closed until the end of the practice in 40 minutes when you hear me say Om Tat Sat. Try not to sleep, but remain alert.

Preparatory Relaxation - *body stillness*

Be aware of the body and of the position of the whole body as one unit. Surrender the body to the floor. Feel the body gradually becoming still. Concentrate on motionless. Total awareness of the body and the stillness you feel within the body. Complete physical stillness of the whole body.

Sankalpa - *resolution*

Focus on the eyebrow center and in front of your closed eyes, observe the space of consciousness, the space of chidakasha.

Take a moment to consider your sankalpa, repeat it mentally several times. Allow the mind to be receptive to this seed of intention and to invite it.

Rotation of Consciousness

Go to the top of the head, the whole area on the top of your head. Move down to the forehead, the right eye, left eye, right ear, left ear, right nostril, left nostril, right cheek, left cheek, upper lip, lower lip, upper teeth, lower teeth, roof of the mouth, tongue. Right shoulder, right elbow, wrist, base of the fingers, fingertips. Left shoulder, left elbow, wrist, base of the fingers, fingertips. Right hip, right knee, ankle, root of toes, tip of the toes. Left hip, left knee, ankle, root of the toes, tip of toes. Lower back, pelvis, right side of the abdomen, left side of abdomen, navel. Right side of the

chest, left side of the chest, center of the chest.

From the center of the chest, sink back, down to a space inside at the region of the heart. Not the physical organ, but the space of the heart, Hridayakasha. From here visualise a connection to the center of the right hand palm. You may experience it as a movement, as energy flowing, a beam of light or however it feels most natural for you. From the heart to the center of the right hand palm. Then visualise a connection from the heart to the center of the left hand palm. From the heart to the middle of the right foot sole. From the heart to the middle of the left foot sole. From the heart down to the perineum. From the heart up to the top of the head.

Awareness at the top of the head and experience a warm current float down through the body, a constant flow of energy. Slide down to the right shoulder, continue down the outside of the right arm out to the fingers. Turn around in the hand, come back up the inside of the right arm, up to the armpit, down the right side of the body, waist, hip, down the outside of the right leg all the way to the toes. Turn back in the foot and up the inside of the leg, across the pelvis and glide down the inside of the left leg to the toes. Turn around at the foot and come up the outside of the leg, hip, waist, up to the armpit. Move down the inside of the left arm, to the hand and fingers. Come back up the outside of the arm to the left shoulder, neck, up to the place you started at the top of the head.

Now combine the movement with the natural and spontaneous breath. As you exhale, slide down to the shoulder, outside of the right arm out to the hand. Inhale, come back up the inside of the right arm, up to the armpit. Exhale and down the right side of the body, the outside of the right leg to the toes. Inhale up the inside of the right leg, Exhale glide down the inside of the left leg to the toes. Inhale come up the outside of the leg, up to the armpit. Exhale, move down the inside of the left arm, to the fingers. Inhale, come back up the outside of the arm to the left shoulder, neck, up to the starting point at the top of the head. Continue a few more rounds with as smooth a movement as possible. Visualise it in whichever way seems natural, perhaps as energy flowing, as light or warmth. The movement follows the normal rhythm of the

breath. Upon exhalation, moving downwards. Upon inhalation, moving upwards.

The next time you return to the top of the head, then end here and leave the breath.

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

Experience the weight of the body lying here on the floor. It may feel as if your body is becoming heavier, the more you experience it. So feel your arms becoming heavier. Both the legs are heavy. The back is heavy. Feel heaviness in the face, around the eyes, the jaw. The whole body is heavy.

Then turn your attention to the opposite sensation and feel your body becoming as light as a feather. The arms are light now. The legs are light. The head is light. The back is light. So light that it's almost lifting upwards from the floor.

Feel coldness in your whole body. Feel a shivering sensation in the spine. Your whole body is being chilled as though you are lying in snow. Feel cold, without actually being cold.

Then let it go, and turn to the opposite sensation of heat in the whole body. Feel that your body is glowing with intense heat. Your body is enveloped with an atmosphere of heat. The heat permeates the whole body.

Remember a pain that you have experienced. Recall it. Feel the pain in the whole body or in a specific part. Observe your own reaction to it, to pain. And let it go.

Then remember and re-experience intense pleasure. Relive it. Feel the ecstasy of the pleasure. Let all associated thoughts arise unobstructed. Experience this pleasure.

Chakras

Become aware of the spine and visualise the radiant chakras at their individual locations along it. Begin with the first source of energy, mooladhara chakra at the perineum. See it glow and experience a slight throbbing sensation or pulse at this point.

Next visualise the second point of light, swadhisthana chakra, at the tip of the spine. Make it brighter with your imagination and feel it pulsating gently.

Then be aware of the light at the third center, at manipura chakra,

directly behind the navel in the spinal passage. Feel a pulse beat at manipura. With each pulsation the point of light or jewel glows brighter.

Anahata is the fourth point of light, situated behind the heart in the spine.

Then come up to the fifth point of light behind the throat at the back of the neck, vishuddhi chakra.

Finally, see a bright jewel of light in the middle of the head, directly behind the eyebrow center, ajna chakra.

Reverse the direction of your awareness and come down again through the chakras, mentally repeating their names as you locate them one by one. Vishuddhi, anahata, manipura, swadhisthana, returning to mooladhara.

Continue moving up and down the spine, mentally repeating the chakra names. Swadhisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi, ajna.

Vishuddhi, anahata, manipura, swadhisthana, back to mooladhara. Do it a few more times by yourself. Locate each point effortlessly.

Breath - *mental nadi shodhana, counting 5*

Now limit your awareness just to the nose, and experience the air flowing through the nostrils. Imagine that you can breath through one nostril at a time, alternately. In through one nostril, and out of the other, in through the other and out of the first, in through the first, then out of the other, and continue like that at your own natural rhythm. You may find that you can control the breath this way, or just imagine that you are, and visualise the air flowing through alternating nostrils.

Maintain awareness of breathing through alternate nostrils, and at the same time start counting your breaths as follows:

Inhale through the left nostril for 1, exhale through the right nostril 1, inhale right nostril 2, exhale left nostril 2, inhale left nostril 3, exhale right nostril 3, inhale right 4, exhale left 4, then with 5, inhale and exhale through both nostrils together. Back to the left nostril for 6, and out through the right 6, in through the right 7, out of the left 7, and continue at your own pace. Remember with every fifth breath, at 5, 10, 15, 20 and so on, to inhale and exhale through both nostrils together. If you forget the counting, or every fifth breath,

if you forget the breath all together, go back to 1 and start again. Otherwise see how high you can get with your counting.

Full awareness of mental alternate nostril breathing with counting. Continued awareness of alternate nostril breathing with counting. If you make a mistake, start again. Stop your counting and leave your breathing.

Visualisation - *story, journey, mountain*

Leave the breath behind and imagine that it is very early in the morning, still dark, a crescent shaped moon hangs low in the sky, a twinkling star above it. You are setting out on a journey, the destination is uncertain, but you know that it must be undertaken.

You are walking east toward a distant mountain. The road you follow splits into separate paths. You choose the path that seems to take you most directly to the goal. It leads you through a green jungle and it is difficult to keep on the trail and more than once you lose your way. You imagine wild animals hiding in the shadows, a wolf perhaps, or a big brown bear. Or maybe a deer. There is a sound of a bell nearby, and following the ringing tone you come to a clearing with a lonely wooden hut, There is a smell of incense, the fragrance of flowers, and an atmosphere of tranquility. A yogi sits outside in front of a fire and welcomes you with a cup of tea, as if he was expecting a guest.

You express doubts about the journey and feel far from home. He points towards the east, and above the canopy of the jungle the distinctive outline of a mountain emerges against the backdrop of a starry sky. It doesn't appear so far away and the sight of it strengthens your resolve. But afraid that you may again lose your way, you ask the yogi for guidance. He is not very talkative, but agrees to keep you company and you again continue with your journey. After a little time you begin to ascend and the jungle becomes less dense. The ascent becomes steeper and you are feeling tired, but the guide continues at his steady pace. Sometimes you feel angry at his relentless pace, but at other times you are grateful for his expertise in climbing the more difficult terrain and in avoiding places that would have been impossible for you to climb. The pale sky heralds the dawn and all thoughts of home have gone as you need

to concentrate completely on climbing and keeping up.

As you near the peak of the sacred mountain you see an eagle circling high above. The final ascent is even more difficult, and the guide is far ahead of you. You carry on alone and finally reach the top, where the guide is waiting for you.

As you observe the spectacular view, a feeling of exhilaration floods through your body and mind. The sun rises like a golden ball to the east, scattering rays of golden light. See the sunlight strike the tops of mountains and move down their sides, deep valleys emerge as the shadows retreat.

The guide gives you a meaningful smile, and you are grateful to him for his forcefulness during the climb. You are still absorbed in this exhilaration when the guide says, 'Follow me', and leaps from the peak, disappearing into space. Without a further thought, you follow.

Self - stillness

Who am I? Become aware of yourself. Are you awake or asleep? See your whole body from top to toe by being outside it. Ask yourself, 'am I this body?' Look to your senses by which you know the world. Ask yourself, 'am I these senses?' Become aware of the energy in your body. Ask yourself, 'am I this energy?' Look to the mind, the mind by which you understand yourself and the world. Ask yourself, 'am I the mind?'

Who am I? When there is nothing left, there is just peace. Surrender deep into this moment, into what is already here. Stillness.

Sankalpa

Om Tat Sat. Take a moment to reflect upon your sankalpa.

Returning

Om Tat Sat. Return to the physical body, feel its weight on the floor. Hear the sounds. Be aware of the room, other people and the objects around you. Slowly move the fingers and toes, hands and feet. Gently move the head from side to side. Take a deep breath in and stretch your arms over your head. When you have regained control of your physical body, open your eyes and slowly sit up.

Hari Om Tat Sat