

## **CLASS-III**

Lesson 8 Basic Kriyas and Pranayama

Lesson 9 Yoga Practices for Voice Culture

Lesson 10 Patanjali Yoga Sutra and Hathayoga Pradipika

Lesson 11 Yama and Niyama

Lesson 12 Krida Yoga





## 8

## BASIC KRIYAS AND PRANAYAMA

Yoga requires us to be in the present, and to concentrate and focus on our breathing. Breathing exercises can energize and promote relaxation. You are now aware how it feels to do Mukha Dhouti after jogging. Now, we shall learn some of the Pranyama techniques with deep breathing. These Kriyas help to increase your focus as well as your lung capacity. These help reduce stress naturally and promote the release of healthy hormones.

Pranayama is a technique used to develop awareness of the body by using deep breathing and specific body movements.

Kriyas are yogic cleansing techniques, which helps in cleansing your internal organs like, eyes, digestive tract, respiratory tract, nasal passage etc.

In this lesson, Trataka Kriya or simple eye exercise has been introduced which helps to promote concentration. It prevents eye disease, both muscular and optical when they are practiced regularly. Trataka and eye washing with cups helps to cleanse your eyes and allay allergies, thus helps in improving your eyesight and concentration.



## OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- explain meaning of Kriyas;
- perform various Kriyas;
- describe the pranayama;
- explain the steps of doing pranayam; and
- describe the benefits of Kriyas and Pranayamas.

## 8.1 KRIYAS

Kriya in sanskrit means ‘completed action’. It is also a cleansing technique. There are six kriyas which helps to cleanse various internal organs. In this lesson we will learn only about Trataka and Kapalabhati.

Trataka is also called yogic gaging. It is a practice where the gaze is fixed on an object or point.

Trataka is an eye exercise to improve, gazing, focusing and defocusing while Kapalabhati is for cleansing frontal lobe.

Trataka is a sanskrit word, which means ‘to look’ or ‘to gaze’. As such, this meditation technique involves starting with a single point of focus. There are various techniques of Tratakas. Let us discuss some of the popular and useful Tratakas.

## I. VAMA- DAKSHINA JATRU TRATAKA

The first important Trataka is Vama Dakshina Jatru Trataka.

Let us study the steps of this Trataka.



Fig. 8.1



Fig. 8.2

- Stretch both hands in front with both palms making fists and thumbs raised up.
- Move the left palm towards left as far as possible without losing sight of the tip of the thumb.
- Maintain this position for a while holding the hand at the extreme end. Slowly then bring the left hand to the centre.
- Maintaining the left hand at the centre, move the right hand in the same manner as above.
- Do not move the head.
- Move the eyeballs only.
- Repeat the whole procedure three times.
- Do simple palming.
- Adopt more and more relaxation.
- Do Bhrammari.



Notes



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## II. UBHAYA JATRU TRATAKA

Follows these simple steps

- Stretch both the palms in the front. Raise the forefingers.
- Start gazing at both the fingers.
- Start moving the right finger towards the right and the left finger towards the left.
- Maintain to gaze on both forefingers simultaneously.
- If you cannot see both together, then bring them little closer and maintain them there.
- Slowly bring back both hands together without losing the simultaneous sighting of both forefingers.
- Do palming.
- Relax the arms.
- Slightly bend the head.
- Support the arms on the chest.
- Take a deep breath. Press the surrounding eyemuscles.
- Chant Bhramari.
- Enjoy the vibrations of Bhramari through the surrounding eye muscles



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### III. EYE WASHING WITH CUP

#### Practice

- Take an eye cup, fill it with water.
- Close the eyes. Holding it with right hand, bring the cup near the right eye.
- Press cap gently on the eye.
- Keep the right eyeball in water, then open the eye in the water in the cup.
- Repeat closing and opening the eye at least 7 times.
- Hold the eye cup with left hand bend to right and allow all the water to fall down over the right eye in the water ball.
- Repeat the some on the left side also.
- After completion of both sides, gentle massage the muscles above and below the eye ball so that any water remaining will fall out.
- This is called Tear Sac Massaging.



Fig. 8.3

#### Benefits

- This practice washes the eyes.
- Ourcomes allergies.
- Extremely useful in improving the eyesight.



Notes



## INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.1

Fill in the blanks:

1. Kriya in sanskrit means \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Trataka is usefull for eye exercise gazing, \_\_\_\_\_ and defocusing.
3. Ubhay Jatra Trataka removes \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Eye washing with cup also called \_\_\_\_\_.

## 8.2 PRANAYAMA

Pranayama popularly known as yogic breathing, involves a conscious manipulation of our breathing pattern. Pranayama consists of the breathing techniques which help with the control of breath or respiratory process.

Pranayama, helps us in following manner-

- increases our concentration and attention,
- creates a feeling of awareness,
- promotes relaxation,
- it reduces stress, and
- increases our lung capacity.

**Notes**

## I. CLEANSING BREATH (KAPALABHATI)

Kapalabhati is considered a kriya (cleansing breath) which cleanses the frontal brain. Let's follow the given steps to practice Kapalabhati.

### Practice

- Sit straight in any meditative pose.
- Take a deep breath.



Fig. 8.4

- Exhale forcefully in such a way that the lower abdomen is contracted to expel out the air.
- Inhale spontaneously and passively without making any efforts.
- Air will enter the body through this passive inhalation. This is one practice set of Kapalabhati. Begin with 10 sets at a time. This completes one round.
- One can practice one to three rounds in one practical session.



### DO YOU KNOW

In sanskrit, Kapala means 'skull' and bhati means 'shine'. Thus, Kapalabhati, helps to improve the functions of the organs located in the skull.



Notes

**Precaution :**

Do not move the chest or shoulders during exhalation. Do not make any effort while inhaling.

**Benefits**

- It stimulates the nerves in the abdominal region, tones up the abdominal muscles and improves digestion.
- Kapalabhati helps expel more carbon-dioxide and other waste gases from the lungs than the normal breathing.
- It improves heart and lungs capacity and therefore good for bronchial asthma.
- It improves blood circulation of the whole body.
- It energises the body and removes lethargy.

**III. NADI SHUDDHI**

While practicing Nadi Shuddhi one inhales through the left nostril and then exhales through the right nostril, then the order is reversed by inhaling through the right nostril, and exhaling through the left nostril. This pranayama is called Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama. It is also called Anuloma viloma.

**Practice**

- Sit in any meditative posture.
- Keep the body erect and place the hands on the respective knees.



Fig. 8.5

- Raise the right hand and place the right thumb on the right nostril and close it.
- Inhale slowly through the left nostril.
- Close the left nostril by the ring finger and the little finger and exhale slowly through the right nostril.
- Again inhale through the right nostril.
- Close the right nostril with thumb and exhale through the left nostril.
- This is one round of Nadi Shuddhi.
- Repeat 10 rounds.

### Benefits

- It purifies the blood.
- It calms down the mind and improves concentration.
- It is helpful to children who are hyperactive.

### ? DO YOU KNOW

#### Mudra

Mudra means a sign or a seal in sanskrit. Mudra are various yogic gestures or positions using the fingers, hands, eyes or other parts of the body to channelize energy in a certain way.

The first condition of any mudra exercise is comfort. You must sit in a comfortable position to do these exercise.

Learn these Mudras and use them appropriately for doing the Kriyas explained below:



Notes



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### CHIN MUDRÁ

It is a spiritual mudra. It helps to control the flow of energy in the body.



Touch the tips of the thumbs with the tips of the forefingers. Keep the other fingers straight.

Rest the palms on the middle of the thighs.

### CHINMAYA MUDRÁ

It is a mudra or gesture of awareness

The tips of the forefingers touch the tips of the thumbs and all other fingers are folded into the hollow of the palms. Rest them on the thighs.



### ÁDI MUDRÁ

It helps to stimulate the brain and improve capacity of the lung.

Make fists of both hands with the thumbs tucked in. Rest the fists on the thighs.



Fig. 8.6

## IV. VIBHAGIYA PRANAYAMA

This Pranayama which helps in utilizing all the three lobes or sections - abdominal, thoracic and clavicular, which aids in deep breathing. Breathing becomes continuous, smooth and rhythmic. It corrects the wrong breathing pattern and increases the vital capacity of the lungs. Let's learn about them in detail.



### **i. Abdominal (diaphragmatic) breathing (Adhama)**

#### **Sthiti: Vajrāsana**

#### **Practice**

- Place the hands resting on the thighs in Chin mudra.
- Inhale, deeply, slowly and continuously, and note how the abdomen bulges out.
- The abdomen is drawn inwards while exhaling, continuously and slowly.
- Repeat this breathing cycle five times.
- There should be no jerks in the whole. It should be smooth, continuous and relaxing.

#### **It is important to note here that :**

- In abdominal breathing the air fills the lower lobes of the lungs.
- Avoid movement of the chest.

### **ii. Thorasic (intercostal) breathing(madhyama)**

#### **Sthiti: Vajrāsana**

#### **Practice**

- Place the hands resting on the thighs in Cinmaya Mudra.
- While inhaling, expand the chest cage forwards, outwards and upwards.
- While exhaling relax the chest wall and return to resting position.
- Repeat this breathing cycle five times.

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**It is important to note here that :**

- Avoid movements of abdomen.

### iii. Upper lobar (clavicular) breathing (Ádya)

**Sthiti: vajrásana**

**Practice**

- Sit in any meditative posture.
- Place the hands resting on thighs in ädi mudra.
- While inhaling raise the collar bones and shoulders upwards and backwards.
- While exhaling drop down the shoulders to the resting position.
- Repeat this breathing cycle five times.

**It is important to note here that :**

- Try and avoid movements of the abdomen and chest.

### iv. Full yogic breathing

Full yogic breathing is a combination of all the three sections of sectional breathing or Purna Shvasa explained above.

**Sthiti: Vajrásana**

**Practice**

- Place the hands resting on the abdomen at the navel in Brahma mudrá.



- During inhalation, the Adhama, Madhyama and Adya Pranayama occur sequentially. Now exhale in the same sequence (abdominal, chest and clavicular).
- Repeat this breathing cycle five times.

### **It is important to note here that :**

- The whole process should be done in a relaxing and comfortable manner, with a smile on the face.
- Observe the time of your inhalation and exhalation.
- All breathings should be performed through the nose and not through the mouth. As you increase the number of rounds of full yogic breathing day after day, you will be able to do this practice as an automatic and normal function of the body.

### **Benefits**

- This helps you to learn three different components of respiration (abdominal, thoracic and clavicular) and incorporate them into full yogic breathing.
- Even 5 minutes of full yogic breathing daily can work wonders, you acquire more power and vitality, calmness in daily activities. Thinking and clarity of thought also improves.
- When you feel tired or angry, practice of full yogic breathing will help in calming down your mind and revitalizing it.



Notes

## V. BHRAMARI

The word Bhramari is derived from bhramara which means a 'black humming bee'. In this pranayama, the practitioner makes the sound which resembles the buzzing sound of a black bee, therefore it is named Bhramari Pranayama.

### Practice

- Come into any meditative asana.
- Assume Chinmudrá.
- Inhale deeply.
- Exhaling, produce a low pitched sound resembling the humming of a female bee.
- Feel the vibrations in the entire head. After exhalation, bring your hands back on your knees and breathe in slowly. This completes one round.
- Repeat 10 rounds.

### It is important to note here that :

- During the practice of Bhrámarè use 'N-kára' and not 'M-kára'.
- With long practices, one feels the strong vibrations in the entire head region along with its resonating effect through out the body.
- In the beginning, 5 to 10 rounds of Bhramari are sufficient.
- It can be practiced at any time to relieve mental tension.

## Benefits

- It helps to reduce anger.
- It helps in improvement of concentration and memory.



## INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.2

State True or False :

1. Pranayama is popularly known as Yogic breathing.
2. Nadi Shuddhi is also called Anuloma Viloma.
3. Bhramari word derived from Sparrow.
4. Bhramari increases anger.
5. Kapalbhatai doesn't helps in bronchial asthama.



## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

- Meaning and Practice of Kriyas-
  - i) Vama Jattru Trataka,
  - ii) Ubhaya Jattru Trataka, and
  - iii) Eye wasing with cup
- Pranayama –(i) Kapalabhati (ii) Nadi Shuddhi (iii) Vibhagiya Prnayama (Adhama, Madhyama, Adya and Purna Shvasa), (iv) Bhramari.
- All the practices should be perfomed with attention, concentration and awareness.
- Benefits of doing kriyas and pranayamas.



Notes



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## TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What are benefits of Pranayama?
2. Explain the benefits of Kriyas?
3. What is Trataka? Write any 2 benefits of trataka.
4. What is Kapalabhati? Mention the steps to perform Kapalabhati.
5. What is Bhramari Pranayama?
6. What is Vibhagiya Pranayama?
7. What is Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama? Write any 2 benefits.



## ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

### 8.1

1. Complete action
2. Focusing
3. Allergies
4. Tear Sac Massaging

### 8.2

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. False