

## 2. PRAYER

Let us pray now :

**Om Saha Navavatu, Sahanau Bhunaktu,  
Saha Viryam Karavavahai, Tejaswi Navadhitamastu,  
Ma Vidvishavahai, Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.**  
(Krishna Yajurveda Kathopanishad)

There are four Vedas. They are Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda. Each Veda has been divided into four parts. They are Brahmana, Samhita, Aaranyaka and Upanishad. The Upanishad is the terminal part of Veda. So it is called as Vedanta. There are many Upanishads but out of them 108 are very well known. Out of them Isha, Kena, Katha, Mundaka, Mandukya, Aitareya, Taittiriya, Shwetashwata, Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka are the main ten Upanishads.

Every Upanishad has various branches and sub branches. In our country, the Northern and the Western India have Shukla Yajurvediya tradition; while in south India, there is Krishna Yajurvediya tradition. There are different methods and pronunciations due to different traditions but their meanings remain same.

### WHY A PRAYER ?

Here the 'Shanti Mantra' (Chant of Peace) of Kathopanishad describes determination between master and disciple. In the beginning there is faith, confidence, honour and dedication between the master and disciple.

The master is not greedy and disciple is not selfish. Yogic life means the right feelings between each other. There is unhappiness where jealousy, envy, ego, deceit, fraud, enmity and indictiveness are present. Jealousy is worse than cancer. There is only one solution. That is, regular pronunciation of Omkar for a long time, practice of Pranayama, introspection and practice of self-analysis.

There are three types of complexes : superiority and inferiority complex and the third one which is a mix of these two. But the third complex is difficult. One can't anticipate when there will be change in nature and behaviour. There is sometimes superiority and sometimes inferiority complex. Sometimes they feel that they have extra power and sometimes they feel disgraced and depressed.

Yogic life is the life of simplicity. It is deceitless life. It is selfless, philanthropic life with pious conduct and thoughts.

That is the reason why we insist on non-touch Yoga. We like to see lions, tigers, elephants, rhinos, crocodiles, cobras or pythons but of course from a distance. We also worship the sun but from a distance. So the Yoga students should be loved but from a distance and without touching. One should not believe that the tendencies of teachers are always good and the minds of students are clean. In such circumstances the non-touch Yoga is the only solution that can protect us on every step of life and during education.

It is a good fortune if good ideas originate in the mind otherwise there are many bad ideas all over. It is just like a defensive driving. We should see that we don't strike anybody and more importantly we should see that nobody strikes us.

In the end of this Mantra, it is "Ma Vidvishavahai" It means that there should not be malice between us. But unfortunately it is mispronounced as "Maha Vidvishavahai" ! It means that let there be major misunderstanding between us. Unfortunately it is happening

today. Sometimes it is thought that student is guilty and sometimes the teacher has been harassed. This is not only physical harassment but it is psychological also. Some times he is also called characterless and society is not ashamed of laughing at him. You see the society according to your own ideas.

That is why if you want to be happy, see the faults of yourself. If you think of the faults of others, the same faults will be produced in yourself. If you think of the good virtues of others the same good virtues will develop in yourself.

Now this stanza will be understood clearly. "Let God protect us, both master and disciple together. Let He give us liberation simultaneously. Let us both try together to know the secrets of Shruti. Let our education be enlightened. Let there be no malice between us any time."

Or it can be understood other way.

"Let us learn together.

Let us get the result of study together.

Let us jointly work hard for education.

Let us together get the knowledge, light and development at the end of the study.

Let there be no misunderstanding between us during learning.

Let us together get physical, mental and spiritual peace."

### **TEACHER, STUDENT, EDUCATION, EXCHANGE**

Yoga means balance and equality. Yoga also means dexterity in work and at last quietening of the inclination of the mind and eternal peaceful life. That is the Yogic life.

The teachers should take following precautions during teaching. (1) They should master the knowledge which they are going to teach. They should know it, learn it, understand it, digest it and then explain it. Even though they have taught the subject for last twenty years they should read and think about latest development in

relation to the same subject. (2) Before teaching the lesson in the classroom it is essential to revise it at home and before going to the classroom. (3) It is essential to make the habit to read about different aspects in relation to the subject that is to be taught. Nowadays plenty of information is available through computers, so that the teachers should use computers to learn and teach the students to achieve the target. Even though we are knowledgeable, we should not underestimate the students. Many students are experts in many subjects. So whenever a question is asked you should answer only when you have enough knowledge about the subject, otherwise it would be better to tell them that you don't know the answer and you will give the answer next day after referring to the subject. Don't give wrong answer; otherwise, if the students lose faith in you it will be difficult for you to reestablish it. If you speak the truth, your prestige will increase. So, any haphazard answer should not be given. (5) You should teach them in an understandable language according to their level. The lesson should be taught by simplifying it. You should not teach it by making it complicated to show your knowledge. (6) Teach them with interest. If there is no interest in teaching you are doing labour. So, to cultivate the students' interest in education you should teach them with interest.

The students should also understand certain facts. In education there is a formula to understand the subject well – I.R.A. (1) I for Impression. (2) R is for Repetition (3) A is for Association.

- (1) The students should refer to the subject which is going to be taught, before going to the class and they should also revise the lesson that was learned before. That creates an impression.
- (2) There will be repetition when the teacher teaches in the classroom.
- (3) After going home when we complete the homework it will be association.

As there is revision of the lesson for three times the

chapter is perfectly learned.

Perfect learning is possible only if the mind is entirely engaged in the study. One has to clean the glass of the car by the wiper during rain. The mind plays mischief at the time of study. The body sits with the book. The eyes are also open. The body is stable and book is open very near to the eyes but everything is blank in front of the eyes. Not a single line is read as no line is being seen. Even though they sit for two hours the learning is zero. It happens ! The reason is that the body is in Saltlake (USA) and the mind is in Manchester (UK). The mind should be there where the body is ! It is Yoga otherwise it will be Viyoga. The thread is to be passed through an eye of a needle. The thread is made up of multiple fibers. The thread can't be passed through an eye of the needle if any of the fibers is separate. All the fibers should stick to each other. Then and then only the thread can enter the eye of the needle.

The mind is also the same. It requires complete stabilizing at one place and in one direction. The teacher has interest in teaching. The teacher is clever also. But for the students who don't have interest in learning one poet writes, "Arasikeshu Ma Likh, Ma Likh, Ma Likh." It means, "O God ! Please don't give me the fate of teaching the students who don't have interest in the study."

The practice of Pranayama calms down the wavering mind. Pranayama also abolishes the dirtiness of the mind. The practice of Pranayama develops thought power, tolerability of the mind, intelligence, logic power and it keeps the mind always fresh. We knew about Omkar and Bhramari. We understand the meaning of prayer that we do. This prayer is a grouping of good thoughts and unity with the universal power.

### **NATURAL STATE OF PRAYER**

Prayer doesn't mean that something should be asked for. Prayer is a bridge connecting God and ourselves. It means the expression of our internal feelings. We always

do one prayer after "Saha Navavatu...."

The other prayer is :

**Bhumi Mangalam, Udaka Mangalam,  
Gagana Mangalam, Surya Mangalam  
Chandra Mangalam, Vayu Mangalam,  
Agni Mangalam, Jiva Mangalam  
Jagata Mangalam, Mano Mangalam,  
Atma Mangalam Sarva Mangalam  
Sarva Mangalam Bhavatu, Bhavatu, Bhavatu.**

Here the unity and oneness with the nature has been expressed. Let there be auspiciousness of the earth, water, sky, sun, moon, wind, fire, life, world and soul. Let all do good.

Yoga is never meant by Shirshasana and Sarvangasana. Yoga means the oneness of an individual with the universe. The sun, wind and clouds all have auspicious desire of "Kuryat Sada Mangalam." Here we arrange father's day, mother's day, valentine's day, but where is the nature's day ? Nothing is possible without it. The news channel works for twenty four hours. Nowadays we see weather news on sunday or everyday evening to plan the weekly programme. The sun, moon, planets, constellation of stars, are the inseparable parts of our life. We can't neglect them. Not only America but whole world's greatest achievement is the oneness of science with astrology. It is the reason why we pray for the auspiciousness of all.

There is one Vedic prayer also. We pray in this way :

Let there be welfare of all,  
Let all be happy and nobody be unhappy,  
Let there be auspiciousness of all.

Let there be immense peace in the east and west, in the north and the south, in the mountains, oceans, forests and in every individual's life.

These Vedic saints did not have self interest at all. Their wishes were limited only to "Sarvesham Swasti

Bhavatu". It is the perfect Yoga. A very well known German philosopher says that, "You cannot pluck the flower in your own garden without disturbing the stars in the heaven."

We are not the only persons. There was the world before our birth and it will remain even after our death. Other than father and mother for the birth, there is a need of a doctor for assisting delivery, his clinic, labour room, operation theater, if some complication occurs anesthetist, their assistance, oxygen, blood bottles for the transfusion. They are kept ready. The knife is required to cut the cord of placenta (the connection of the child with mother). It has been brought from the medical store where it has been brought from a factory. The raw material required in the factory comes from the mines. America imports only, so it comes from China, Korea or Taiwan. There is a big chain for such a small deed. We cannot separate ourselves from the universe. The unity with the universe will direct the powerful flow towards us, but if we get separated from it we will lose both energy and power. So the prayer is essential. It is an inner motive as well as inner feelings.

Our Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's Universal Prayer is very well known. On 3rd May 1976 the deputy Prime Minister of undivided USSR Moscow, I. V. Archipov, came to Sivananda Ashram Rishikesh. The meeting was for only twenty minutes, but he spent two and a half hours there. We demonstrated Yogasanas. Our Gurudev Sri Chidanandaji Maharaj recited universal prayer at the end of the programme. The translation and meaning of each and every line of the prayer was explained to him. After completion of the prayer he embraced worshipful Swamiji Maharaj. He wept with tears in his eyes and there was no end of sentiments. Worshipful Swamiji had put on saffron coloured T-shirt with Omkar painted on it. He also asked for that.

Here is the universal prayer.

O Adorable lord of mercy and love !  
Salutations and prostrations unto thee,  
Thou art Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute,  
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and 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, greed, hatred,  
anger and jealousy.  
Fill our hearts 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.

– Swami Sivananda

Read this prayer two to five times with a cool mind and think over it repeatedly, the mind will be happy. There is plenty of prosperity in America by God's grace, but where is the soul (self) ! We have hectic schedule from Sunday to Friday. We are engaged in laundry, vacuum cleaning, shopping as well as we have social appointments in the weekend because we celebrate Diwali, Holi, marriage, birth and death in the weekend only. We have to search for the inner consciousness. The minds have become narrow and suspicious. We don't know where generosity and simplicity have gone ! In these circumstances Swami Sivanandaji's universal prayer shows us a newer path.

Prayer strengthens the mind.

There is a nice prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi,

"O Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace,  
Where there is hatred, let me sow Love,

Where there is injury, pardon;  
 Where there is doubt, faith;  
 Where there is despair, hope;  
 Where there is darkness, light;  
 Where there is sadness, joy.  
 O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
 To be consoled, as to console,  
 To be understood, as to understand;  
 To be loved, as to love.  
 For it is in giving that we receive,  
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.  
 It is in dying to self, that we are born to eternal life.  
 - Saint Francis

Prayer makes the heart generous. Prayer creates the environment of peace, love, compassion and forgiveness in the universe. There is an immense energy in the prayer. It develops mental power. It increases the spiritual power. Prayer energizes the vitality of the mind and increases the Will power during unbearable and unexpected circumstances.

There are innumerable prayers in our Bhagvata. Uttara had made prayer for the protection of her embryo. Kunti had prayed for the safety of Uttara. Bhishma's prayer is for self surrender after the realization of God at the time of death. There is prayer of Dhruva and Prahlad. There is Stuti (prayer) of Draupadi as well as Gajendra Stuti.

In Mahabharata, Rantidev's prayer is,

**Na Tvaham Kamaye Rajyam,  
 Na Swargam Na Punarbhavam,  
 Kamaye Dukha Taptanam Praninam Aartinashanam.**

It means I don't have expectation of the kingdom; I don't want heaven or rebirth. O God, make me capable to serve the creatures who are unhappy to relieve their suffering.

Shalbeg, the Muslim king of the state Kataka in Orissa, was the loyal devotee of Sri Jagannath

Mahaprabhu. His prayer is also wonderful which is in local language. The translation is :

Let there be the burning sparks in my eyes but don't give any pain to others. Pour the poison in my mouth but give honey in others' mouth. Whatever sorrows are there in your collection, let it be on my head but don't give sufferings to others. Certainly give heaven to the dying person who wants it. Let me repeatedly receive the sufferings of the hell.

Another prayer is, "Bahujana Hitaya Sukhaya Cha"

Prayer is more effective when it is done for only benevolence and there is no selfishness. Group prayer is more effective. The whole world was praying for worshipful Mother Teresa during her illness to cure her. The hero Amitabh Bacchan of Indian films was injured seriously during the film shootings many years back and also two years before his health got deteriorated. At that time thousands of people prayed simultaneously for his long life, good health and early recovery. Prayer should be an indivisible part of our daily life. We always do prayer in the beginning and end of the class without fail. There is endless energy and triumphant force in the prayer. Prayer never fails whether it comes from the lips or from the heart. The answer of all the prayers is received sooner or later. Prayer is the breath and essence of life. Life becomes smooth like a flower by doing prayer. Life becomes quiet and fearless. Prayer has the power to shake the mountain Meru. Hence prayer should be included in every day of our life.

The question arises, "Swamiji, how should it be done, in the sitting position or the standing position ?

The Jain, Bauddha, Hindu – Yahudi, Muslim, Parsi people have the habit of offering the prayer in different sitting positions only. Only the Christians do prayer by sitting on the bench or in standing position. Personal prayer is done in kneeling position also. We teach and insist the students to sit in a cross leg posture in Yoga classes. There are many cross leg postures in Yoga

practice. The main postures are: 1. Sukhasana, 2. Padmasana, 3. Siddhasana, 4. Swastikasana, 5. Vajrasana (Muslim prayer position).

The great artery Aorta arises from the heart. It carries oxygenated blood to the different organs. It descends downwards in the chest and the abdomen. It divides into two arteries for right and the left leg. It supplies adequate blood to the organs of abdomen, pelvis and legs. It crosses the inguinal region. Then it descends downwards in the thigh, back of the knee, the calf muscles and it reaches up to the soles of the feet. There is kinking of the artery in inguinal region when we sit in cross leg postures and some pressure is exerted on the artery in the legs. The legs don't require much blood in these postures, so relatively there is much blood supply available to the organs of the abdomen as less blood flows in the legs. The heart muscles also get extra blood circulation.

We can understand this fact in a simple way. The salesmen, salesgirls of the malls, traffic police etc. have to work in the standing position for the whole day. They suffer from varicose veins in the legs in a long run. There is dilation and tortuosity of the veins over the legs (calf muscles) due to excessive and continuous flow of blood in downward direction and there is stasis of the blood in the legs. So the blood circulation may become deficient in the heart. Having the habit of sitting in the cross leg postures improves working capacity of liver, spleen, pancreas, kidneys, intestine, bladder and adrenals due to extra blood perfusion. Therefore the people of India had the habit of sitting in cross leg posture while offering prayers in the morning, while taking meals, Satsang, Swadhyaya, Bhajans etc. So the food was better digested and the concentration of the mind was also good.

There was no difficulty for the heart to pump blood towards the brain or there was less strain when a person is in cross leg position. So every thing was regular, easy and natural. Hence there is a tradition to sit erect in a stable position keeping the head, neck and the chest in

one line with peace of mind before starting Yogabhyas. Patanjali Darshan also insists to have stable and comfortable Asana. Geeta also says, "Samam Shiro Griva Kaya" and indicates to sit straight by keeping the head, neck and trunk (spinal column and chest) in one line. Form the habit of sitting with cross legs. Always do prayer, alone as well as with family, without fail, everyday and compulsorily.

### 3. PRANA

Generally there is a tradition in Yoga teaching that the Asanas are taught first, followed by Pranayama, Kriya, Mudra, Bandha and meditation at last. But our method is different. After the prayer we teach Pranayama first. The Asanas are for the good health of the body. It is the physical science. The Pranayama is the subtle science and it is for the development of mental power. The Asanas are like silver coins, Pranayama is like golden coins, while meditation is like diamond, pearl, emerald and jewellery. So we teach Pranayama practice in the beginning. Maharshi Patanjali says in his Yoga sutras, "Prachchhardanavidharanabhyam Va Pranasya" In the previous Sutra it was said, "Maitri, Karuna Muditopekshanam Sukhdukha Punyaapunya Vishayanam Bhavanatashchittaprasadanam" It means the stability of the mind is obtained by observing friendliness, compassion, love and avoidance of happiness, sorrows, Punya and sinful subjects respectively. In our Sutras it is said that the mind is also stabilized by Rechaka and Kumbhaka.

Here is the description of Prana. The true meaning of Prana is not only breath. The Prana is energy. It is universal power, brightness, light and intelligence. All these cosmic energies are named as Prana. "Yatkinchit Jagat Sarvam Drishyate Shruyatepiva." This Prana is filled in all that we see and hear, the inside and outside of all things, all movement etc. in this world. The Prana is the

source of all the capabilities and power in the universe. The actions of rising up, sitting, walking, moving, eating, drinking, sleeping and speaking happen due to Prana. This Pranashakti is in us in the form of mind, intelligence and ego. Our thoughts and their exchange, will power, action power and knowledge power are possible due to Prana only. This whole universe is the mixture of sky and Pranashakti.

Rig-Veda 10:29 Nardiyasukta says,  
**There was no truth as well as no false,  
There was no world as well as no sky,  
What did encircle the fog ? Whose was that ?  
What was there in the depth of severe darkness ?  
At that time there was neither death nor nectar.  
That way the nights were not different from the days.  
But the motionless, the only TAT was beating in its  
own glory.**

Nothing else was existing other than TAT. There was only the darkness and unreachable sky. Then the water originated. The origin was from zero. The water, the solid substance and fire originated and in addition the natural power produced light and brightness.

#### PRANAYAMA

The world has originated by God's will so that we also got the will which has appeared as an initial seed of the mind. The saints separated SAT – truth and ASAT – false. They realized truth hence this knowledge came into existence. Its rays spread in four directions as well as upwards and downwards. Then brightness became active. From the root of it wonderful creative power was born.

From where were all these originated ? From where did the light and shades originate ? Because gods came from the shades only. From where did all these come ? Who can know it ? Who can tell about it ? What is the base of it ? It is Prana. Its essence is active Paramatma who is the controller. He is omniscient because its base

is Prana.

The process of taking Pranashakti (Energy associated with Prana) in and exhaling it out is called Pranayama. According to Maharshi Patanjali the process of controlling the inclination of the mind is Pranayama. Take the breath in through the nose and remove it out through nose. You will experience that your mind has become peaceful if you do this process for sometime. If it is regularly practised everyday you become free from excitement, the peace of mind is maintained permanently and also the problem of unsteadiness of mind gets solved.

Swaatmaaram, the writer of Gherandsambhita and Hathayoga Pradipika and other saints also have described the three types of Pranashakti in human body. They describe them by the names of Ida, Pingala and Sushumna. One has to take deep inhalation to take breath up to the end of the spinal column. The lower end of the spinal column is a bone known as sacrum. It is made up of five bones joined together. In front of it there is a hollow area into which there is a plexus of nerve fibers. It is known as sacral plexus. We should experience that the breath is carried up to this end of the spinal column when we inhale.

The vertebrae of the spinal column resemble the English letter '8'. The sacral plexus is the extension of the function of the brain. Its importance is not less. It is believed that there is Pingala Nadi on the right side of the spinal column and Ida Nadi on the left side of the spinal column. The spinal column has hollow area in it. The cerebrospinal fluid flows around the brain as well as it extends around the spinal cord also. In the medical science the specimen of cerebrospinal fluid is taken by doing the lumbar puncture for testing to diagnose the problems in the brain. These Ida and Pingala Nadis described before are the flows in the nerve fibers in the human body. The functions in the body are carried out by the impulses flowing in these nerves. Sushumna remains unmanifested in all except that it is active in

Yogis' bodies. There is change in the human body by Yogasadhana and the changes continue in physical, mental and spiritual life. It can be experienced every moment.

## PRANAYAMA - REQUIREMENT AND TRADITION

I was a visiting professor for ten years at Administrative training college in Nainital. Shri Krishnakant Pant (name is changed) was the joint director of that institution. He was not keeping well for all twelve months, sometimes due to fever, indigestion of food as well as short temper. He used to sleep up to 10 o'clock in the morning and he used to come back home at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. It was difficult to see him before 10 AM and after 4 PM. He was advised to practise Pranayama regularly followed by Yogasanas and meditation in order. After six months he started working from 4 AM to 10 PM. By self driving he used to take ill persons to the hospital at late night whenever needed. He started conducting Yoga classes in the morning. He also did plantation and mountaineering. His wife wrote me, "Now my husband is in a better human shape. Before it was the body with shape and look of a human being, now it is the body of nature and activity also." Regular practice of Pranayama activates cerebrospinal fluid that circulates in the spinal column. It creates the waves in that fluid around the brain also. It tremendously increases the functioning capacity of the cerebrum and the cerebellum. As Yogasadhana progresses, the thought process generates a new direction. The newer source of consciousness, warmth, light, development, knowledge and energy get generated.

"Vishayavati Va Pravrutthisatpanna Manasah Sthitih Nibandhini" Maharshi Patanjali says very clearly regarding above subject. The divine experiences resulting from Pranayama practice generates carefulness in the mind. It decreases the idleness of the mind. The mind never becomes depressed but it remains delighted. It always

remains active. It does not mean that unsteadiness of mind increases. The enthusiasm and pleasure increased.

“Vishoka Va Jyotishmati” The practice of Pranayama removes sorrows. The absence of sorrows means pleasure.

Now let us understand Pranayama scientifically. While practising Omkar and Bhramari Pranayama, the belly distends at the time of inhalation. The diaphragm that is situated between the chest and abdomen moves down. The diaphragm is a sheet of muscles. Due to expansion of the lungs oxygen enters in the lungs in extra quantity. The oxygen enters into red blood cells through the lungs and it reaches to every organ through blood circulation. The carbon dioxide is removed when the lungs deflate. This process continues naturally but by the practice of Pranayama the control on inhalation and exhalation improves. By doing this process regularly for a long time the kidneys and adrenal glands situated in the abdomen on both sides of the navel get extra blood perfusion. The working capacity of pancreas also improves due to increase in blood perfusion. As it controls the blood sugar well, working capacity of all endocrine glands also improves. This way liver, kidney, pancreas, spleen, adrenal, bladder, intestine, heart, lungs, cerebrum and cerebellum are also benefited.

The cholesterol level is also controlled by the practice of Omkar, Bhramari and other Pranayamas. The clotting of blood does not occur in coronary arteries. The blood pressure does not fluctuate up and down. Naturally one can understand that there is no question of heart failure when the walls of heart are strong and when they get enough exercise. In addition there is also enhancement of metabolism in the body due to better control of the hormones and functional capacity of thyroid by extra availability of blood circulation. The possibility of hypothyroidism is negligible.

By practising Omkar, Bhramari, Ujjayi Pranayama the stickiness in the vocal cords gets cleared and in order

the voice becomes sweet. The same way the speech, hearing capacity, smell sensations and visual acuity improve as well as the problems of sinusitis, common cold in nose and throat are solved by availability of extra Pranashakti to nose and para nasal sinuses. The working capacity of pituitary gland increases by extra blood circulation available in the head.

The maximum effect and benefit of Omkar, Bhramari or Pranashakti restraining is increase in the immunity or resistance power of the body. The practice of Pranayama destroys disease producing microorganisms. The working abilities of sensory organs and motor organs improve as each and every cell of the brain gets extra nutrition. The secret of beauty of skin, shining of the face, brightness of the eyes, intelligence power and development of mental power is the result of the practice of Pranayama.

Prana is the only power behind the normal functioning of the system of respiration (inhalation and exhalation), blood circulation, digestion, excretion of urine and stool, system producing semen, structure of our bones and also the nervous system.

The light of the sun, coolness of the moon, fragrance of the flowers, colours of butterflies, ebbs and tide of the sea, wide spread green coloured grass covering the ground, Himalaya covered with the snow and the groups of the mountain peaks talking with the sky are by the Prana only. Therefore the practice of Pranayama is essential before Yogasana.

The practice of Pranayama means oneness with cosmic energy. Pranayama Sadhana opens the doors of subtle life from the gross life and very subtle from a subtle life. Let us live Yogic life and make Pranayama as an ideal of our life to make it successful. That is the auspicious prayer.

## **IDA, PINGALA – SUSHUMNA**

Our Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has written more than 300 books. He has described interestingly

on Swarasadhana in his books on "Science of Pranayama" and "Sadhana".

There are 72,000 Nadis in our body through which Prana circulates. Out of them twenty four Nadis are main. Ten out of those twenty four and three out of those ten are principal. (1) Ida, known as Chandra Nadi, (2) Pingala as Surya Nadi, (3) Sushumna which is active between Surya and Chandra Nadi.

During the day and night in all twenty four hours a man breathes for 21,600 times. It is said that Surya Nadi is active if the right nostril is open and the Chandra Nadi is active if the left nostril is open.

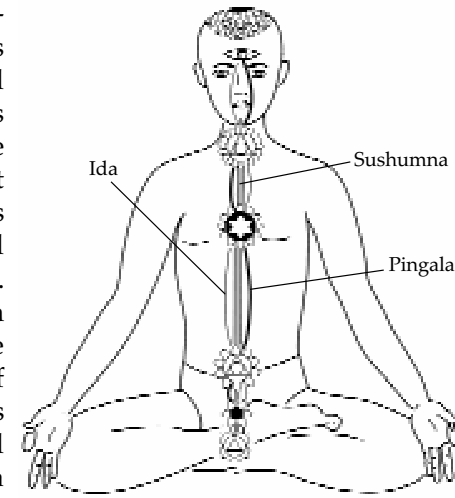
If the Surya Nadi is active in the morning it is beneficial to walk in north or east direction by keeping the right leg first on the earth. If the Chandra Nadi is active it would be beneficial to walk in west or south direction by keeping the left leg first on the earth. If the Surya Nadi (Pingala) is active at the time of asking the question, the questioner will get success if he is standing on lower side, backside or on right side. But If the Chandra Nadi is active the questioner will succeed if he is standing on upper side, front side or on left side.

These Ida and Pingala are not the involuntary Nadis but they are subtle Nadis for the conduction of the subtle Prana. It can be said that they resemble the involuntary system of the physical body. Ida starts from the left gonad and Pingala starts from the right gonad. They meet Sushumna at Muladhara Chakra and make a gland like appearance. We call as Mukta Triveni the meeting place of these three Nadis at Muladhara Chakra.

Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati reside in Ida, Pingala and Sushumna respectively. The true bath in Prayag means to concentrate on Pranashakti in these three Nadis. This meeting place is called as Brahmagranti. Then they meet in Anahat and Ajna Chakra. In this huge universe also Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati are present and they meet in Triveni Prayag.

Ida flows through left nostril and Pingala flows

through right nostril. Ida is called as Chandra Nadi and Pingala is called as Surya Nadi. We have discussed it before. Ida gives coolness and Pingala gives heat. Ida is the Nadi with strength and it is the great nourisher of the world. Pingala is red, like fire and Rudraswarupaa. Ida and Pingala indicate time and Sushumna swallows the time.



**IDA, PINGALA, SUSHUMNA**

Yogi knows his time of death and at that time he takes his Prana into Sushumna, keeps it in Brhmarandhra and ignores the time (Kala). He challenges it. The famous Changdev of Maharashtra had challenged death for a number of times by taking his Prana in Sushumna. He was contemporaneous of Jnandev of Alandi near Puna. He lived for 1200 years by the power of his Yogasadhana. Not only that he had achieved control over the living and nonliving things by his unprecedented accomplishment of Pranayama. He went to see Jnandev by sitting on the back of a tiger. He used to hold living cobra in his hand as a whip. In front of him Jnandevji used to travel by sitting on a rock. The rock was moving according to the instruction of Jnandevji.

The practice of this Swarasadhana or breathing manifests truth and Brahma as well as it is the giver of Paramjnana and pleasure. One should perform easy work when the Ida is active. One should perform enthusiastic and benevolent deeds when the Pingala is active. When Sushumna is flowing it would be beneficial to perform

the work which results in development of mental power, meditation and Yoga. At the time of sunrise if breathing is through Ida Nadi and if it flows through it for the whole day, and if at the time of sunset if breathing is through Pingala and if it continues through the same overnight, that gives considerable good results. Let the breath flow through Ida for the whole day and through Pingala for the whole night. If this is practised, really it results in Yogic life. It reveals one fact that Ida and Pingala do not function at all time with the same force. Every one and half hour they change from left to right and right to left. But we can change the path of Ida and Pingala according to our need that is the flow of Ida into Pingala and the flow of Pingala into Ida.

- (1) The right nostril opens by lying down on left side for ten minutes. The left nostril opens by lying down on right side for ten minutes.
- (2) By packing the open nostril by soft cotton for some time the previously blocked nostril opens up.
- (3) Sit straight with keeping the left knee pointing upwards and keep the heel of left foot under the left gluteal region. Then press the left armpit by left knee. Breathing will start in Pingala in a short time.
- (4) Keep both the heels under the right gluteal region. The right knee will remain on the left knee. Keep the left palm on the floor one foot away and transmit the body weight on it. Don't allow the elbow to bend. Tilt the head towards the right side. Hold the left ankle by right hand. It is an effective method.
- (5) The side of breathing could be changed by Nauli Kriya also. It is not easy process for every one.
- (6) Some Yogis can change the side of breathing by their willpower by practice.
- (7) Keep Hansadand or Yogadand ('T' shaped two feet high stick on which hand can rest.) under left armpit and put the left arm on it.
- (8) By doing Khechari Mudra the flow can be changed very effectively and immediately. Yogi can open or

close the passage of breathing by tip of the tongue by turning the tongue in.

For the above mentioned experiments the breathing should be controlled. Nadishuddhi is possible by regularizing breathing. There is no other secret knowledge or a faithful friend other than science of breathing or science of Pranayama. The selfcontrol, selfimportance, prosperity, reputation and glory can be obtained by regular practice of Pranayama. The knowledge of present, past and future as well as many other accomplishments can be obtained by doing it. It gives the best position in life.

All of us should try sincerely and with awareness that our breathing should occur through left nostril in the day time and through right nostril during the night. This Sadhana is one kind of Pranayama only. But it is known as Swarasadhanyoga. It gives us wonderful benefits if we can do it. The wrong Swara in the form of the flow of breath through improper Nadi is the cause for many types of pain. Following the above mentioned Swara correctly, gives healthy long life. This is not impossible. We suffer because we live without the knowledge of this science due to our idleness and ignorance. Everyday we conduct Yoga classes in our Ashrama for eight times in a day. We take only hundred rupees fees for the maintenance so that maximum number of the people can obtain good, true and scientific method of living. We give training to Yoga teachers in the month of May during summer and in December during winter so that true and useful knowledge of scientific method can reach the maximum number of people. Our life is successful if it can be utilized for the people otherwise commonly, people live for selfishness. Sadgurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj always used to say, "Give, Give, Give - Spend, Spend, Spend. He will Send, Send, Send."

Therefore there should not be idleness in Pranayama, meditation, Yogabhyasa and in living Yogic life. Avoid laxity, inertia and carelessness. Gird up loin. Do not waste time in gossiping and scandal back biting. Let us be

prepared to live perfect life. Prior to beginning the practice let us worship Paramatma Yogeshwar Shiva who is the giver of all this science. Let us worship Devadhideva Ganesh who destroys the troubles and let us begin Pranayama just today and now only.

Before we start the chapter of Pranayama let us know something about other Nadis also.

Their names are, Gandhari, Hastajihva, Kuhu, Saraswati, Poosha, Shankhini, Payaswini, Varuni, Alambusha, Vishvodwaraa, Yashaswini and many other important Nadis are described in many places. (Ref: Yogank Kalyan Kalpataru-Geeta press Gorakhpur Prakashan). All those Nadis are situated around Ida, Pingala and Sushumna and go towards many organs for special purpose. They all are subtle Nadis and from them innumerable minor Nadis arise as the leaf of Pipal is made of innumerable fibers. The same way the body also contains thousands of subtle Nadis.

#### **PURAK, KUMBHAK, RECHAK (Its regulation)**

The Nadis about which we discussed before cannot be seen by our eyes. There are about 72000 Nadis small and large in size. Ida, Pingala and Sushumna are the main Nadis amongst them. Out of them Sushumna is the prime Nadi. These Nadis are immortal and they are made up of immortal material. They conduct the flow of Prana. They can be seen by the immortal eyes only.

The Pranashakti above the navel is known as Prana and below the navel is known as Apana. Therefore Shrikrishna says in Geeta :

**“Aham Vaishvanarobhutva Praninam Dehamaashritah,  
Pranapanasamayuktah Pachamyannam Chaturvidham”**

(Geeta : 15:14)

Meaning : Myself, Vaishvanara stays in the bodies of the animals in the form of Jatharagni and my forms, Prana and Apana digest four types of food. The origin of this Vaishvanara (cosmic energy) is Pranayama only. Therefore the process of combining Prana and Apana is

Pranayama. We can divide Pranayama in four different actions. (Generally till today all the Yogabhyasi, Yogi, Yogapracharakas and writers were of the same opinion that there are three different actions.)

They are Puraka, Kumbhaka and Rechaka. But after research it has been proved that following Antarkumbhaka and Rechaka performing external Kumbhaka has much importance. These actions means, (1) Puraka – to inhale or to take breath in, (2) Rechaka – To exhale or to remove the breath, (3) Kumbhaka – To hold the breath. If the breath is held after inhaling, it is called as Antarkumbhaka and (4) if the breath is held after exhaling, it is called as Bahyakumbhaka. These four parts of Pranayama Puraka, Antarkumbhaka, Rechaka and Bahyakumbhaka are together called as Pranava Pranayama. Akar, Ukar, Mkar and Chandrabindu. In Bhagavata the five parts of Pranav Pranayama are described and they are Akar, Ukar, Mkar, Nad and Bindu. **“Pinde Vachvagnisamshuddhe hritpadyastham Paraam Mam Anvim Jivakalaam Dhyayennadante Siddhabhavitam”**

Pranayama can be practised by sitting in Sukhasana, Padmasana, Swastikasana, Siddhasana or Vajrasana. It is essential to keep the head, neck and chest in one straight line. Sitting with the straight spinal column is essential while practising Pranayama.

**“Samam Kayashirogrivam Sthiram Sukhamasanam.”**  
The Asana Should be stable and comfortable. **“Natyuchchhritam Naatinicham”** The Asana should not be too high or too low. **“Shuchau Deshe Pratishtapya.”** The place and Asana for practising Pranayama should be kept clean and pure and the place should not be noisy. Such types of suggestions are described in the sixth chapter of Shrimad Bhagavadgeeta in Atmasamyam Yoga.

In Kapilopakhyaana in Bhagavatji, Kapilmuni has described in detail about Pranayama while teaching Sankhyayoga to Mother Devahuti.

**“Now I describe the characteristic of ‘Sabija Yoga’**