

## PART III: ESSENTIAL PRACTICE

### CHAPTER 12

#### A GOOD WAY OF EXPERIENCING THE BEAUTY OF KRIYA YOGA

In the second part of my book I have tried to give the reader the opportunity to familiarize with various procedures of *Kriya Yoga*. I have tried to describe in detail different techniques, perhaps too many techniques.

Probably the reader has made some experiments with different procedures and has noticed that some of them are more effective than others. Surely with few techniques the whole spiritual path of *Kriya Yoga* can be mastered.

Now, if I had the intention of teaching *Kriya* to a beginner, which techniques would I choose to teach? My desire is obviously to see good and solid results.

I want that a person, through the practice of <i>Kriya</i> that I have recommended to him, be born to the <i>spiritual life</i> .
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Besides the physical birth (... to feed, to work, to create a family...) and the mental birth (... to find pleasure in thinking with your own head...) there is the spiritual birth (... to find perfect joy coming in your life without a plausible reason.)

Those who are born to mental life only, cannot understand what the birth to the spiritual life is. This birth rarely happens and when it happens it doesn't consist in the decision to live in a different way, adopting certain rituals and professing a certain faith. The spiritual life doesn't start through a mental effort.

A human being must first have a contact with the joy that is in the center of her/his heart. That joy is somehow related with the spine, with the spiritual centers that are found along it and is experienced with the intuitive vision that happens through the "third eye." Sometimes the contact with the internal beatitude is accompanied by the experience of a strong current of energy in the spine. The experience is sometimes preceded by inexplicable fear, sometimes by real anguish. I think that the reader has familiarity with these events.

Now, what is necessary to teach in order that the person has a strong contact with that joy?

The first thing I will teach is *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee

### **FIRST LESSON: Technique of Kriya Pranayama as it was explained by Sri Mukherjee**

The *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee has been the best discovery in the field of *Kriya* since my initiation into *Kriya* in 1975. Sri Mukherjee is a nice person, a very likeable and open-hearted *yogi*. He is well-intentioned. He told me a thing that nobody had ever told: "I don't want to leave this body allowing that this original *Kriya* dies with me." He really wants to do something practical in this direction.

#### **Preliminary remark**

The technique of *Kriya Pranayama* is practiced to enter *Sushumna*. In order to enter it, you need to make the breath extremely subtle. Actually, you can enter *Sushumna* only by behaving with extreme delicacy. This happens when, during *Kriya Pranayama*, your inner gaze and all your attention are fixed in the central point of the spiritual eye between your eyebrows and not in any other place! This point is *Kutastha*. Therefore, put your whole attention there. Be mindful of avoiding any strain on the eyes. Everything should stay natural.

Many try to raise the energy in *Sushumna* with force, in a coarse way. In this situation, *Kundalini* does not move upwards but is dispersed and burned in the body; this may create diseases because initially the *Nadis* are partially blocked. Your *Kriya Pranayama* will produce only stress. Many endeavor to produce the sound in the throat since the beginning and create a strong visualization of the energy that comes up and down: this is not correct. Therefore, I repeat, we must start in an extremely simple way and proceed without expecting striking results. But then, at a certain point, something profound and meaningful will happen. As for *Kechari Mudra*, the *baby Kechari* is enough for now – *baby Kechari* is to hold the tip of the tongue up, touching the soft part of the palate.

#### **Main instruction**

By keeping both the shoulders in a natural position, by expanding the chest a little bit, by bringing the back in a straight position, by lowering gently the chin, by mentally gazing between the two eyebrows, the position becomes steady effortlessly. Do not cross the eyes, simply set yourself in

the point between the eyebrows as if this were a cave where you take shelter.

Have a deep, natural breath. <sup>1</sup> Chant mentally *Om* six times in *Kutastha* during inhalation and six times during exhalation.

Unlike other forms of *Kriya*, during this initial part you don't put *Om* in the physical seat of each *Chakra*. Rather you don't feel the body at all. Your breath doesn't require effort – therefore you don't make any sound in the throat. Perhaps this will seem to you not a correct way of practicing *Kriya*, but please practice this way, this is what Lahiri Mahasaya and Swami Pranabananda Giri instructed.

If your breath is very short, accept this situation without trying, with uneasiness, to lengthen your breath. A longer breath will appear spontaneously in time. What matters is to stay focused at *Kutastha* with the mental chant of *Om*. So, while you are inhaling or exhaling you "knock" at the door of *Kutastha* by chanting 6 + 6 *Oms*.

The recommended number of breaths is 108 and therefore (if you don't fall asleep, if are not disturbed by external events) at the end you shall have mentally chanted the syllable *Om* 12x108=1296 times.

Knocking with *Om* at *Kutastha* will give you the power to mentally touch the central point of each *Chakra* – this event happens spontaneously, so don't try to anticipate it through complicated visualizations. This event happens because the the sixth *Chakra Ajna* governs everything: it gives you an alignment with all the *Chakras*.

When, while inhaling and exhaling, you mentally chant *Om* the prescribed number or times in the central point of *Kutastha* and this subtle action happens also in each *Chakra*, automatically – even if you are not aware of this fact.

There is only a sphere of Light in *Kutastha* and all happens there. You, your body, your spine, everything is there. By going ahead, the exercise becomes more and more pleasant.

In time [if it doesn't happen today, it will happen tomorrow: it needs to have patience and to encourage the right attitude] you will feel that the

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<sup>1</sup> In this situation "deep breath" means: "Deep as much as you can easily mentally chant six + six *Oms*."

spine exists, that it is possible to perceive it in all its length. There is nothing in particular you do. Don't try to obtain this by moving your awareness down in the body. Everything happens automatically.

Meanwhile you notice that the breath is slower and also the mental chant of the various *Oms* is more calm and pleasant. At a certain point you will feel that the six *Chakras* exist. What will appear through internal vision is not necessarily the traditional form of the spinal column with the six *Chakras*. The *Chakras* can be perceived in many different ways.

At a certain point you will realize that the mental chants of *Oms* in *Kutastha* are happening in the center of each *Chakra* too. But remember that your attention is always at the central point of the spiritual eye. If your focus is diverted from *Kutastha*, all the magic of this process is lost.

At a certain moment you will notice that the breath is accompanied by a delicate sound in the throat. It is the sound of the friction of the air in the throat. In this way the breath becomes slow and subtle. In time the sound of the exhalation reminds the sound produced by a small flute through which a small amount of air passes. Now don't worry how this sound should be.

If everything goes as expected, if you still maintain calmness, your breath crosses the *Chakras* from the first to the sixth and from the sixth to the first and in each *Chakra* the syllable *Om* is vibrated. This is a delicious situation. Usually this happens toward the end of the 108 breaths. All your being is settled in a bright sphere located between *Kutastha* and the center of your head. What you see doesn't matter, what matters is that you are perfectly comfortable, absorbed in the beauty of the procedure. While you are approaching the end of the 108 *Kriya* breaths, you might have the experience of the light in *Kutastha*. This will be intensified by *Yoni Mudra*. After *Yoni Mudra* and *Maha Mudra* you will sit again placing yourself in *Kutastha* without doing nothing. In other words without chanting *Om*, and without paying attention to the breath.

## Questions and answers

Some *kriyabans* find it difficult to learn how to practice this form of *Kriya Pranayama* because they do not accept the fact that this method is completely different from what they had been practiced before. For example they feel it strange that in the instruction there is no mention of the spinal path. There are many unexpected questions.

### **Are the breaths uncontrolled like in the Hong So technique?**

During the *Hong So* technique we observe the spontaneous process of breathing without paying attention to whether the inhalations and exhalations are long or short.

By going ahead with this technique the breathing must be natural but we must pay attention so that it is gradually prolonged. How can the "*Hong So* breathing" sustain the procedure of *Kriya Yoga* that gradually leads to a slowing down of upward and downward movement of the current along the spine?

In Lahiri Mahasaya's teaching (and we are trying to abide by that tradition) it is stated that in the long run you become able to practice a very sublime form of Pranayama: inhalation and exhalation prolonged up to 22 + 22 seconds.

In other words: in Sri M.'s *Kriya Pranayama* we utilize a NATURAL breath. But this breathing must be slow so that you can chant *Om* mentally six times during inhalation and six times during exhalation. We must have a breath that can support this mental action. Our breath must go ahead effortlessly but must exist! If we would practice like in the *Hong So* technique, it will be impossible to have it. The breath must be natural but we must care that it gradually lengthens.

If you have a very short breath and therefore you are not able to mentally pronounce that many *Oms*, chant the *Oms* more quickly. Your breathing will be prolonged after a small number of repetitions.

### **I would like to know little more about the process of "knocking" with *Om* in *Kutastha*. If we mentally chant *Om*, then at that time we are not having *Kutastha* in mind.**

The point is not: "having *Kutastha in mind*" but being there, inside *Kutastha*. The mind is still, the process of thought is not stressed with the idea "I must have *Kutastha* in mind otherwise my practice is wrong" No. Nothing of that. You are occupied with two activities, [1] breathing and [2] putting *Om* repeatedly in the central point of *Kutastha*. That's all. If you do this for some minutes, you enter a paradise. With patience you achieve your divine state of contemplation.

Some persons speculate about the duration of each *Om*, if after each *Om* there is a short pause. They want to know how many micro seconds it lasts... They are free to sophisticate and come to their failure. *Kriya* sometimes might seem a chemical receipt but its nature is that of an art based upon intuition, intelligence, commonsense.

### **What is the best routine?**

108 *Kriya* breaths [Time required: from 40 to 50 minutes] After that, practice *Yoni Mudra* (only once in 24 hours), 3 *Maha Mudra* and then remain calm, focused on *Kutastha*. In this final part you simply enjoy the peace and the bliss originating from the practice of *Kriya*.

Sri Mukherjee explains clearly that even a beginner can start right away doing the full 108 repetitions. There is no lower number to begin with, there is no recommended progression. Of course if one is ill, he does not practice at all. And if one, due to circumstances beyond their control, can practice only an inferior number, well, this may happen but it should not become the rule. About other numbers found in the letters written by Lahiri to his disciples, we must understand that those letters represent very personal instructions. Here we are considering a general counsel given to serious *kriyabans* in a good condition of health.

As for *Maha Mudra* there is a variation recommended by Sri Mukherjee for those who find *Maha Mudra* too difficult. "Lie down on the back. Inhale. Raise the legs maintaining the pelvis on the floor. Join the hands under the knees. Keep your equilibrium on the inferior bones of the pelvis and keep the forehead near the knees. Exhale. Return to the initial position."

### *Alternative practice to conclude your practice of Kriya Pranayama.*

When the breath is internalized inside *Sushumna*, keep attention at *Kutastha*. With natural breathing pull one inhalation into *Sushumna* with only one mental chant of *Om* and exhale with another *Om*. Practices like this until you forget yourself and reach the stage of *Samadhi*.

### **In the correspondence of Lahiri with his disciples, Medulla is often quoted. Has Medulla a role?**

What I now describe is a "subtlety" that is discovered in time.

Practice as I describe: keep the chin some millimeters down and inside in a way that *Kutastha* and *Medulla* are at the same level. It is not difficult to realize that the center of your awareness is in the *Medulla* while the faculty of visualization is located in the point between the eyebrows. Now you will discover that every manifestation (not visualization), every luminous revelation of the *Chakras* happens about four centimeters inward from the point between the eyebrows: the seat of *Ajna*. What I say seems perhaps complicated to you but, believe me, while you are practicing, breath after breath everything becomes clearer.

### **How can I know when comes the right moment to produce the sounds in the throat?**

It is typical of *Kriya schools* to teach you how to produce strong sounds in the throat since the beginning of the practice. They explain that strong sounds in the beginning are ok because they produce cold and warm sensations in the spine. Sri Mukherjee explains that these sensations happen but they are produced by the *Ida* and *Pingala* currents. These currents have nothing to do with being in *Sushumna*. If you, since the starting of your *Pranayama*, insist too much upon them, you may cause some problems and lose the magic of the procedure.

Let that throat sounds come later. They will be more enjoyable, will "mesmerize" your concentration and help the procedure. The sounds appear spontaneously when the breath is sufficiently long. Only meditation born intuition can help you to understand when it is good you try to increase the force of your breath and produce the sounds.

### **Why in the main document posted on the download page it is written: "after entering the Sushumna you have to use force on Pranayama."**

This is a hint to the *Second Kriya* stage. It may happen that before ending 108 *Kriyas* breaths you are in *Sushumna*. It might happen that at a certain moment you will feel that the veil of darkness fades away and you witness the brilliance of the Divine Light in the center of which lies the entry point of *Sushumna*. In that wonderful situation you might perceive the color of each *Chakra*.

This is the realm of *Second Kriya* that we will examine later. In this situation it is not necessary to abide by the injunction "Don't overstep the prescribed number: 108." In this case you can go ahead until you enter an ecstatic state and are lost there. Lahiri Mahasaya has said that in this state there is no other instruction to be practiced.

### **If *Kriya Pranayama* as it is taught by Sri Mukherjee is so beautiful and works so well, what is the utility of *Kriya Pranayama* as described in Chapter 6?**

*Kriya Pranayama* requires a continuous improvement. Those who have fresh in their mind chapters won't have any difficulty in perfecting now at incredible levels the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. I recommend to everyone be inspired by the various aspects of *Kriya Pranayama* as delineated in chapter 6.

Here ends the explanation of *Kriya Pranayama* as I have heard it from Sri Mukherjee. Now, in the remaining part of this *Chapter*, I will explain how to obtain the best from this technique.

## **SECOND LESSON: Let us learn a very important preliminary phase**

Let us learn four important techniques. For the time being let us consider them "Preparatory" to *Kriya Pranayama* – later we shall discover that there is more in them.

### **PREP. 1: Forward bendings**

Before describing this procedure let me remind that one cannot start a *Kriya* routine by simply sitting in the correct position for meditation with erected spine after having sitting for hours to do mental work. It is important to practice some exercises that awaken the *Prana* in the body. At least stroll casually ... few minutes are sufficient.

#### *Forward Bendings*

Through a deep inhalation visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Muladhara* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Hold your breath. Bend at the waist and touch the floor with your head. During the forward bendings you should utilize the legs and also the hands in the way which is more comfortable for you. If you usually practice *Kriya* in *Siddhasana* or *Half Lotus* do not insist in maintaining this position while bending!

Move your head near the right knee – the face is turned toward the left knee so that it is possible to perceive a pressure on the right side of the head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the left side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 12 seconds.

Then repeat the same exercise with the other side of your body, reversing the perceptions. Then the head is placed in the region between the knees again, the face turned downward. A pressure is felt on the forehead. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region.

Then sit up straight, inhaling deeply. Through a long exhalation let the energy go down from *Ajna Chakra* to *Muladhara*. Practice six of these forward bendings.

- The "*Forward Bendings*" as taught by Swami Hariharananda are explained in Chapter 11. In this Chapter 12 when I recall an already explained procedure, I do it in a synthetic form.



The forward bendings are useful not only as a preparation to *Kriya* but also for ameliorating your standing position, correcting wrong positions. For many old persons the forward bendings can replace the *Maha Mudra*.

### **PREP. 2: Kriya Pranayama with Japa rotating in Kutastha (12)**

We know how important is the practice of *Japa*, especially when practiced a couple of hours before starting the *Kriya* routine. It creates a condition very favorable to an entranced contemplation of the Spiritual Reality.

Now we summon all the power of *Japa* through "*Preparation 2*." All the efforts of internalization will be more successful.

Now remember that if you want to practice the *Kriya Pranayama* you must know how to make your awareness stable in *Kutastha*. The recommended exercise is based upon perceiving something like a *micro movement* in *Kutastha*.

Inhale as in *Kriya Pranayama*, then create a pause after inhalation. During this pause mentally chant your favored *Mantra* (the one you utilize for *Japa*.) Perceive that this *Mantra* is something that rotates in the sphere of *Kutastha*.

What does "something that rotates" mean? You have surely seen those acrobats that ride a motorbike inside a sphere made of solid steel armor. They cross the inside part of the sphere along all the directions winning the strength of gravity. Well you make pretense that your *Kutastha* is a sphere in whose internal part you make your *Mantra* rotate. (More slowly of course.) Do this until you feel a sensation of strong presence in the center between you eyebrows. A very good choice is to do 12 of these breaths while keeping the pause after inhalation for the same length of the inhalation.

#### **Bhastrika Pranayama as alternative**

If you want that the experience be more intense, then utilize a mild form of *Bhastrika Pranayama*. Thus you will create an increase of energy that can be suitable, for example in the morning, for the practice of *Kriya*.

Make a few deep but fast breaths through your nose. Two seconds for breath is fine for beginners. With every inspiration feel that your abdominal muscles expand. The contrary happens with the exhalation.

After 6 breaths as described, inhale deeply focusing the whole awareness in *Kutastha*. Make another short inhalation expanding the breast and

internally relaxing. Hold your breath for around 30-second. Then exhale. Repeat 3 times.

### **PREP. 3: Nadi Sodhana with inverted breath & Tadan Kriya**

These two techniques have a decisive power to foster the free movement of *Prana* through *Sushumna*. A *kriyaban* will find great benefit by practicing every day these two exercises with inflexible determination.

#### *Nadi Sodhana (with inverted breath)*

Focus on the *Muladhara Chakra*. Close the right nostril and inhale through the left nostril while mentally chanting *Om* 3 times. Visualize that you are attracting the energy contained in the inhaled air and bring this energy down around your *Muladhara*. Close both nostrils and mentally chant *Om* 6 times while holding your breath. At the same time apply *Maha Bandha*. (Or *Aswini Mudra* six times.) Then exhale through the right nostril mentally chanting *Om* 6 times.

*Maha Bandha* means to apply the three basic *Bandhas*. The three *Bandhas* are:

*Mula Bandha*: contract the muscles at the base of the spine

*Uddiyana Bandha*: draw inside the abdominal muscles by contracting them

*Jalandhara Bandha*: lower the chin on the chest

Repeat the procedure inhaling through the right nostril, pause with *Bandhas* and exhale from the left nostril. These two breaths count as one unity. Practice only three unities. In the future you can increase such number. During this procedure the concentration on the *Muladhara Chakra* is the most important detail. This exercise finds its natural completion with *Tadan Kriya*.

#### *Tadan*

Inhale deeply through both nostrils feeling the breath coming down to *Muladhara*. Hold your breath and practice the three *Bandhas*. Lift your body, with the help of the hands, of few millimeters and then let the buttocks touch the seat with a mild jolt. Have three jolts – be sure that you are holding your breath during them! Then exhale, slowly and deeply, releasing the three *Bandhas*, perceiving an ecstatic feeling. This detail is very important: it is a signal that the *Prana* has entered the spine and *Kundalini* starts its travel upwards. The mental energy (not just the physical action) that you put in this exercise is a decisive factor. The action of *Tadan Kriya* is called *Maha Veda Mudra* "Mudra of the great perforation." Repeat the practice of *Tadan* two more times for a total of 9 jolts.

#### **PREP. 4: Guiding Kundalini**

This preparation is very important. In this procedure, the breath is utilized to guide *Kundalini* along an internal path known, in *Internal Alchemy*, as "*Small Heavenly Orbit*". Complete the procedure three times. However even one practice produces a fantastic result.

While *Nadi Sodhana with inverse breath* and *Tadan* are always practiced together, this exercise can be practiced independently. You will surely love it and will practice it, in different moments of your *Kriya* routine, every time you will feel the need to center in the internal state of calmness. When you experience the effect of this procedure you won't ask why this techniques should be practiced but why you have not practiced it before.

Note. Do not complicate this exercise, the procedure should always remain natural and likeable.

From now onwards it is fine (unless the instruction is to keep the mouth open) you keep your tongue in *baby Kechari position*. Of course practice *Kechari* proper if you are able to assume this position of the tongue.

##### First part: coming up

Take a deep, strong inhalation, marked by the particular sound of *Ujjayi*. [Of course when I say *Ujjayi*, the mouth is closed.] The length is about 4 seconds. Attract, through it, the energy from your body into the first *Chakra*. Feel *Kundalini* in the first *Chakra* and exhale rapidly with mouth open "huh." <sup>2</sup> The length of the exhalation is about half second. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the first *Chakra*.

Now take a deep, strong *Ujjayi* inhalation – the length is about 3-4 seconds. Feel that the energy comes upward from the first *Chakra* to the second. After feeling *Kundalini* in the second *Chakra* exhale rapidly with mouth open "huh." The length of the exhalation is about half second. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the second *Chakra*.

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to the third *Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the second *Chakra*. ]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to

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<sup>2</sup> The sound is the same you produce with your mouth when you want to fog up a glass.

the fourth *Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the second and the third *Chakras*. ]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to the fifth *Chakra*. [It is not necessary ... ]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to *Ajna Chakra*. [It is not necessary ... ]

### Second part: going down.

As a general rule, the procedure of going down is symmetric to the procedure of going up.

Take a rapid inhalation through the nose. This is not *Ujjayi*. The length is about 1 second. Feel that *Kundalini* is present in the seventh *Chakra* – the "Thousand petal lotus." Now have a deep, strong *Ujjayi* exhalation – the length is about 4 seconds. [This exhalation happens through the nose.] Feel that the energy of *Kundalini* comes down from the seventh *Chakra* to the spiritual eye in the space between the eyebrows.

Take a rapid inhalation through the nose – as in the previous breath. The length is about 1 second. Feel that *Kundalini* is present in the seventh *Chakra*. Now with a deep *Ujjayi* exhalation (the length is about 4 seconds) feel that the *Kundalini* energy comes down from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the fifth *Chakra*: the Adam's apple.

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the fourth *Chakra* – the central part of the breast bone. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the third *Chakra* – the navel. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the second *Chakra*. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the base of the spine – the seat of *Muladhara*.

### ***Note: optional way of intensify the procedure "Guiding Kundalini."***

While going up, during each inhalation you can contract the muscles near the location of the *Chakra* you are focusing upon.

The muscles to be contracted are the following:

*Muladhara*: the back part of the perineum.

*Swadhisthana*: the genital and the sacrum muscles. You can practice *Vajroli Mudra* (contract and relax both the urethral sphincter.)

*Manipura*: tighten the muscles of the abdomen at the level of the navel.

*Anahata Chakra*: expand the chest. Bring the shoulder blades together and contract the part in the middle near the heart.

*Vishuddha*: move your head quickly from side to side (without turning your face) a couple of times, perceiving a grinding sound in the cervical vertebrae. Contract the muscles of the back of the neck near the cervical vertebrae.

*Medulla*: clench your teeth and pull back your head, raising your chin.

During the second part (going down) of "*Guiding Kundalini*" there is only a slight contraction in the muscles near the location of the *Chakras* where the energy comes down from *Sahasrara Chakra*. All what we have described (in the definition of the procedure of "*Guiding Kundalini*") remains the same, there is only emphasis on the descent of Light. The ideal result would be to become sensitive to the different nuances of color of the light of the different *Chakras*.

After such intense procedure, it is good to deeply relax with some form of *Mental Pranayama* like the form we have explained at the end of chapter 6. Let me summarize it here:

After three deep breaths, let that the breath is natural and do not think of it. Move your awareness up and down along the spine making a pause in every *Chakra* for about 10-20 seconds. Try to perceive the sweetness that emanates from each *Chakra* until you perceive a feeling of sweetness, as if the *Chakra* is "melting". It is important that you assume a passive and patient attitude, with total trust in what will be revealed to you through the practice itself.

**THIRD LESSON: Let us now put together the preliminary phase with a calm practice of Kriya Pranayama**

In Routine 1 and Routine 1bis you will find a good method to utilize the four preparatory techniques by coupling them with Sri Mukherjee's *Kriya Pranayama*. Be patient, be not in a hurry and the experience will be fantastic.

**ROUTINE R1**  
**[A way to master the First level of Kriya]**

This routine starts with an excellent preparatory phase that aims at opening the spinal passage located in the *Muladhara*. When this passage is opened even only partially, the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* becomes a real delight. This routine is like a vacation that you grant to yourself; the sense of work doesn't exist. Obviously, if you live a chaotic life and the mind is continually overheated at the point of collapse by thousand thoughts and worries, the process of internalization will be slower.

**ROUTINE 1**

- Prep. 1, 2, 3
- 36 Basic Kriya Pranayama
- Prep. 4: "Guiding Kundalini"
- Kriya Pranayama perceiving the light of the Chakras (72)

**Explanation**

In this routine I show you how to make the best use of the preparatory techniques. I counsel to break the *Kriya Pranayama* into two parts (36+72). After **Prep. 1, 2, 3** practice **36 Kriya breaths**. Then practice **Prep. 4 "Guiding Kundalini."** You will be stunned how easy is to perceive the location of the *Chakras* and to calm the breath. Therefore the following 72 *Kriya* breaths will happen in the best conditions.

This interruption is also useful to avoid the particular problem that is called "Plateau Effect."

The Plateau Effect is this: an exercise up to a certain moment seems effective, from a moment onwards seems not to work anymore. Our concentration faculties don't succeed in answering to the procedure that we are following and you can falsely think that there is no possible improvement in store for you or that we ourselves are a total failure. This effect is potentially destructive.

Now, during these 72 breaths you will have a great surprise. *Kriya Pranayama* will happen in an extraordinary way. If don't have your mind destroyed by a chaotic life, you will experience a real heaven.

You will succeed in "seeing" the *Chakras*. You will perceive that all the parts of your being are ideally focused in a region situated between *Kutastha* and *Ajna*. In this sphere you will perceive the lights [these lights seem weak but they bring great internal realization] of the different *Chakras*. This will be a stupendous moment of the practice. To close simply remain focused on the Internal Light.

#### **R1 FINAL COMMENT**

Enjoy this routine at least for one month before facing the next Routine R1bis. If you find Routine R1 boring and unpleasant, decrease the number of breaths. For example, instead of practicing 36+72 you can practice 12+24. In the days that you feel strongly negative avoid doing violence to your being. Simply rest and enjoy a country walk !

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#### **ROUTINE R1bis**

**[Another way to master the First level of Kriya]**

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#### **Kriya Pranayama in three parts**

During the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* you can move the attention from *Kutastha* to *Fontanelle* and to the heart *Chakra Anahata*. This is very wise: your routine will fill you with joy during all the day.

## **ROUTINE 1bis**

- Prep. 1, 2, 3, 4
- Kriya Pranayama in three parts

### **Explanation**

After having practiced the 4 preparatory techniques, divide the breaths of *Kriya Pranayama* in three parts.

In the first part the concentration is on *Kutastha*.

In the second part the concentration is on *Fontanelle*. In Chapter 7 we have explained how to do this. You need only to guide your awareness and energy at the summit of your head and remain stable there. Therefore, the chant of *Om 6+6* happens only in the *Fontanelle*. Very useful it is to also add a continuous *Aswini Mudra*.

We know that the practice of *Aswini Mudra* is insuperable in its power to make you touch with the awareness the spinal cord. Therefore, when you feel yourself ready, try to introduce a continuous *Aswini Mudra* during *Kriya Pranayama*. "Continuous" means: during the inhalation and during the exhalation. Always, continuously.

There are different definitions of *Aswini Mudra*. The standard definition is to repeatedly contract the muscles at the base of the spine (anal sphincter) with the rhythm of around two contractions a second. While learning the technique, you contract the buttock muscles, perineum or even the entire pelvic region also; with time, the contraction involves only the sphincter muscles.

This *Mudra* is a direct way of obtaining a perceptive contact with the energy at the base of the spine. This energy is pushed up within the spine. Little by little, *Aswini Mudra* will become more and more subtle – namely it will become just a mental pressure along the whole spine. You start to clearly perceive the totality of *Sushumna* like something cool and bright as a silver thread.

The exercise is very gratifying. You will perceive a white light, diffused, in the upper part of your head. A beautiful sensation of fresh air that comes up crossing each *Chakras* will make you feel filled with energy. A sweet warm that goes down permeating every zone of the body from top to



bottom will infuse a great feeling of comfort. The practice seems to have a life of its own.

Sometimes you will have the impression you are crossing a mental state, that is similar to falling asleep and suddenly returning to full awareness, realizing that you are basking in the spiritual light. It's like a plane emerging from clouds into a clear transparent sky.

#### *Final part*

During the last 36 *Kriya* breaths, the *Oms* (6+6) are mentally chanted in the *Anahata Chakra*. That's all. Forget the *Aswini Mudra* or make it so subtle that it cannot disturb. The routine ends with the awareness become stable in the heart *Chakra*.

#### **FINAL COMMENT ABOUT ROUTINE 1 AND ROUTINE 1bis**

Many persons write me thanking for the previous two routines. They said that the results is extraordinary. Let me emphasize the secret of the success of these routines.

The secret lies in the utilization of strong tools during the preparatory phase. *Nadi Sodhana with inverted breath*, *Tadan Kriya* and *Shakti Chalana* ("*Guiding Kundalini*") are very strong tools.

Never recoil from giving the right stimulation to the *Muladhara Chakra* before facing the subtle work of *Kriya Pranayama*!

In other *Kriya* schools, we see an excessive prudence in teaching effective tools that point at awakening the *Muladhara Chakra*. All the other *Chakras* are seriously taken into account.

I believe that there are no serious reasons to cultivate such fear. Let us avoid thinking that *Muladhara* and *Kundalini* can be a source of troubles!! *Kundalini* is the vital energy present in the body. It is true that when it enters *Sushumna* it has an overwhelming effect that recalls the image of a snake that hisses and spits when disturbed, but there is no reason to fear the *Kundalini* energy that is the very essence of the spiritual experiences.

A very good strategy is to complete the stimulus on the *Muladhara Chakra* by guiding the awakened *Kundalini* energy up and down along the spine. Remember also that this possibility is always achieved after having created a condition of energetic balance between *Ida* and *Pingala*.

Focusing on this task will help a *kriyaban* to familiarize with a dimension that can falsely appear as austere, while in reality is made of true Beauty.

Now the strategy for the remaining routines is to diminish the number of *Kriya Pranayamas* and utilize the *Higher Kriyas*.

Other six Routines are here described. You will find both *Kriya* techniques already explained in the preceding chapters and other procedures which I describe here for the first time. I tested them in these last years. All I can say is that there is really something great in them.

Familiarize with each one of them, studying and testing them in the given order. In my opinion each routine should be utilized for at least two months. However other approaches are possible, especially for people who are practicing some form of "spinal breathing" since many years. The four preparatory techniques are utilized in almost every routine, it is for this reason that I explained them at the starting point.

When in the following routines you find "*Basic Kriya Pranayama*" this refers to the technique of *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee.

### **The routines that I am going to introduce**

**R 2:** This is to work intensively upon the *Chakras*. They receive a great stimulus. There are two important techniques described here: *First Omkar Kriya* and *Sushumna Pranayama*. You don't find here the traditional *Second Kriya* (You find the description of it in the opening page of chapter 8.) The reason is that this *Second Kriya* technique is contained in the *First Omkar Kriya* and in the *Third Kriya*.

**R 3:** Here you find a strong form of *Thokar*. It is the Third Kriya technique. The description is the same as in chapter 8, **BUT** here you will benefit of an unorthodox detail about how to reach 200 repetitions

**R 3bis:** Here you find a totally different way of conceiving the Thokar: pushing the energy toward whatever target through fragmented exhalation.

**R 4:** The art of Thokar is here completed. The effect is to obtain the best form of Pranayama: *Pranayama with internal breath*.

**R 5:** After obtaining the "*Internal Breath*" your breath moves along the *Tribhangamurari path*. The *Tribhangamurari* is the form of *Sri Krishna*.

**R 6:** This is a formidable way of reaching the breathless state and, at the same time, to knock at the door of *Kutastha*. Through this routine that door opens...

## **FOURTH LESSON: Let us familiarize with the Higher Kriyas**

### **ROUTINE R2**

**[A way to take a tremendous forward step for a good practice of Kriya Pranayama]**

### **Piercing the Chakras**

With this routine you become intensely aware of the reality of the *Chakras*. The *Chakras* are to be awakened and pierced by the *Prana* guided by your awareness.

### **ROUTINE 2**

- Prep. 1, 2, 3
- Mental chanting of Om in the Chakras
- Lahiri Mahasaya's Kriya Pranayama
- First Omkar Kriya
- Prep. 4
- Sushumna Pranayama

### **Explanation**

**Start with Prep. 1, 2 and 3**

### **Mental chanting of Om in the Chakras**

After Prep. 3 you are in a particular state of awareness in which it is easy to perceive the location of each *Chakra*. Vibrate mentally *Om* (sounds like Oooooonng) in the *Muladhara Chakra*; then do the same with the second *Chakra* and the same up to the fifth *Chakra* (*Vishuddha*) and then also in the *Medulla*. During this action, try to intuitively touch the internal nucleus of each *Chakra*. Don't pay attention to the breath: breathe naturally

Then the descent starts. *Om* is chanted in the cervical *Chakra*, then in the heart *Chakra*, then in each *Chakra*, down to *Muladhara*. Repeat this two more times.

The correct vocal pronunciation for "Om" is like the "ong" in "song" but drawn out. It must not be pronounced like the "om" in Tom e.g. "ahm." In this technique, "Om" is a pure prolonged vowel sound pronounced like the alphabet letter "o." The "m" is silent and the "o" sound is lengthened. You can also practice with mouth not completely closed – thus creating the nasal sound "ng". When pronouncing Indian *Mantras*, like *Om namo bhagavate ...* or *Om namah Shivaya ...*, the consonant "m" in "Om" is heard. Some say the correct note of *Om* is B (Si) before Middle C (Do). Some schools teach to chant *Vam* or *Bam* or *Hrom* at the place of *Om*. In particular *Hrom* (*Hroooooooooom*) is very effective. It fills you with euphoria.

#### • **Lahiri Mahasaya's Kriya Pranayama**

We have described this wonderful technique in chapter 6. You can practice it now with supreme sweetness for 12-24 times.

The *Kriya* of Sri Mukherjee is fantastic. However it is true that the "*Original Kriya*" requires indeed that you mentally chant *Om* in the location of each *Chakra*. After practicing for many months the *Kriya* of Sri Mukherjee (Routine 1 and 1bis) it is more easy to practice Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya Pranayama*. I have explained in detail Sri Mukherjee's way of practicing the *Kriya Pranayama*. I wrote sincerely that to me it was a great discovery. I adore how it PREPARES you to the practice of the original *Kriya Pranayama*.

In my opinion Sri Mukherjee's instructions represent a didactic strategy that aims at making you realizing a correct practice of the original *Kriya Pranayama*.

If you try to practice the "*Original Kriya*", without a long preparatory phase – breathing intensely, while mentally placing the *Om Mantra* exactly in the seat of each *Chakra* – very probably you will do some mistakes that, in time, will halt your progress. Unaware, you will do violence to the system of your *Nadis*. You believe you have entered *Sushumna*, but, probably, you will not be there. You have only exerted a mental effort to enter a path which is momentarily barred. The door of *Sushumna*, instead of opening, remains firmly closed. The strategy of Sri Mukherjee is to make you gradually enter the *Sushumna*, enter with sweetness. Following his method you will arrive slowly but safety. The awareness of the essence of *Chakras* [and therefore their real location in the astral spine] will appear at the proper time.

### **First Omkar Kriya**

Moderately contract the muscles at the base of the spine. Inhale and at the same time rise the awareness along the spinal column. Interlaced hands are placed over the navel to create a mental pressure over the first three *Chakras*. This pressure is perfected by adding the practice of *Uddiyana Bandha*. During the inhalation, lift the chin following the inner movement of the *Prana*; mentally chant *Om* in each *Chakra*. Or you can mentally chant the syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudevaya*.) *Om* is chanted in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second, *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu*. Hold your breath.

After the just described inhalation, bend the head to the left (without turning your face to the left), guide your awareness within the right hemisphere of the head (it is the part which in this moment remains aloft.) Then, always holding your breath, bend your head to the right intensifying the concentration on the left part of the left hemisphere (it is the part which in this moment remains aloft.) Keep holding your head, lower the chin on the chest and practice *Maha Bandha*.

*Maha Bandha* means practicing the three *Bandha* together. The three *Bandhas* are: *Mula Bandha*: contract the muscles at the base of the spine; *Uddiyana Bandha*: draw internally the abdominal muscles by contracting them; *Jalandhara Bandha*: keep the chin on the chest.

Perceive an intensification of the *Prana* in the *Dantian* region. Raise your chin as much as possible and perceive light in the region from the *Kutastha* to the *Fontanelle*.

Now your chin is perfectly horizontal. Start a sweet, slow, tranquil exhalation. This exhalation injects the Light in *Sushumna* through *Medulla*. Let the Light come down millimeter after millimeter towards the base of the spine. This Light "pierces" each *Chakra*. The mental chant of *Te, Va, Su, De, Va, Ya*, helps you to feel more clearly this "piercing" procedure.

Enjoy this powerful, beautiful beyond comparison, *Kriya Pranayama*. Enjoy the movements of the head, the *Bandhas*, the mental pressure of the *Prana* upon each *Chakra*. Repeat 24-36 times.

Now you can close your routine with the beautiful Prep. 4. If you have time, you can try the very subtle *Sushumna Pranayama*.

## Sushumna Pranayama

*Sushumna Pranayama* is the *Pranayama* that happens inside the *Sushumna* and therefore in the state of breathlessness. We shall reach this state by a succession of short breaths between *Muladhara* and each *Chakra*.

Start with three deep breaths. Then focus the attention on the *Muladhara*. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the second *Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on *Muladhara*. Make a short pause. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the *Third Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on the *Muladhara*.

Repeat the procedure between the *Muladhara* and the fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and the fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and *Medulla*; *Muladhara* and fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - third *Chakra*; *Muladhara* – Second *Chakra*.

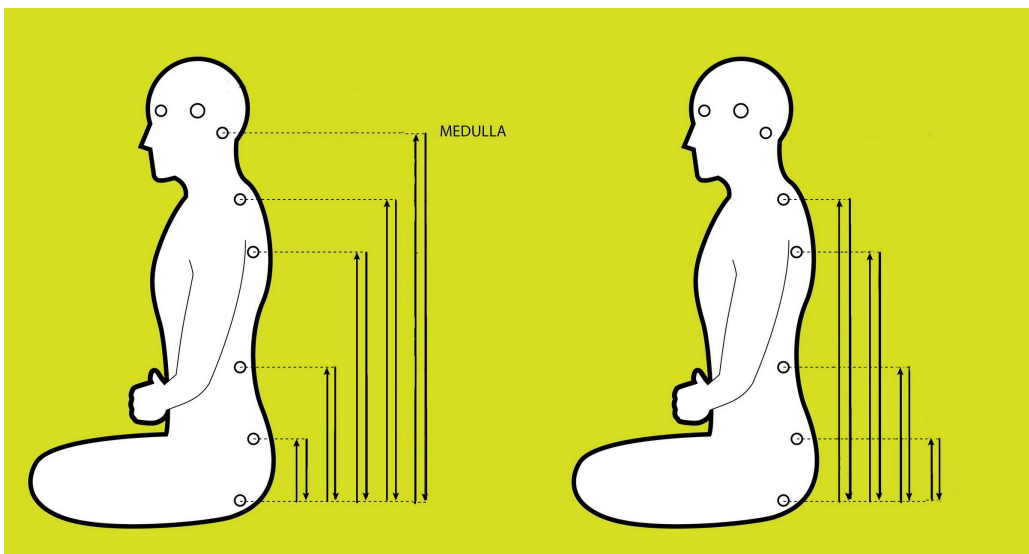


Fig.22 One cycle is made of 9 short breaths

These 9 calm breaths are one cycle. If at this point your breath has not drastically calmed down, you practice one or two cycles more.

After 4-6 cycles you will notice that the breath is almost disappeared, while the spine has become like a steel bar. I cannot guarantee that you will also succeed in listening to the internal sounds coming from the *Chakras*,

but you will certainly perceive a particular internal pressure in the head which is an aspect of the *Omkar* dimension.

Once completed 4-6 cycles, if you are not in the breathless state forget the *Chakras* and make the procedure more "subtle". Feel *Muladhara* and a small piece of the spine, then *Muladhara* and another piece of the spine, then another .... The mechanism is the same but instead of reaching the perception of the whole spine in 5 steps you reach it in a greater number of steps.

You intuitively discover the power of conquering the spine millimeter after millimeter. What does it mean "conquering"? It means to perceive, to be intensely conscious.... It means that you do not breathe anymore and you are inside the *Sushumna*.

One day your intuition will suggest to focus on the totality of your body and perceive there a fresh energy. Go ahead until you realize that your body is sustained by internal energy. Go ahead not only feeling the *Chakras* but also the whole body. One day your breath will stop completely: it will be like a miracle.

"No me pidáis que lo explique. Tengo el fuego en las manos" <sup>3</sup>  
(*Garcia Lorca*)

## **R2 FINAL COMMENT**

First Kriya as taught by Sri Mukherjee // First Omkar Kriya // Prep. 4 (Guiding Kundalini) // Sushumna Pranayama are four wonderful procedures to come very near to the breathless state. They are a real blessing!

I emphasize this because if a *kriyaban* desires to experience *Thokar* in its elementary form and practice it at the place of the *First Omkar Kriya*, or after it, he can of course do that, but he must be very careful, prudent, delicate. Otherwise the breathless state instead of coming near may move away. Study the Elementary form of *Thokar* in the beginning of chapter 8.

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<sup>3</sup> "Don't ask me that I explain it. I have the fire in the hands

## **ROUTINE R3**

**[A wonderful way of having the experience of Thokar]**

The *Advanced Form of Thokar* is the *Thokar* repeated various times while holding the breath. In the past I have experimented it in different variations but the outcome was never good – save for the form that I am going to describe here.

### **ROUTINE 3**

- Prep. 1, 2, 3,4
- First Omkar Kriya
- Cross shaped Pranayama
- Third Kriya (Advanced form of Thokar)
- Savasana

### **Explanation**

After the sequence of all the preliminary techniques and after a small number of repetitions of First Omkar Kriya (12-24) let us consider the following procedure:

#### **Cross shaped Pranayama**

Practice some breaths in the following way. When you inhale, feel a movement of energy that goes from the left part of the body toward the right part. During exhalation feel a movement of energy from the right part of the body toward the left part. To this breath, a classic *Kriya* breath follows: the energy moves upwards during inhalation and downwards during exhalation. Go ahead alternating the two ways of breathing. You need only 6 couple of breaths to clearly feel the location of the *Anahata Chakra*. Practice 18 couples of breaths. The last couples of breaths must be very very subtle.

**Now let us describe the following technique which is a real jewel:**

#### **Third Kriya (Advanced form of Thokar)**

Moderately contract the muscles at the base of the spine. Inhale and at the same time rise the awareness along the spinal column. Interlaced hands are



placed over the navel to create a mental pressure over the first three *Chakras*. This pressure is perfected by adding the practice of *Uddiyana Bandha*. During the inhalation, lift the chin following the inner movement of the *Prana*; mentally chant *Om* in each *Chakra*. Or you can mentally chant the syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya.*) *Om* is chanted in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second, *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu*. Hold your breath.

After the just described inhalation, move your head a few millimeters to the left, then return to the center with your chin slightly up. Without stopping turn your face to the right. The chin goes down a bit to get closer to the front of the right shoulder. There should be no stress in this movement.

Mentally chant "Tee" at the top of the right lung. Then slowly move your head to the symmetrical position by mentally placing "Va" at the top of the left lung. The syllable *Su* is vibrated in the center of the heart *Chakra* while directing the chin near the center of your chest with a rapid movement. This produces a hit (*Thokar*) in the center of the heart *Chakra*.

Do not exhale, repeat the "*Te Va Su*" procedure. "Repeat" means: raise your chin and focus for an instant your awareness to *Bindu* where you vibrated the sixth syllable *Ba*, move your head a few millimeters to the left, then return to the center with your chin slightly up. Without stopping turn your face to the right... vibrate *Tee* at the top of the right lung. Then move your head to the symmetrical position by mentally placing *Va* at the top of the left lung, then practice again *Thokar* on the heart by vibrating *Su* in it.

...repeat and repeat... : "*Te Va Su*" "*Te Va Su*" "*Te Va Su*"...

Feel the irradiation of Light increasing, maintaining the state of *Kumbhaka*... keep it until you feel that it is correct to stop and exhale.

To give an idea of the speed of the movements, the entire process from inhalation to exhalation with 12 repetitions of the rotation of the head (each rotation concluding with the movement of the chin toward the chest) lasts around 80 seconds.

This technique is to be practiced once a day.

### **A first counsel to increase comfortably the number of rotations**

Traditionally, one begins with 12 cycles of the head movements unhurriedly during one single breath and increases by one every day up to 200 repetitions. This *Kriya* is considered mastered when one reaches 200 rotations without interrupting the *Kumbhaka* state. It is imperative not to feel uneasiness! "Do not force" is the pressing recommendation!

Now, how is it possible to achieve the goal of 200 rotations, without interrupting the *Kumbhaka* state, comfortably? Satisfying this request appears very difficult – almost impossible. Almost all *kriyabans* are jammed after 30-40 repetitions, while gasping for breath.

Does the solution lie in going ahead rotating your head much more quickly? No, this would be silly. Please consider what I am explaining now.

When you feel you have neared your limit holding your breath, while keeping the chest expanded and the abdominal muscles and diaphragm contracted and immobile, let a minimal (almost imperceptible) sip of air go out whenever the chin is lowered toward the chest and let an imperceptible sip of air enter whenever the chin is brought up. Do not do any specific act of inhaling or exhaling: relax and allow this phenomenon happen of its own accord. The sensation will always be of not breathing at all.

In other words, if you want to go ahead comfortably with this practice, you must give up the idea of keeping a perfect *Kumbhaka* while trying to reach the 200 rotations goal.

The counsel to renounce a perfect *Kumbhaka* is strange, but if you go ahead with this and repeat it a sufficient number of times (usually it's a matter of a couple of months), one day you will make a beautiful discovery: this strategy is no more necessary! Thanks to the effect of this practice upon the ganglia exerting an influence on the central cardio-respiratory mechanisms, the practice happens in better and better conditions, until one day you will be able to complete the 200 rotations without breathing and without hurry. You will experience a state of consciousness characterized by heightened feeling of freedom from physical laws. It is a matter of inner realization – an instinct which is discovered in time.

The advice that I have given can seem a desecration, however... it works.

**All this was already explained in chapter 8 (and is given here for you convenience) please consider the following counsel to be applied before starting your *Third Kriya*.**

Before starting the *Third Kriya* procedure, inhale slowly and steadily through your nose and at the same time pull-in the stomach and lift up the the perineum. While inhaling, mentally repeat *Om, Na, Mo...*and raise the *Prana* to the upper part of the lungs. Then partially relax the muscles of the thoracic cage as if you were going to begin a new inhalation.

Focus your attention on the upper part of your rib cage. A part of this attention goes to the base of the spine. Mentally chant *Om, Om, Om...* rapidly (about two chants of *Om* per second) feeling your awareness like an ant, crawling up the innermost channel of the spine millimeter by millimeter from *Muladhara* upwards.

After no more than 4-6 seconds, you'll have reached the heart *Chakra*; go up further, in the region between the fourth and the fifth *Chakra* (the region related to the upper part of lungs and chest.) You will perceive a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Be sure to feel *Prana* pervade the rib cage and become calm and stable there.<sup>4</sup>

Well, taking this as a basis, utilize the best attitude you have to reach a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Remain stable in this state, without ever letting the abdomen and the rib cage relax and the *Prana* slide down. In this mental and physical state, apply the first counsel given before and practice your *Third Kriya*. You will discover how beautiful and comforting is the experience of rotating your head (with *Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su...*) while the breath seems frozen in the thorax region.

### **Savasana**

After practicing this method for at least a couple of weeks, something very strong could happen in you spine.

Let us suppose that, after a good practice of *Kriya*, you have the opportunity of being alone for about half an hour, locked in a room where no one can reach you.

Relax in the *Savasana* position and enter the state of deep sleep (*Turiya*.) Suddenly an extensive, yet intense Beauty is in front of you but somehow

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<sup>4</sup> The counsel to mentally chanting *Om, Om, Om...* really draws energy in the spine from all the parts of your body and guides it toward the spine. If your body condition is perfect (if you are moderate with eating and your are on an empty stomach) you will notice that your breath is dissolved in some inexplicable way in the body.

distant as within a kind of ideal horizon. You feel that Beauty, you recognize It and feel limitless joy. Your reaction is crying of nostalgic longing. The joy intensifies and you are not able to bear it anymore because it becomes like an aching pain. You are aware that your time to merge with that Beauty has not yet come. You return to reality with tears in your eyes, tears of joy and burning devotion.

"My worship is of a very strange kind. Holy water is not required. No special utensils are necessary. Even flowers are redundant. In this worship, all gods have disappeared, and emptiness has merged with euphoria." (*Lahiri Mahasaya*)

### **R3 FINAL COMMENT**

In this routine we have faced the delicate process of experiencing a long *Kumbhaka*. I gave you a particular counsel how to proceed with delicacy.

Soon after my initial footsteps in Yoga, I studied shortly after the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali commented by T.K. Taimni. I was spellbound from his annotations. Among the other things he recommended to be prudent with the *Kumbhaka*. Those words made me understand that I had among the hands a powerful tool of spiritual evolution.

"*Kumbhaka* affects the flow of pranic currents in a very marked and fundamental manner and enables the *Yogi* to gain increasing control over these currents. [...] Not only is *Kumbhaka* the essential element of real *Pranayama* but it is also the source of danger in the practice of *Pranayama*. The moment one starts retaining the breath, especially after inhalation, in any abnormal manner the danger begins and one can never know what it will lead to. [...] *Kumbhaka* unlocks the doors of unexpected experiences and powers. If it is taken up without the necessary preparation and guidance it is sure to lead to disaster."

I have always followed his admonishment and I hope that the reader of these notes wants to follow it. We will never try to hold back the breath in abnormal way. Our "holding" will be always very prudent.

  
**ROUTINE R3bis**

[A very particular way to cooperate with the Third level of Kriya]

**A different form of Thokar**

In this routine the repeated stimulus of the *Anahata Chakra* happens through a particular form of fragmented exhalation. This powerful method is not part of the canonical Kriyas, therefore it is not described in chapter 8 or 9. You find it only here in chapter 12.

**ROUTINE R3bis**

- Prep. 1, 2, 3,4
- First Omkar Kriya
- Thokar with fragmented exhalation

**Explanation**

After the sequence of all the preliminary techniques and after a small number of repetitions of First Omkar Kriya (12-24) let us consider the following procedure:

**Thokar with fragmented exhalation**

After a short but deep inhalation (nothing to do with *Kriya* inhalation, you simply fill the lungs with air) a long exhalation happens through the half closed mouth. Precisely: the lips are united in the central part and the air goes out through the side part of the lips. During the exhalation, the sound of s-s-s-s-s-s-s... is produced... creating between the lips a warm sensation which is continually transferred mentally to the spine. When you actually feel the warm in the spine, the exercise is practiced correctly. When you don't feel it, usually the problem lies in the fact that you are practicing in a too quick way.

In the first part of the exercise you increase the perception of the warm energy in Chakra 1, then 2, 3, 4, 5, Medulla, right part of the brain, left part of the brain, Chakra 5, Chakra 4.

In the second part of the exercise through one (I mean only one) long exhalation you guide the energy millimeter after millimeter along the spinal path that goes from Medulla to Chakra 4.

### **First part**

After a deep inhalation, utilize a long fragmented exhalation with s-s-s-s-s... sound to increase the perception of the warm energy in *Chakra 1*. Produce as much micro pushes s-s-s-s-s.. as it is possible [until you remain without breath.] After another deep inhalation, utilize a long fragmented exhalation with s-s-s-s-s... sound to increase the perception of the warm energy in *Chakra 2*. Then do the same with the focus of your concentration on *Chakra 3, 4, 5, Medulla, right part of the brain, left part of the brain, Chakra 5, Chakra 4*. At this point the first part of the exercise is completed.

### **Second part**

After a deep inhalation, utilize the ensuing long fragmented exhalation with s-s-s-s-s... sound to guide a warm flow of energy from the right part of the brain to the left part of the brain and then to *Medulla*. This requires few seconds. Now, without interrupting the exhalation come down very slowly along the spinal path, cross the cervical center and come down very, very slowly (millimeter after millimeter) until you enter the heart *Chakra* and stop there.

The last part of the exhalation has a sound like "sssst" and is strong and sharp. In other words, when the exhalation is ending, inject energy in the heart *Chakra* with the movement of the chin. This is a form of *Thokar*. Stop an instant in the *Anahata Chakra* to perceive the particular energetic irradiation that is originated there and expands in the heart region.

Inhale deeply and repeat this procedure. The general plan of *Kriya* practice envisages 36 repetitions of this technique.

The secret is to intensify, through the power of concentration, the heat produced by the different fragmented exhalations. The heat is increased by increasing the number of small micro parts of the exhaling breath. This form of *Thokar* is really strong, there are no doubts!

Repeat the exercise at least 36 times. Then breathe freely, become stable in the meditation posture. Reach a state of pure flow of awareness WITHOUT A SINGLE THOUGHT. Remain like this 15-20 minutes.

### **R3bis FINAL COMMENT**

One day you will bless the technique of the fragmented exhalation. You will realize that it succeeds in an instant in lifting your spirits. Every time you feel the necessity of it, utilize the procedure until you feel perfectly calm and serene.

### **ROUTINE R4**

**[Complete form of Thokar leading to Pranayama with Internal Breath]**

The ancient texts of *Hatha Yoga* affirm that the *Pranayama* without the three *Bandhas* (*Jalandhara*, *Mula* and *Uddiyana*) is useless. They affirm also that the *Bandhas* are useless without *Maha Veda*. Well then, what is this *Maha Veda* to whom they give such supreme importance?

A simple form of *Maha Veda* is the *Tadan Kriya* that we apply inside **Prep.3**. *Maha Veda* in its full form is the *Fourth Kriya* that we are going to learn now.

### **ROUTINE 4**

- Prep. 1
- First Omkar Kriya
- Fourth Kriya
- Pranayama with Internal Breath.

### **Explanation**

After the first Preliminary technique (forward bendings) + 12 First Omkar Kriya practice the Fourth Kriya

### **Fourth Kriya**

[See illustration in chapter 8. (Figure 9.)

### **First part**

► Inhalation [The same kind of Inhalation that you have learned in First Omkar Kriya and in Third Kriya]

... During the inhalation, lift the chin following the inner movement of the

*Prana*. Mentally chant the syllables of the *Mantra*: *Om Na mo Bha Ga Ba*.

Hold your breath. Move your head to the left of few millimeters, then return to the center with chin slightly up. Without stopping, turn your face toward right. The chin goes down a bit to get closer to the front of the right shoulder. Vibrate "Tee" at the top of the right lung. Then slowly move your head to the symmetrical position by mentally placing "Va" at the top of the left lung.

From this position there is a movement of the chin to hit the *Anahata Chakra*. You mentally chant "Su" feeling a hitting sensation in the heart *Chakra*.

Holding your breath and starting from the upper part of the right lung where you again chant *Te*, repeat the movement of your head and place *Va* at the top of the left lung, then there is a movement of the chin to hit the third *Chakra* with the syllable *Su*. [Yes the same syllable you have utilized to hit the fourth *Chakra*.]

In a similar way you hit the second *Chakra* and then the first *Chakra Muladhara* where, after *Su*, you also chant the final syllables *De Va Ya*.

## **Second part**

In the second part, Chakras 2, 3 and 4 are not stimulated: only *Muladhara* receives our stimulation with *Thokar*. The action of *Tadan Kriya* is called *Maha Veda Mudra* "Mudra of the great perforation."

What is the difference between *Maha Veda* and *Tadan*, the *Tadan* that we have practiced in Prep.3? The answer is very simple: there is no difference. There is only one fact to underline: now we are ready to receive all its power. Now it is important to handle that power, and this happens by experiencing **Pranayama with Internal Breath** after the practice of the *Fourth Kriya*.

► Inhale... During the inhalation, lift the chin following the inner movement of the *Prana*. Mentally chant the syllables of the *Mantra*: *Om Na mo Bha Ga Ba*. Hold your breath. Move your head to the left of few millimeters, then return to the center with chin slightly up. Without stopping, turn your face toward right. The chin goes down a bit to get closer to the front of the right shoulder. Vibrate "Tee" at the top of the right lung. Then slowly move your head to the symmetrical position by mentally placing "Va" at the top of the left lung.

From this position there is a movement of the chin to hit the *Muladhara Chakra* with the syllable *Su*.



When you come down with *Thokar* (you are holding your breath) lift your body, with the help of the hands, of few millimeters and then let the buttocks touch the seat with a mild jolt. *Thokar* in *Muladhara* happens in this moment. Have three jolts – be sure that you are holding your breath during them! Then exhale, slowly and deeply. Relax any tension, perceive an ecstatic feeling. This detail is very important: it is a signal that the *Prana* has entered the spine and *Kundalini* starts its travel upwards. The mental energy (not just the physical action) that you put in this exercise is a decisive factor. Repeat this *Kriya* for 6 to 12 times. Wait months before increasing.

### **Now, what is Pranayama with Internal Breath?**

Consider the experience that Lahiri Mahasaya reports in his diaries when, a couple of years after his initiation at the Himalaya, he wrote: "After an excellent *Pranayama*, today the breath is completely directed inside. After so much time, today the purpose of my descent (on the earth) has reached!"

This is a great sentence! The breath has become *mental substance*, *something immaterial*. PY describes the same event by referring to an elevated form of *Kriya Pranayama* where energy moves without utilizing the breath.

### **Method 1**

Consider the procedure Prep.4 "*Guiding Kundalini*." Start it soon after completing the practice of the *Fourth Kriya*.

Practice it very, very slowly. The six inhalations of the "ascending" phase must be long and intense. With the first inhalation the energetic movement is perceived as an energetic stream from the body to the first *Chakra*. A short exhalation follows.

The second inhalation is very important. The energetic movement is perceived from the first to the second *Chakra*. This movement must be very very slow. If you deem it necessary, repeat it. Don't mind about time. Come up millimeter after millimeter. Do the same with all the other parts of the spinal path up to *Sahasrara*.

The "descent" phase follows. Through the six exhalations you perceive the movement of the energy from the *Sahasrara* to the sixth *Chakra*, then to the fifth, then to the fourth etc... If you go ahead slowly, this phase is not difficult. The maximum of intensity is given to the "ascension" phase.

## **Method 2**

This is more difficult because you must alternate it with your *Fourth Kriya*. After completing one round of *Fourth Kriya*, inhale very, very slowly, feeling that you are really entering the spine. Come up as far as possible, crossing each *Chakra* while trying to reach your head. Proceed with great delicacy and sensitivity.

You will discover that you can guide the movement of the energy up the spine. Perhaps only for a small stretch. Do not force – it is not necessary to complete that breath. Instead let your task unaccomplished and start another round with the *Fourth Kriya*.

After that round, try again your experience with the *Internal Breath*. Whatever happens, whatever you perceive (a very delicate current moving up the spine) is precious.

At a certain moment you will experience with renewed joy that you are really inside the spine and your *Pranayama* has become more subtle than you ever thought possible. You will feel the beauty and the strength of this process: for some days you will not desire any other thing to do. This work will seem you the most important you have ever done in *Kriya*.

## **R4 FINAL COMMENT**

During the day observe yourself. You will notice an alternation in your mood. Sometimes your nights will be characterized by very vivid dreams that could upset you. Sometimes they will make you live in the most sublime state of ecstatic enjoyment. Why all this? Because the power started by striking the *Muladhara* is great. The effect of this technique is a shock. You will live in a new way: you will live allied with Truth, accepting all the consequences of being sincere with people.

## **ROUTINE R5**

**[A way to master the Fifth level of Kriya]**

This *Fifth Kriya* is a higher octave of *Fourth Kriya*. Its action is very subtle.

### **ROUTINE 5**

- Prep. 1
- First Omkar Kriya
- Preparation to Fifth Kriya
- Fifth Kriya
- Pranayama with Internal Breath along the Tribhangamurari path.

### **Explanation**

After Prep.1 and *First Omkar Kriya* try to have a clear perception of the *Tribhangamurari* movement. The follow preparation is very useful, but you must know what is explained in chapter 9.

### **Preparation to Fifth Kriya**

In chapter 9 we have divided the work into three parts: *Amantrak*, *Samantrak* and *Thokar*. Here we omit *Amantrak* and simply perceive the *Tribhangamurari* movement by reciting the syllables *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba Te Va Su De Va Ya*. You can chant mentally those syllables or whisper them with your voice. Read the simple instruction given in Chapter 9. See figure 11. Intensify with mental pressure the energetic flow of energy along the whole *Tribhangamurari* circuit. Each syllable when vibrated in the right place is like a mental *Thokar*. Make the round 24-36 times.

### **Fifth Kriya**

Practice this procedure only when the energetic flow along the *Tribhangamurari* path is well printed in your consciousness.

Inhale placing the first six syllables of the *Mantra* in the relative *Chakras*. Hold your breath. Go down along the *Tribhangamurari* path making the movements of the head and giving five blows in the way we have explained in Chapter 9.

Let us shortly recall the movements of the head.

Without turning the face, bend your head sideways a couple of centimeters to the left. Return to the middle raising the chin. Feel the seventh center in the left part of the brain. Remain only an instant in this position and chant *Tee* there. Then turn the face to the right as much as possible. Only the face moves, not the torso. The chin touches the right shoulder for an instant and the syllable *Va* is vibrated in that region.

Then the face turns to the left. The syllable *Su* is vibrated in that region and the chin for an instant touches the left shoulder. The chin slowly moves toward the middle of the chest while grazing the left collarbone. During this movement, two light blows are given to the left collarbone in intermediate positions. The syllables *De* and *Va* are vibrated. Finally, with the chin down in the central position the syllable *Yaaa* is vibrated in *Muladhara*.

You notice that the three final blows characterized by *De*, *Va* and *Yaaa* produce a sense of ecstasy. The last movement, the blow upon the *Muladhara Chakra* is especially enjoyable: the energy is pushed upwards from the base of the spine toward the heart *Chakra*. It is possible to perceive divine Light in the upper part of your head.

After chanting *Yaaa...*, the exhalation starts. During the exhalation you don't utilize again the *Tribhangamurari* path. You simply create a fine "eee..."<sup>5</sup> sound in the throat and visualize a white light coming down along the back of the spine. Feel a warm current. The practice is so beautiful that often you will enter the ecstatic state during the practice itself. It is a drunkenness of joy.

At the end of the exhalation you can practice *Tadan* 3 times. Then relax.

Repeat the procedure 36 times.

### **Pranayama with Internal Breath along the Tribhangamurari path**

Now practice Pranayama with Internal Breath along the Tribhangamurari path. You are doing Pranayama inside the Tribhangamurari path. But this is internal.

### **R5 FINAL COMMENT**

The sixth level of *Kriya* we are going to describe in the next routine, represents the final improvement to enter *Kutastha* and complete your spiritual path. Most persons try to complete the spiritual path through *Yoni Mudra*. I prefer to complete it with the very subtle practice of R6.

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<sup>5</sup> SHEEE is perceived as: [ʃi:]

## **ROUTINE R6**

**[A way to master the Sixth level of Kriya]**

### **In search of the Micro movement Tribhangamurari**

Let's prepare for a definitive work in *Kutastha* and therefore in *Sushumna*. We shall utilize a formidable method that should be learned with great attention and patience.

### **ROUTINE 6**

- Prep. 1, 2 and 3
- First Omkar Kriya
- Fifth Kriya
- Pranayama with Internal Breath along the Tribhangamurari path.
- Perception of the Micro Movement Tribhangamurari

### **Explanation**

We have already experienced each entry up to "Pranayama with Internal Breath along the Tribhangamurari path."

### **Perception of the Micromovimento Tribhangamurari**

Put the totality of your being in *Muladhara Chakra*. Inhale a subtle breath by mentally chanting *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba* trying to feel something moving inside *Muladhara*. There is something that starts in the back part of the *Muladhara* and comes forward toward the frontal part of it. Then exhale a subtle breath by mentally chanting *Te Va Su De Va Ya* trying to perceive a movement sensation with three curves that returns back to the position of departure. This (the internal sensation that accompanies the recitation of the 12 syllables) is the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari*.

Perceive it three times. Then focus on the *second Chakra* and patiently to have there the same experience. Then in the *third Chakra*....

In conclusion you have the experience of the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari* three times inside each of the 12 centers. You see that your focus touches each of the first 5 Chakras, then Bindu, then the center in the left part of the brain, then the center in the upper part of the right chest, then the one on the left part of the chest, then two centers coming down towards *Muladhara* and finally *Muladhara* again to close the round.

See fig. 14 in chapter 9. During one round the *Micro movement* is perceived 3x12 times.

[In the *Muladhara Chakra* the *Micro movement* is perceived 3+3 times. This is correct because here *Muladhara* plays a particular role.]

Well, this long procedure is to be repeated three times for a total of  $3 \times 12 \times 3 = 108$  times

During this long practice, the breath disappears while the spine becomes like a bar of steel. This exercise has a power, without parallel to let you enter *Sushumna* and pierce *Kutastha*.

If you practice in open country, with open eyes, then the practice becomes pure ecstasy. Going beyond the sense of drowsiness that is typical of this practice, you will enter another dimension. Somehow your perception of space and time are altered.

#### **R6 FINAL COMMENT**

During the day take back the practice of the *Japa Tribhangamurari Macro*. Go ahead slowly. Decide (through your strong will) that each syllable of the *Mantra* is translated into joy. Feel that each syllable promotes your alertness and your capacity for joy. You feel such an intense joy that your mind will blow up. ... and you know that *Samadhi* happens when actually your mind blows up.

*Seize me as I pass by  
if you have the strength to do so,  
and try to solve the enigma of happiness  
that I offer you. (M. Proust)*