

YOGA: STEP – BY – STEP

THIS IS A SERIES OF FIFTY – TWO LESSONS ON THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF YOGA WHICH INCLUDES INSTRUCTIONS IN ASANAS, KRIYAS, MUDRAS, HATHA YOGA, JNANA YOGA RELAXATION AND THE SCIENCE OF PRANAYAMA. THE FIRST STAGES OF THE ANTARANGA YOGA OF PATANJALI ARE DEALT WITH BY THE AUTHOR AND PARTICULARLY THE EARLY KRIYAS OF PRATYAHARA, SENSE WITHDRAWAL AND THE HIGHER KRIYAS AND PRAKRIYAS OF JNANA YOGA AND RAJA YOGA INCLUDING THE HIGHLY RESPECTED TECHNIQUE OF THE HANG SAH KRIYA AND THE ORIGINAL RISHI CULTURE CONCEPT AND TEACHINGS OF CHETTINA NIDRA, NOW POPULARLY CALLED YOGA NIDRA, YOGA PSYCHIC SLEEP. THESE LESSONS ARE IN SEQUENCE AND WERE ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AS A CORRESPONDENCE COURSE IN YOGA, BUT THEN GREATLY EXPANDED INTO FOUR VOLUMES ENTITLED:

VOL. I How to Begin a Practice of Yoga

VOL.II Yoga – Intermediate Practices

VOL.III Advanced Yoga Practices

VOL.IV Senior Yoga Practices.

These lessons are intended to be studied lesson by lesson, absorbed and learned before going on to the next lesson. In no sense is this a book to be read for the sake of reading, or to pick out some postures which one wishes to do for the sake of doing some Asanas alone. This author would be happier if you reached for some lesser-known work on Yoga if all you want to do is learn a couple of Yoga exercises—twists and jerks. This course of Yoga tuition offers a step-by-step guidance to anyone who is ready for real Rishiculture Yoga and can be followed up with numerous courses that are also available but only after these courses are studied, step – by-step.

BY YOGARISHI DR. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI, ACHARYA, YOGA JIVANA SATSANGHA (INTERNATIONAL), PRESIDENT, VISHWA YOGA SAMAJ (WORLD YOGA CONGRESS), FOUNDING MEMBER AND PATRON OF INDIAN ACADEMY OF YOGA (BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY UP,)

Dedication and Acknowledgement

This author has had serious reservations about publishing any of the material entrusted to him by his Guru as all of this material was passed to him by a mouth – to – ear system, and oral system that is still the only system by which Yoga can be properly learned today. Yoga is not a visual science, and cannot be taught by visual means, no matter how good the teacher or the intentions of the well-meaning instructor. There is no substitute for a Guru and if there were, it would never be a “Kitab Guru Book Guru”. I have written this work after seeing so many books virtually insulted the base of real study of Yoga. In some cases, these books virtually insulted the base of Yoga as the SCIENCE OF SCIENCE, the only science of spirituality that can lead a human aspirant to enlightenment and the “At-One-Ment” with the Universal Self. With all humility and with the deepest of respect to my teachers I wish to dedicate this material which has been entrusted to me by that long line of Parampara or Spiritual Masters without a break, who have made this life such a pleasant Yoga Life... and I hope that these “step-by-step teachings” will add a new dimension to the life of those who take up this Yoga Life step-by-step. Where I have erred may I be Karmically forgiven and where I have added some modern scientific terms it has only been to be able to help the scientifically-minded and those educated along this line. For those needing a philosophical and scientific explanation for the Kriyas and Prakriyas, this single volume will greatly help. For those needing a spiritual insight into the teachings of the way of life in which they have been raised, may this elevate your thinking into Christ Consciousness, the Buddhist splendour.... the Yogic Cosmic Consciousness.

I would be remiss if I failed to offer my life once again to the service of that great Guru in the tradition of the Rishi Brighu, Dr.Swami Kanananda Bhrigu, to Sri Akanda Paripurna Satchidananda Satguru Srila Sri Kambli Gnana Desiga Swmigal, and Sri La Sri Peedathiapathy Shakaragiri Swamigal, the Gurus to whom I own everything I know, am have, or am able to offer to you, and the long line of Gurus, from which we are descended and to you the reader whose life will surely be blessed by this study and application of Yoga.

YOGA: STEP – BY – STEP

How to Begin a Practice of Yoga – PART 1

A Course in Yoga Tuition with Step – by – Step Guidance in the Preliminary Practices of Hatha Yoga Asanas, Kriyas and Mudras and Beginning Pranayamas that Form a Basis of Classical Rishi Culture Yoga.

BY YOGARISHI DR. SWAMI GITANANDA

It has often been said that Yoga should not be practised except under the direct guidance of a Guru. This is certainly true of more intricate, higher phases of Yoga, but there are certain aspects of Yoga which can be learned through the printed word and by photos and diagrams. Yoga philosophy and psychology, hygiene and diet, instructions in Pranayama and basic Asanas plus encouragement to embark upon the Yogic Path are all areas of learning that can be passed along by the written word. The written word is never a substitute for direct contact with a Yoga Guru and study in his presence, but there are few today who can afford the time and the cost of travel to have the rich blessing of the Guru's presence or to live in his Ashram. The "Book Guru" has become the means of teaching for millions around the world, and some students are able to gain a good deal of benefit.

Even the student privileged to study at "the feet of the Master" often needs to take copious notes to be reminded of the suggestions made. This note – taking can be a great deterrent to real learning and often the notebook is "realized" but the student misses out. Written material, parallel to the teachings of a Guru, therefore can augment the study and practice of Yoga and be source of rich "remembering" of the material earlier presented. It may also clear up any doubts as to techniques which are found difficult to remember at the time. It was with this thought in mind that I embarked upon a simple presentation of some of the material which I teach in my regular Yoga Teachers Training Course presented each year from October 1st through March 31st of the following year.

I once had serious misgivings about putting Yoga down in print, but I have found that many have benefited, particularly those who have been in personal contact with me and find the teachings accurately represent the oral tradition, Paramparam, out of which I teach. Many students who have heard me lecture or speak on Yoga write to tell me that they can actually hear me speaking as they read the words of instruction on the various aspects of the course. This intimacy alone justifies the production of such a Yoga model of instruction. I myself learned in a totally different manner. My Guru had the attitude that one must listen and absorb. We were never allowed to ask a question about techniques that we had been taught, although we were encouraged to ask questions in general. If I missed a point and queried that point, he would ask me to sit down and think, "remember", and see if the material would re-present itself to my mind in memory form. In this way I developed a photographic – cum – photogenic memory that has been the greatest single boon to my life along with the good health that I have.

I encourage my own students to “listen”. Modern students “hear” but they don’t listen”, possibly because of the high incidence of sound in the modern world and the modern hang-ups that in clued” not listening to the voice of authority”. I have had students who have wept at my feet because they have lost the ability to “listen” even to the voice of the Guru, and now rue the day they took to an” a – Yogic “ path.

If “ Yoga is skill in action”, as quoted by Sri Krishna in BHAGAVAD GITA, it means we must also become skillful with our senses, our talents and our other mental and physical faculties. If the printed word does help in gaining this skill, then the method is doubly justified. Still, the onus is on the student and every effort must be made to learn as much as possible and gain personal benefits. The book may be the source material, and a place to check and re-check methods and techniques, but it must never replace actual learning and absorbing. This is particularly true if the student wishes later to convey this material through teachings to another. The written word does help make sure that the teaching is conveyed correctly and without error.

I originally began the lessons as a weekly series to cover a year of Yoga learning practice. Presently, fifty –two lessons are available, but it could easily be extended by another fifty –two weeks, and I hope to do this some time in the not – too – distant – future. Many people desired a permanent record of their lessons, so we bound up each series of thirteen lessons into a handsome volume with a dust jacket. Vol. 1, we entitled HOW TO BEGIN A PRACTICE OF YOGA; Volume II was entitled YOGA – INTERMEDIATE PRACTICES; Volume III, ADVANCED YOGA PRACTICES; and Volume IV was entitled SENIOR YOGA PRACTICES.

Volume I, HOW TO BEGIN A PRACTICE OF YOGA, Lesson 1 to 13, was laid out in a simple step – by – step method of learning the simple beginning postures or Asanas of Hatha Yoga and the rudiments of Pranayama. The student was encouraged to go along slowly, perfecting the postures and the breathing techniques before going on to the next lesson. I encouraged the students to avoid a common, popular, modern delusion that they needed to learn a great number of postures and “Yoga things”: In short, to collect a lot of names and material “without the doing”. Yoga is knowledge, but it is more in the doing, in the action. I encouraged the student to let Yoga become a way of life, through a new attitude using Yoga philosophy and psychology and a change in personal hygienic and diet patterns. In this way knowledge could set them free from the bad habits and the conditioning of their earlier lives. I also pointed out that the Intermediate and Advanced Practices to follow required a good foundation that could only be had by perfecting the present material.

When I completed all four volumes (1976) of the YOGA PRACTICE SERIES, I had them bound up into one giant book entitled YOGA: STEP BY STEP. This material I had reserved only for those taking my six – month –long Yoga International Teachers Training Course and the course in Indian Indigenous Medicine on Yoga Chikitsa, or Yoga Therapy. Successful candidates of the Yoga course can be registered as Yoga teachers on an international basis, while those completing the Yoga Chikitsa Course can join the All- India Yoga Physicians Association. Recommendations for all candidates must come from the parent Yoga Jivana Satsangha, and myself as President. This actually makes the fifth edition and the present edition is vastly expanded over the previous for editions. I plan to write more as Volumes V to XIV. These volumes will be ready in the near future. (Vol. V, VI and VII are now finished).

In the YOGA – INTERMEDIATE PRACTICES, of Volume II, Lessons 14 to 26 were presented. Again I warned my reader to go slowly, lesson by lesson. Perfect your practices before you move on. I stressed that Yoga is an integrated practice, so that earlier material learned should still be included, and at this stage, as material was still being collected. Yoga content was still important. The “Yoga View of Life” was stressed. The idea of Karma, “action – reaction”, was introduced and ways of overcoming common health disturbances, and facing life and what it had to offer. The postures and Pranayamas in this section were much more difficult and required a good deal of practice to perfect.

The step – by –step approach was continued in Volume III, ADVANCED YOGA PRACTICES, I encouraged review of the earlier 26 lessons. I pointed out that the material in Lessons 27 through 39 was a stepping stone to the Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga Kriyas that were yet to come. Much emphasis was placed onto the relaxation techniques of the Jnana Yoga, and a good deal was said about body pain and tension and the difficult art of being happy. The beautiful Surya Namaskar was introduced in the latter part of this sequence of lessons. It culminated with what I felt to be the need for relaxation in movement, as it expressed a free flow of energy under the command of the mind to the body. Possibly this section of the course is the most important one for students living in a tension –riddled world. In this section I put much more emphasis upon the need for relaxation away from the 3- F Stresses of modern society. These three stresses are ; fear, or fright; flight or fugue; and fight. Anxiety and fear are said to be the source of modern tension, killing millions yearly through various stress disorders. Over half of the population of the modern world is in some sort of fugue, a flight from responsibility and reality, and aggression knows no bounds at the personal, inter-personal, national and international level. The need of the hour is to step back, relax, and see the modern world for what it is, a by – product of anxiety.

In the SENIOR YOGA PRACTICES of Vol. IV, Lessons 40 through Lessons 52, I again stressed the drawback of isolating this material from the previous instructions. I feared that a student of Yoga may not follow each lesson as well as if they had been presented one lesson at a time. I put the extra onus for this attention onto the student, and warned against complacency and slipping behind in conscious Yoga practices. I set out this dictum: “ Each lesson must be thoroughly learned before moving onto the next lesson”. Each section must be perfected, before learning more. Do not leave out any part, thinking it is not important. Otherwise, the continuity is lost. Do not rush ahead too quickly into material which you are not yet ready to absorb. “Learn fully”. If such instructions become a daily thought corresponding to action in reality, then Yoga or Union is a foregone conclusion. This volume, a part of the larger Yoga Course, is intended to give the widest possible appreciation of the study and practice of Yoga, and to meet the requirements of a Yoga teacher or a Yoga physician.

All of the material contained in the first four volumes of my YOGA LIFE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE is contained in this single volume YOGA: STEP – BY- STEP. Each lesson contains a Question Refresher, which should be used as a review by the casual reader or serious student who is studying from this volume alone. I am not in a position to answer these questions for the student who should send these answers to me for that purpose. I confine that service only to the students who are doing a Yoga Correspondence Course with diploma or certificate to be awarded on completion.

How to Begin a Practice of Yoga

CONTENTS

LESSON

- I. Yoga: The Science of Living
 - Pranayama: An Introduction
 - Vajra Asana, the Thunderbolt Posture
 - Sukha Pranayama, (Samavritti Pranayama), the Pleasant Breath
 - Yoga Diet
 - Eka – Janu Uttana Kriya, Lifting One Knee Action
 - Dwi – Janu Uttana Kriya, Lifting Both Knees Action
 - Pada Vajra Kriya, the Foot Thunderbolt Action
 - Shava Asana, the Corpse Posture
 - Daily Yoga Practice: Week One

- II. The Yoga Life
 - Ekakin Vajra Asana, Sole – of – the – Foot Thunderbolt Posture
 - Gulpha Vajra Asana, Ankle Thunderbolt Posture
 - Purna Vajra Asana, Completed Thunderbolt Action
 - Utthita Vajra Asana, the High Sitting Thunderbolt Posture
 - Paripurna Vajra Asana, Extended Thunderbolt Posture
 - Pranayama, Anatomy and Physiology
 - Sukha Purvaka Pranayama (Yoga Pranayama),
the Pleasant Cycle Breath
 - Loma Pranayama (Visama I), the Converse Breath
 - Viloma Pranayama (Visama II), the Inverse Breath
 - Daily Yoga Practice: Week Two

- III. Yoga As Four –Fold Awareness
 - Requirements of Good Pranayama
 - Vibhaga Pranayama, Sectional Breathing
 - Adham Pranayama, Inferior or Diaphragmic Breath
 - Abdominal Breathing Benefits
 - The Respiratory Centre
 - Prana Mudras, Pranic Hand Gestures
 - Chin Mudra, Abdominal Breath Control
 - Prana Vayus, Vital Airs
 - Yoga and Diet
 - Daily Yoga Practice: Week three

- IV. Awareness as Yoga
 - Madhyam Pranayama, Middle or Intracostal Breath
 - Yoga Appreciation Diet
 - Neuro – Mechanics of Mudras
 - Chinmaya Mudra, Intracostal Breath Control
 - Respiratory System
 - Daily Yoga Practice: Week Four

- V. Yoga: A Way To Attain Spiritual Unity
 - Adhyam Pranayama, Clavicular Breathing
 - AUM in the Scriptures of the World

- Adhi Mudra, Clavicular Breath Control
 Yoga and Your Diet
 Important Dietary Rules
 Nerves and Organs of the Body
 Daily Yoga Practice: Week Five
- VI Kriya Yoga, the Yoga of Right Action
 Pranava OM, Mantra of Mantras
 Mahat Yoga Pranayama, the Grand Yoga Breath
 Apraakasha Mudra, Breathing Centre Control New Dimensions in Diet
 Brahma Prana Mudra, Complete Breath Control
 New Dimensions in Diet
 Brahma Prana Mudra, Complete Breath Control
 Shunya Mudra, Vacuum Breath Control
 Apraakasha Bindu Mudra, Breath Lock Mudras
 Pranayama and Blood Circulation
 Pranava OM Pranayama
 Daily Yoga Practice: Week Six
- VII Prancha Niyama, the Five Evolutionary Observances
 Chatus Pada Asana, Four Footed Postures
 Vyaghras Pranayama, Tiger Breathing
 OM, the Evolution of All Sounds
 Nutritious Substitutes for Milk
 Sharabha Asana, the Griffin Posture
 Chiri Kriya, the Cricket Action
 Kaya Kriya, the Body Action
 Daily Yoga Practice: Week Seven
- VIII Inner and Outer Yoga
 Hathaas and Hathenas, Forcing Techniques
 Ushthra Asana, the Camel Posture
 Sepurna, Purna and Pararitta Ushthra Asana
 Nutritional Malt Foods
 Hatha Yoga Relaxation
 Tala Kriya, the Palm Tree Action
 Dridha Kriya, The Firming Action
 Man's Response to Speeds of Vibration
 Daily Yoga Practice: Week Eight
- IX The Scope of Yoga
 Hatha Yoga, the Yoga of Health
 Pranayama Yoga, the Yoga of Breath Control
 Jnana Yoga, The Yoga of the Wise
 Karma Yoga, the Yoga of Selfless Action
 Bhakti Yoga, the Yoga of Devotion
 Shasha Asana, the Hare Posture
 Sapurna Shasha Asana, Incompleted Hare Posture
 Purna Shasha Asana, Completed Hare Posture
 Paripurna Shasha Asana, the Extended Hare Posture

- Ashrama – Inner and Outer
Pancha Prana Vayus, Five Vital Pranas
Pancha Kosha, the Five Bodies
Sago Cheese
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Nine
- X The Scope of Yoga (Con't)
Mantra Yoga, the Yoga of Articulate Sound
Japa Yoga, the Yoga of Silent Repetition
Ajapa-Japa Yoga, the Yoga of Silent Repetition of Sound
Likhita Yoga, the Yoga of Mantra Writing
Dhyana Yoga, the Yoga of Meditation
Kundalini Yoga, the Yoga of Energy Arousal
Laya Yoga, the Yoga of Re-Absorption
Yantra Yoga, (Mudra Yoga), the Yoga of Spiritual Mathematics
Tantra Yoga, Yoga of Power Control
Personality Yoga, the Building of a Yoga Cult
A- Yoga Yoga, Hedonistic Yoga
Matsya Asana, the Fish Posture
The Cure of Kaphic Disorders
Heart Disease and Yoga
Nara: Psychic Disassociation
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Ten
- XI The Gita and Yoga
Nikunja Asana, the Flower Bower (Bala Asana, the Baby Posture)
Maha Mudra or Pravaaha Pranayama, Tidal Breath
Sapurna Maha Mudra
Maha Bandha Mudra
Purna Maha Mudra
The Cure of Kaphic Disorders
Unless Ye Become As Little Children
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Eleven
- XII Yoga in the Gita
Inner Concentration Techniques
Dharmika Asana, the Devotional Posture
Ardha Shashanga Asana, Incomplete Elbows to the Floor Position
Purna Shashanga Asana, Complete Elbows to the Floor Position
The Cure of Kaphic Disorders
Endocrine Glands and Chakras
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Twelve
- XIII Gita Yoga (Con't)
Spinal Health
Vira Asana, the Hero's Posture
Shashanga Asana, the Classical Elbows to the Floor Posture
Purna Shashanga Asana, the Completed Elbows to the Floor Posture
The Cure of Kaphic Disorders
The Smoking Habit

Shat Chakra Pranayama, the Six Chakras Breath
Hatha Yoga and the Chakras
Chakra Meditation
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirteen

Intermediate Yoga Practices

Index

LESSON

- XIV. Yoga Drishthi – The Yoga View
A Healthy Spine Is A Healthy Body: Supta Vajra Asana
Variations on Classical Spinal Postures
Supta Vajra Asana (Paravritti)
Paryanka Asana, The Saddle Posture
Savitri Pranayama, The Rhythmic Breath
Changes Promoted by the Rhythmic Breath
Variations on Vira Asana, The Hero Posture
Namaskara Vira Asana
Anjali Vira Asana; Agra Mudra Asana
Variations on the Rhythmic Breath
Yoga Drishthi – The Yoga View
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Fourteen
- XV. Rhythmic Actions to the Rhythmic Breath
The Body Battery Charger, The Dog Pant
Yoga and Muscular Man
Viloma Asana, the Bridge Posture
Purna Viloma Asana : The Perfected Bridge Posture
Brahma Mahurta Meditation
Vira Asana Variations – Dhanwan Vira Asana, Hamsa Vira Asana
Deva-Devi Pranama Mudra – Pranama Mudra, Anjali Mudra
The Yoga System of Reverence, Padasparsha Mudra,
Aashirwaad Mudra
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Fifteen
- XVI. Yoga Marga : The Yoga Path
Chakra Asana : The Wheel Posture
The Chakras and Yoga
Brahma Mahurta Meditation
Rectified Timetable for Meditation
Surya Nadi Asana and Pranayama
Chandra Nadi Asana and Pranayama
Anjaneya Tapas Asana
Purna Chakra Asana : The Standing Wheel Posture
Raja Kapota Asana, The Royal Pigeon
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Sixteen
- XVII. Karma : The Law of Life
The Hazards of Heavy Lifting, General Hints for Lifting

Asanas for the Prevention of Hernias
Dwipada Uttanapada Asana, The Double-Leg Lift Pose
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Seventeen

- XVIII. The Law of Karma
The Hazards of Heavy Lifting
The Classical Pranayamas
Ardha Shalabha Asana : The Incomplete Locust Posture
Shalabha Asana : The Locust Posture
Shirsha Utta Eka Pada Shalabha Asana (With arms in front)
Shirsha Utta Eka Pada Shalabha Asana (With arms wide apart)
Sarpa Asana : The Serpent Posture
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Eighteen
- XIX. The Source of Karma
Bhastrika Pranayama-The Bellows Breath
The Healing Breath
Variations of Sarpa Asana (Locked hand variation)
Dwi Pada Shalabha Asana, Uttiha Shalabha Asana
Bherunda Asana (Variation), The Lyre Bird Posture
Viparita Shalabha Asana
Sarpa Kriya
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Nineteen
- XX. Fate or Free Will
Asanas, Kriyas and Mudras
Shava Asana : The Corpse Posture
Uttana Asana : The Yoga Sit up
Nava Asana : The Boat Posture
Nava Kriya : The Boat Action; Navaka Kriya : The Oar-Lock Action
Mukha Bhastrika, The Cleansing Breath
Vajroli Mudra
Glandular Control
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty
- XXI. Beautiful Living
Glandular Stimulators : Sarvanga Asana
Sarvanga Kriya, The Shoulder Stand Action
Purna Sarvanga Asana
Dhauti Pranayama
Anunasika Pranayama : The Atomic Breath; Ear and Eye Cleansing
Nasal Cleansing Yoga Style; Jala Neti, The Water Douche
Bhujanga Asana : The Incomplete Cobra Posture
Variations on Bhujanga Asana
The Cobra Posture (Variations)
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-One
- XXII. Yoga and Diabetes : The Control of Diabetes
Metabolism and Yoga
Viparita Karana, The Topsy-Turvy Action

- Diet to Prevent or Cure Diabetes
Smoking and Diabetes
Kokila Asana : The Cuckoo Posture
Unmukha Danda Asana, The Face-Prone Lift
Chaturanga Danda Kriya
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-Two
- XXIII. Control and Cure of Digestive Disturbances
Malaise and Yoga; Upset Spleen
Eka Janu Shirsha Asana, One-Knee-to-the-Head Posture
Liver Disturbances; The Pancreas
Dwi Janu Shirsha Asana, Both-Knees-to-the-Head Posture
General Rules in the Use of Foods; Special Rules for Diabetics
Utkata Asana, The Yoga Squat
Chatus Pada Bhumi Sparsha
Meru Asana, The Mountain Posture
Surya Namaskar, The Sun Adoration
Stomach Stretchers
Breath Sequence For a Simple Surya Namaskar
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-Three
- XXIV. Allergies and Intolerance
Hala Asana – The Plough Posture
Sapurna Hala Asana : Variation 1
Hala Asana : Variation 2
Purna Hala Asana : Variation 3
Recommended Pranayama For Diabetics
Manomaya : Yoga and Post-Metabolic Activity
Ekapada Hala Asana
Karna Peeda Asana
To Take Off Weight; To Put On Weight
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-Four
- XXV. The Bitter and the Sweet
Hatha Peedas and Bandhas
Sethu Bandha Asana, The Bound Bridge Posture
Eka Pada Sethu Bandha Asana
Dwi Pada Sethu Bandha Asana
Uddyana and Nauli Kriya
Hatha Pratipas and Vistris
Dwi-Kurpara Pratipa Asana
Ardha Pratipa-Hala Asana
Pratipa-Hala Asana
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-Five
- XXVI. Facing Facts; Excess Sugar
Excess Fats; The Coffin Nail
The Bow Posture
Ardha Dhanurasana, The Semi Bow Posture
Dhanurasana, The Bow Posture

Dhanu Kriya
Tensions and the Practice of Yoga
Dhanurasana – Variations
Eka Hasta Dhanurasana
Pada Shirsha Dhanurasana
Urdhva Dhanurasana
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty-Six

Advanced Yoga Practices

INDEX

LESSON

- XXVII. Now to Serious Practices!
Slow Down – Relax – Unwind
Yoga Relaxation
Shirsha Asana, The Head Stand
Stand on Your Head... Walk on Your Feet
Kapala Asana
Proper Walk Up to the Head Stand
Makara Asana, The Crocodile Posture
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty – Seven
- XXVIII Real Relaxation
Vriksha Asana, The Tree Posture
Stava Asana
Tala Asana
Prana Jnana Kriya
Sleep and Relaxation
Tension Relaxation Scale
Variations on Vrikshasana
Vatsyayu Asana, The Horse Posture
Baddha Hasta – Pada Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Twenty – Eight
- XXIX. Yoga Relaxation
Garuda Asana, The Eagle Posture
Nadi Jnana Kriya
The Dance of Shiva
Rhythmic Movements and Dynamic Stance
Shiva Mudra
Awareness Technique
The Dancing Shiva
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Twenty – Nine
- XXX. Nadi Shoddhana and Nadi Shuddhi
Spinal Twists
Vakra Asana
Ardha Matsyendra Asana
Brahmadanda Asana
Shakti Jnana Kriya – The Tingle

Take Your Health In Your Own Hands

Eka pada Vakra Asana

Purna Matsyendra Asana

Advanced Spinal Twists

Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty

- XXXI. The World's Most Common Disease
The Teeth
Diet
Oral Hygiene
Kona Asana, the Angular Posture
Agrimassra Asana, The Forward Angular Posture
Akasha Jnana Kriya
Ardha Chakra Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – One
- XXXII. Oral Hygiene
Brushing, Scraping and Massaging
Professional Care
New Findings
A Word to the Wise
Trikona Asana – The Triangular Posture
Bindu Jnana Kriya
Trikona Asana and Kona Kriya
Padaangusha Asana
Kona Kriya
Eka Hasta Kona Kriya
Dwi Hasta Kona Kriya
Kona Kriya Variations
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Two
- XXXIII. The Difficult Art of Being Happy
Master Structure
Parshvakona Asana
Marmanasthanam Kriya
The Cause of Stiffness
Shakti Trikona Asana
Shakti Path Asana
Chatushkona Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Three
- XXXIV. The Body and Tension
Shirsha Janu Asana, The Head to the Knee Posture
Manas Chitra Kriya
Natural Relief of Tension
Kraunch Asana, The Curlew or Heron Posture
Sapurna Kraunch Asana
Kraunch Asana : Variation No.1
Kraunch Asana : Variation No.2
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Four

- XXXV. The Many Names of a Backache
Paschimottana Asana, The Posterior Stretching Posture
Chittamaya Jnana Kriya, Creative Visualization
Arm Strengthening Postures
Purna Baka Asana
Kaka Asana
Baka Asana
Mayur Asana
Mayuri Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Five
- XXXVI. Pain and Yoga
Pavana Mukta Asana
Gas Free Posture
Breath Cycle
The Simple Form of Releasing Rectal Gas
Variations of Pavana Mukta Asana
Eka Pada Pavana Mukta Asana
Antara Jnana Kriya, The Inner Trip
The Gas Relief Postures
Ekakin Vajra Asana, Sole – of-the Foot Thunderbolt Posture
Dwi Janu Pavana Mukta Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Six
- XXXVII. Surya Namaskar, Sun Adoration
Stava Asana, The Prayer Posture
Pranama Asana, The Greeting Posture
Hasta – Uttana Asana, Arms Lifting Posture
Surya Namaskar Kriya
The Health Benefits of Surya Namaskar
Pada Hasta Asana, Hands to Feet Posture
The History of Surya Namaskar
Ashwasanchalana Asana, The Equestrian Posture
Meru Asana, The Mountain Posture
Kokilasana, The Cuckoo Posture
Ashtanga Namaskar, Prostration of Eight Body Parts
Bhujanga Asana, The Cobra Posture
- XXXVIII. Surya Pranayama Mudra
Simplified Surya Namaskar
Surya Namaskar Part II
Surya Namaskar Part III
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Thirty – Seven, Thirty – Eight,
and Thirty – Nine
- XXXIX. Surya Namaskar Mantras
Veerya Surya Namaskar
Bhoomi Sparsha Utkata Asana
Jnana Surya Kriya

Kokila Asana, The Cuckoo Posture
Meru Asana, The Mountain Posture
Janu Shirsha Asana, The Head – To – The – Knee Posture
Ashwasanchalana Asana, The Equestrian Posture
Veera Bhadra Asana, The Posture of Mighty Shiva
Shirsha – Janu – Urkata - Asana, The Head – to – the Knees Sitting Posture
Gulpha Hasta Shirsha Janu Asana
Stava Asana, The Prayer Posture

Senior Yoga Practices

INDEX

LESSON

- XXXX. Junk Food Disorders
Cellulite – A Glandular Disorder
Eka Pada Dridha Asana
Dridha Asana
Purna Dridaa Asana
Paravritta Dridha Asana
Dwi Pada Dridha Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Forty
- XXXXI. We Are What We Are... Plus!
The Gall Bladder and Its Functions
Side Flank Positions
Uttana Eka Pada Dridha Asana
Ekapada Urdhwa Dridha Asana
Urdhwa Dridha Asana
Uttana Dridha Asana
Ardha Vashistha Asana
Vashishta Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Forty One
- XXXXII. The Spleen and the Lymphatic System
Lymphatic Disorders
The Spleen
The Appendix
The Lymph
Exercise Diet
Some Additional Information on the Spleen
Simple Lymph Exercises
Variations on Yoga Sitting Postures
Samkatha Asana
Sapurna Samkatha Asana
Samkatha Asana (Feet Drawn to Buttocks)
Purna Samkatha Asana
Vrishabha Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Forty Two

- XXXXIII. The Story of a Yoga Spine
Vajra Asana
Sukha Asana
Chitrapatanga Asana
Sama Pada Asana
Antaradrishti Kriya
The Kidneys
Baddha Kona Asana and Variations
Purna Baddha Kona Asana
Paripurna Baddha Kona Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Forty Three
- XXXXIV. Yoga One Pointedness
Siddha Asana, the Adept's Posture
Ardha Padma Asana
Padma Asana
Good Health and Posture
Some Valuable Isometric – like Exercises
Utkatha Asana
Utkatha Vakra Asana
Daily Yoga Practice: Week Forty Four
- XXXXV. Pratyahara – Yoga Sensory Withdrawal
Shabda Kriya
Shabda Pratyahara
Prana Kriya
Higher Pratyahara
Raashi Kriya – Shock Therapy
Yoga Foot Postures
Prasiddha Siddha Asana
Siddha Asana
Baddha Padma Asana
Yoga Mudra
Swastika Asana
Yoga Asana
Gupta Asana
Prashad Asana
Shakti Chalana Asana
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Forty Five
- XXXXVI. Hot Weather Pranayamas
Sitkari Pranayama
Sheetali Pranayama
Kaki Pranayama
Matanga Pranayama
Bhujangi Pranayama
Kavi Pranayama
Cooling Diet
Cool, Cool Water
Rhythmic Breathing

Sama Vritta Pranayama
Asama Vritta Pranayama
Visama Vritta Pranayama
Solar Breath Rhythms
Savitri Pranayama
Effect of Savitri Pranayama
Savitre Pranayama
Savitra Pranayama
Savituh Pranayama
Notes on Rhythmic Breathing

XXXXVII. Yoga Polarity

Loma – Viloma Prakriyas of Pranayama
Loma – Viloma Pranayama
Aloma – Viloma Pranayama
Pratiloma Pranayama
Prana Mudras
Anu – Loma – Viloma Polarity Kriyas
Anu – Loma – Viloma Kriya No. 1
Anu – Loma – Viloma Kriya No. 2
Cosmic Polarity
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Forty Seven

XXXXVIII. Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya

Pancha Prana Vayus, Five Major Pranas
Upa Prana Vayus, Minor Vital Airs
Para Prana Vayus, the Psycho Mental Pranas
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya Part I
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya Part II
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya Part III
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya Part IV
Alu – Loma – Viloma Prakriya Part V
Alu – Loma – Viloma (Sitting Variation Diagram)
Some Extra Advice on the Polarity Prakriyas
Daily Yoga Practice : Week Forty Eight

XXXXIX. Hanga Sah Kriya

Sabija Karma
Kriya Yoga
Intense Meditation
Hanga Sah Kriya
Hang Sah Kriya Part I Pelvis
Hang Sah Kriya Part II Heart
Hang Sah Kriya Part III Head
Extra Instructions on the Hang Sah Kriya

L. Yoga Nidraa Sleep, the Sleep of the Yogis

Preparations for Yoga Nidraa
Classical Yoga Nidraa: Psychic Sleep

- Yoga Nidraa: No. One
- Variations on Yoga Nidraa: No. 1
- Yoga Nidraa: No. Two
- Variations on Yoga Nidraa: No. Two
- How Yoga Nidraa Affects Body, Mind and Psyche
- De – Hypnosis with Yoga Nidraa
- Tension Relaxation Scale

- LI. Reservations about the Use of Yoga Nidraa
 - Prana Nadis
 - Advanced Bhastrikas
 - Nasarga Bhastrika
 - Kushala Kriya
 - Chakras and Prana Nadis (Diagram)
 - Kapalabhati, the Skull Cleanser
 - Apanic Visualization
 - Kaya Kalpa
 - Pranic Visualization
 - Pancha Sahita Pranayama, the Five Part Ratio Breath
 - The Five Body Parts Affected by the Pancha Sahita Pranayama

- LII. Yoga and Senses
 - Extra Care of the Eyes
 - Gomukha Asana
 - Vrishabha Asana
 - The Cow's Face and Tail
 - Gopuch'ha Asana
 - Pranic Poultice
 - Eye Drills
 - A Closing Word
 - Various Yoga Routines

Tributes and Testimonials

Generally when one releases a book that has been out in previous editions, they have some eminent scholar write a masterful introduction to the new edition. I could have done the same for YOGA : STEP-BY-STEP but have chosen instead to let a few of my students of the YOGA LIFE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE that in this edition is entitled YOGA : STEP-BY-STEP speak for the quality of this material. I have thousands of letters from grateful students, unsolicited, and sometimes written much after they have completed the course. Those who have signed their testimonials may be contacted if my reader wishes. Many other comments are to be appreciated from my students. They range from “amazing – wonderful – magnificent – superb – masterful – unbelievable – informative – detailed – exact – deep insight – real wisdom.” Many others have echoed – “Just what I have been searching for.” – “Priceless”. – “Your work is filled with love,” – “I feel that abounding grace of the Guru” “Thank you”! “Bless you”.

“Obtaining my Yoga Teacher’s Certificate has been a dream of mine for a long as I can remember. My family responsibilities, plus lack of finances would not permit me to travel to India to accomplish this dream, but it was feasible for me to study via the mail service, by correspondence, which I did. Although I began studying Yoga about fifteen years ago, and have been teaching for almost fourteen, I did not feel in any way adequately prepared for such a responsibility. I did however, receive the confidence and factual information, plus knowledge I needed to continue

in my study and teaching of Yoga by completing the Teachers Course. (Needless to say my studying has not ceased) I cannot nor would I want to imagine my life without Yoga. My daily Yoga routine has become an integral part of my life. When I began studying Yoga I was very overweight, and totally toxic, plus lacked any sense of direction in my life. I have worked hard to change these conditions, and with much success. At that time I was leaning heavily on medication and drugs to solve these problems, but to no avail. An old automobile injury left me with a whip lash and reverse curves in my spine, that could only be solved with surgery (So I was told). Fortunately with diligence, patience and some discomfort, years later these problems are nonexistent for me. I cannot say my life has been devoid of pain, but I can say with all sincerity Yoga has offered me many tools with which to survive; for this I shall be eternally grateful. I have learned also to which to survive; for this I shall be eternally grateful. I have learned also to accept the lessons and challenges of life and not try to hide or run from them. This certainly does add to one's serenity and peace of mind, not to mention the fact that my energies are more wisely spent". Mary Frances Beckman W. 3626 West Drive, Spokane WA, 99204, U.S.A.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE TRIBUTES

A Few Selected Comments from the Hundreds Received From Students around the World

"I have received the four volumes of the CORRESPONDENCE COURSE and am thrilled! I am anxious to take all of the courses. Your mailing department has been faithful in getting the material to me each month. As the lessons are so well done, and I savour each one, my thoughts go in your direction often and I thank you for the opportunity to do just that." – Majorie Fishes, 617 Greendale Road, Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081, U.S.A.

"One Kriya in particular I am pleased to have made acquaintance with the Hang Sah Kriya. The relaxation I experience after each segment of this Kriya is a treasure to me. No doubt, I was in need of this cleansing Kriya, as I feel so comfortable with its practice. To me, living a Yogic life is like climbing a golden stairway with very shiny, slippery treads. If one does not watch each step, it is easy to slip back, but provided one continually looks up there will always be a hand to help one back up that difficult stairway. The "Self" has a remarkable way of supplying the hand." – Mrs Eunice Warrne, Yoga Teacher, M.S. 795, Bowenville 4404 Queensland, Australia.

"I am very happy with the YOGA LIFE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE. I plan to continue with Section Five when I have completed the first four section. I really feel the benefits from practicing this Yoga and also find many answers to questions I and previously had but which no one before could give me a satisfying answer I always look forward to receiving the weekly lessons because I feel a real link with you – the Guru!" – Helen Haas. Scheibe 554, Neustift, A-6167, Tirol, Austria, Europe.

"I am greatly enjoying the fifty-two lesson series in Yoga which you present so logically and scientifically. I am interested in continuing the additional lessons and studying through your other publications. Your Yoga disciple" – Dr. S.P. Singh Saini, Medical Physician and Yoga Teacher, 42 Main Road, Longeaton, Nottingham, NG 10 1 QW, England, Great Britain.

"I have studied with every major teacher in America, but I find your teachings and especially your writings the best material anywhere for Yoga study." – Yours in Yoga, - Sue Miller, Yoga Teacher, Box 18 RD 4 Aber Road, Finleyville, Pa 15332 U.S.A.

"My wife and myself do Asanas and Pranayama every day at home. Through your teachings our enthusiasm has continued. Your Pranayama Techniques have cured me of my sinus trouble for which I am most grateful. I am desirous of obtaining your ongoing courses and books. Om Shanti!" – R.G. Abeyesinghe, 26, Edward Lane, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka.

"We are grateful for the teaching coming through you and other beautiful teachers around the globe. We are continuing to present your Asanas and Pranayamas along with a life generating diet. We often of returning to the Ashram, and enjoying again the great training that you conduct there." Janaka and Sita Ananda, Yoga Teacher, (James Cox) Po Box 203 North Bonneville. WA 98639 0203.

"I feel your course has helped me tremendously in many aspects of my life. I begin teaching an evening Yoga class at our local Community College this next week. I look forward to teaching and employing all that you have taught me through the CORRESPONDENCE COURSE" – Beverly Pung, Yoga Teacher, 1940 Carl Rd. No. 107, Irving, Texas 75061, U.S.A.

"I am regularly receiving the CORRESPONDENCE COURSE lessons and also YOGA LIFE magazine. Both are really most interesting and I study them with great pleasure. I wish to thank you heartily for spreading to the world your wisdom of this ancient and invaluable science." – Stefania Redini, Via A. Casotti 6, 16137 Genova, Nervi, Italy, Europe.

"During this year of studying Yoga through these most perfect teachings, I have made an incredible change in my emotions and my mind, but the first important change happened in my body through the new idea of respecting my body. I know this is only a beginning. I feel that Yoga I have discovered the "Real Life". – Giorgio Cagiari, Yoga Teacher, Mantova, Viale Alfieri 16, Italy.

Although I have not had the pleasure of meeting with you and knowing you personally, I feel in my heart as though I have known you for a life time. It is said that when one is ready to begin to practice Yoga and live a Yoga Life, Yoga will come to you. In my case this is so true. Almost eight years ago, I began to practice Yoga with a teacher named Pat Rickits, of whom you will know Swamiji as she recently completed your correspondence course, and these begins my life. For the first few years, I attended Yoga classes without thought of anything but the sense of physical well being which ensued. I was fortunate indeed to be instructed in the practice of Yoga by a teacher, concerned with not only the physical well being of her students, but who also attended to the needs of their minds. As you are well aware Swamiji not all who claim to be teachers of Yoga are deserving or worthy of the title Yoga teacher, I eventually became aware that there was more to this thing called Yoga, than first meets the eye. After some "gentle persuasion" I was induced to apply to study your correspondence course. And what an informative course! Thus far I have completed up to Lesson Nine, and am looking forward with eager anticipation to the following lessons. It never ceases to amaze me that so much information can be set down in print, yet still retain the feeling of person to person teaching. This personal touch shines through to such an extent, that I can almost hear your voice Swamiji directing me along the right path of Yoga learning. Encouraging me to further research, and leading me to continue along this well trodden path of knowledge and learning. Picking me up, dusting me off and standing me on my feet again, with well deserved criticism if I stumble along the way. Your correspondence course which takes in all facets of Yoga would be nigh impossible to emulate. Through the study of your correspondence course, I am at last able to begin to sow the seeds of Yoga learning into new fields. As the seeds sprout they will be nurtured in the light of your knowledge Swamiji, which you have seen fit to graciously bestow upon me and they will be lovingly tended there after.

There is a particular aspect which is so apparent in the lesson on "Love". The "Love" you yourself have for your students and the "Love" they in return have for you. The copies of YOGA LIFE magazine are an added bonus to your Correspondence Course and are eagerly scanned by me, page by page for news and information from your Divine Self, Meenakshi Devi, Ananda Balayogi, and other guest writers. Verlie Gabrio, Box 234, PO Ingleburn N.S.W. 2562 Australia.

Your Correspondence Course has been an interesting and important adjunct to my life and I see and appreciate its many benefits. As you suggest, I will now reread and go through the whole course again in order to refresh my memory and to discover things missed or not fully understood the first time around.

- Peggy Champin, Cape Town, South Africa.

Yogapedia. Let top-tier yoga teachers guide you step-by-step from foundational poses into more advanced asanas with prep poses, modifications, and skillful practice tips. Go deeper into each yoga pose to enhance your practice. Move From Chaturanga to Eka Pada Koundinyasana. 7 Steps to Master Chaturanga Dandasana. Yoga step by step. Repin to practice these poses later! This Yoga Sequence helps to stretch out tight hip flexors & hamstrings.Â Yoga step by step. Here's part 3 of our "Do This Not That" series - Downward-facing Dog yoga pose. Ready to perfect this asana? Tags: yoga, infographic, asana, asanas, yoga pose, yoga poses, downward dog, downward facing dog. Iveta Jonkus. Yoga step by step. Ashtanga Yoga Poses Hatha Yoga Video Yin Yoga Poses Vinyasa Yoga Poses Power Yoga Poses Bikram Poses Hatha Yoga For Beginners Kundalini Yoga Poses Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga. Bikram, Ashtanga, power yoga and Anusara explained. Iveta Jonkus. Yoga step by step. Common Mistakes in Boat Pose. Pin now, work on core strength later!

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