



Yoga Science Academy

Pranayama Online Teacher Training

Session I



Yoga Science Academy



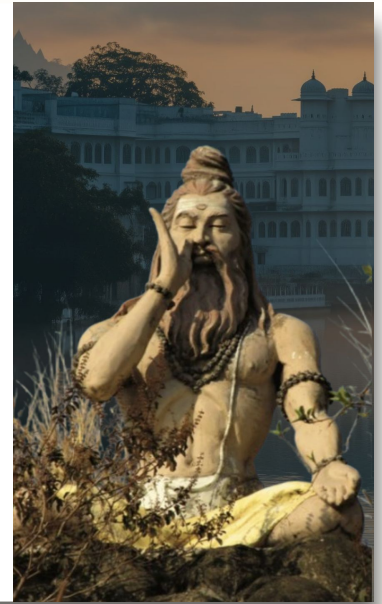
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Welcome to the Pranayama Teacher Training

Pranayama is a sacred practice performed by Yogis and renounced Sadhakas - the truth seekers who dedicate their life to the holy path towards enlightenment. Today, we can prove the effects of Pranayama practice with scientific measures and understand why Pranayama is so powerful and can be used as a healing tool for physical and psychological problems. You'll learn to understand the spiritual and the scientific meaning of breathing along the guidelines of thousands of years old practice and expand your awareness through Pranayama.



The Magical Power of Pranayama Trainings

Yoga masters around the world pronounce that breath control is self-control. Breath mastery is self-mastery. Through Pranayama trainings one can cultivate self-discipline and spiritual growth, connect with the inner self and access the boundless power and wisdom of the universe. Swami Sivananda stated that "Breathlessness is deathlessness", pointing out the power to overcome worldly boundaries via the Yogic Breathwork. Swami Rama emphasized the profound role of Pranayama training in enhancing overall health and well-being. He taught, "The breath is the key to good health, vitality, and inner peace. When we control our breath, we control our mind and emotions, and we can tap into a deep well of inner strength and power."

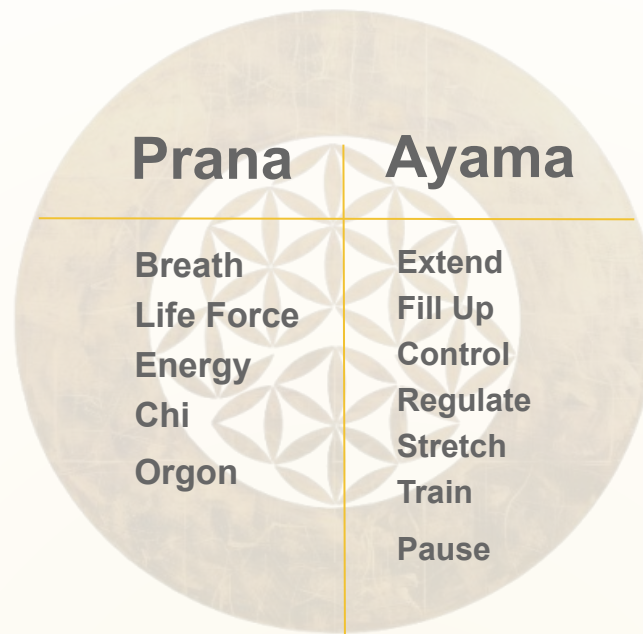


What is Pranayama?

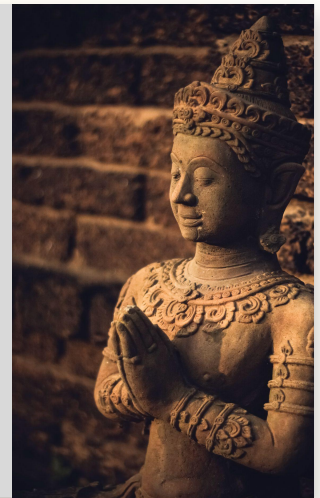
Pranayama is the 4th limb of Ashtanga Yoga - the 8 folded path towards enlightenment



Pranayama meaning



Pranayama, derived from the Sanskrit words “Prana”; (life force or breath) and “Ayama” (extension or control), stands as an ancient Yogic practice that centres on the regulation and mastery of breath. Pranayama, was passed on over thousands of years as a spiritual discipline, is renowned as one of the most potent tools for nurturing physical, mental, and spiritual health. Within the Yogic tradition, its widely acknowledged that the breath serves as a bridge between the body and the mind. By gaining mastery over our breath, we gain the power to directly influence our physical and mental state.



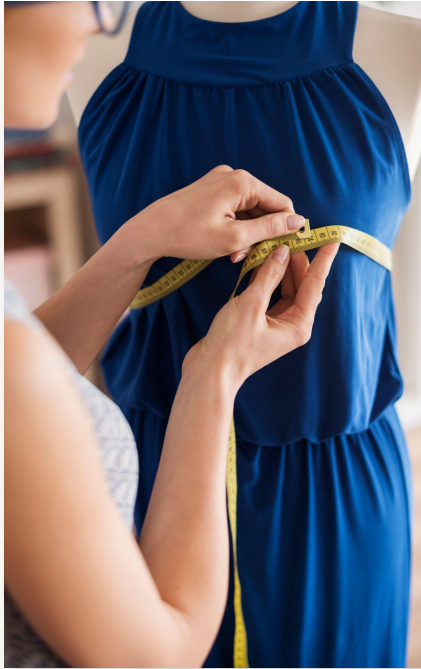
Beyond Breathing Techniques - Breathwork is not Pranayama

The term breathwork has become very popular and millions of people are seeking physical and mental health through application of different Breathing Techniques. While breath work seeks to modulate physical and neurological states it does not consider the immense effects on the astral body and the spiritual self of the practitioner. These effects are first hidden to the naked eye and show long-term by transforming people's lives.





Pranayama Practices have to be customized



The health benefits of Pranayama have been studied for thousands of years and re-discovered by modern science and medicine as an object of research. Like in pharmaceutical medicine, a quick conclusion has happened saying that a remedy will have the same effects in everybody.

Unwanted Pranayama- the imprints in our mind

But as we have different talents and weaknesses, different conditions and constitutions, also our breath show different patterns and qualities. These irregularities function like breathing techniques. To see the REAL effect of Pranayama on your system, you have to remove the unwanted programs from your breath, create a clean slate.

Customized Pranayama Protocols- the wisdom of Ayurveda

That fact that Pranayama can be used as a potent healing tool has been known and adopted in Ayurvedic medicine for hundreds of years. Each patient, each practitioner meets different hurdles and come with a unique composition of elements, with distinct and changing imbalances and has to be analysed prior to practicing Pranayama. What can be good for one can be very harmful for another practitioner. In breathwork the rule that one-size-fits all is pursued, which can lead to harmful events and cause troubles in body and mind.



Responsibility in guiding yourself

In modern breathwork the personality traits of the students are not a big topic. But Pranayama is a spiritual practice and accumulation power comes with great responsibility. To observe the holy virtues is essential in order to not cause negative developments of the personality. What has to be trained to use Pranayama as an ongoing tool for well-being is the skill of self-observation, being honest and accepting to one's weak points and the willingness to grow as a human being. Prana also flows easily into our habits: If these guidelines are not observed the Prana will flow to where the least resistance is, where the pathways have already built. Bad habits can grow, problems increase and imbalances in body and mind can become stronger. Only with using "ayama", we can avoid negative effects and gain the most of the practice.



Physiological and mental effects of Pranayama

In Pranayama practice, we work with the astral body, our information field that translates mental activity into electrical currents (thoughts), gland- and muscle activity, emotional output and behaviour. We interfere with the double feedback-system of our body and modulate how our nerves, glands and organs work, how we feel, the state of mind and our brainwave patterns and how we make decisions to build our lives.



Healing mentally and physically

The nature of Pranayama is that it cleans out impurities from body and mind. Biochemical toxins will leave the body and make it lighter, stronger and healthier. Unpleasant emotions, mental disturbances, trauma and restricting programs in our mind can be released. Our awareness expands, and the mind becomes brighter over time.

The Goal of Pranayama- MOKSHA

The goal of all spiritual practices is to attain bliss and avoid suffering. To let go of impurities of the mind, manifested in the body leads you towards Moksha, that blissful state. How to attain Moksha is the guideline for any truth seeker and has to be applied in Pranayama and Meditation practice alike. Practicing “letting go” makes life richer and you open to receive the fullness of existence.



Moha
Hold on, grasp

Moksha

Kshaya
Let go



Building up the Practice

To avoid the cleansing to be too fast and cause unwanted effects, the practice has to build up slowly and new techniques will be added to a firm foundation that has to established first.

The Diaphragm and our belly

As we have been exposed to external and internal stressors all our lives and not much acquainted with observing the qualities of our breath, the breathing pattern of grown-ups in most western societies has shifted from normal to stress-breathing. A constant trigger to our body and mind that lead to the deterioration of our main breathing muscle, the diaphragm. The breath gets short and irregular, causing physiological stress, narrowing the mind and keeping us from detoxing and healing.

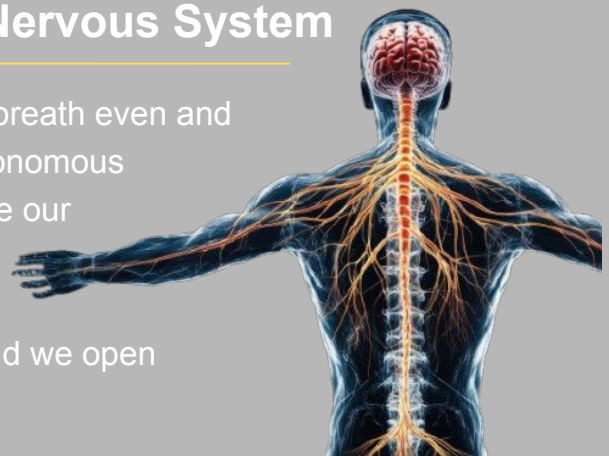


Makarasana – Crocodile pose (with weight on the back)

Makarasana is an ancient breathing exercise that has many layers, benefits and purposes. In the beginning we will mainly focus on the expansion of the lung capacity and rebuild our diaphragm to ensure a slower and healthier breathing pattern throughout the day. Putting a weight on the breathing muscle helps to keep the focus on the constant movement of the breath and trains the muscle to come back to its original strength.

Makarasana and the Autonomous Nervous System

Through slowing the breath down, and making the breath even and smooth, we directly influence the activity of our autonomous nervous system, regulate stress down and modulate our brainwaves. Deeper inner perception develops over time. The depth of the practice will be discovered step by step our awareness expands and we open up to our inner wisdom.





The 5 Pillars of Holistic Health

Support for Spiritual Practices

1. Adapt to the circadian cycle

- Synchronize with the sun, rise early and go to bed early.
- Expose yourself to sunlight in the morning and at sunset.
- Eat the biggest meal at noon.
- Sleep 6-9 hours/night.
- Avoid artificial light in the evening, no screens, no overhead lights.
- Switch off the fuses in your bedroom.
- Turn off the Wi-fi during the night.



2. Move your body

- sweat and move limbs and joints

3. Let go of toxins

- drugs, artificial tastes, processed foods, refined flour, refined sugar
- neuroactive substances (tobacco, coffee, tea, alcohol, sodas, party drugs)
- KEEP using prescribed drugs you need for your health

4. Reduce acidic consumption (use green veggies, alkaline herbal tea instead)

5. Avoid exposure to Wi-fi, 5G and electrical devices.

Digital detox and mental hygiene should be observed.

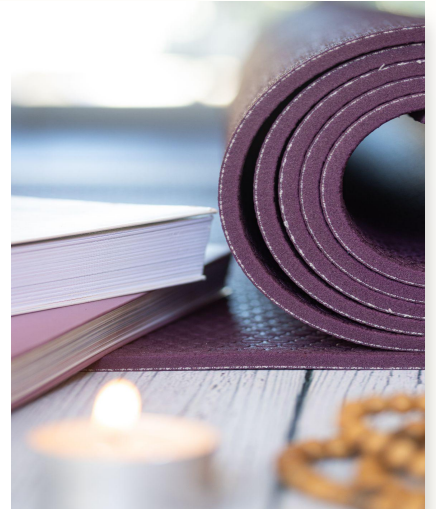


[View the Preparation Series here](#)



Probs and Tools for the Practice

- Firm grounding, a support you can sit on Yoga mat
- Shawl or a blanket to cover yourself
- A quiet room, no cell phones or other disturbances
- Pad of paper to take notes
- Empty stomach
- Neti pot, rock salt
- Weight (sandbag, water bottle, heavy book) 1-2kg
- Dedication and sincerity
- Clean body and mind



Jala Neti – Nose Cleaning with Water

- **Please use clean stone salt. No sea salt or fluoridised or iodised salt, no salt with coating as strong reactions can occur.**
- Use about 1/2 teaspoon of salt for one Neti pot.
- Use lukewarm water and prepare the saline so that it has the same amount of salt as in your blood.
- Keep your mouth open and breathe through the mouth while doing Neti.
- Tilt your head towards the side of the open nostril and bend forward.
- Wait until the water comes out without any bubbles or obstacles.
- Blow out your nose vigorously and through both nostrils!



Neti helps

Congestion, allergies, dry nose, swelling, sinusitis, snoring, to prevent flues



The Importance of the right Sitting Position

In order for the Prana to flow freely, we have to observe the physical and the spiritual anatomy of our material and our astral body. 72. 000 sublime energy channels (Nadis) stretch throughout our system and converge in energy centres (Chakras) that communicate with our organs and glands. When we sit correctly, everything is in the right position and energy can flow without being blocked by tension and squeezed nerves or energy channels.



The basic Rules of right Sitting in Pranayama and Meditation

The basic rules of right sitting in Pranayama and Meditation. How to sit right for Meditation, Pranayama and other spiritual practices is a big question and a topic of struggles for beginners and practitioners alike. To find the perfect pose can take some time and requests respect for yourself and your unique physical conditions. When you find your personal position, you can sit without effort or discomfort for long hours. The right pose will allow your energy to flow and deepen your spiritual practice.

When do I sit right? “Sthira Sukham Asanam” Patanjali Yoga Sutra 2.46

Patanjali's Yoga Sutra 2.46 about the nature of Asanas states that a pose (Asana) should be stable (Sthira) and comfortable (Sukham). The serenity of the body allows the practitioner to dwell deep inside and lets the energy (Prana) flow freely through our whole being.

- Sit without any effort
- Maintain a stable position
- Relax completely in your position
- Keep your spine straight
- Sit on a stable foundation
- Allow your blood to circulate freely (no numbness)



Whether you sit on a chair or on the floor, with or without support, doesn't matter when it comes to the principles of sitting.



Unique bodies-unique sitting poses

We all have seen pictures of meditating persons sitting blissful in the so-called Lotus seat. Most people cannot sit like this as the hips are not open enough for this advanced asana. Whether you want to cross your legs and take one of the many Yoga positions or sit with parallel legs is completely up to you and your personal composition.

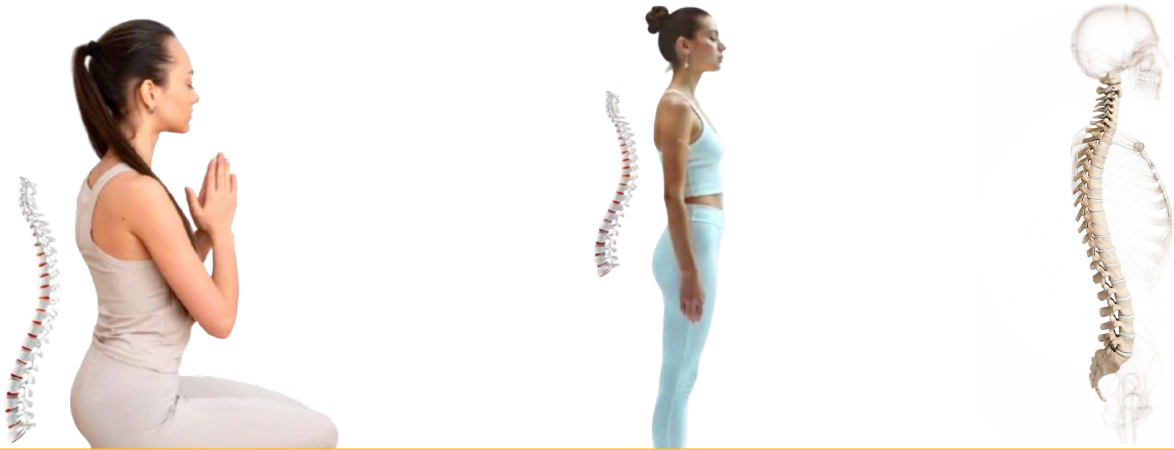
Stable Foundation in Pranayama and Meditation



To sit stable, like a Pyramid, we need to sit on our natural tools, our sitting bones. The spine is balanced freely upon this foundation. The hips should be free, so we can still tilt our pelvic forward and backward without obstruction. The knees are always lower or at the same level as our hips, so that the energy can flow freely in the position. Make sure that you sit high enough otherwise there will be a pressure on the hips which transfers onto the next joints, our knees and ankles! Use support to cushion your legs individually and find the right support for your grounding.



Straight Spine in Pranayama and Meditation



Our spine is not linear but shaped in a double-s-curve to bring us the stability and flexibility we need to be upright. The intensity of the lordosis (convex curve) and kyphosis (concave curve) in the spine differs individually. No one looks like pictures in anatomy books, but we all have unique conditions and an individual harmony in our physique. So, every sitting position will look a bit different from person to person. When we stand up straight and relaxed, without effort, our spine is straight. The chest is open and the shoulders are hanging down without tension. The neck is long and the chin remains parallel to the ground. The highest point of our head is in straight line with the base of our spine, our coccyx. The head is facing forward and not tilted in any direction. When we sit down our spine remains in the exact same position.

Watch out for the curve in your lower back!

As you sit down on the floor, your support or a chair keep your hands at your lower back and observe the curve. The curve has to remain the same. If it flattens then level up your support to keep your lordosis and your hips mobile. When your spine remains in the same position as in standing up you have found the right height for support.



Support for sitting in Pranayama

As a support for your sitting position, you can use anything that allows you to sit stable and effortless. The legs can be cushioned individually to avoid blocks in the energy flow. Some suggestions here

- Folded blanket/towel
- Sitting cushion
- Meditation bench
- Pillow
- Yoga block



Free Energy Flow in Pranayama



After some minutes of sitting, you may observe that some tension builds up or limbs become numb. Often pain in the hips, knees or ankles occur and without respecting the signal of the body we might end up hurting our-self. So, if numbness or pain arises, we have to change the position so that no nerves or vessels are squeezed and allow the energy to flow again. Stretching or changing the legs in crossed-leg positions is a good way to counter the problem during a session. Yet, the sitting position should be adapted, so it won't happen again. A little journey of trial and error is normal until you find your perfect sitting position.



Crossed-legs or parallel legs?

If you choose to sit with crossed legs make sure that you change the legs every day or every meditation session so that your body remains balanced.

Tips to correct the Position- Indications in Pranayama

To sit stable, like a Pyramid, we need to sit on our natural tools, our sitting bones. The spine is balanced freely upon this foundation. The hips should be free, so we can still tilt our pelvic forward and backward without obstruction. The knees are always lower or at the same level as our hips, so that the energy can flow freely in the position. Make sure that you sit high enough otherwise there will be a pressure on the hips which transfers onto the next joints, our knees and ankles! Use support to cushion your legs individually and find the right support for your grounding.

Start easy and adjust over time

As much as we want to sit like in a Yoga journal, we have to respect our physical limitations and needs. In the west we grow up sitting on chairs, not on the floor. Mostly our hips are closed and an advanced Yoga position will bring discomfort and eventually injuries. Most important is the position of your spine and that you sit straight in comfort and without any effort. So, feel free to start you sitting Meditation or Pranayama practice on a chair or use enough support.

When you practice Asanas and sitting postures your hips will open and your sitting support has to level down bit by bit. You will have to adjust your height and cushions according to your progress in flexibility.

Watch out! Even without stretching your hips will open up through mental practice and meditative states alone. Be prepared for changes.



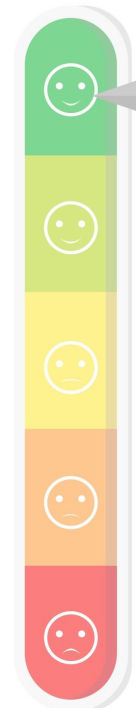
CP-Test for Mitochondria and CO2 Resilience

- Sit straight
- Breath normally
- **After** breathing out, hold your breath
- Count the seconds until you feel the urge to breathe in
- Breathe in soundless and effortless

Remember the number and repeat every morning over a longer period of time

Results

| Health status | Hold breath |
|---|-------------|
| No symptoms, optimum health | 60+ seconds |
| Very good health, most symptoms are gone | 40 seconds |
| Good health, symptoms present when exposed to a trigger | 30 seconds |
| Symptoms are often present | 20 seconds |
| Many different symptoms always present | 10 seconds |
| Dead | 0 seconds |



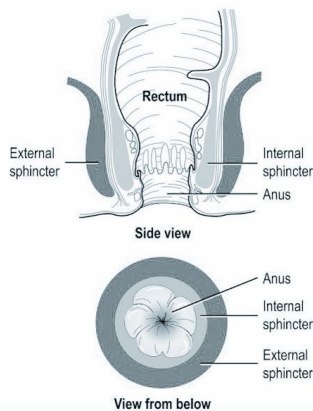


Breathing Rate Test

- Sit
- Breathe naturally without modulating the breath
- Count your breaths 1 minute, note down the number
- Repeat in Makarasanfora practice, compare



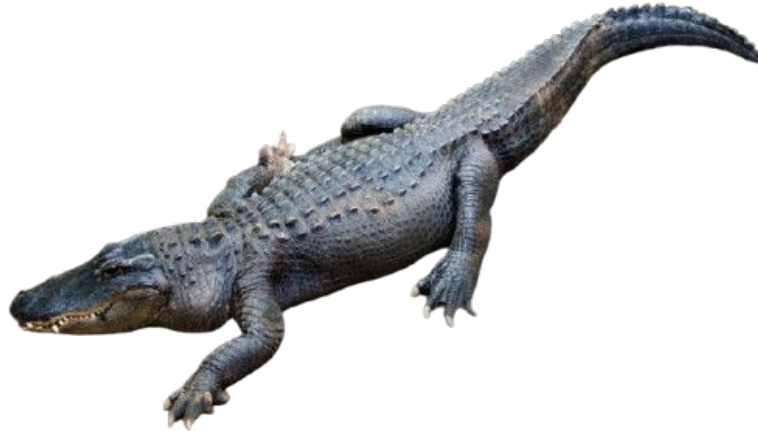
Ashwini Mudra – Horse Mudra Sequence



1. Isolate your anus in your mind
2. Tense up the anus
3. Observe you don't tense any other parts
4. Keep your breath flowing evenly, your belly soft and moving with your breath
5. Release after a few seconds
6. Make sure there is no residue of tension in your body



Makarasana - Crocodile Pose - Sequence



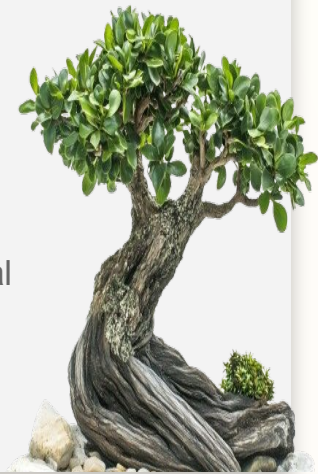
1. Lie on the belly with open legs, the inner rims of the feet are touching the ground.
2. Place the weight onto you back where your rib cage ends.
3. Fold your arms, so that your hands grab you elbows.
4. Rest your head on the lower arms.
5. Release your arms to the sides of your head. Your right cheek is resting on the ground.
6. Turn your head to the right side and bring your legs together. Let your toes touch and drop your heels towards the sides.
7. Remove the weight from your back to the right side of your body.
8. Stretch out your left arm over your head and roll over your left side onto your back.
9. Place the weight onto your stomach area, between your ribcage and your navel.
10. Open your legs to the sides and stretch your spine out on the ground.
Shavasana. Arms are resting alongside the body. Palms are open to the ceiling.
11. Remove the weight to the right side of your body.
12. Stretch out you left arm over your head and bend your right knee.
13. Roll to the left side of your body.
14. Sit up, eyes closed same breathing.



Homework

To achieve the best results in the Training it is recommended to invest time into your advancement and learn from experience. Please enjoy the recorded guidance and grow with every breath.

- Do Neti every morning
- Practice Ashwini mudra after Makarasana in sitting position and watch out for the relaxation in your other muscles. 4 rounds/session in the beginning.
- Avoid Ashwini mudra when the belly tenses up while you have menses.
- Practice the sequence every day if possible and keep your breath observation throughout the day
- Don't practice more often than 2/day
- Not down your observations, hurdles and insights in your journal



Reach out for any advice - info@yogascience.online



All the Best,
Elli Ji

