

A simple way to calm down, stabilize and concentrate one's mind

Restlessness of Mind is a common problem that affects everyone these days. Let him or her be a child, a student, a working person or even a retired senior citizen, more or less everyone finds difficulty in focusing the mind. Most psychologists also say that the mind of today's human being has become so fickle that around 20 to 30 thoughts are generated in one's mind per minute. That means around 30,000 to 45,000 thoughts are generated in the human mind per day. Out of which only 15 to 20% of the thoughts are related to his interest, his routine work and to his responsibilities. The remaining 80% of the thoughts are either toxic, negative or wasteful. Out of these 80% of the thoughts, the wasteful thoughts contribute to being the highest, which leads to draining of energy.

For a person who is loaded with so much wasteful thoughts, it becomes difficult for him to keep his mind calm and steady and he also loses his power of concentration. We all know that the power of concentration is very essential for any task to be completed efficiently and successfully.

Today we may not see such a level of concentration, which Arjun had in ancient days. Yet we need not get disappointed. The science of yoga, the heritage of Indian culture, can help us to calm down our mind.



Regular practice of yoga will surely increase the concentration power of our mind.

In yoga practice many relaxation techniques are suggested to stay calm, still and focused. One of such relaxation techniques is as follows.

Relaxation through deep breathing:

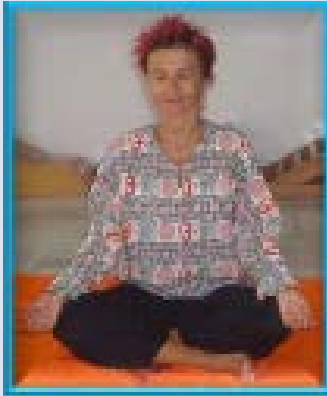
The principle on which this technique works is that the rate of respiration is affected by the state of our mind. There is a direct relationship between the speed of our thoughts and the speed of our breath. When we are excited, our breathing rate increases. Conversely, when we are sitting quietly and comfortably, our breathing slows down. Based on this principle, if we reduce the speed of our breathing with our own effort, the rate of generation of our thoughts will slow down and the mind will calm down. Taking deep breaths will reduce the speed of breathing and will give a positive impact on the stability of our mind.

To practice this method of relaxation through deep breathing, we need to adopt either of the following comfortable positions.

Position No-1:-

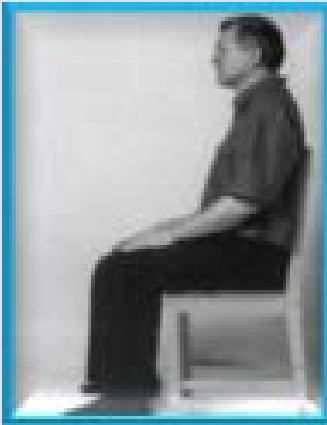
Sit comfortably on the ground with both legs folded (cross legged), The Spine,

neck and head should be straight. Keep the hands in such a way that the wrists of both hands rest on the knees with *Gyan mudra*. To adopt *Gyan mudra* make a circle with the index finger and the thumb and the other three fingers to be straight. Let the eyes be half open. This posture is known as '*Sukhasana*' in *Yogasan* practice.



Position No-2 :-

Sit on a comfortable chair and keep your spine straight. Keep some distance between both legs and knees. Keep your heels pointed inwards and toes pointed outwards. Keep the hands folded and placed on one another in your lap. Keep your head straight, so that the spine and neck are aligned. Let the mouth be closed and eyes half open.



Position No-3:-

Lie down in *Shavasana* posture, with both legs straight. Keep a little distance



between both the legs and keep the soles of both feet inward and the toes pointed

outward. Both the arms to be straight and slightly away from the body. Keep palms open, flat and facing upwards. Let the mouth and eyes be closed.

After positioning yourself in any one of the above positions, start taking deep breaths through both the nostrils. Our normal breathing rate is 20 to 22 breaths per minute. Now reduce it to 12 to 15 breaths per minute breathing deeply. With this rate of respiration, for one breathing cycle, we will get around four and a half to five seconds.

Now execute the following *four steps*:

1. Breathe in through both nostrils for about a second and a half or for four counts. This action of inhaling the breath is called the '*Purak Kriya*'.
2. Then hold the breath in the lungs for half a second or for two counts. This action is called the '*Aantar Kumbhak Kriya*'.
3. Then slowly exhale through both nostrils for about two seconds or for five counts. This is known as '*Rechak Kriya*'.
4. Then before proceeding for another cycle of breathing, pause for about half to 3/4th second or for two counts. This is called '*Stambhan or Bahya Kumbhaka Kriya*'.

This entire act of breathing has to be done from the stomach. Hence it is also called '*Abdominal Respiration*'. As you inhale, let the belly gently come outward and as you exhale, let the belly go inward.

Once the breathing rhythm is set, now focus your entire attention on the breath. Calmly witness and lovingly observe the inhaling and exhaling of the breath. While focusing on the breath, try to experience and feel the touch and sensation of the inward and outward flow of your breath on the inner wall of both the nostrils. If you get to this experience, it indicates that you are now focused. Now if you enhance your concentration on your breath, you will have another experience. The breath you are inhaling is cold and the breath you are exhaling is relatively warm. Now try to feel this coldness and warmness of your breath on the inner wall of the nostrils during inspiration and expiration respectively. If you experience this, then it indicates that your mind has calmed, settled, and is fully focused.

Release all your muscles from your feet to your head and experience the feeling of relaxation. The concentration gained in this way will be very useful for any kind of yoga practice, in studies and to achieve success in any work. Practicing this

technique regularly will reduce the restlessness of the mind and the concentration of the mind will be improved.

For study of **Raja Yoga** meditation the concentrated mind can be focused at the Centre of the brain and one can visualize his own self (The Soul) in the form of a luminous point of light. Then, being soul conscious, one can very easily connect with almighty God and get enlightened and empowered.



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