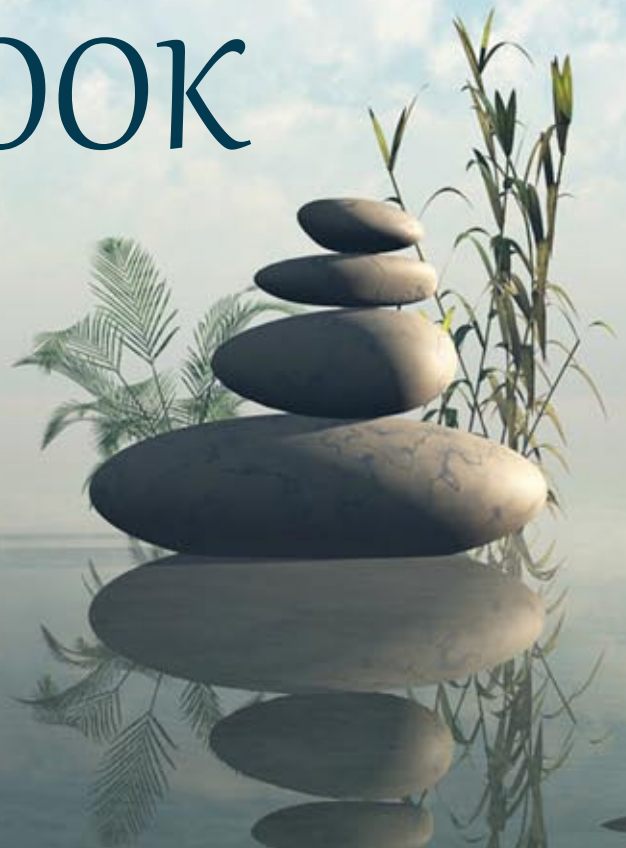




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The

PRACTICE *of* INNER PEACE GUIDEBOOK



DEVARSHI STEVEN HARTMAN

The
PRACTICE of
INNER PEACE

Guidebook

Devarshi Steven Hartman

IMPORTANT

To begin — Please save this workbook to your desktop or in another location.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Devarshi Steven Hartman's *The Practice of Inner Peace*.

In this program Devarshi Steven melds the ancient teachings of Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and Yogic traditions, and takes you on a journey toward the world of Enlightenment and deep inner peace. Included in this guidebook are practical tools and applications that you can immediately implement in your inner life so that you can experience great inner peace whatever the outer circumstances you find yourself in.

Devarshi Steven Hartman, ERYT, Dean of the Kripalu School of Yoga and former Director of Professional Trainings at Kripalu Center, has been a yoga student and teacher for more than 30 years and is a former longtime Kripalu Ashram resident. Devarshi is the creator of the audio series *The Essence of the Bhagavad-Gita*, also produced by Nightingale-Conant. He leads workshops and retreats around the country and teaches Yoga Teacher Trainings at the 200-hour and 500-hour levels. He is a practitioner of the healing arts, a bodyworker, teacher of A Course in Miracles, Avatar Master/Wizard, father of two, and lifetime lover of yoga.

To achieve the maximum benefits from this program and workbook, listen to each audio session at least twice, ideally three times, and then work on the corresponding chapter below. Listening to the audio session several times allows it to sink into your subconscious mind as you make more and more discoveries each time that you listen. Be sure to keep a paper and pen in hand as you are listening to the program, and be prepared to pause the program when you hear an idea or technique that particularly appeals to you. Think about that idea in connection with your situation, your work, and your lifestyle, and then prepare a plan to act upon it in the days ahead.

Start now! Do not procrastinate. We suggest that you simply take just five minutes to begin using your workbook. Whenever possible, give yourself a deadline, and be committed to following through on that deadline. Without implementing any of the action steps that you have mapped out for yourself, this program simply becomes an exercise in listening. In order to gain the full benefits that this valuable program has to offer you, make the decision here and now to **work** through this guidebook, **act** upon your insights and strategies, and **achieve** the kind of results in your life that you've never thought possible.

CD 1: DISCOVERING INNER PEACE THROUGH *SATORI*

1. Devarshi/Steven starts with the question, “What if there was one thing, that if you knew it, it would end suffering in your life?” Most likely you experienced a doubt that there would be any one thing that would. What were your thoughts and feelings when Devarshi/Steven posited this question?

2. A Zen koan (story) called “A Cup of Tea” is told. This story speaks of “emptying your cup to learn about peace; being in beginner’s mind.” How much of a beginner’s mind do you currently have as you embark upon this program? On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being low, and 10 being high) check the box in front of the number that best rates your level of openness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

3. Devarshi/Steven shares his story of witnessing a friend being killed by a car as his early initiation into the world of spirituality and inquiry. Reflect on the beginnings of your spiritual journey. What event or events led you to pursue spirituality?

4. Devarshi/Steven felt that he should have been the one to die because he felt his friend was a better person than he was. Have you ever experienced a similar scenario in your life (where you felt you should have been the one to get sick or die)?

5. What kinds of issues did you struggle with during your childhood? In retrospect, what spiritual lessons did you learn in experiencing them?

6. Devarshi/Steven shares the insight that life is impermanent; life and death are instantaneous and interlinked. We all will die on this earth, and yet we so often convince ourselves that we are invincible. Think about your death. What thoughts and feelings arise for you when you do?

7. Another Zen koan, “Royonan’s Clear Realization,” is told. In this teaching, this incredible spiritual seeker actually burned her face so that she could enter a Zen temple. While this act seems extreme, it shows her absolute commitment to her divine quest. Take a moment and ask yourself what you would be willing to give up to further pursue your spiritual quest.

8. If you are drawn to the Zen koans that Devarshi/Steven has shared, get the book, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* by Paul Rep and Nyogen Senzaki. Write about your findings.

9. Have you ever thought about what is beyond life, the experiences you might have after death? If so, what have you discovered? If not, take some time to quiet your mind and explore this question. Write about any insights you gain as you ponder the afterlife.

10. Devarshi/Steven shares the reality that atoms are 99.9% space; they are mostly not real. Quantum physicists have learned that the 0.1% is actually light that vibrates at a certain frequency that has an appearance of reality. That light is manipulated by thought. How might believing this change the way you relate to “reality”?

11. A ancient Sanskrit prayer that Devarshi/Steven shares translates to:

*Lead us from the unreal to the real,
Lead us from darkness to light,
Lead us from the belief that we can die to the reality of our immortality;
our infinite reality.*

*Asatoma Sada Gamaya
Tamasoma Jyotir Gamaya
Mrityorma Amritam Gamaya*

In response to this prayer, Devarshi/Steven asks the following questions: What if we really truly were infinite, eternal, and whole? What if the self that we believe is so real and the life and reality that we put so much stake in were not “real” at all but were a temporary light show that is a great distraction from our reality and our immortality? Contemplate these questions, and write your response.

12. It is suggested that you choose a fear that you have and then trace it back to its origins. You can do this by asking yourself, “What’s so important about that?” If you do this exercise, you will find that the roots of that fear are somehow related to the belief that you can die. Try this exercise, and write about any insights you gain.

13. You either believe that you can die, or you believe that you are infinite, eternal, and whole. The spiritual journey to inner peace is the simplicity of being in this struggle. Our suffering or beliefs that we can die comes to us in traumas. Perhaps this life is showing us our fears and reminding us that we are infinite, eternal, and whole. Explore this supposition. What thoughts, feelings, or insights do you have?

14. Devarshi/Steven's early seeking was a way to try to get out of his deep unhappiness. He was willing to give up anything to become enlightened. At one point in his life, during a meditation, Devarshi/Steven came to a moment when he believed he had nowhere to go and nothing to do. He was complete. Have you ever had a similar feeling or experience?

15. Soon after his sense of completeness, Devarshi/Steven received the message, "Now that you've been trying to get off the planet for so many years, get on it. GO MAKE A MESS. Live life fully without resistance. Be open to everything." He is pleased to say that he has made a great mess in his life. Have you made a mess of your life? How?

16. Can you celebrate the messes you've made in your life?

17. Devarshi/Steven has maintained a sense of detachment and awareness that he lives in an infinite mystery that is always pervading him. Do you see life as a mystery? How?

18. We live in a world of great diversity and choice. Along with that choice is a sense of mystery. We don't know what the future will be. Global warming messages are that we have 10 more years left before the world as we know it will no longer exist. What effect does this pending reality have on you?

19. A Sutra (thread) that Devarshi/Steven shares is *Ata Yoga Nushasanam*, which means "Now the inquiry of yoga or union." It is an invitation for you to open up to the mystery. That mystery rests in the present moment.

20. Union with our High Self is our natural state. Devarshi/Steven instructs you on Dirgha Breath. It is called the three-part breath. Information and instructions on this technique are given on page 21.

21. The Zen koan called “Muksuan’s Hand” tells a tale of a disciple’s concern about his wife’s miserliness. Muksuan teaches the woman a lesson about balance, and when to be hard, along with when to be supple. This story revealed a master’s knowing deep inside of the principles of “fixed state” and “open state.” Reflect on your tendencies. How are you fixed and hard? When you could be suppler?

22. How are you suppler, when you could afford to be harder?

23. The Tao Te Ching teaches a similar lesson; however, it shares that when we get fixed and fundamentalist about what we know to be true, we harden. It does not serve us well. However, when we remain supple, we remain open to all there is. What steps might you take to become more open in your views and opinions?

24. To end this session, Devarshi/Steven takes you on an internal journey exploring beginner’s mind and your breath. Write about any thoughts, feelings, or insights you experienced after completing this exercise.

CD 2: LIVING IN A STATE OF AWE

1. Devarshi/Steven shares how *A Course in Miracles* was one of the books that greatly affected his life. The course states that “The opposite of love is fear; however, that which is all-encompassing cannot have an opposite. Herein lies the peace of God.” This principle can be perplexing. The question that comes from it is, “Which is all-encompassing, fear or love?” Ask yourself, are you in a state of chaos, or are you in a state of order in your life. Provide evidence of your statement through specific examples in your life.

2. Devarshi/Steven spoke about a Catholic priest who was his initial teacher. Who was your initial teacher when you started out on your spiritual journey? What were their teachings?

3. Do you still believe in those original teachings, or has your spiritual perspective changed?

4. Devarshi/Steven asks, “Is there such a thing as infinity?” and takes you through an experiential exercise in probing this question. What insights, thoughts, or feelings did you gain in doing this exercise?

5. To get the experience of infinity, we have to get to the space of mystery and the unknown. Devarshi/Steven asserts that the state of inner expansion is our natural state.

6. The one thing people can count on today is change. Those who struggle with change and tend to be fixed will have difficulty with this.

7. Devarshi/Steven believes that the 9/11 terrorist attacks were rooted in fear of change in the East. How fixed are we? How much do we know who we really are?

8. The path of yoga is about opening up to experience the present moment just as it is, without the past, and with all of the awe and wonder that the present moment deserves. The tools and practices of yoga then are about undoing what we've done.

9. Devarshi/Steven asks why we are not in a state of awe of this planet all the time. It is because we have locked ourselves in our minds of labeling. He asks "What if we showed up in heaven with the same consciousness we have now?"

10. Devarshi/Steven asserts that yoga is not a religion. It is not attached to any fear or belief. He describes it as a series of practices that will either support or challenge the beliefs that you hold. The beliefs that need to be challenged do get challenged. While those that need to be supported, get supported. Have you ever practiced yoga? If so, what was your experience? If not, make a point of taking some yoga classes. Write about your experience.

11. "Practice" is defined as "continuous struggle over long periods of time." You can either commit to practice to find enlightenment, or you can have an instantaneous flash of enlightenment. In Devarshi/Steven's experience, the more we are willing to believe that we know nothing and are open to change, the more the opportunity is to experience *Satori*. Do you have a spiritual practice of some kind that you are fully committed to? If so, what is that practice? If not, what practice would you be interested in pursuing and why?

12. Devarshi/Steven describes the journey children have from the world of wonder and mystery to the world of labeling and form. When was the last time you experienced yourself in a state of awe about something? Write about it.

13. In the human experience, we go through the process labels, and then concepts, personalities, and belief systems. Ultimately, we find ourselves in a world of resistance. We create a list of “what we don’t want to experience” around that resistance. Write as comprehensive a list of your resistances as possible:

I would never want to...

I would never want to...

I would never want to...

I would never want to...

I would never want to...

I would never want to... (continue writing here)

14. When we are ready to visit these resistances, we find ourselves able to experience a fuller life of greater spiritual and emotional depth. Experiment with going into each of the resistances you listed above. Totally allow yourself to feel into the experience you are resisting. Then note any shifts in your consciousness or in your life that you note in response to doing this exercise.

15. The Zen koan “Is That So?” is a story about how a Zen master, Hakuan, who had fathered a child, proceeded to honor whatever position he was given. He cared for the child when it was announced that he was the father. Once the truth of the real father was revealed, the child was taken away. His constant response, no matter what situations he faced was, “Is that so?” Devarshi/Steven talks of how he originally thought that this lesson was about seeking non-attachment in his life. Do you have a desire to fully embrace non-attachment? Why or why not?

16. Devarshi/Steven explains that we have one “feel” button. As we continue to turn down that “feel button,” we deliberately turn down our ability to feel. Do you avoid certain feelings? If so, what are they?

17. Next time you find yourself resisting a particular feeling or experience, try to go into it completely. Describe your experience.

18. When we allow ourselves to experience anything fully, even the worst thing imaginable, we are left with a sense of bliss and wholeness. Devarshi/Steven reads two Zen koans, “The Last Poem of Hoshan” and “Eshan’s Departure,” about how Zen masters deal with death. Have you ever contemplated your own death? Take a few minutes and do so. What would you like on your epitaph? Write it out.

19. Buddha studied the ancient Sanskrit texts. He renounced all organized religion and suggested that people should wander and enlighten as many people as possible. His disciples do so, and Sanskrit writings can be found in China and other cultures. The Sanskrit word *om*, pronounced “aum,” contains all words, the words of all creation. Chanting this word has a powerful positive effect in the world. Devarshi/Steven concludes this session with the Dirgha Breath and the chanting of “om.” Focus on something that you would like to shift in your life, and then do the chant for at least five minutes each day for at least 28 days while focusing on that issue. Write about your experience.

CD 3: OPEN TO CHANGE, OPEN TO *SATORI*

1. Devarshi/Steven opens this session with the story of Buddha. After leaving the protected walls of his kingdom, he asked himself how people could find a state of happiness, abundance, and true self without having to experience the dark night of the soul. Do you believe that one has to experience the darkness before they know the light?

2. Buddha teaches the five Kleshas, or causes of suffering:

- § Avidya (lack of knowledge of the true self)
- § Asmita (I-ness, the ego; the belief in separateness)
- § Raja (attractions and wants)
- § Dvesha (all that we are resistant to; all that repels us)
- § Abhinivesha (clinging to life, fear of death)

The means to remedy these Kleshas is the cultivation of unbroken discriminative awareness. The first, Avidya, is lack of knowledge of the true self. In truth, we are all infinite, eternal, and whole. We are a part of everything. The more we open to change, the more we are open to *Satori*. How open are you to change? On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being “not at all open,” and 10 being “very open”), check the box in front of the number that best rates how open you are to change in your life.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

3. The second Klesha is Asmita, or the ego; the belief in separateness. How separate do you feel from the divine? On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being very separate, and 10 being not at all separate), check the box in front of the number that best rates how separate you feel from divinity.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

4. Raja is the third Klesha. This cause for suffering is your attractions and wants. How much attention do you focus on “wanting” things in your life? On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being very focused on my wants, and 10 being not very wanting or desirous), check the box in front of the number that best rates how needing and wanting you are in your life.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

5. The fourth is Dvesha or all that we are resistant to; all that repels us. How does resistance show up in your life? Write a list of the things that completely repel you in your life.

6. The fifth is Abhinivesha, or the clinging to life. Do you find yourself clinging so much to life that you often find yourself unable to be in the present moment? Write about your relationship to clinging in your life.

7. One of the remedies suggested is contemplation, concentration, or Dharana for 12 seconds on one object. Try this. Did you witness the “circus” going on inside your mind?

8. The second remedy is Dhyana, meditating for at least 2½ minutes. Try this and write about your experience.

9. The third remedy is Samadhi or 30-minute meditation. Try to meditate for 30 minutes. How did you do? Write about your experience.

10. Devarshi/Steven speaks of the thinker and then the one who watches the thinker, or the listener, watching from a place of non-judgment, compassion, and acceptance. Have you ever noted the one who watches, your “witness self”? Write about your experience.

11. The fourth remedy is Samyama, or placing your attention on an object and fully absorbing yourself in it. Devarshi/Steven suggests you go on a Samyama walk, looking at things as if you have come from another planet. Send awareness to whatever you see, asking “What is it?” See if you can feel what it feels like to be that object in the here and now of its moment. Its density, its vibration, its lightness, its space, its form. See if you can feel what it feels like to be that without judgment, just as it is. Go on such a walk and experiment with this exercise. Write about your experience.

12. Devarshi/Steven did Samyama on crocodiles, and in going through this process realized that they did not want to hurt anything; that they were our grandfathers, ancient and evolved. Do Samyama on something that you fear or do not like. Become aware of it with a non-judgmental eye. Has your perspective shifted in any way? Write about your experience.

CD 4: ALLOWING REAL JOY TO HAPPEN

1. Devarshi/Steven opens this session with a parable from Buddha that focuses on entering into the present moment while in the face of death and all of life's challenges. Do you feel you are able to surrender to the moment and enjoy it? When are you most able to be in the present moment?

2. Samyama that Devarshi/Steven did on the crucifix in a church turned out to be an eye-opening experience. He saw the cross from several perspectives, all of which were truth in their own perception. Try this exercise on an icon or symbol in your life. Write about the various perspectives you experience as you do this exercise.

3. The benefits of exploring Samyama is that you deliberately start to turn on your feel button when you begin to practice feeling outside of yourself. When you feel things outside of yourself, you begin to feel within as well. We often resist feeling deeply, as we don't want to feel pain or any other uncomfortable emotions. Continue practicing Samyama, and keep a journal of your findings. Note when you notice inner feelings arising within you.

4. Devarshi/Steven brings up the concept of reincarnation in this session. He asserts that you need not believe in it. He finds it helpful for himself as it solidifies his belief that he is infinite, eternal, and whole. What is your belief about reincarnation, and how does this belief support you in your life?

5. Fundamentalists hold the belief "if you don't believe this, then you are wrong." You may be fundamentalist about certain things in your life and not even realize it. Reflect on your views and beliefs, and write about the ways in which fundamentalism shows up in your life.

6. Devarshi/Steven encourages us each to find our own dharma, something that we can wake up and be passionate about; something we truly believe in. Have you found your dharma? Make a list of the things that you are truly passionate about in your life.

7. Devarshi/Steven then suggests you ask yourself, “How can I believe in it, be passionate about it in a way that honors others’ beliefs and is not fundamentalist?” Ask yourself this question about the thing that you are currently most passionate about in your life. Write your response.

8. You are given the directive to do Samyama on the feeling of gratitude. Gratitude has a very real, physical, tangible, measurable vibration. As you do Samyama and feel what it feels like to be someone who is grateful; feel what it feels like in your cells, and your fingers and your toes. It has a very real, tangible vibration of healing. Do this exercise and write about your experience.

9. Devarshi/Steven then suggests you do a more difficult Samyama on someone with whom you are having a problem. Try this exercise and write about your experience.

10. With this person whom you are having difficulty with in your life — what beliefs do you believe they may have about the world, and then try Samyama on your own viewpoint. Do you find yourself gaining more insight into the actual truth of the situation? Write about your perceptions and beliefs before doing this exercise, and then after. Did you experience a shift of any kind?

11. Devarshi/Steven encourages us to try to avoid indoctrinating our children, allowing them to explore their own beliefs. This is not an easy task. Reflect on your life. How have you indoctrinated others? Write about your reflections and findings.

12. Harry Palmer stated, “You experience what you believe.” This means that your belief precedes experience. How do your beliefs shape your life? What beliefs are not working for you? Can you decide to change them?

13. Devarshi/Steven shares an experience he had of a subliminal impression of dying while being tortured by native Indians. This allowed him to relax and be more present in his current situation. Have you ever experienced any past life remembrances? If so, write about them.

14. When Devarshi/Steven stumbled upon a block he had around successfully investing in real estate, he discovered that he had feelings of being a failure as a man that affected his decision making. He resisted his feelings of being a failure no more and went into those feelings. In doing so, he cleared the block that he had, and, literally immediately, real estate opportunities began to show up in his life. Do the exercise that Devarshi/Steven guides you through on something you are struggling with in your life. Investigate and feel into your feelings around this issue. Feel into anything you may be resisting. Write about your findings.

CD 5: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AUTHENTIC

We Have Come to Be Danced

By Jewel Mathieson

*We have come to be danced.
Not the pretty dance
Not the pretty, pretty, pick me, pick me dance
But the claw our way back into the belly
Of the sacred, sensual animal dance
The unhinged, unplugged, cat is out of its box dance
The holding the precious moment in the palms
Of our hands and feet dance.*

*We have come to be danced
Not the jiffy booby, shake your booty for him dance
But the wring the sadness from our skin dance
The blow the chip off our shoulder dance.
The slap the apology from our posture dance.*

*We have come to be danced
Not the monkey see, monkey do dance
One two dance like you dance
One two three, dance like me dance
but the grave robber, tomb stalker
Tearing scabs and scars open dance
The rub the rhythm raw against our soul dance.*

*We have come to be danced
Not the nice, invisible, self-conscious shuffle
But the matted hair flying, voodoo mama
Shaman shaking ancient bones dance
The strip us from our casings, return our wings
Sharpen our claws and tongues dance
The shed dead cells and slip into
The luminous skin of love dance.*

*We have come to be danced
Not the hold our breath and wallow in the shallow end of the floor dance
But the meeting of the trinity, the body breath and beat dance
The shout hallelujah from the top of our thighs dance
The mother may I?
Yes you may take 10 giant leaps dance
The olly olly oxen free free free dance
The everyone can come to our heaven dance.*

We have come to be danced

*Where the kingdoms collide
In the cathedral of flesh
To burn back into the light
To unravel, to play, to fly, to pray
To root in skin sanctuary
We have come to be danced
WE HAVE COME.*

1. What does this poem mean to you and why?

2. As the poem suggests, do you feel free enough to make messes, caring not about what others think, but trusting more in your inner guidance?

3. One of the quotes from the Tao Te Ching is that “There is no greater illusion than fear, no greater wrong than preparing to defend yourself, no greater misfortune than having an enemy. Whoever can see through all fear will always be safe.” Rewrite this quote in your own words, and then apply it to your life.

4. Another quote from the Tao Te Ching is, “If you realize that all things change, there’s nothing you’ll try to hold on to. If you aren’t afraid of dying, then there’s nothing you can’t achieve. And the more you know, the less you understand.” The one thing you can be certain of is change. How open are you to change? Write a list of the changes or potential changes that you fear in your life.

5. Devarshi/Steven clarifies the difference between understanding versus experiencing, noting that true understanding really comes from experiencing. What might you “understand” in your head but still need to fully “experience” to really know in your life?

6. In the story from Hafiz, the Sufi mystic teaches that we need not try to be perfect. In fact, we are encouraged to get on the earth, make a mess, and live our lives unabashedly. In this we will find true freedom. What is the full expression of your personality? Explore what that might look and feel like. Write about your findings.

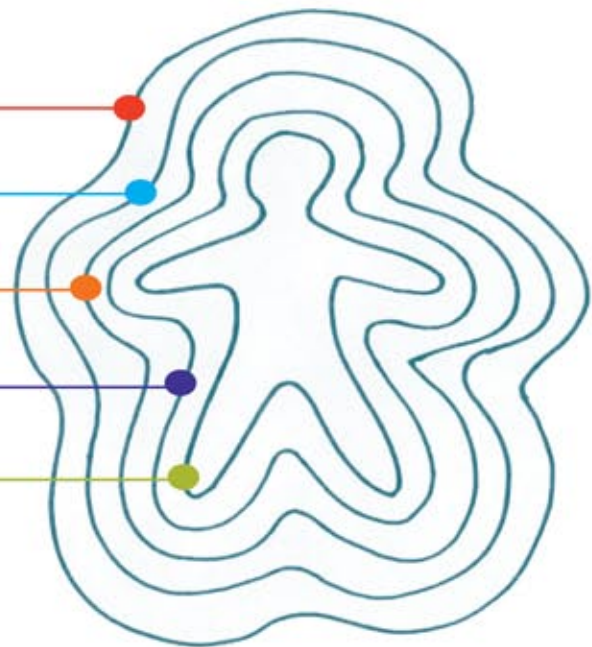
Physical Sheath: Annamaya Kosha

Breath Sheath: Pranamaya Kosha

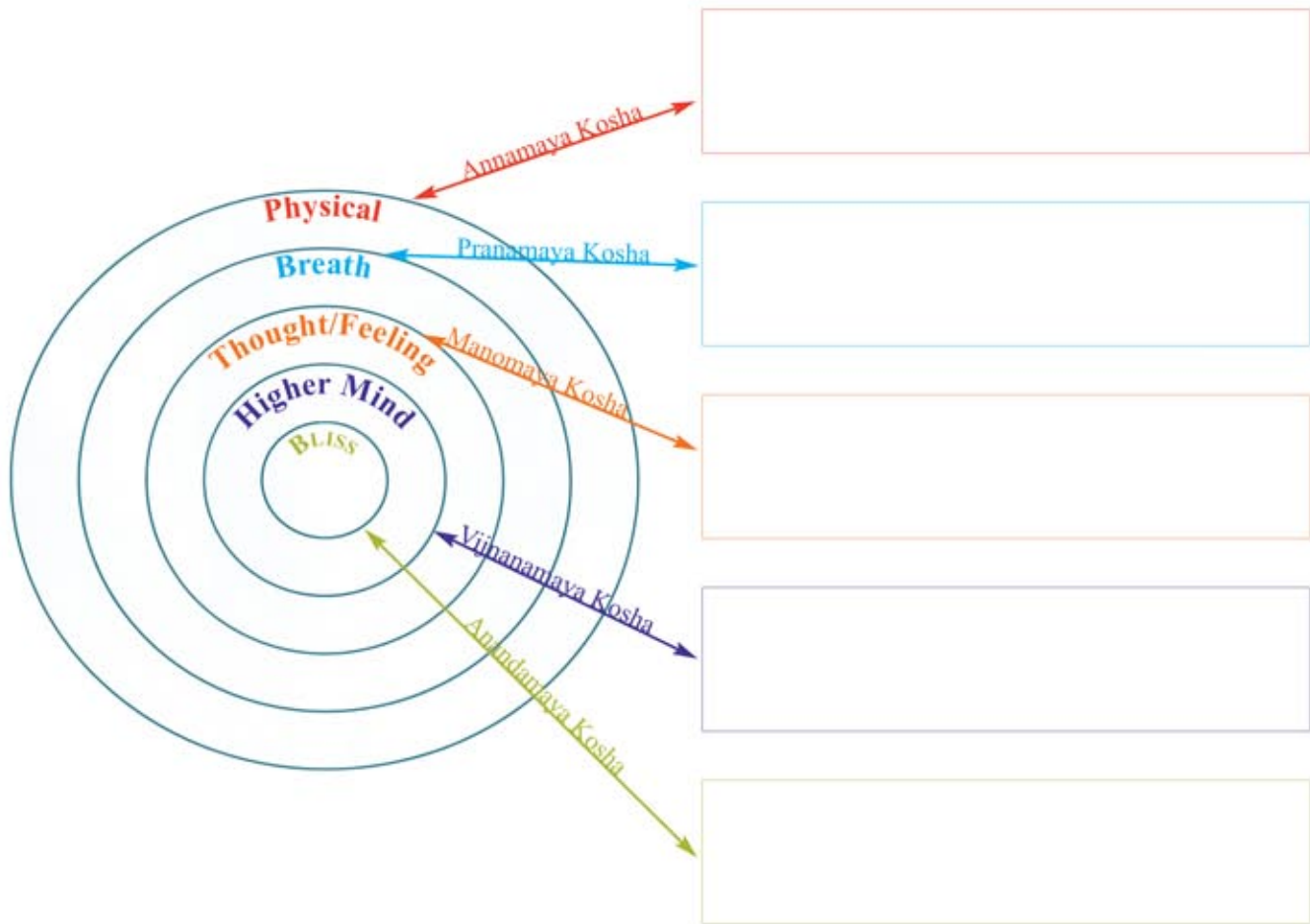
Thought/Feeling Sheath: Manomaya Kosha

Higher Mind Sheath: Vijnanamaya Kosha

Bliss Sheath: Anandamaya Kosha



7. Take a journey through each of your five Koshas. Which are not fully aligned? By each Kosha, list how it is not aligned or in balance.



8. For each of the imbalanced you listed in #7, list what steps you can take to align them.

9. When the Koshas are in full alignment and balance, then complete authenticity is experienced. In what ways are you inauthentic in your life?

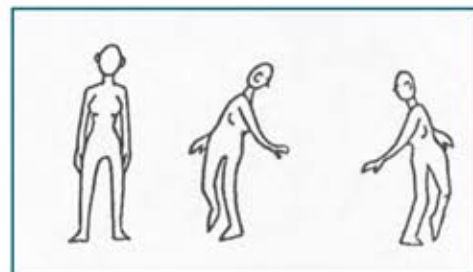
10. Match the situations you listed in #9 with the Koshas that govern them.

11. In order for subliminal impressions to truly clear, you have to have a transformation on each level of your Koshas. This means that you have to fully experience it in the physical body and your higher self must be present and compassionately observing it. The next time you notice yourself behaving in a way that is imbalanced, try to fully experience any resistance while compassionately observing yourself going through the experience. Write about any insights, feelings, or shifts you experience.

12. There are many ways to cultivate the witness consciousness, one of which is through practicing yoga postures. Listed below are several postures. Take some time to practice them, and ideally incorporate them into your daily routine. Note any energetic or physical shifts you have in response to doing them.

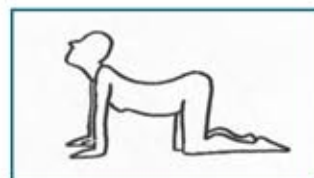
STANDING SWINGING TWIST/Empty Coat Sleeves Stand with your feet

shoulder-width apart and your arms relaxed by your sides. Begin to turn your hips from right to left, allowing your arms to swing side to side. Let your arms flap against the body like empty coat sleeves as you pick up the pace. Exhale “Ha” to each side, allowing your head and eyes to turn to follow your hands. (Lift the heel of the opposite foot in the direction you are twisting to give the hips more range of motion.) Relax your spine and soften your knees.

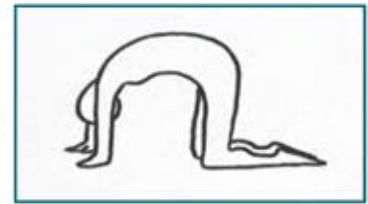


SIX MOVEMENTS OF THE SPINE:

DOG: From the table position, inhale as you lift the tailbone, looking upward and allowing your lower back to arch downward as your chest opens. Look up and open your chest.



CAT: On the exhalation, tucking the tailbone under, round your spine upward and lower your head. Move slowly and smoothly several times from the dog stretch into the cat stretch, coordinating breath and movement.



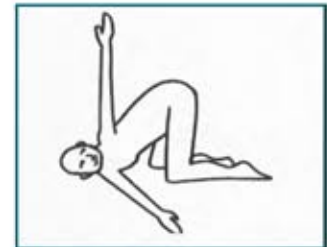
LATERAL STRETCH: Wagging the Tail - From the table position, keep your gaze on the floor and exhale as you bring your right ear to your right shoulder. Simultaneously bring your right hip toward the same shoulder, creating a lateral stretch. Inhaling, return to center and repeat on the opposite side.



THREADING THE NEEDLE: From the table position, exhale as you slide your left hand through the space between your right hand and right knee. Bring your left shoulder to the ground, creating a gentle twist. Hold for a few breaths and repeat on the opposite side.



Variation: From the above position lift your right arm and explore the range of movements as you relax your neck and shoulder into the pull of gravity. Return to center and repeat on the opposite side.



13. Devarshi/Steven shared his experience with his father's surgery as an example of following his intuition and connecting with his father's soul throughout his recovery. Do you deeply follow your intuition? Write about an experience you had in which you did follow your inner voice.

14. Devarshi/Steven ends this session with the circular breathing technique. Practice this breath along with Stephen's guidance, and write about your experience after doing this exercise.

CD 6: CULTIVATING THE WITNESS CONSCIOUSNESS AS WE MOVE TO THE FUTURE

1. Devarshi/Steven opens this session with the story of Krishna's disciple, Santosh. It was a lesson about not taking things too personally. Reflect on your life. What do you take personally that perhaps you should not?

2. We are messy, endless, multidimensional beings and constantly growing and changing but never finished in our learning process. We often live with the misinformation that "when I get it, then I'll be happy." Living in the question and constantly learning is the ideal. Do you feel you are constantly learning? If so, do you enjoy it?

3. What are the questions you are currently living with in your life? E.g., Should I stay in my marriage? Is this really what love is? If I leave, will I be supported? What's the best way I can support my child? Is it with a firm or soft hand? Write out some of the key questions that you are living with.

4. The Zen koan about the son of the famous swordsman Matajuro Yagyu deals with impatience and how letting go is key. On a scale from 1 to 10, rate how impatient you are (1 being not very patient, and 10 being extremely patient). Check the box in front of the number that best rates how impatient you are.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

5. "Tired of Speaking Sweetly" From the Sufi mystic, Hafiz

*Love wants to reach out and manhandle us, break up all our teacup talk of God.
If you had the courage and could give the beloved His choice, some nights, he
would just drag you around the room by your hair, ripping from your grip all
those toys in the world that bring you no joy.*

*Love sometimes gets tired of speaking sweetly and wants to rip to shreds all your
erroneous notions of truth that make you fight within yourself, dear ones, and
with others, causing the world to weep on too many fine days.*

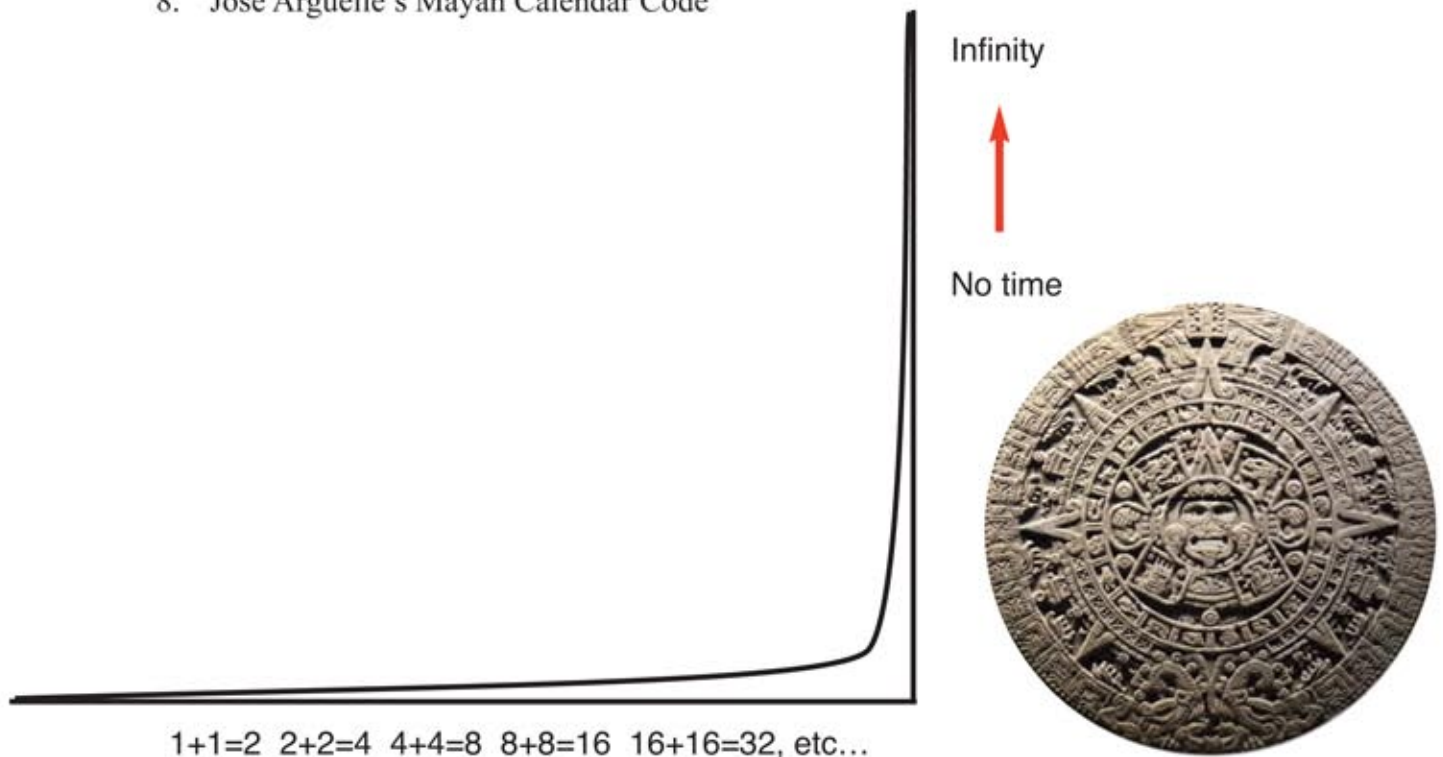
God wants to manhandle us, lock us inside of a tiny room with himself and practice his dropkick. The beloved sometimes wants to do us a great favor, hold us upside down and shake all the nonsense out.

What does this poem mean to you, and how does it apply to your life?

6. Devarshi/Steven discusses technological advancement and its potential ramifications. What are your thoughts and feelings about technology? Does it serve mankind, or is it a hindrance?

7. The more we let go of what we think we know and open to change and paradigm shift, the more we hold a future vision of great outrageous hope and change — beyond our wildest dreams. How do you see the world shifting with such a vision?

8. Jose Arguelle's Mayan Calendar Code



9. Devarshi/Steven encourages us to hold a positive vision of the future and to choose to live in love over fear. What fears are you currently holding onto that you could release?

10. At the end of this session, Devarshi/Steven leads you through an envisioning of a world peace. Write about any insights, emotions, or energy shifts that you experienced.

11. This session ends with a reading from the Tao Te Ching:

The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The unnamable is the eternally real. Naming is the origin of all particular things. Free from desire, you realize the mystery. Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations. Yet mystery and manifestations arise from the same source. The mystery within darkness, the gateway to all understanding.

12. What does this passage mean to you, and how can you apply it to your life?

BONUS CD: MEDITATIONS AND EXERCISES FOR INNER PEACE

MEDITATION

SAMKHYA: Meditation is “the liberation of the mind from all disturbing and distracting emotions, thoughts, and desires.”

PATANJALI: “When all thoughts get diverted to the point that the mind is fixed without creating any other flow of thought, it is called *dhyana* by wise people.” It is the *kriya* (purification) of *chitta* (mind).

SWAMI KRIPALU: “Meditation is the inner journey, the spiritual journey, the journey toward the Absolute, or the journey of divine love.”

During meditation one is conscious only of the meditator, the meditation, and the object of meditation. Everything else is forgotten.

Meditation cannot be taught. It is a process, a happening from within. There are many methods and techniques to work with to prepare for meditation.

purpose

The purpose of meditation is to draw mental energies inward in order to tap the sources deep within. This process of stilling and eventually transcending the mind will allow you to experience your true nature, which is revealed as truth, consciousness, and bliss (*satchitananda*).

benefits

The benefits of the regular practice of meditation over many years are multiple: emotional and mental stability, which leads to clarity in decision making; peace of mind that will influence communications and relationships; a freeing up of creative energy; and a sense of self-worth rekindled. On a physical level, regular meditation has been proven to greatly influence the body’s metabolic processes and reduce high blood pressure, depression, and anxiety.

Regular meditation may eventually lead to a change in eating habits and lifestyle. Practicing the *yamas* and *niyamas* is often a natural outcome of meditation. The food we eat, the thoughts we think, the things we do — everything is interwoven and influences the state of the mind.

The word *meditation* has many meanings: focused awareness, reflection, contemplation, prayer, stilling the mind, attuning to spirit, etc., and is used in most spiritual and religious traditions. We will look at meditation from a broad yogic perspective and then explore what it means in the Kripalu tradition.

THREE-STEP MEDITATION

- Still the body
- Still the breath
- Still the mind

BASIC PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUES

DIRGHA

Three-Part Breath, Full Yogic Breathing, or The Complete Breath

This breath is known as Complete Yogic Breathing because it utilizes the full capacity of the lungs. By consciously breathing into each of the separate areas of the lungs, we take in more air than we do habitually, exchanging more carbon dioxide for oxygen and invigorating all the systems of the body. It is more than our lungs that breathe; every cell in the body needs to be supplied with a constant supply of oxygen for the energy-generating process of metabolism to proceed properly. When you breathe freely and fully in yoga practice, the respiratory process is stimulated throughout the body, increasing metabolism and improving the health of each and every cell.

This technique is done with long, slow, deep breaths, bringing the breath into the three separate regions of the lungs. The lungs themselves are completely passive, and the contraction and release of the breathing muscles cause the breath to move in and out. When the diaphragm muscle contracts, it moves downward, causing air to enter the lungs and displacing the contents of the abdomen. This pushes the abdomen out and is often referred to as “belly breathing,” even though no air enters the belly. Many of us, especially women, have learned not to let the belly expand as we breathe. This tendency has to be unlearned in order to perform Dirgha Pranayama. In the mid-lung or thoracic region, inspiration (inhalation) is assisted by the intercostals muscles between the ribs, which, when engaged, lift and spread the ribs, causing more air to flow into the lungs. Finally, to fill the upper region of the lungs, engage the scalene and sternocleidomastoid muscles in the neck to lift the clavicles and first three ribs slightly, creating additional space for more air. Movement in this area is very subtle, but if you inhale fully you will feel your clavicles rise slightly.

Instructions:

1. Sit erect and relax your abdomen.
2. Place your palms on your belly and breathe into your lower lungs, feeling your diaphragm drop and your belly expand into your palms. Repeat several times.
3. Shift your palms to the sides of your rib cage, and breathe into your chest feeling your rib cage expand to the sides. Repeat several times.
4. Place your fingertips on the front of your chest just below your collarbones. Breathe into the upper part of your chest and feel your hands lifting. Repeat several times.
5. Combine all three in-breaths to make a Dirgha Pranayama inhalation.
6. Exhale completely, gently contracting the abdomen to squeeze out residual air.
7. Repeat this cycle several times, moving your hands to the different parts of your body. Focus on filling and emptying your lungs completely.
8. Rest your hands in your lap and continue this breathing pattern for several minutes.

Contraindications:

- Any irritation of the throat or sinuses
- Any respiratory infection, especially if contagious

Effects:

- Calms mind and enhances introversion
- Complete exchange of air in lungs
- Oxygenates blood
- Releases tension in chest and abdomen
- Provides a gentle massage to abdominal organs, improving digestion
- Facilitates a deeper experience of postures and increases holding time

Awareness:

This may be challenging to learn for beginners who are reverse breathers. Reverse breathing means that their habitual way of breathing is to contract the belly on the inhalation. You can breathe into the lower lungs, allowing the belly to expand on each inhalation until this becomes comfortable.

Teaching Tool:

Lie on the floor and do the three-part inhalation. You can make the breath more pronounced if you elevate the chest by lying over a pillow or a rolled up sticky mat. Be sure that the head is still resting on the floor or a cushion so as not to compress the vertebrae in the neck.

UJJAYI

OCEAN-SOUNDING BREATH

This breath is performed by taking long, slow, deep breaths while slightly contracting the back of the throat in the area of the glottis. This subtle muscular contraction creates a hissing sound in the back of the throat that sounds like the rising and falling of the ocean waves. Once mastered, the sound is made by fully relaxing the same area of the throat.

Instructions:

1. Sit erect and relax your abdomen.
2. Begin Dirgha Pranayama and repeat it several times.
3. As you breathe, gently contract the back of your throat so that you are making a soft, continuous hissing sound like the sound you hear in a seashell. Do this on both the inhalation and exhalation and keep your mouth closed the whole time.
4. Continue the deep breathing and explore how loudly you can make the sound, but do not strain. Focus all of your attention on the sound.
5. Breathe, making this sound for several minutes, and then sit quietly and feel the effects.

Contraindications:

- Any irritation of the throat or sinuses

Effects:

- Calms mind
- Complete exchange of air in lungs
- Oxygenates blood
- Releases tension in chest and abdomen
- Strengthens breathing muscles, as pulling air through the contracted glottis takes more effort
- Facilitates a deeper experience of postures and increases holding time
- Generates introversion of mind
- Increases concentration
- Increases breath control

Awareness:

Ujjayi Pranayama can be done with any full, deep breath. Dirgha is used as the foundation with beginners. When using Ujjayi Pranayama during postures, you will not be able to use the complete Dirgha breath due to the compression of different parts of the torso in many of the postures.

Teaching tools:

- Visualize you are fogging a mirror as you exhale through your open mouth. Hold your hand as if it were a mirror. On the inhalation visualize the mirror in the back of your throat. This will help you to make the Ujjayi sound. Once they can make the sound with their mouths open, they can gradually close their mouths and continue the breath.
- Have your students say the word “Home” several times drawing out the ‘Hhhaaooo’ sound. Next have them say it on the inhalation, and finally have them gradually close their mouths as they make the sound.
- If your students are having difficulty hearing their breath, have them close their ears.

Notes:

You may wish to hold the breath for a few seconds at the end of the inhalation and/or at the end of the exhalation. This tends to produce more focus.

Another way of practicing the Ujjayi breath is to connect the inhalations and the exhalations, leaving as little space between them as possible. Allow the inhalations and the exhalations to follow a continuous circular flow.

NADI SHODHANA

CHANNEL-PURIFYING BREATH

Instructions:

1. Sit erect and relax your abdomen.
2. Repeat Dirgha and Ujjayi Pranayama for several minutes to center and relax.
3. Close your right nostril and slowly inhale through your left nostril. (You may use Vishnu Mudra if you wish.)
4. As soon as you finish inhaling, close your left nostril and exhale through your right nostril.
5. As soon as you have exhaled through your right nostril, inhale through your right nostril. Close the right nostril and exhale left. Continue this pattern (exhale, inhale, switch).
6. After several minutes of breathing in this way, begin to slow down your inhalations and exhalations. Do this very gradually. As the meditative quality of your practice deepens, you will be able to breathe even more slowly. Let the slow pace be a reflection of your mind slowing down.
7. When you are ready to end your practice, release your hand to your lap and exhale through both nostrils. If you are doing complete rounds, you will finish by exhaling through the left nostril. A round is an inhalation and an exhalation through each nostril once. (You may practice Nadi Shodhana for up to 15 minutes in one sitting.)
8. Sit quietly for several minutes and feel the effects.

Precautions:

- Any irritation of the throat or sinuses
- Any respiratory infection, especially if contagious

Contraindications:

- None

Effects:

- Calms mind
- Complete exchange of air in lungs
- Releases tension in chest and abdomen
- Generates introversion of mind

Notes:

Do not count. Many traditions teach a ratio of inhalation time to exhalation time. In Kripalu Yoga we find that if you count, you create tension in the body. If you relax into the Pranayama, you will find that over time a ratio will develop but in a way that is organic. Let the in breath and the out breath flow at their own pace, and as you practice, the breath will slow down.

If you would like, you can combine Ujjayi with Nadi Shodhana to create even more introversion. If using Ujjayi causes tension, let it go.

If the pattern of inhalations and exhalations through opposite nostrils causes tension, release the Pranayama and relax for a few minutes before resuming

From Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

Atha Yoga Nushasanam

Atha yoga nushasanam

Now the inquiry of yoga

Kleśā (sanskrit) is a term from Indian philosophy and yoga, meaning a “poison.” The third *śloka* of Patañjali's Yogasūtra - (a Hindu text) explicitly identifies Five Poisons (Sanskrit: *pañcakleśā*): Avidyāsmītārāgadveṣābhiniveśāḥ pañca kleśāḥ

This may be rendered in English as:

- Ignorance (in the form of a misapprehension about Reality) (ávidyā),
- egoism (in the form of an erroneous identification of the Self with the intellect) (asmitā),
- attachment (rāga),
- aversion (dveṣa) and
- fear of death (which is derived from clinging ignorantly to life) —abhiniveśa— (abhiniveśāḥ)

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