

PARAYOGA MASTER TRAINING  
KOSHAS: UNLEASHING THE SCIENCE OF SOUL  
Yogarupa Rod Stryker

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## **TIBETAN COLOR PURIFICATION TECHNIQUE**

### **Introduction**

### **Purification of the Physical - Mental/Nervous System and Causal Bodies**

The Purification Breathing Exercise transforms the physical, mental/emotional, energetic and casual bodies. An exceptional technique of *laya* yoga (the yoga of dissolution), it engages the mind's capacity to direct and affect the pranic body. It is a powerful and wide-ranging practice, positively accelerating evolution of all the koshas and touches deep into the heart of tantric practice and its goals.

### **Practice**

#### **Physical Body - Repeat 4 Times**

Block the left nostril with the left thumb. Ring and little fingers rest on the mound of the thumb. Breathe RED LIGHT in and out of the right nostril.

BREATHE IN for a count of 9, drawing in red light through the top of your head flooding the physical body with its energy.

HOLD BREATH for a count of 18, feeling red light pulse through the body, charging every cell in it.

BREATHE OUT for a count of 9, feeling every cell vibrant with ruby red light.

#### **Mind/Nervous System - Repeat 4 Times**

Block right nostril with right thumb, ring and little fingers rest on the mound of the thumb. Breathe BLUE/GRAY LIGHT (Thunder cloud gray) in and out of the left nostril. BREATHE IN for a count of 9, drawing blue-gray light in through the top of your head, flooding the brain, pouring down the spine and the rest of the nervous system.

HOLD BREATH for a count of 18. Flood the nervous system with this light. Feel the body mapped by electric blue-gray chords of light that tingle at every nerve ending. BREATHE OUT for a count of 9.

#### **Causal Body - Repeat 4 Times**

Hands on the knees, thumbs and index fingers touching.

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Breathe in through your mouth, drawing breath through throat with the sound AWWW, BREATHE IN for a count of 18, with the sound of AWWW, visualize a beam of VIOLET LIGHT rising from the base of the spine until it reaches the mid-brain. HOLD BREATH for a count of 9 “seeing” a violet ball of light firing in the brain. BREATHE OUT for a count of 18, from the back of the throat, with the sound KEEE. Feel violet light burst from the spine and brain, creating an aura of violet light.



## IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

### INTRODUCTION – PANCHA KOSHA – THE FIVE SHEATHS:

Kosha means sheath or layer. The basic concept is of a covering, something that obscures true or clear illuminative wisdom and understanding. These coverings create the illusion that we are finite beings. *Kosha* is *maya*. The teaching about the koshas is called “*pancha kosha*,” and is first described in the Taittiriya Upanishad.

The koshas provide the seminal teachings that help us understand ourselves and our lives, shedding light on the various manifestations of consciousness. They are the basis for unconscious thoughts, actions, feelings—in short, the koshas link us to finite reality and shape all of our experience and destiny.

Practice has been given to us to heal the pain that arises from the three fires of pain (*tapas*).

1. Physical pain
2. Mental/Emotional pain
3. Spiritual pain

Hatha Yoga Pradipika (1:10) identifies these three types of pain and their treatment:

- Physical pain is resolved through physical, mental and spiritual means.
- Mental pain is resolved through mental and spiritual means.
- Spiritual pain requires spiritual means (i.e. a spiritual ailment only needs a spiritual solution).

	Physical Treatment	Mental Treatment	Spiritual Treatment
Physical	X	X	X
Mental		X	X
Spiritual			X

All and any of these three pains can be eliminated by right understanding of the koshas and the correct methods to address them. We must also understand the process as progressively working from the more superficial “coverings” to the most subtle layers.

The Five Layers (or bodies)—a quick look:

- 1) Physical
- 2) Mental
- 3) Energetic
- 4) Body of Pure Intelligence (the Inner Teacher)
- 5) Bliss

Consider the concept of “event horizon” – this deals with the limits of perception—your reality changes when you change your perspective. Once your “view” is expanded, your assumptions of what is real is transformed and thus create a new event horizon.

The goal of practice as it relates to the koshas is two-fold:

1. Transcend all the layers/koshas/confinements. You must understand the nature of your limited perspective—if you’re going to get out of prison, you’ll need to know where the locks are and how to access the keys. We reach for transcendence of all five layers. This leads to the highest state of freedom/*moksha*—you are now no longer bound or deluded by any *kosha*.
2. How do you best condition each layer in order to fully thrive. You look to refine, purify and exalt each layer to unleash its fullest potential.

### THE FIVE SHEATHS:

2. *Annamaya kosha* – the physical body.  
*anna* = food, *ma* = she, divine mother, *ya* = measure, *maya* = She who measures. The body is totally reliant on food. When we are done with the body, it will become food for something else.
3. *Pranamaya kosha* – the energetic body.  
PRA = first, ANA = smallest unit, all of life is built on this “first unit”. It is most accessible as breath.

Together, the *annamaya* and *pranamaya* koshas are sometimes referred to as the “*atmapuri*” or “the City of the Soul” because they are said to comprise the region of the soul (body plus energy). In short, this means that for the unawakened mind, the animated body is all that we believe ourselves to be.



4. *Manomaya kosha* – the field of all thought and feeling. This includes both the lower mind (our world - thought and emotion, imagination, memory, feelings, ideas, and beliefs) and the higher mind—the higher use of will, discernment, decisiveness. The mind's capacity to “see” or create experiences, to collect itself and become sensitive to *prana* is one of its most essential features as it relates to the practice of *tantra* and yoga.
5. *Vijnanamaya kosha* – pure intellect, highest aspect of *buddhi*, intuition and will. This is the “inner teacher” as well as the seat of “*dhi*” (the part of us that knows or is knowing and the unbounded power to act on it).
6. *Anandamaya kosha* – the body of bliss also referred to as the Causal Body – the most subtle sense of self-awareness. This is the seat of *ahamkara* (“I-am-maker”). The most subtle aspects of *chitta* and *samskara* that shape our karma—how long you live and the basic conditions of your life. This is the *ananda* of *satchitananda*. *Sat* = the light or spark of existence, *chit* = complete self-awareness, *ananda* = bliss, peace, joy.  
*Anandamaya kosha* is where all our karmas—good and bad—are held, and it is what shapes our individual destiny. Our potential karmas (*sanchit*), those that rest in potential form (in the *anandamaya kosha*) can be either activate or dormant. The key to happiness and success is to purposefully engage the *manomaya* and *vijnanamaya* koshas so that you activate the karmas stored in the *anandamaya kosha*—increase the most beneficial potentials and negate those that are non-productive.

Ultimately, koshas are part of the field of *maya* (illusion). At each layer there is illusion, compelling you to identify with that particular layer. I am my body; I am my mind; I am my breath, etc. **Behind all layers is soul—beyond gender, time, suffering, age and even karma.** Even identifying with bliss is an illusion.

How do you work with the koshas? Work with each of the five bodies to reach a level of ease, balance or wholeness—when each is sufficiently refined, you can move more easily to the next and more subtle sheath.

- The relationship between the bodies and where they meet is important. When you refine the body, the mind will get clearer, energy will move more freely.
- If you change your energy, you can more easily affect the mind positively.
- If you focus your mind, you can change our energy.
- When the mind is refined enough, it becomes a medium to enter the domain of the inner teacher.
- From the clear light of the inner teacher, you can most effectively access and positively influence the bliss or causal body.

## ANNAMAYA KOSHA

The body is a shrine, the altar of life. The body is also your material memory, a field that records and retains all that you do, think and eat. When it accumulates memories that are less than dharmic, the innate, shining of *atman*—the inner shrine—becomes obscured.

Thus, you will need to address these obstructions. Until you do so, you cannot effectively access the highest layer or, at the very least positively affect the next layer—*pranamaya kosha*.

Addressing the needs of the body, your focus is to balance, heal, purify and detoxify. You will work physically as well as energetically (i.e. nadis, doshas, vayas) in order to most positively impact the physical.

In terms of practice you generally address the needs of *annamaya kosha* in this order:

1. Autonomic nervous system (ANS), and by extension respiratory system
2. Digestion/Elimination (both physical as well as energetic)
3. Muscular mobility/stability balance
4. Tonify viscera/internal organs
5. Navel center—activate the seat of inner transformation, assimilative fire, transformation, integration and strength

### TREATING ANNAMAYA KOSHA (THE LARGER CONTEXT)

- Chronic physical issues are generally related to the first three chakras. Therapeutically, you'll focus primarily on third chakra, either through *asana* or meditation. (Note that chronic mental issues are also addressed here—navel center).
- Mind addressed at third and fourth chakras.
- Spiritual issues focus on fifth, sixth and seventh chakras.
- Relaxation and purification (diet, lifestyle and asana) are the keys to enlivening the physical body as well as being able to transcend it.

The goal of practice, related to the physical body, is to create steadiness so the body shines and the system returns to qualities of ease, purity and lightness. The goal is not to subjugate the body or its needs, but to refine and balance it, so that it is fully enlivened.

Just because you can transcend a sheath, does not mean it has been optimized.

Specific yogic methods that address the physical systems:

1. Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) and by extension respiratory system:
  - a. 5-10 minute restorative holds. First 10-15 seconds body responds by contracting in order to protect. Longer holds (more than 30 seconds, ideally 30-60 seconds)
  - b. BREATHE! 1:1 or 1:2; lengthen exhale
  - c. Long holds of 5-10 minutes in supported postures provide profound benefits to the nervous system.
  - d. *Yoga nidra*. The most vital element for positively affecting the physical body is relaxation. Depending on the practice, *yoga nidra* targets any one or more of the 5 koshas.
  - e. At a basic level, YN offers deep rest and healing to *annamaya kosha*.
2. Digestion/Elimination (both physical as well as energetic) + tonify viscera/internal organs:
  - a. Move dynamically, and then longer holds (1-5 minutes)
  - b. Twists and Forward bends (twists for kidneys and digestion/elimination; forward bends for elimination).
  - c. *Focus on exhale; descend/release all tensions, contractions, stagnations*
3. Muscular mobility/stability balance:
  - a. Dynamic approach/repetition
  - b. Movement linked to breath
  - c. Strong muscular action in pose
  - d. Link exhale to abdominal contraction/lift
4. Skeletal:
  - a. Dynamic movement
  - b. Weight resistance and weight bearing techniques
5. Navel center—the seat of inner transformation, assimilative fire, transformation, integration and strength. Navel is the seat of the subtle aspect of fire—*jataveda*—the fire that knows everything about you, complete knowledge of you, your potential, the solutions to your challenges, your potential destiny (sometimes referred to as *bhuta agni*—the fire that digests your ghosts.):
  - a. Abdominal/core work
  - b. Leg raises
  - c. *Uddiyana bandha*
  - d. *Agni sara*
  - e. *Mantra (i.e. Gayatri, Ram bija)*
  - f. *Pran & Apan* to ignite *agni*

g. Meditation at navel, inner fire

Additional Notes on YN:

61 Points: 2-4 second holds in 39 places. 15 – 20 minutes

75 Breaths: (no *ujjayii*) ~ 15/20 minutes

10 breaths Top of Head > Soles of Feet  
10 breaths Top of Head > Ankles  
5 breaths Top of Head > Knees  
5 breaths Top of Head > Pelvic Floor  
5 breaths Top of Head > Navel (skip 2<sup>nd</sup> chakra, possible sleepiness)  
5 breaths Top of Head > Heart  
5 breaths Top of Head > Throat  
5 breaths Top of Head > 3<sup>rd</sup> Eye  
25 breaths Tip of the Nose > Crown of the Head

\*For Restorative Asana Practice for ANS and adrenal fatigue see the practices at the end of manual.

According to the tradition, steadiness and stability in the body, *sukham* and *sthiram* are the basis for gaining access and being able to transform mind (create lasting change and insight).

By slowing down the body, our thoughts are more easily recognized and analyzed. Once the lower mind is still, the unconscious mind rises to conscious awareness and the higher mind can process what is otherwise unseen.

Thus, you use *asana* to still the body; *pranayama* to ease and soothe the nervous system; meditation to focus and quiet the mind.

Finally, from the view of *tantra*, the next sheath—*pranamaya kosha*—is the key to reversing the negative impact on the physical body (the result of non-dharmic action, thought and diet).

### **PRANAMAYA KOSHA**

To the ParaYogi, the role of the energy body is to:

- Transmute the negative effects of thinking and feelings on the physical body
- Accelerate spiritual evolution

How do you move *prana* or enliven the subtle body? Move your breath; move your

body; move your mind (energy follows thought).

On mind as a source of moving and transforming the energy body: one aspect of the mind is key—the mind's innate ability to conjure feeling (*bhavana*) or create image or even intention, visualization.

EACH THOUGHT PRODUCES A RAY OF PRANA THAT AFFECTS THE BODY AS WELL AS THE MIND.

The capacity of the mind to create positive change is dependent on the quality of *prana dharana*: make mind / pranic field highly concentrated and collected, then take the full force of *prana* toward the object of choice, as opposed to taking the mind toward an object in order to make the mind whole.

Initially, the 6<sup>th</sup> chakra is the seat of sensitization of *prana*.

The ETHERIC BODY is shaped by mind (energy follows thought) made up of chakras, nadis, vayus, doshas and subtle- doshas.

1. *Chakra*:

*Muladhara* – place of the root

*Svadhithana* – dwelling place of the Self

*Manipura* – city of gems

*Anahata* – unstruck (sound), place where no pain can enter

*Vissudhi* – pure

*Ajna* – I command

*Bindu* – point (from which all life originates)

*Sahasrara* – thousand petalled

2. *Nadi* – meaning, “river, current, tube, channel, stream.” These are the channels through which the vital subtle force flows. *Nadi* becomes blocked with impurities—internal, external, mental / emotional, physical, environmental.

3. *Vayu* – influence both physical and mental states. The *prana* vayus are the five subsets of *vata* – the movement of air, energy, the animating quality. In the body, *Vata* manifests in five ways. Each *vayu* has physical and mental expression, influencing both.

a. *Apana* – at the pelvic floor (between the reproductive area and the base of the spine), moves downward, descending; it is the force behind elimination (perspiring, urination, menstruation, defecation). Also relates to mental elimination, releasing information and experiences that are no longer helpful. When *apana* is strong, elimination is strong. When *apana* is weak (or stuck), it leads to stagnation—mental and / or physical.

- b. *Samana* – in the abdomen, the equalizing force, the energy of assimilation. People with strong *samana* naturally assimilate their experiences and food. *Samana* brings quiet and stillness, homeostasis.
  - c. *Pran* – in the heart and head, it moves inward and upward, a recharging and energizing force. *Pran* is related to inhalation and our five senses—taking in information requires energy. If you have low *pran*, you are burnt out, overwhelmed, unable to take in more “stuff.” *Pran* deficiency is wide-spread due to the over-stimulation, lack of sensory control and the constant outpouring of vital force.
  - d. *Udana* – in the throat, it moves upward, ascending, expanding, it regulates the enthusiasm of growth, voice and expression. It refers to the growth of body and personal development. A lack of motivation and inspiration is symptomatic of low *udana*.
  - e. *Vyana* – located everywhere, our aura, a distributive force that ties all the other *vayus* together. This is the subtle vital force that organizes and integrates all the other *vayus* as well as mind to body and body to breath.
4. *Dosha* – more physical than mental. *Dosha* = “defect” or that which has a tendency to go out of balance. Each *dosha* is susceptible to specific diseases and tendencies.
- a. *Vata* – governs energy, breath, nervous and sensory systems, responsible for balancing tissues and organs. When *vata* is too high, you lose connection to your body.
  - b. *Pitta* – heat, digestion, assimilation, analytical, systematic, ambitious. Tends to run hot / angry, too intense, needs cooling, rest and expansion.
  - c. *Kapha* – consistent, generous, good endurance. Prone to stagnation, phlegm, mucus.
5. Subtle *dosha* – whereas the central idea with the *doshas* is to wisely manage (i.e. reduce or balance) them through discipline and right action, the universal approach to the subtle *doshas* is to increase them.
- a. *Prana* – the subtle energy of air. Gives intelligence, coordination. Life-force. Increased *prana* provides enthusiasm, creativity, adaptability. Increase *prana* through *pranayama*, meditation (space and sound), and raja yoga.
  - b. *Tejas* – Inner radiance. Perception, digestion, impression, thoughts, will, power. Increased *tejas* provides courage, fearlessness, insight, confidence, assimilative strength and capacity. *Tejas* is charisma. Correct *tapas* becomes *tejas*. Increase *tejas* through control of speech,

- mantra, concentration, *jnana yoga*, abdominal work, *uddiyana bandha*, self-reflection. Probably most weak or needed in *kapha* types.
- c. *Ojas* – prime vigor, the vehicle of prana. Stamina, essence, bodily fluids – the vital force. Increased ojas provides peace, confidence, patience, steadiness. Increase ojas through: diet, herbs, control of sexual fluids, bhakti, ritual. Profuse sweating does not help.
  - d. The subtle doshas go in that order of difficulty to build.
    - Prana* – can generate by breathing.
    - Tejas* – need to look at mind and get rid of what you don't need.
    - Ojas* – need devotional and nurturing practices to build.
  - e. Kaphas have most ojas. Pittas burn up ojas. Vatas by their nature have the least of it and, due to their excitability, use up ojas quickly.

**VAYU BREATH ANALYSIS:** the practice of learning to observe breath patterning in order to analyze which particular *vayu* is weak or out of balance.

- Person to be observed lies down, a blanket under their spine, with the fold approximately six inches above the sacrum.
- The chin and forehead should be level, parallel to the breast-bone. Student establishes diaphragmatic breathing.
- Breathe in, first filling toward the pelvic floor (the seat of *apana*); breath expands in all directions, moving upward and ends as the collar bones rise.
- Watch the quality and ease of movement at each location, as it relates to the location of the *vayus*. Also, observe the points of transition between each of the main four locations; *vyana* is what links each of the other four *vayus*.

**HAND MUDRAS** – These are all helpful for *pratyahara*. Three types of hand mudras:

1. Pranayama – hand positions to facilitate breath into parts of lungs.
2. Vayus – hand positions to increase pranic flow to specific *vayus*.
3. Meditative – hand positions that affect consciousness.

## HAND MUDRAS FOR PRANAYAMA

1. *Gyan mudra* and *chin mudra* – the index finger connects to the thumb. It is the same *mudra* if the index finger drops to the base of the thumb; this is to quiet and calm the ego.
  - a. *Gyan mudra* – attitude of intuitive knowledge, done with the palm down. Palm down is generally more grounding.
  - b. *Chin mudra* – attitude of wisdom or consciousness, done with the palm face up.

- c. Both of these help us work and activate the lower lungs, these are for *apana*.
  - d. Connects the *chi* points of lungs and small intestine.
2. *Chin maya mudra* – the thumb and index finger come together while the rest of the fingers touch the middle of the palm. The palms face down. It is for *Samana*, it activates the middle lobes of the lungs. It is said to affect healing from the navel to the throat.
  3. *Aadi mudra* – bring the thumb into the palm and close the fingers around the thumb. The palms can be up or down facing. This *mudra* is for *PRAN* or *udana*, activating the upper chest. *Pran* – palms down. *Udana* – palms up.
  4. *Brahma mudra* – take *aadi mudra* and bring the hands together, thumbs away from the body, little fingers toward the body, the knuckles are brought together (second and third knuckles). The back of the hand is down, let the hands relax in the lap. This is the attitude of all prevailing consciousness. It is for *vyana*.

## HAND MUDRAS FOR VAYUS

The *vayu* mudras have *mudra*, *mantra*, location, visualization, and feeling. Meditation in practice – should be spiritual, working at causal level or intellectual level or mental or energetic.

1. *Apana*
  - a. Thumb, index, and middle finger touch
  - b. “*Om apanaya Swaha*”
  - c. Dark blue triangle pointing downward, lightning grounded into earth.
  - d. Feel grounded and stable
2. *Samana*
  - a. Thumb, little, and ring finger touch
  - b. “*Om samanaya swaha*”
  - c. Multi-colored spiral behind navel
3. *Pran*
  - a. Thumb, middle, and ring finger touch
  - b. “*Om pranaya swaha*”
  - c. Meditate in the head (Pran in head and heart)
  - d. See brain absorbing white light and energy (good for helping a slight headache)
4. *Udana*
  - a. Thumb, index, middle, and ring finger touch
  - b. “*Om udanaya swaha*”
  - c. Blue lotus in throat
  - d. Feeling of head floating off neck



- e. Energy, ascending
- 5. *Vyana*
  - a. All fingers together
  - b. In heart – wheel spinning, sending rays of orange light outward
  - c. “*Om vyanaya swaha*”

PRANAYAMA --- According to the sage, Vyasa, you’re ready for *pranayama* when:

1. The body is steady, stable and able to hold a sitting posture with some level of motionless.
2. The exhalation is long and smooth, uninterrupted.
3. The mind has developed some level of awareness of or connection to an infinite state of being. Experience yourself as spacious—a vast, empty sky.

*Pranamaya kosha* – regulate breath, *nadi shodhana*, *prana dharana*, *kriya*, visualization, *mudra*, *bandha*, chanting.

*Prana* is the bridge to consciousness. The Upanishads state, “*Prana* is the bow, *atman* is the arrow, *brahman* is the target.”

### WORKING WITH FATIGUE

The recommended course when dealing with extreme fatigue or adrenal exhaustion: longer holds in forward bends and shorter holds (less than 30 seconds) in twists build *pran* through *pranayama*, *kriya* and meditation.

This increases the regenerative force of *pran* without over-stimulating and thus further depleting adrenals.

### MANOMAYA KOSHA

You purify the physical body through: diet, exercise, fasting, perspiration, breath, yogic cleansing techniques (*sat karmas*), nutrition and relaxation. How do you purify the mind?

1. *Jnana yoga* – the yoga of knowledge (discernment, insight). Take responsibility for your experience—trace all experiences back toward *atman*, in the process you gain access to the light of discernment. You become both therapist and patient. This approach is filled with challenges, in as much as you are using the mind to uncover the mind’s confusion—*jnana yoga* is an intellectual, analytical path.
2. *Raja yoga* —whereby you create steadiness in the mind. Focus the mind. Only when the mind is still can you move beyond the mind and fully recognize its contents. Until that time, *gyana yoga* is not easily accessed.

*Asana, mantra, meditation, kriya yoga and pranayama* are essentials to reach a clarity of mind.

In short, your mind is conditioned by past experience. You bring all this stuff with you, which obstructs clear perception, clouding your desires, expectations and self-awareness. There is no confusion in the field of a clear mind. “Nothing remains hidden to a mind perfected through the power of concentration” (Vyasa).

*Samahitam*, from the same root as *samadhi*—“a state where all questions are answered.” The solution appears at the same time you see the problem clearly.

Patanjali generalized mind, calling it all *chitta*. To understand the specifics of mind and its four functions, we turn to the teachings of Vedanta.

#### THE FOUR ASPECTS OF MIND:

1. *Manas* – 5 senses + that faculty that discerns what it is perceiving. Reactive Mind. Its job is to maintain keep the status quo, taking in information to ensure your safety. This is the reactive, most primitive function of mind. No deliberation, no pre-meditation. Yogic solution: Calm it, get quiet.
2. *Asmita* – I-am-ness. Loosely translated as ego. *Asmita*, born from *avidya* creates a false identity. Not seeing yourself as *atman*, infinite being, *asmita* creates a limited self-image, steeped in misapprehension. *Asmita*’s orientation is to ensure your mistaken sense of self is protected / maintained. Yogic solution: Empty it by experiencing identification with that which is beyond all limitations.
3. *Chitta* – the storehouse of all impressions (*samskaras*)—conscious and unconscious and not confined to this lifetime. These impressions feed *asmita*. Its function is to orient you to the familiar, to what is known and comfortable, thus ensuring that your current experience is consistent with your past experiences. Yogic solution: decouple from the charge you associate to your memories—you are increasingly free of your past.
4. *Buddhi* – the part of mind responsible for: discerning, deliberating, deciding. Yogic solution: increase clarity, strengthen your decision making process. There are three stages to the process of decision making—three levels of development for *buddhi* (the Decider):
  - Instant gratification. Increase Pleasure / Remove Pain, rooted in the intention to get as much “pleasant” as possible and as little “unpleasant” as possible.
  - Social agreement. The basis of morals and ethics. Born from the recognition that it is my self-interest to take care of you and follow accepted social patterns. This can be at the level of family or place of origin, friends, work, socio-economic status, etc.
  - *Buddhi* as a servant of *dharma*. Highest level, examples such as Gandhi, Socrates, Jesus, free of all concern about what others

believe. Serving the highest recognition of Truth; behavior not confined by “norms,” hearing the call to action that may not make sense to the rest of us.

In short, the processes of yoga and *tantra* are used to still *manas*, dissolve *asmita*, create new impressions in the field of *chitta*, and refine as well as strengthen *buddhi* through accessing *atman* and exercising the muscle of conscious choice.

Emotions are born from *asmita*—self-image. *Asmita* + *dosha* + *vasana* (*samskara*) + *guna*.

*Manas*, *asmita* and the lower stages of *buddhi* form the lower mind. Initially, higher mind dawns as a refined *buddhi*, as it becomes more and more infused with the power and distinct characteristics of *atman* (*prajna* and *karuna*—wisdom and compassion). The idea is to uncover, refine and strengthen *buddhi* through practice—the “yogic solutions” described above

A refined and evolved *buddhi* doesn’t avoid painful thoughts or emotions, does not see them as enemies or something to discard. Instead, *buddhi* uses its power of discernment, asking what they can teach. Prior to inquiry, it is unlikely you can know your thoughts and feelings as guides—where they are trying to lead you. Some may be vital to listen to and others should be discarded.

Consider: an emotion like jealousy. Is your experience of jealousy rising from insecurity or is it an indication that deep in your heart you want to shine (as demonstrated in the person of whom you are jealous)? In other words, your jealousy is a call to excel. If it is about being insecure, then it is critical that you become more secure. If its source is born from a desire to shine, you need to figure out how to fully shine.

Depending on the root desire that is the source of the emotion or thought, there needs to be a different response.

The process for coming to this state of elevated understanding is clear reason, discernment, called *vichara*. *Vichara* is wisdom that liberates, freeing you from unconscious patterning.

The core of the “*vichara* process,” developed by Yogarupa and approved by his teacher, Pandit Rajmani Tigunait is two-fold:

- Part One: *Karma Chakra* (*wheel of karma*).

*karma* (action) -> *samskara*

## (impression) -> *vasana* (tendency) ->

Action produces impression. Strong impressions create strong tendencies—both positive and negative, which then create a pattern of new actions. Thus, *karma chakra*.

- Part Two: The precursor of every thought/emotion and every action is a desire. All desires arise from impressions. For a refined *buddhi*, none of this need be unconscious. Enslaved to the karma chakra, there is a minimum of free will.

The *vichara* process is best done after meditation or, as one perfects it, whenever your mind is clear and able to access *buddhi*.

1. Recognize one or two main thoughts that came up during the practice.
2. Trace each thought back to a desire. Trace the thought back to a desire, until you can trace it to the seed desire. Go deep.
3. Determine where seed desire is arising from: lower or higher mind. Sometimes the desire can be partially lower and higher mind.
4. Finally, determine how you will respond. "The purpose of life is to learn how not to suffer." To respond consciously, you have two choices: Contentment and Adjustment.
5. In order to apply either or both Contentment and Adjustment, meditate regularly to develop more *shakti*.
6. Even for those who do meditate regularly, there are some patterns that do not respond to your intention. This is when access to the next *kosha* is critical, in order to access a. the Fire of Self-Knowledge (*prajna*) or b. the Light of Divine Surrender.

**Anxiety is symptomatic of not responding to buddhi's call for change.**  
**Depression is not responding to the anxiety.**

Chronic clinical depression is real—something that most yoga teachers are unqualified to treat without working alongside a clinical psychotherapist.

To help students work with, change or prevent anxiety or depression you must address:

- ANS (depression can mean an over-activated parasympathetic condition)
- *Prana*
- Mental patterning (through chanting, intention, self-care)
- Life-style
- Inquiry into beliefs or change life? (in most cases, self-analysis will not break the pattern of suffering; attempting to change the mind

while still under its influence is difficult; blocking momentum makes looking at the content of the mind more accessible, and so our inner wisdom can flourish. Very often drugs make it more difficult to meditate, which is why *pranayama* and *yoga nidra* can be helpful.

## VIJNANAMAYA KOSHA

*Vijnanamaya kosha*: the inner teacher, the body of higher discriminative intelligence, body of pure will.

The hunger for a teacher is the search for knowing your inner teacher! You search for someone who knows you, knows what to do, someone whose will is perfected, who can handle anything and never loses sight of the path. They are endowed with the power that neither seeks to avoid or deny pain, knowing that it can reveal more wisdom and freedom.

*Vijnanamaya kosha* is the body of self-mastery—awakened *buddhi*. Few human beings know it. Developing it = more intuition, more will, a supreme intellect and the ever present voice of conscience.

*Vijnanamaya kosha* is the intuitive body; it is essentially the highest expression of the most refined *buddhi*. Accessing *vijnanamaya kosha* requires that the activities and patterns of the lower mind have been stilled. Everyone is capable of intuition, everyone has an inner teacher, and everyone has a conscience. The less stuff in the mind, the more intuitive you become. Get the mind clear.

Now awareness bridges mind and causal realms, which allows you to bring conscious awareness to determine who you are and who you will become.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna reveals a description of the two approaches to meditation that allow you to overcome the deep patterns and hidden prejudices of mind. These are the two paths, using meditation to evolve mind toward spirit, from a state of dysfunction to optimal functioning, to transform your mental/emotional imbalances into your inherent self-luminous nature.

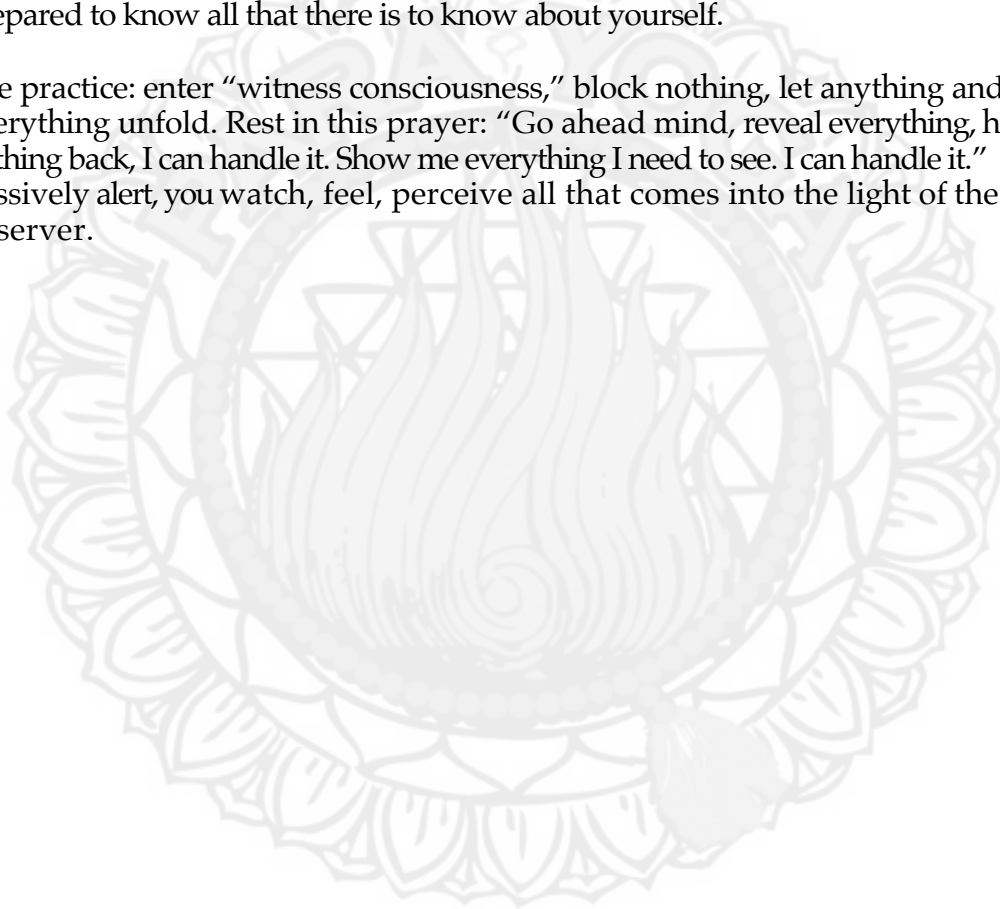
**1. One-pointed awareness.** Be like the tortoise, draw yourself into your shell and hold one-pointed focus. Strongly internalize your attention through unbroken intention. Hold fast to the light—the highest aspect—*atman*. This will empower you to rest and become absorbed in the Essential.

Now you can face the vagaries of the world, and remain fiercely contained in the highest truth. *Maha mudra* is a metaphor for containing our internal force.

The practice: Hold the light of the teacher, undiluted, un-fragmented, adamantine. Swamis wear orange because it is the color of fire. To be a swami means your fire burns so bright that everything can be consumed by it. The fire in this case is the fire of the inner teacher. Experience all impressions / thoughts subsumed into this fire. When this fire is strong enough, whatever it consumes makes it stronger.

**2. Be like the ocean** – everything flows into it, nothing is denied. If you meditate to suppress thoughts, the issues causing that thought may never be resolved. Meditation means “attending to” what is present, meaning... suppress nothing. In this work, you become like the ocean. Repress nothing, abide in the *bhav* (sentiment) where everything is embraced and you are open and prepared to know all that there is to know about yourself.

The practice: enter “witness consciousness,” block nothing, let anything and everything unfold. Rest in this prayer: “Go ahead mind, reveal everything, hold nothing back, I can handle it. Show me everything I need to see. I can handle it.” Passively alert, you watch, feel, perceive all that comes into the light of the observer.



The Four Dimensions Of Speech (*vak*), three are hidden and the fourth is the domain of words, spoken and thought:

1. **Vaikhari** is articulated or audible speech—the lowest expression of sound. This is outward expression, articulated thought, which attempts to describe external, finite, physical and mundane objects and forms. Can't convey God or even the deepest feelings or perceptions. Related to the *annamaya kosha* + some *manomaya kosha*.
2. **Madhyama** (Middle—mid way between spiritual and mundane). This is the level of ideation / myth; mental speech. Also, perceived sound in the subtle or pranic world. This is silent sound, beyond intellect. Related to the *manomaya* and *pranamaya kosha*.
3. **Pashyanti**, pure perceiving of sound, the purest and most subtle form of *mantra*, the sound vibration heard in the causal world; it means "seeing speech." Knowledge experienced in the states of awareness is "seen," without the use of the reasoning faculty or sensory data. Now *mantra* becomes *anahata nada*, "unstruck sound," pure feeling, eternal vibration breathing in you as you. Related to the *anandamaya kosha*.
4. **Para-Vak**, the source of the soundless sound, the highest form of sound. It issues forth from the Eternal, from where sound / vibrations are the source of all worlds—manifest and unmanifest, pre-existing in an undifferentiated state. Individual is subsumed into the One, dual and non-dual are one. Beyond the koshas. Para is the language of the Rishis (Seers)—pure telepathic.

General Steps to Japa Practice:

- 1) Do some *asana* practice – be efficient
- 2) Pure Breath
- 3) Dawning of Awareness (*buddhi* awakens)
- 4) *Prana dharana* – something is breathing you, light / awareness in the 3<sup>rd</sup> eye, expand to encompass heart
- 5) Invoke Lineage: *sampradhyaya* ("that which gives eternally")
- 6) Invoke *mantra shakti* – replace your body with a divine body. You are the Divine. experiencing itself. The Bhav. Non-Dual awareness.

### ANANDAMAYA KOSHA

The last *kosha*, the body of bliss is also known as the Causal Body as well as the domain of *ahamkara* ("I-am-maker") This is the most subtle covering of the *atman*, the most subtle sense that you are unique, "This is me; I am this," a reality separate from the Absolute.

*Ahamkara* is more subtle than *asmita*. Whereas *asmita* is loosely the same as what we call "ego," *ahamkara* is much more essential, the cause of your being

uniquely who and what you are. *Ahamkara* is the original identification of separateness that gives unique shape to the forces of *prakriti*, without which you do not come into form. This is the abode of *samskara* and *chitta*, active and dormant karmas. The seat of *jiva*, this is where the unconscious and the soul meet.

This means that *anandamaya* is so subtle it is all but impossible to transcend, The only way to realize a state beyond it is to end the pattern of identification—you must be even beyond identification with “nothingness, light, meditative ecstasy or *sattwa*.” This is the essential state of *kaivalya* (aloneness)—the highest aim of yoga.

To reach the causal body, you establish yourself in inherent joyousness. To transcend it, you practice negation. This practice is called *neti neti*, meaning “not this, not that.” You now rest in the existence of non-existence, pure non-dual awareness. You are nothing, you own nothing, you aspire to nothing, you hold onto nothing, you are attached to nothing. You are no longer identified with any “thing.” You are consciousness, beyond all conditions, you are the Absolute.

### **SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WORKING WITH THE KOSHAS**

*Annamaya* – see *annamaya kosha* section for the work of asana, its goals and vital approaches. Consider the work that focuses on navel center.

*Manomaya* – longer holds lead to psychic cleansing. Breath affects the mind field (the four components) more efficiently than any other modality. Consider the work that focuses on the navel center.

- *Nishta dharana* (breath meditation awareness at navel) – to harmonize physical functions (digestion, equilibrium point, *samana*) and empower mind.
- *Prana shuddhi* meditation – mental alternate nostril breath, seeing air flow evolve into pranic intelligence, awakens third eye and sensitivity to prana, stills the activity of the lower mind.

*Pranamaya* – use the *asana*, visualization, meditation, hand mudras, chanting and mind / *kriya*.

- First achieve a peaceful mind.
- Tibetan Color Purification Technique — the culmination of balancing the physical, mental and causal bodies.
- Causal body is an egg-shaped aura around the body. In the third stage, you work with violet light that purifies the causal body, making it accessible.
- *Chidakasha* unravels the unconscious, awakening the higher



potential of mind (*buddhi*).

- *Kriya* is a profound precursor to meditation, aligns the first 3 bodies.

*Vijnanamaya kosha* – establish the body of the inner teacher, both methods (the tortoise and the ocean approaches) we practiced are meaningful. Choose one and practice it consistently.

#### Anandamaya kosha

*Neti neti* – the un-joining, letting go of all ideas, the path to disconnecting from the most subtle things that bind you to *maya*.

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Meditation centers. Where to meditate: the third eye, navel, or heart?

1. Navel - out in the world, defining self in those terms.  
Positive aspect – vibrantly in the world, positive sense of self.
2. Heart – the center of independence, truth, compassion.  
Positive aspect - not looking for outside objects to validate us. *Dharma* abides here.
3. Third eye – seat of mastering the lower mind.  
Positive aspect – become master of inner and outer world. Can be in either world and in full glory. The forces of nature follow your command to benefit you and others.

Formulating a spiritual practice means becoming as integrated and capable as possible. How do you measure this? Joyfulness and fearlessness.

If you are doing your practice and you don't feel you are increasing these qualities, one of the koshas is blocked and is not being integrated.

Work with the most superficial layer first. If you find you can work with this layer, then move to the next layer. Start with the body, and then go to the mind...

## THE PRACTICES:

### Day 1 Annamaya Kosha

- Navel Centered Asana w / *nishta dharana* or light in the navel center meditation
- 61 Points
- Restorative practice for ANS and adrenal fatigue

ANNAMAYA KOSHA—A RESTORATIVE PRACTICE FOR ANS AND  
ADRENAL FATIGUE:

*Vipartti karani* (legs up wall w/bolster) 8-15 minutes  
*Sukhasana* Forward Fold (head on blanket) 3-5 minutes  
*Uttanasana* (head on block) 3-5 minutes  
*Padottanasana* (head on block) 3-5 minutes  
*Adho Mukha Svanasana* (head on block, ideally with ropes) 3-5 minutes  
Supported Shoulderstand (sacrum on block) 7 minutes (\*optional)  
Lying Twists (knees below hips) 5 breaths each side, 4 times (keep the length of the hold shorter to keep it *langhana*)  
*Janu Sirsasana*  
*Savasana*

Day 2 Pranamaya Kosha

- Heart Centered Asana into *Prana Dharana*
- Vayu Breath Analysis Practice
- Hand Mudras for Pranayama and Meditation
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chakra Focus and Self-Healing Meditation

Day 3 Manomaya Kosha

- *Sukham/sthiram* practice into *chidakasha*
- *Vichara*
- *Asana* leads to Color Purification Technique

Day 4 Vijnanamaya Kosha

- Long Holds as a Mirror to the Mind and Access to the Inner Teacher (Meditate as the ocean (“I can handle it...”))
- Practice leading to dissolving all thought into the Light of the Teacher

Long Hold Practice As A Mirror To The Mind And Access To The Inner Teacher

1. *Balasana* (child’s pose) – 5 minutes
2. *Adho mukha svanasana* (down dog) – 5 minutes
3. *Uttanasana* – 5 minutes
4. *Prasarita padottanasana* (forward bend - legs spread wide) – 5 minutes
5. *Tadasana* (mountain pose) – 5 minutes
6. *Bhujangasana* (cobra pose) – 3 minutes
7. *Salabasana* (locust pose) – 3 minutes
8. *Dhanurasana* (bow pose) – 3 minutes
9. *Setu bandha* (bridge pose) – 5 minutes
10. *Eka pada raja kapotasana* (pigeon pose both sides) - 5 + 5 minutes

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KOSHAS: UNLEASHING THE SCIENCE OF SOUL  
Yogarupa Rod Stryker

11. Half spinal twist (both sides) – 4 + 4 minutes
12. *Baddha konasana* (bound angle with forward bend) – 5 minutes
13. *Paschimottanasana* – 5 minutes
14. *Savasana* – 8 minutes

Day 5 Anandamaya Kosha

- Practice leading into *Neti Neti*



**UNDERSTANDING OF KEY CONCEPTS**  
**IN YOUR WORDS**

1. What are the five koshas and what techniques can be helpful to balance and purify them?
2. Describe the effects of shorter and longer holds on the body and mind.
3. What are the Prana Vayus and how are they significant to a yoga practice?
4. What is the relationship of Pranamaya Kosha to the mental and physical bodies?
5. Describe one technique and its desired effects used in the training for Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha, and Vijnamaya Kosha.

