



*Samadhi*

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Lecture

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## The Five Koshas

				
<b>Anamaya Kosha</b>	<b>Pranamaya Kosha</b>	<b>Manomaya Kosha</b>	<b>Vijnanamaya Kosha</b>	<b>Anandamaya Kosha</b>
The physical body (bones, muscles, organs)	The energetic body (nervous system, prana, nadis)	The everyday uncontrolled mind and emotions	The witness conscious, awareness of the self & other koshas	The bliss inherent in ourselves, our connection with the divine

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## Anandamaya Kosha: Bliss Body



- The innermost sheath is the bliss body, the everlasting and pure part of our selves that is not affected by the swirling physical sensations, energetic fluctuations, mental or emotional upheavals, or intuitive blockages
- It is said to be the size of a mustard seed seated in the sacred interior (energetic) heart

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## Samadhi



- The highest state of meditative consciousness that one can achieve while still bound in the human body, and leads to spiritual liberation
- Enlightenment reveals the ultimate truth of reality - ALL IS ONE!
  - We move beyond the duality of good/bad, dark/light
  - Beyond even the fluctuations of the mind (emotion, desire, memory, ego-driven thoughts)

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## What are we Being Liberated From?

- According to dualistic Samkhya philosophy, Ananda is the bliss achieved by releasing the soul from the shackles of the human body through practicing the 8 Limbs of Yoga.
  - Body and soul are separate.
  - Goal is for the soul to become liberated from the cycle of reincarnation.
- According to the non-dualistic Vedanta philosophy, the nature of bliss is finding liberation while the soul is still embodied through practicing the 8 Limbs of Yoga.
  - Body and soul are all already one.
  - Goal is for soul to find Samadhi in this life.

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*Yoga Nidra*

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Practice

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## What is Yoga Nidra?



- Yoga Nidra is a systematic method of guided relaxation that has a profound effect on the body, mind and emotions. You enter the stages of deeper relaxation where you turn your awareness to the inner landscape, away from external experiences

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## Benefits of Yoga Nidra



- Balances autonomic nervous system, reduces sympathetic activity
- Reduces stress in the moment and increases stress hardiness
- Increases body awareness, awareness of sensations, and the connection between the brain and body
- Enables conscious mind to withdraw so subconscious mind can move to the forefront, this may bring with it thoughts, memories, and conditioning to be released
- Engages both the intuitive/right and logical/left hemispheres of the brain
- Can reduce pain by stimulating the release of natural analgesics, increased body awareness can also act to reduce chronic tension.
- Increases creativity and ability to visualize
- Provides deep rest (30 min nidra = 2 hours sleep)

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## To Stay Awake, or Not to Stay Awake?



- A 50-yr-old has fallen asleep at least 18,250 times. In yoga nidra you are trying to maintain this in-between state so you are working against a very ingrained habit of falling asleep from the alpha state.
- So many of us are so chronically sleep deprived that yoga nidra may be one of the only times we can really let go.

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## The Hypnagogic State

- The hypnagogic state is a temporary state that lasts 3-5 minutes as we naturally fall asleep. It is a state where we are able to release physical tensions, sometimes resulting in jerking body movements.
- Awareness of the external world dissolves and the dreaming subconscious mind begins to take over or thought processes.
- Through the process of yoga nidra, we learn to stay rooted in this Alpha state of brain function, turning our attention toward the internal landscape of sensation, thought and breath while staying conscious of the instructions being given. Resulting in a profound experience of relaxation and connection to our witness

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## Alpha Brain Waves



- **Wakeful Rest (8-12 cps)**
  - Hypnagogic borderline between wakefulness and sleep
  - Deep relaxation, place of visionary states, conscious dreaming, archetypal imagery, superconscious mind (turiya)
  - Where mental coordination, alertness, mind/body integration occurs
  - Increases positive feelings of compassion and love
  - Promotes serotonin production, greater immune function, heart regulation
  - Yoga Nidra increases alpha waves

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## Structure of a Yoga Nidra Session

1. Introduction
2. Relaxation
3. \*Sankalpa
4. \*Body Scan
5. Breath Awareness
6. \*Dualities
7. Rapid Image Visualization
8. Guided Journey
9. \*Repeat Sankalpa
10. Return

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## What is a Sankalpa?

- The word Sankalpa translates to:
  - Idea, volition, conviction, thought, persuasion, intention, will personified, declaration of purpose, will, determination, wish
- It isn't just a wish to be fulfilled but a more profound idea that enables a connection to our highest truth.
- While creating intention, give yourself time to look at your core beliefs, especially those about worthiness that are outdated, and you are ready to move beyond
- The Sankalpa should address some ideas we have about ourselves that are hindering our spiritual progress.

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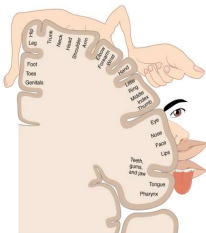
## Two Types of Sankalpa

- **I AM Statement**
  - This type of Sankalpa is a statement of your innate worth and goodness
    - I am peace
    - I am happy
    - I am healed
- **Goal/Wish Fulfillment**
  - This type looks at your goals and guides you to take a specific step toward that goal
    - I focus on the positive
    - I love and accept myself in every moment
    - My work fulfills me financially, mentally, and emotionally


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## Body Scan



motor homunculus

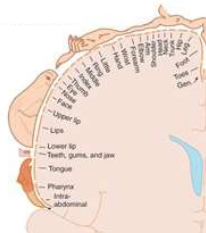


- Also called the rotation of consciousness, this is a sensory journey through different parts of the body to increase body awareness, eliminate mental chatter, and engage the witness.
- Engage as many channels of communication as possible: auditory by listening to the teacher's voice, speech by repeating the body part, visual by imagining the part externally, proprioceptive by feeling the part internally, kinesthetic by sensing movement from one place to the next.
- Works from within the motor cortex of our brain there is a neuronal map of the parts of the body called the homunculus or "little man". The images show a pictorial representation of the primary motor cortex


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## Body Scan, cont.



sensory homunculus



- A simplified version of the tantric practice *nyasa* where a golden Om was visualized in every part of the body until it was filled with golden light, this was used to increase focus and awareness.
- The body scan can be done in any order but it is helpful to not skip around too much. Give students ample time to feel each body part before moving on to the next
- The body scan is part of the yoga nidra practice but helpful as a standalone practice for relaxation, anxiety and insomnia
- The scan connects the origin of the motor nerves in the brain to the ending of the nerves in each part. As you go through the rotation of consciousness, you are activating parts of your brain associated with parts of your body which in effect, relaxes the mind by relaxing the body.
- The images show a pictorial representation of the primary somatosensory cortex

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## What are Dualities?

- Pairs of opposites move the awareness of sense perception and moves from the physical experience of the body in the Body Scan through the koshas to the mental/emotional experience.
- The witness consciousness enables a memory or experience of the pairs without allowing the thinking mind to dwell on what they might trigger within us - we can recall an experience or intense feeling without reacting emotionally.
- It also makes us aware of the duality of our experiences, that they are neither inherently good nor bad.

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## Rapid Image Visualization



- A list of physical, mundane, and archetypal images to seed the imagination and engage the witness seen on the chidakash or mind screen.
- Everyday objects, elemental images, symbols of human development, feelings, natural scenes, etc.

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## Guided Journey



- The journey should always take you to the deepest parts of yourself and into the experience of oneness.
- The journey seems to take you out there, but it's really guiding you into yourself and that experience of Samadhi and Ananda (liberation and bliss)

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## Repeat Sankalpa



- Repeat the same sankalpa that you created at the beginning of the practice three times to yourself.
- The second time you say the sankalpa you are often deeper in a meditative state
- This repetition waters and fertilizes the seed of the healing intention more deeply in the consciousness.
- Return to wakefulness by moving from the subtle kosha levels back to the physical.

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## Returning to Wakefulness

- Move back through the koshas from the subtle to the physical
- Move into experiencing the thoughts and emotions, then the breath, then the physical body, then the outer room.
- Maintain awareness of the present moment
- Transition from lying on the back, to bending the knees, rolling to the side, sitting up and keeping the focus inward for a little while.

