

SADHANA SERIES

INSTRUCTION GUIDE

This booklet offers brief instructions for the practices which are included in all three of the *Ananda At Home* video and audio series.

GUIDED MEDITATIONS

- ~ Superconscious Living Exercises
- ~ Energization Exercises
- ~ Guided meditation sessions

ANANDA YOGA

- ~ Energization Exercises
- ~ Short yoga session
- ~ Longer yoga session

COMPLETE ROUTINE

- ~ Superconscious Living Exercises
- ~ Energization Exercises
- ~ Short yoga session
- ~ Short guided meditation

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SUPERCONSCIOUS LIVING EXERCISES

Repeat each exercise several times, or as much as you like.



1

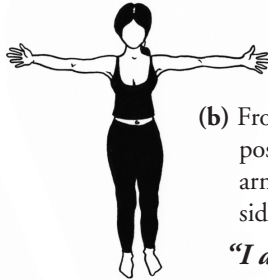
Walking vigorously
in place, affirm:

***“I am awake
and ready!”***



2

(a) Starting
position



(b) From the starting
position, fling the
arms out to the
side, and affirm:

“I am positive!”



(c) Bring the arms
back briefly to
the starting
position, then
thrust them out
in front of you,
affirming:

“Energetic!”



(d) Bring the arms
back
briefly again to
the starting
position,
then fling them
high
above your head,
coming up onto the
toes, as you affirm:

“Enthusiastic!”



3

Rap your knuckles lightly on the forearms and upper arms, first with the right fist, then with the left, affirming:

***“I am master of my body,
I am master of myself!”***



4

Rub your arms, legs, hips, chest, and other parts of the body while affirming:

***“Awake! Rejoice,
my body cells!”***



5

Rap your scalp lightly with your knuckles, affirming:

***“Be glad, my brain!
Be wise and strong!”***



6

Massage your scalp lightly all over with the fingertips, affirming:

***“Awake, my sleeping children!
Wake!”***

GUIDELINES FOR PRACTISING THE ENERGIZATION EXERCISES

Awareness of cosmic energy

While your concentration should be at the centre of the muscle or muscles you are tensing, you should try to become increasingly aware of the flow of cosmic energy which enters the body through a subtle doorway, located at the medulla oblongata, at the base of the brain, and floods downwards, directed by the will power. Once you have learned the exercises, try to keep your eyes closed and directed upwards towards the centre of will power, at the point between the eyebrows.



Use conscious will during the exercises

The energy flow is directed to the various body parts through the instruments of our will power and concentrated mind. Try to apply Yogananda's axiom, "*The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy.*" with each exercise.



"Tense with will, relax and feel"

During the tension phase of each exercise, we deliberately and gradually bring each muscle from low to high tension, and then vibrate it with great will power. The vibration phase should be done with as much power as possible, without exaggerating to the point where the muscle becomes damaged. During the relaxation phase we gradually bring the muscle to a state of complete relaxation, feeling the flow of energy infusing the area which has been energized. Both the tension and the relaxation phases should be gradual and smooth, increasing and decreasing in a flowing rhythm. In this way we bring the flow of prana under our conscious control, an ability which we can then use in all aspects of life.





Double Breathing

Some of the exercises require “double breathing,” while in others this breathing pattern is not necessary, or is optional. Double breathing allows you to inhale and exhale more deeply and to oxygenate the blood. The double inhalation is done by using the diaphragm to draw into the nostrils (with mouth closed) first a sharp, short inhalation, followed immediately by a longer, smoother inhalation. The double exhalation follows the same pattern, with a short and then a longer exhalation from the mouth and nose, with the sound “ha-haaaa.”



Isolate each muscle

Do your best to focus on one muscle only (in some exercises concentration is required on two or four muscles simultaneously), causing only that muscle to vibrate. There are, of course, fibres which connect many of the muscles, so complete isolation is not possible. To obtain the maximum benefits from these exercises, attempt to visualise and focus in the centre of the appropriate muscle or muscles, while maintaining the other muscles relaxed. Energy follows thought, and the *prana* will arrive to those areas in which our mind is focused.



Where to practice

These exercises can be done in almost any location. It is ideal to practise them in the fresh air, either outdoors or in front of an open window. When these conditions are not possible (while seated on an airplane for example), the exercises can still be done, many of them even in a seated position, or lying down.



Practise regularly and often

The more you practise the exercises, the more capable you become in drawing *prana* into your body and mind at will. Try to practise the entire set at least once, preferably twice a day, and use the 20-part recharging exercise as often as possible. In situations where you are not able to perform them in a standing position (in public transportation, during periods of illness when you are confined to a bed, etc.), you can vibrate those muscles which you can reach, and do the other exercises mentally.



Cautions

If you suffer from high blood pressure, use medium rather than high tension during the exercises. If any muscle has been injured, it should be recharged either with light tension if possible, or if you are unable to tense at all, then do the exercise only mentally. If you have a condition which prevents you from practising any of the exercises as instructed, try your best to approximate the exercise, or do it mentally. If necessary, any or all the exercises can be done sitting in a chair.



Do the exercises joyfully

The will power which is used in performing the exercises is not grim or severe. Yogananda preferred the word “willingness” to indicate an attitude of openness and enjoyment in bringing a nourishing meal of energy to the body. The cells rejoice when we energize. You can keep this affirmation in mind, “*Awake! Rejoice, awake my body cells.*”



THE ENERGIZATION EXERCISES THE PRACTICE

Practice each exercise three to five times, or more if you wish. In those exercises which recharge both sides of the body alternately, always begin on the left side.



PRAYER

“O Infinite Spirit,
Recharge this body with
Thy cosmic energy;
this mind with Thy concentration;
and this soul with Thy ever-new joy.
O eternal youth of body and mind,
abide in me forever and ever.”

1

Double-breathing with palms touching

With your arms extended to the side at shoulder level, and with a double exhalation, bring your arms together in front of you, with the palms touching, and the knees bent. With a double inhalation, tense the entire body upwards in a wave, as you straighten your legs and pull the arms back outward against a resisting force. With a double exhalation relax the body downward, closing the arms again and flexing the knees.





2

Calf recharging, with

3

ankle rotation

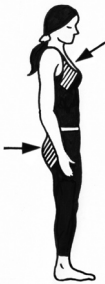
Balancing on the right leg, pull the left leg upwards, bending at the knee, tensing the calf muscle as though pulling against a weight. Relax briefly, and then push the leg down against a weight. Practice three or more times and then rotate foot with tension in the ankle, three times in each direction.



4

Calf and forearm; thigh and upper arm

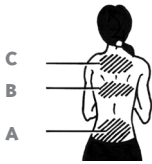
With your weight on the right leg, place your left leg slightly in front, and simultaneously tense the calf and forearm gradually from low, to medium, to high tension, and then vibrate them. Relax gradually in reverse order. Repeat this with the thigh and upper arm muscles. Alternating between the upper and lower muscles, do this three times on the left side, then three times on the right. Then with your weight on both legs equally, tense both calves and both forearms simultaneously, and relax; and then both thighs and both upper arms, and relax. Repeat at least three times.



5

Buttock and chest recharging

Gradually tense and vibrate the left buttock and left chest muscles together, and gradually relax them, and repeat on the right side, alternating left and right at least three times.



6

Back recharging

a) Tense and relax the lower back muscles, in the lumbar area, alternating left and right three times; b) then the middle back muscles, in the area of the shoulder blades; c) and finally the upper muscles, across the shoulders just below the neck.



7

Shoulder rotation

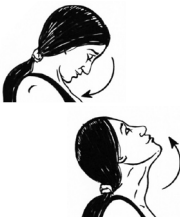
With your fingers resting on your shoulders, rotate the shoulders with tension in large circles, three or more times in each direction.



8

Throat recharging

Tense and relax the entire throat and neck muscles three times, and then alternate on the left and right sides of the neck three times.



9

Neck recharging

With a double exhalation, slowly relax and lower your head until your chin touches or is near your chest. As if the chin were tied to the chest, and with a double inhalation, pull the head slowly up and back, vibrating the neck muscles. Relax slowly downwards with a double exhalation, and repeat several times.



10

Neck rotation, cervical adjustment

Tensing the muscles on the inside and outside of the neck, rotate your head three times in one direction, and then in the other direction. Repeat the rotations without tension.



11

Lower spinal adjustment

With the feet apart, and the arms bent at the elbow and placed at the level of the hips, twist the hips and lower body in one direction while the shoulders and arms move in the other direction. The motions are brisk and defined, moving left and right several times.



12

Spinal rotation

With the feet apart, the hands on the waist, the head in line with the spine and looking straight ahead, bend slightly forward arching the spine. With tension in the arched spine, rotate the upper body at least three times in each direction, maintaining the legs and hips stationary.



13

Lateral spinal stretching

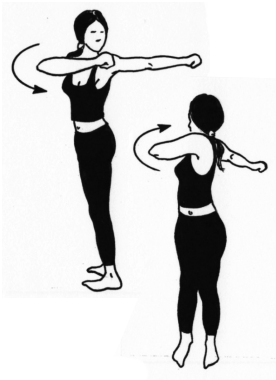
With the feet still apart, hands on the hips, and with tension in the spine, push against that tension to the left, and then to the right, several times.



14

Vertebrae adjustment

Bend slightly forward with your fists pressing firmly on the muscles on each side of the spinal column. Starting at the base of the spine, and pressing inward and upward with the knuckles, arch your spine and thrust the upper body backwards, coming up onto the toes. Repeat this movement with the knuckles positioned one vertebrae higher with each cycle.



15

Upper spinal adjustment

With the feet apart and the arms straight out in front of the body at shoulder height, and keeping the legs and hips stationary, draw the arms back to the left with tension, bringing the right hand to the chest. Relax back to the starting point, and repeat to the right side. The head follows the motion of the arms.

16

Brain cell recharging

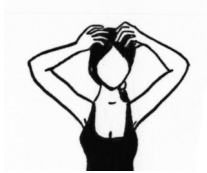
Briskly rap the entire skull and forehead with the knuckles, stimulating the energy in the brain cells.



17

Scalp massage

Press the fingertips firmly on the scalp and move the scalp forwards and backwards, left and right, and then rotate in each direction. Then move the fingers and repeat until the entire scalp has been massaged.



18

Medulla memory exercise

Joining the forefinger, middle finger and ring finger of each hand, place them at the medulla oblongata and with pressure rotate them in small circles in each direction several times. Then bring your head slowly back against the pressure of your fingers, with a double inhalation. With a double exhalation, relax the tension and bring the chin down to the chest, with a decisive but not violent movement. Repeat several times.

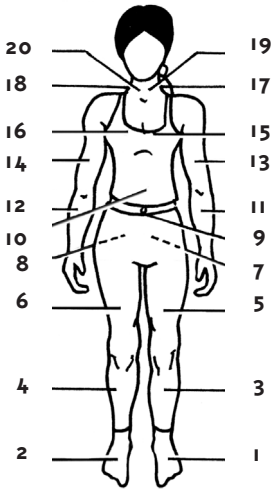




19

Biceps recharging

With your hands clasped over or resting on your head, gradually tense, vibrate and then relax the biceps, alternating to the left and right several times.



20

Twenty-part body recharging

PHASE ONE: With a double inhalation, gradually tense all body muscles simultaneously (low-medium-high), vibrate the whole body strongly, and relax gradually with a double exhalation.

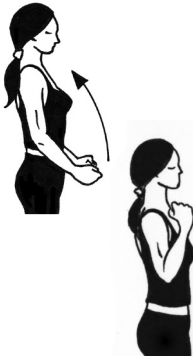
PHASE TWO: Gradually tense and relax each of the twenty body parts individually, alternating from left to right: feet, calves, thighs, buttocks, lower and upper abdominal muscles, forearms, upper arms, chest muscles, neck (left side, right side, front and back).

PHASE THREE: Repeat the exercise, this time maintaining the tension at a medium level in each part, as you slowly inhale. When the entire body is tense, vibrate it briefly and strongly, and then...

PHASE FOUR: Relax each muscle individually in the reverse order as you slowly exhale. Begin the relaxation phase by bringing the chin to the chest and thus relaxing all four parts of the neck.

PHASE FIVE: With the chin still on the chest, take a double inhalation and gradually tense, and vibrate the whole body, and then gradually relax, with a double exhalation.*

*In a conversation with Swami Kriyananda about the exercises, he remarked: "Yogananda continued to refine the exercises. He showed us this addition to the 20-part recharging and instructed us to practice it and teach it this way."



21

Weight lifting in front

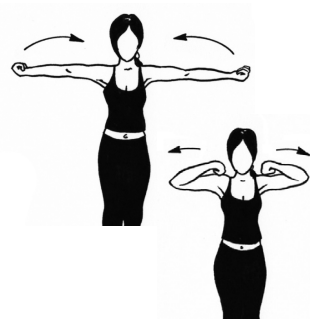
With your arms down at your sides, and the fists facing each other, tense your arms as if you are pulling up heavy weights. Vibrating the arms, bring the fists to your chest, relax briefly, and push them down, with the fists still facing each other. Repeat several times. Optional double inhalation with the upward movement and exhalation with the downward movement.



22

Double breathing with elbows touching

With your elbows bent, lift your arms to the side of the head at shoulder level. With a double exhalation, bring the elbows together in front of the chest as you bend at the knees. With a double inhalation, vibrate and pull the arms back to the starting position, as you tense the lower body in a wave upwards, similar to the first exercise. Repeat several times.



23

Weight pulling to the side

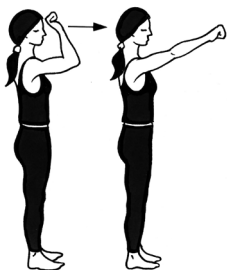
With the arms extended to the sides at shoulder level, and parallel to the floor, clench your fists in an upward position, and draw the arms towards the head, as though pulling heavy weights towards you. Relax briefly and push the arms out again, making them vibrate. Repeat several times. Optional double breathing.



24

Arm rotation in small circles

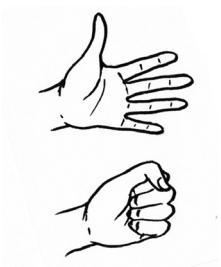
With the arms extended to the side at shoulder level and the fists upwards, rotate the arms in small circles, tensing harder and harder all the time. Then relax momentarily, and rotate in the opposite direction.



25

Weight pulling to the forehead

Begin with the backs of your fists near your forehead. Extend your arms straight out in front, vibrating them as though pushing weights. Relax briefly, and pull the weights back in. Optional double breathing.



26

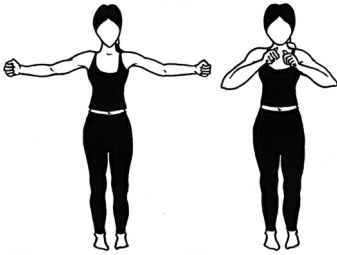
Finger recharging

With the arms relaxed down at your sides, open and close the hands vigorously several times, with tension. Repeat the exercise with the arms extended laterally, then again with the arms extended in front of the body, and finally with the arms extended over the head.

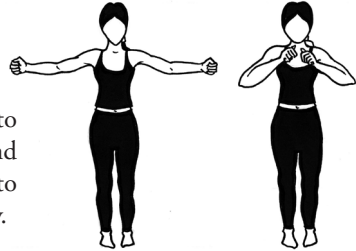


Arm recharging in four phases

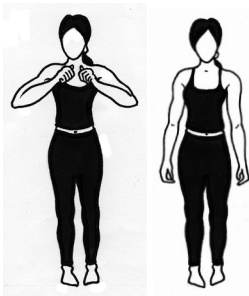
Bring the fists up to the chest in the starting position.



- (a) *While inhaling*, push the arms out to the sides with tension, relax briefly, and then pull them back with tension to the starting position, and relax briefly.



- (b) With tension again in the arms, and *exhaling*, push the arms out in front of you, relax briefly, and pull them back with tension to the starting position.



- (c) Now with tension and a *double inhalation*, lift them over your head, coming onto the toes.



- (d) With relaxed arms and a *double exhalation*, bring the weights down first to the chest, and then down to your sides.



28

Overhead weight lifting

Tense your left arm as though holding a weight in your hand, and inhale with a double breath as you lift it over your head, coming up onto your toes. With a double exhalation, relax the arm as you bring it back down. Repeat with alternate arms, several times.



29

Lateral weight lifting

With the feet apart, tense the left arm as though holding a weight, and with a double inhalation bring the arm up laterally until the upper arm touches the head, bending very slightly to the right side. With a double exhalation relax the arm downwards, and repeat with alternate arms, several times.



30

Walking in place

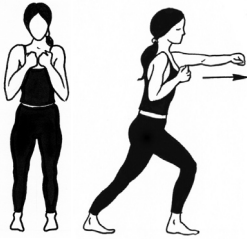
Walk in place with an exaggerated marching step, lifting your knees high and swinging the opposite arm. Continue for 50-100 steps, becoming aware of the energy flowing to and through the body.



31

Running in place

Run in place, lifting the knees as before, and at the same time bring the heels up to touch the buttocks if you can. The arms remain stationary, bent at the elbows. 50-100 steps.



32

Fencing

With both fists on your chest, step forward with your left leg and, with a double exhalation, thrust the right arm and fist to the front, as though you were pushing a heavy door. Keep the spine straight and tense, with tension as well in the chest, the back leg and the extended arm, as you move from the standing to the thrusting position. Both feet are flat on the floor. With a double inhalation, relax and return to the standing position, and repeat the exercise with the other leg and arm, alternating several times.



33

Arm rotation in large circles

As you inhale, lift the tensed arms in a large arc over your head, and with an exhalation bring them down behind you, relaxing them. Repeat at least three times in each direction.

34

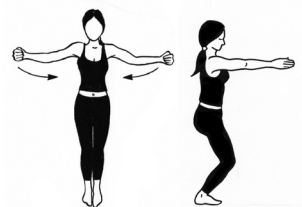
Stomach recharging

FIRST PHASE: known as *udiyana bandha*. Exhale completely, as you bring the upper body forward, resting the heels of your hands on the thighs. With the breath still out, draw your stomach in strongly and hold it against your spine for as long as you comfortably can.



SECOND PHASE: exhale again and resume the forward position, this time drawing the stomach in and pushing it out as many times as you comfortably can.

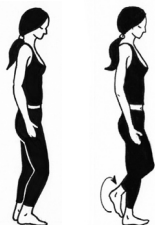
More advanced phases of this exercise are shown on the video



35

Double breathing with palms touching

This exercise is the same as the first one.



36

Calf recharging, with

37

ankle rotation

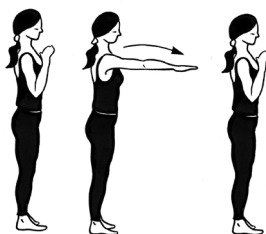
This is a repetition of the second exercise.



38

Hip recharging

Balancing with your weight on the right leg, rotate your straightened left leg in medium circles, with the foot close to the floor, three or more circles in each direction. Repeat on the right side.



39

Double breathing without tension

Keeping your mind at the point between the eyebrows and looking up with closed eyes, bring your hands to the chest, holding them forward. With complete relaxation, and a double exhalation, extend the arms slowly in front of you. Pause and enjoy the flow of energy you feel throughout the body. With a double inhalation slowly draw the arms back to the chest, pausing again to feel the energy flow. Repeat many times.

**ANANDA YOGA POSTURES
SHORT SEQUENCE**



VRIKASANA

(Tree Pose)

“I am calm,
I am poised.”



VIRABHADRASANA II

(Warrior Pose II)

“I joyfully manifest
the power of God!”



VAJRASANA

*(also Thunderbolt Pose,
Diamond Pose)*

“In stillness I touch
my inner strength.”



JANUSHIRASANA

(Head-to-the-knee-pose)

“Left and right and all around,
life’s harmonies are mine.”



SALABHASANA

(Locust Pose)

“I soar upward on wings of joy!”



MATSYASANA

(Fish Pose)

“My soul floats on waves
of cosmic light.”



SAVASANA *(Corpse Pose)*

“Bones, muscles, movement
I surrender now; anxiety, elation and
depression, churning thoughts—
all these I give into the hands of peace.”

**ANANDA YOGA POSTURES
LONG SEQUENCE**



TADASANA
(Standing Mountain Pose)
“I stand ready
to obey Thy
least command.”



GARUDASANA
(Eagle Pose)
“At the centre of life’s
storms I stand serene.”



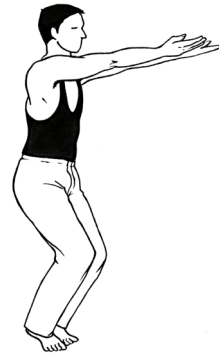
ARDHA CHANDRASANA
(Half-Moon Pose)
“Strength and courage fill
my body cells.”



PADAHASTASANA
(Jack-knife pose)
“Nothing on earth
can hold me.”



**(STANDING)
BACKWARD BEND**
“I am free! I am free!”



UTKATASANA
(Chair Pose)
“My body is no burden;
it is light as air.”



VAJRASANA

(Firm pose, Thunderbolt Pose)

“In stillness I touch my
inner strength.”



SASAMGASANA

(Hare Pose)

“I am master of my energy,
I am master of myself.”



ARDHA MATSYENDRASANA

(Half-Spinal Twist)

“I radiate love and goodwill to
soul-friends everywhere.”



MATSYASANA

(Fish Pose)

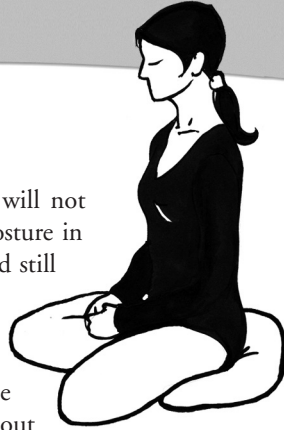
“My soul floats on waves
of cosmic light.”



SAVASANA *(Corpse Pose)*

“Bones, muscles, movement I surrender now;
anxiety, elation and depression, churning thoughts—
all these I give into the hands of peace.”

MEDITATION GUIDELINES



Choose a quiet place where you will not be disturbed, and a meditation posture in which you will be comfortable and still for the duration of your practice, using either a cushion, kneeling bench or a chair. Try to remain with the spine straight and the body upright and relaxed throughout your practice, with your eyelids closed or half open, and your eyes relaxed and gently directed upwards towards the point between the eyebrows. It is best to meditate on an empty stomach. Before meals is best, or about three hours after a full meal, somewhat less after a snack or small meal.

PREPARATION

Triangular breathing: Slowly inhale, hold the breath, and slowly exhale, using the diaphragm. Make the period of inhalation, holding, and exhalation the same. (Suggested counts 20-20-20, or 12-12-12, or even 6-6-6.) Don't strain. Repeat six to twelve times.

To decarbonize the blood stream, and thereby to calm the body, inhale with a double breath, tense the whole body, vibrating all of the muscles strongly, and then throw the breath out and relax. Repeat three to twelve times.

Mentally check the body to make sure it is relaxed. Periodically, relax the body again during your practice of the technique. Begin your actual practice of the technique by first exhaling, slowly and deliberately.

THE BASIC TECHNIQUE

- ◆ When the breath flows in of its own accord, follow it mentally with the sound, *Hong*. Imagine that the breath itself is making this sound.
- ◆ When the breath flows out of its own accord, follow it mentally with, and imagine that it is itself making, the sound, *Sau* (sounds like “saw”).
- ◆ If at any time the breathing stops naturally, accept the pause calmly. Identify yourself with it until the breath flows again of its own accord.
- ◆ To keep your mind on the breath, if you find it necessary to differentiate between inhalation and exhalation, it may help you in the beginning to bring the forefinger towards the palm as the breath flows in, and away from the palm as the breath flows out.

FIRST PHASE

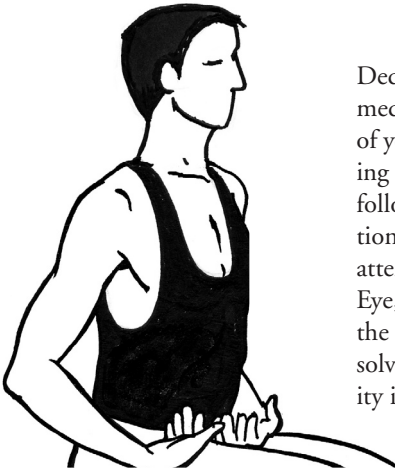
1. If your breath is still restless, you may be more easily aware of the physical movement of your lungs and diaphragm than of the flow of breath in the nostrils. In this case, let the mind follow its natural inclination: Concentrate on the purely physical aspects of breathing - the movement of the rib cage, the diaphragm, or the navel.
2. Gradually, as you grow calmer, transfer your attention from the breathing process to the breath itself.

SECOND PHASE

1. As your attention begins to focus on the breath itself, watch the breath at the point where it enters the nostrils.
2. Gradually, with the progressive calmness of the breath, center your awareness of it higher and higher in the nose. To raise this center of awareness, you may find it helpful if you make a special effort inwardly to relax your nose.
3. As it becomes natural to do so, center your awareness of the breath at the point where it enters the nasal cavity. Feel it in the upper part of this passage, and visualize its movement gently fanning and awakening the Christ center in the frontal lobe of the brain.

THIRD PHASE

1. Become more and more identified with the breath, less and less with your body's need for it to flow in and out. Remember, especially as you grow very calm, that this need may be as much imaginary (the result of deeply ingrained subconscious habit) as actual. Therefore:
2. Particularly concentrate on, and enjoy, the pauses between the breaths. Dwell on the sense of freedom from the tyranny of constant breathing. Beyond enjoying this sense of calmness and freedom, however, do not try to prolong the breathless state by an act of will.
3. Direct the will, rather, toward the thought of becoming the air that is flowing in the nose, or of becoming boundless space at the Christ center.
4. As the pauses become prolonged, you may want to engage your attention in chanting *Aum* mentally at the Christ center.



FOURTH PHASE

Dedicate at least the final quarter of your meditation time to reaping the benefits of your efforts. Let the technique go, using a slow inhalation through the nose, followed by three gentle, slow exhalations from the mouth. Then place your attention and your gaze at the Third Eye, or Christ Center, and silently enjoy the inward states of consciousness, dissolving your identity as an ego personality into the infinite ocean of bliss.

FOR MORE DETAILED EXPLANATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS IN MEDITATION:

The Art and Science of Raja Yoga by *Swami Kriyananda*, available at www.innerlife.it
A Course in Meditation, Eight Lessons with Swami Kriyananda, DVD/CD/MP3, available at <http://www.anandaedizioni.it/sangha/>
Meditation for starters by *Swami Kriyananda*, available at www.crystalclarity.com