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## Role of kriya, mudras and bandha in yoga

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### Abstract

Patanjali says Yoga is the ability to control the modifications of the mind with one's will-power. Regulating the fluctuations of the mind is not a casual pursuit, and is the only achieved through constant practice and with the spirit of renunciation. Even though the mental faculty undergoes a state of stillness at times, this cannot be called yoga. Such a physical state may resemble sleep Fainting fits; catalepsy and hysteria also bring about a similar state of mental inactivity. People affected by such conditions are not conscious of anything, and are not practicing yoga. Kriya yoga is an advanced technique for spiritual evolution that comes down from higher ages of spiritual enlightenment. Part of the ancient science of raja yoga it is referred to by Patanjali in his yoga sutras and by Sri Krishna in the bhagvad Gita. Although the actual kriya technique can only be revealed only to initiates, its purpose and basic nature have been described by both Yoganandaji and Kriyanandaji in their respective autobiographies, in chapters dedicated to this subject. In this study we have discussed about the Kriya and Mudra of Bandh, so that every individual should know about these kriyas which can help them in cleansing of their internal organs. Many points of practicing yoga had been taken into view such as: Place and surroundings, Bath, Dress, Yoga schedule, Physical exercises and sequence of selection of Yogic practices. A word of caution though- Please do not practice yoga without the help of an experienced yoga instructor.

**Keywords:** Catalepsy, fits, kriya, bandha, hysteria

### Introduction

#### Kriya

Kriya (Processes). These are basically the internal cleansing of different body systems. Yogic kriyas can be classified into six broad groups. (Shat karma)- Neti (Cleanses the nasal passages with the aid of water or using friction (by means of a cotton cord or rubber catheter), Dhouti (It is the group of all those cleansing process which clean the food pipe, the stomach and the entire alimentary canal, using water or air as medium and taking the help of long strip of cloth or a rubber tube), Basti(Water and air used to clean the last portion of the large intestine(colon and the anal region), Nauli (Creation of the negative pressure in the thoracic region resulting in the "Sucking in" of the diaphragm, abdominal walls, etc. followed by fast movements of the rectum muscles produced by positive pressure. These together with the play of negative and positive pressures, cleanse the abdominal region.), Kapalbhatai (Cleansing of the air passage right from the nose to the bronchi as also cleaning of the cavities around the nose. The cleansing is done with the aid of air or water.) And Tratak (Stabilizes the gaze and purifies the eyes by using tears formed therein.)

#### Mudras

The meaning of mudra which is a Sanskrit word is 'Closure'. Mudra hand positions are physical gestures that have an effect on the energy flow of the body. The ancient practice of yoga links the hand mudras to the changing spiritual and mental aspects of a person. There are some types of mudras given below are:

#### Vayu Mudra

This mudra can be practiced in standing, sitting or lying down posture. It's easy to do. Fold your finger. As you fold your fingers you can see two bones. These are called phalanx bones. When you have folded your index finger the second bone that you see, you have to press it with the base of your thumb just as shown in the above picture.

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The rest of the three fingers should be kept extended as much as possible. Do this any time of the day as per your convenience. There is also no compulsion of doing this at an empty stomach. You may also practice this mudra with a full stomach.

**Caution:** Once you achieve the benefits from this mudra, stop doing it. After a certain time, it may cause imbalance within your system.

**Benefits:** As the name suggests Vayu mudra, it balances the air element within our body. This mudra releases excess wind from stomach and body thereby reducing rheumatic and chest pain.

#### **Agni Mudra (Mudra of fire)**

Fold your finger and press the second phalanx with the base of your thumb. Keep the rest of the fingers straight. This mudra should be practised only in sitting position early in the morning with an empty stomach. Maintain this mudra for at least 15 minutes every day.

**Caution:** If you are suffering from acidity or indigestion, avoid this mudra.

**Benefits:** It helps to dissolve the extra fat boosting metabolism and controls obesity, it improves body strength, it quickens the digestion, it reduces the stress and tension, it controls the high cholesterol levels.

#### **Prithvi Mudra (Mudra of Earth)**

Touch the tip of your ring finger with the tip of your thumb. Pressing the tips of these two fingers, keep the rest of the fingers extended out. It is preferable that you perform this mudra in the morning. However you may even do it at any time of the day and for any duration. Sit in a padmasana keeping the palms of both your hands on your knees with straight elbows. Perform this asana when you feel stressed out and exhausted. Padmasana accompanied by this mudra will immediately perk you up.

**Caution:** Nothing at all. Perform this asana freely.

**Benefits:** It improves blood circulation throughout the body, it increases patience and tolerance, it increases concentration while meditating, it helps strengthen weak and lean bones and also increases weight of people suffering from low weight.

#### **Prana Mudra (Mudra of life)**

This is a very important mudra as it activates the energy in your body. This yoga mudra pose should be accompanied along with padmasana. Bend your ring finger and little finger and touch the tip of both these fingers with the tip of your thumb. There is no specific time to perform this asana. Any time of the day will be suitable.

**Benefits:** This mudra improves your immune system, it also increases your eye power and also cures any sort of eye disease, it reduces fatigue and tiredness. There are some very important mudras in yoga and are beneficial for your health. Practice yoga every day.

#### **Bandha**

Bandha is a constriction or control imposed on certain part of the body. Bandha what? Bandha is a word I heard my teachers say in class daily, a word that I wrote off as “yogi hippie

crap” until I experientially understood what it was all about. And given that took a fair amount of time (over a year of 7 day a week practice), I am going to lay it out for you so you and your practice can take off ASAP.

In Sanskrit Bandha means to lock, to hold, or to tighten. I also refer to lock in and of itself. There are three principle bandhas in the body, and a fourth that ties them all together. The ancient yogi philosopher said, and I concur, that when you master the locks, you master the yoga practice, the practice on outside- floating in and out of asanas, holding for long periods of time, and managing new positions and the practice on the inside consistent single pointed concentration, steady and long breath, and a calm, clear mind. And in a straight up modern, western sense, the bandhas help you regulate and control all your internal systems, hormonal, sexual, metabolic, digestive and more. Whether you care about the east, the west, or both, the bandhas are the critical factor to a killer you, and to yoga. Note, Bandhas should not be practiced while pregnant.

#### **Mula Bandha**

In Sanskrit mula means root, and thus Mula bandha is the root lock. To find it, sit, stand, or even be in asana, and if you are a man, contract the area between the anus and the testis. If you are a woman, contract the muscles at the bottom of the pelvic floor, behind the cervix. Initially the anal sphincter will also contract, but with time and practice you will be able to hone in on the mula bandha region and leave the rest aside. In a more physiological sense mula bandha stimulates the pelvic nerves, the genital system, the endocrine system, and the excretory system. It has also been shown to relieve constipation and depression.

#### **Uddiyana Bandha**

In Sanskrit Uddiyana means to fly up, or to raise up. To find Uddiyana bandha start standing up tall, feet about a meter apart. Inhale through your nose and reach your arms up alongside your ears. Exhale out of your mouth and fold forward placing your hands just above your knees. Without inhaling close your lips, straighten your elbows, and feel your abdominal wall and organs push up and back towards your back towards your back. It should feel somewhat like a suctioning back up and up of everything on inside. If you are doing it correctly and happen to glance at your profile in a mirror you should see your waist Marilyn Monroe-style tiny winy, with the ribs noticeably protruding over and in front of your abdomen or belly button. Retain as such for as long as possible, and exit the bandha via inhaling through your nose and standing up straight, raising your arms up alongside your ear than exhaling through your nose again as you move your arms down. It is the ultimate remedy for abdominal and stomach ailments, from constipation to digestion. It stimulates your digestive juices, thus increasing your metabolism and tones your over worked abdominal organs. It also balances the adrenal system, relieving stress, lethargy and tension.

#### **Maha Bandha**

Maha bandha is the combination of all the bandhas. Sit in a comfortable seat, on your shins, or cross legged, palms of the hands on thighs or knees, inhale fully through your nose, and exhale completely through your nose. Squeeze squeeze squeeze until every last drop is out. Without inhaling engage Mula bandha and then find Uddiyana bandha. Retain, pressing your palms down, as long as possible. When you have had enough, lift your head, inhale fully, and release all the bandhas.

It gives the benefits of all the bandhas and regulates the entire Endocrine system. And as an added plus, it makes you a much better swimmer and a runner.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion of this study was that the yoga plays an important role in our life. These kriyas will help all individuals to clean their internal organs which will cure them from diseases. The effect of the mudra and bandh will help all players and coaches to enhance their performances.

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