

Prāṇāyāma

A Practical Handbook

॥ श्रीः ॥

Sama Yoga/ॐ Press

Compiled and edited under the direction of
Ākāśa (Sky) Caitanya

Prāṇāyāma: A Practical Handbook

Table of Contents:

Benefits and Techniques	–	–	–	–	Page 1
Health Benefits	–	–	–	–	Page 2
Āyurvedic Recipes	–	–	–	–	Page 3

Nine Prāṇāyāma Disciplines:

Bhastrikā	–	–	–	Page 5
Kapālabhati	–	–	–	Page 7
Nāḍī Śodhana	–	–	–	Page 9
Agni Sāra Dhauti	–	–	–	Page 11
Bhramarī	–	–	–	Page 13
Ujjāyī	–	–	–	Page 14
Śitalī	–	–	–	Page 16
Utgīṭ	–	–	–	Page 17
Anuloma Viloma	–	–	–	Page 18
A Prāṇāyāma Practice with Vedic Mantra	–	–	–	Page 20

Supporting files for this booklet, including jpg images and MP4 videos may be found at:

www.samayoga.info

Prāṇāyāma

Benefits and Techniques

The Sanskrit word *prāṇāyāma* is actually composed of two smaller words; *prāṇa* and *āyāma*. The word *prāṇa* means 'vital life force'. This force directly sustains the gross body, making physical activity possible. It also regulates the flow of cellular 'intelligence'. *Prāṇa* is the subtle aspect of breath, and is a property of the subtle body. It is similar in many respects to the Chinese force called 'qi' (as in qigong) and the Japanese 'ki' (as in Aikido). *Āyāma* (from the root *yam*) means expansion; regulation; deathless. One can unfold the full word to mean 'consciously disciplining one's life force using specialized breathing techniques'. These techniques have been 'revealed' to Humankind by the *Rṣis* (sages/seers with heightened intellects) who are highly revered in the ancient *Vedic* texts. *Prāṇāyāma* can also mean 'regulation of the movement of air while breathing' and 'extension of the breath'.

Prāṇāyāma is used to condition the body-mind complex. It is especially useful for balancing the emotional aspect of the mind. The reasons why this effect is important will become clear when one decides to combine a daily *prāṇāyāma* practice with the study of *Vedānta* under the guidance of a qualified, traditional teacher.

dhāraṇāsu ca yogyatā manasaḥ

धारनासु च योग्यता मनसः

'[By practicing *prāṇāyāma*], the mind gains the strength to deal with unwanted or hindering thought-forms [helping to deepen concentration].'

From the 'Yoga Sūtras' (2:53) of Patañjali

Sixteen Health Benefits Directly Associated With The The Practice Of Prāṇāyāma

- Calms and quiets the mind
- Stabilizes the nervous system
- Balances the endocrine system and hormone levels
- Helps to cure respiratory diseases
- Increases digestive capacity
- Improves the absorption and assimilation of nutrients
- Reduces cholesterol, excess fat and the symptoms of diabetes
- Increases the efficiency of all the organs
- Strengthens the immune system
- Balances the left and right hemispheres of the brain
- Reduces the risk of heart disease
- Regulates bladder and bowel elimination
- Increases overall strength and stamina
- Relieves depression/sadness
- Brings cellular renewal and regeneration
- Brings luster to the skin and the eyes

Āyurvedic Recipes for Maintaining a Healthy Respiratory System

***Rasāyana:* Rejuvenation tonic for building prāṇa:**

- 1 teaspoon of pippali (black pepper)
- 1 teaspoon of honey (local, organic, wildflower is preferable)
- 1 teaspoon of ghī (clarified butter)
- Mix and take at room temperature after the morning meal.
- Note that herbs taken after a meal work more effectively on the upper part of the body.

Supportive, household herbs for decongestion:

Ginger, black pepper, cinnamon, coriander, clove, fennel, basil (tulsi basil and holy basil are preferred), ajwan (celery seed), cardamom (which also neutralizes mucous formation from the ingestion of dairy products), saffron, bay leaves, mustard seed, eucalyptus, camphor (externally), peppermint, honey (which scrapes mucous from the respiratory system; it is recommended one takes honey in combination with any/all of the above).

For dryness in the lungs (and for the colon which is directly related to the lungs):

Slippery elm (for restoring mucous membranes in the lungs), licorice, flax seed, ghī, peaches, (and a yummy one...) a ripe banana mixed with 1 teaspoon of honey, a pinch of black pepper, warm milk and turmeric powder.

Blocked nasal passages:

Some possible reasons for blocked nasal passages may be due to hay fever, allergies, irritation and swelling of the mucous membrane, colds, bacterial infection and dust and dirt inside the nostrils. Difficulty in breathing may also be due to a deviated septum, which will require special attention (an surgical operation or a dedicated yoga practice called *sūtra neti*).

Simple remedies for blocked nasal passages include:

Steam inhalation using ajwan, ginger, eucalyptus, peppermint or any of the VICKS products designed for decongestion.

Jala Neti: Flush the nostrils with salt water in the morning on an empty stomach using a *neti* pot.

Snuffing with a saline solution: Add ½ teaspoon of salt to ½ cup of body-temperature water.

For severe congestion, put 2 - 3 drops of raw garlic juice directly into each nostril with a nose-dropper.

Drink a mixture of fresh ginger with one teaspoon of honey, 2 - 3 times per day.

Foods, drugs or practices to limit when taking on a disciplined prāṇāyāma practice:

Dairy products, cold drinks, ice cream (both dairy- and nondairy-based), hydrophilic substances (any form of salt; hydrophilic foods include chia seeds, pears, okra, oatmeal, barley, Brussels sprouts, kidney beans, chickpeas, oranges and agar), exposure to cold and damp, any kind of smoking or vaping of any substance, over-eating, exhaustion, fever, pregnancy, menstruation, and above all, avoid taking alcohol. It might be prudent, if one has a propensity toward allergens, to find out which foods and substances to avoid by consulting a qualified medical practitioner.

॥ हरिः ॐ ॥

Nine Prāṇāyāma Disciplines

Bhastrikā

भस्त्रिका

The Bellows Breath; powerful thoracic breathing. The purpose of *bhastrikā* is to increase the vital capacity of the lungs. This is done by inhaling fully and deeply with a full thoracic expansion (expanding the front, back and sides of the rib cage).

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position and deeply inhale through the nose.
- 2) Exhale completely with some force to completely empty the lungs (while contracting the diaphragm).
- 3) Deeply inhale through the nose with a quick-filling action that brings an immediate expansion of the rib cage (feeling a stretch all the way around and from the top to the bottom of the rib cage).
- 4) Immediately exhale again with some force, contracting the diaphragm.
- 5) Continue this powerful rhythm of full inhalation and exhalation for 16 rounds while gradually increasing the tempo (imagine a steam locomotive slowly picking up speed).
- 6) After the 16th round, exhale and hold the breath out until the urge to breathe arises. One may choose to engage the *jalandhara* and *uddyāna bandhas* (throat and abdominal locks) for this step.

Benefits of *Bhastrikā*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- dilation of the bronchi
- increased breath capacity
- stimulation of metabolism
- reduction of body fat and cholesterol levels
- reduction of excess weight
- invigorates the gross and subtle bodies
- brings lightness and brightness of mood
- increases circulation to coronary arteries which in turn helps to reduce the possibility of heart attacks
- tones the diaphragm
- improves thyroid function
- increases digestive fire
- helps relieve the symptoms of asthma and allergies

Contraindications:

Avoid this practice if you are menstruating, are pregnant or running a fever. If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, please consult a competent medical practitioner before practicing *bhastrikā*.

Kapālabhati

कपालभति

The skull-shining breath; abdominal pumping breath. The purpose of *kapālabhati* is to stimulate and massage the abdomen and internal organs. This practice will also open up the sinus cavities and clear the nostrils in preparation for the practice of *nāḍī śodhana* (alternate nostril breathing).

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position and inhale through the nose. Feel the striking action of the breath at the brow.
- 2) Start with a very strong exhalation by drawing the navel inwards, emptying the lungs.
- 3) Allow for the inhalation to come naturally as the belly re-inflates.
- 4) Continue this pumping action of the belly, keeping a steady and comfortable rhythm for up to 60 breaths (ideally, with a rate of 1 breath/second, this should take about a minute to complete).
- 5) After the final exhalation of each round, hold the breath out (*bāhya-kumbhaka*) for as long as it is comfortable.
- 6) Make a smooth transition by inhaling and then immediately exhaling, clearing all the breath from the lungs. Inhale again to a comfortable-sized breath and this time hold the breath in (*āntara-kumbhaka*) while engaging the *jalandhara* and *uddyāna bandhas* (throat and abdominal locks).
- 7) Exhale and rest until the heart rate normalizes. More advanced practitioners may choose to perform up to 9 rounds of *kapālabhati* in a ten minute period.

Benefits of *Kapālabhati*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- Strengthening of the heart
- increased oxygenation
- exercises the glandular system which balances hormone levels
- removes stale and toxic air from the respiratory system
- increases mental clarity
- enhances memory
- helps to reduce the symptoms of allergies
- normalizes thyroid/parathyroid functioning
- reduces feelings of depression
- clears the sinuses
- stimulates and strengthens the parts of the brain that regulate the sense of smell as well as the entire limbic system
- increases healthy kidney function
- helps the physical body stay supple and slim
- helps to reduce lumps in the breasts and uterus
- massages ovaries/fallopian tubes
- helps prostate function
- strengthens the abdomen and detoxifies the lungs

Contraindications:

Kapālabhati should not be practiced while menstruating, during pregnancy, during a high fever, in the presence of high blood pressure or if one is suffering from acute lung disease.

Nāḍī Śodhana

नाडी शोधन

Alternate nostril breathing; cleansing of the subtle energy channels. The purpose of *nāḍī śodhana* is to open up the right and left breath channels (both subtle and gross), and to activate the subtle central channel known as the *sūṣumṇā nāḍī*. This will increase overall energy levels and help to balance the mind (stimulating creative power and helping to improve rational thinking).

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. Place the right hand just above the nose, palm down. You should be able to easily close the right nostril with the thumb, and the left nostril with the ring finger (as if one were playing a two-holed flute). The index and middle fingers may be folded in toward at the wrist, or pointing out with the tips of the fingers resting on the area between the eyebrows. Close the right nostril with the thumb, inhaling deeply through the left nostril. Completely fill the lungs with this breath.
- 2) Close the left nostril with the ring finger and fully exhale through the right nostril.
- 3) Keeping the left nostril closed, inhale fully through the right nostril.
- 4) Now close the right nostril (again, with the thumb) and exhale fully through the left nostril. This completes one cycle. Keep the inhalations and exhalations the same length (*sama vṛtti*; with an equal breathing ratio of 1:1).

- 5) Maintain a steady, balanced rhythm for from three to five minutes or 12 rounds.
- 6) As one advances in this practice, one may choose to keep the breath held in for the same duration as the inhalations and exhalations (1:1:1).
- 7) After a few weeks of daily practice, one can modify the breath ratio (inhalation-retention-exhalation) to 1:4:2. This specific practice is known as *sahita-kumbhaka* (breath with retention).

Benefits of *Nāḍī Śodhana*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- gives the mind immediate clarity
- helps to steady the mind
- increases brain health (balancing left and right hemispheres)
- supports healthy hypothalamus and pineal gland function
- helps to regulate all physiological functions and cycles (heating-cooling, sleep, weight, menstrual, etc.)
- helps to clear all 72,000 *nāḍīs* (subtle channels)
- helps to activate the *suṣumṇā nāḍī* (allowing a freer flow of energy with increased brightness and clarity; an overall balancing effect for the body-mind complex)

Contraindications:

Nāḍī śodhana should not be practiced during menstruation, pregnancy or when a fever is present.

Agni Sāra Dhauti

अग्नि सार धौति

Fire washing; massage of the abdominal organs. The purpose of *agni sāra dhauti* is to warm and stimulate the navel center. This is accomplished by first exhaling completely, then pulling the abdomen up and in towards the backbone, and then releasing and contracting it in a rapid, in-and-out movement. This in-and-out action may be repeated as many times as comfortable until a new breath is needed.

Technique:

- 1) Start by standing up straight with the feet slightly wider than the width of the hips.
- 2) Inhale forcefully while raising the arms above the head.
- 3) Exhale fully and forcefully through the mouth while simultaneously throwing the arms forward and bending forward (try to keep the head in line with the spine). This action will remove all the air from the lungs.
- 4) Establish a stable posture with bent knees while keeping the breath out. The hands should be placed just above the knees with the arms straight. The head should continue to stay in line with the spine.
- 5) With the breath still out, use the deeper abdominal muscles to suck the belly up and in towards the backbone. This will create a vacuum (this effect will be prominently felt in the throat). Keep the chin tucked in, 'locking' the throat (*jalandhara bandha*).
- 6) Still keeping the breath out, release the belly outward by relaxing the abdominal muscles.
- 7) Engage the *mūlā bandha* (root lock).

- 8) Repeat this in-and-out movement as rapidly as possible for as long as the breath can comfortably be held out without straining.
- 9) Inhale gently, stand up and stretch the arms overhead to lengthen the belly (again, without straining).
- 10) Repeat.

Start with three rounds. Over time, increase the repetitions to 12 rounds (beginning with 20 'pulls' or as many as possible without discomfort, increasing to 80 'pulls' per breath).

Benefits of *Agni Sāra Dhauti*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- increased digestive power
- kindles *agni* (the fire element of the body which is responsible for transforming all incoming gross material into useable energy)
- purification of the digestive tract
- massages the intestines and reduces flatulence
- develops stronger breath control
- maximizes absorption and utilization of nutrients
- helps protect the body from the possibility of hernia, gall stones and asthma
- reduces fear
- stretches the front of the spinal column
- helps relieve constipation and heal hemorrhoids
- stimulates the secretion of insulin (helping to decrease the risk of diabetes)
- reduces obesity

Contraindications:

Agni sāra dhauti should not be practiced during menstruation, pregnancy, if one has a hernia, or when a fever or stomach ache is present.

Bhramarī

भ्रमरी

Humming (like a bumble bee). The practice of *bhramarī* creates a vibration in the skull (sound therapy for the brain) by focusing the voice internally.

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. To effect the internal perception of the 'humming', the ears and other sense organs in the head will be 'blocked'. Fold the ears forward with the thumbs; place the index fingers lightly over the eyes; place the middle fingers lightly on the nostrils; place the ring fingers just above the top lips pressing lightly downwards; place the little fingers just below the lower lips pressing lightly upwards. This will create a 'sound chamber' in which to perceive the humming of the bumble bee.*
- 2) Inhale, and on the exhale begin humming and keep humming while slowly exhaling. Adjust the pitch and resonance to achieve the maximum vibration inside the skull.
- 3) During this practice, one can also make contact between the tip of the tongue and the dome of the hard palate to further potentiate the effect.
- 4) Begin with 7 rounds of *bhramarī* and over time, increase to 21 rounds.

*A simpler form of this practice would be to close the ear canals with the tragus of each ear using the middle fingers and begin humming.

Benefits of *Bhramari*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- strengthening of the singing voice
- strengthening and stimulating the glandular system
- improved memory and reduction of tumors
- enabling neural networks to maintain a healthy patterning
- activates the secretion of melatonin and dopamine
- relaxes the facial muscles, jaw and sinus cavities
- relaxes the entire nervous system

Ujjāyī

उज्जायी

Victorious (over the fluctuations of the mind). The practice of *ujjāyī* stimulates the thyroid and parathyroid glands by creating a slight constriction in the glottis (the muscles used for swallowing) so that an audible sound can be heard. Note that this is the classical version of *ujjāyī* where the sound produced by the throat is pitched and very high. The arms are active in this practice, with each arm rising alternatively during the inhalations (for timing and for lung stimulation).

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. Close the mouth and with the head tilted slightly forward, pull the chin inwards, maintaining a comfortable constriction in the throat.
- 2) Inhale slowly through the nose drawing air across the throat. This will produce a high-pitched humming sound. Raise the right arm while inhaling. Try to time it so that the arm reaches its apex when the breath has almost completely filled the lungs.
- 3) Hold the breath in for from 4 – 5 seconds.

- 4) Close the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand and completely exhale through the left nostril.
- 5) Keeping the mouth closed tilt the head slightly forward and pull the chin inwards, creating a comfortable constriction in the throat.
- 6) Inhale slowly through the nose drawing air across the throat. This will produce a high-pitched humming sound. Raise the left arm while inhaling. Try to time it so that the arm reaches its apex when the breath has almost completely filled the lungs.
- 7) Hold the breath in for from 4 – 5 seconds.
- 8) Close the left nostril with the thumb of the left hand and completely exhale through the right nostril.
- 9) This is one complete round of classical *ujjāyī* breathing.
- 10) Start with 7 rounds and slowly build up to 21 rounds.

Benefits of *Ujjāyī*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- assisting in the removal of phlegm from the throat
- strengthens the singing voice
- helps to focus the mind
- increases appetite
- helps in the regulation of coughing and fever due to any throat ailments
- stimulates and strengthens the thyroid and parathyroid glands (which regulate hormone levels, thereby balancing the body's natural cycles, for example; sleep, menstruation, cellular growth, etc.)
- has an overall warming effect

Śitalī

शीतली

The cooling breath. The practice of *śitalī* is designed to cool the body temperature (which may be due to heating from vigorous *āsana* practice and/or heating from other forms of *prāṇāyāma*) while calming the mind.

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. Curl the tongue from the sides into a tube shape (some people are genetically unable to do this).^{*} Now, extend the tongue past the lips.
- 2) Slowly inhale through the tongue as if one were sipping air through a straw, dragging the air through the tube of the moist tongue.
- 3) 'Swallow' the air into the stomach and hold the breath in for from 4 – 5 seconds.
- 4) Slowly exhale through the nose. This completes one round.
- 5) Start with 10 rounds and gradually increase to 40.

^{*}If one is unable to curl the tongue into a tube shape, flatten the tongue and press it to the back of the top teeth. Part the lips slightly so that air can pass by the sides of the tongue with a hissing sound. This practice is called *śitkarī* and has the same effect as *śitalī*.

Benefits of Śitalī

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- helps to cool the body
- increases digestive efficiency and a reduction of heartburn and colic
- helps to balance body temperature after rigorous *āsana* and/or *prāṇāyāma* practice

Utgīṭ

उत्गीट्

Opening the gateway of the throat. The purpose of *utgīṭ* is to ease stress and tension from the neck and heart. This is accomplished by smoothly generating sound on the exhalation while fully opening and closing the mouth.

Technique:

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. Take a full inhalation through the nose while keeping the chin slightly tucked in. Have the fingers of both hands resting on the upper chest in the area of the clavicle, pulling the skin in a gentle, downward motion.
- 2) On the exhalation, make three distinct sounds. The sound during the first third of the exhalation will be 'ah' (while the head is slightly tilting back). The sound during the second third of the exhalation will be 'oh' (while the head is stretching up and back as far as it is comfortable). The sound during the final third of the exhalation will be 'm' (the mouth being closed while slightly tucking the chin in with the head still tilted all the way back).

Note: The sounds ('ah' – 'oh' – 'm') should be continuous with no stoppage of the breath. There should be a smooth, continuous movement of the head as well, as it tilts back, suggesting a howling wolf. The hands on the chest actively pull the skin down while the head tilts up and back, stretching the fascia tissue in the throat. Note also that this vocalization should not be confused with the Sanskrit word 'om'.

- 3) Continue for from 3 – 12 rounds, gradually lengthening the duration of the sounds.

Benefits of *Utgīt*

The benefits of the practice include, but are not limited to:

- helps to inspire vocal expression
- reduces facial tension including tension in the mouth and jaw
- helps to overcome shyness
- strengthens the vocal chords
- reduces pressure and tension in the upper body
- helps to open the fascia tissue in the chest and neck
- increases lung capacity
- helps in opening the throat and the throat *cakra*

Anuloma Viloma

अनुलोम विलोम

Alternate nostril breathing with breath retention and paused exhalation. The purpose of *anuloma viloma* is to balance and direct energy flow through the subtle, central channel (*suṣumṇā nāḍī*). This is achieved by practicing steady, rhythmic breathing while applying alternate nostril breathing with breath retention and paused exhalation.

Technique:

This practice is very similar to *nāḍī śodhana*. The difference is the application of *kumbhaka* and the breath retention/paused exhalation ratios. For the sequence of inhalation - retention – exhalation – paused exhalation (keeping the breath out), apply the ratios of 1:4:2:1.

- 1) Sit in a comfortable position. Using the thumb on the right hand, close the right nostril and exhale completely through the left nostril. For the correct hand position, please refer to page 9 (the first technique for *nāḍī śodhana*).

- 2) Begin the sequence, inhaling through the left nostril for a slow count of 4 (this should completely fill the lungs).
- 3) Hold the breath in (*āntara-kumbhaka*) for a slow count of 16 (keeping relaxed and focused on the area of the third eye - *ājñā cakra*).
- 4) Close the left nostril with the index finger of the right hand and exhale completely through the right nostril for a slow count of 8. This should be a slow, deliberate, smooth exhalation.
- 5) Hold the breath out (paused exhalation/*bahir-kumbhaka*) for a slow count of 4.
- 6) Inhale through the right nostril for a slow count of 4.
- 7) Hold the breath in (*āntara-kumbhaka*) for a slow count of 16 (keeping relaxed and focused on the area of the third eye; *ājñā cakra*).
- 8) Using the thumb on the right hand, close the right nostril and exhale completely through the left nostril.
- 9) This completes one round of *anuloma viloma*.
- 10) Begin with 6 rounds and slowly perform up to a total of 12 rounds or more. As one grows more comfortable with the practice, the ratios may be gradually increased; for example, 5:20:10:5, 6:24:12:6, etc.

Benefits of *Anuloma Viloma*

The benefits of the practice are the same as for *nāḍī śodhana*. The benefits with the addition of breath retention and paused exhalation to the practice include, but are not limited to:

- strengthening and fortifying the nervous system
- helps to conquer fear
- helps to extend lung capacity

Contraindications:

Anuloma viloma should not be practiced during menstruation, pregnancy or when a fever is present.

A Prāṇāyāma Practice With Vedic Mantra*

Inhalation: Sit in a comfortable position. For the correct position of the hands, please refer to page 9 (the first technique for *nāḍī śodhana*). Close the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand and inhale through the left nostril (chanting mentally):

om bhūḥ	ॐ भूः
om bhuvah	ॐ भुवः
ogrṁ suvah	ओ॒गँ सुवः
om mahah	ॐ महः
om janah	ॐ जनः
om tapah	ॐ तपः
ogrṁ satyam	ओ॒गँ स॒त्यम्

Retention: While keeping the right nostril closed with the thumb of the right hand, close the left nostril with the ring finger of the right hand (chanting mentally):

om tat savitur vareṇyam
bhargo devasya dhīmahi
dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt

ॐ तत्स॒वितु॑र्व॒रेण्यं॑

भर्गो॑ दे॒वस्य॑ धी॒महि

धियो॑ यो नः प्रचो॒दयात् ॥

Exhalation: Close the left nostril with the ring finger of the right hand and exhale through the right nostril (chanting mentally):

om āpo jyotīraso'mṛtaṁ
brahma bhūrbhuvassuvarom

ॐ आपो॑ ज्योती॒रसो॑ऽमृतम्

ब्रह्म॑ भूर्भुव॒स्सुव॑रोम् ॥

Repeat the above. This time, while keeping the left nostril closed with the ring finger of the right hand, inhale through the right nostril. Retain the breath and then, while closing the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand, exhale through the left nostril. This is one complete round. Start with nine rounds and over time, work up to 54 or 108 complete rounds.

*This is one of the most exalted practices mentioned in the *Vedas*.

आकाश (स्कै) चैतन्य

Ākāśa (Sky) Caitanya

Sky began his *yoga* journey in 1990 after the death of his father, which inspired him to follow his heart and live life in a more balanced manner. Sky is fortunate to have been blessed with accomplished teachers who are passionate about the subjects they teach. He has practiced many forms of physical and mental disciplines including *Haṭha Yoga*, *Kuṇḍalinī Yoga*, *Iyengar Yoga*, *Vinyāsa* and *qiğōng*. Sky had the great fortune to study *Āyurveda* with Dr. Vasant Lad, which further influenced his healthy approach to *yoga*. In 2001, Sky met his *guru*, Svāmī Vāgīśānanda Sarasvatī; a *saṁyāsīn* and traditional teacher of *Vedānta* in the lineage of Śrī Pūjya Svāmī Dayānanda Sarasvatī. Studying *Vedānta* under the guidance of his *guru* has allowed Sky to express his practice more fully via the heart. Practicing and teaching *yoga* over the past 20 years in Europe and Asia has matured Sky and provided him with a unique lifestyle. He continues to study *Vedānta*, chant *Vedic mantras*, teach *yoga* and relax in fullness. Sky currently travels with his family, teaching in Sweden in the summer and Bali in the winter.

Sama Yoga/ॐPress

www.samayoga.info

This book would not be possible without the guidance and blessings of my teachers: Dr. Vasant Lad, MAsc., Clive Sheridan, and Śrī Svāmī Vāgīśānanda Sarasvatī. Thanks also to Sanna and Jayin for bringing light and love into my world. *Ākāśa (Sky) Caitanya*

Special Thanks to ॐPress for this devoted renovation and editing of

'Prāṇāyāma: A Practical Handbook';

helping to make this little booklet so much more user-friendly.