

Spirit Self

Strengthening intuitive understanding and helping people all over brighten their intellectual illumination

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue N° 1 – May 2009

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Breathe Consciously and Become Conscious

by Dave A. Williams

Sat Nam! With eight months of Kundalini yoga training under my belt and a teaching certificate on the way, I have so many wonderful things I want to share with all of you! That said, I'll try not to get ahead of myself. Let's start with one of the most important facets of Kundalini yoga, all other forms of yoga, and life in general. Something most of us don't even think about.

Kundalini Breathing: are you doing it backwards? Chances are you might be. A lot of people contract, pulling in their stomach or navel point when inhaling. This is breathing backwards! Maybe you do it because you don't want to pouch out your gut while you breathe. Maybe you do it because you bring all the air into your chest cavity, completely neglecting your diaphragm. Maybe you do it because your abdominal muscles are so rock solid that you couldn't expand your navel center if you tried (I highly doubt this is the case).

Whatever the reason, whatever the excuse, let's work on this together. I quickly became aware of my own shortcomings while studying Pranayam*.

When you inhale your navel point should move out while you expand fully, and then move in and up while you exhale completely. We make ourselves wider when we inhale, and longer when we exhale. So sit with a straight spine and really feel yourself raising up and elongating when you exhale, and widening to your full capacity when inhaling.

"The mind follows the breath. The key to controlling the mind is in controlling the breath."

~Yogi Bhajan

Ever think about why we have noses? Well besides aesthetically balancing our faces, they also filter the (often dirty) air that we take into our lungs. This is one reason you probably shouldn't be gasping for air through an open mouth while exercising. Your mouth doesn't have those cleverly crafted air filters to protect you from all the junk that's in the air. You should be in control of your every breath.

Noses warm and humidify the air we breathe. Our nostrils are also conveniently connected to our ida and pingala, so when we take in air through our

nose we stimulate the pituitary gland and even our Third eye (also known as the 6th chakra). In yogic philosophy life isn't measured in years, but in breaths. We are all said to be given a certain amount of breaths for this life time. Once we take our last allotted breath, that's it. Whether you find truth in this or not, it really is a good mental note to help keep you breathing long and deep, keeping a calm, steady, focused mind... not wasting even one of your numbered breaths. ~



If you would like to learn some of the practices behind conscious breathing, Dave has provided some Kundalini breathing techniques on www.Spirit-Self.com

Dave A. Williams is certified in the art of Kundalini Yoga and believes that everyone

should have the opportunity to improve their lifestyle. If you have any additional questions, he would love to hear from you. *email:* mr.dave.a.williams@gmail.com

THE POND, THE RIPPLE, AND THE LILLY

Meditation by Ashli Hilton

Chakra Connection:

Ajna, (The Third Eye)

Main Issue:

Intuition, Wisdom

Affirmation:

I recognize the need for silence and stillness in my life.

Make sure you are laying or sitting comfortably. Close your eyes. Take a few deep cleansing breaths.

You walk down a long, wooded lane. The birds chirp and sing all around you. After some time, you come to a clearing. In the middle of the clearing is a pond. Aside the pond is a tall, flowering tree. You sit down beneath the tree just at the pond's edge. The pond is Still and crystal clear. You hear nothing- just blissful quiet. Revel in the solitude as you say to yourself I am Still like the pond.

On top of the pond sit three remarkable, white lilies. They float effortlessly just on the surface and give off an air of supreme Peace and Beauty. Appreciate and welcome their perfection as you say to yourself I am full of the Peace and Beauty of the lilies.

At your side you notice a small white pebble. Pick it up and admire its smooth, perfect texture. Gently toss it into the center of the still pond. Gentle ripples cascade from the center, moving Silently toward you. As the ripples reach the edge of the pond, say to yourself "I am Silent like the ripples."

Feel the rhythm resonate through your body. You are now One with the Pond, the Ripple and the Lilly. Take a deep cleansing breath as you say:

I am Still

I am Peaceful

I am Beautiful

I am Silent

I recognize the need for these things in my life.

Slowly open your eyes when you are ready. Take a few deep breaths. How do you feel?

SIXTH CHAKRA: AJNA

Location: situated between the eyebrows (Third Eye)

Deals with: self-knowledge, wisdom, intellect, clairvoyance, action of ideas, detachment, insight, understanding, intuitive reasoning, visualization

Governs: brain, eyes, ears, nose, pituitary gland, pineal glands, neurological system

Element: light

Colors: indigo

Sense: extra sensory perception

Mantra: AUM or OM

Physical Dysfunctions: headaches, nightmares, eyestrain, learning disabilities, panic, depression, blindness, deafness, seizures, spinal dysfunctions

Psychological and Emotional Issues: judgment, evaluation, concept of reality, confusion, fear of truth, discipline, lack of concentration

Balanced Sixth Chakra: ability to think reality into existence, imagination, intuition, concentration and focus

Postures that Balance Sixth Chakra: Meditation/guided visualization/sense withdrawal (Pratyahara) and Seated Yoga Mudra, Child's Pose (Balasana) and palming the eyes and eye circles

Related Gemstones: Amethyst, Lapis Lazuli, Purple Fluorite, Sugilite, Quartz

Related Essential Oils: mint, jasmine



CENTER OF INTUITION

As you focus on opening your Ajnajna, it will become easier to access your intuition at a much higher level.

The sixth chakra provides a channel for projection of energy, more specifically thought energy. As one starts actively working with the Third Eye sensations, or impressions, begin to register with the conscious mind right in the forehead. One may speak of it as reinforcing ones forehead

When there is not sufficient energy flowing into this center one will have challenges projecting their thoughts into the world of manifestation. They will also have difficulties with their sense of intuition.

People that have an overactive Third Eye may be too mental in nature. They can focus too much of their attention within their own mind and can come off as aloof. The color of the 6th chakra is a blend of electric blue meets deep purple.

Benefits of a Balanced 6th Chakra

- Improved intuition
- Ability to swiftly transition into a meditative state
- Psychic ability
- Thought projection into manifestation

The sixth chakra has much potential to increase the quality of our lives when properly balanced. As humanity evolves the power of the sixth center will be with us. The ability to focus within the mind and bring down impressions from above is truly inspiring.

Just Dance

by Jessica Brothers

Adapted from a lecture by Cheryl Walker

To dance is to be out of yourself. Larger, more beautiful, more powerful.

~Agnes De Mille

Let ourselves be free to just be who we are and not worry about what other people think about us. When we are home alone and nobody's watching and we hear the right song, we start to dance and our hearts start to sing. We go back to that time when we were two or three and we didn't have a care in the world and we just danced. We danced because it was fun. We danced because we could. We danced just because. We didn't care what people thought of our dancing skills, we just danced. And there are moments when we recapture that innocence and we dance as if there is no one looking.

Something seems to happen to us the minute we step out of the privacy of our home. All of a sudden we think that we can't get out there and dance because people are going to be watching.

When we get on the universal dance floor, be it a marketplace, a party, a gathering, the only person who may be watching us is the person dancing with us, and they may not be watching either. We are the only ones concerned with how well we are dancing. Our egos are the only ones that care if we can keep a beat or not. Our bodies just want to move and enjoy the freedom and joy in dancing. Yet our heads keep our feet on the sidelines. Our minds allow us the joy of dancing only in the privacy of our homes, when we think no one is watching.

Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance. Great dancers are not great because of their technique, they are great because of their passion.

*~Martha Graham, American
Choreographer*

How many other things do we fail to do because we are worried about doing it right. How many other opportunities do we miss out on because we think there is someone watching us and we are afraid of embarrassment? Just like dancing mostly the fear is in our own heads. We all do things that cause us to be embarrassed.

We say the wrong thing, to the wrong person at the wrong time and we suffer temporarily the shame of imperfection. Each of us knows what that feels like. The worst thing we can do is to vow to ourselves never to be embarrassed again. We can hope to do

better the next time, but if we vow to never feel shame again, then we have just vowed that we will no longer be ourselves. We have promised that we will be the person who is all things to all people and we have promised to not be ourselves. When we worry more about what people are thinking about us, then we stop accepting the person we are, in all our glory and all our failings.

How much happier we would be if we knew deep in our core that we were enough, we were inherently worthy of dignity and respect. How much more secure would we be if we knew that we were loved just for who we were, not for who we might become. And not for who we once were, but just for who we are now. This belief allows us to live securely in a nation where constant insecurities are thrown at you.

Each of us should know that we are loved just as we are, and that we should be in the world as our authentic selves. We were not put here to care about whether we can keep the beat we were put here dance to our own unique tune. We may think it seems silly sometimes, or we may feel a little out of synch, but that's okay. We are put here to dance our own dance, not one that someone else has prescribed for us.

Maybe it's time for all of us to say it's enough. Enough of caring so much about what we think someone may be thinking of us. Enough of trying to live up to someone else's expectations of our lives. It's time for all of us to proclaim that the essence of who we are and always have been is enough.

We are wonderfully beautiful just the way we came into this world.

Let's shed the worries that hold us back from truly being who we are and living our own dreams. We are never too young and never too old to dream and begin living those dreams. What holds us back is not the size of our aspirations, but the size of our fears. When we give up the fear of not being accepted for who we are and accept ourselves as we are, we are able to accomplish so many more things. When we get our egos out of the way, we can see clearly the path our lives intend us to take and we are free to travel to places our small minds could never imagine.

And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music.

~Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

The greatest choice you'll ever make in your life is whether or not you will permit your fears to rule your life. You have the power within your hands to decide if you will live under the tyranny of public opinion or if you will rise above it. There will be many out there whose own fears will tell you to toe the line, keep on the straight and narrow. Don't

listen to them, listen to the voice within you that says be all that you have been created to be.

It may not be easy and sometimes there is a cost, some people will reject you for your freedom. Some people will say they can only love you if you are the person they want you to be. Don't listen to that voice, if they loved you truly, they will love you still. Silence the voices inside your head that tell you be just like everyone else. That is not the voice of reason, it is the voice of fear. Instead listen to that voice that says to you:

Sing like nobody's listening,

Live like it's Heaven on Earth,

Work like you don't need money,

Love like you've never been hurt,

And dance like no one's watching.





Educate, Enliven, & Evolve

Many grass-root undertakings go unnoticed among the large fields and meadows of today's technology. Together we can plant the seeds to help these and other wonderful groups and individuals flourish and bloom.

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Letter from the Editor



Thank you very much for subscribing to our newsletter! Your support is much appreciated. Each monthly publication will be theme-oriented to help each one of us fully understand the ideas, practices, and purpose. Our first publication is filled with wonderful information, focusing on the practice of opening up our sixth chakra, "Ajna".

Along with striving to better our wisdom and understanding, we hope to help others recognize the connections we hold with one other and within ourselves. We hope to help all people discover the constants that each of us cling to and we want to try and help create

positive changes that will allow us to reconnect with our spirit and get back to our roots. We want to help embed a holistic understanding of healing that involves self, others and the earth. Accessing our third eye is a very useful practice, especially as we are trying to recognizing our true self, our intuitive nature, and gaining a more concrete understanding of the world around us. Thank you again.

Peace and Progress,

Jessica Brothers, Founder Spirit Self Network

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