

KRIYA – FOR THE INSTINCTUAL SELF

(Keeping Up! As taught by Yogi Bhajan, pp. 18-20.)

1. Sit in Easy Pose. Bring the soles of the feet pressed together (Butterfly Pose). Grab the feet with both hands and draw them to the groin, keeping the heels as close to the floor as possible. Inhale and flex the spine forward (Butterfly Flex), keeping the head straight. Exhale and flex the spine backward, keeping the head straight. Continue rhythmically, coordinating the movement with the breath for 1 to 3 minutes. Inhale and hold the breath briefly, exhale and relax.

This exercise loosens the lower spine and stimulates the flow of sexual / creative energy from the 2nd chakra.

1. Cobra Pose. Lie on the stomach with the palms flat on the floor under the shoulders. The heels are together with the soles of the feet facing up. Apply *Mulbandh*, rotate the pelvis, elongate the lower back and inhale into Cobra Pose, arching the spine, vertebra by vertebra, from the neck to the base of the spine until the arms are straight with the elbows locked. (It is perfectly acceptable to keep the pelvis off the floor for less flexible students.) Exhale. Then inhale and raise the buttocks so that the body forms a straight line from the head to the heels. Exhale and lower the body back into Cobra Pose. Continue rhythmically with powerful breathing for 1-3 minutes. Then inhale into Cobra Pose, holding the breath briefly and applying *Mulbandh*. Exhale and relax.

*(From *Divine Alignment* by Guru Prem Khalsa, p. 98: Keep the fronts of the thighs rolled toward each other to protect the sacrum and keep your feet touching. It sometimes is helpful to place a yoga block between your thighs. The thighs have to press together to keep the block in place*

and this makes it difficult to compress the sacrum as you arch backward.)

This exercise works to strengthen the lower back and to balance the flow of energy from the 2nd chakra with the region of the 3rd chakra.

1. Crow Pose. Squat down with the knees drawn into the chest and the soles of the feet flat on the floor. Keep the spine straight. Wrap the arms around the knees with the fingers interlocked in Venus Lock. Begin Breath of Fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. Inhale. Exhale and relax.

This exercise circulates the energy of the lower three chakras and opens up the circulation to the hips and lower intestines.

1. Double Leg Lift to 90 Degrees. Lie on your back. Inhale and raise both legs up to 90 degrees. Exhale and lower the legs. Continue rhythmically with powerful breathing for 1 to 3 minutes.

This exercise strengthens the abdomen, energizing the navel center and 3rd chakra, balancing prana and apana. It is also good for the hips and lower back.

1. Lie on the stomach. Interlock the fingers in Venus Lock at the small of the back. Inhale, raising the head and hands as far as possible. Begin Breath of Fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. Inhale. Exhale and relax.

This exercise strengthens the lower back, allows the energy to flow to the mid-spine and opens the nerve channels in the area of the solar plexus.

1. Lie down on the back. Relax on the back for 1-3 minutes with the arms at the sides and the palms facing upward. Then pull the knees to the chest with the arms wrapped around the knees and the head pressed forward so that the nose is between the knees. Rock back and forth on the spine from the base to the top and back for 1 minute.

This period of relaxation and the exercise following it relax the spine and distribute the energy from the previous exercises.

1. Shoulder Stand. (If you have neck problems, skip this exercise.) Lie on the back and breathe in and out, tightening all the muscles. Place the hands on the hips, just below the waist. Bring the hips and legs up to vertical position, making the spine and legs perpendicular to the ground. Support the body with the arms firmly at the waist and the elbows on the floor. Make sure the elbows are not too far apart. Make sure your weight is supported by the shoulders, not the back. (It is perfectly acceptable to have the back at a 45-degree angle to the ground. It is also fine if your legs are a little jack-knifed.)

Begin Breath of Fire in this position. Continue for 1-3 minutes.

Next, continuing Breath of Fire, come into Plow Pose by carefully bending at the waist and allowing the legs to come over the head and drop down to the floor, pointing away from the chest. The toes will be pointed with the tops of the feet resting on the floor. The legs should be straight. The arms should be stretched out behind you, pointing away from the back. As you breathe, slowly and carefully stretch the legs farther away from your torso so that you feel a mild stretch in the upper back and neck. (It is perfectly acceptable to use Half-Plow Pose in which

the legs are held over the head parallel to the floor instead of full Plow Pose. Support the back with the hands if you feel wobbly.)

To end, inhale deeply. Exhale and relax the breath, slowly coming out of the posture by unflexing the spine, vertebra by vertebra, from the top of the spine to its base. Be aware of each vertebra as you slowly lower yourself down. Then relax on your back.

These exercises open the upper spine and related nerve passages to the flow of Kundalini energy, bringing extras circulation into the head and higher glands. They have an anti-gravity effect on the body and is very soothing after you relax out of position. (It is generally recommended that all inverted postures not be practiced during the first few days of the menstrual period.).

1. Sat Kriya. Sit in Celibate Pose. Spread the knees and heels wide so that you are sitting between your knees. (If there is pressure on the knees, use a cushion, block or blanket to support the buttocks.) Stretch the arms over the head so that the elbows hug the ears. Interlock all the fingers except the index fingers which point straight up. The right thumb should be clasped over the left. Begin to chant “*Sat Nam*” (rhymes with “but mom” emphatically in a constant rhythm about 8 times per 10 seconds. Chant the sound “*Sat*” from the navel point and solar plexus and pull the navel point all the way in toward the spine. On “*Nam*” relax the navel point. Continue for 3-5 minutes. Then, inhale and squeeze the muscles tightly from the buttocks all the way up the back, past the shoulders. Mentally allow the energy to flow through the top of the skull. Exhale and relax.

This exercise circulates the Kundalini energy and integrates the energy released from the lower three chakras into the entire system so that the total effects of these exercises are stable and long lasting.

1. Deep Relaxation. Deeply relax for 3 to 10 minutes.

Deep relaxation allows you to enjoy and consciously integrate the mind/body changes which have been brought about during the practice of this kriya.

Comments: As human beings, we have certain instincts as do animals, but we also have the ability to direct, shape and give meaning to the expression of these instincts. Many of the strongest instincts find expression and representation through the “lower triangle” of *chakras* (i.e., the 1st, 2nd and 3rd *chakras*). The physical correlates of these *chakras* are the rectum, the sex organs and the navel point.

According to the science of Humanology as taught by Yogi Bhajan, dysfunctions of the body are reflected in the mind and vice versa. A serious neurotic behavior or self-destructive attitude in the mind will also appear as an imbalance in the lower triangle. One of the most direct ways to correct such an imbalance is to use physical nerve and glandular stimulation to alter the instinctual and learned patterns in the lower *chakras*. Once this is achieved and a new energy balance is attained, then, through analytic self-assessment and meditation, it is possible to effect the holistic change in behavior which is desired.

This *kriya* is an example of such a technology. To use it correctly, remember to bring your mind to focus on what you are doing and experiencing during each moment of this *kriya*.

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