

A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION TOWARDS SUBTLE COMPONENT OF THE YOGA PRANA AND PRANAYAM FOR EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is an ancient art form that can be practiced as a kind of physical exercise. This style of exercise takes a comprehensive approach to a harmonizing system of development for the body, mind, and soul. And The state of being aware of something, whether it be something internal to the mind or something external inside the physical or sensory world, is referred to as consciousness. It is possible to characterize it as an individual's unique knowledge of (often simultaneous) their own thoughts, feelings, sensory experiences, and the environment around them. Most philosophers are in agreement, despite the fact that the term "state of consciousness" can be tricky to define, that the average person has some kind of innate comprehension of what it means. This is a fundamental idea in yoga, as traditional yogis used to hold the belief that everything in the cosmos stemmed from a single, all-pervading consciousness. The main aim of this paper is to discuss the components of yoga which is Prana and Pranayama based on evolution of consciousness.

Keywords: Subtle Component, Yoga, Prana, Pranayama, Consciousness, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Yoga is a set of beliefs that tries to cultivate awareness in its practitioners via the combination of meditation activities and physical movement. As a direct result of the meteoric rise in popularity of yoga all over the world, there has been a change in emphasis

away from asanas and toward yoga as a whole (poses and movement).

In recent years, particularly in the Western world, yoga has been increasingly reduced to the practice of postures or asanas, and practitioners in general are quite oblivious to the fact that yoga is an important philosophical

system whose goal is to achieve moksha (moksha/liberation) for the practitioner. This trend has been particularly prevalent in recent years in the West. In the most recent few decades, this pattern has become very pervasive.

Yoga's core belief is that the mind, body, and spirit are all interconnected and cannot be easily distinguished from one another. The deeper aspects of the body, mind, and spirit may, nevertheless, be explored using

a wide range of philosophical concepts. To change our perception of ourselves as distinct and to realize the unitive condition, it is crucial to study and comprehend these concepts. The ideas of the subtle body and the passage of prana and kundalini spiritual energies via the nadis and chakras are also included into yoga philosophy. The theories behind this energy anatomy are particularly ingrained in hatha yoga. A continuous state of pure consciousness known as Moksha or Samadhi is the ultimate aim of yoga. In order to achieve one's "true self" or "highest self," one does yoga. Our fundamental essence is this sensation of unadulterated awareness. All philosophical and mental structures disintegrate in this liberated condition. In essence, learning about yogic philosophy is essential for developing one's yoga practice and realizing enlightenment.

2. CONCEPT OF YOGIC PRACTICE

The word "Yoga" originated from the Sanskrit root "YUJ" which can be translated as "to join" "to yoke" or "to unify." According to Yogic teachings, the practice of yoga results in the union of one's own consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, which points to a

state of perfect harmony between the mind and the body, as well as between man and nature. Self-Realization, or the end of all suffering and the arrival at "the state of freedom," is the ultimate goal of yoga practice.

The term "Yoga" can also refer to a number of different types of practices. One of the most important connotations associated with it is "Yukti." The practice of yoga as Yukti entails a wide variety of steps, all of which call for adequate instruction. Thus, the procedures or exercises (also known as yuktis) that are recommended in yogic literature are sometimes referred to collectively as "Yoga." As a result, we obtain words like Laulika Yoga, Neti Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Samadhi Yoga, and so on for the individual who practices yoga. All of these many schools of yoga, such as Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Laya Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc., are merely Yoga in the sense that they consist of a variety of techniques, yuktis, or yogic practices.

All yogic practices have a psycho-physiological foundation at their core. While though each and every yogic practice includes a psycho-physiological component, those practices that put more of an emphasis on actively exercising control over one's mental processes can be considered more psychological. Several of the yogic practices that make up Hatha Yoga are more focused on the body or the physiological system than they are on the mind. The term "exercise" should only be applied to those yogic practices that focus primarily on the body or the physiological system. Instead, one ought to take them in the context of the so-called hygienic exercises to fully grasp their meaning. Some of the yogic activities are Surya Namaskar, Asana, Pranayama, Mudras, Bandhas and Shat kriya.

The most visible facet of a person's personality is the first target of yogic practices. The

majority of people find that the physical body is a useful and comfortable place to begin their exploration. When there is an imbalance at this level, the organs, muscles, and nerves no longer function in harmony; rather, they work in opposition to one another. This may be observed when there is pain in the body. Doing yoga is an effective way to correct these imbalances and bring harmony to both the body and the mind. One of the primary goals of yoga is to improve one's overall level of proficiency. Using yogic techniques can assist one in cultivating a state of mind that is more like to perfection. There are many different kinds of yogic practices, and everyone can benefit from them.

3. YOGA & CONSCIOUSNESS

The state of being aware of something, whether it be something internal to the mind or something external inside the physical or sensory world, is referred to as consciousness. It is possible to characterise it as an individual's unique knowledge of (often simultaneous) their own thoughts, feelings, sensory experiences, and the environment around them. Most philosophers are in agreement, despite the fact that the term "state of consciousness" can be tricky to define, that the average person has some kind of innate comprehension of what it means.

This is a fundamental idea in yoga, as traditional yogis used to hold the belief that everything in the cosmos stemmed from a single, all-pervading consciousness. Because of this, some people believe that Consciousness is the same as God.

A number of yogic philosophers, like Swami Kriyananda, are of the opinion that consciousness is the ultimate or most refined condition. It is believed that vibrating energy is the manifestation of matter, and that energy itself is believed to be the manifestation of

consciousness. In this sense, it is argued that consciousness cannot be defined since once it is, it is no longer pure. This is why it is believed that consciousness cannot be defined.

Through the process of introspection, also known as an investigation of the mind, practitioners of Yogic techniques such as mindfulness and meditation are able to investigate and comprehend the nature of awareness. In order to gain a deeper comprehension of consciousness, the practitioner must first turn their attention away from the things that are present in their awareness and towards the instrument of their experience, which is Consciousness itself.

4. SUBTLE COMPONENT OF THE YOGA PRANA FOR EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The word prana originates from Sanskrit, and its meaning can be deduced from its component parts, pra and ana. Pra can signify either to exist on one's own or to have a history of previous existence. The word "ana" is an abbreviation for "anna," which can refer to a cell, an atom, or a molecule called anu. Atoms, molecules, and individual cells make up all living things, which are referred to collectively as ana. Hence, prana refers to that which was already present prior to the formation of any atomic or cellular life. The existence of life in this form is considered to be a manifestation of the divine. Hence, prana existed before the manifestation of form. It is responsible for keeping everything together, as well as the order of the universe, the orbit of the planets, the movements of the stars, and even the upkeep of living creatures. In Sanskrit, this subtle force is referred to as prana; in Japanese, it is known as Ki; in Chinese, it is known as Qi; in Greek, it is called Pneuma; in Polynesian, it is known as Mana; and in Hebrew, it is referred to as Ruah, which literally translates to "breath of life." This subtle energy or life force is

thought to have a significant role in determining whether or not our body continues to exist and remain healthy (Sui, 1992).

Prāna means 'continuous motion'. As we are conceived, we immediately begin this state of continual mobility that continues throughout our lives. This delicate energy plays an important part in the maintenance of our body's overall health. There are two forms of energy that exist within the human body. The first is referred to as prana shakti, and the second might be either manas or chitta shakti. The term manas shakti refers to the mental energy that one possesses, whereas prana refers to the vital energy or dynamism that one possesses. This indicates that there ought to be two pathways leading to the provision of energy in each and every organ of the body. In addition to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, contemporary physiology now recognises the existence of a sensory or information system and a motor system as distinct varieties of the nervous system. These two systems are linked together in every organ of the body, making communication between them possible. In a similar fashion, mental and pranic energy are delivered to each organ.

According to the Yajur Veda, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad III, IX-Yagnavalkya and Vidagdha, it is mentioned that the vital breath (Hiranyagarbha) is god, and that Brahman is the entity that is referred to as such (tyat). It is stated in the Prasna Upanishad that the vital principle (prana) obtains its existence from the self, and that it is through it that the other functions of the body, including upward, downward, and balancing activities, obtain their force. In other areas, we see that all of the many vital forces owe their existence and capacity to the primary vital principle (prana), to which they all ultimately return. This is the case because prana is the source of all vital energy. Four dependent vital processes, which

are referred to as apana, samana, udana, and viyana are responsible for performing the various motor tasks of the body. The Brihadaranyaka and Chhandogya Upanishads discuss these functions in a similar vein. It is obvious from this that the concept of a single vital principle (prana) that draws its existence from the self and which supersedes the other functions had already gained ground in the Upanishads. In a more general sense, the explanation of prana can also be found in the Atharva Veda:

*Prānahpraja anu vaste pita
putramivapriyam I*

*Prano ha sarvasyesvaroyac ca prānati
yacca na. II (11.2.4.10)*

(It indicates that prana is to all individuals what a father is to his cherished children. Prana is the essential component of everything in existence, including that which breathes and that which does not breathe. (The all-encompassing nature of prana is indicated by the fact that it possesses this quality.)

Another explanation found in the Atharva Veda that expresses a far more in-depth understanding of Prana. The actions of prana cause the jiva to identify with the gross body in the following ways:

Apanatiprānatipuruso garbhe antara I

*Yada
tvamprānainvasyathasajayate punah II
(11.2.4.4)*

To Lord Rama, Guru Vasistha says:

*Prānasaktauniruddhayam mano
ramaviliyate I*

*Dravyacchaya' nu tad
dravyamprānarupam hi manasam II*

– *Yoga Vasistha*

(O Rama, by the control of the life-force the mind is also restrained; even as the shadow disappears when the substance is withdrawn, the mind ceases when the life-force is restrained).

According to the doctrines of Indian philosophy, the entirety of the universe can be broken down into two categories: akasa and maha prana. The meaning of akasa is less obvious than that of mahaprana. Because it is so much more delicate, normal people are unable to perceive it at all. The only way to observe it is once it has taken any kind of gross shape. This akasa, via the force of maha prana, transforms into the atmosphere, the liquids, the solids, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth. It is the akasa that creates the bodies of animals and plants, as well as every form that humans can perceive, as well as everything that goes out into the world. But we are unable to separate the two of them in our minds. Prana permeates everything in the universe that possesses life, energy, or mobility. This includes everything. Hence, the power of mahapran works in conjunction with akasa to do a variety of tasks in order to complete the universal deeds. Hence, here everything emerges from this akasa, and at the conclusion of the cycle, all of the things in the universe dissolve back into the akasa again, and all of the forces (prana) return to the maha prana, and to be with akasa. This is how everything works. Everything that we term energy or power is an outgrowth of this maha prana; it is the source of all of these things. "It is the prana that is manifesting as motion; it is the prana that is manifesting as gravitation, as magnetism," said Swami Vivekananda. It is the prana that is manifesting as the activities of the body, as the nerve currents, and as the mental power.

This holy force serves as a foundation for all the manifest creations of life. It provides support and sustenance, and it shifts and transforms as required to maintain the proper equilibrium of life's functions. Without prana, there is no such thing as existence. Although the universal principle of prana can exist in either a static or dynamic condition, it is always all-pervasive, all-powerful, and all-knowing. We are able to obtain prana from a wide variety of additional sources. One also draws prana from the air, water, solar energy, food, and environment when operating at the material level. According to the yogic point of view, all of the components of nature are regarded as potential sources of prana. The calibre of the elements to which an individual is subjected has a direct bearing on the amount of prana that is contained within that individual. It is important to differentiate prana from other components that are taken in through the process of breathing, such as oxygen, nitrogen, or hydrogen, as well as the nutrients that can only be obtained through the consumption of food and drink. The above ideas make it abundantly evident that the maha prana, which supplies us with pranic energy (prana) and is also referred to as vital energy (immunity), enables us to maintain our lives and shields us from a variety of illnesses. That prana is present everywhere in the body and is the driving force behind all of the activities that take place in all of the body's systems.

The term "prana" refers to the vital life energy that is responsible for the coordinated actions of the body. Its most obvious form is the vata dosha. The universe, the air, and the food all contribute to the supply of prana. Prana is the latent power that enables all kinds of life and all phenomena to take place. It is also known as the vital force. Prāna manufactures tejas. Tejas is the force (fire) transmutation that makes it possible for the body, mind, and spirit to interact despite the differences that exist between them. Tejas is stoked into a raging fire

by prana. Tejas is the name given to the kinetic force that is produced when prana is present and being put to use. Pitta is the gross manifestation of this dosha. Our immune system and our aura (pranamaya kosha) both have their origins in our ojas. Ojas is the substance of immunity that keeps everything in balance and keeps everything together. Ojas is the substance of immunity that can be thought of as the sum of all of the critical hormones and enzymes, etc., that are ready for action in the body. It can also be thought of as the substance that makes up immunity.

Because the word "Prana" is employed in the Upanishads to mean every manifestation in the cosmos, both on the microcosmic and the macrocosmic level, it is particularly significant from the perspective of Adhyaropa-Apavada (Superimposition and Negation). "Prana is in fact the first born and holds the position of preeminence. Chhandogya Upanishad (V.I.1).

Katha Upanishad, (2:3:2):

*Yadidamkimcajagatsarvamprānaejatin
ihstam I*

*Mahadbhayamvajramudyatamyaetadv
iduramrtastebhavanti II*

Those who are aware of this are granted immortality, as the cosmos itself originated from prana and continues to move so long as prana is there. Prana is the first born and is also known as the creator of the universe. "Just as the spider spins its web and then gathers its threads back into its body, just as plants grow from the soil, and just as the hairs on a live person's body emerge from the person themselves, so too does this entire cosmos originate from the unchanging one."

*Prānasyedam vase
sarvamtridiveyatpratistitam I*

*Matevaputranrakshsvasrishcaprjnam
ca vidhehinaiti II*

All that is present in the three worlds is subject to the authority of prana. Like a mother guard her young, so, too, do you, O Prana, guard us and bestow upon us splendour and wisdom, Prasnopanisad., Ch: 2 V: 13.

According to the Taittiriya Upanishad, the human existence can be comprehended in terms of five sheaths that are collectively referred to as the "Panchakoshas." Every kosha is thought of as an implication of the enormous energy that possesses a varying degree of autonomy (Gombhirananda, 2001). In addition to that, it discusses the significance of prana to all forms of life. Life-breath and the breath of God along with it, just as people and animals do. For life, breath is the source of life for beings; therefore, it is referred to as "all life." When they worship Brahman as the source of life, they will undoubtedly have a life that is complete. Because the breath of life is what gives beings their life, it is sometimes referred to as "all life" (Olivelle, 1998).

In the Chhandogya Upanishad, there is a narrative that portrays a discussion that takes place within the human body regarding which component of the body is the most significant. After the ears had stopped performing their role for a period of one year, the brain questioned the other senses to determine whether or not his absence had an adverse effect on them. In a similar manner, all of the other senses, with the exception of the respiratory system, were affected. Nonetheless, the loss of those senses for a period of time did not pose a threat to the individual's ability to survive. But, as the breath (prana) is getting ready to leave, all of the other senses become aware that he is the most important. In the absence of prana, there is no possibility of continued existence (Nikhilananda, 1990).

Both the Upanishads and the Hata yoga literature divide prana into two distinct categories: the pancha pranas and the panchaupa-pranas. The following categories are described in the Gheranda Samhita, Chapter V:

*Pranopanasamanascavyanodanotatha
iva ca I*

*Nagahkurmahkrukarodevaduttodhana
njaya.II*

- (1) Apana
- (2) Vyana.
- (3) Samana
- (4) Prāna
- (5) Udana

The functions of the pancha pranas, as well as their placements and places throughout the body, are outlined in Table 1.

4.1 PanchaPrnaVayus: The Human Body's Five Main Airts

Table 1: The Pancha Pranas, Their Positions in the Body, and the Duties They Serve

Name of Upa-Vayus	Region	Function
Prāna	The area between the navel and the clavicle	Respiration, beating of the heart.
Apana	In the area between the navel and Anus	Excretion (stool, urine, sweating).
Samana	In the region between the diaphragm and the navel	Digestion, absorption, assimilation of nutrients.
Udana	Above the neck	Engage the sensory receptors in the eyes, ears, nose, and throat to make sound. Mind's internal thoughts
Vyana	Whole body	Circulation flows energy through 72,000 nadis.

4.2 Prana and the Many Ideas about the Nadis in the Human Body

The Sanskrit term 'nad,' from which we get the word 'nadi,' means hollow stalk and also refers to sound vibration and resonance. They assist in the circulation of prana in all directions, in addition to providing vitality to each and every cell, organ, and component of the body. They are connected at specific spots all throughout the body known as chakras. Because Nadis are both very delicate and very extensive, even the Yogic books disagree over how to calculate their exact number. According to the principles of yoga, nadis are either the psychic channels or the nerves through which prana flows. They are

referred to as both. Nadis, as defined by the Yogis, are not physical entities but may be found in every area of the human body. They are accountable for a variety of processes that the body does that are necessary for maintaining life. While the Prapanchasara Tantra lists a total of 300,000 nadis, Charandas asserts that human bodies have just 72,864 nadis, all of which are thought to have originated in the region around the navel. Goraksha Samhita and Hatha Yoga Pradeepika, two of the most important literature on Hatha yoga, estimate that there are 72,000 nadis, whereas Shiva Samhita states that there are 350,000 nadis emanating from the region of the navel. According to the Varahopnishad, the

nadis travel through the entirety of the human body, all the way from the bottoms of the feet to the tops of the heads. The majority of the nadis emerge from either of two centres known as kandasthanas, which are described as having

the shape of an egg-shaped bulb and are located, respectively, (i) a little bit above the navel and the heart and (ii) above the anus and sexual organs and slightly below the navel.

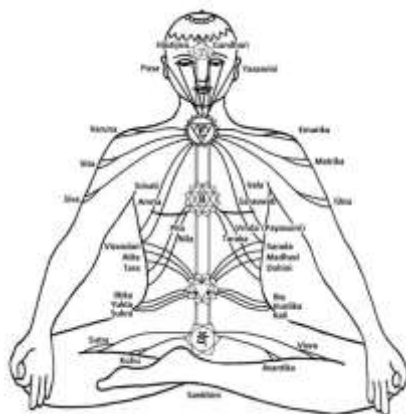


Figure 1: Human Body Nadis

When kundalini is awakened, some of the yogic scriptures state that prana circulates inside the pingala, apana circulates within the ida, and sushumna is where kundalini circulates. Seventy-two of the thousands of nadis that encompass all of the major and minor flows are regarded as being significant. There are 72 nadis in total, and only ten are considered to be important nadis (major pranic flows). Three of these ten major nadis are considered to be the most important. These are the idanadi, which is regarded to be the mental channel, the chandranadi, also known as the lunar nadi, the pingalanadi, also known as the vital channel, the suryanadi, also known as the solar nadi, and the sushumnanadi, also known as the spiritual channel, eternal. These three primary nadis, also known as channels, are located in the spinal column and travel through each chakra in the body. These three nadis are taken into consideration for the process of energy distribution over the entirety of the pranic network. These three major nadis serve as the primary roads for prana, which transports energy throughout the body to the many different organs and components. Little nadis

branch off from these larger nadis and make their way to every part of the body.

Pingala nadi is associated with the sympathetic nervous system, which originates at the Mooladhara chakra and begins on the appropriate facet of the spine. It then twists and travels through the six chakras that are on the opposite side of the body. This nadi comes to a close at the pineal eye chakra, also known as the proper aspect of ajna. Here is the location where energy is gathered before being distributed. pingalanadi is the conduit via which prana, the Hindu deity, flows. prana is the energy that controls the body's activities; it is connected to stars and to positive energy.

The idanadi originates from the Mooladhara chakra and branches off to the left of the spine. It then curves around and travels through the other six chakras. Ida nadi comes to a close at the left side of ajna, at the pineal eye chakra, which is the location where energy is gathered prior to being dispersed. It is identical to the reflection of the Pingala Nadi that can be seen here. Ida nadi is the Hindu deity that is in charge

of the energy known as chitta, which is the force that controls one's mental processes and has a connection to both the moon and negative energy.

Sushumnanadi goes straight up the spine from the mooladhara chakra to the sahasrara, or crown chakra. Yet, a balanced and unfettered flow of prana is maintained as the pingala and Ida nadis spiral in and out of the sushumnanadi. All three primary nadis are crucial for spiritual arousal.

There are seven minors significant nadis in addition to the three big nadis. Gandhari, hastijihva, yashaswini, pusha, alambusha, kuhu, and shankhni are among them.

In the major category, some texts incorporate additional nadis. Jihva, korma, payaswini, saraswati, saumya, shura, varuni, vilambha, and vishwodari are among them.

Hatha yoga practices strive to balance the energy currents in the pingala and idanadis and maintain their smooth flow. The word hatha means "sun and moon," reflecting the solar and lunar associations of Pingala and Ida. As a result, the goal of hatha yoga techniques is to improve prana flow.

4.3 Evolution of Consciousness: Through the Practice of Prana Sadhana and AjapaJapa Dhyana (Dharana Darshan, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati)

The Svara yoga, also known as the sound of the breadth, is described in the Shiva Svarodaya and the Hamsa Upanishad. In this yoga, the sound of inhalation is explained as so, and the sound of exhalation is explained as Ham. Ajapa-japa dhyana is a Kriya yoga Technique. The term "activity" or "movement" can be found in the word "kriya." As a result, the term "Kriya yoga" refers to the movement of awareness or consciousness both within and

without the physical body. Kriya yoga places a greater emphasis on awareness than it does on concentration. The term "awareness" refers to paying conscious attention to one's own thoughts or to other objects, whether they be internal or external. It suggests a connection between the act of perception and the person doing the perceiving. Because concentration is something that happens naturally in a highly relaxed mind and body, Kriya yoga brings about a deeper degree of relaxation and naturally promotes focus. It combines pranayama, the shadadhara chakra, the six psychic centres, and meditation. The first thing one must be aware of is that ajapa-japa is one's own natural breath. One breath around 15 times per minute, 900 times per hour, and 21,600 times in a single day, but we are never conscious of this most important activity, which is the basis for life. The ajapa-japa meditation brings the rate of breathing down to a minimum. In addition to the various benefits associated with improved physical and mental health, this occurs at a rate of 2 or 3 each minute, which results in an extension of consciousness. Japa is the constant recitation of a mantra. The term "ajapa-japa" refers to the process of japa when it occurs in an unplanned manner. It is thought that japa originates from the mouth, but ajapa originates from the heart. So..ham" serves as the mantra for ajapa-japa meditation. It might also mean "I am consciousness," which means "I am that." When one pays close attention to their breath, they will hear the sound "So" during intake and the sound "Ham" during exhale. When this practice is paired with Ujjai Pranayama, the sound so..ham can be clearly perceived and found to be true.

5. SUBTLE COMPONENT OF THE YOGA PRANAYAMA FOR EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The term "Pranayama" can be simplified by separating it into its component parts, which are referred to as prana and ayama. "Prana" is a Sanskrit word that literally translates to "that which existed before any atomic or cellular life came into being." 'Pranasyaayamahpranayamah' is an ancient Sanskrit phrase that translates to "control or the science of control" or "to extend, to link, to expand, stopping, etc." Hence, pranyam implies "ayamah in prana," which can be interpreted to imply "mastery over prana."

The Yogic method of pranayama is used to bring balance, rhythm, and regularity to one's breathing. Normal breathing is not pranayama. There is no control over how much air is inhaled or exhaled during regular breathing. Puraka (inspiration), rechaka (expiration), and kumbhaka (retention) are controlled by place, time, and frequency in pranayama, according to Patanjali. As a result, it is clear that the process of maintaining control over one's breathing is known as pranayama.

According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra-

*"Tasminsatisvasaprasvasayorgativicc
hedahprānāyāmah"*

- Sadhana Pada 2/49

The systematic series of activities, with a particular emphasis on yogic practices that enables one to develop control and mastery over prana is known as pranyama. Hence, pranayama can be understood as "to obtain control over the varistha prana (generic prana) by any one or all pranas (vital airs or energies) by the various yogic techniques." With the help of pranayama, one can activate the prana that already exists as well as enhance the prana while simultaneously extending consciousness, exercising control over the mind, and transcending the mind.

The science of breath, or pranayama, refers to the regulation of the life-sustaining energy (prana) contained in the air that humans breathe. When we take just short, shallow breaths, certain nerve receptors that are buried deep in the lungs are not stimulated in any way. These inspiratory receptors and expiratory receptors are only activated when we take long, deep breaths in and out. This action is known as reflexogenic feed-back, and it travels from the lungs to the respiratory centre, a specialised breathing centre in the brain. Our ability to hold our breath when inhaling and exhaling is also controlled by this respiratory centre. The conscious art of pranayama is to develop mastery over this centre.

The fourth limb of classical yoga is pranayama, which is the science of regulating, conscious expansion, the extension or expansion of the dimension of 'life force,' or prana (the life force). Although all yogic practices purify the pranas, pranayama, which focuses on breath control, is regarded as the most important. Sage Patanjali writes, "Thus, the covering of the light is destroyed," in reference to the effect of pranayama in the Yoga Sutra (2:52). This covering is the remnant of tamas and rajas, and the chitta'ssattvik nature is revealed by pranyam. The tamas and rajas manifest themselves as obstructions in the nadis. These obstructions may be brought on by illness, tension, a buildup of pollutants, negative thoughts, or samskaras, which are mental patterns that become stuck in the sub-conscious and unconscious parts of the mind. Such difficulties can be overcome with the use of various pranayamas.

It has been observed that the average human takes 15 breaths per minute, which equates to 900 breaths per hour (15 times 60). This means that an average person takes 21,600 breaths in a 24-hour period; however, a pranayama practitioner takes even fewer breaths per

minute. A person can save 14,400 breaths each day as a result. According to this perspective, the length of one's life should not be counted in terms of years but rather in terms of breaths.

The physiology of breathing makes it abundantly evident that "the more we slow down and deepen the breath, the more it shall

enable to ensure the increase of pranic energy." The length of time spent in kumbhaka should be managed and lengthened as much as possible to maximise the benefits of decreasing and expending one's breath. Table 2 presents further information that sheds light on the impact of shallow breathing:

Table 2: Consequence of Slow Breathing

Sl. No.	Living Entities	Breath Per Minute	Longevity
1.	Dog	28 – 30	14 Years
2.	Horse	20 – 22	40 Years
3.	Man	15 – 16	100 Years
4.	Snake	7 – 8	150 Years
5.	Tortoise	4 – 5	More than 200 Years

The many pranayama practices are practiced to rectify the breathing. So, it is impossible to perform the correct breathing exercise, which consists of pranayama followed by pranayama with retention. The awareness that comes from pranayama practice enables us to comprehend the proper way to breathe as well. What we commonly know about how pranayama benefits our bodies and minds. In the beginning, pranayama teaches us how to live; more specifically, how to live a full life. We are not living a full life; rather, we are living a very brief existence. According to the yogic principles, when practicing pranayama, a person is able to inhale seven times more air, which results in a seven times higher level of oxygen than when practicing normal breathing. The oxygen travels to the lungs, but the life force travels throughout the entire body. As a result, we have more energy and never feel exhausted. Breath becomes life in this way. Hence, pranayama increases our vitality or energy. And that vitality or vital energy can heal any ailment of the body. Not only is it good for the body, but it also puts the mind at ease. It eliminates all pollutants from the body and breaks down the poisons that are already there,

cleansing the body on all levels, from the cellular to the mental.

Many people do not breathe correctly and are not aware of this fact. Our physical and mental well-being is significantly enhanced by proper breathing. The breath has a direct bearing on our physical and mental well-being. Incorrect breathing will frequently represent a variety of disorders on both the physical and mental levels. Perhaps the only physiological mechanism that can be controlled consciously or subconsciously is breathing. Either one can pay attention to one's breathing and deliberately regulate the process of breathing, or one can disregard it and breathe automatically or subconsciously. When we are not conscious of our breathing, more primitive portions of the brain are in charge of it. These parts of the brain are responsible for emotions, ideas, and feelings of which we are not or just dimly aware. It is in this way that the regularity and rhythm of the breath are dispersed, and if it flows in an unconditioned way, it creates havoc in both the body and the psyche. When most people talk about pranayama, they are typically referring to the kind of yogic practices that include some

form of control over the flow of the breath in some way. Yet, when one examines the history of yoga, one discovers that the idea of pranayama encompasses a considerably wider scope and that its practices comprise a broad array of highly nuanced components in addition to the straightforward regulation of breathing activity. Pranayama is more than just an unconscious practice of breathing to keep the body and the soul together. The practitioners of these techniques take in a lot of oxygen, which causes their bodies to go through certain subtle chemical changes as a result.

It is important to note that the word that we use to describe how we interact with the cosmos in which we exist is connected to the concept of breathing. The Sanskrit word for "self," or "soul," is "Atman," which is the word for "breathe" in German. The Sanskrit word for "breathe" is "Brahman," meaning God. The word inspiration comes from the Latin "in-spiro," which means "to die." When a guy passes away, we say that he has "expired." He has, to put it more bluntly, "lost his prana." The word "death" is "aprana, the loss of the life energy" in all Indian languages.

5.1 Stages of Prāṇāyāma

When it comes to pranayama practices, there are four different facets or phases of advanced breathing techniques to consider. They are as follows:

- (1) Puraka (Inhalation)
- (2) AbhyantaraKumbhaka (Pause after breathing) Complete Pause
- (3) Rechaka (Exhalation)
- (4) BahyaKumbhaka (Pause after exhaling) Empty Pause

Sahitakumbhaka is the combination of inhaling and exhalation. Kevala is the name given to something which is empty of both of these (alone). One should attempt for the kevala after

mastering the sahitakumbhaka. The fourth type of "regulation of breath" is referred to as "absolute and pure" (kevalakumbhaka) when, after sufficient training, the kumbhaka continues to exist in numerous locations without exhalation and inhalation and is unconstrained by place, time, and number.

5.2 Prāṇāyāma Classifications

According to the Hatha Yoga Pradeepika, "When pranayamas are practiced properly, they heal all diseases; however, a poor practice causes diseases." There are four different categories into which the pranayama might be divided. They are as follows:

- Balanced Pranayamas
- Tranquilizing Pranayamas
- Cooling Pranayamas
- Warming or revitalising Pranyamas

6. CONCLUSION

Yoga is a deliberate technique that speeds up our development from more gross to more delicate layers of the mind. According to the tenets of Yoga philosophy, the mind is the source of both enslavement and freedom. Mind that is absorbed in sense objects is the cause of bondage, while mind that is separated from sense objects is the cause of liberation.

The present descriptive study and the Yogic approaches have the potential to pique the interest of yoga practitioners in the regular practice of yoga, which will allow them to move forward on the path to self-realization, as well as develop a kind of self-regulation skills that will allow them to carry out life in a very smooth manner, and a life that is progressive in its pursuit of health and wellbeing. Because of this, the descriptive study of prana, pranyamis believed to be the fundamental Yoga practices and the evolution of awareness.

In the spiritual quest to achieve the highest degree of consciousness and cosmic consciousness, all Yoga practices, particularly the practices of prana upasana and pranavidya, have their rightful place. This is especially true for prana upasana.

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