

## **YOGA NIDRA – The Blissful Relaxation**

“NIDRA” means sleep, “YOGA NIDRA” means sleep without tensions but also with a trace of awareness. It is a state of mind in between wakefulness and dreaming. Most people fall asleep from pure exhaustion and think that is relaxation.

### **THE ART OF RELAXATION**

The modern man has lost the harmony and the point of balance in his existence. We are preoccupied with surviving in the material world, we have lost our self awareness of our physical and mental well being.

Modern science may be able to control the spread of diseases, but now modern science has to face a new wave of stress-related disorders. The leading causes of death in the modern world today are heart disease and cancer, both known to be caused by stress. Psychosomatic illness such as diabetes, hypertension, migraine, asthma, ulcers, digestive disorders and skin diseases are related to the tensions in our body and mind.

The problem of today is total tension. When we can find a balance in our life, we can control our emotions, anger, and passions. This balance can reduce the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and other stress related illness.

### **THE THREEFOLD TENSIONS**

The ability to balance is very important in our well-being. There should be an equilibrium in how much to think, how much we work physically, how much we eat and what we eat, the tip in the balance creates and accumulates tensions. These tensions amass in the different layers, such as the muscular, emotional and mental systems of the human personality.

In yoga, the problems of tension are dealt with from a wide perspective. Understanding the vicious cycle of tension, (when the mind is tense, the digestive system is affected, the whole circulatory system is tense, which can bring about a tension headache) and how relaxation can relieve tension is the main approach.

An individual’s inner tensions can contribute to the outer aggression and discontentment towards life in general. “Peace can only be found within, never without”, therefore in order to create a peaceful existence, we have to learn to how to relax and harmonise our own body and mind.

Yogic philosophy, as well as modern psychology, outlines three basic types of tension that are responsible for imbalance in our lives. These are physical (muscular), mental, and emotional tensions. Through the systematic practice of yoga nidra, these three-fold tensions can be released progressively over time.

**MUSCULAR TENSIONS** – which are related to the nervous system and endocrinal imbalances. Muscular tensions can be removed by the deep relaxation attained in the state of yoga nidra.

**EMOTIONAL TENSIONS** – when emotions are repressed due to an inability to express them articulately and/or a refusal to accept them internally deep-rooted tensions can be the result. Yoga nidra can help to free up the emotional rigidity of the mind caused by repression.

**MENTAL TENSIONS** – the underlying cause of a person’s abnormal behaviour often lies in accumulated mental tension brought on by stress in one’s life. This build-up of tension may manifest as violent outbursts or other inappropriate behavior. The state of relaxation achieved through yoga nidra enables one to delve deep within the subconscious mind, in order to release and relax these mental tensions thereby improving the quality of one’s mental health.

Unless we can free ourselves from muscular, mental and emotional tensions, we can never be truly relaxed. Thus ordinary sleep due to exhaustion provides only short term and superficial relief of tension and a temporary sense of well being.

Yoga nidra is a more effective form of psychic and physiological rest and rejuvenation than conventional sleep. The total systemic relaxation of a one hour yoga nidra session is equivalent to many hours of ordinary sleep without awareness.

### **SECRET OF TRANSFORMATION**

When in the state of yoga nidra, one is not merely relaxing, rather one's entire personality is being restructured and reformed from within. This is because the yoga nidra allows one to access multiple levels of holistic therapeutic relaxation using methods and techniques perfected over millennia by countless yogis and swamis.

### **THE HISTORY**

Swami Satyananda Saraswati devised and developed the science of yoga nidra about 40 years ago in Rishikesh. Its origin is based on ancient scriptures instilling higher awareness and divine consciousness into the various parts of the body.

### **THE PRACTICE**

Outline of the Practice

Preparation

Resolve

Rotation of consciousness

Awareness of the breath

Feelings and sensations

Visualization

Ending the practice.