





KRIYĀ

INTRODUCTION

This handbook about *kriyās* and classes in Hatha and Kundalini Yoga is an integral part of my book *Light on Kundalini Yoga*. These classes have emerged from handouts that I was giving to my students during the teacher training program. I think that they offer a great inspiration for practitioners and teachers of yoga. So I decided to make them public in this form.

Dive into them playfully from your heart.

The Heart of Kriyā

Different to *karma* (the result of an accomplished action), *Kriyā* is an action's dynamic force. In yogic practice, *kriyā* is commonly understood as an action, or a set of actions, aimed at achieving a particular goal.

And yet it is so much more than that. Patañjali teaches us that *kriyā yoga* is the first step to *sādhana* – the way to the goal. Patañjali refers to the fact that the unlimited threefold cosmic energy is blocked by the absence of *kriyāśakti* – the power of action. Awakening *kriyāśakti* allows one to overcome the causes of suffering and thus walk the path to liberation. *Kriyā yoga* is therefore that yoga which awakens the universal power of action.

Yoga of Action (Kriya Yoga) has three components:

Tapas – discipline (heat or intensity),

Svadhyaya – refinement (self-study),

Ishvara Pranidhana – surrender to God

*Its purposes are to disarm the causes of suffering and
achieve samadhi.*

Pātañjalayogasūtra II (1–2)

Therefore, all *kriyā* should be performed with this orientation. *Kriyā* is always full of passionate intensity, self-awareness and full of surrender to the supreme goal. This is the right place for your heart.

It is important to highlight that every class you teach must be a *kriyā* in itself. This means that each exercise within a class must find a natural order in which the energy can flow constructively and awaken *kriyāśakti*. To achieve this flow, each exercise must be a natural answer to its predecessor. This ‘answer’ can only be found if one possesses a clear vision of where the class should lead you to. This oneness of your vision, the class, and your skillful action requires a wealth of experience, as well as a long and deep journey into yourself until you find the strength to lead others on your own secret paths up the mountain. Until you have reached this point, I would advise you to study our *sādhana*, classes, *āsanas*, *mudrās*, and the great masters’ *kriyās*.



OUR MATSYA KRIYĀS

I have learned many *kriyās* in the style of Yogi Bhajan. He was always very strict in the timing and order of the *kriyās*’ performance. Performing an exercise in a predefined manner helps the student discover their boundaries and overcome their individual attachments. Krishnamacharya, the grandfather of modern Ashtanga (*aṣṭāṅga*) Yoga, once said that success in yoga cannot be achieved by following one’s likes or dislikes, as this only serves to change an exercise according to one’s own limitations. All this is indeed true for those students who cannot listen to the subtle voice inside their hearts.

Just in this case we will make an exception, because I believe in you.

I want you to discover the hidden blessing that is you, which I suspect (and hope) that you can already feel. I want you to discover your nature, because this nature, in its highly personal flavour, is what the world thirsts for. It is your duty to reveal it to the world.

There is just one commandment on this higher path of practice: You must always, and by all means, seek out the expression of you that is the highest, most lovable, truest, clearest, and most desired on your way to a brighter world. Do not be

overwhelmed; achieving this is easier than you might think – you must simply act from your heart. In doing so, all will be achieved with ease. By acting contrary to your heart, it will be impossible to achieve regardless of how hard you try.

Therefore, I invite you to change and play in a loving manner with all the *kriyās* I have prepared for you. The classical *āsanas* are used here, so they can be easily integrated in any *haṭha* and *kuṇḍalinī* class. All of these *āsanas* can also be performed with *kapālabhāti* and *bhrāmarī* in any static posture.

Bīja Nyāsa

We can perform *bīja nyāsa*, which involves placing a sound within the body, at the conclusion of every class. As this can be consistent across all classes, I have elaborated on it separately here.

In this *bīja nyāsa*, we position the seed sounds of the five elements within the revered *suṣumnā* and allow their vibrations to expand. *Suṣumnā* is the central axis of the body, extending from the perineum to above the head. The heart, the center of all things, lies at the core of *Suṣumnā* itself. Placing these sounds within your body entails singing them and, with the power of your imagination, allowing them to emanate from within.

center	Svara	Bīja	Invocation
Mūlādhāra	<i>Sa</i>	<i>Laṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Laṃ Ma</i>
Svādhiṣṭhāna	<i>Re</i>	<i>Vaṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Vaṃ Ma</i>
Maṇipūra	<i>Ga</i>	<i>Raṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Raṃ Ma</i>
Anāhata	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Yaṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Yaṃ Ma</i>
Viśuddha	<i>Pa</i>	<i>Haṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Haṃ Ma</i>
Ājñā	<i>Dha</i>	<i>Kṣaṃ</i>	<i>Oṃ Kṣaṃ Ma</i>
Sahasrāra	<i>Ni</i>	<i>Śrī</i>	<i>Oṃ Śrī Ma</i>

Assume a meditative posture, comfortable but upright. Fold your hands in front of your heart, feel your center, softly sing OM, and let this OM travel through your body from the base to the cosmos. This OM represents the teacher, guide, mother, father, and soul.

Preform *mūlabandha* at the beginning of each sound. Place the seven notes in each chakra. Simply make yourself vibrate with sound. Then, successively place the *bījas* for each element in one chakra after the other.

The last step invokes the elements through a mantra. For this, chant Om̐ at *mūlādhāra*, and pull the perineum, then ascend the *bīja* through the body and expand above in Ma (the supreme mother).

Remember the Teacher

All *kriyās* should be practiced with the teacher. Nothing can be achieved in the teacher's absence.

The teacher is both the means and goal. Every action begins with, is pervaded by, and finally rests in, the teacher. Without this teacher, Kundalini Yoga can be harmful and nothing will be attained. Always remember the teacher, both in the beginning and the end.

This teacher is your heart. The one teacher, *manonmanī*, the place beyond mind.

Before you even chant the mantra, take a few breaths with your hands folded in front your heart. Sink into the cavity of your innermost being. Repose at the bottom of your heart. Silently remember the teacher. The flame, beautifully burning without smoke. An eternal light in the dark, illuminating the path.