

## Anxiety Disorders

### Part 2

Last month we looked at Yoga for Anxiety Disorders, discussing their background causes, symptoms and some of the ways in which yoga helps. This month we continue by sharing some meditation, breathing and postures practices that will all assist when applied at regular intervals in daily life. Practice as little as once a week provides so many benefits.

#### Relaxation and Meditation

Believe in the power of prayer - open your awareness to your inner most self and see what you are holding in your heart.

Practice Yoga Nidra (yogic sleep) reclining or sitting;

Tune in to your breath, become aware of the top of your head, space above your top palate, heart and abdominal connection. Be aware of the mind-space and allow meditation to arise.

Relaxation will restore the body to heal as all functions stabilise; sleep, diet, heart and brain all begin to smile. Meditation deepens the process, accessing, soothing and enhancing brain function. The unconscious mind arises before the 'Seer' revealing the causal impregnation of fear within one's being. Having re-witnessed this event without attachment, the meditator releases it and reclaims the energy as freedom, simplicity - life.

#### Begin by contemplating;

What are my stressful feelings and thoughts?

At what point does excitement become stressful?

How ethical is my life?

Am I aware of a deeper purpose?

Am I chasing clouds?

Do I ever let the sky clear?

Go out for a **silent walking, breathing, listening or observing meditation.**

Sit and visualise revitalising under a soft spray **waterfall-meditation.**

**Yawning Meditation** - we all yawn every day. People often get irritated when they need to yawn, are embarrassed or short change their yawn. Yoga practice allows us to look at this from another angle; one that accepts, embraces and transforms stressful energy into vitality. Imagine the effect on the body if stagnant wind is never released. Well, yawning is a part of this process; helping the physical and emotional energy to rebalance.

**Laughter Meditation** - try one minute - from a quiet chuckle, to voice level, to loud and boisterous. Then pull some really silly faces, in as many different ways that you can. This will help the whole body-mind to relax even more. Then talk in different voices, accents, languages and even gibberish, interrupting the chatter with chuckles, giggles, laughter and even hysterics. Take your time and remember to stop to breathe when you need to. I remember as a young boy, being scared to really laugh as I knew this might trigger (my) asthma. In hindsight I see this is a stifling way to live. Laughter allows us to release pent up tension, whether it be anxiety, anger or grief for example. There are only two base E-Motions (Energies of motion) that move through our system. One is fear, the other love.

**Anxiety is not fear, but associated with memories or anticipation of fears and, the attached biological conditioning or habit.**

When we practice something like laughter, we can see, as I did many years ago, that there may be tension - inhibition around the whole idea or ability to let go to the 'meditation'. Simply seeing this tension activates a transformative process. The willingness to relax, settles in to the system at deeper unconscious levels. Gradually, if you are prepared to change, to let go of all that no longer assists your path as a free and creative spirit; laughter, love and life may all flow through you easily. You are once again a Human Being, no longer fretting about all the things you haven't done in the past or planning and agonising as to how your future will pan out. Life can run its course, teaching you as a loving parent does, such is its nature.

Anxiety results from incessant looping dialogue which attempts to control reality. To move out of this current, come out of your STORY and move into reality. You might ask "How!?" **Be aware of trauma, self beliefs etc and the feelings and thoughts that are coupled with them.** Be aware of the Triggers (e.g you think someone is pointing the finger at you) and the Knee Jerk Reaction to ENTER the story each time it arises; such as "Oh my God, everything is

coming down on me". Watch each drama closely, with the intent to relax your heart and mind. Writing a diary may help. Instead of passing through the same door over and over, make the choice to differ. This awareness, which is the key, will offer you a moment to reflect, to remember how you would choose to live if you had a choice (and on a soul level we all do); to breathe, to relax into the embrace of something so much larger than the ego can imagine.

The moment anxiety strikes, we must stop and ask, what is it we really want? Is it truly peace? The old software is the Samskara (Stress Imprint). Sankalpa, (your Intention), is new software, wiring new neural pathways, such as, 'I relax...', even if at the beginning you can't. Have some faith in the process.

Allow life to be and this allows you to be, rather than attempt to shape an impossible egoic expectation. Reality exists inside and outside of this. It is the **Self** which requires no fixing.

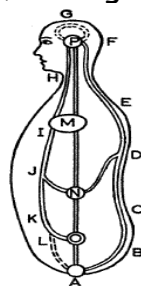
The anxiety may take a while to release. There may not be an instant cure, but there is usually instant insight, relief and inspiration. When the body-mind learns what it feels like to be relaxed again, you can make a conscious moment by moment choice.

## **Breathing**

**For Hyperventilation - Ujjayi** (soft vocal in/exhale 'haaaa') and **Alternate Nostril Breathing**; Cover right nostril, then exhale and inhale through left. Switch to the other side. Repeat the cycle five minutes.

**Abdominal Breathing** - Feel your belly softening as you breathe below and behind the navel a few minutes.

**Small Heavenly Cycle** - Inhale the warm current into the tailbone, to the crown and down the front body to the tail, making a loop.



**Full Yogic Breath.** Isolate the body cavities; pelvis, abdomen, ribcage, neck and skull. Starting from the bottom upwards, isolate and breathe into them. Then connect and breathe into them all, from the tailbone to the crown.

**Breath Counting** - count backwards from thirty to zero.

**Kapal Bhati** - Exhale 'ha ha ha ha ha' through mouth or nose until lungs empty. Then inhale gracefully and repeat; five to ten rounds.

**Bhastrika** - Practice a dynamic and equally balanced inhalation and exhalation. Try ten to a hundred rounds. Pause and repeat as comfortable. (Avoid with high blood pressure).

If any of these practices trigger symptoms of an attack; observe, maybe continue a fraction, rest and return at a later date.

## Postures

Tree

Warrior Poses

Cat

Upward and Downward Dog - three to ten times.

Seated Twists

Bridge

Supine single and double knee raises

Supine Leg Raises (hamstring, back and belly stretches).

Cobra and/or Bow (Frontal back bends)

Plough Pose (supine de-stressor)

Childs Pose (frontal restoration)

Viparita Karani - lie with your legs up the wall.

Knowing we are the same; embodied spirits, entering and leaving with nought but experience and awareness, helps us reconcile our journey, to the ever present summit within.

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For more information about Pranasana Yoga, Matt, his book and DVD's 'How to Breathe', Yoga Nidra relaxation Cd's, coaching and private mentoring, please visit [www.pranasanayoga.com](http://www.pranasanayoga.com) or email [matt@pranasanayoga.com](mailto:matt@pranasanayoga.com)