

POSTURE AND BREATHING EXERCISES

The Seven-point Posture of Vairocana

Sit with the legs crossed in the siddhasana posture; the back is straight like an arrow; the hands rest on the knees in the jnana mudra; the eyes are open and the mouth is relaxed; the chin is tucked slightly in; the shoulders are back and the chest is open; the tip of the tongue touches the palate behind the teeth. The whole body is relaxed and poised at the same time.

It is said: "When the body is straight, the channels are straight; when the channels are straight, the energies are straight; when the energies are straight, the mind is straight."

The Nine-fold Purification Breathing

Sit in meditation posture and close your eyes. Begin by breathing easily and naturally. (For women the instructions should be reversed.)

Inhale fully and deeply: Raise the right elbow as high as possible, stretching your right side to open the chest and close your right nostril with your right forefinger. The right hand is in jnana mudra with the palm facing outwards. Pause briefly. Exhale slowly and deeply through the left nostril.

Inhale fully and deeply: Raise the left elbow as high as possible, stretching your left side to open the chest and close your left nostril with your left forefinger. The right hand is in the jnana mudra with the palm facing outwards. Pause briefly. Exhale slowly and deeply through the right nostril.

Repeat this exercise alternating either side three times.

Inhale through both nostrils together, completely opening the chest. Pause briefly. Then exhale slowly and deeply through both nostrils as you lean forward, keeping the back straight, and expelling all the remaining air. Repeat this three times.

Finish by breathing easily and naturally.

The inhalation and exhalations should be performed slowly and mindfully.

Imagine inhaling pure, bright, light and energy. Imagine exhaling heavy, dark, stale energy.

The practice opens up and balances the right and left energy channels within the body and removes obstructions to the energy flow.

Deep Abdominal Breathing

This involves breathing with both the abdomen and the chest. It is good to start a session with 3 or more long, slow deep abdominal breaths. But it can also be used throughout the meditation.

On the inhalation, draw the abdomen in firmly and allow the chest to steadily open and expand.

On the exhalation, allow the chest to deflate gradually, and slowly release the abdomen. Exhale fully before inhaling again.

During the meditation, follow the flow of the inhalation and exhalation of the breath with your attention and awareness or focus on the sacral chakra.

On the in breath, turn towards whatever arises in your experience.

On the out breath, let go and relax into spaciousness.