

Kriya for the Instinctual Self

Please note: It is generally recommended to avoid all inverted postures during for the first three days of a woman's Moon Cycle (or longer if menstruation is heavy). Please modify postures as needed. Some practitioners also recommend avoiding Breath of Fire during the first few days of the Moon Cycle. You may choose to practice Long, Deep Breathing or a very light Breath of Fire instead.

1. Butterfly Pose. Bring the soles of the feet pressed together. Grab the feet with both hands and draw them towards the groin, keeping the knees as close to the floor as possible. Inhale and flex the spine forward, keeping the head level. Exhale and flex the spine backward, keeping the head straight. Continue rhythmically, coordinating the movement with the breath for 1 to 3 minutes. To end: Inhale and hold the breath briefly; exhale and relax.

This exercise loosens the lower spine and stimulates the flow of sexual/creative energy from the 2nd chakra.

2. Moving Cobra Pose. Lie on the stomach with the palms flat on the floor under the shoulders. The heels are together with the soles of the feet facing up. Inhale and elongate the spine, lift the chest and heart up, drop the shoulders, and stretch the head back. Straighten the arms gradually, without straining. (It is perfectly acceptable to keep the pelvis off the floor for less flexible students.) Exhale.

- a) Inhale and raise the buttocks so that the body forms a straight line from the head to the heels.
- b) Exhale and lower the body back into Cobra Pose. Continue rhythmically with powerful breathing for 1-3 minutes.

To end: Inhale into Cobra Pose, suspend the breath, and apply *mulbandh*. Exhale and relax.

This exercise works to strengthen the lower back and to balance the flow of energy from the 2nd chakra with the region of the 3rd chakra.

3. Crow Pose. Crouch down with the soles of the feet flat on the floor, knees wide and drawn into the chest.. Keep the spine straight. Wrap the arms around the knees with the fingers interlocked in Venus Lock. Begin Breath of Fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. To end: Inhale. Exhale and relax.

This exercise circulates the energy of the lower three chakras and opens up the circulation to the hips and lower intestines.

4. Double Leg Lifts. Lie on your back. Inhale and raise both legs up to 90 degrees. Exhale and lower the legs. Continue rhythmically with powerful breathing for 1 to 3 minutes. To end: Lower both legs. Inhale, exhale, and relax.

This exercise strengthens the abdomen, energizing the navel center and 3rd chakra, balancing prana and apana.

5. Modified Boat Pose. Lie on the abdomen. Interlock the fingers in Venus Lock at the small of the back. Inhale, raising the head and hands as far as possible. Begin Breath of Fire. Continue for 1-3 minutes. To end: Inhale. Suspend the breath, apply *mulbandh*. Exhale and relax.

This exercise strengthens the lower back, allows the energy to flow to the mid-spine and opens the nerve channels in the area of the solar plexus.

6. Rest. Relax on the back for 1-3 minutes with the arms at the sides and the palms facing upward.

7. Back Rolls. Pull the knees to the chest, wrap the arms around the knees, and bring the head forward, nose towards the knees. Rock back and forth on the spine from the base to the top and back for 1 minute.

This period of relaxation and the exercise following it relax the spine and distribute the energy from the previous exercises.

8. Shoulder Stand. Lying on the back, place the hands on the hips, just below the waist. Bring the hips and legs up to vertical position, making the spine and legs perpendicular to the ground. Support the weight of the body on the elbows and shoulders using the hands to support the lower spine. (Make sure the elbows are not too far apart.) The chin is pressed into the chest. Begin Breath of Fire in this position. Continue for 1-3 minutes. Move directly into the next pose.

9. Plow Pose. Continuing Breath of Fire, carefully bend at the waist and allow the legs to come over the head and drop down, touching the pointed toes to the floor behind the head. Ideally, the back is straight. The arms should be stretched out behind you, palms pressing into the floor, or fingers interlaced in Venus Lock pointing away from the body. (If needed, support the lower back with the hands just as in Shoulder Stand.) As you are able, slowly and carefully stretch the legs farther away from your torso so that you feel a mild stretch in the upper back and neck.

To end: Inhale deeply. Exhale and relax the breath, slowly coming out of the posture by releasing the spine, vertebra by vertebra, from the top of the spine to its base. Be aware of each vertebra as you slowly lower yourself down. Then relax on your back.

These exercises open the upper spine and related nerve passages to the flow of Kundalini energy. They also stimulate the thyroid and parathyroid glands.

10. Sat Kriya in Celibate Pose. Spread the knees and heels wide so that you are sitting between your knees. (If there is pressure on the knees, use a cushion, block, or blanket to support the buttocks.) Clasp the hands in Venus Lock, except for the index fingers which point together. Straighten the arms over the head, upper arms hugging the ears. Begin to chant “*Sat Nam*” (rhymes with “but mom”) in a steady rhythm. Squeeze the navel point in and up as you chant “*Sat*.” Release as you chant “*Nam*.” Continue for 3-5 minutes. To end: Inhale and squeeze the muscles tightly from the buttocks all the way up the back to the tips of the index fingers. Mentally allow the energy to flow through the top of the skull. Exhale and relax.

This exercise circulates the Kundalini energy and integrates the energy released from the lower three chakras into the entire system so that the total effects of these exercises are stable and long lasting.

Deep Relaxation. Deeply relax for 3 to 10 minutes.

Deep relaxation allows you to enjoy and consciously integrate the mind/body changes which have been brought about during the practice of this kriya.

Comments: As human beings, we have certain instincts as do animals, but we also have the ability to direct, shape and give meaning to the expression of these instincts. Many of the strongest instincts find expression and representation through the “lower triangle” of *chakras* (i.e., the 1st, 2nd and 3rd *chakras*). The physical correlates of these *chakras* are the rectum, the sex organs and the navel point.

Dysfunctions of the body are reflected in the mind and vice versa. A serious neurotic behavior or self-destructive attitude in the mind will also appear as an imbalance in the lower triangle. One of the most direct ways to correct such an imbalance is to use physical nerve and glandular stimulation to alter the instinctual and learned patterns in the lower *chakras*. Once this is achieved and a new energy balance is attained, then, through analytic self-assessment and meditation, it is possible to effect the holistic change in behavior which is desired.

This *kriya* is an example of such a technology. To use it correctly, remember to bring your mind to focus on what you are doing and experiencing during each moment of this *kriya*.

The text above is primarily from *I Am a Woman*, edited by Sat Purkh Kaur Khalsa, with some minor adaptations. Used with permission of KRI.

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