

THE HOLISTIC CARE · FREE RESOURCE

Yoga Nidra

A Complete Practice Script

Yogic Sleep · 5 Stages · 20 Minutes

For practitioners and teachers



5 STAGES · FULL ROTATION · VISUALISATION · SANKALPA

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What Is Yoga Nidra?

Yoga Nidra — "Yogic Sleep" — is a systematic practice of guided relaxation that leads awareness through four states of consciousness: waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state (turiya) that underlies them all. Unlike ordinary sleep, the practitioner remains fully conscious throughout.

Research from AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences), the Birla Institute of Technology, and multiple Western universities shows that 30 minutes of Yoga Nidra is neurologically equivalent to 2–4 hours of conventional sleep in its restorative effect on the nervous system.

THE FIVE STAGES OF THIS PRACTICE

01 Settling & Sankalpa

3–4 min

Arriving in stillness. Setting your intention.

02 Rotation of Consciousness

5–7 min

Systematic awareness through the whole body.

03 Pairs of Opposites

3–4 min

Experiencing sensation without reaction.

04 Visualisation

4–5 min

Images arising and dissolving in awareness.

05 Sankalpa & Return

3–4 min

Sealing the practice. Gradual return.

FOR FACILITATORS & TEACHERS

Speak slowly — far more slowly than feels natural. Pause for 5–10 seconds between sentences, especially in the rotation and visualisation stages. Your own breath should become slow and even as you read.

01

Settling & Sankalpa

LIE DOWN · EYES CLOSED · SPEAK SLOWLY

Arriving in stillness

3–4 min

Lie down in Savasana – on your back, legs slightly apart, arms a little away from your body, palms facing up.

Allow your eyes to close... and let your body become completely still...

Take three slow, deep breaths... and with each exhale, feel your body releasing into the ground...

The ground beneath you is solid... completely supporting you... You can let go of any effort...

You don't need to do anything in this practice... except remain aware... and awake...

Now bring to mind your Sankalpa – your heart's deepest intention. A single short statement, spoken from the heart. Perhaps: 'I am peaceful and whole.' Or 'I am open to healing.' Or simply: 'I am enough.'

Repeat it three times internally... with full feeling... as if it were already true... because in the deepest part of you, it is...

02

Rotation of Consciousness

MOVE AWARENESS — DO NOT TENSE OR RELAX

Moving awareness through the body

5–7 min

Now begin to rotate your awareness through the body. As I name each part, simply bring your attention there — nothing else is required.

Right thumb... second finger... third finger... fourth finger... fifth finger... palm of the right hand... back of the hand... right wrist... forearm... elbow... upper arm... right shoulder... right armpit... right side of the chest... right side of the waist... right hip... right thigh... right kneecap... right calf... right ankle... right heel... right sole... right big toe... second toe... third toe... fourth toe... fifth toe...

Left thumb... second finger... third finger... fourth finger... fifth finger... left palm... back of the left hand... left wrist... forearm... elbow... upper arm... left shoulder... left armpit... left side of the chest... left side of the waist... left hip... left thigh... left kneecap... left calf... left ankle... left heel... left sole... left big toe... second toe... third toe... fourth toe... fifth toe...

Right shoulder blade... left shoulder blade... the whole of the back... lower back... middle back... upper back... the back of the neck... the back of the head...

Top of the head... forehead... right temple... left temple... right ear... left ear... right eyebrow... left eyebrow... the space between the eyebrows... right eye... left eye... right nostril... left nostril... right cheek... left cheek... right corner of the mouth... left corner of the mouth... upper lip... lower lip... chin... throat... right collarbone... left collarbone... right side of the chest... left side of the chest... the centre of the chest... the navel... the abdomen... the whole of the body as a single field of awareness...

03

Pairs of Opposites

GUIDE SLOWLY — PAUSE BETWEEN EACH PAIR

Experiencing sensation without reaction

3–4 min

Now we will experience pairs of opposite sensations. For each one, simply feel the experience — do not try to sustain it or resist it.

Experience heaviness... feel your body sinking... becoming very, very heavy... heavier than you have ever felt... heaviness throughout the whole body...

Now experience lightness... the body becoming weightless... floating... barely touching the ground... light as air...

Experience warmth... a gentle warmth spreading through the whole body... particularly in the hands and feet...

Now experience coolness... the body becoming cool... a fresh breeze across the skin...

Experience joy... a wave of happiness moving through you... a smile arising naturally... a lightness in the chest...

Now experience sadness... a heaviness in the heart... a weight in the chest...

Now let go of all sensation... return to awareness of stillness... the quiet ground of your being...

04

Visualisation

ALLOW IMAGES TO APPEAR AND DISSOLVE — NO

Images arising in the mind

4–5 min

Now we enter the stage of visualisation. Images will arise in the mind's eye. Simply observe them as they appear and disappear — like clouds moving across the sky. Do not analyse. Just watch.

See a golden sunrise over a calm ocean...

A white dove flying across a blue sky...

A lit candle in a dark room...

The full moon reflected on a still lake...

A child laughing in a garden...

A path through a quiet forest...

A pair of cupped hands holding clear water...

An open door leading to a garden full of light...

Your own face, peaceful, radiant, at rest...

Now let all images dissolve... let the screen of the mind become completely clear... blank... luminous... like the sky before dawn...

05

Sankalpa & Return

GENTLY BEGIN TO RAISE VOICE — SLOW RETURN

Sealing the practice and returning

3-4 min

Now bring your Sankalpa back to the surface of the mind. Your heart's deepest intention.

Repeat it three times internally with full awareness and feeling, as a seed planted in the deepest soil of your being...

...

Now begin to become aware of your body lying on the floor... feel the contact with the ground... become aware of the room around you...

Become aware of your breath... without changing it... just noticing the gentle rise and fall...

Become aware of any sounds in the room, and sounds outside the room...

Very slowly and gently, begin to deepen your breath... let the breath expand slightly...

Wiggle your fingers and your toes... gently roll your wrists and ankles...

If you wish, bring your knees to your chest and rock gently from side to side...

When you feel ready, slowly roll onto your right side and remain there for a moment... there is no rush...

Very slowly, press yourself up to a comfortable seated position...

Take a moment to feel the transition — from the deep interior of Yoga Nidra back to the world...

Bring your hands together at your heart. Bow your head.

Sankalpa Examples & Practice Notes

SANKALPA EXAMPLES — CHOOSE ONE THAT RESONATES DEEPLY

- 01 *"I am at peace with myself and with life."*
- 02 *"I radiate health, vitality, and inner calm."*
- 03 *"I am open to receiving abundance in all forms."*
- 04 *"I am grounded, centred, and fully present."*
- 05 *"I release all that no longer serves me."*
- 06 *"I am connected to the deepest wisdom within me."*
- 07 *"I am love, and I give love freely."*
- 08 *"I trust the unfolding of my life."*

HOW OFTEN TO PRACTISE

- Daily:** Even 20 minutes produces measurable benefits within 2 weeks.
- Weekly:** Use before important events — presentations, difficult conversations, exams.
- At bedtime:** Practise lying in bed to transition into deep, restorative sleep.