

Pranayama

Great Breathing

Maha Pranayama

In this Pranayama, there is the opportunity to test and refine the three levels of breathing (abdominal, thoracic and clavicular) in combination with the appropriate Bija Mantra and Mudra.

The three letters that constitute the Mantra Om are recited separately, with a particular method of breathing and a Mudra, thus allowing for a vibration to be activated in a specific area of the body while also creating specific psychic connections. It is a potent synergy.

Focus attention on the region where the vibration originates. The 'A' initiates in the back of the mouth; the 'U' comes to be pronounced in the middle of the mouth and the 'M' vibrates in the extremities, from the lips outwards.

Starting Position: sit in the Thunderbolt Pose with the hands on your thighs; focus on alignment and breath.

Before starting the practice become especially aware of:

- The area between the feet and the diaphragmatic line.
- The area between the diaphragmatic line and the armpits.
- The area between the clavicular line and the head and higher.



Assume Chin Mudra with both hands. The tips of the thumbs are in contact with the tips of the index fingers.

The palms of your hands open upward, and your hands rest on your thighs.

Exhale singing 'Aaaa...'; feel the vibration in the region between the perineum and the diaphragm.

Repeat three times.

Assume Cin Maya Mudra with both hands. In this Mudra the middle finger, ring finger and little finger are brought into contact with the palm of your hand.

The palms open upwards and your hands rest on your thighs.

Exhale singing 'Uuuu...'; perceive the vibration in the region between the diaphragm and the armpits.

Repeat three times.



Assume Adi Mudra with both hands. The thumb is bent towards the base of the little finger, and the other fingers close over the thumb.

The palms face downwards and the hands rest on the upper thighs.

Exhale singing 'Mmm...'; perceive the vibration in the area between the armpits and the forehead.

Repeat three times.

Assume Brahma Mudra with both hands. Maintaining your hands in the same way as in Adi Mudra, join the knuckles of your index and middle fingers at the base of the sternum.

Exhale declaiming 'A-U-M'; feel the vibrations in each corresponding area.

The sound comes from the lower belly; when the 'Aaaa...' arrives at the diaphragm, it changes to 'Uuuu...', and when the 'Uuuu...' reaches the armpits, it transforms into 'Mmm...'. The ultimate vibration has the sensation of being without an end.

Repeat three times.





Placing your hands on your knees, inhale completely through your nose. Bend the torso downwards, until your head is resting on the ground. Keeping the lips in Kaki Mudra (like when you whistle) exhale through your mouth. The flow of the breath is interrupted by a few pauses until the lungs are completely empty. Practice at least seven pauses between increments of breath. Then inhale completely through your nose and return to the Thunderbolt Position. Repeat three times.

Assume the Reversed Thunderbolt Pose and maintain it for at least one minute, up to three minutes.

When finished, move to Child's Pose.



In the final phase, maintain 1 to 3 minutes of stillness in the Thunderbolt Pose in a state of mental silence and alignment.

This meditative phase may also be prolonged for a very long time, depending on your preference.

Contraindications: in cases of slipped discs or lumbar and cervical region pathologies, the Reverse Thunderbolt Pose may be harmful. In such cases, it would be better to avoid that phase.

Benefits: opens the door to the meditative dimension; improves and perfects breathing; donates a great sense of calmness and mental serenity.