



If we can benefit from Vedic Chanting, it is thanks to
sri T Krishnamacharya
who gave everyone sincerely interested, the possibility to learn it,
independently from nationality or gender and thanks to
T.K.Desikachar who continued by carrying out his teaching.
It is thanks to my teacher Chandra Klee Cuffaro who patiently and
lovingly taught me, and thanks to Kausthub Desikachar who gave us
the framework for applying yoga tools in therapy ,that my students
and I presently have the possibility to apply this precious teaching
and to benefit from it.

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Foreword

This paper concerns the Vedic Mantra and its possible application as a yoga tool in a therapeutic context.

The field of mantra is huge and very special; instead my experience about it is rather short. I simply consider this work together with my dear classmates of the "Yoga Therapy Course" just a drop. Many drops together can make a beautiful lake.

INTRODUCTION

Why this topic

One of the reasons for choosing this topic is because it was the first time I was able to experience yoga as a great tool for recovery, based on mantra practice. In this case I was the care-seeker.

I was 33 years old and unfortunately had a serious gynecological disease, a cancer of uterine cervix. I chose to undergo surgical intervention and had to wait one month before the operation. The doctor could not tell me anything certain before surgery and would decide what to do only under surgery. I was stricken by terror, and now I realize that fear itself was a bigger problem than the cancer.

At that time, I was practicing yoga in group classes and had never done any individual lessons. My teacher was a Danish lady who had been Gerard Blitz's student. She was worried for me and gave me suggestions on what to do.

The practice consisted in waking up before sunrise to take a warm bath then sitting to do mantra Japam: repetition of "Mrtyunjaya

Mahamantra" 108 times. The evening practice consisted in another mantra japam with a different mantra, the Mula mantra "Om namo Narayanaya ". No asana or pranayama were done.

I was supposed to do a practice exclusively based on mantra.

I personally experienced how effective the mantra was as I did it for one month, but even before the end of that period, with the mantra practice I was able to recover from my big fear, helping me reach the surgery date being calm and positive. Moreover, I had never experienced such a stable state of mind before.

The surgeon was curing me, but Mantra Japam was healing me.

After some time I had the great chance to meet T.K.Desikachar in a Yoga Retreat in northern Italy, in Garda Lake. He was accompanied by Menaka, Mala and Chandra, my future yoga and Vedic Chanting teacher. During that seminar they chanted for us many times. After that I started to learn Vedic Chanting and to progressively learn how the appropriate sound could be useful in a yoga practice. Little by little, simple vowel sounds, mantra and Vedic Chanting became a vital part of the work done with my students.

How it is developed

If I had to postulate a hypothesis, the heart of this paper would be **Vedic Mantra melts dukkha** . But this report is not based on a hypothesis to be confirmed through "scientific" testing. It would not be possible, for the number of people "tested "and also because of the vastness of mantra nature itself and its complexity in the interaction with our multi-dimensional system.

Therefore, this hypothesis is an actual testimony of an experience that took place in a little yoga school in Italy during a period of twenty years. As a result of Vedic mantra there was an experience of reduction of dark, heavy thoughts, painful feelings, even in a social, cultural and religious context very different from the one in India.

In this period of time, we experienced many positive changes related to Vedic mantras connected with asana and pranayama practices and to Vedic chanting. These changes manifested in different forms all in the

direction of the onset of the capacity to face difficulties which before were impossible to deal with.

An increase of qualities like mental and emotional stability, calm and clarity, self-confidence, joy, emerged while negative aspects decreased. Clarity in speech and a better communication is what often appeared. If I were to summarize the effects that resulted from mantras applied in a therapeutic context, it would be that many of my students now cry much less and smile much more!

The first part of the report, based on teachings received and reflections is theoretical. The second part is practical : a presentation of ten cases, describing the possible application of mantras in therapy.

PART ONE

The modern biochemists and molecular biologists are in agreement that our bodies in molecular level are systems of vibrating atomic particles. Our body's cells when hit by sound vibrations automatically resound. In a public speech William Tiller, President of the Department of materials science at Stanford University, asserted : "every atom, molecule, cell and gland of our body has its own characteristic frequency, on the basis of which they absorb and emit a radiation." Different parts of our body are resounding differently because every human organ has its own fundamental frequency. We can consider our cells and our senses as transformers of vibrations. We can consider Vedic Mantras as special vibrations coming from ancient experiential wisdom.

Mantra

The etymology itself tells us why it can be so helpful in healing: the word mantra comes from the root word *tra* (protection) and *mana* (mind).

It protects the mind.

One of the common definitions is: "When invoked in our mind, it protects us".

"Mananat trayatre iti mantrah". It protects from outside, it protects from inside. Inside meaning what are dark, negative thoughts in our mind that make us suffer and make us unable to act efficiently.

According to this definition we can deduce that mantra does not necessarily have to be in Sanskrit. It can be any appropriate sound that has a positive effect on a care-seeker, given by a competent teacher.

However, in the cases here examined Vedic Mantras were used.

This fact is very interesting, because we are in Europe in a completely different linguistic, context.

In my experience, it is rare that a Sanskrit sound is not accepted. Honestly, it is more often the case in which Italian words or phrases are less effective, and they sometime can create a kind of mental arguing in an Italian mind that impedes quality of mental attention and stillness.

Sometimes it was not possible to work with mantra; but the reason was not because of Sanskrit, but because there was lack of open-mindedness, or an overall poor reception of sound.

One of the cases presented refers to this situation.

Why it is possible and quite easy to create a real and efficient link with a mantra based on a language coming from such a different culture ?

I think that there are many reasons why this happens.

- _ Sanskrit is a very special language.
- _ The link with "western minds "can exist because values , qualities represented and transmitted by these special Sanskrit sounds are common to all human beings .
- _ Mantra sounds go beyond the mind, straight to the heart, a special place where there are no cultural differences.

Why Sanskrit is a special language

The Sanskrit language is an immense topic. Even on a simple vowel "a", many pages have been written, many aspects have been considered. In this paper I would like to point out some information useful for understanding the effectiveness of mantra in healing.

Sanskrit is a sound based language; it has a verbal, oral, fundamental tradition not a written one. It is part of a culture where teachings are orally transmitted, by teacher to student. It is a living, vibrating teaching. It has always been a learned, liturgical, poetic language; not ordinarily used as vulgar language. It is purified at an extremely high grammar level.

Our ancient Italian language, Latin, for example, even if was used for wonderful poetry, philosophy and also sublime religious Gregorian chants, it was mainly created for law .

Sanskrit was meant to give sound to something subtly special, even beyond mental concepts, in the search for what is deep inside us, what is great outside us.

Sanskrit is composed by 51 syllables, classified differently in function of the vocal emission; *gutturals*, emitted by the throat; *palatal*, emitted from a jaw movement in relation with the upper palate; *dental*, emitted with the tip of the tongue placed against the upper teeth; *retroflex*, emitted with rolled tongue and pushed back; *nasal*, involving the nose.

Every syllable is significant, making sound and meaning become one. It is not always necessary to know the translation of a word sometimes we can understand, feeling it through repetition.

Furthermore, Sanskrit syllables are related with *tan mantras* (the five elements): *space, air, fire, water and earth*.

This is not an abstract, symbolic theory, but it has a great, concrete impact in the healing process. It is one of the parameters to be considered in choosing the appropriate mantra.

Classification de Pāṇini

(Les sons de l'alphabet Devanāgarī y sont classés en fonction de la zone de la cavité buccale où ils sont produits)

(Les correspondances avec les sonorités françaises ne peuvent être que des approximations)

	Dures aspirées	Doux aspirées	Nasales (douces)	Semi-voyelles (douces)	Siffantes dures	VOYELLES					
						Courtes	Longues	Diphongues	Diphongues		
Gutturales (prononcées dans la gorge)	क Ka (comme dans «moka»)	ख Kha (plus explosive)	ग Ga («Gamin»)	घ Gha (plus explosive)	ङ ṅa («ṅrone»)	ह Ha («Ha ha!»)	॰ ḥ (aspirée en fin de mot - ah: «aha»)	अ A («Amande»)	आ Ā («Âme»)	ए E («Paré»)	ऐ Ai («Haïr»)
Palatales (palais)	च Ca («Aïchiron»)	छ Cha (prononcé «chha»)	ज Ja («Adjacent»)	झ Jha (plus explosive)	ञ ṅa («Signe»)	य Ya («Yé!»)	श Śa («Chien»)	इ I («Tari»)	ई Ī («Infime»)		
Cérébrales (pointe de la langue vers le palais)	ट Ta («Trident»)	ठ Tha (plus explosive)	ड Da («Drame»)	ढ Dha (plus explosive)	ण ṅa («I.N.R.A.»)	र Ra («Rôle» - en roulant le r)	ष Śa («Manchon»)	ऋ R («Fromage» - en roulant le r)	ॠ R̄ (plus longue)		
Dentales (pointe de la langue contre les dents du haut)	त Ta («Tamis»)	थ Tha (plus explosive)	द Da («Dent»)	ध Dha (plus explosive)	न Na («Nu»)	ल La («Laver»)	स Sa («Saluer»)	ऌ L̄ («Pèlerine» - r roulé)	ॡ L̄̄ (plus longue)		
Labiales (lèvres)	प Pa («Pari»)	फ Pha (plus explosive)	ब Ba («Bain»)	भ Bha (plus explosive)	म Ma («Maternel»)	व Va («Vie»)	॰ ḥ	उ U («Bijou»)	ऊ Ū («Boule»)	ओ O («Cône»)	औ Au («Micaou»)

m comme dans rame, nasalisation suivant une voyelle

L'alphabet dans l'ordre habituel de sa récitation:

a; ā; i; ī; u; ū; ṛ; ṝ; ṝ̄; ṝ̄̄; ṝ̄̄̄; e; ou; o; au; ka; kha; ga; gha; ṅa; ca; cha; ja; jha; ṅa; ṅa; ta; tha; da; dha; na; pa; pha; ba; bha; ma; ya; ra; la; va; śa; śa; sa; ha; ḥ; ṁ

VĀYU air	AGNI fire	BHŪMI earth	ĀPA water	ĀKĀŚA space
a ā e	i ī ai	u ū o	r ṛ au	l ṛ am
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña
ta	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa
ta	tha	Da	dha	na
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma
ya	ra	la	va	śa
śa	kṣa		sa	ha

Legends

Nasal

Gutural.

Palatal

Retroflex

Dental

Labial

Alpaprāṇa

Mahaprāṇa



To better understand the importance of the connection between these five elements in the Sanskrit language and healing process, it is interesting to refer to Samkhya philosophy in relation with *tanmatra* (subtle elements) and with the Ayurveda point of view in relation to *pancabhuta* (elements) in our system.

Shabda tanmatra

According to Yoga and Samkhya school, in relation with evolution of Prakriti, Shabda, (sound) is the first element of creation. It is the fundamental element.

Considering the evolution of Prakriti , the five *tanmatra* , understood as subtle elements not as our senses (indriya), manifest sequentially: from shabda tanmatra derives sparsha (touch) , rupa (sight) , rasa (taste) , gandha (smell) in this way:

shabda + shabda = sparsha tanmatra

shabda+ sparsha = rupa tanmatra

shabda+ rupa = rasa tanmatra

shabda+rasa = gandha tanmatra

Shabda is inside each of the other *tanmatra* , in higher percentage in space , lower in gandha , but It pervades all the other and influence them.

Tanmatra expresses itself into elements, bhutas.

Taittiriya Upanishad, Upanishatsarasamgrahah , Pancakoshavivaranami is beautifully described how from akasha, related to shabda, evolve vayu , wind ;from vayu evolves tejas , fire ;from fire evolves apa , water ;from water evolves prthivi ,earth; from earth oshadhi , herbs from oshadhi annam , food , and from there purusa , human beings .

It is very interesting to note that in the embryonic stage, the first sense that appears is the ear.

Pancabhuta

The concept of 5 elements is one of the most fundamental in Ayurvedic science.

As we are a microcosm of nature, the five elements, bhuta, also exist within each of us. Our five senses and the various aspects of our body functioning are all directly related to the five elements.

Ether, (space); we need it in order to live, move, grow and communicate. It is associated with the sense of hearing. In the body it includes the mouth, nose, gastrointestinal tract, respiratory tract, abdomen and thorax. Psychologically, space gives freedom, peace and expansion.

Air, (it is formless), but it can be perceived by touch, to which it is related. It is related with the principle of movement, movement of muscles, and pulsation of heart, expansion and contraction of lungs. Sensory and neural impulses move to and from the brain under the influence of the air principle, which is also responsible for breathing, ingestion, movement of the intestines and elimination. Thoughts and emotions are moving too.

Fire, (Radiant Energy). On the atomic level, the atom radiates heat and light in the form of a quantum wave and it cannot exist directly in the body but is held in hot liquids like blood and digestive fluids. It regulates body temperature and metabolism: digestion, absorption and assimilation. Fire is associated with light and vision and is mentally related with the illuminating capacity of the mind.

Water (It is the fluid solution), the internal ocean, and constitutes the main substance of the body. It exists in it as plasma, cytoplasm, serum, saliva, nasal secretion, cerebrospinal fluid, urine, sweat, seminal fluid. It is responsible for cohesion. It brings molecules together. It is associated with the sense of taste, without moisture the tongue cannot taste anything.

Earth (It gives structure, strength and stamina to the body). All the body's solid structures are derived from this element: bones, cartilage, nails, teeth, hair, and skin. It is associated with the sense of smell.

It promotes support and growth.

All the five elements are present on every level of our physiology, starting with a single cell. Within the cell, the cell membrane is earth, cellular vacuoles are space, cytoplasm is water, nucleic acid and other chemical components of the cell are fire, and movement of the cell is due to the air principle.

Every single cell also has mind, intelligence and consciousness, through which it manifests selectivity and by choice.

The main tool of the auditory process is the ear, but every cell of our body owns vibratory qualities. Shabda pervades all the elements and influences them. Tanmatra , pancabutha model is not an abstract philosophical postulate. It concretely concerns our body–mind system.

Concerning the relation between sound and water element, the research done by Masaru Emoto, President of I.H.M General Research Institute, Tokyo since 1986, is quite interesting. His research is developed on the study of various types of water; the water present in the human body, the water in daily life, the water present in the Earth, performing creative experiments on the basis of the conviction that water crystals are reflecting the water essence.

Emoto claims that positive changes to water crystals can be achieved through prayer, music, or words and the results of these changes can be documented by photographs of the crystals before and after one of these actions.



After Kaji prayer



After "thank you" in Japanese language

About the relation between sound and earth element, one of the main pioneer in the sound field, the Swiss scientist Hans Jenny, studied for ten years the relationship between the undulatory forms and matter, trying to obtain physical configurations corresponding to the vibrations. In 1967, he published the bilingual book *Kymatik – Wellen und Schwingungen mit ihrer Struktur und Dynamik/ Cymatics – The Structure and Dynamics of Waves and Vibrations*.

His work was based on a discovery made by Ernst Chladni in XVIII century ; he had sprinkled with sand some discs of steel and had observed the drawings formed on it when different notes were played by a violin.

In 1787, the German musician and physicist Ernst Chladni published, 'Discovery of the Theory of Pitch', making it one of the first treatises on the science of sound. In this and other works, he laid the foundation for that discipline within physics that came to be called acoustics.

Jenny made use of crystal oscillators and an invention of his own by the name of the tonoscope .

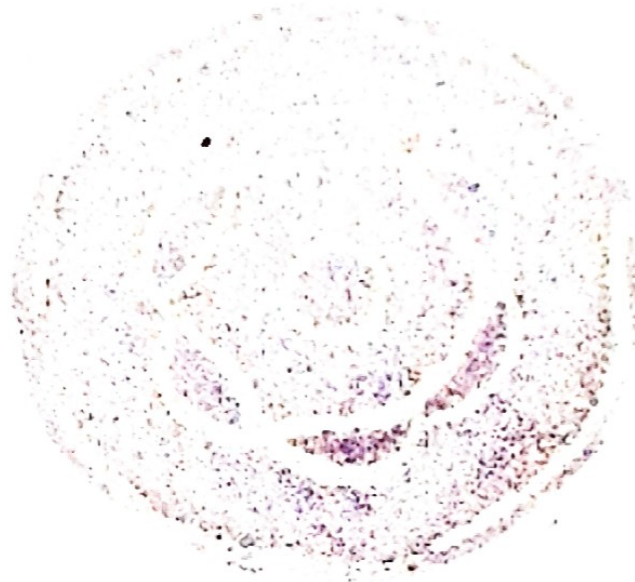
The tonoscope was constructed to make the human voice visible without any electronic apparatus as an intermediate link.

H.Jenny sprinkled discs with powders, liquids and iron filings and, in order to ensure that the sounds had the exact frequency , calibrated them with crystals in vibration.

While the notes changed were also changing the harmonic configurations on discs, many of them took organic forms, similar for example to the pentagonal form of the sea urchin, the hexagonal cells of beehive, the spirals of nautilus and so on.

H.Jenny called "Cymatics" the study of the sound produced configurations .

Perhaps the form of snow flakes or of flower petals is determined by some sound existing in nature ,perhaps crystals, plants and even human beings are music assuming a visible form, perhaps these vibrations under some extent are at the base of life itself.



Here it is visible the figure created by a human voice producing sound "aaaaaaaa" on grains of sand placed on a thin layer of metal.

A simple "a" creates a beautiful flower shaped figure!

What a wonderful shape can be created in us by special sounds of Vedic Mantra?

The experience of a feeling of re-harmonization is frequent after Mantra practice or Vedic Chanting .

To restore harmony ,the free flowing of vital energy in our system
Is necessary to remove what obstacle it .

As Patanjali metaphorically describes in Yoga Sutra IV°,3

"Nimittamaprayojakam prakrtinam varanabhedastu tatah ksetrikavat"

To remove obstacles , varana bhedastu like the farmer, ksetrikavat,
who knows how to make the water flow in his field where it is necessary.

In fact one of the definitions for yoga given by SriT.Krishnamacharya is
that of "*shodana kriya* " ,yoga is a cleansing process.

According to Ayurveda, the healing process is a cleansing of the
impurities that impede the correct functioning of our system, and
therefore creates illness. Such impurities can be installed in each of the
levels that constitute us.

As it was previous mentioned everyone of us has a basically similar
harmonic connection with the universe, based on vibrational patterns
genetically pre-programmed,codified in our molecular structure .

But at the same time each one of us is unique, very different from all the others, because of the incredible refined complexity of our system. This multidimensional interconnected structure is wonderfully presented In Taittiriya Upanishad, Pancakoshavivaranam.



Pancamaya model

This model has been accepted by all healing traditions coming from India. It consists of 5 matrixes, linked together from a gross to subtle level.

Annamaya , because we consume *annam* (food)we have a body ,
Pranamaya, food is not enough, we need breath, energy,
Manomaya, mind level, *Vijnanamaya* , our own personality,
Anandamaya, our emotions.

The word “*maya*” is very evocative, meaning all pervading. Every layer spreads out into the others, because they are interconnected. In yoga therapy, the strategy is to try to understand at which level the priority is, and to choose the tool that can better influence that level. Or, it is meant to find the easiest “door “to enter the system, in relation with the possibilities and situation of the student.

How mantra influences body (Mantra in annamayakosha)

In our body three main areas are touched by sound:

- 1 – Upper part, throat and face
- 2 – Lower part, abdominal area
- 3 – Middle part, thoracic area

1-throath area

The throat and face is where sound is emitted and modulated. Vocal emission engages our larynx, where vocal chords are situated, jaws, tongue, lips. Traditional Indian teaching related to vocal emission, defines *Bahya prayatna* (the outer effort) the effort produced in this area, it means the work made by the larynx and vocal chords vibration, diffusion, amplification color. Moreover, sonorous emission creates vibrations in all our cavities covered by mucosa, sinus, situated in bone structure.

Appropriate sound can relax many tensions situated in that area. Often face muscles keep a lot of tensions, and frequently jaws are stiff and can cooperate to keep neck tensions. Even the tongue, which is a big muscle, can be a source of tension related to the neck and eyes. Appropriate sound opens the jaws correctly, freeing them from tensions accumulated. It creates a wide opening of pharynx and larynx. Looking deeper, this is a very interesting area if we look from the Ayurvedic point of view; the throat is the area where *udana vayu* is operative. This is the energy that allows us to speak, chant, communicate, and feel enthusiasm. As mentioned previously in the introduction, concerning student improvement of communication.

2-abdominal area

Sounds are emitted and modulated and colored in the upper part, but they originate in the region between the ribcage and abdomen. Traditional Indian teachings define the effort produced here as *abhyantara prayatna* (internal effort). From there, correct emission of sound is based on breathing muscular system and on diaphragm. In that part of the body an important beneficial effect of mantra occurs. The abdominal area is connected with "jathara agni, the body's biological fire, which governs the transformation of matter into energy.

It governs the digestion and assimilation of food, as well thoughts and emotions.

According to the Charaka Samhita, one of the great classics of Ayurvedic medicine: *"...the span of life, health, immunity, energy, metabolism, complexion, strength, enthusiasm, luster, and the vital breath are all dependent on agni (bodily fire).*

One lives a long healthy life if it is functioning properly, becomes sick if it is deranged, or dies if this fire is extinguished."

Agni is necessary for the normal process of digestion, and the subtle energy of agni transforms the lifeless molecules of food, water, and air into the consciousness of the cell. When it is robust and healthy, the system digests; it assimilates and absorbs the food, and then eliminates the impurities. When Agni becomes weakened or disturbed, food is not properly digested. The undigested, unabsorbed food particles accumulate and turn into a toxic substance called ama . When these molecules of ama clog the channels, the cellular Intelligence (prana) which is constantly flowing between the cells gets blocked and pathological changes begin to occur. But the root cause of cytopathological changes is the movement of this molecule of ama. So ama has to be eliminated from the body.

Appropriate mantras with correct emission can remarkably improve the good functioning of the abdominal area with a cleansing, stimulating effect. Expiratory muscles are involved in sound emission; diaphragm is better working. Sanskrit has special aspirate sounds called "mahaprana". They require a particular abdominal retraction having a strong stimulation on this area, and consequent purifying effect. Moreover, Sanskrit has special fire related sounds that promote a good state of Agni, by their vibratory quality.

3 thoracic area

In order for sound to travel from belly to throat it has to pass through chest area. It is in fact considered in ancient Indian etchings as a combination between fire in abdomen and space in the heart. That place is a very special one. It is the residence of vital organs heart and

lungs. In this space we feel joy and pain; we feel sentiments and emotions, often related to a change in heart rhythm, in breath rhythm. Sound passing through, produces vibrations, resonances, gives space, and creates a link between the other two areas. So sound links, by harmonizing these three vital areas, by creating a good balance in between, which is essential for physical and psychological and emotional health.

HOW MANTRA INFLUENCES BREATH

(Mantra in pranamayakosha)

The link between sound and breath is evident: Every sound is transported by our breath, our exhalation. Appropriate sound progressively has the power to lengthen our exhalation .This has several important healing effects, because exhalation is a pillar for restoring health. It is a powerful tool for purifying our body and our mind from impurities. It is a great help when we need to relax tensions.

In Yoga Sutra I°, 34 “ *Pracchardana vidharanabhyam va pranasya*” Patanjali says that a breathing practice with prolonged exhalations it is useful for restoring peace and clarity in our mind, and go beyond obstacles.

Exhalation is linked with the abdominal area, hence with what is mentioned previously regarding Agni. It is promoting correct functioning of apana vayu the force that eliminate impurities, not only physiological ones but mental and emotional too.

Moreover, mantra is a wonderful way to bypass the impossibility to work directly with breath. Sometimes with some students it happens, like mentioned in case n°1.

HOW MANTRA INFLUENCES THE MIND

(Mantra in manomaya and vijnanamaya)

“Mantra is the main ayurvedic tool for healing the mind from its deepest layers to its surface actions “

(Caraka Samhita Sutrasthana , XI ,54)

Considering the resounding aspect of words, we can note that as soon as a thought moves in our mind, at that time also a word is moving. The thought cannot exist without word. No idea can exist without word, and when the word moves, the sound is moving. Every time a thought is moving or a word is moving, it is working on the nervous system and on the chemical system. If we pay attention, we can note a tension caused by that thought. It is a fact, when mind moves there is a tension; the entire chemical equilibrium of the body experiences a light change. Mantra is a special word (-s) that moves in our mind. It is a special nourishment. It is a direct a method for dealing with the mind. Mantra can have different uses:

- * It can be used to bring mind in a state of concentration. It is something that mind can grasp not to be captured by others dispersive thoughts.

- * It can be used to pacify.

To find calmness in the mind is to allow restoration in our system. Otherwise, a disturbed mind impedes the flow of prana, and therefore, our inner strength of healing to work in us. We can define it with modern word of immune system. Many illnesses (perhaps all) are connected with a disturbed state of mind because it affects digestion hence the metabolism immune system.

It is what Patanjali taught us in Yoga Sutra ,I° 30-31 .

In presence of *cittaviksepa* (disturbed, agitated mind) negative symptoms appear, in emotional level in mental level, in respiratory and body level. He says that state of mind influences other parts, so when mind starts a new positive way these parts too start to change in a positive way. Also if some kind of illness is not curable, to link with them from a stable state of mind it means, to find the force to accept and deal in the best way possible and above all to not totally identify with.

- *Mantra can be used for changing patterns

In our mind we have deep seated habits and tendencies, repeated mental activity called samskaras.

We can say that our conditioning is a sound pattern to which we have accustomed our minds. Mantra can replace this negative conditioning with a beneficial one.

Patanjali says in Yoga Sutra I°,50 that new samskaras obstacle old ones.
"tadjah samskarah anyasamskarapratibandhi"

Memory and samskara are strictly connected, supporting each other. We can also see our memories as a kind of subtle sound vibration that we retain in our consciousness. Bad memories as indigested sounds, they remain like a toxin and produce distorted perception or lead to wrong actions. Right mantras can neutralize them.

* Mantra used to create a positive reaffirmation.

It helps to create a new positive attitude through the repetition of it and through the link with its meaning,
With the quality evoked it means that for it to be effective it should not be mechanical but consciously repeated.

Patanjali teaches it in Yoga Sutra I°, 28 :"*Tajjapah tadarthabhavanam*"
To repeat visualizing its meaning .

Every key word or phrase that we repeat, memorize and hold deep inside us is a kind of mantra. It should be positive, appropriate, given by a competent teacher. The correct repetition nourishes the quality, force needed.

The beauty of Vedic mantras, and one of the reasons for its utility in modern contexts, is that they are like an immense ocean of possible qualities, in multiple forms, with subtle different nuances. So there are many different forces to link with and so many different aspects of these forces, where to choose the suitable. The amazing fact to not forget is that besides, the sound itself has a vibratory inherent quality, coherent with the meaning. It works because quality of focus of mantra is transferred to the person who experiences it. Like in meditation one receives the quality of focus.

Reassuring, mantra can simply pacify mind at a more superficial level or reaches such a deep level in our mind and personality to become a tool of elimination of source of disease, and a medium for subtle change.

How Mantra influences the emotions (Mantra in anandamaya)

Every feeling belongs to this layer, and immediately spreads in other maya. One morning we wake up feeling sad without any reason, it is coming from anandamaya . Sometime the problem, the difficult situation is still there, but the person feels better, not knowing why, anandamaya !

Mantra is very strictly connected with feeling. Mantra through its sound energy produces a certain emotional force, or force of feeling, and vice versa each emotion creates a particular kind of sound. A mantra japam can quickly produce a surprising change in feeling and emotions. Mantra can have different effects in this layer. It can be a tool for awakening to emotions, it reveals underlying psychological condition.

It can help to deal with negative emotions, a way to utilize negative emotion's energy for transforming in a creative one.

For example an emotion like anger gets inside a great energetic potential appropriate mantra , chant , can free it from a kind of wrong direction , internal dialog changes , the way to feel this energy in the body, changes the creative potential and can so be accessible. Sadness depressive feelings can catch energy, taking away from action and bearing stagnation, mantra can open the cage.

An important aspect of emotional layer is the connection. Through a good link a good feeling can derive. We meet someone we love, a link, a feeling of joy, wellbeing arises. Mantra is a tool for recovering an intimate link with positive forces, inside and outside. For example Laghunyasa chant, every strophe is a mantra linking natural forces and their qualities with some different part in our five -layer system. It is precious and extremely efficient. In my country, may be in western society or urban society, many people have lost the connection to

natural forces. They have no time to look at the sky, sun, moon, trees; they have lost the custom to relate with space, air, fire, water, ground. This is a deep cause of pain, of mental and emotional instability, of fear of life for the consequent feeling to be alone, dispersed in a world full of dangers. Through mantra it is possible to restore it. What a huge source of confidence and joy is that precious feeling of a living link .



PART TWO

Application methods

Ten cases will be presented to show how the Mantras were applied and the results obtained.

The common element of the people treated is that the request was at a mind-emotional level. All of them were in quite a good state of health. Naturally there were body and breathing symptoms, it could not be otherwise. However, no important illnesses were present in any of the cases mentioned below.

The choice of mantra and its application depended on several factors:

First of all it has been considered the kind of effect to obtain in terms of Brmhana or Langhana or Samana .

The effects produced should be stimulant, energetic, heat (brmhana) relaxing, refreshing (langhana) calming and stillness (samana).

In connection with these directions the following parameters were considered:

- soft sounds or hard sounds
- the nature of quality inherent in the mantra
- the kind of visualization suggested together with the mantra
- the relation with the kind of asanas, pranayama
- the way to chant, loud, whispered, or mental
- the capacity and ability of the care-seeker
- stamina at all levels
- the amount of time to dedicate to the practice and the time of day

Case One : Giuseppina

She is a 65 years old lady, a house wife, married and mother of two children.

She came for yoga lessons, persuaded by her brother, who is one of my students. Her health was quite good. She does not do any sport activity. Her request was to reduce stiffness in her back. She expressed this with difficulty, and she was ashamed and embarrassed. The most evident problem, however, was not in her back, but was the fact that during our dialog she was yawning all the time. Asked about it she told me that this happened very often to her. She explained to me that she was trying to catch her breath, to look for air, having the impression not to have enough of it. She went also to the doctor and he told her that she did not present any pathology in the breathing system. Her breath was very short, most of all the exhalation. And the impression was that she was "full ", and she really needed to find her breath, first of all to create space for it, re-educating her exhalation . The direction to take was very clear, easy movements in langhana direction.

We started with simple arms movements and mild bending, with the goal to lengthen her exhalation. We tried to start, but she could not at all coordinate breath and movement, even in very simple way .

She was panicking, afraid of making mistakes and was ashamed.

This was increasing her yawns more and more. In this case, the sound was our salvation. The only thing possible was to tell her to say " a a a " while lowering her arms , or bending. In this way it was possible to do the practice. She calmed a little and her exhalation started to work better.

(practices 1 - 2)

G. came once a week for two months; and after every two weeks, while she practiced regularly at home. She could start to well coordinate breath and movement (practice 3).

Her breath had visibly improved . The efficiency of exhalation automatically facilitate that of inhalation , making her reduce that " need of air ".

The efficiency of exhalation automatically facilitate that of inhalation, making her reduce that "need of air ".

This new breath pattern gave her mind relaxation, consequently the false yawning stopped.

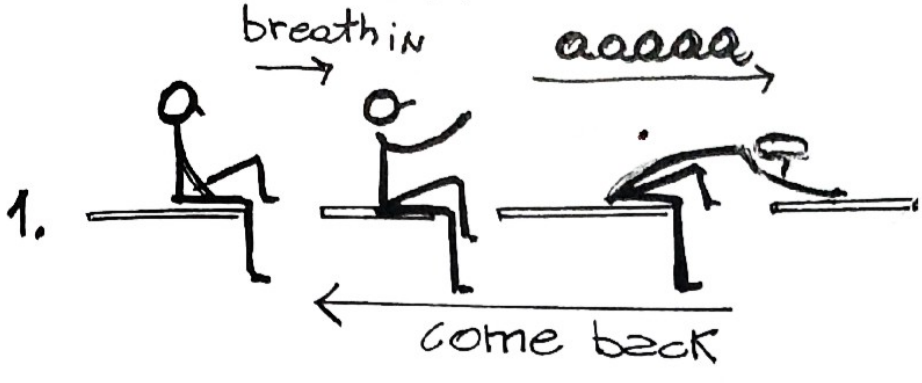
During our last meetings she started to tell about something she was not aware before, a kind of subtle fear towards her daughter, her judgment. It is very interesting, because it is a chain of effects, from a simple vowel that help breath and mind, to a new way to look at situations and deeper in herself .

In this case, the sound was the tool for reaching the asana and to educate coordination of body and breath. At the same time it lengthened her breath, without giving direct attention to it with consequent agitation. This allowed her to coordinate body and breath. This is just looking at the first step and at a superficial result , even if important . The beginning of a different way to look in herself is a deeper result and it shows how sound helps exhalation than cleaning and relaxing the mind induces an increase of sattva quality hence of clarity.

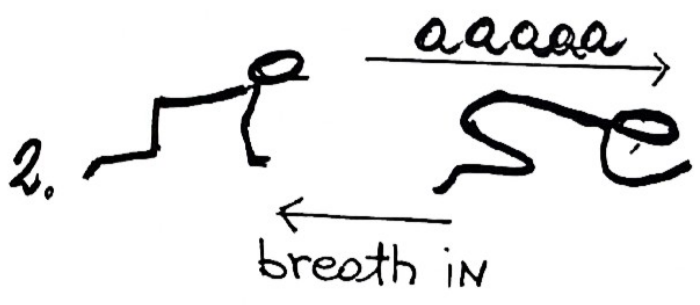
Giuseppina

(1° practice)

ā



Sometimes

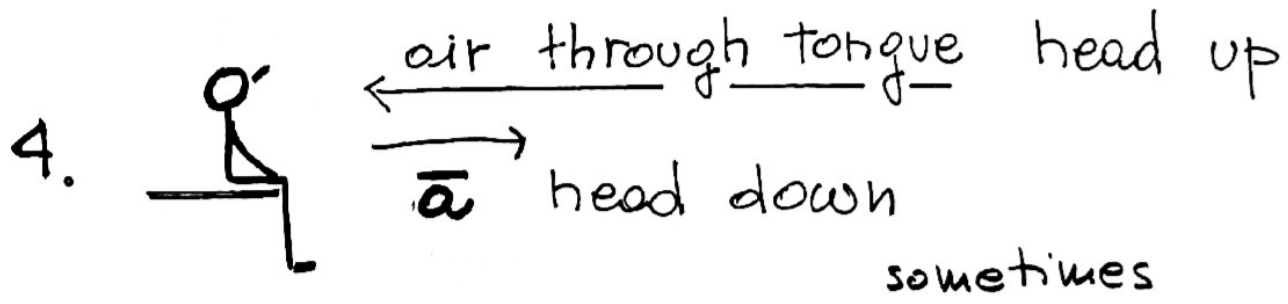


sometimes



gently press abdomen
during ā sound emission

let it free to go up
when sound finished

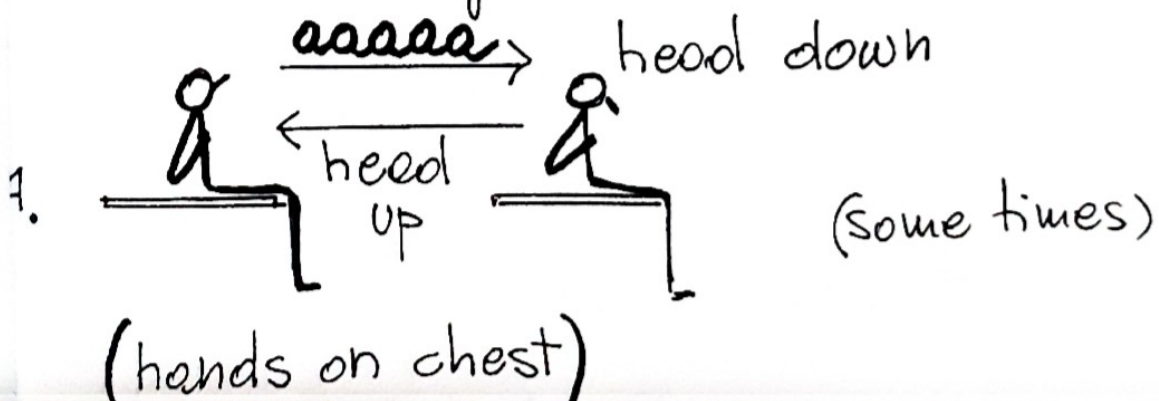
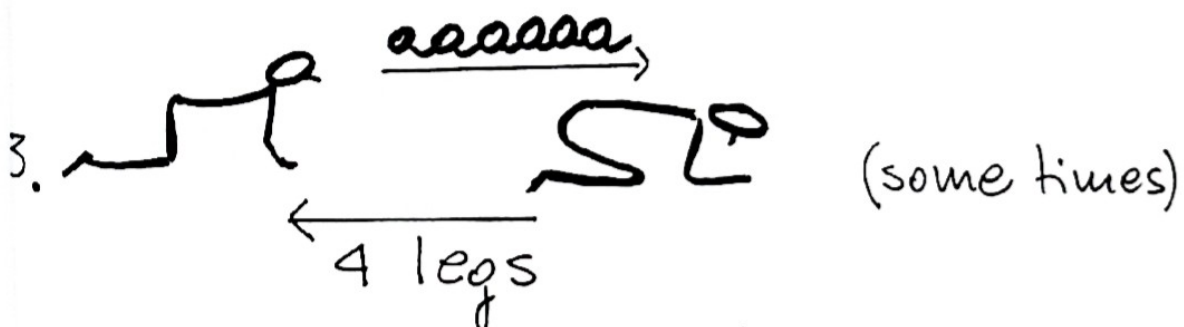
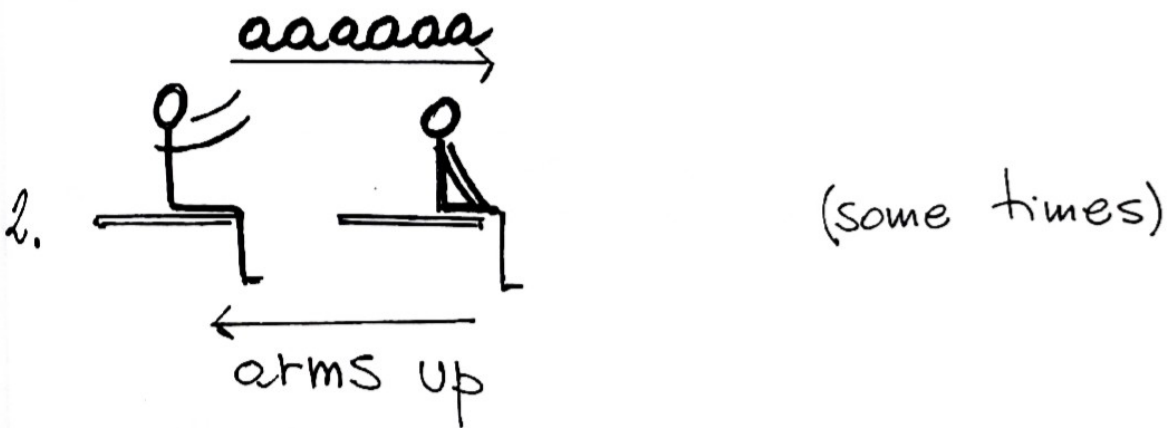
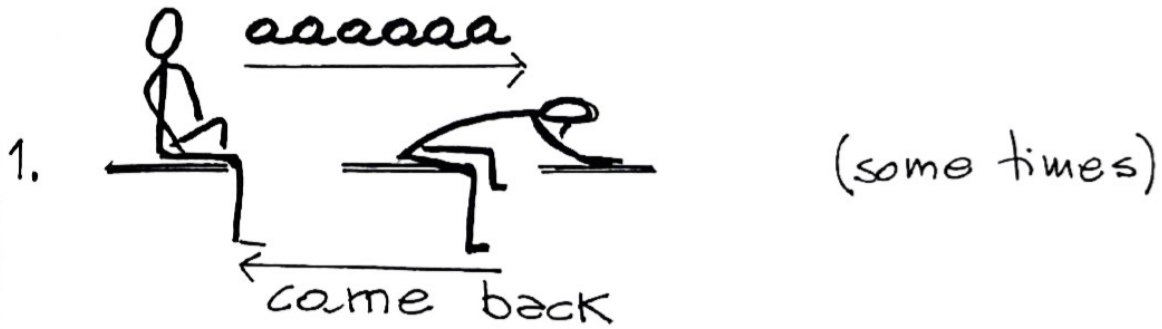



sometimes


twice a day

(in evening n° 2-3 of 1° practice)


in morning:




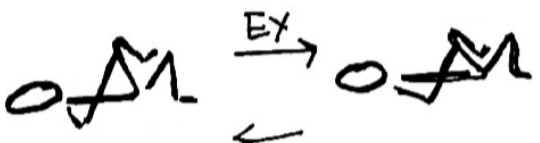
1.  IN tongue head up
EX with sound mā
st.


2.  IN →
← EX
mā front st.


3.  IN → mā mā → IN → EX → 6+

4.  mā mā mā
← IN 6+

5.  = test
feel abd ↓ when Ex

6.  EX → 6+ each
← IN

7.  IN
EX mā (very softly)

8.  IN sitali
head up
EX head
= back
sometime • free

- IN mā mā " "
- EX mā mā mā " "

Case 2 : Franca

She is a 30 years old dental hygienist; she is not married.
Weight 48 Kg , height 1.65

Franca came three years ago. She was very, very nervous, insecure, she was talking excessively and very very quickly . She complained to be insecure , easily worried and frightened . She told me about an uncomfortable situation at work, her rapport colleagues. She suffered very much of that difficulty in communication.

Agitation easily provoked her bowel movement so that she frequently needed to go to bathroom. She also complained about excessive sweat in her hands. She explained to me that her mind was continuously judging herself, and it was evident in the way she was commenting every exercise she did.

It was impossible to go on with the class during our first meeting because it was frequently interrupted for going to the bathroom.

But she was persevering and trustful in Yoga, so we could go on with other sessions, and little by little it was possible to work with her.

She had been introduced to me by her elder sister, who is a student of mine and doing Vedic Chanting. So I asked Franca to come in Vedic Chanting group classes with her sister and just listen.

She accepted, she began to chant a little, progressively more and more. We also continued our individual classes. The first practice proposed was constituted by very simple arms movements, chest opening, and laying positions focused on exhalation.

Her feed back after two weeks , was that these arm movements in standing position ,gave her bowel stimulus , during 30 minutes practice she had to stop twice. In laying positions with attention on exhalation , she could not keep attention , her mind was going everywhere .

Luckily she was starting to come to Vedic Chanting classes and she was open to sound . So the next practice proposed was with mantra , pranava , in sitting position , with nyasam .

(practice 1)

I proposed pranava to her because of its simplicity but at the same time power. I explained to her that this special sound could deeply pacify her mind, and also protect her from negative thoughts. This time she could do it without any interruptions. She began to be more calm and attentive. For some time she just practiced this one by herself; while during our classes (one a week) we progressively introduced more asanas , and breathing work focused on exhalation and krama on exhalation .

In the next practice, a standing position and a evening relaxation with "*apana shanti*" mantra was added. (practice 2)

Step by step more work at body and breath was introduced, but the mantra it is always present as main tool for Franca's healing . The visible change in Franca is amazing. She feels much stronger at body and mind level, and this is evident. Her bowel movement is becoming more regular.

The insecurity decreased, her speech is much more harmonious. This change took two years, the greater part of it, is based on mantra and Vedic Chanting .

Here is the current practice (practice 3)

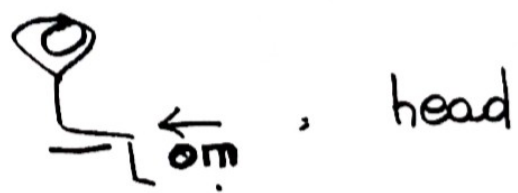
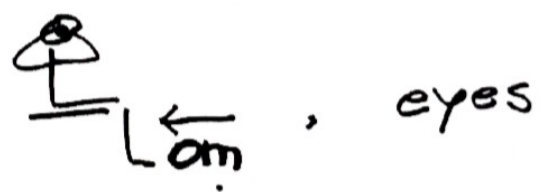
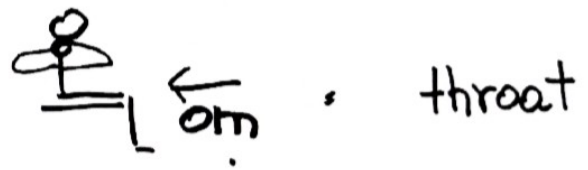
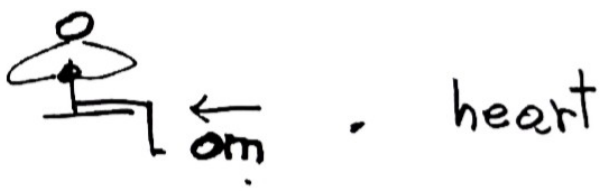
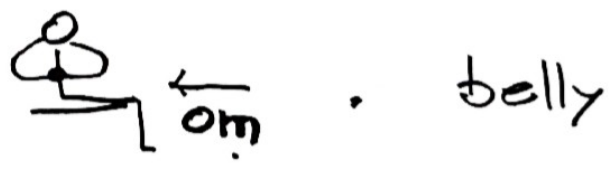
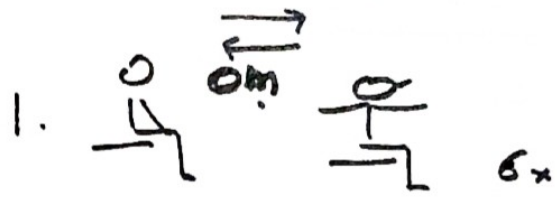
In this case, the pranava was suggested to reach calming but stimulating effect. The mantra is easy and soft to pronounce. The prolonged o gives a vibrating opening. In its simplicity it was effective to keep attention in Franca's mind to progressively calm in this SOS practice. In the first practice the mantra was combined with niasam (gestures) to bring the mantra itself in different parts of the body like a deep impregnation of calm and protection.

In the second class the mantra was added in viloma Krama (krama on exhalation) supporting this first step in the direction of a work aimed to strengthen the exhalation and apana region.

In the evening practice another mantra was added to relax this area of apana and to create a new subtle connection. In the third practice srim mantra was chanted evoking a calm feminine force .

Franca w sitali

(1° practice)
om

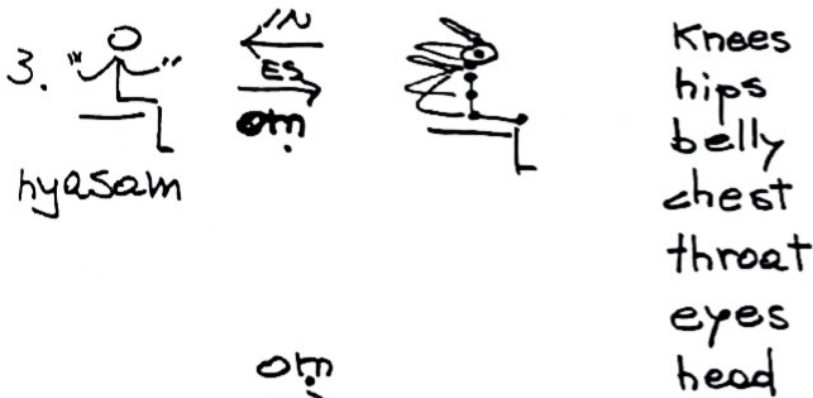
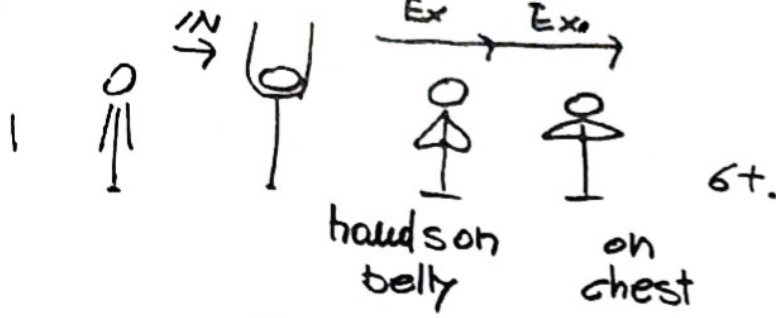


-repeat 4 times the cycle-

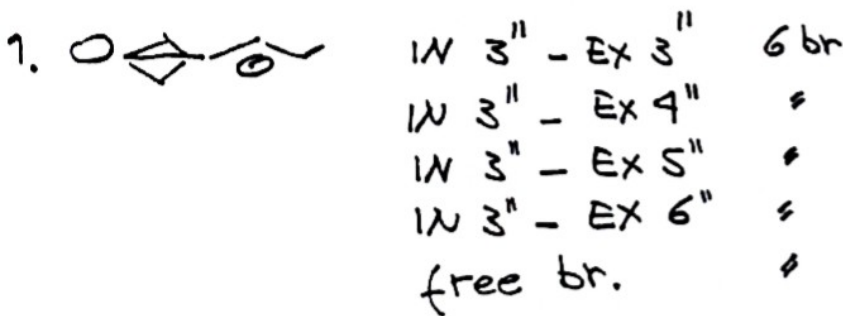
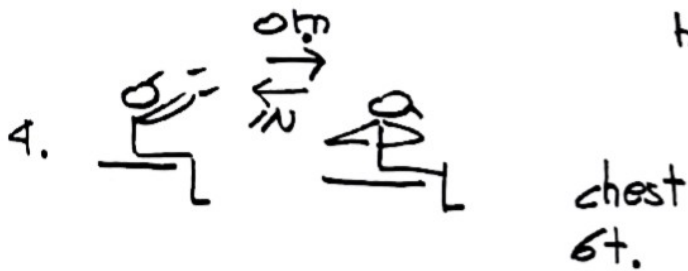


Franca

(2' practice) morning

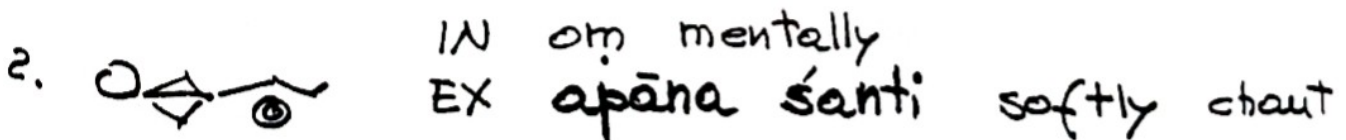


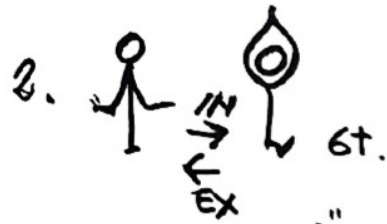
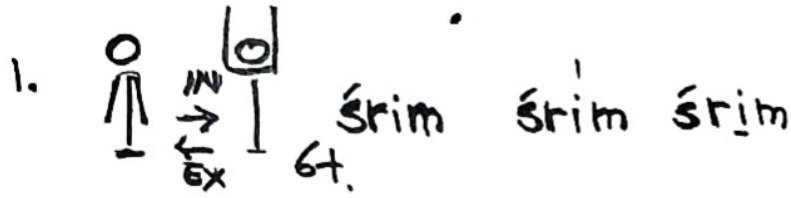
3 cycles




evening

IN free
EX krama 2" - 2" - 6 br
free br



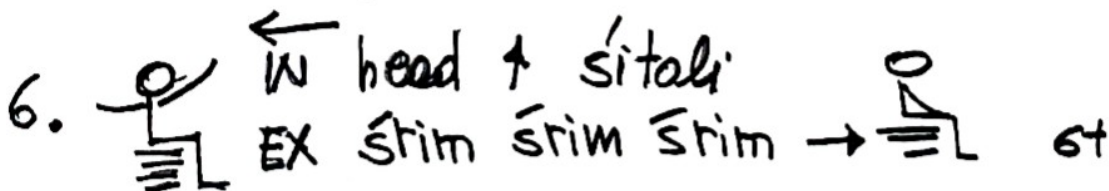


5.  IN 2 nostrils EX alternate om mentally EX 4 cycles

IN 2 nostrils EX alternate 2 Krauma om om (m) EX EX //

IN 2 nostrils EX alternate 3 Krauma om om om (m) EX EX EX //

face breaths



Case three : Antonio

Antonio is a young man, 30 years old, physiotherapist , just married ,without children .

He has been practicing yoga from 4 years. He is very interested in all the yoga tools and in understanding them deeply. He is 1.90 m tall and weights 65 -66 Kg .

He is tall and quite thin, so his body tendency is to stay lightly bowed. Mild kyphosis. Antonio also has frequent colds. The purpose of this practice was to strengthen his chest area , pranasthana ; to have a new and subtler link with it and to nourish his opening, at all levels.

In this case mantra and asanas cooperate equally, they are supporting each other. I asked him to give special attention to effect of the mantra to give some feed back.

Antonio's feedback

Effects perceived in practices with "Pranaya namaha "mantra .

_ When linked to movements , it gives vibration in active body sectors.

_ It stabilizes mood , humor , heart.

_It increases concentration by directing my internal dialogue to articulation of sound.

_ It counts the time determining exhalation duration.

_It cleans and frees.

_ It reveals correctness of asana and possible tensions in body sectors not correctly placed.

_ It amplifies energetic effect.

I feel that:

PRA : it opens my chest

NA : it picks up Energy

YA : It diffuse

NA : it takes pranaya sound effect

MA : It brings it to me , to my heart

HA : it brings it to my belly

In exercise n° 9 , the sound was not fluid , interrupted when the position was incorrect.

It showed me that also my inhalation was forced and incorrect, and my way of doing shalabasana not sthirasukham .

In this case mantra and asanas are supporting each other.

The quality of sound is stimulating, "pra" , but in a mild way .

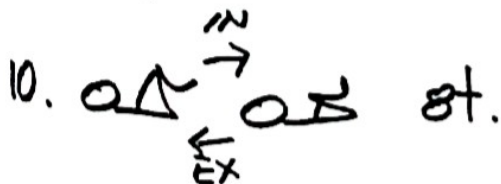
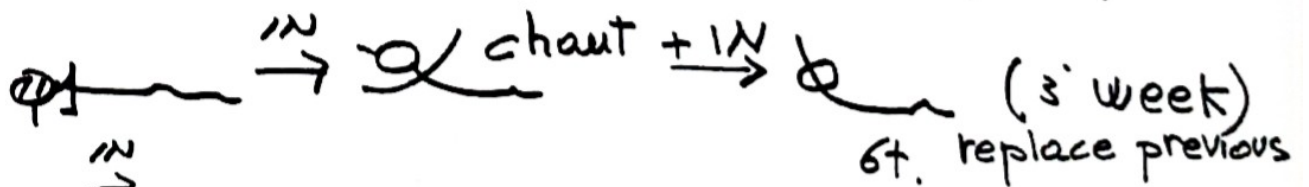
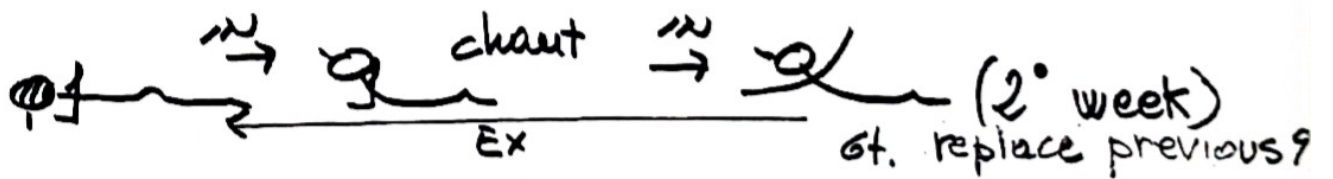
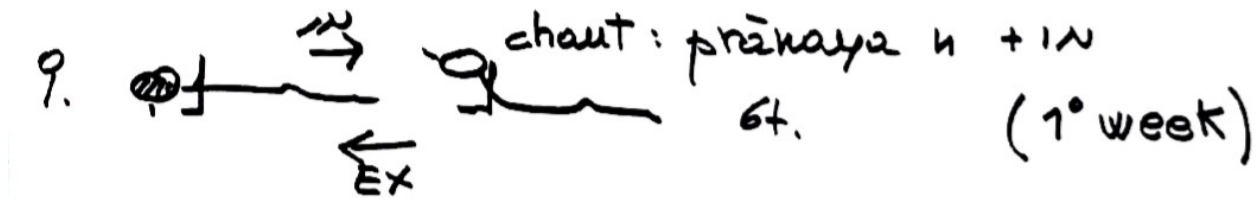
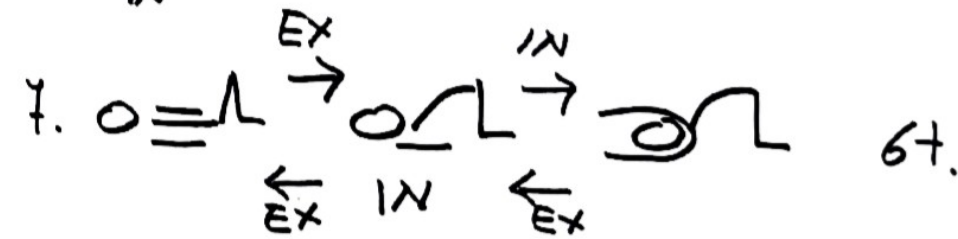
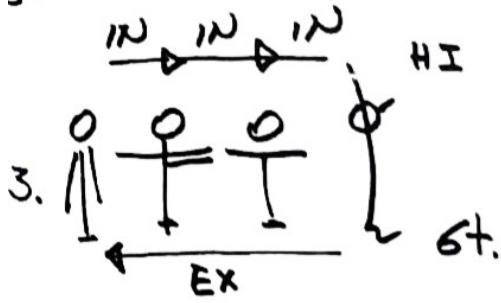
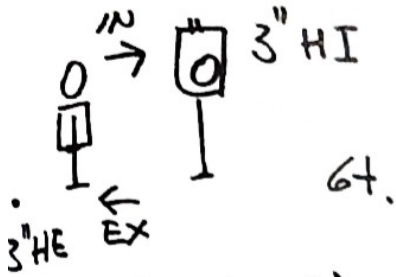
It was not appropriate at that time for A. a sound more brmhana like bija mantras.

It helps the expanding and opening.

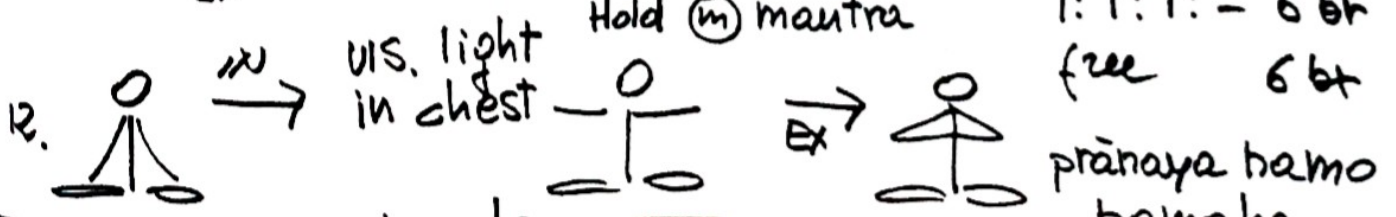
At a more subtle lever it is crating a connection with prana, a force in us different from mind. This is useful for Antonio who is excessively analytic (mind working). Expansion in the chest and connection with heart area was the goal aimed at and partly reached.

Antonio

prāhaya namaha



11. $0 = = =$ 1: $\frac{1}{2}$: 1: - $6t$
 1: 1: 1: - $6t$
 free $6t$



Case four : Gemma

She is a 35 years old lady, qualified nurse assistant nurse, married and mother of 2 children , 4 and 6 years old , both deliveries were normal.

The reason for coming to yoga class was her extreme mental agitation and emotional turbulence. She told me that her mind was full of negativity that she needs to find some rest in her mind.

She is carrying on a heavy past in her original family. This past experience is not digested at all and it is still source of pain and darkness.

She is full of grudges toward her parents, especially toward her violent father.

Furthermore, her work is hard, because it is demanding a lot, in terms of psychical effort , but most of all at an emotional level , for she is in contact with seriously sick people, for the whole day often with terminal patients.

She lives far from the town and so she goes out very early in the morning and comes back at evening. She thinks to be inappropriate to raise her children. She has been doing psychotherapy for some years , And she is doing weekly a meeting with her psychotherapist.

When I saw her for the first time, I really get the sensation of someone totally full and trapped in her negative thoughts, someone arrived at the top and trying to find something to cling to. At the same time, under these dark layers it was possible to perceive a temperament strong and self ironic. I was surprised with her quite healthy state on body level. She has a painful menstrual cycle and back stiffness.

All the same, observing her breath, it was evident that it was irregular; with a predominant inhalation .She was quite confident because I was recommended from a common dear friend, but at the same time closed. The only possible time for practicing was at night, before sleeping.
(practice 1).

The first practice was a very short langhana one. The goal was to lengthen the exhalation, and to begin to link her mind with her breath

The suggestion was to feel the yoga practice like a space private, only dedicated to herself and a space of rest.

Two weeks later she came back, telling that it was not possible to keep her mind on counting, as it was jumping everywhere. She appreciated the sound "a " and the exercise nr.2 .

She was open to sound, so I introduced " Shanti "mantra in the next practice .

(practice 2).

This worked better than previous one, but not yet enough. The feedback was that she did not feel concerned by that sound and that even that short practice was too long for her.

I felt to go on with sound, because that tool could be useful and appropriate for her, to keep her mind far from negative thoughts, for lengthening her exhalation and increasing a new link with that positive force in her; but which one?

In the third practice it was introduced " namaha ", and some mild work with viloma krama .

Very progressively she could link with her yoga practice and with her breath. The communication between us was getting more fluid and she was more open and relaxed during class and more trustful also.

During one meeting, she described to me the wood place where she is living and that she has a good link with natural forces and often late in the evening she stays outside looking at the sky.

This information suggested me to propose her a mantra related with a natural force.

I thought of the moon, because of her gently refreshing light , because she was already linked with it . The mantra " Somaya namaha " refers to the healing force of the moon, and it is pacifying, possible to utilize even late in night, perceivable like a calming and fresh force ; but most important like a healing force , the king of medicinal herbs..

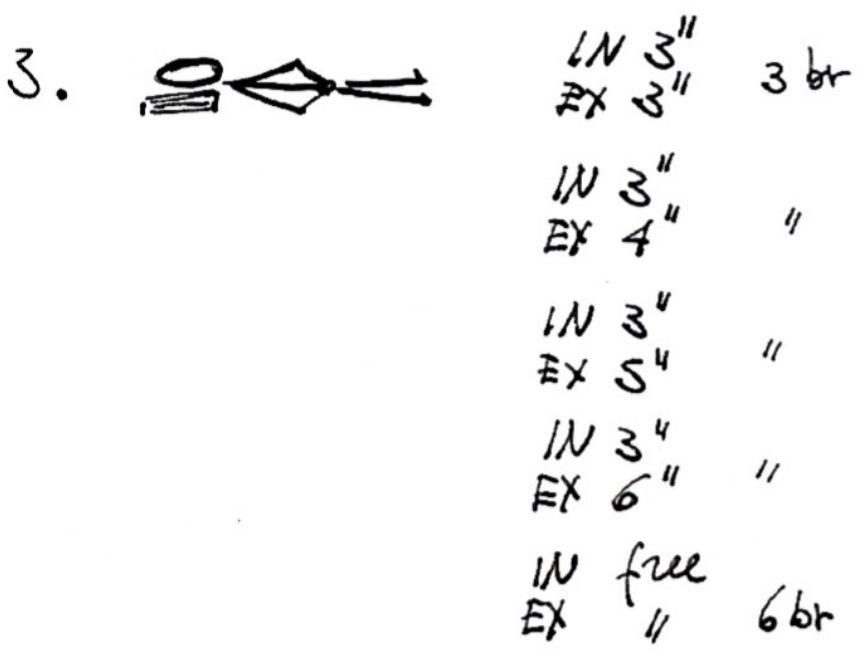
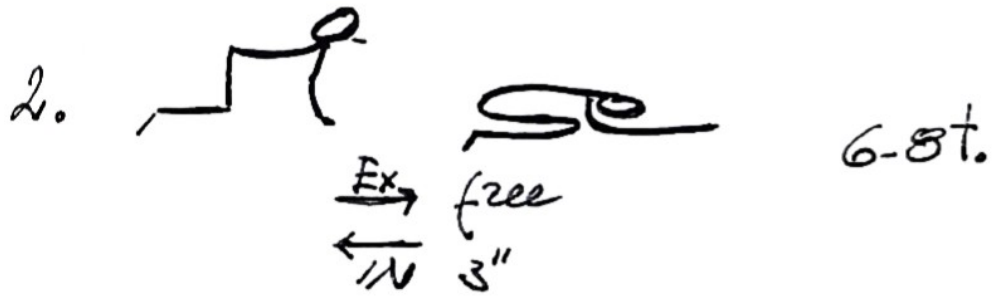
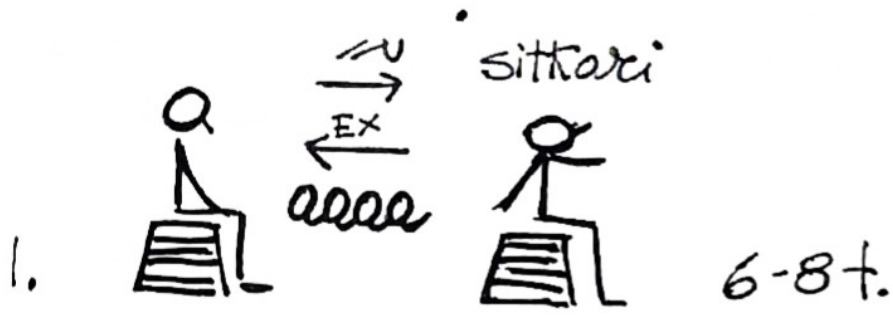
So the mantra "Somaya namaha " was introduced in a short and resting practice. (practice 3)

Three weeks after we met and Gemma's feedback was that she was happy with that, she felt a positive feeling in her, a living link with the moon.

It was possible to lengthen the practice a little, to propose it now not only with a rest valance, but also with a meditative one.
(practice 4)

She has been practicing that one from two months now.
We don't know yet what is happening at deep level, and we can not say that she is over from her troubles, but she is happy to do it and she feels to have found something to grasp, a raft. And she believes now that change is possible.



What I feel is like if a seed of calm clear space is entered in that thick mind. Now she is asking me to learn more Vedic Chanting.





Ex = cleaning,
darkness goes
out with EX -

Gemma


(2^o practice)

1.  $\xleftarrow{\text{EX}}$  (aaaa sound on EX)
sometimes

2.  $\xrightarrow{\text{EX}}$  (clearing)
6x

3.  $\xrightarrow{\text{IN}}$  $\xleftarrow{\text{EX}}$
6x
śānti

4.  $\xrightarrow{\text{EX}}$  $\xleftarrow{\text{IN}}$
sometimes

5.  softly śānti sometimes
śānti śānti "
śānti śānti śānti "

1. sometimes

2. vis. full moon silver light
somāya namaha (softly)

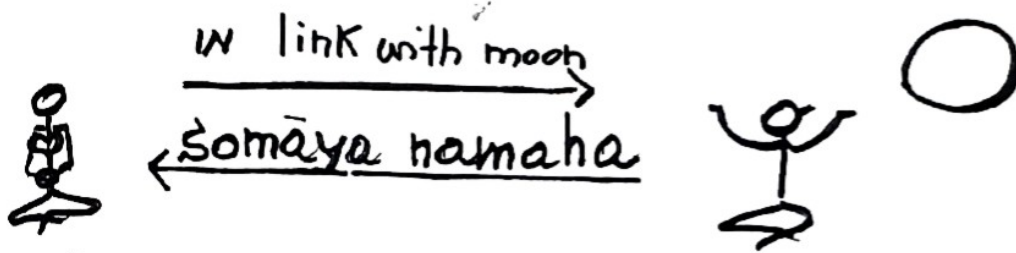
3.

4. to recit
somāya namaha
in each part (mentally)
feet - knees - hips - belly - chest - throat - eyes - head

Gemma

Somaya Namaha

(4° practice)



hands on belly 6t.

hands on heart 6t.



visualize moon in belly:
radiating

Ex **Somāya namo namaha**
(very very very soft voice)

vis. moon in heart

Ex **Somāya namo namaha**



free breathing sleep

Case five : Sara

She is a 29 years old woman, working in a shop as sales manager. She is single.

She is in good health, only sometimes she suffers a weak digestion. She has been coming for individual classes from 3 years, and she is attending Yoga Sutra study group classes and Vedic Chanting classes.

The request related to this practice was to increase her Energy, because in the morning it was poor, and to help her mind to be attentive, being easily distracted.

The 1° practice proposed was a brahmana practice , based on bija mantra-s and vinyasa krama of Surya Namaskar , and a short meditative moment linked with the sun as source of energy and health and clarity for her mind. (practice 1)

The second practice, three weeks after , continued in that direction , chanting bija mantras in a sequence with ardhattanasana and utkatasana , and a visualization of sun entering the chest in virabhadrasana , because in that moment she was looking for some resoluteness for communication with her director at work . (practice 2).

The third class with vinyasa krama of Surya namaskar chanting bija mantras . (practice 3)

Sara kindly accepted to write her feed back for this report.

Sara feedback

My experience of that practice with Bija Mantra-, is that I feel that they clear my thoughts and give to me a lot of energy, mental and physical , they make me more active .

To chant is freeing me from distractions and it favors my concentration. Without, it is not so easy for me to keep my mind concentrated on asana practice .

This effect is not only during the practice itself, but also it is continuing after, during my working day.

I feel to be more determined, resolute during the day than before.

Even out of morning practice, if I am passing through a moment of indecision, when it is possible, I mentally chant Bija Mantras , and they help me to enter in action.

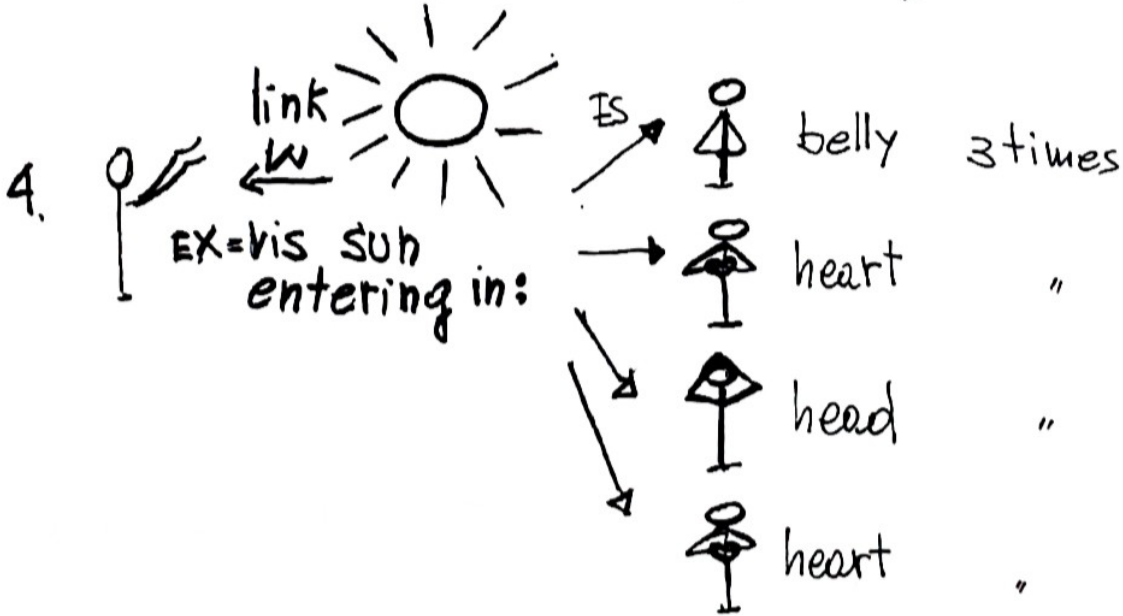
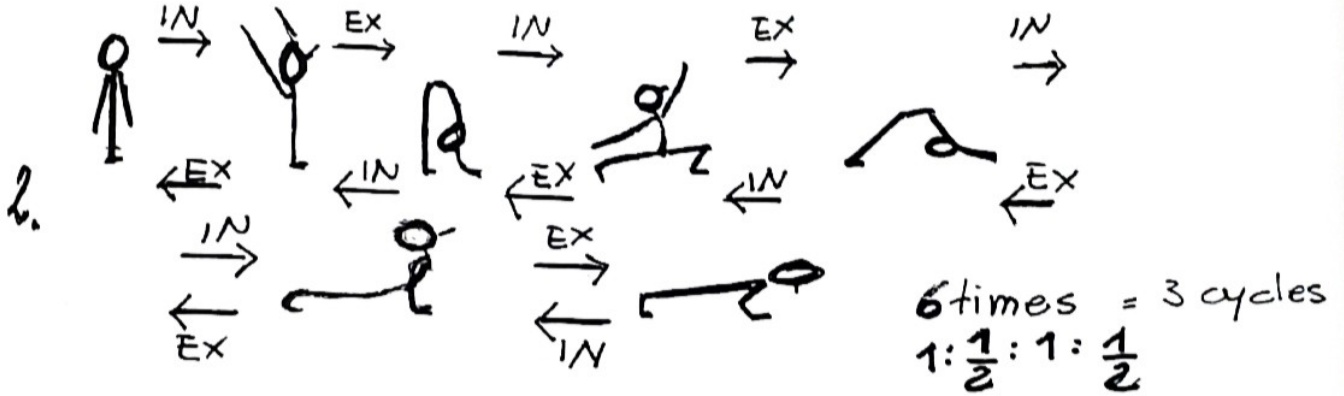
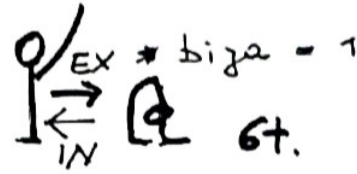
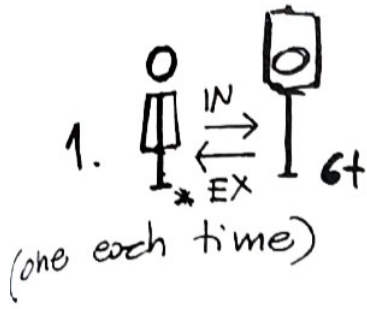
Practice with bija mantr helps me to be stronger, this is what I feel.

The most interesting aspect is that more I practice these Mantras, the more I repeat these sounds , the more it is as if the itself has memories of them. In this way it is possible for me to go back to the mood that I feel during my yoga practice, in other moments also, even in not easy or pleasant situations.

These mantras called bija mantras, seed syllables are connected with the sun. They have been proposed for their power to increase vitality and mental alertness. They are made up fire syllables plus aspirated syllables. Increasing fire they can help digestion.

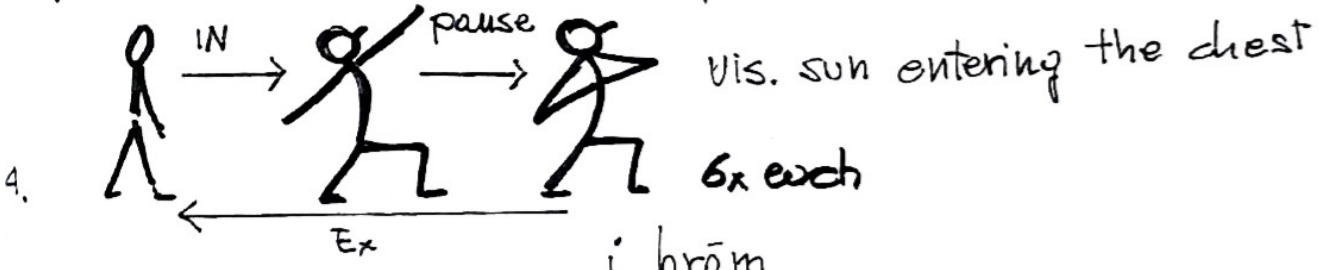
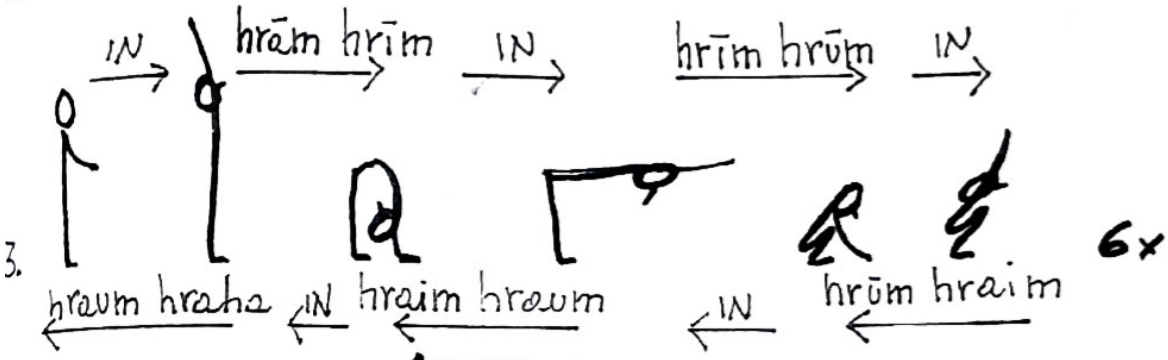
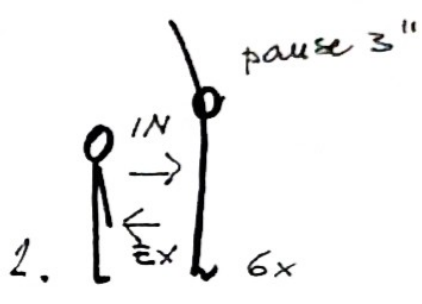
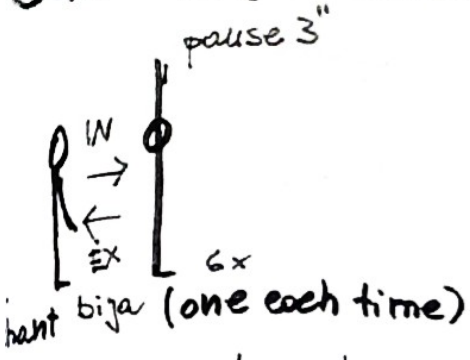
Bija Mantras

- * hrām
- hrīm
- hrūm
- hraitm
- hroum
- hraha

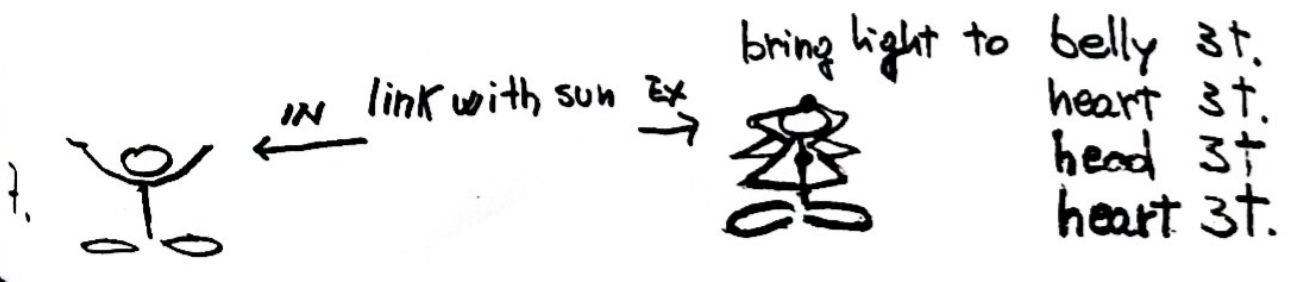
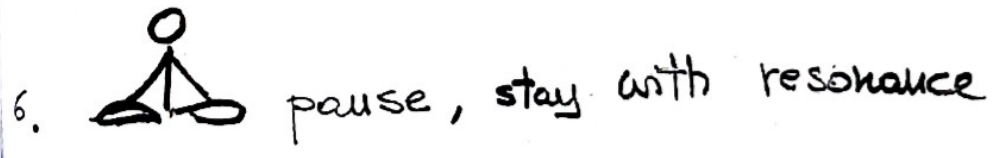


Seta Bija Mantras

(2° practice)

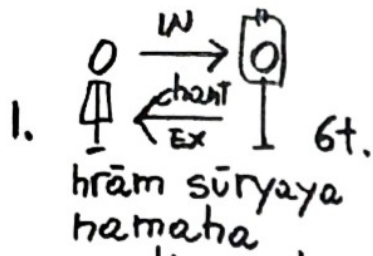


5.
 1: hrām
 2: hrām hrīm
 3: hrām hrīm hrūm
 4: hrām hrīm hrūm hraim
 5: hrām hrīm hrūm hraim hraum
 6: hrām hrīm hrūm hraim hraum hraha

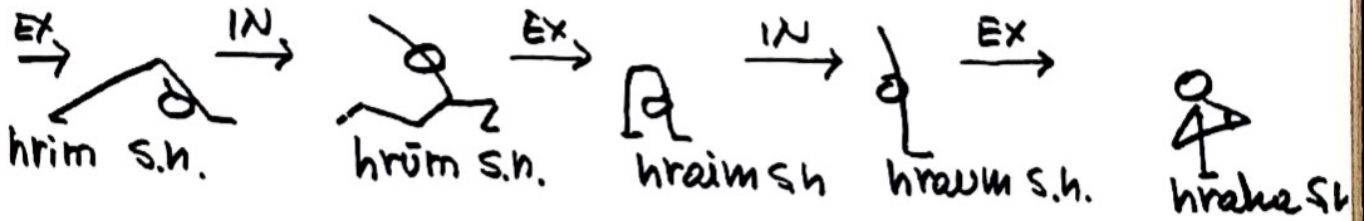
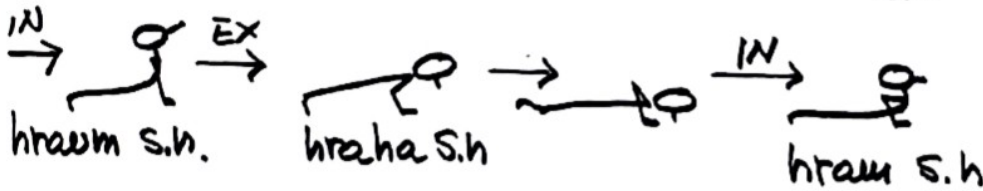
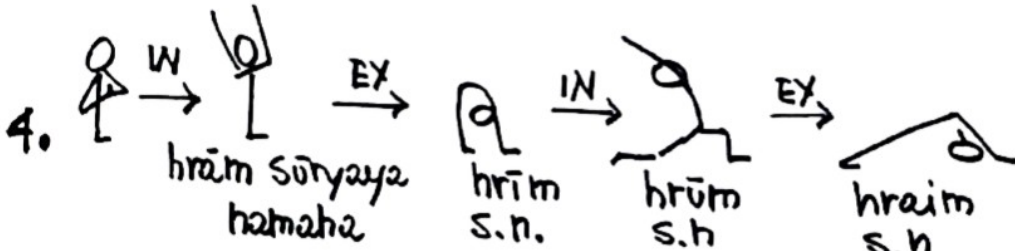
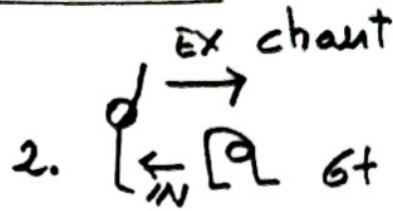


Sara

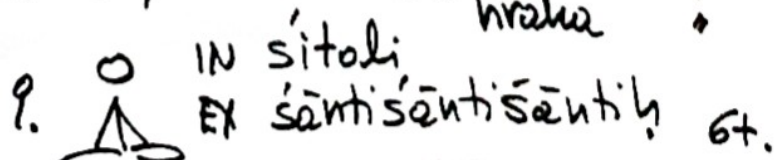
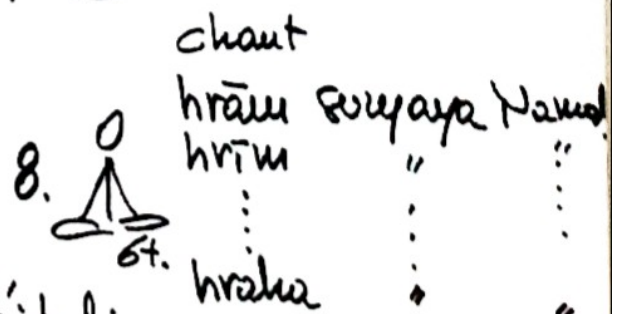
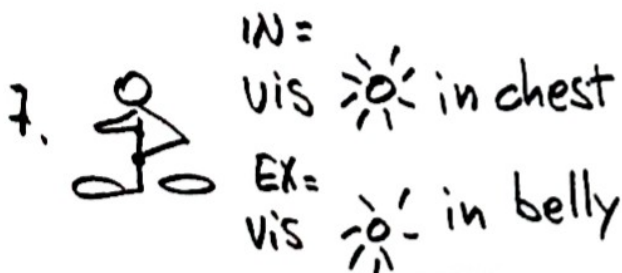
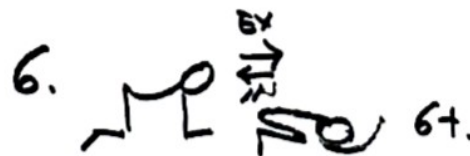
Bija Mantra + Sūryaya Namaha (3° practice)



(every time change bija m.)



- 1° time no chant, 2° time no chant, stay 1 br in each p.
3-4 time with mantra -



Case 6 : Dario

D. is a 34 years old man , working in a bank , single .

He has been studying yoga for 5 years, and attending Vedic Chanting classes.

He is very sensitive and emotionally fragile. His health is good, but he is easily worried about it. He is very sensitive regarding to colleagues' opinions. And what they say to him. He complained about a weak not a digestion , not all the time. His request was to face a depressive mood, often present at wakening , and to increase physical energy . He told me not to have more than 30 minutes.

The practice proposed was based on vinyasa krama of Suryanamaskar , visualizing to be in front of the rising sun and nadi shodana pranayama

He did it for one month, after that we met and he asked something for lowering his easily emerging anxiety for health. The practice remained unchanged except the introduction of Suryanamaskaramantra .

It was proposed because of his needing to have a short and dynamic practice but having also a meditative direction.

The suggestion was to chant Surayanamaskaramantra in the vinyasa , as a "moving meditation " for asking the great force of light to strengthen and nourish his health . It is interesting in this case those effects of mantra itself can be better pointed out, because the practices and time were exactly the same.

Dario asked about his experience told me that the second practice was much more powerful. I asked him what he meant with "powerful " , and he answered that he felt it was going much deeper. In the first one he could well feel the muscles stretching and a general wellbeing and flexibility, while in the second one he felt like if the internal parts of the body were touched. He felt like an internal vibratory motion, so that the impression was that well functioning was increasing, and a kind of cleansing was going on.

Dario was surprised and pleased with results.

Suryanamakara Mantrah is a salutation to the sun . It has a very stimulating effect.

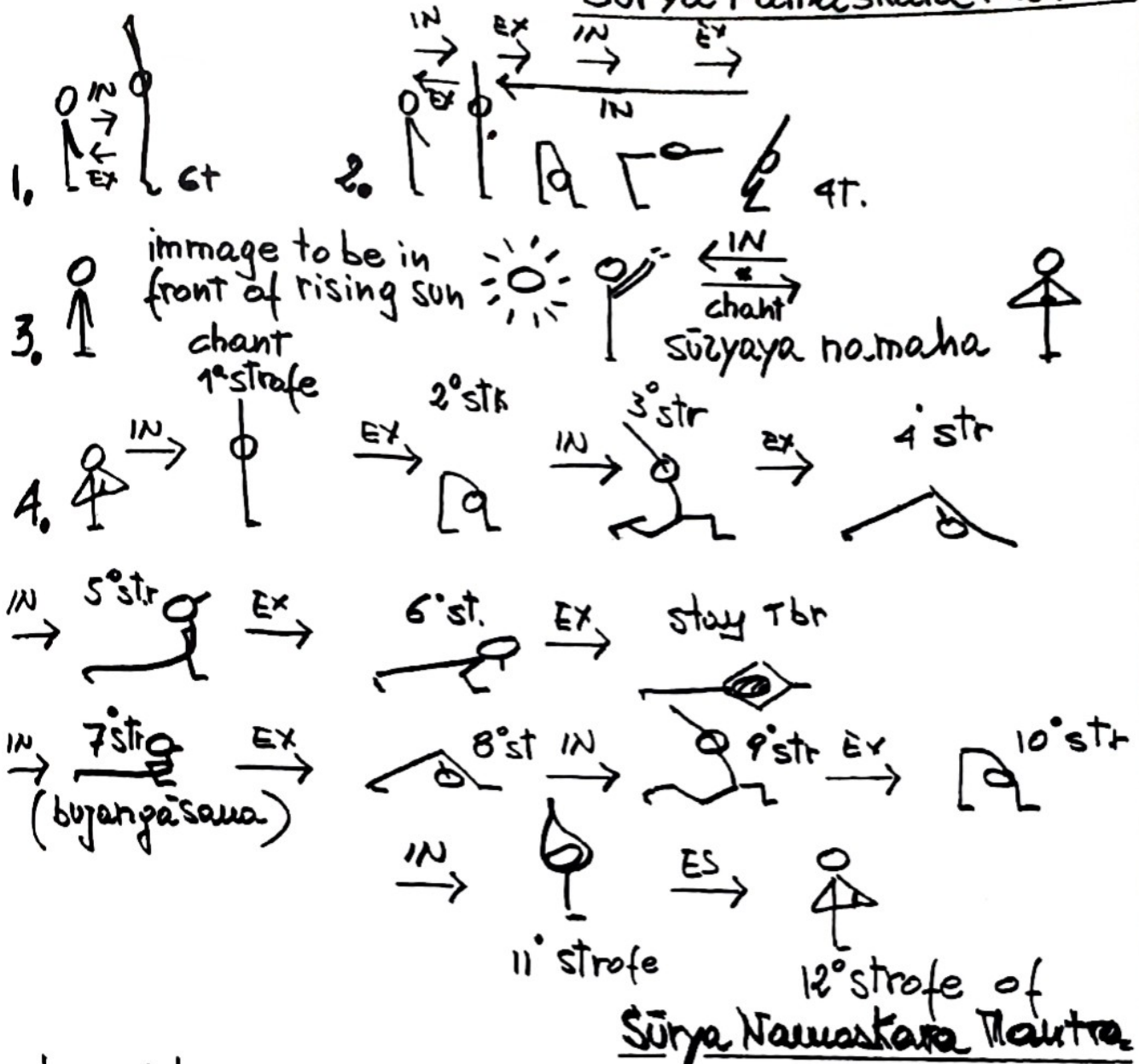
It is called Surya , sury means who has light , a-sura means who has not light . The root syllab is "ram" , fire syllab .

In this chant the sun is evocate 12 times , every one with a different appellation related with different qualities.

From Mantra Mala : " The sun is the nourisher of life , guardian of health and remover of darkness. This chant requests the sun to remove all our physical , mental and emotional problems, to vanquish our enemies and to guide us in our every step. Taken from the *taittiriya brahmana* (7.3.6.)

Dario

Sūrya Namaskara Mantra



Sūrya Namaskara Mantra

stay 1 br -
vis. sun before doing second leg.

3 cycles: 1^o no chant 2^o-3^o chanting SN. Mantra -



Case 7 : Rita

She is 72 years old, retired pharmacist , widowed , without children

She has a long medical history but it does not have importance in this context. She has a very clever rational mind.

She started to come to yoga classes in 2006. Her request was to improve her physical and mental conditions, memory. From that time she came every week and she regularly practiced at home. There was a slow but continuous progression in back and shoulders flexibility and in strength of legs, and also a mild amelioration of memory .

During the time she started to change her expectation toward yoga and she told me that she would like to become more sensitive, to " feel her heart " ,to go deeper inside her self . She is Catholic, but only as a social formality, therefore not open to pray or to link to Christian figures

As she was appreciating very much to bring attention to her breath, counting and lengthening, and rationally open to the concept of prana, a vital force , I suggested a practice where she visualized her breath that is tangible as a light entering her heart and expanding there . After a week of practice she told me that it had been very difficult, she was not linked with this visualization, it was too abstract for her. So we started a path with several different attempts to find an appropriate object for her meditation. The same kind of difficulties rose with these practices. But because her desire was still there, we persevered.

We started to work with sound because she was open to do it, moreover she told me that when she was young she chanted in a chorus.

The first sounds introduced were from our cultural context: " amen " "alleluya"; but she was not comfortable with them.

So very progressively I taught her how to use the mantra " pranaya namaha"(in the first practice enclosed), and "anantaya namaha "(in the second one). Both mantra are connected with the breath .

The practices attached are the last step of a progressive work. She practiced both, around one month. Even if she was constant in practicing and telling me that she liked it, I felt that nothing was moving even a very little change. Anyway I told myself that change can be very little, hidden , not necessarily perceivable to me.

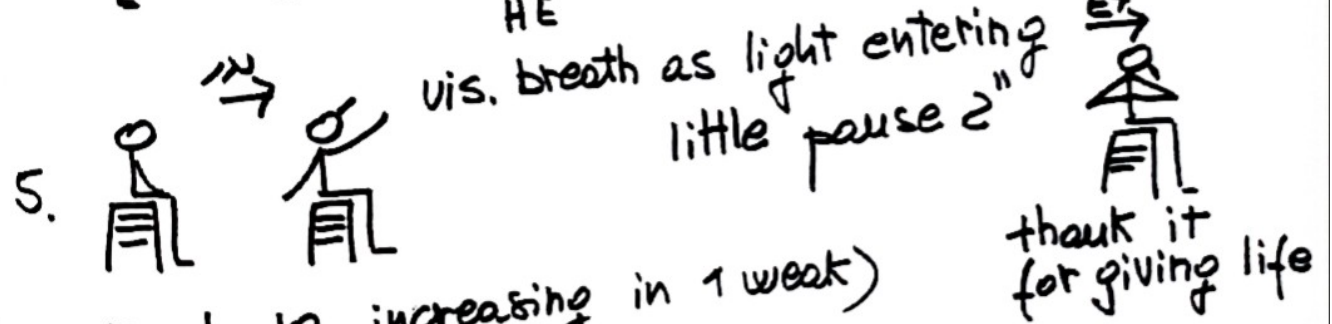
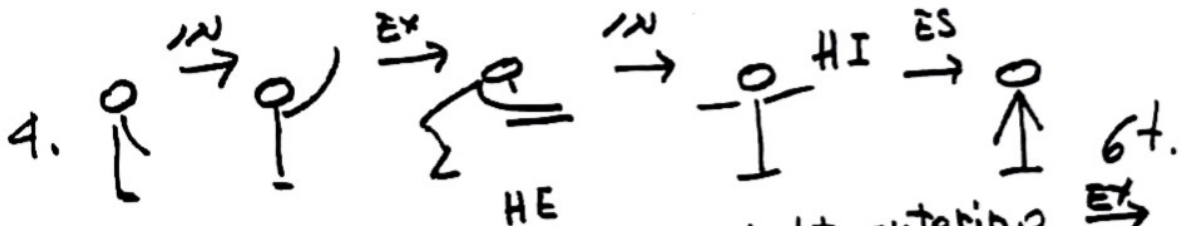
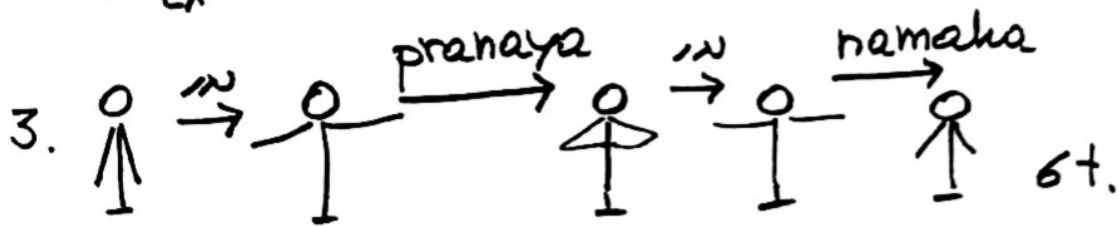
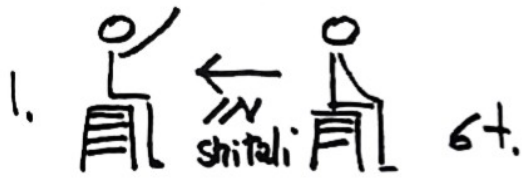
Finally one day she spoke frankly, she told me that it was not true that she liked it, all the time her mind was judging the quality of melody, of note.... So, we stopped with mantra practices. Now she is practicing her shitali pranayama or she works with breathing rhythms after asana practice and I suggested her to walk in gardens , observe flowers, take some at home and paint them .

In this case the mantra was not efficient. The medium was not the right one for the care seeker (at that moment, may be). This demonstrates how a therapeutic tool can only work if the care-seeker takes on responsibility for his own healing and has the right intention for the work proposed. Otherwise, the multi-dimensional system does not open the "door", therefore, the input cannot enter and it cannot vibrate its layers.

As the proverb says: you can bring a camel to a well but you cannot make him drink!

prāṇaya namaḥa

mantra
Ex

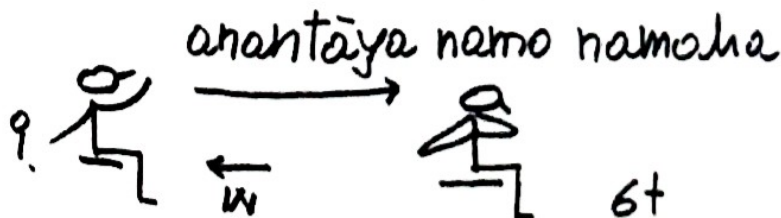
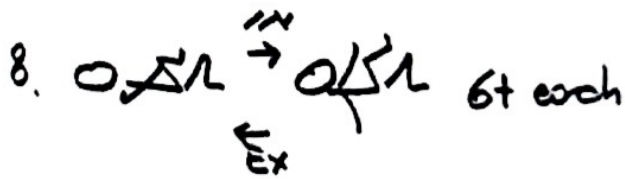
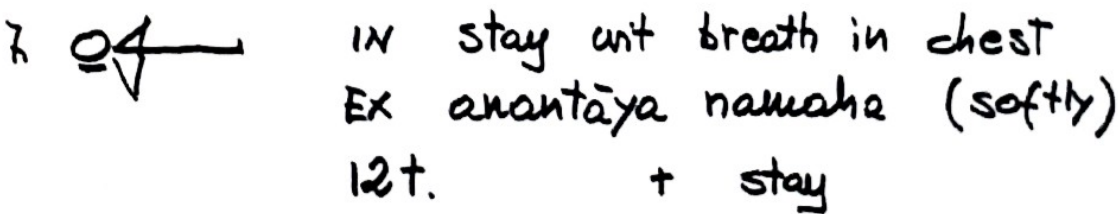
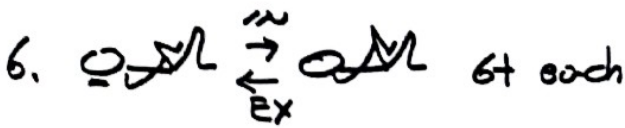
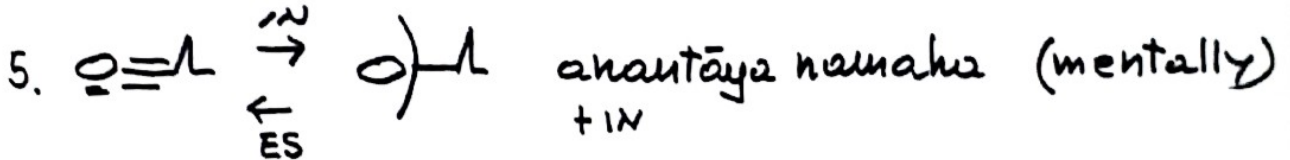
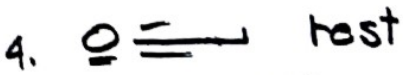
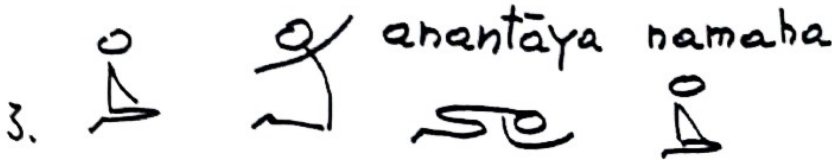


(from 6+ to 10 increasing in 1 week)

6.
 IN, mild head movement
 vis as in n^o 5
 EX chant "pranaya namaḥa"
 stay 1 br.

Rita

(20 practice)
evening pr.
anantāya namaha



Case 8 : Luisa

Luisa is a 50 year old yoga teacher, she is married, she does not have children.

The first reason for coming, 6 years ago, was to learn more about Krishnamacharya and Desikachar Yoga tradition, because she was coming from a different one . She wanted to enter in an individual work and to study Yoga Sutra.

She was also complaining about a depressive mood tendency and a difficulty to get going instead of staying to turn over and over in her mind. Moreover she was suffering for gynecological disorders with a little fibroma and a painful menstrual cycle.

We started to work on this, by dynamic asana practice, brmhana direction, maha mudra as long term goal (not yet really reached), and different kinds of pranayama .

But the real problem, that was periodically coming out was fear in different forms but generally related to illness, in presence of a small symptom a great fear to have a serious illness rose. We started to introduce mantras in her practice.

“ Suryaya namaha “ linking with visualization of sun , as a great source of health and light .

“Pranaya namaha “ and “apanaya shanti “, and all the five vayu mantras chanted with namaha or svaha .

Simple mantras, inserted in movements, pranayama and meditative practices. She well accepted the mantras even if she is not inclined to Vedic Chanting over the years accompanied by many dialogs sessions and Yoga Sutra Teaching, some results have appeared .

She told me to be much more active, less lazy .
To have become more concrete in her job and to be less worried than before.

This was the result obtained until a new major incident occurred in her life. Luisa has applied for adopting a child and after a long and hard path, her request was accepted, and now she is waiting for the child. This fact naturally triggered contrasting emotions and old fears have come up again.

The practice included is linked to that situation. It is based on mantra "Shraddhaya namaha".

It is a meditative practice, to be done once a day, to add to her morning asana practice.

She has been practicing it for around 4 months.

It is not possible to say that her hypochondria is over, and "fear attacks" are finished, but that they have reduced, at two levels: frequency of episodes and intensity.

She feels this mantra very supporting and nourishing.

She chants the mantra, like a protection and a way to focus her mind on a positive force whenever she needs, out of practice.

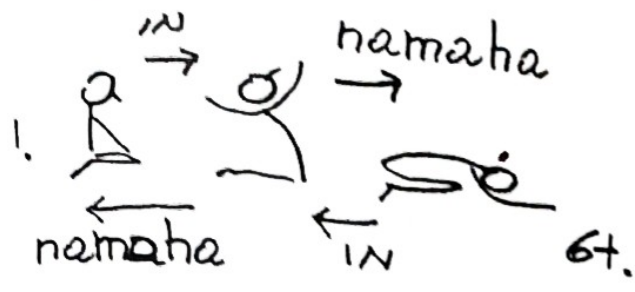
Here the practice is totally based on mantra *sraddhaya namaha*. The heart of the practice (pradhana) is Mantra Japam.

The repetition done with awareness and linking with the meaning nourishes the quality evoked, its vibrations change the mind in which it is resounding.

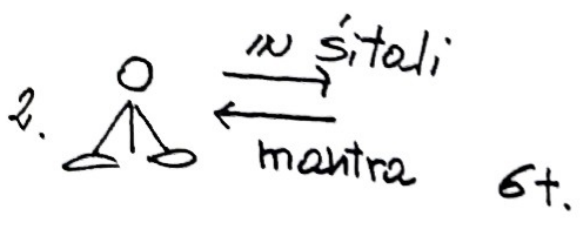
This Mantra is strong and stabilizing, within maha prana.


The root meaning *dha* evokes the concept of holding, the ability to anchor. This becomes a support, confidence in our capacities, and trust in life.

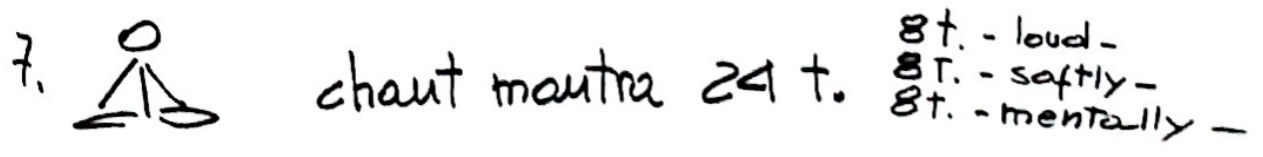
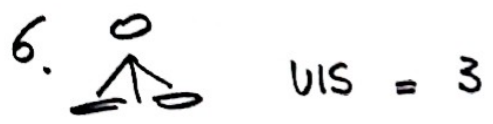
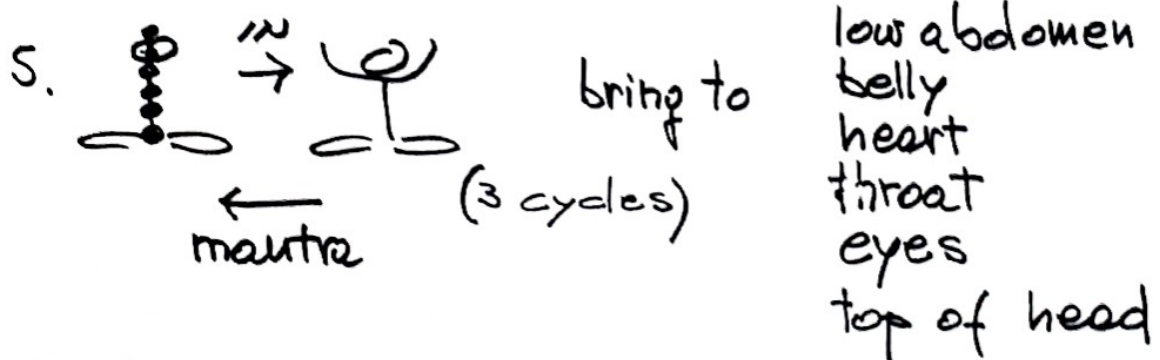
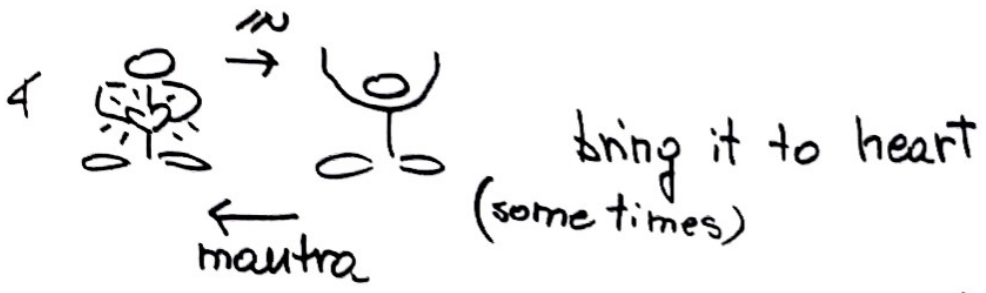
Luisa




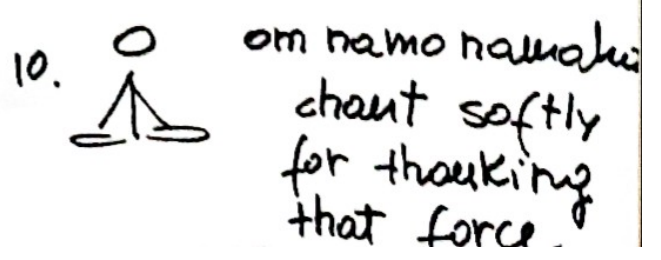
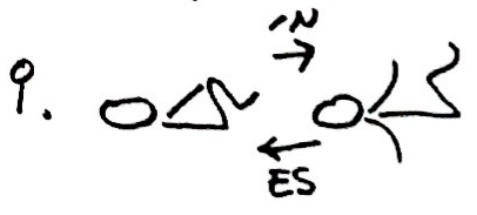
mantra:
 " śradhāya
namaha "



3.  VIS. śradhā as a bright force that protects.



8.  stay with resonance



Case 9 : Delia

She is a 57 years old lady, working as an accountant , separated, 1 daughter .

Delia has been my student for 20 years . She is very constant and interested in Yoga , Yoga Sutra and Vedic Chanting .

Over the years she had the occasion to experience many different kinds of practices. What is presented here is a mantra practice done for three months.

It was proposed for facing a difficult moment in Delia's life .

Her daughter was going to live by herself, and Delia stayed alone (she is separated).

Here below her feedback, where she explains her situation and effects of mantra practice.

Delia's FEEDBACK

At the beginning of last spring I lived a very painful and difficult moment. I was in a bad situation at work and having problems of money. So I was stressed and depressed. In that situation, my daughter decided to go to live with her boyfriend.

I am separated, so I had to start to living alone, and I was afraid about it. It was like a tempest, all my securities were shaken that I thought my serenity would away.

Thanks to the support given to me by my teacher, and thanks to the meditative practice I could deal with this critical moment . I practiced from spring to summer, every day in the morning.

This practice was a great help for me. It immediately stopped my painful thoughts giving concentration to my mind. After practice I felt I had the Energy to face my day. I started to look on what was happening with different eyes,

I was crying less frequently, and I started little by little to accept.

At the end of the practice I had to connect with a person representing strength for me . I chose my father who has been dead for 10 years, but simply thinking of him made me feel well .

On the long term what I experienced was the feeling of not to be alone, but sustained and that depressive mood moments were getting less and less frequent.

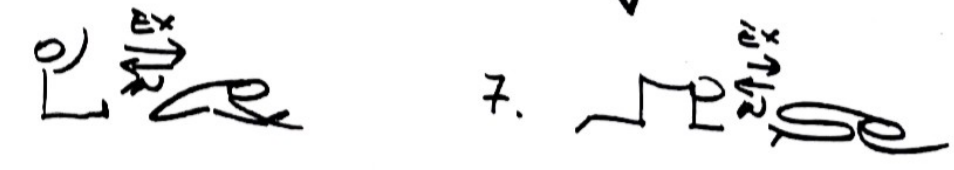
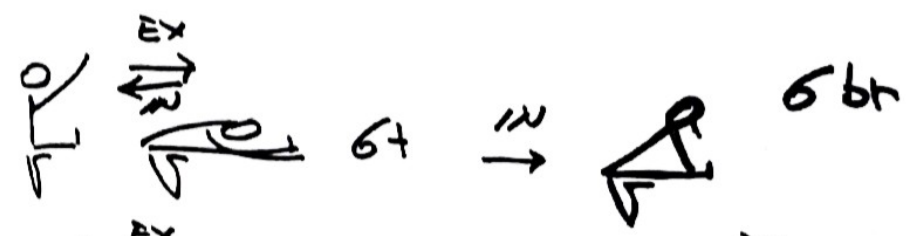
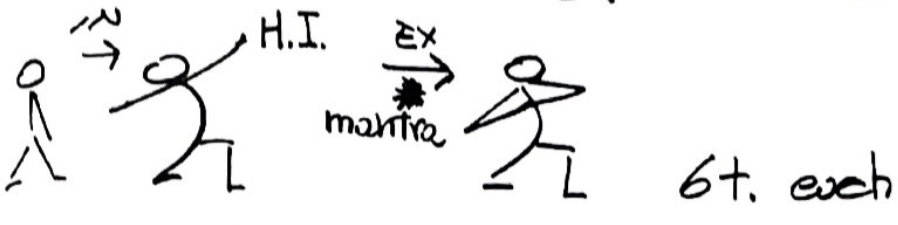
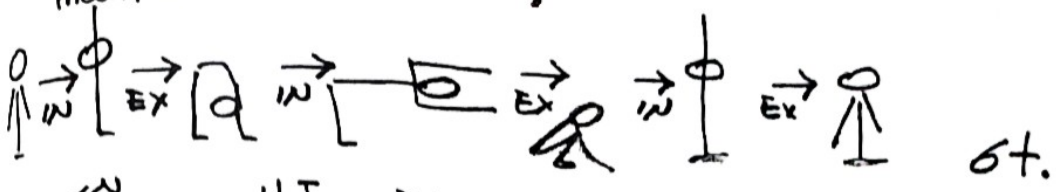
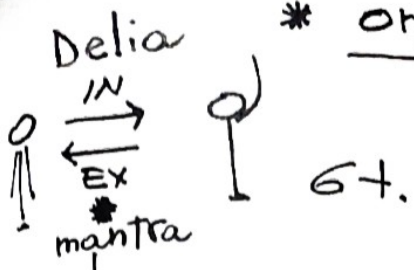
Moreover, also my body was stronger, more compact .


Here the mantra suggested is "*om dhiraya namaha*". It is a brmhana mantra with fire syllables and mahaprana. The root *dhi* means inner strength, courage. In this case, the mantra is combined with a stimulating, stabilizing asana practice containing maha mudra as pradhana.

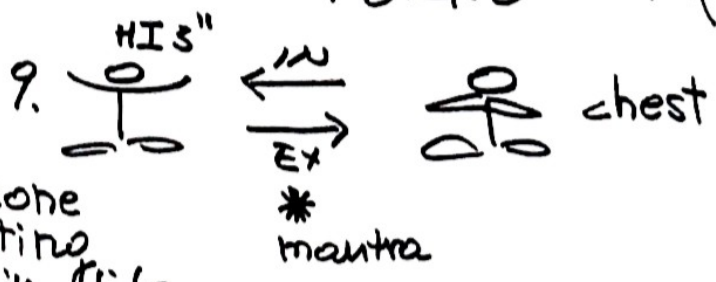
The meaning and vibration effect of Mantra itself are linked with visualization. The mantra is practiced together with a visualization of a figure.

At the end of the practice there is a laying rest a relaxing mantra *om shantishantishanti* , for a langhana effect to counterpose this very stimulating practice.



* om dhiraya namaha

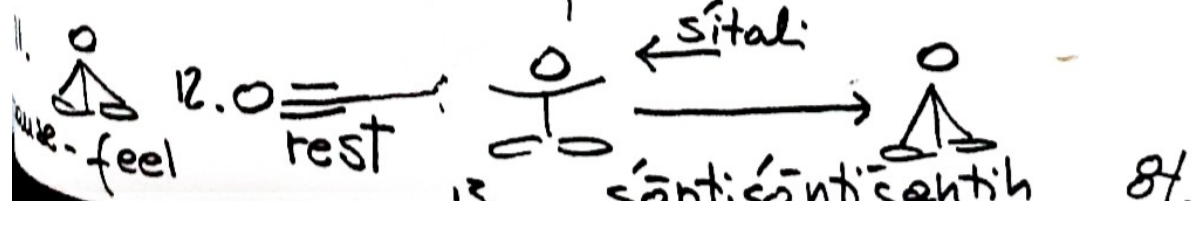


8.  3 cycles hadi shodane
4.8.4.0 + free breaths



Someone presenting no thought in life

10.  vis. person in  24 t.
chant om dhiraya namaha
little pause



Case 10 : Maria

Maria is a 57 years old lady, she is in charge of an administration office at the court house. She's widowed with one daughter .

She has been my student for 20 years. And she has also been practicing Vedic Chanting .

In her life she has had to face very painful situations because she was left widower twice. The first time when she was very young, the second one while she was pregnant and just after having bought a new home, making debts with the bank.

Yoga has been her support over the years , and a tool of deep transformation .

I really saw the potency of Yoga in helping to separate from dukkha

What I like to present here, is a mantra practice proposed for helping her in a difficult moment of great troubles at work that strongly affected her mind. She suffered an injustice at work and moreover subject to psychological persecution , mobbing .

She had the promotion to office manager after 26 years as a clerk and after a competitive examination. However, person in charge would not leave his post although she had right to it. So she asked the help of the trade union and after some time and troubles her right was recognized. From that moment everyone in the office, even her colleagues , instead of being on her side were against her and her life in that office became terrible.

She told me: "now I feel to be inappropriate, and I do not know who I am , I need to feel that I am existing. I need protection." In that case the Mantra proposed was Gayatri Mantra. She was doing it in the morning before going to work, for six months. She was also doing a practice in afternoon focused, on asanas and pranayama , changing in connection with her different physical needs, occurred over the months.


Gayatri Mantra is made up of 24 syllables. It is linked with the sun in its feminine form. By chanting it is asked to remove impurities and allow clarity and strength that are in us to be revealed.


In this case the emphasis was put on different qualities to nourish,


protection, cleaning of fears , emotional strength , mental clarity .
Every one of them was kept as sankalpa (intention) in the practice for a
certain time .

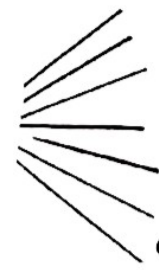
Gayatri Mantra



* om bhūh
 om bhuvah
 om suvah
 om mahah
 om jahah
 7. om tapah
 om satyam

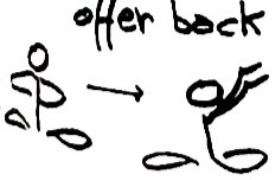

2.  3 cycles
 nadi shodana
 1-1-1-0

3.  intention: Sun protects (3 weeks)
 Sun cleans from fear (3 weeks)
 Sun gives strenght (3 weeks)
 Sun gives clarity (3 weeks)

4.  * vis sun entering the heart
 stay for one moment

5.  feet : om bhūh tatsaviturvarenyam
 knees : om bhuvah bhargo devasya dhimahi
 hips : om suvah dhiyo yonah pracodayat
 navel : om mahah tatsaviturvarenyam
 heart : om jahah bhargo devasya dhimahi
 throat : om tapah dhiyo yonah pracodayat
 crown of head : om satyam : the whole mantra

6.  - remind intention
 - recit on mantra
 vis sun in heart
 7.  12 times

8.  offer back
 9.  chant 1 mantra in
 every direction
 (turning on right) - stay for
 one moment

Reflections

Some of the cases present common elements.

In three cases : nr.8 - nr.9 - nr.10 the people are between the ages of 50-56. Their practice lasted between 3-4-6 months, considered quite long. The long term goal was to clean deep settled samskaras and the short-term goal was to pacify in order to face daily life. Therefore, similar age and somehow similar request to reach: to get inner strength, to deal with difficult life situations.

A lot of pain is felt and expressed with copious cry.

the cases nr. 5 and nr. 6 presented similar elements: similar age between 30-35 and similar situation with relation of work. They were asked to be brilliant and top-performance but at the same time they did not have a positive attitude toward their work. From this situation this request to increase physical and mental energy . They are both characterized to have digestive problems, in absence of a pathology .

In case n° 1 and 2 very positive results also at body level, with the disappearance of undesirable symptoms.

In four cases nr.3 - nr.5 - nr.6 -nr.9 asanas have an important role .

In five cases nr. 1- nr.2 - n°r.4 - nr.8 - n° 10 Mantra is the predominant element.

Finally,9 cases had positive results and one negative .

Conclusion

Considering what was previously exposed it is possible to say that mantra has influenced these care seekers in a positive way . It has produced a healing effect verifiable in different ways, as mentioned in the starting part of this paper (pag.3).

Mantra is passing through all the layers of our system, creating a therapeutic effect in them, it creates a special resonance that pervades them. When chanted, mantra goes beyond the mind, and while passing it cleans and so creates space.

Space is the possibility for prana to flow, for new thoughts, creativity to rise, for mental silence, calm to install, allowing in that way a possible meditative state.

Mantra is energy. It cleans darkness and gives light. The ancient sage of India, thousands of years ago, told that sound contains the light. Modern physical science asserts that if we reduce variety of material forms to basic principles we can obtain luminous energy and resounding energy.

There is a phenomenon, called sonoluminescence, that refers to a process in which sound energy is converted into light, generated by a bubble, placed inside a fluid, which was hit by a sound. Although the phenomenon was known since the early thirties of the twentieth century, only since 1988 began to study with targeted searches.

Dr. Seth Putterman at UCLA (Sonoluminescence: Sound into light) published several articles on the subject and determined many of the known characteristics of the Sound into light.

The resonant vibration of mantra creates light, and it brings in an intimate special place , full of light.

The place where our feelings reside, prana resides, our consciousness resides, *hrdaye* , the place of heart , were there is no suffering .

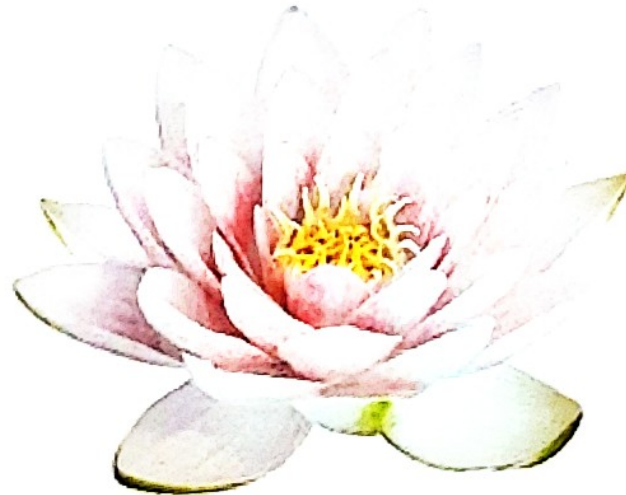
Mantra melts *duhkha* even in the very first steps of its way toward *hrdaye* .

Patanjali in Yoga Sutra I° ,37 says : "*Vishoka va jyotishmati*":
a place where there is no grief , it is full of light.

The words are inadequate to describe that place.
What words can not describe, chant, poetry can.
Tagore said that when Nature wants to communicate with us,
not finding another way, it fills our heart with rhythm and melodies.

“ Lead me to the center of my silence and fill my heart with songs “.

Rabindranath Tagore



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