



Sama Vritti Pranayama Technique

Equal Breathing (Calming Breath) “Sama” means “equal”; “Vritti” means “rotation/flow.”

Instruction:

- Inhale (*puraka*) through the nostrils slowly & Exhale (*rechaka*) through the mouth slowly and equally duration to the inhalation.
- Inhale through the nostrils & retain the inhalation (*antar kumbhaka*), Exhale through the mouth.
- Inhale through the nostrils & retain the breath, Exhale through the mouth & retain after exhalation (*bahya kumbhaka*), these 3 breaths of inhalations/exhalations are considered one round and a complete breath.
- Return to the natural rhythm of breathing or repeat the inhalation/retention & exhalation/retention portion of the breathing as many rounds as needed to calm the mind & body.

Objective:

- Sit with a tall spine and keep each breath and retention equal while imagining the breath sweeping upward from the base of the spine towards the crown of the head.
- Create a steady pace by gradually lengthening the breath & retention (without straining), remembering to keep them all equal in duration for up to 10 minutes.

Duration & Timing:

- In the beginning allow a gentle retention, as this breath becomes more relaxed, introduce a count of 4 for each breath & retention, then increase the count to 6, then 8, & up to 10 for each breath & retention.
- Offer this breath at any time during yoga practice, prior to any other breathing techniques, & meditation.

Benefits:

- Soothes and calms the nervous system by releasing tension & stress.
- Promotes a sense of well-being & relaxation.
- Brings fresh oxygen to the blood stream balancing all systems of the body.

Contraindications:

- Avoid the retention of Sama Vritti, as it may cause exertion for pregnant women & anyone with low/high blood pressure, heart, lung, eye and/or ear sensitivities, and/or discomfort when retaining breath.
- Best to practice on a light stomach but can be offered any time.
- Stop offering breath if experiencing dizziness, or if unable to maintain a steady rhythm.
- Listening to the body, doing what feels right, & comfortable are paramount.