

Week 5 Lesson 9: Prana

Prana is what gives your whole life flow.

Dear heart,

We are using this week to focus on our Prana. Prana is our life force. It's what frees the mind from blocks.

We are looking at two forms of Prana in this lesson:

Prana-vaya and Apana-vaya

That which enters the body is called Prana. That which leaves the body is Apana.

Apana refers to the lower region of the body. It is elimination energy. If we feel slow and heavy in the body, we have too much apana. Too much apana prevents the healthy flow of Prana.

Impurities in the body can create Apana. Yoga reduces these impurities.

People who are short of breath, cannot hold their breath or cannot breathe slowly have more Apana. Conversely, when you are able to control your breath, breathe slowly and have long exhales, you have less Apana.

An overabundance of Apana in all areas of the body can lead to problems, so we love to reduce Apana in order to bring More Prana into the Body

The more content you are, the better you feel. The more disturbed you are, the more your Prana is outside of your body, becoming dissipated and lost.

A Yogi is One whose Prana is within the body.

Whatever happens in our mind influences our breath. Your breath becomes quicker when you are excited or anxious, and your breath is deeper and more quiet when you are relaxed.

In order to influence Prana, we must be able to influence the mind. Actions and events often disturb the mind, causing Prana leaks. But through daily practice, we reverse this process. Instead of the outside world affecting our Prana, we can use our breathing patterns to positively influence the mind. We will look more at breathing patterns in the next lesson, but for now enjoy a deep dive within as you consider your Prana.

XO

Jane

Journaling and Meditation Questions

*Prana is the driving force of the world
And can be seen in every manifestation of life.*

-Swami Vivekananda

There is a strong link between your mind and your breath. Your state of mind is related to the quality of your internal Prana. In yoga we are making positive use of these connections, so that Prana strengthens and flows freely within. This week take time to notice what happens to your breath when something outside of you happens (good or bad). Write down a few experiences that you notice today in the space below. Write down what happened and then what occurred in your breathing and in your mind. Take as much space as you need to record these experiences.

Prana is a friend of consciousness. If we can relate to or see the degree of clarity created by the power of our consciousness within us, then the close connection between our mind and prana becomes obvious. Prana is an expression of consciousness both inside and outside the body. It is something that flows continuously from somewhere inside of you, your vitality streaming out from the center of your body. Describe your Prana right now to the best of your ability. Even if you don't quite fully grasp the concept, let your inner voice record a few words or phrases. You can also draw a picture if that feels easier or more available to you.

When we are unhealthy, we have more Prana outside of the body than within. Feelings of being stuck, negative thoughts, aches, pains, and depression all arise when there is a lack of prana inside the body. Can you think of a time when your Prana was more outside of you than within? What did that feel like? What was happening?

When we feel peaceful and aligned, we have more prana within the body. If prana can't find the body, it's because there is too much rubbish there. (That's why we will practice Pranayama in the next lesson, to reduce the rubbish within our body.) For now, write down what it feels like in your body to be peaceful and aligned. Think of a time that you felt like all was at peace for you and write down what it felt like. What was happening around you? What was happening within you?