

Considerations for Vinyāsa Krama around Bakāsana



When studying the many aspects of Āsana, my teacher taught me not just the final form of the Āsana, but also that there was a learning around the context and especially the Vinyāsa Krama of each Āsana and the 'family' to which they belonged.

For example when studying Āsana such as Bakāsana, I was taught that there are certain protective and selective criteria that need to be considered as part of both the dynamic of the form and the prerequisite steps. These also help in determining the readiness of the practitioner to engage in the dynamic that Āsana such as this one sit.

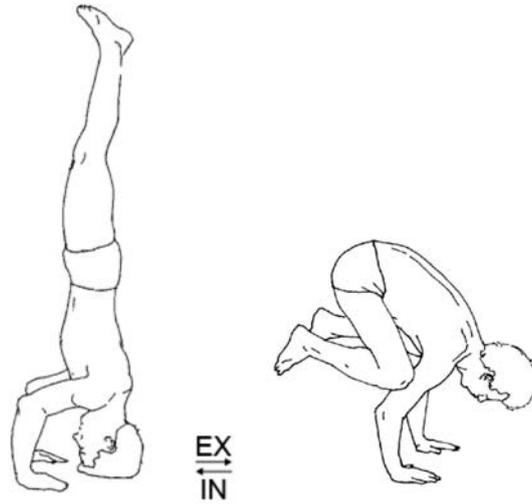
These considerations include a specific Vinyāsa Krama or steps into and out of the Āsana. These steps in themselves offer a sort of check list to determine if the student is adequately prepared and thus ready to engage in the process of which the final form is but a still frame within a movie.

These considerations within the methodology of Krishnamacharya's and Desikachar's teaching appear to be somewhat at odds within many of the current attitudes to and within Modern Postural Yoga. In that Yoga students and teachers *idée fixe* with attaining the final form dominates the reality of the postural landscape that we call Yoga today.

This *idée fixe* around final form also appears to include exploring short cuts or nifty choreographical bypasses where the aim is to get into the posture by whatever means we can. This is not what or how Krishnamacharya and Desikachar taught in that the Vinyāsa Krama also determined if the student was well prepared and physically competent for these more challenging physical forms.

The Vinyāsa Krama for Bakāsana is one such example and two examples of the approach to and from the Āsana are illustrated, each in themselves determining the readiness of the student for the final form.

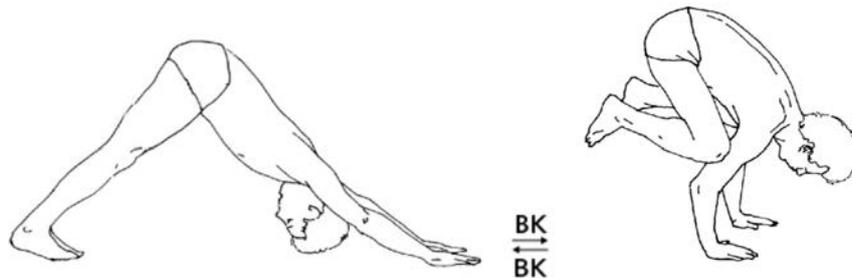
Included in the Vinyāsa Krama for Bakāsana is also the concept of dynamic and static in that I was taught that I needed to move into and out of this particular final form for at least 6 times smoothly before I was deemed ready to stay. All in all it seems a far cry from what one finds today with our determination to get there whether we are ready or not.



The example above is the primary Vinyāsa Krama and in it the Āsana is approached from a variation of Śīrṣāsana. Here the practitioner slowly moves into and out of Bakāsana for six times dynamically before being deemed ready to stay in the final form.



A further note for this particular Vinyāsa Krama is that the movement process does not include lowering the knees to the arms first, as shown in the above illustration, before then lifting up the head and trunk. The head and trunk need to be lifted up before the knees arrive at the arms. In other words at the same time as the legs curl down the head and trunk are lifted up.



The above example is a alternative Vinyāsa Krama, used in such as teaching youngsters where jumping sequences are part of the strategy in engaging their attention, involvement and coordinational development. Here the practitioner smoothly jumps, on the Bāhya Kumbhaka, from Adho Mukha Śvan Āsana into Bakāsana landing lightly into the final form.

We can observe from both these examples that the considerations in Krishnamacharya and Desikachar's teachings around the Vinyāsa Krama of Āsana such as Bakāsana includes a determination regarding the prerequisites. In other words the readiness of the student or appropriateness of the Āsana for the background of the student were inbuilt into the learning process.