108 Saṃskṛta Core Concept Pointers – 3 – Āsana

आसन

Root:

ās

Devanāgarī:

आसन

Translation:

particular posture; sitting, sitting down; seat, place, stool; abiding, dwelling

Similar words:

pīṭham

Related concepts:

haṭha, kriyā, prāṇāyāma, mudrā, viparīta, bandha, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, prathamā, madhyamā, prauḍha, ujjāyī, pratikriyā, sarvāṅgāsana, paścimatāna, śavāsana, pūrvatāna, koṇa, śvan, jānu, bakāsana, utkaṭa, uttāna, upaviṣṭa, ūrdhva, adhas, daṇḍa, nāva, kapota, bheka, kukkuṭa, garbha, gaṇḍa, mayūra, piñcha, vṛkṣa, vṛścika, prasṛta, prasārita, pādāṅguṣṭha, matysa, bhujaṅga, samasthiti, tāḍāsana, adho mukha śvānāsana, ūrdhva mukha śvānāsana, daṇḍāsana, cakravākāsana, vīrabhadrāsana, vīrabhadra, bhujaṅgāsana, uttānāsana, utkaṭāsana, parśva uttānāsana, janu śīrṣāsana, caturaṅga daṇḍasana, parśva trikoṇāsana, parivṛtti trikoṇāsana, prasārita pāda uttānāsana, upaviṣṭa koṇāsana, baddha koṇāsana, ardha matsyendrāsana, brahmāsana, sukhāsana, pādāsana, supta pādāṅguṣṭhāsana, apānāsana, halāsana, paścimatānāsana, sukha, padmāsana, supta, aṣṭāṅga, śīrṣāsana, pratikriyāsana, vinyāsakrama, vinyāsa, upāsana, vṛkṣāsana, koṇāsana, upaviśya, aṣṭāṅgayoga, mayūrāsana, vajrāsana, vyāyāma

Appears in:

Yoga Sūtra:

Chapter 2: 29 , 46

Bhagavad Gītā:

Chapter 6: 12

Haṭha Pradīpikā:

Chapter 1: 17

Chapter 2: 1

Yoga Rahasya:

Chapter 1: 31 , 45 , 89

Links to Related Resources & Longer Articles:

- Āsana & Mudrā Practice Techniques Glossary
  – Grouped into Standing, Kneeling, Lying, Inverted, Backbend, Seated & Sitting
- Prāṇāyāma & Bandha Practice Techniques Glossary
  – Grouped into Primary, Secondary & Ancillary Techniques
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

– Āsana Practice Articles

- Yoga Postures in Practice – A series on Āsana by Paul Part 1 Samasthiti
- Yoga Postures in Practice – A series on Āsana by Paul Part 2 Tāḍāsana
- Yoga Postures in Practice – A series on Āsana by Paul Part 3 Uttānāsana
- Yoga Postures in Practice – A series on Āsana by Paul Part 4 Utkaṭāsana
- A fundamental facet in the principles of Āsana, Mudrā and Prāṇāyāma practice……
- Āsana is not just another form of exercise……
- Aṣṭāṅgāsana – The eight limbs of Āsana Planning and Practice
- Bṛṃhaṇa Kriyā and Laṅghana Kriyā as Expansive and Contractive potentials……
- Compendium of Quotes from TKV Desikachar on the Yoga of T Krishnamacharya……
- Deepening our relationship with Prāṇāyāma deepens our relationship with Āsana……
- Finding your starting point within Āsana to set a direction and route towards a goal…
- Haṭha Yoga has another role other than mere freedom of movement……
- If we appreciate the role of breathing in Āsana how can we make it longer?
- In the beginning of our journey into the arts of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma……
- Introduction to the Yoga Makaranda by TKV Desikachar
- It appears that one can often talk about the effects of Yoga Āsana on the spine in Yoga yet……
- it is still unclear how much Yoga someone has to do to get the benefits……
- It is the pleasure of practising Yoga because you want to practice……
- Keeping the breath longer than the movement within an Āsana
- Know your breath and its unique characteristics in Āsana and you will……
- Nāma, Rūpa, Lakṣana – The Name, Form and Characteristics of Āsana
- One example of this depth is Krishnamacharya's lesser known work in the teaching of Mantra……
- Reflections on TKV Desikachar's Teaching and Svatantra……
- Sound – A Means Beyond Āsana and Prāṇāyāma……
- The breadth, depth and potential of Desikachar's teachings on practice……
- The Breath has its own developmental process within an Āsana.
- The continued effort of the Breath is that which gives life……
- The Link between the practice limbs of Āsana, Mudrā, Prāṇāyāma and Dhyānam
- There are some forms within the postural resources developed by……
- The teaching of Krishnamacharya around Āsana included an in-depth appreciation of the Lakṣaṇa……
- The Viniyoga of Yoga is the application of the principles that…
- The Westernisation of Yoga Āsana with its emphasis on structural focus……
- Though there are many different aspects to formal 'home' practice……
- T Krishnamacharya's accomplishments should not be defined just by his more well known characterisations……

- TKV Desikachar talks on Śraddhā in the light of the Yoga Sūtra……
- YOGA AND MODERN MEDICINE – Interview by TKV Desikachar
- YOGA: SURGERY SANS INSTRUMENTS – Interview with TKV Desikachar 1998

– Āsana Practice Theory

- Āsana Mudrā & Prāṇāyāma
  – Collected Practice Planning and Practice Theory Questions
- Āsana Mudrā & Prāṇāyāma
  - Collected Viniyoga of Practice Planning Principles
- Considerations for Vinyāsa Krama around Bakāsana……
- Can we find some similar characteristics between various individuals around Āsana practice…
- Correct vibrational intonation was an important emphasis within all aspects of Mantra initiation
- Cultivating the skills within Yoga Practice Planning for Individual Students
- cYs Practitioner Training Programme Retreat Extract 1 – Self Planning & Self Practice
- cYs Practitioner Training Programme Retreat Extract 2 – Self Planning & Self Practice
- cYs Practitioner Training Programme Retreat Extract 3 – Self Planning & Self Practice
- cYs Practitioner Training Programme Retreat Extract 4 – Self Planning & Self Practice
- Design an Āsana Practice according to the principles taught by TKV Desikachar
- Examples of Vinyāsa Krama for Sitting Āsana within a Single Practice…
- Exploring Prāṇāyāma within Cikitsā, Rakṣaṇa and Śikṣaṇa Krama…
- Guidelines for skilful dynamics within the performance of Vīrabhadrāsana……
- How do we apply Viniyoga to students already set in a particular mode of Āsana practice?
- Link to Series: 108 Postural Practice Pointers
- Laṅghana Kriyā has two functional dimensions…
- Longer term Vinyāsa Krama within the Viniyoga of the breath in Āsana……
- Pañca Maya – The five aspects of Being Human…
- Pratikriyā Bhāvana for Vīrabhadrāsana
- Physiological and psychological considerations around the practitioner's starting point…
- Question to Krishnamacharya – "Can you explain the concept of Vinyāsa and Pratikriyā Āsana?"
- Self Planning & Self Practice Project around Mahāmudrā…
- Śīrṣāsana as a Viparīta Karaṇī Mudrā
- Studying, Practicing and Learning the Tri Bandha involves Theory, Techniques and Cautions…
- The breath can be a key to unlocking the mystery of the relationship……
- The counter posture needs to be mastered before a particular Āsana is attempted
- There are Many Approaches to Āsana Practice…
- The Viniyoga of Inversion as an Āsana or as a Mudrā……
- We can really see the weaknesses of a body when a person is becoming tired…
- We need to consider the process that surrounds one's Āsana practice…
- What are the concepts of Sṛṣṭi Krama, Sthiti Krama and Antya Krama?
- What is the Yoga of Krishnamacharya?

- Āsana Practice Planning:

- Āsana Mudrā & Prāṇāyāma
  – Collected Practice Planning and Practice Theory Questions
- Design a practice with an emphasis on working with arm movements in Bhujaṅgāsana as preparation for Dhanurāsana.
- Design an evening Practice before going out (as if) to teach Yoga...
- Design an Āsana Practice according to the principles taught by TKV Desikachar
- Design an Āsana practice around Dhanurāsana and Ardha Matsyendrāsana
- Design an Āsana practice to include three hand balance Āsana of your choice...
- Design an Āsana practice to move towards being able to work dynamically in Ūrdhva Prasṛta Pādāsana
- Design an Āsana practice to include Ardha Uttānāsana, Śīrṣāsana and Navāsana
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Bhujaṅgāsana and Paścimatānāsana...
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Parśva Uttānāsana and Janu Śīrṣāsana...
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Dvī Pāda Pīṭham and Bhujaṅgāsana
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Vīrabhadrāsana and Ardha Śalabhāsana...
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Parivṛtti Trikoṇāsana and a modified Jaṭhara Parivṛtti
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Parivṛtti Trikoṇāsana and a intensified Jaṭhara Parivṛtti
- Design and Experiment with a Practice around Baddha Koṇāsana and Mahā Mudrā...
- Design and Experiment with Four Āsana Practices to use Sālamba Bhujaṅgāsana and/or Nirālamba Bhujaṅgāsana
- Design a Practice around Jaṭhara Parivṛtti, Mahā Mudrā and Pratiloma Ujjāyī Prāṇāyāma
- Design a Practice for the morning after a heavy meal and late night...
- Design a Practice to experience the application of Sound in Āsana...
- Design a Prāṇāyāma for yourself to include Śītalī, Anuloma Ujjāyī and Nāḍī Śodhana
- Design a Prāṇāyāma for yourself to include a crown ratio of 1.1.1.1. in Nāḍī Śodhana
- Design a practice leading to staying in Sarvāṅgāsana for 8 minutes...
- Design a practice to stay 8 minutes in Paścimatānāsana...
- The Viniyoga of Āsana - Planning an Appropriate Āsana Practice
- An example of a Secondary Yoga Practice, primarily for early evening use
- A sample Parivṛtti and Paścimatāna Themed Group Practice
- Example of a Vinyāsa Krama around Jaṭhara Parivṛtti
- Viniyoga Vignette 1 – Antar and Bāhya Kumbhaka in Āsana
- Viniyoga Vignette 3 – Śītalī and Anuloma Ujjāyī Prāṇāyāma within Āsana
- Viniyoga Vignette 4 – Combining Prāṇāyāma within Āsana
- Viniyoga Vignette 5 – Introducing Uḍḍīyana Bandha within an Āsana practice
- Vinyāsa Krama for Upaviṣṭa Koṇāsana from TKV Desikachar's Notebooks

Collated Related Short Posts & Quotes:

"The greater the Śraddhā, the more meaning there is in the techniques such as Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Dhyānam, Bhāvanaand all the others. Without Śraddhā, these techniques have little effect on the state of the mind and the progress to Citta Vṛtti Nirodha. However, sometimes some minor benefits that we get through Āsana or Prāṇāyāma practice, open up the Śraddhā within us. Śraddhā is within each of us but is covered. It could be any experience that uncovers it."
– TKV Desikachar on Śraddhā in the Yoga Sūtra

"Can these four Yoga Aṅga – Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāṇāyāma – be practiced by everyone at every stage of life?
How often and how long should one practice?
How can we adapt our practice to changing circumstances?
These questions and others like them must be answered by a competent teacher, according to each student's individual circumstances."
– T Krishnamacharya on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 30

"The use of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma is
an investigation of all the 9 obstacles
in Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 30.
Those things that come between how
we are and how we would like to be."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 30

"In Veda, Āyurveda and Yoga Sūtra,
various techniques are offered to aid in healing the sick.
In addition to herbs and medicines,
Patañjali suggests that Āsana, Prāṇāyāma and Vairāgya
are particularly beneficial and, as any medicine,
should be used with care and discipline."
– T Krishnamacharya on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 34

"Prāṇāyāma must be properly instructed.
The posture used, seated erect for example,
is also important.
The duration and regularity in terms of time
is also as important as proper instructions."
– T Krishnamacharya on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 34

"Āsana alone can be a support for
our outer relationship with living.
However, can Āsana alone be a support
for our inner relationship with dying?

Especially as our disposition towards
clinging to life is continuous, as well as
being deeply buried within our psyche.
This is why Yoga offers vehicles beyond Āsana
for the inner and especially the final journey."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 9

"In the Yoga Sūtra,
Āsana is basically something linked to Prāṇāyāma,
since Prāṇāyāma is a very important practice there,
linked to Dhāraṇā."
– TKV Desikachar on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 46

"This verse is commenting on the attainment of an Āsana as
an appurtenance, or foundation for more subtle practices.
Better not to confuse the vehicle with the direction."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 46

"Āsana, according to this verse, needs to correlate the
two qualities of steady attentiveness and spacious clarity.
However, we are being offered qualities that are actually
the fruits or outcome of the practice guidelines in the next verse.
Hence this verse is a definition, but one that arises as an outcome
of an attitude around the way we go about exploring Āsana.
Although it could be added that this definition also relates
to the direction of one's Āsana practice as a whole."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 46

"The experience known as Sthira Sukham Āsanam,
described in Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 46,
arises as a fruit of Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47,
from melding the mastery of outer stillness in the world,
described as Prayatna Śaithilya, or relaxation of continued effort,
with the mystery of inner openness to the beyond,
described as Ananta Samāpatti, or unity in the infinite."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 46

"The practice of Āsana without breathing and
without remembering Ananta has no value."
- T Krishnamacharya on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47

"Our continued effort
with the breath in Āsana
is that which helps to enliven
our various levels of interaction
with our inner and outer worlds as
expressed through the Pañca Maya."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47

"Two primary roles in the adaptation of Āsana
to the needs and potential of the student are
Facilitating a decrease of tension within the body
whilst
Facilitating an increase of attention within the breath."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47

"From Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47
Krishnamacharya taught that the
common denominator for successfully uniting
both aspects of relaxation and the infinite
within the practice of Āsana is the breath.
He saw it as continued effort
and synonymous with giving life.
The continued effort of the breath is that which gives life."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 47

"When working with the Breath in Āsana,
it's perhaps less appealing initially,
but ultimately more attractive, satisfactory
and effective, to integrate a Bhāvana on
the Samāpatti of Śaithilya and Ananta,
within a developmental Prāṇāyāma Sādhana,
focused towards the Siddhi of Dīrgha or Length,
supported by its counterpoint, Sūkṣma or Subtlety."
– Paul Harvey on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Two verse 50

"The state of Dhyānam is possible in a seated posture.
If a person lies down, it may induce sleep.
If a person walks and moves about,
he may be distracted by the objects around him.
This posture must be in a place
where the mind will not be distracted."
– T Krishnamacharya on Yoga Sūtra Chapter Three verse 2

"Fixing the Manas in a particular place,
disciplining the senses,
seated in a proper posture,
a person begins Yoga for Citta Śuddhi."
– T Krishnamacharya on Bhagavad Gītā Chapter Six verse 12

"Āsana Practice brings steadiness, reduced illness and a lightness of limb."
– Haṭha Pradīpikā of Svātmārāma Chapter One verse 17

"For me, still to this day, one of the simplest, direct and most succinct definitions on the purpose of Āsana within the processes and practices of Haṭha Yoga, is the definition offered in the Haṭha Pradīpikā Chapter One verse 17.
It is a definition valid for any situation, discussion or presentation, or as a response to questions from any background, or level of interest around why we practice Āsana.
It can also be a springboard to linking physiological qualities, such as the relationship of Agni, to the energetic qualities of health and lightness of limb. Or investigation of the commentary by Brahmānada, as that explores psychological qualities such as the relationship of the Guṇa, Rajas, to mental qualities such as steadiness."
– Paul Harvey on Haṭha Pradīpikā Chapter One verse 17

"There are different body structures,
therefore not all Āsana are enjoined."
– From T Krishnamacharya's composition,
the Yoga Rahasya Chapter One verse 31

"Without Āsana,
Prāṇāyāma cannot become accomplished.
Without containing Prāna,
the mind cannot achieve steadiness."
– From T Krishnamacharya's composition,
The Yoga Rahasya Chapter One verse 45

"There is a particular order of teaching Āsana,
so also an order to follow when teaching Prāṇāyāma."
– From T Krishnamacharya's composition,
The Yoga Rahasya Chapter One verse 89

"Without mastering Āsana and
regulating the inhale and exhale in Āsana,
the Āsana will not produce the desired fruits."
– From T Krishnamacharya's composition,
The Yoga Rahasya

"Without Āsana practice Prāṇāyāma cannot be mastered.
Without Prāna Nirodha mind will not become stable."
– TKV Desikachar commentary on T Krishnamacharya's composition, the Yoga Rahasya

"Mind should follow the breath.
Exhale, Inhale and Retention support life.
So during Āsana it is desirable that the mind must follow them."
– TKV Desikachar commentary on T Krishnamacharya's composition, the Yoga Rahasya

Question to T Krishnamacharya:
How necessary is Yoga in these modern times?
Krishnamacharya's Response:
"For the strengthening of the Aṅga,
Yoga Āsana practiced with long
inhalation and exhalation is important.
To reduce the disturbances of the mind,
to gain mental strength and to increase longevity,
Prāṇāyāma is necessary."

"Use Āsana for problems of the body and
Prāṇāyāma for problems of the mind."
– T Krishnamacharya

"Just because a person is not practicing Dhyāna,
but only Āsana,
we cannot say he is not practicing Yoga.
In a body, each limb belongs to the body.
Similarly, practice of Āsana is indeed
practice of Yoga to that extent."
– T Krishnamacharya 1984

"To raise the awareness of the pupil to Dhyāna,
the teacher must instruct the pupil during Āsana practice."
– T Krishnamacharya 1984

"All Āsana cannot be mastered by any one individual."
– T Krishnamacharya 1984

"We cannot say that this Āsana or this
Prāṇāyāma can be given for this disease."
- T Krishnamacharya 1984

Question to T Krishnamacharya –
Q: How long should a person stay in an Āsana every day?
A: A person must stay in any one Āsana for at least fifteen minutes.
From the book 'Śrī Krishnamacharya – The Pūrnācārya', published by the KYM in 1997

"Breath is indispensable for life
and its absence is death.
Hence the necessity to make it longer
and accumulate the Prāṇa Śakti.
Just as a rich man accumulates money slowly to get wealthy,
so also one should practice every day,
through the proper use of the breath in Āsana,
to maintain good health."
– T Krishnamacharya's response to a question on breathing.

"One could say, of course, that I have taught Yoga to hundreds of people, of different ages, states, origins, but by Yoga I mean only postures and breath control, and do not count meditation or interpretation of the texts.
These I have only taught to a few people and only to those I deemed worthy after several interviews, designed to give me an idea of their personality and the firmness of their intentions.
I discouraged those who appeared to have superficial reasons for learning Yoga, but never those who came to find me because of health problems and who had frequently been turned away by the medical profession."
– From interviews with T Krishnamacharya by Sarah Dars, published in Viniyoga Review no 24, December 1989

"It is a mistaken concept that certain Āsana are only postures for meditation.
If we look at the commentary of Vyāsa, we see that the postures
he elucidates are so complicated that we can't be in Dhyāna.
We can feel these different postures and we can't stay in them.
Two of these are Uṣṭrāsana and Krauñcāsana,
These are very difficult postures in which to remain."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga Chapter Ten Page 133

"Āsana and Prāṇāyāma can, according to the Yoga Sūtra,
create a condition where the mind is fit for Dhāraṇā."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga Chapter Eleven Page 156

"What can be done can be easily established if we observe our breath in Āsana."
– TKV Desikachar 'Choosing a Ratio and the proper technique for Prāṇāyāma' Religiousness in Yoga Chapter Twelve Page 163

"The best Āsana for doing Bandha are inverted, lying flat, or sitting with the back straight.
A classic posture is Mahā Mudrā, which is in fact, Mahā Mudrā only if the Bandha are used."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga 'The Concept, Preparation and Techniques of Bandha' Chapter Fourteen Page 200

"Another simple posture is Adho Mukha Śvan Āsana.
the next step is to try them in some sitting postures such as Mahā Mudrā.
These Bandha can also be done in the headstand.
It is easy to do Bandha in this position because the lifting,
Uḍḍīyana Bandha, and holding up, Mūla Bandha,
of Apāna to the flame is almost automatic
because now the Apāna is above the flame.
If we can do the three Bandha in these postures,
we are ready to introduce them in our Prāṇāyāma."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga 'The Concept, Preparation and Techniques of Bandha' Chapter Fourteen Page 197

"Don't go on doing a lot of postures; if you do,
I think the meaning in Yoga will be lost."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga 'Various Approaches to Yoga' Chapter Seventeen
Page 238

"People often ask me if I teach Āsana.
When I say "Yes, I do." they say,
"Oh you are a Haṭha Yogi."
If I talk about the Yoga Sūtra
they say, "You are a Rāja Yogi."
If I say I am chanting the Veda,
they say, "You are a Mantra Yogi."
If I say I just practice Yoga,
they can't understand.
They want to put a label on me."
– TKV Desikachar Religiousness in Yoga 'Various Approaches to Yoga' Chapter Seventeen
Page 247-248

Three questions given by Desikachar in a retreat in 1978
"1. What interests you most in Āsana?
2. What distinguishes Āsana from Prāṇāyāma?
3. What is hard to teach? Āsana and/or Prāṇāyāma, or something else?"
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1978

"By observing how the breath responds in Āsana
i.e. Forward Bends. Backward Bends. Lying Postures. Inverted Postures. Twist Poses.
As to whether there is a better quality in either inhalation or exhalation,
one can decide how to proceed in Prāṇāyāma."
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1978

1. Know the Breath from the feelings in the Āsana.
2. Choose a ratio close to that used in Āsana.
3. Choose a technique to suit the day.
4. Choose a proper posture for the spine.
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1978

"One's own actions can develop or make one Guṇa prominent.
Thus we can plan or practice Āsana or Prāṇāyāma to promote one Guṇa.
The practice of Yoga can influence the Guṇa.
the room where you practice can affect the Guṇa
by photographs, colour of paint, smell.
Even Mantra are classified into Guṇa.
This needs to be considered when using Mantra for the individual.
Meditation can be related to the Guṇa.
The object of our inquiry must be related or,
in accordance with what we want to produce."
– TKV Desikachar on Sāṃkhya and Yoga

"We can use Āsana to explore the breath and
then use Prāṇāyāma to experience the breath."
– From personal lessons with TKV Desikachar

"The Āsana in which you sit can alter the characteristics of the breath."
– TKV Desikachar 1980

"You put your mind in one place during an Āsana,
the body compensates and places the escape elsewhere."
– TKV Desikachar 1980

"For standing Āsana it is not necessary to close the eyes.
As standing Āsana are usually at the beginning of a practice,
it can sometimes be distracting to close the eyes,
because of all the visual activity proceeding the practice.
Having the eyes open can also stop you becoming unbalanced as you move.
The eyes can be useful for checking alignment within dynamic movements.
You may not observe this with the eyes closed.
However, the attention with the eyes open should be passive and aware."
– TKV Desikachar 1980

"He has very clear ideas on the Ṣat Kriyā and the Mudrā.
He believes that if a person does Āsana properly, with breathing,
and has certain restraints regarding food, there is no need for these Kriyā."
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1981

"Another important thing that he has understood is
that these Āsana should not be taken one by one,
they have to be taken as a group and as a composition.
This means you don't do headstand on Monday,
shoulder stand on Tuesday,
you do your group of Āsana linked like words in a sentence."
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1981

"He also presented the idea that Āsana is Svādhyāya,
making you understand something about yourself."
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1981

"Because of the different uses of breathing,
he strongly believes that the beginning of Prāṇāyāma is in Āsana.
Āsana, and Āsana alone,
with proper breathing techniques,
leads you to the idea of Prāṇāyāma."
– TKV Desikachar Switzerland 1981

"Yoga is a mirror of ourselves.
It is Darśana Vijñāna,
the science of observation,
not just doing Āsana.
In teaching Yoga this implies:
– that we may not transmit exactly the way we have been taught.
– that we may not teach what we ourselves are doing."
– TKV Desikachar 1981

"Āsana practice is the beginning that will confirm the importance of observation.
Through observation in Āsana practice we can learn a lot about ourselves
and even probably meet 'that' which is observing inside us."
– TKV Desikachar 1981

"We cannot escape the need for adaptation.
Adaptation is the application of certain principles to achieve certain results.
It implies:
– Knowing where the person is now.
– Knowing where we want them to go.
Adaptation is the means used to bridge this gap."
– TKV Desikachar 1981

"Āsana offers a purpose more than just physical.
Āsana offers a link of the mind to the physical.
Āsana introduces the concept of Dhyāna as a practice.
Āsana seeks to minimise the Saṃskāra
or habitual patterns which dull the mind.
In doing so it seeks to increase our sensitivity to ourselves,
what is around us and its corresponding influences,
and to what sustains us."
– TKV Desikachar 1981

"Patañjali has proposed 3 approaches to verify the indications.
Tapas – Process of action
Food, Āsana, Prāṇāyāma.
You will be doing something that you will not be habitually doing.
For example one day no salt, cigarettes, Prāṇāyāma.
Tapas is from the root to create thirst.
It means to deprive.
It will tell us about ourselves.
It will reveal our Saṃskāra and Pariṇāma or changes in ourselves.
From this Tapas we will start to get an indication of our individual nature.
For example active or lazy.
Tapas indicates the the beginning of the Bheda, through the Bhāva."
– TKV Desikachar France 1983

"One important thing is food.
Different combinations have different effects on the body.
When we work with Āsana and Prāṇāyāma we need to consider which foods to take.
Your mind is according to your food.
The type of food you take influences your mind.
The subject is vast."
– TKV Desikachar France 1983

"Śikṣaṇa Krama – do something perfectly or correctly.
Anything is taught to achieve perfection in the practice of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma.
In other words teaching children and healthy people where you can take risks with no problems.
Not a valid approach for groups.
We need to use intelligence and Viveka,
not follow the idea of no pain, no gain to become painless,
or to get to a point without suffering."
– TKV Desikachar France 1983

"Even with my students they teach a posture
because it has been taught to them.
Like a rubber stamp.
This is not Viniyoga.
People have rigid ideas.
For example, why Cakravākāsana for this lady
after Śīrṣāsana, whereas something else,
say Mahāmudrā for somebody else.
So it does not follow what is good for me
is good for everybody."
– TKV Desikachar France 1983

"Some people say they practice Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Meditation.
Among these things which is close to Sādhana
and which is not close to Sādhana?"
– TKV Desikachar France 1983

"Whenever we look at an Āsana
we must look at two sides:
1. What is involved in the Āsana
2. Who is doing the Āsana"
– TKV Desikachar 1984

"The first step in the practice of Āsana is the linking of the mind to movement and breath."
– TKV Desikachar Madras 1988

"The breath makes Āsana part of Yoga."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"Yoga is often attributed to Āsana practice alone,
which is only the part of Yoga focusing on the physical body or servicing the body."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The body can be underused, overused and abused,
we need to be aware of what is happening with the body,
but we also need to do something for the mind."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"There are two categories of practice, the Śikṣaṇa Krama way, according to the rules,
or the Cikitsā Krama way, the application or adaptation of a posture
to suit a particular person or a particular situation.
Where postures need to be adapted to suit particular bodies and their limitations.
The authority for the postures comes from the teacher,
although some rules are indicated in the texts."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"There are many postures to suit a variety of different body types.
Āsana practice is to prepare the body, to sit for Prāṇāyāma.
Āsana also helps to get rid of impurities
so that it is possible to do something deeper, inside the mind."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"There are simple postures for Prāṇāyāma and Dhyāna,
so that we can relax in the body and not be distracted by it.
There are challenging postures,
to enable us to master our bodies and for young people who
will be engaged by the performance aspect of the posture.
There are also corrective postures."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"It is possible to be aware of the state of the mind
by observing the body during an Āsana practice."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"In Āsana practice there is an expression of the state of the mind,
the practice can be a handle to hold the mind."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The action of a posture may be delayed
because the student has tried to force the body into a posture.
Never measure something by its immediate effects."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"Āsana practice should take into account:
– Where we are – Where am I?
– Where are we going – What is my goal?
– What happens afterwards – How do I continue with my life?
There needs to be steps in the sequence to lead to the goal and counter postures
to prepare for life after the Yoga practice, a Vinyāsa.
The postures need to be visualised prior to being executed, Bhāva.
It is important to prepare for life after a Yoga practice
so that a student is fully prepared for life outside the Yoga room."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"Moving into the posture after the exhale (Bāhya Kumbhaka) is an adaptation."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The focus should be on
the contraction of the abdomen or
the expansion of the chest during Āsana."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"How do we know that the Āsana has served its purpose?"
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"- Yoga has been adapted to life in the modern day.
- Any posture far removed from the normal posture is a problem and therefore risky if there is any problem with the body.
- Inverted postures present problems because of the tension that people carry in their necks.
- Postures that create tension should be avoided.
- Moving into the posture after the exhale is an adaptation.
- Krishnamacharya designed aids to help people achieve postures.
- Slow movement has a different action on the muscles, it is harder work.
- The role of Āsana, its purpose and goal must be respected.
- Opposite postures are a handicap but can help us to appreciate something different in a posture.
- We must feel ourselves and what is happening in a posture.
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"It is usual to start a lesson be it, Chanting, Sūtra, Āsana, with a prayer.
A prayer is recited and repeated according to the study or purpose of the lesson,
to show respect for the subject.
When the student is familiar with the prayer they repeat it along with the teacher.
Focusing the study with a prayer helps to recall earlier study, lineage of repetition.
The student is given the meaning later.
After the lesson another prayer is said to offer thanks for the learning and for everybody."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The position of a particular posture in an Āsana practice will change its effect
and will influence a particular part of the body."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The breath presents different possibilities in Āsana.
For example, there can be a refinement of the
posture through developing the breath."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"Using the breath in Āsana
makes the Āsana adaptable.
For example, by varying the
breath we can vary the effect."
– TKV Desikachar England 1992

"The Āsana are presented in
Vinyāsa Krama, the way it was
taught to children in the Yoga Śāla.
This should not create the impression
that T Krishnamacharya taught
in this manner to everyone."
– TKV Desikachar Introduction to Yoga Makaranda

"Question: What were his favourite foods?
Response: You might be surprised that he relished good food. He was from Andhra and so, relished food that was hot and spicy. He was very fond of sweets and would eat them in great quantities. With all this he would always have ghee. Ghee formed a very important part of his diet and whatever the food, it would be accompanied with large quantities of ghee. Of course, he was also doing Āsana for three to four hours daily in addition to his Prāṇāyāma. His practice was extremely rigorous and that may account for his being able to handle these large quantities of spicy and sweet foods."
– TKV Desikachar answering questions on T Krishnamacharya

"It must be remembered that Śīrṣāsana is
one form of the Viparīta Karaṇī Mudrā.
For those who cannot do Śīrṣāsana
or any other inverted posture,
alternatives do exist.
Mahāmudrā is one such alternative
which would yield similar benefits."
– TKV Desikachar KYM Darśanam February 1994

"The practices dealing with the body and the
breath are known as Āsana and Prāṇāyāma.
They are interlinked, in Āsana the body is
the focus and the breath serves this focus.
In Prāṇāyāma the regulation of the breath is the focus,
the body is prepared adequately via Āsana for this
regulation to materialise without any resistance."
– TKV Desikachar Madras 1996

"The purpose of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma are twofold,
to reduce symptoms of ill-health or,
to prepare the mind towards fulfilling the main
emphasis of Patañjali, which is Meditation.
However according to the teaching I have received,
both of these roles can be fulfilled with
relatively few Āsana postures and Prāṇāyāma techniques."
– TKV Desikachar Madras 1996

"Krishnamacharya's understanding of Cikitsā
or Yoga therapy and the arrangement and
sequencing of postures, along with modifying
the posture and using different breathing
patterns, plus the use of sound and different
Bhāvana or mental foci was profound.
This allowed for many possibilities to be
offered, for a great number of students
with problems, from a range of relatively
few postures and breathing techniques."
– TKV Desikachar Madras 1996

"Apart from Āsana and Prāṇāyāma there are some special techniques.
Amongst them, those known as Mudrā need special mention.
Mudrā are essentially some more refinements to
Prāṇāyāma to intensify the effect."
– TKV Desikachar Madras 1996

"When is an Āsana an Āsana?
When does it become one?"
– TKV Desikachar

"Conscious breathing is one of the greatest tools to influence the effect of the postures
without changing the posture."
– TKV Desikachar

"We can really see the weaknesses of a body when a person is becoming tired. Sometimes we have to bring the body to its limits for physical or psychological weaknesses to appear. This need not take a long time; we just have to put the person in an unusual position. Someone who can easily sit in Daṇḍāsana, for example, could be asked to lean backward. Someone who can do Utkāṭāsana could be asked to squat with one foot slightly in front of the other, comparing the two sides.
Breathing can also be used. It is possible to save time by asking someone to add special breathing requirements to their Āsana. They will be concerned about these and problems in the body may appear faster. For example repeating Uttānāsana twelve times with a 15″ inhale."
– TKV Desikachar

"To use the breath in Āsana
practice is to check change.
To be able to realise that
something has changed."
– TKV Desikachar

"A great number of postures, notably most standing postures,
have doubtless come to us directly from the Professor,
who would have introduced them as appropriate
to the needs of modern times.
Amongst the standing postures, Uttānāsana, Parśva Uttānāsana,
Utthita Trikoṇāsana and Utthita Parśva Koṇāsana,
are examples which the Professor himself codified."
– Claude Maréchal was a student of TKV Desikachar from 1969-2002.
This is an extract from Claude talking about what
Desikachar told him about his father, Krishnamacharya.

"Where do Āsana lead us?
1. For seated practices
(Adhyātmika Krama or Yoga Practice as a Self-Inquiry)
To stay in a stable posture with the spine erect,
for Dhyāna or preparation for Dhyāna.
2. For health.
(Cikitsā Krama or Yoga Practice as a Self-Healing)
They do something for the energy flow of the body.
3. Ability to master the body
(Śakti Krama or Yoga Practice as a Self-Empowerment)
Not necessarily to promote health,
but to show that we can master the body.
Often these are good for health,
though many are only useful as challenges."
– TKV Desikachar
Further Reading – What is the Yoga of Krishnamacharya?

"When moving out of Paścimatāna Āsana such as Uttānāsana.
Focus on the arms bringing the back up.
Rather than the back bringing the arms up."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Prone Backbends as front stretches are wall to wall Āsana
in terms of Bhāvana, rather than floor to ceiling.
Thus in Sālamba Bhujaṅgāsana the focus is on
the sternum stretching forwards and
the big toes stretching backwards."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"As a teacher it can be helpful to consider Āsana as
vehicles to transmit the fundamental principles of practice.
For example a cardinal principle of practice is that Āsana
have a primary and a secondary aspect within their Lakṣana.
Thus we must inquire into what is the primary aspect in this Āsana,
and what is the secondary aspect in this particular Āsana?
The idea is to maintain the integrity of the primary characteristics.
Thus we may need to compromise the secondary characteristics.
For example in Uttānāsana to sustain the primary work in the spine
we can consider a secondary compromise by releasing the knees."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"It is possible to achieve the form of an Āsana
without accessing the function of an Āsana.
In other words accessing the form of an Āsana
does not guarantee accessing its function."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Backbends disturb the length and quality of the exhale,
in that they impact the Apāna and push the Mūla downwards.
Thus we need to consider an appropriate Pratikriyā Āsana
to compensate for this disturbance to the Apāna Sthāna.
Hence Pratikriyā such as Apānāsana to restore the Apāna."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Āsana is about the movement of the force,
rather than the force of the movement."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In terms of the transition within
a Vinyāsa Krama from standing
Āsana to lying Āsana and beyond.
Choose not to lie down for Śavāsana
until you feel you don't need to lie down."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Pratikriyāsana have counterpostural, compensational and transitional roles
and are applied at specific points in the practice in order to
maintain a sound physiological and psychological base.
This principle has an important role in how
we link the different aspects of the Āsana practice,
how we close the practice or how we integrate the Āsana
element of the practice into other aspects of our Yoga practice.

There are specific guidelines around how
they can be integrated into the practice,
the first of which is that the counter posture needs to
be mastered before a particular Āsana is attempted.
This principle is especially important when
attempting to integrate more complex Āsana such as
Sarvāṅgāsana and Bhujaṅgāsana into our practice.
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"How do we know that a student is ready to attempt
a more progressive Āsana such as Sarvāṅgāsana?
From following a core principle in the teachings of Vinyāsa Krama.
In that, the Pratikriyāsana for a particular Āsana needs
to be mastered before that particular Āsana is attempted.
For example, if we want to teach Sarvāṅgāsana,
because it will have a specific potential for the particular student,
then we teach the Pratikriyāsana Bhujaṅgāsana first.
So the student first works around Bhujaṅgāsana
within their personal practice and the information that arises
guides the teacher as to their readiness for, in this case, Sarvāṅgāsana.
The information arising from observing how
the student practices Bhujaṅgāsana guides
the teacher as to the appropriateness of Sarvāṅgāsana.
The information that feeds back may be on the level
of Annamaya, Prāṇamaya, Manomaya or beyond.
Obviously, this implies that we are observing the student's practice directly.
Once the student shows an adequate performance of Bhujaṅgāsana
and it can be integrated into their existing personal practice,
then we can be more secure that the student is ready to approach
integrating Sarvāṅgāsana into their regular practice."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"When moving from Standing Āsana to Lying
Āsana, consider the role of Samasthiti to be one
of recovery from the efforts of, and exploration
of the effects from, the preceding standing Āsana.
Whilst also considering the role of Śavāsana to be one
of transition to lying and the exploration of lying Āsana.
Rather than the other way around, in that, we are taking
Śavāsana as a place of recovery from our preceding efforts.
In other words, choose to stay in stillness within Samasthiti
until you feel as if you do not need to lie down to recover."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"We might want to consider the notion that the
most important standing Āsana is Samasthiti.
Its role is to ensure we engage with the next Āsana
from a place of attention and aware anticipation,
and after it, return to a place of fullness and reflection.
As if we are experiencing the fullness of the aftertaste
that naturally follows the ingestion of well-cooked food.
It's learned Bhāvana is a quality of stillness within any
moment of inaction, ere to a transition to the next action."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Within the teachings of T Krishnamacharya,
as transmitted to TKV Desikachar,
the role of Śavāsana within an Āsana practice was as
a transitional link pose between categories of Āsana.
For example between Standing and Lying Āsana,
or Lying and Inverted Āsana,
or Inverted and Prone Backbends,
or Prone Backbends and Seated Āsana,
or Seated Āsana and Sitting Practices.
The extent of its use and length of rest at each stage,
when transiting from one category to another within our
Āsana practice journey, was dependent on the facility
of the practitioner and the intensity of the practice.
Within this individualised variance is the guiding
principle that the role of Śavāsana is to facilitate a
smooth transition for the flow of the breath and also
the pulse through and beyond the Āsana practice,
as a marker for the practitioner's state of mind.
However according to Desikachar the Viniyoga of
Śavāsana was seen in terms of recovery from the
fatigue of the preceding aspect of the practice rather,
than say recovery from the preceding aspects of one's life.
Regarding the approach for the recovery
from the preceding aspects of one's life,
amongst other things such as Āhāra and Vihāra,
the wider purpose, content, duration and frequency
of the Āsana practice must be carefully reconsidered."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

Bhāvana on Śavāsana within a Śikṣaṇa Āsana practice.
"Inherent within the application of Śavāsana
as an Āsana within a Śikṣaṇa Krama practice,
is the active cultivation of a quality of Nirodha,
or what can be described as 'witness awareness'.

As in the notion of the Cit observing the Citta.
Thus, a key to directing the attention in
Śavāsana, is to intentionally cultivate
a quality of passive observation."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"The Breath is the activating force in all aspects of the Āsana.
For example, when comparing a dynamic performance
of an Āsana with the static performance of an Āsana,
the difference is in the degree or extent of the movement.
Thus, from a Viniyoga or application of Āsana perspective,
whether the extent of the movement is what is seen
as long-range, mid-range, short-range, or even micro,
the activating force of the Breath is integral to the Āsana.
From a developmental viewpoint, as in a longer-term
Vinyāsa Krama, this a journey from those Āsana that
mainly favour long-range movement, towards those Āsana
and Mudrā that mainly favour micro-range movement.
Within this developmental refinement in the relationship
of Breath as the activating force, sit the place and roles
of mid-range movement and short-range movement."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"It is not enough in Āsana to just
work at lengthening the breath.
We need also to explore how to
refine the subtlety of the breath.
Whether within a single Āsana,
a number of Āsana in one practice,
or within the evolution of all aspects
of our practice over a number of years."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Saying that the direction of Āsana is
towards staying does not mean that the
direction of all Āsana is towards staying.
In other words the role of some Āsana is
as a secondary support Āsana and their use
is merely as a dynamic preparatory aide to
support a deeper relationship with those Āsana
within which their primary purpose is staying."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Our relationship with
Food can be too much,
too little, or wrong.
The same could also be
said for Āsana Practice."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In supporting a cultivation, within or through Āsana,
of the subtler aspects of Bāhya Aṅga Sādhana, such
as Pratyāhāra, it can be a more helpful marker to be on
the lookout for sensory incontinence, rather than say,
being more preoccupied with physical choreography.
Such as how we can unconsciously leak, through randomly
opening the eyes or vaguely keeping the eyes open, when
transiting into or changing sides around such as seated Āsana.
For example, arriving into or departing from a choreographically
demanding asymmetrical Āsana such as Ardha Matsyendrāsana.
In other words, remaining alert and using the space between the
breath when moving from or returning to its link Āsana, Daṇḍāsana.
Another example is the potential for sensory incontinence when
moving into or out of or especially when changing sides, with
more popular or familiar seated Āsana such as Janu Śīrṣāsana."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"The art of improvisation in Āsana functions
through two core practice principles, namely
that of the modification in and of the Āsana
and that of the variation in and of the Āsana.
Each can be defined more specifically in that:
Modification is that which brings you closer to
the Lakṣaṇa or core characteristics of an Āsana.
Variation is that which can take you away from
the Lakṣaṇa or core characteristics of an Āsana."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"One aspect to the art of modification in Āsana,
is in order to sustain a specific direction of Candra
according to the primary Lakṣaṇa of and in an Āsana,
amidst a contrary potential to stimulate a dispersion
of Candra, because of the demands of the secondary
Lakṣaṇa overpowering that of the primary Lakṣaṇa.
This also implies that we have personally embedded
a theoretical and experiential understanding, through
study of the process in the Viniyoga of Āsana, according
to their inherent primary and secondary characteristics."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"When looking at the means to explore the art of
improvisation within the choice and application
of Āsana, we need to be specific in our intention.
For example,
we could look through the lens of two questions:
1. What are the areas that we wish to investigate?
2. What are the ways to explore these in Āsana?
If we are specific in regard to the first question,
as in what is the area or areas to be investigated,
then we can explore these in the second question,
through utilising the art of improvisation in Āsana."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"At the heart of the Viniyoga of Āsana
process around the practice of Āsana,
is the experience of moving as if you
have not already experienced the Āsana
and are, as if, meeting it for the first time.
When it comes to staying in the Āsana, then
staying as if you already know the Āsana,
and are once again greeting an old friend."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"The application of modification
within the choice of Āsana relates
more to the purpose of the Āsana.
Whereas, the application of variation
within the choice of Āsana relates
more to the purpose of the practice."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Just because you can perform a posture,
doesn't automatically mean you can
experience the posture as an Āsana.
To experience a posture as an Āsana
implies some other factors are involved.
Such as how to facilitate a decreasing
resistance within the confines of the body,
and integrating a transcendent involvement
with the mystery of what is beyond the body."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In Āsana one should vary the breath ratio."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"The Bhāvana should vary from Āsana to Āsana.
For example, one could use the Bhāvana
to decide the ratio or, where to place
the attention on the breath."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In Āsana one should not
always count the breath length,
otherwise one loses mindfulness."
– 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In Āsana the use of metronome
should be limited and used as
a check on your breathing.
Such as, where you are using a
long Prāṇa breath one could use
a metronome to check the count."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"In the beginning of our relationship with Āsana,
we work at adding Breath to the movement.
As we refine our relationship with Āsana,
we work at adding movement to the Breath."
- 108 Postural Practice Pointers

"Mahā Mudrā is the bridge between Āsana and Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Mudrā Practice Pointers

"Which Āsana support the
principle of Mūla Bandha?
To stop the Mūla dropping,
as in Paścimatāna drawing
the Mūla towards Maṇipūra."
- 108 Mudrā Practice Pointers

"Lying Āsana such as Taḍāka Mudrā can be
initially used for Uḍḍīyana Bandha as less
strain on the legs and better for observation."
- 108 Mudrā Practice Pointers

"According to such as the Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā,
Aśvinī Mudrā and Mūla Bandha are seen as very
different forms in terms of definition and application.
Regarding application, only Aśvinī Mudrā is focussed around
the repeated contraction of the anal sphincter muscles.
Whereas, Mūla Bandha is a single sustained contraction.

It also appears that there are differing certainties within
the modern use, definition and application of the two terms,
with a single contraction variant of Aśvinī Mudrā often being
passed off in 'Krishnamacharya' terminology, as if Mūla Bandha.
For example, Mūla Bandha being described as somethng you
take all the time whether sitting, talking, walking, or eating.
This would not be possible given T Krishnamacharya's view of
what is Mūla Bandha and its relationship to Uḍḍīyana Bandha.
Comparing Mūla Bandha to Aśvinī Mudrā:
Aśvinī Mudrā can be an outcome of an effective Mūla Bandha.
If Mūla Bandha is good then Aśvinī Mudrā can follow automatically.
But not the other way round, as Aśvinī Mudrā is only
a localised contraction of the anal sphincters.
Also, Mūla Bandha is considered as complete,
whether or not Aśvinī Mudrā is there.
Also, the use of Aśvinī Mudrā can produce gas and
too much use can affect the peristaltic reflex.
Plus avoid in certain conditions such as haemorrhoids.
Āsana can be used for the same effect on these organs.
A direct Aśvinī Mudrā pushes the stomach forward,
so its contraindicated for Mūla Bandha.
Thus, Krishnamacharya's view of what is Aśvinī Mudrā and what is
Mūla Bandha differed, both in terms of definition, technique, and
application, as well as regarding the student starting prerequisites,
Vinyāsa Krama and links to other layers of their Yoga Sādhana."
- 108 Mudrā Practice Pointers

"In order to access its inner dimensions,
I feel Prāṇāyāma needs to be sustained,
in terms of both frequency, consistency and
competence, rather than it being a sporadic,
or perhaps nominal foray, into its potential as
a primary tool within Bāhya Aṅga Sādhana.
Maybe this is because of insufficient interest
in a long-term exploration into Prāṇāyāma?
On this point, one might offer observations
on the environment and expectations within
which the styling of modern group classes
are framed, seemingly 'posing' as if 'Yoga'?
Or, perhaps because this cursory glance at its
form and function arises from us just looking
for nominal, immediate or even external fruits?
As one might with Āsana, when experiencing
a structural, energetic or psychological issue?"
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"Bhāvana for the Breath in Āsana, Mudrā and Prāṇāyāma
- Pūraka – Lifting from the Viśuddhi Cakra
- Antar Kumbhaka – Expanding from the Anahāta Cakra
- Recaka – Contracting from the Svādhiṣṭhāna Cakra
- Bāhya Kumbhaka – Sustaining from the Mūlādhāra Cakra"
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"The longer term measure of our Prāṇāyāma
potential is determined by our skilful efforts
within all four components of the breath in Āsana.
For example, can we maintain a ratio of 8.8.8.8.
in Parśva Uttānāsana or 12.6.18.12 in Mahāmudrā?"
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"Prāṇāyāma, the same as with Āsana and Dhyānam,
was taught according to the core principles within
Cikitsā Krama, Rakṣaṇa Krama and Śikṣaṇa Krama.
Thus we have breathwork practice possibilities
ranging from Cikitsā, using simple ratios to settle
an irregular breathing pattern or pulse fluctuation,
to Rakṣaṇa, with a visible competence and fluidity
within a range of basic techniques and mild ratios,
to Śikṣaṇa and a skill base encompassing all techniques,
and ratios and especially, the application and integration of
Kumbhaka with long holds both after the inhale and the exhale."
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"When reflecting on the intimacy of the relationship between
Prāṇāyāma and Āsana experientially, we could consider
exploring the practice of Prāṇāyāma and its developmental
conjunction with Āsana, via the following reference points.
Within the age-old coalescence of Prāṇāyāma and Āsana,
Prāṇāyāma can have three potential roles in influencing
the physical, energetic, psychological or emotional
effects arising from the prior practice of Āsana.
In this context the application of Prāṇāyāma can be
from one of three directions. It can be used to either
pacify, or to stabilise, or to intensify, the various
experiences arising from the practice of Āsana."
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"One of the joyful experiences that can emerge within our morning practice
is the feeling that arises on arriving at our Prāṇāyāma seat and taking
that first breath within an atmosphere of having more than enough time
in hand left to engage with this aspect of our on the mat Sādhana that day.
The sense of Sukha is palpable and offers a spaciousness that facilitates
the breath both releasing and entering into the spirit of, as Krishnamacharya
spoke of in terms of Āsana, Prayatna Śaithilya and Ananta Samāpatti.

This feeling in itself can both automatically lengthen and deepen
the flow of the breath without any conscious effort on our part.
A precious gift to start the days journey into exploring this vital area of practice.
A constant reminder, if not rejoinder, to not forget
to leave more than enough time for Prāṇāyāma,
rather than it being the token twiddle at the end of the practice,
or that which is oft easily at best compromised or at worst,
forgotten within the seduction of the bodily experiences."
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"What can define a transition between
Cikitsā Krama, Rakṣaṇa Krama and
Śikṣaṇa Krama in terms of the breath?
Is it that in Cikitsā Krama, the priority is
within Āsana practice and establishing a
core relationship with using the breath?
Whereas, in Rakṣaṇa Krama, the priority
is within Āsana practice, and developing
the core relationship, primarily with the
exhale and secondarily with the inhale?
Whereas, in Śikṣaṇa Krama, the priority is
within Prāṇāyāma practice, and developing
the core relationship, primarily with the exhale
and the inhale, and secondarily with the holds?"
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"What can define a transition between
Cikitsā Krama, Rakṣaṇa Krama and
Śikṣaṇa Krama in terms of Prāṇāyāma?
Is it that in Cikitsā Krama, the priority is
establishing an Āsana practice with the aim
of developing a core relationship with Ujjāyī?
Whereas, in Rakṣaṇa Krama, the priority is
establishing a Prāṇāyāma practice with the aim
of developing a core relationship, primarily
with Anuloma and secondarily with Pratiloma?
Whereas, in Śikṣaṇa Krama, the priority is
developing a core relationship, primarily with
Nāḍī Śodhana and secondarily with Sūrya Bhedana?"
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"As an adjunct or extension to the Āsana element of a practice,
Prāṇāyāma can be applied to either enhance, stabilise or reduce
the impact of accumulative effects arising from the Āsana element.
The skill is being able to choose which is appropriate for that day,
in relation to where we are coming from in terms of that day's Āsana,
and our personal choices as to where we are going to need to be after."
- 108 Prāṇāyāma Practice Pointers

"One of the key concepts in the Viniyoga of Āsana
is how to facilitate movement in the spine
rather than just movement of the spine."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"One of the primary roles for Āsana
is to make the spine a fit vehicle for Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In Āsana, the Breath is an accessory to the Āsana.
In Prāṇāyāma, the Āsana is an accessory to the Breath."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Yoga is more about exploring
the movement of the mind, whilst
Āsana is more about exploring
the movement of the body.
The vehicle common to exploring both
is the movement of the breath.
The yoking of all three is towards the goal of
experiencing the source of all movement."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Some are satisfied with what Āsana brings them.
Others are curious as to where Āsana can take them."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"We can make a profession out of the myriad of ways we find
to use Āsana to stay too busy to make time for Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Are we confusing the maturation of our Āsana practice
with the maturation of our Yoga practice?"
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Āsana alone can be a support for our outer relationship with living.
However, can Āsana alone be the support for our inner relationship with dying?
Especially as our conception of death is buried deep within our psyche.
This is why Yoga offers vehicles beyond Āsana for the inner and especially final journey."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Ultimately our experience of the Āsana is refined
through the mystery of the breath,
rather than the mastery of the form."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Āsana is an interface between the body
and the systemic energy processes.
Prāṇāyāma is an interface between the
systemic energy processes and the psyche.
Dhyāna is an interface between the psyche
and the awareness that pervades our sense of being."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Is it a misdirection within Āsana from talking
about effects on the body as if on the spine?
Thus too much focus on talking about effects on the body
and not enough on looking at the actual effects on the spine?"
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Āsana is the primary choice to work the breath.
Prāṇāyāma is the primary choice to refine the breath."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The ABC of the Viniyoga of Yoga
is the bespoke long term cultivation of
a personalised, pertinent and progressive
Āsana Practice as a foundation for a separate
Breathing Practice with its own identity alongside a
Chanting Practice to honour teachings and transmission.
Dhyānam is the fabric that time weaves from these related threads."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In terms of ageing mainframes and creaking joints,
it is perhaps useful to remind ourselves that
Yoga practice is much more than just Āsana.
In other words, even as the body slows down,
can we continue to slow the Breath down,
can we continue to slow the Mind down,
can we be still within the distraction of age?"
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"According to the teachings of Krishnamacharya and Desikachar,
Āsana involves extending the length of the breath beyond the body,
rather than the extending of the body beyond the length of the breath.
The purpose is to facilitate the field of Prāṇa accumulating in its intensity."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The place of learning is in the space between the Āsana.
In that Āsana practice is a movie, not a series of pictures.
A marker towards Nirodha is not leaking between Āsana.
Thus containing energetic itches on coming back to stillness."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The journey into the breath in Āsana is one where we
evolve from firstly, exploring the breath within ourself
towards ultimately, exploring ourself within the breath."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"We realise the Āsana through the breath,
rather than the breath through the Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Specific breathing patterns in Āsana
ensure a harmony
a sense of involvement
allow an investigation into the Āsana
offer a mirror for observing subtle changes
within our responses to the Āsana
and its place within the practice."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Listening to the breath between Āsana is more
important than listening to the mind between Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Āsana works from
the outside inwards.
Prāṇāyāma works from
the inside outwards."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The starting point for the Āsana is the breath.
The finishing point for the Āsana is the breath.
The journey between the two is via the breath."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The art of Viniyoga is being concerned with what
happens during the movements between the Āsana
rather than just the movements during the Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"The art of Viniyoga is about
how you bring life to the Āsana
rather than expecting the Āsana
to bring life to you."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Then there are those Āsana that you learn
solely for practices other than Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

What constitutes lazy Āsana practice?
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In the beginning, the breath in Āsana
sets the direction for our Prāṇāyāma practice.
As we develop this, the breath in Prāṇāyāma
sets the direction for our Āsana practice."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"When less Āsana time than you would like,
better to reduce the number of Āsana,
or the number of repetitions,
or the length of the stays,
rather than, reducing the length of the breath.
Or..... even considering lengthening the breath,
thus even fewer Āsana, all with a longer breath than usual.
Here the Bhāvana could be to observe the effect
of a more spacious than usual Āsana breathing
on a more cramped than usual daily mindset."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In the beginning of our journey into the arts of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma, the outcome of our exploration into the breath in Āsana sets a direction and parameters for the beginnings of our exploration into how and where to develop the breath in Prāṇāyāma.
As we establish, progress and refine our practice of Prāṇāyāma, the strengths and issues that arise from our practice of Prāṇāyāma invite a subtler investigation of the breath in Āsana.
This investigation with its reciprocal and yet increasingly subtle direction offers a more precise guidance for where and how we revisit and engage with our work with the breath in Āsana.
Over time we come to both realise and experience the uniqueness of the breath within each of these two arts and the increasingly subtle development of the qualities of the relationship between the breath in Āsana, with that of the breathin Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"When considering what, why and how to practice,
it can be helpful to consider our starting point.
For example, are we looking for the role of an Āsana
practice to help in recovering from a situation
where we are as if personally overdrawn.
Also, what is the nature of our 'overdraft'?
Is its impact or origin physical, energetic, psychological
or emotional, or even a combination of more than one?
Here the concepts of too little, too much, or wrong
can also be helpful as a reference in that, as well as
considering the nature of the 'overdraft', we need to
consider the means we undertake to remedy this
aspect of the situation. In other words our first
priority is to choose to plan practice steps that
will initially reduce the negative aspect at least.

However, sometimes we can try something that is
as if a short term loan and at a high rate of interest
in terms of time, effort, energy and commitment.
Thus whilst finding our situation temporarily
improving a further depletion can possibly arise as
we find ourselves unable to as if 'keep up with the
extra payments' given the nature of the original
depletion and its current impact on our potentials.
So having a clear reference point in terms of
identifying the nature of our starting point, and
the short term or longer term potentials of a
choice of an appropriate remedy, is as important
as our personal determination to clear the deficit
that has knowingly or unknowingly emerged within us."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In Āsana the emphasis is
more on Body, Breath, Mind.
In Prāṇāyāma the emphasis is
more on Breath, Mind, Body.
In Dhyānam the emphasis is
more on Mind, Breath, Body."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Bṛṃhaṇa Kriyā and Laṅghana Kriyā, as
expansive and contractive activities, are two
potentials explored through Āsana and the Breath.
Alongside the practice of Āsana, Mudrā and Prāṇāyāma,
they are actualised through a theoretical understanding of
the primary principles that inform Haṭha Yoga and Āyurveda.
The alchemical process underpinning this understanding
is the relationship between the two primary principles of
Prāṇa and Agni in order to influence Haṭha Yoga concepts such
as Prāṇa, Apāna, Sūrya, Candra, Nāḍī, Cakra and Kuṇḍalinī.
In terms of Bṛṃhaṇa Kriyā and Laṅghana Kriyā, the
Viniyoga of Bṛṃhaṇa effects a dispersion of Agni from
the core to the periphery and the Viniyoga of Laṅghana
effects a concentration of Agni from the periphery to the core.
Integrating the application of these two specific processes
facilitates access, through the Merudaṇḍa, Prāṇa and Agni,
to either energising or cleansing potentials, or as collaborative
outcomes within the practice of Āsana, Mudrā and Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Progressing from Movement to Stillness,
as in from Dynamic Āsana to Static Āsana,
is a perceived goal within every Yoga practice.
However, within the Viniyoga of Āsana, this is not
a purposeful goal to expect within every Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Another lesser-known facet to the practice tool of Pratikriyāsana
is the application of it in the practice planning steps, not in the
more usual sense of its perception as a postural counterpose,
rather its application in order to reduce a negative state of being
and the impact that we are currently experiencing, whether at a
physical, energetic, psychological or emotional level of being.
In this context, Pratikriyāsana means the practice planning steps
when choosing and arranging Āsana that will effect an counter action
on our current state of negativity expressing itself and impacting on
our sense of well-being, whether body, mind, energy or emotions.
Thus, opposite action Āsana to a currently unhelpful sense of being."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Svatantra within Āsana, Mudrā
and Prāṇāyāma implies knowing
the self-application and effects of
breath ratios, as well as you know
the self-application and effects of
the forms of the important Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"In Āsana the breath is
a mirror for the body.
In Prāṇāyāma the breath
is a mirror for the mind."
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

"Āsana Practice needs a
Mat and a Map.
Of the two the more
important question is,
what Map are you using,
rather than,
what Mat are you using?"
- 108 Yoga Practice Pointers

General Guidelines for Practice Planning:
"Keep it simple and consider how
to spend more time in fewer Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"Yoga emphasises that Āsana must not be neglected,
it is a valid tool that needs a precise application, hence
respecting that there need to be guidelines when choosing."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"Āsana practice seems to mean
different things to different people."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"Most of the Āsana are not close
to the postures of the body we use
in our daily life and its activities."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"These days people begin Āsana practice
at different stages of their life."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"It is not humanly possible to adapt Āsana
practice to respect all the considerations.
Hence, a safe compromise that produces
certain positive effects and limits negative
effects is the only proper alternative."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Choosing Āsana:
"The principles we utilise through
the Viniyoga of Āsana practice are
a fair attempt in this direction."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Setting Practice Aims and Learning Outcomes:
"Furthermore, we must also respect
the after-effect of the Āsana practice,
as well as the after-action yet to come.
Here we must respect the travel from A to Z
and that Z seems to vary much more than A.
For example, there are generally fewer
variables with practice in the morning.
Whereas, with practice in the evening we are more
subject to the day's effects and thus more variables."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

General Guidelines for Setting Practice Aims and Learning Outcomes:
"If being practised regularly, consider
the impact of the accumulative effect
of Āsana and Pratikriyāsana, in any
one practice, and especially over time
on any aims and intended outcomes.
Observations here can be helped by
keeping the practice concise, consistent
and coherent in intention and execution."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Generally, in terms of Āsana practice,
we can consider two types of physical activity
that of Dynamic or Movement and Stay or Static:
Dynamic is the movement aspect of an Āsana or posture.
Here some Āsana are more suited to Movement or Dynamic Work"
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Relating these two types of activity,
dynamic movement in Āsana is the initial way
of assessing what is what in the body,
in the breath and in the mind.
Furthermore, you can't just press a button and
get into and out of an Āsana, you have to move.
So there is a starting point in learning the practice of Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Generally, in terms of Āsana practice,
we can consider two types of physical activity,
that of Dynamic or Movement and Stay or Static.
Stay is the Static aspect of an Āsana or posture.
Though some Āsana are more suited to Stay or Static Work."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Linking Dynamic and Static Āsana within a Vinyāsa Krama.
In this respect the application of the principles of
both dynamic and static work, when planning for
Āsana practice, allows for a more efficient use of
the body and respect for the variables such as
time of day, time of year, time of life, preceding
or following activities, the length of practice,
the role of practice, our practice needs, etc."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Amongst the technical learnings of the different
possibilities for Āsana are topics such as,
the developmental application of Āsana
within the refinement of the practice from
more movement towards more stasis.
This involves an exploration of the immediate
or longer-term potentials for different Āsana:
– When used with long-range movement
– When used with mid-range movement
– When used with short-range movement
– When used with micro movement."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"This would also involve a theoretical study of
the Lakṣaṇa of individual or groups of Āsana.
This is supported by exploring the advantages and
disadvantages of movement or stay in specific Āsana.
All of which to help in appreciating which Āsana
are best used dynamically, or which Āsana are
best used statically and which Āsana can serve the
practice in both dynamic and a static application."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Consequently in looking at the principles
of working with dynamic and static,
we must consider the following:
– The Lakṣaṇa of the chosen Āsana
– The Lakṣaṇa of the practitioner's body
– The Lakṣaṇa of the practitioner's breath
– The Lakṣaṇa of the practitioner's mind
– The Vinyāsa Krama to link the Āsana
with the practitioner's individual
body, breath and mind."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Furthermore, the consideration of the roles of
movement and stasis can be further developed through
Krishnamacharya's teachings on application of Āsana.
For example, whether for circulation or for purification,
within both structural and/or systemic roles for Āsana.
Regarding circulation, or what he called Rakta Calana.
When you want to activate the circulation you move.
Regarding cleansing, or what he called Śarīra Śodhana.
When you want to activate a purificatory process you stay.
Both presume there is competent access to the breath,
working access to the concepts of Prāna, Apāna and Agni,
and experience of how to direct the breath in the spine."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Furthermore, the consideration of movement
or stasis sits within a relationship to the
deeper purpose of Āsana within our journey
through the body and the breath, to the mind
and beyond, through considerations such as:
In relation to the dual concepts of Sthira and Sukham.
Dynamic can be too much effort, as in overly Sthira,
and Static can be too relaxing, as in overly Sukham.
Thus, the use of movement and stasis in Āsana needs
to consider how to correlate these two qualities, namely
that of steady attentiveness with that of spacious clarity."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Furthermore, the consideration of movement
or stasis sits within a relationship to the
deeper purpose of Āsana within our journey
through the body and the breath, to the mind
and beyond, through considerations such as:
In relation to the fluctuations of the Guṇa.
Ideally, dynamic work is a state of still movement,
rather than a state of active movement, as in Rajas.
Equally, static work is a state of bright stasis,
rather than a state of dull stasis, as in Tamas.
Thus, in relation to the Guṇa, the application
of both movement and stasis in Āsana need to be
appropriately supported by a quality of Sattva.
As in a quality of stillness within dynamic work
and a quality of brightness within static work."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Furthermore, the consideration of movement
or stasis sits within a relationship to the
deeper purpose of Āsana within our journey
through the body and the breath, to the mind
and beyond, through considerations such as:
In relation to the concepts of Dhāraṇā and Dhyānam.
Dynamic is the effort to move the activities of the mind,
as well as of the body, in one direction as in Dhāraṇā.
The observations from dynamic work also allow us to see
the role or appropriateness or subtlety of static work.
Here static can be considered as the holding of the mind,
as well as of the body, in one direction as in Dhyānam.
As Dhāraṇā precedes Dhyānam in terms of directing the
activities of the mind, so dynamic work precedes static
work in terms of directing the activities of the body.
So, the quality of the attention within the mind, as well
as the body, is important in helping us to experience the
progressive interrelationship between movement and stasis."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Different Types of Postural Activity in Āsana Practice
"Finally, the consideration of movement
or stasis sits within a relationship to the
deeper purpose of Āsana within our journey
through the body and the breath, to the mind
and beyond, through considerations such as:
In relation to the psychological ideal of remaining there.
According to the definition in Chapter Three verse 2 of
the Yoga Sūtra, a continuity of psychic activity is the ideal.
This is seen as the ability to stay, as if in the same moment, as
one moment melds into the next moment and the next moment.
In other words, the ability to internally maintain a continuity of
experience as if maintaining an apparent stillness of movement.
Access to such subtle states requires a containment of movement
that ultimately extends from the body to the breath to the mind."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Voluntary Efforts and Involuntary Effects in an Āsana Practice
"As well as the consideration around the use of
Āsana dynamically or statically, there is also,
depending on our background to Āsana practice,
the voluntary effort and the involuntary effects.
According to the impact of this in the background,
certain voluntary intentions can, often unconsciously,
trigger certain involuntary, multilevelled responses."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Voluntary Efforts and Involuntary Effects in an Āsana Practice
"Thus, this means these effects can also apply to our
attitudes whilst working habitually in a particular Āsana.
For example, an involuntary response as a result of memory.
So we can have a blindness, in that we are unaware of the
position of the arms, legs, or body, as well as in our attitude.
Thus, we need to at least apply movements voluntarily
in our efforts to influence the qualities of the Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

Voluntary Efforts and Involuntary Effects in an Āsana Practice
"Thus, with these two aspects there can be a lot of variables.
For example, using or not using the breath in Āsana
practice can be either a voluntary or involuntary aspect.

Thus, if you are not used to using the breath in an Āsana
and its quality is affected involuntarily, then we must apply
a voluntary action to improve or sustain the quality of the breath.
Or, if we are used to using the breath, the way we use it
can become fixed and unchanging – an involuntary effect."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

A third factor, that of Respect for Responses
"There is also a third factor besides the relationship
between voluntary efforts and involuntary effects,
namely a person's response to the notion of effort and effect.
In the travel from our everyday postures to Yoga postures
we need to consider respect for the idea of responses.
We can often ignore the body's response to our efforts
within our aims and intentions for ideals, such as in Āsana.
Voluntary efforts and involuntary effects are the variables."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

A third factor, that of Respect for Responses
"Voluntary,
as in a controlled action
and involuntary,
as in an action or reaction
without conscious control,
have both positive and negative aspects.
For example, a person who has a particular
problem would seemingly come voluntarily.
However, their reaction in response to
what we ask them to do may be involuntary.
So we have to consider a person's responses.
As in, what are and what are not
acceptable responses when we travel
from everyday postures to Yoga Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

A third factor, that of Respect for Responses
"So Āsana are considered as voluntary phenomena,
like writing with your opposite hand.
Thus, it is an action which requires conscious control.
However, when you are used to going from everyday
postures to Yoga Āsana they become automatic in use.
Thus, they become involuntary."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

A third factor, that of Respect for Responses
"We must consider our waking posture,
which is usually standing or sitting.
Thus, we have a gap from this to
the main Āsana we intend to use.
How can we bridge this gap from everyday
postures to Āsana, in terms of form and function?
Principles of practice are means to bridge the
gaps according to place, time and circumstances.
Here, we can cultivate steps towards being
able to access an Āsana with a conscious
composure, remaining awake within it
and maintaining a respect for responses."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

A third factor, that of Respect for Responses
"Āsana are not automatic but can become so.
The inevitability of voluntary actions is that we
get used to them and they become involuntary.
With this, the risk factor is increased as well.
So what is voluntary and what is involuntary is
completely different when there is a 'new' response.
However, such a response needs to be linked to
something deeper than just merely a 'tweaking',
or 'inventive' variation within the form of the body.
Given, that in Yoga the breath is that which gives life.
By cultivating a role for, and the purpose of the breath,
we are creating and re-creating a situation for, not just new,
but also more subtle responses to occur and reoccur.
Within this field for enhancing awareness,
through our relationship with the breath,
the risk factor is reduced as well."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

We must also consider the safety factors
"For example, we have Śīrṣāsana and Padmāsana.
Because of being able to do these Āsana a
person wants to do Padmāsana in Śīrṣāsana,
exploring an Āsana known as Viparīta Padmāsana.
However one has to know the factors involved.
One cannot assume that because two things
are possible, a third will follow automatically."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

We must also consider the safety factors
"For example Viparīta Padmāsana could
be approached by working dynamically
from Ardha Padma Sarvāṅgāsana
into Ardha Padma Halāsana. This would
ascertain the ability to work into and with
Padmāsana in an inverted Āsana such as Śīrṣāsana.
Thus, any Āsana practice must allow for certain
safety factors, so we are able to work with respect
and regard for the individual involved and yet
retain consideration of and for the safety factors."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

The element of compromise in the body
"This also applies that, as a teacher,
we should be aware of the student's limitations.
These are variables according to the person,
as well as the climate, the environment, etc.
They are not constant and neither are the effects.
This compromise can react in many ways.
For example:
You put your mind in one place during
an Āsana, the body compensates
and places the escape elsewhere."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

The element of compromise in the body
"It is initially the teacher that observes
the escape, rather than the area
of the body where the mind is.
This is another example of an
involuntary, as in unconscious, response
to a voluntary, as in conscious, movement.
Thus, for example, in Āsana what we try
to do can have different responses:
Such as what we want to happen,
and what we don't want to happen.
If voluntary intentions produce
involuntary responses, then you can
lose touch with what is happening."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

The element of compromise in the body
"If you are doing the same Āsana practice,
over a long period of time,
it is not the same, because it becomes a habit.
In this, it can have a different effect to what is required.
Thus, when you design an Āsana practice for
a long period you should be very careful.
In this situation perhaps accommodate a
compromise and build in a safety factor."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

The element of compromise in the body
"We can either respect our limits and
accommodate them, or else overwork
them and risk creating a need to rectify.
This is where the idea of using the same
Āsana practice all the time has limitations."
- 108 Yoga Planning Pointers
- The Viniyoga of Planning Principles Guidelines – Collected & Collated

"What is important is the refinement of one's
practice and study repertoire, rather than
just the enlargement of one's repertoire,
whether it's more Āsana, Chants or Texts.
Plus, the more time you spend on enlarging,
the less time you have to spend on refining."
- 108 Yoga Study Path Pointers

"Don't let Āsana become just
another form of security,
rather than an inquiry
into the nature of insecurity."
- 108 Yoga Study Path Pointers

"Better not to confuse:
– Bodywork with Āsana.
– Energywork with Mudrā.
– Breathwork with Prāṇāyāma.
– Mindwork with Dhyānam.
– Voicework with Mantra.
– Soulwork with Puruṣa."
- 108 Yoga Study Path Pointers

"According to the Paramparā of
Krishnamacharya and Desikachar,
Āsana begets Mudrā,
Mudrā begets Prāṇāyāma,
Prāṇāyāma begets Pratyāhāra,
Pratyāhāra begets Dhāraṇā,
Dhāraṇā begets Dhyāna.
Of these five Upāya, only
Dhyāna is Meditation."
- 108 Yoga Study Path Pointers

"One hallmark within TKV Desikachar's teaching on Āsana,
was not to confuse 'appropriate' alignment techniques,
with 'proper' alignment techniques.
The former implies a personalised starting point,
whilst the latter implies a developmental potential.
However both need to be related to 3 questions:
Where am I coming from?
Why am I practicing Āsana?
Where am I going to?"
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"The Viniyoga of Yoga perspective
is that the role of Śavāsana is
its specific use as a transition
from the fatigue of the Āsana,
rather than its general use as a
recovery from the fatigue of life."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"Just because a person can achieve the form of the Āsana,
we can't presume they will also achieve the experience of the Āsana."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"Amongst the Antarāya that
relegate Prāṇāyāma to the wish list
is the choice of a long relaxation as
a substitute ending to Āsana practice."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"My Āsana study with Desikachar was shaped around forming
a deep appreciation of specific core principles that underpin
the planning and practice of Āsana and their application to
the individual student's constitution, psychology and need.

Amongst these dozen or so core principles,
the first group when looking at any Āsana in depth,
were the concepts of Nāma, Rūpa and Lakṣaṇa, or the
name, form and characteristics of that particular Āsana.
Obviously, the Nāma is a useful tag point for identification
and the Rūpa is vital as a reference point for the Sat Viniyoga,
or right application of the Āsana within overall considerations of
initial direction and outcomes through such as the Śikṣaṇa Krama,
Rakṣaṇa Krama or Cikitsā Krama application of the forms used.
However, I do feel these days that our understanding in Āsana
practice is more dominated by the Nāma and the Rūpa with
little emphasis on the Lakṣaṇa or inherent characteristics of the
Āsana and how understanding this aspect can have a profound
effect on the approach, application and outcome of the overall or
accumulative impact of the Āsana within the student's practice.
The teachings of Krishnamacharya around Āsana included
an in-depth appreciation of the Lakṣaṇa, especially around
the thirty or so primary and secondary support Āsana such as
Uttānāsana, Jaṭhara Parivṛtti, Bhujaṅgāsana or Januśīrṣāsana."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"Krishnamacharya's approach
to teaching children Āsana,
was more about cultivating
strength in Prāṇa Sthāna and
movement in Apāna Sthāna.
Whereas for teaching adults
Āsana, the approach was
now more about cultivating
movement in Prāṇa Sthāna
and strength in Apāna Sthāna."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"A suggested strategy is to
focus primarily on the length
of the breath when working in
group class situations with Āsana.
Whereas, a suggested strategy is to
focus primarily on the subtlety of
the breath when working in group
class situations with Prāṇāyāma."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"When we are talking about Yoga
what percentage of the time are we in
reality actually only talking about Āsana?"
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"When talking about Yoga as if a practice,
I feel it could be helpful to distinguish
between which aspects of Yoga practice
we are actually referring to as they tend to
have differing, and at times even seemingly
contrasting, facets, paradigms and purposes."
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"If we can accept that Yoga is more than just Āsana,
what would you see as the difference between
Āsana as a practice and Yoga as a Sādhana?"
- 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"Although the inhale is the
exploratory means to learn
more about the Prāṇa Sthāna,
it is initially the exhale that will
teach us about the Apāna Sthāna,
and here is a primary means in the
application of Āsana as a therapy."
– 108 Yoga Teaching Path Pointers

"What are the concepts of Sṛṣṭi Krama, Sthiti Krama and Anta Krama
and what is their significance in relationship to the practice of Āsana?"
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