

Viniyoga Vignette 4 – Combining Prāṇāyāma within Āsana



A short end of study day 25' evening practice from the second day of three day Practitioner Training Programme Module. Here the primary Bhāvana or theme was to offer a practice to conclude what would have been in itself a long day of study as well as internalising the student away from the accumulative stresses from two long days of training input.

Thus the practice out began with spacious work in lying as a grounding transition from the intense work of the day before moving towards sitting. From here moving from lying via kneeling Cakravakāsana, the use of Śītalī, with its head movement and mild Antar Kumbhaka, was introduced to energetically and mentally refresh, before integrating a more physical focus albeit with a sense of seated containment, via mid-range movement in Jānu Śīrṣāsana.

This then flowed into sitting integrated with several types of Prāṇāyāma, firstly exploring Bhramarī, then a subtle seated Ujjāyī and finally Nāḍī Śodhana to complete the transition from the days activities to the evenings endings.

The descent or Uttara Aṅga included counterpose for the knees and hips, along with a return to the starting point via lying arm movements as a point of comparative reflection with the starting point. However this was tempered with the use of mild Kumbhaka, firstly with Antar Kumbhaka and then both Antar and Bāhya Kumbhaka to help externalise the focus back to the departure towards such as travel and/or evening eating activities.

I would emphasise that this is an example of a unique situation that existed at that moment and thus reflects an expression of a study point or the students group dynamic as a need at that moment.

Yet within this caveat, this example of a short but intensive practice, whilst not to be taken as a fixed template, also reflects the richness and multifarious possibilities in how the principles in the viniyoga of Yoga can be expressed as learning and experiential tools within a myriad of situations and personalities.

If there is a sketch quality in the PDF copy it is because these practices were not preplanned and were being notated as they unfolded whilst teaching the group. This also meant I could photocopy them as the practice concluded so copies were immediately available for reflection, reference or discussion.