

CHAPTER-3

Review of Traditional Literature

3.0	REVIEW OF TRADITIONAL LITERATURE	11-62
3.1	Background and Scope	12
3.2	Aims and objectives	13
3.3	Materials and Methods- Source material	13
3.4	Concept of Breath and Pranayama according to Vedas	14
3.5	Concept of Breath and Pranayama according to Upanishads	15
3.6	Concept of Breath and Pranayama according to Thirumanthiram	44
3.7	Definition of Pranayama	49
3.8	Concept of pranayama Practices	50
3.9	Importance and Significances of Pranayama	53
3.10	Different Pranayama Techniques	55
3.11	Summary of Ancient Literatures	61

REVIEW OF TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

3.1 BACKGROUND AND SCOPE:

‘Svasa’ means inspiratory breath and ‘Prasvasa’ is expiratory breath. Breath is an external manifestation of Prana, the vital force. Breath like electricity is gross Prana. Breath is Sthula, gross. Prana is Sukshma, subtle. By exercising control over this breathing you can control the subtle Prana inside. Control of Prana means control of the mind. The mind cannot operate without the help of Prana. The vibrations of Prana only produce thoughts in the mind. It is Prana that moves the mind. It is Prana that sets the mind in motion. It is the Sukshma Prana or Psychic Prana that is intimately connected with the mind. This breath represents the important fly-wheel of an engine. Just as the other wheels stop when the driver stops the fly-wheel, so also other organs cease working, when the Yogi stops the breath. If you can control the fly-wheel, you can easily control the other wheels. Likewise, if you can control the external breath, you can easily control the inner vital force, Prana. The process, by which the Prana is controlled by regulation of external breath, is termed Pranayama. Just as a goldsmith removes the impurities of gold by heating it in the hot furnace, by strongly blowing the blow-pipe, so also the Yoga student removes the impurities of the body and the Indriyas by blowing his lungs, i.e., by practicing Pranayama. The chief aim of Pranayama is to unite the Prana with the Apana and take the united Pranapana slowly towards the head. The effect or fruit of Pranayama is Udghata or awakening of the sleeping Kundalini (Raibahadur, 1915, Raibahadur, 1914, Sivananda, 1935 & Niranjanananda, 2009).

3.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF LITERARY RESEARCH:

- To understand the concept of Pranayama
- To understand the importance of pranayama
- To understand different technique of pranayama practices
- The understand the goal of Pranayama
- To understand the origin and Growth of yoga

3.3 MATERIALS AND METHODS- SOURCE MATERIAL:

- R̥gveda
- Kaṭha upaniṣat
- Praśna upaniṣat
- Muṇḍaka upaniṣat
- Taittiriya upaniṣat
- Chāndogya upaniṣat
- Bṛhadāraṇyaka upaniṣat
- Śvetāśvatara upaniṣat
- Gheraṇḍa saṁhitā
- Pātañjala yoga sūtra
- Haṭha yoga pradīpika
- Śiva saṁhitā
- Bhagavadgītā
- Atharvaveda
- Viṣṇu purāṇa
- Yoga bīja
- Shiva swardaya
- Svara yoga

- Prāṇa and prāṇāyāma
- The Sciences of Pranayama

3.4 CONCEPT OF BREATH AND PRANAYAMA ACCORDING TO VEDAS:

3.4.1 The Ṛgveda:

- Rig Veda 1:66:1, speaks of “breathe which is the life,” as does 1:113:16.
- “In thee is each living creature’s breath and life” (1:48:10). Our breath is inherent in Brahman, Absolute Being-Existence.
- “Breath which is the life, like one’s own son” (1:66:1). The breath is the extension of our inmost life. It is our “offspring.”
- Another hymn speaks of “All the world that moves and breathes” (1:101:5), implying that the whole world breathes, that breath encompasses the whole world.
- “Arise! The breath, the life, again hath reached us: darkness hath passed away and light approach eth” (1:113:16). The breath bears life and light within itself.
- “In thee is each living creature’s breath and life” (1:48:10). The breath is inseparable from Brahman.
- Brahman is also described as “giver of breath” in (10:121:2.)

3.4.2 The Atharva Veda:

- *Prana is the fundamental basis of whatever is, was, and will be.*” (10:XI, IV)

3.5 CONCEPT OF BREATH AND PRANAYAMA ACCORDING TO UPANISHADS:

3.5.1 Katha Upanishad:

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातमद्भ्यः पूर्वमजायत ।

गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं यो भूतेभिर्यपश्यत । एतद्वै तत्

yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātamadbhyaḥ pūrvamajāyata ।
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantaṁ yo bhūtebhirvyapaśyata । etadvai tat“ 2-4-6

[He who perceives] this Aditi that comes into being as the Breath, comprising all the gods, that is manifested along with the elements, and that, entering into the cavity of the heart, is seated there, he perceives that very Brahman.” (Katha Upanishad 2.1.7) Aditi—boundless—is a designation of the boundless “Infinite Mother”—Prakriti—the source of all the forms of consciousness from physical upwards. In Vedic cosmology Aditi is the mother of the gods. The meaning here is that the breath is the first aspect of sentient being that comes into manifestation, that the senses (“gods”) are permutations of the primal breath, as are the five elements (panchabhuta) to which they correspond. Seated in the very core of our being is the breath, and he who truly knows the breath knows Brahman.

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणमुन्नयत्यपानं प्रत्यगस्यति ।

मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते ॥ ३ ॥

ūrdhvaṁ prāṇamunnayatyapānaṁ pratyagasyati ।
madhye vāmanamāsīnaṁ viśve devā upāsate ॥ 3 ॥

“[The Self] sends forth the exhaling breath and draws in the inhaling breath. All the gods [senses] worship Him who is adorable and seated in the middle [of the breath]” (Katha Upanishad 2.2.3). Breathing is an action of the Self who is seated in midst of the breath. That is, exhalation and inhalation take place around the Self. For that reason those who observe the breath movements regain the awareness of their Self which they had lost. It is a reviving of their original consciousness.

न प्राणेन नापानेन मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन ।

इतरेण तु जीवन्ति यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ ॥ ५ ॥

na prāṇena nāpānena martyo jīvati kaścana ।
itareṇa tu jīvanti yasminnetāvupāśritau ॥ 5 ॥

Not by inhaling, not by exhaling, does a mortal live; but all live by something else on which these two depend” (Katha Upanishad 2.2.5). And that something else is the Self upon which they depend, wherefore through them the Self is experienced.

यदिदं किं च जगत् सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम् ।

महद्भयं वज्रमुद्यतं य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

yadidaṁ kiṁ ca jagat sarvaṁ prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam ।
mahadbhayaṁ vajramudyataṁ ya etadviduramṛtāste bhavanti ॥ 2 ॥

“The world, whatever here exists, springs from and moves in Breath” (Katha Upanishad 2.3.2). The Cosmic Breath is spoken of here, but it applies equally to the individual breath in each evolving entity.

3.5.2 Prashna Upanishad:

स एष वैश्वानरो विश्वरूपः प्राणोऽग्निरुदयते । तदेतदृचाऽभ्युक्तम् ॥ ७ ॥

sa eṣa vaiśvānaro viśvaruṣaḥ prāṇo'gnirudayate । tadetadṛcā'bhyuktam ॥ 7 ॥

विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम् ।

सहस्ररश्मिः शतधा वर्तमानः प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः ॥ ८ ॥

viśvarūpaṁ hariṇaṁ jātavedasaṁ parāyaṇaṁ jyotirekaṁ tapantam ।
sahasraraśmiḥ śatadhā vartamānaḥ prāṇaḥ prajānāmudayatyeṣa sūryaḥ ॥ 8 ॥

“The sun is verily Breath. That very one rises up who is Breath, who is identified with all creatures, and who is possessed of all forms. This very one, that has been referred to, is spoken of by the mantra: ‘The realizers of Brahman knew the one that is possessed of all forms, full of

rays, endowed with illumination, the resort of all, the single light (of all), and the radiator of heat. It is the sun that rises—the sun that possesses a thousand rays, exists in a hundred forms and is the life of all creatures” (Prashna Upanishad 1:5, 7, 8).

The sun is the source of all life in our solar system. The enlivening energy of the sun enters all living beings in the form of breath—is drawn into the body with each inhalation, and circulates throughout the body with each exhalation to sustain it. Accordingly, the sun and the breath are equated here. All life forms exist by means of the breath. The solar breath ensouls all life forms in many modes (rays). The breath “rises” in us at the dawn of life and “sets” at the end of life. The breath is Life, and those who truly know the breath know Brahman, for the breath is an extension of Brahman.

अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।

ऋचो यजूंषि सामानि यज्ञः क्षत्रं ब्रह्म च ॥ ६ ॥

arā iva rathanābhau prāṇe sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam ।
ṛco yajūṁṣi sāmāni yajñāḥ kṣatram brahma ca ॥ 6 ॥

By means of the breath all else is controlled. This is revealed in the following parable: “Once the senses of the body made the boastful assertion: ‘We hold the body together and support it,’ whereupon Breath said to them: ‘Do not deceive yourselves. It is I alone, who hold together this body and support it.’ But they would not believe him. Breath, to justify himself, made as if he intended to leave the body. But as he rose and appeared to be going, all the rest realized that if he went they also would have to depart with him; and as Breath again seated himself, the rest found their respective places. As bees go out when their queen goes out, and return when she returns, so was it with speech, mind, vision, hearing, and the rest [in relation to the Breath]. Convinced of their error, the powers now praised Breath, saying: ‘He is immortal life.’ All things are fixed in the Breath like spokes on the hub of a chariot wheel” (Prashna Upanishad 2:2-6). He, then, who is truly one with the breath (in the fullest sense) is one with all the aspects of his existence, and is immortal.

The glories of the breath (verse 6-13)

प्रजापतिश्चरसि गर्भे त्वमेव प्रतिजायसे ।

तुभ्यं प्राण प्रजास्त्विमा बलिं हरन्ति

यः प्रणैः प्रतितिष्ठसि ॥ ७ ॥

prajāpatiścarasi garbhe tvameva pratijāyase ।
tubhyaṃ prāṇa prajāstvimā baliṃ haranti
yaḥ praṇaiḥ pratitiṣṭhasi ॥ 7 ॥

देवानामसि वह्नितमः पितृणां प्रथमा स्वधा ।

ऋषीणां चरितं सत्यमथर्वाङ्गिरसामसि ॥ ८ ॥

devānāmasi vahnitamaḥ pitṛṇāṃ prathamā svadhā ।
ṛṣīṇāṃ caritaṃ satyamatharvāṅgirasāmasi ॥ 8 ॥

इन्द्रस्त्वं प्राण तेजसा रुद्रोऽसि परिरक्षिता ।

त्वमन्तरिक्षे चरसि सूर्यस्त्वं ज्योतिषां पतिः ॥ ९ ॥

indrastvaṃ prāṇa tejasā rudro'si parirakṣitā ।
tvamantarikṣe carasi sūryastvaṃ jyotiṣāṃ patiḥ ॥ 9 ॥

यदा त्वमभिवर्षस्यथेमाः प्राण ते प्रजाः ।

आनन्दरूपास्तिष्ठन्ति कामायान्नं भविष्यतीति ॥ १० ॥

yadā tvamabhivarṣasyathemāḥ prāṇa te prajāḥ ।
ānandarūpāstiṣṭhanti kāmāyānnaṃ bhaviṣyatīti ॥ 10 ॥

व्रात्यस्त्वं प्राणैर्कर्षरत्ता विश्वस्य सत्पतिः ।

वयमाद्यस्य दातारः पिता त्वं मातरिश्च नः ॥ ११ ॥

vṛātyastvaṃ prāṇaikaṛṣarattā viśvasya satpatiḥ ।
vayamādyasya dātāraḥ pitā tvaṃ mātariśva naḥ ॥ 11 ॥

या ते तनूर्वाचि प्रतिष्ठिता या श्रोत्रे या च चक्षुषि ।

या च मनसि सन्तता शिवां तां कुरू मोत्क्रमीः ॥ १२ ॥

yā te tanūrvāci pratiṣṭhitā yā śrotre yā ca cakṣuṣi |
yā ca manasi santatā śivām tām kurū motkramīḥ || 12 ||

प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत् प्रतिष्ठितम् ।

मातेव पुत्रान् रक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रज्ञां च विधेहि न इति ॥ १३ ॥

prāṇasyedaṁ vaśe sarvaṁ tridive yat pratiṣṭhitam |
māteva putrān rakṣasva śrīśca prajñām ca vidhehi na iti || 13 ||

- All things are rooted in the breath like spokes fixed in the hub of a wheel.
- The breath is present even in the womb as the spark of life. (In the chapter on Taoism we will find reference to “the womb breath.”)
- The breath is the Lord of Creation, and it is the breath that empowers birth and growth to adulthood within each life form.
- It is the breath that enables the senses to function, and regulates that function.
- The breath is both awareness and strength in the individual.
- The breath is the expansive power of evolution.
- The breath is the source of mental and physical well-being.
- The breath is the basic “food” of the body. (That is why great yogis in various religions have lived without eating—on breath alone.)
- All things are under the control of breath, including the body and mind of sentient beings.
- The breath protects, develops, and perfects all life forms.(verse 6-13)

आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । यथैषा पुरुषेछायैतस्मिन्नेतदातं

मनोकृतेनायात्यस्मिञ्शरीरे ॥३॥

ātmana eṣa prāṇo jāyate | yathaiṣā puruṣe
chāyaitasminnetadātataṁ
manokṛtenāyātyasmiñśarīre || 3 ||

- “This breath is born of the Self. As a person casts a shadow, so is this breath connected with the Self. It comes into this body by the action of the mind” (Prashna Upanishad 3:3). Not only is the Self the source of the breath, the breath and the mind are interdependent. This means that we can reach the Self by means of the breath and can purify and perfect the mind (buddhi) by the breath—and the breath by the mind—through fixing the attention of the mind on the breath.

उत्पत्तिमायतिं स्थानं विभुत्वं चैव पञ्चधा ।

अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते

विज्ञायामृतमश्नुत इति ॥ १२ ॥

utpattimāyatiṁ sthānaṁ vibhutvaṁ caiva pañcadhā |
adhyātmaṁ caiva prāṇasya vijñāyāmṛtamaśnute
vijñāyāmṛtamaśnuta iti || 12 ||

- “The wise one who knows Breath thus...becomes immortal. As to this there is this verse: The birth, the entrance, the abode, the fivefold overlordship and the relation to the Self of the Breath—knowing these one obtains immortality, knowing these one obtains immortality” (Prashna Upanishad 3:11, 12). The repetition of the final clause emphasizes the truth of the breath as the means of immortality.

यदुच्छ्वासनिःश्वासावेतावाहुती समं नयतीति स समानः ।

मनो ह वाव यजमानः । इष्टफलमेवोदानः ।

सएनं यजमानमहरहर्ब्रह्म गमयति ॥ ४ ॥

yaducchvāsaniḥśvāsāvetāvāhutī samam nayatīti sa samānaḥ ।
mano ha vāva yajamānaḥ । iṣṭaphalamevodānaḥ ।
saenaṁ yajamānamaharahaḥbrahma gamayati । ।

There are five forms of sacred fire in Vedic religious rites. The upanishad (4:3, 4) next says that “It is the ‘fires’ of Breath that really keep awake in this city of the body,” meaning that it is not the body that is really alive, but the breath moving inside it. Then it likens the mind aware of the breath to a priest supervising the fires, and concludes that the breath “leads this sacrificer every day to Brahman.”

पृथिवी च पृथिवीमात्रा चापश्चापोमात्रा च तेजश्च
तेजोमात्रा च वायुश्च वायुमात्रा चाकाशश्चाकाशमात्रा
च चक्षुश्च द्रष्टव्यं च श्रोत्रं च श्रोतव्यं च ग्राणं च
घ्रातव्यं च रसश्च रसयितव्यं च त्वक्क स्पर्शयितव्यं च
वाक्क वक्तव्यं च हस्तौ चादातव्यं चोपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यं
च पायुश्च विसर्जयितव्यं च यादौ च गन्तव्यं च मनश्च
मन्तव्यं च बुद्धिश्च बोद्धिव्यं चाहङ्कारश्चाहङ्कर्तव्यं च
चित्तं च चेतयितव्यं च तेजश्च विद्योतयितव्यं च प्राणश्च
विद्यारयितव्यं च ॥ ८ ॥

ṛthivī ca ṛthivīmātrā cāpaścāpomātrā ca tejaśca
tejomātrā ca vāyuśca vāyumātrā cākāśaścākāśamātrā
ca cakṣuśca draṣṭavyaṁ ca śrotraṁ ca śrotavyaṁ ca grāṇaṁ ca

ghrātavyaṃ ca rasaśca rasayitavyaṃ ca tvakca sparśayitavyaṃ ca
vākca vaktavyaṃ ca hastau cādātavyaṃ copasthaścānandayitavyaṃ
ca pāyusca visarjayitavyaṃ ca yādau ca gantavyaṃ ca manaśca
mantavyaṃ ca buddhiśca boddhivyaṃ cāhaṅkāraścāhaṅkartavyaṃ ca
cittaṃ ca cetayitavyaṃ ca tejaśca vidyotayitavyaṃ ca prāṇaśca
vidyārayitavyaṃ ca || 8 ||

The absolute rulership of the breath in the individual is outlined in this way: “Earth and the element of earth, water and the element of water, fire and the element of fire, space and the element of space, the organ and object of vision, the organ and object of hearing, the organ and object of smell, the organ and object of taste, the organ and object of touch, the organ and content of speech, the hands and the object grasped, sex and enjoyment, the organ of excretion and the excreta, the feet and the space trodden, the mind and the content of thought, understanding and the content of understanding, egoism and the content of egoism, awareness and the content of awareness, the shining skin and the object revealed by that—all that is held and controlled by Breath” (Prashna Upanishad 4:8).

स प्राणमसृजत प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवीन्द्रियं मनः ।

अन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः कर्म लोका लोकेषु च नाम च ॥ ४ ॥

sa prāṇamasṛjata prāṇācchraddhāṃ khaṃ vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivīndriyaṃ manaḥ |
annamannādvīryaṃ tapo mantrāḥ karma lokā lokeṣu ca nāma ca || 4 ||

Finally the upanishad (6:4) declares that the Supreme Self created the Breath, and from the Breath was created all the worlds and all that is within them. The same is true of the individual Self as well.

3.5.3 Mundaka Upanishad

एतस्माज्जायते प्रणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।

खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥ ३ ॥

etasmājjāyate praṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca |

khaṁ vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī ।। 3 ।।

“From the Self [purusha] originates the breath as well as the mind, all the senses, space, air, fire, water, and earth that supports everything” (Mundaka Upanishad 2.1.3). This is a hierarchal list. First, there is the breath, and then everything that follows is its modifications.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥ ८ ॥

bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasaṁśayāḥ ।
kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare ।। 8 ।।

Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.8 explains why we fix the mind on the breath, saying: “It is the director of the breath-body [pranasharira].” We will find the expression “body of the breath” in the teachings of Buddha and Buddhist meditation masters in the chapter on the Buddhist tradition.

प्रणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर्विभाति विजानन् विद्वान् भवते नातिवादी ।

आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावा-नेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥ ४ ॥

praṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī ।
ātmakrīḍa ātmaratiḥ kriyāvā- neṣa brahmavidāṁ variṣṭhaḥ ।। 4 ।।

“Truly it is Breath that shines forth in all beings. Knowing it, the wise man does not talk about anything else. Sporting in the Self, delighting in the Self, performing works, such a one is the greatest of the knowers of Brahman” (Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.4). The wise man “does not talk about anything else” but the breath in the sense that he knows that whatever he speaks of is a ray of the breath-sun. Knowing the breath, he rejoices in the Self and does all things in the consciousness of the Self. Certainly, he is among the greatest of those who know the Absolute. He no longer experiences the breath as anything but Brahman.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन् प्राणः पञ्चधा संविवेश ।

प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन् विशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ॥ ९ ॥

eṣo'ṅurātmā cetasā veditavyo yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa |
prāṇaiścittam sarvamotaṁ prajānām yasmin viśuddhe vibhavatyēṣa ātmā || 9 ||

“The Self [atman] is to be known by means of the breath which pervades the mind [chitta]”
(Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.9).

3.5.4 Taittiriya Upanishad

प्राणं देवा अनु प्राणन्ति । मनुष्याः पशवश्च ये ।
प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः । तस्मात् सर्वायुषमुच्यते ।
सर्वमेव त आयुर्यन्ति । ये प्राणं ब्रह्मोपासते ।
प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः । तस्मात् सर्वायुषमुच्यत इति ।
तस्यैष एव शारीर आत्मा । यः पूर्वस्य ।
तस्माद्वा एतस्मात् प्राणमयात् । अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा मनोमयः ।
तेनैष पूर्णः । स वा एष पुरुषविध एव ।
तस्य पुरुषविधताम् । अन्वयं पुरुषविधः ।
तस्य यजुरेव शिरः । ऋग्दक्षिणः पक्षः । सामोत्तरः पक्षः ।
आदेश आत्मा । अथर्वाङ्गिरसः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा ।
तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ॥ १ ॥

prāṇam devā anu prāṇanti | manuṣyāḥ paśavaśca ye |
prāṇo hi bhūtānāmāyuh | tasmāt sarvāyūṣamucyate |
sarvameva ta āyuryanti | ye prāṇam brahmopāsate |
prāṇo hi bhūtānāmāyuh | tasmāt sarvāyūṣamucyata iti |
tasyaiṣa eva śārīra ātmā | yaḥ pūrvasya |
tasmādvā etasmāt prāṇamayāt | anyo'ntara ātmā manomayaḥ |
tenaiṣa pūrṇaḥ | sa vā eṣa puruṣavidha eva |
tasya puruṣavidhatām | anvayaṁ puruṣavidhaḥ |

tasya yajureva śiraḥ | ṛgdakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ | sāmottaraḥ pakṣaḥ |
ādeśa ātmā | atharvāṅgiraṣaḥ pucchaṁ pratiṣṭhā |
tadapyeṣa śloko bhavati || 1 ||

Earlier the subject of a yogi leaving the body on the vehicle of the breath was mentioned. Since there is no physical body in the higher worlds, does breath remain relevant? Will not breath awareness cease as soon as the person leaves the body? Yes, the breath does remain relevant to the disembodied yogi, and No, breath awareness will not cease, for the Taittiriya Upanishad tells us: “The gods breathe along with the breath, as also humans and animals; the breath is the life of all beings. Therefore, it is called the Life of All. They who worship Brahman as breath attain to a full life, for the breath is the life of all beings. Therefore it is called the life of all. The breath is indeed the embodied soul of the physical body” (Taittiriya Upanishad 2.3.1). From this we see that the subtle breath continues on the higher levels of existence, so the practice of Breath Meditation continues, as well. This is underlined by the following verse: “Breath is Brahman. For truly, beings here are born from breath, when born they live by breath, and they enter into breath when they depart” (Taittiriya Upanishad 3.3.1).

“Breath, verily, is food. The body is the ‘eater’ of that food. In breath is the body established; in the body is the breath established” (Taittiriya Upanishad).

3.5.5 Chandogya Upanishad

प्राण इति होवाच सर्वाणि ह वा इमानि भूतानि
प्राणमेवाभिसंविशन्ति प्राणमभ्युज्जिहते सैषा देवता
प्रस्तावमन्वायत्ता तां चेदविद्वान्प्रास्तोष्यो
मूर्धा ते व्यपतिष्यत्तथोक्तस्य मयेति ॥ १.११.५ ॥
prāṇa iti hovāca sarvāṇi ha vā imāni bhūtāni
prāṇamevābhisamviśanti prāṇamabhyujjihate saiṣā devatā
prastāvamanvāyattā tāṁ cedavidvānprāstoṣyo
ūrdhā te vyapatiṣyattathoktasya mayeti || 1.11.5 ||

“Verily, indeed, all beings here enter with breath and depart with breath” (Chandogya Upanishad 1.11.5).

मनोमयः प्राणशरीरो भारूपः सत्यसंकल्प
आकाशात्मा सर्वकर्मा सर्वकामः सर्वगन्धः सर्वरसः
सर्वमिदमभ्यत्तोऽवाक्यनादरः ॥ ३.१४.२ ॥

manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīro bhārūpaḥ satyasaṅkalpa
kāśātma sarvakarmā sarvakāmaḥ sarvagandhaḥ sarvarasaḥ
sarvamidamabhyatto'vākyanādarah || 3.14.2 ||

As in other upanishads, the following verse applies both to Brahman and the Self: “He consists of mind, his body is breath” (Chandogya Upanishad 3.14.2).

स यदवोचं प्राणं प्रपद्य इति प्राणो वा इदं सर्वं
भूतं यदिदं किंच तमेव तत्प्रापत्सि ॥ ३.१५.४ ॥

sa yadavocaṁ prāṇaṁ prapadya iti prāṇo vā idaṁ sarvaṁ
bhūtaṁ yadidaṁ kiñca tameva tatprāpatsi || 3.15.4 ||

“I take refuge in breath, for verily breath is everything here that has come to be, whatsoever there is” (Chandogya Upanishad 3.15.4).

तद्धैतद्धोर् आङ्गिरसः कृष्णायदेवकीपुत्रायोक्तवोवाचापिपास एव स बभूव
सोऽन्तवेलायामेतत्त्रयं प्रतिपद्येताक्षितमस्यच्युतमसि
प्राणसंशितमसीति तत्रैते द्वे ऋचौ भवतः ॥ ३.१७.६ ॥

taddhaitadghor āṅgiraśaḥ kṛṣṇāyadevakīputrāyoktvovācāpipāsa eva sa babhūva
so'ntavelāyāmetattrayaṁ pratipadyetākṣitamasyacyutamasi
prāṇasaṁśitamāsīti tatraite dve ṛcau bhavataḥ || 3.17.6 ||

The sage GhoraAngirasa was the spiritual teacher of Krishna. He taught him to say in prayers: “Thou art the essence of breath” (Chandogya Upanishad 3.17.6).

अथाध्यात्मं प्राणो वाव संवर्गः स यदा स्वपिति प्राणमेव

वागप्येति प्राणं चक्षुः प्राणं श्रोत्रं प्राणं मनः प्राणो ह्येवैतान्सर्वान्संवृङ्क्त इति ॥ ४.३.३ ॥

athādhyātmaṁ prāṇo vāva saṁvargaḥ sa yadā svapiti prāṇameva
vāgapyeti prāṇaṁ cakṣuḥ prāṇaṁ śrotraṁ prāṇaṁ manaḥ prāṇo
hyevaitānsarvānsaṁvṛṅkta iti || 4.3.3 ||

We have already seen that the senses are “rays” of the breath; therefore the upanishad(4.3.3) next says that in both sleep and death the senses become withdrawn into the breath.

अथ हाग्नयः समूदिरे तप्तो ब्रम्हाचारी कुशलं नः पर्यचारीद्धन्तास्मै प्रब्रवमेति तस्मै होचुः

प्राणो ब्रम्ह कं ब्रह्म खं ब्रह्मेति ॥४ ॥

[atha hāgnayaḥ samūdire tapto bramhācārī kuśalaṁ naḥ paryacārīddhantāsmāi
prabravameti tasmai hocuḥ prāṇo bramha kaṁ brahma khaṁ brahmeti || 4 ||]

“Breath is Brahman” (Chandogya Upanishad 4.10.4).

“Verily, he who knows the eldest and the best, surely becomes the eldest and the best. Breath is indeed the eldest and the best” (Chandogya Upanishad). This is meant both cosmically and individually. Shankara, commenting on this verse, says that one reason the breath is called the “eldest” is that it functions in the womb, whereas all the other faculties usually only come into function at birth. Again we have reference to the “womb breath” of which the Taoist scriptures speak.

अथ ह प्राण उच्चिक्रमिषन्स यथा सुहयः पड्वीशशङ्कून्संखिदेदेवमितरान्प्राणान्समखिदत्तं

हाभिसमेत्योचुर्भगवन्नेधि त्वं नः श्रेष्ठोऽसि मोत्कमीरिति ॥ ५.१.१२ ॥

atha ha prāṇa uccikramaṣansa yathā suhayaḥ
paḍvīśaśaṅkūnsaṅkhidedevamitarānpṛāṇānsamakhidattaṁ
hābhisametyocurbhagavannedhi tvaṁ naḥ śreṣṭho'si
motkramīriti || 5.1.12 ||

न वै वाचो न चक्षूषि न श्रोत्राणि न मनासीत्याचक्षते

प्राणा इत्येवाचक्षते प्राणो ह्येवैतानि सर्वाणि भवति ॥ ५.१.१५ ॥

na vai vāco na cakṣūṁṣi na śrotrāṇi na manāṁsītyācakṣate prāṇā ityevācakṣate prāṇo
hyevaitāni sarvāṇi bhavati || 5.1.15||

Another parable regarding the supremacy of the breath among the faculties and powers of the body is found in 5.1.6 to 5.1.15. There each of the bodily powers in turn depart and return to find the body still alive though bereft of that sense or function while it was gone. But the moment the breath even began to depart, all the other powers realized that they were departing also because they were rooted in the breath. So the parable concludes with the statement that all these are really forms of the breath, “for the breath indeed is all these.”

स होवाच किं मेऽन्नं भविष्यतीति यत्किञ्चिदिदमा श्वभ्य आ शकुनिभ्य इति होचुस्तद्वा
एतदनस्यान्नमनो ह वै नाम प्रत्यक्षं न ह वा एवंविदि किञ्चनानन्नं भवतीति ॥ ५.२.१ ॥

sa hovāca kiṁ me'nnaṁ bhaviṣyatīti yatkiñcididamā
śvabhya ā śakunibhya iti hocustadvā etadanasyānnamano
ha vai nāma pratyakṣaṁ na ha vā evaṁvidi kiñcanānannaṁ bhavatīti || 5.2.1||

अपांसोम्य पीयमानानां योऽणिमा स ऊर्ध्वः समुदीषति स प्राणो भवति ॥६-६-३ ॥

[apāṁsomya pīyamānānāṁ yo'ṇimā sa ūrdhvaḥ samudīṣati sa prāṇo bhavati || 6-6-3||]

In the section on the practice of Breath Meditation, diet was emphasized as a vital factor in its practice. The upanishad informs us (5.2.1-3; 6.5.2, 4; 6.6.3, 5; 6.7.1) that the subtle energies of our food and drink become our breath energies. This being true, the quality of our breath is determined by diet—the more pure it is, the more pure and refined our breath will be. We can imagine what quality breath would be produced from dead animal bodies, nicotine, drugs and alcohol. It is crucial that the yogi avoid them altogether.

स यथा शकुनिः सूत्रेण प्रबद्धो दिशं दिशं पतित्वान्यत्रयतनमलब्ध्वा बन्धनमेवोपश्रयते
एवमेव खलु सोम्य तन्मनो दिशं दिशं पतित्वान्यत्रयतनमलब्ध्वा प्राणमेवोपश्रयते

प्राणबन्धनं हि सोम्य मन इति ॥२॥

[sa yathā śakuniḥ sūtreṇa prabaddho diśaṁ diśaṁ patitvānyatrayatanamalabdhvā
bandhanamevopaśrayata evameva khalu somya tanmano diśaṁ diśaṁ
patitvānyatrayatanamalabdhvā prāṇamevopaśrayate prāṇabandhanam̐hi somya mana
iti || 2 ||]

“Just as a bird tied by a string, after flying in various directions without finding a resting-place elsewhere settles down at the place where it is bound, so also the mind, after flying in various directions without finding a resting-place elsewhere settles down in the breath, for the mind is bound to breath” (Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.2). And the breath is bound at the tip of the nose.

प्राणो वा आशया भूयान्यथा वा अरा नाभौ समर्पिता

एवमस्मिन्प्राणे सर्वं समर्पितं प्राणः प्राणेन याति

प्राणः प्राणं ददाति प्राणाय ददाति प्राणो ह पिता प्राणो

माता प्राणो भ्राता प्राणः स्वसा प्राण आचार्यः प्राणो ब्राह्मणः ॥ ७.१५.१ ॥

prāṇo vā āśayā bhūyānyathā vā arā nābhau samarpitā
evamasminprāṇe sarvaṁsamarpitam̐ prāṇaḥ prāṇena yāti
prāṇaḥ prāṇam̐ dadāti prāṇāya dadāti prāṇo ha pitā prāṇo
mātā prāṇo bhrātā prāṇaḥ svasā prāṇa ācāryaḥ prāṇo brāhmaṇaḥ || 7.15.1 ||

“Even as the spokes are fastened in the hub, so on the breath all this is fastened. Life moves by the breath. Breath gives life to a living creature. Breath is one’s father, breath is one’s mother, breath is one’s brother, breath is one’s sister, breath is one’s teacher, breath is the Brahmin [knower of Brahman]” (Chandogya Upanishad 7.15.1). That breath is a teacher-revealer to the meditator will be the experience of those that apply themselves to Breath Meditation.

तस्य ह वा एतस्यैवं पश्यत एवं मन्वानस्यैवं विजानत
 आत्मतः प्राण आत्मत आशात्मतः स्मर आत्मत आकाश
 आत्मतस्तेज आत्मत आप आत्मत
 आविर्भावतिरोभावावात्मतोऽन्नमात्मतो बलमात्मतो
 विज्ञानमात्मतो ध्यानमात्मतश्चित्तमात्मतः
 संकल्प आत्मतो मन आत्मतो वागात्मतो नामात्मतो मन्त्रा
 आत्मतः कर्माण्यात्मत एवेदं सर्वमिति ॥ ७.२६.१ ॥

tasya ha vā etasyaivaṃ paśyata evaṃ manvānasyaivaṃ vijānata
 ātmataḥ prāṇa ātmata āśātmataḥ smara ātmata ākāśa
 ātmatasteja ātmata āpa ātmata
 āvirbhāvatirobhāvāvātmato'nnamātmato balamātmato
 vijñānamātmato dhyānamātmataścittamātmataḥ
 saṅkalpa ātmato mana ātmato vāgātmato nāmātmato mantrā
 ātmataḥ karmāṅyātmata evedaṃsarvamiti || 7.26.1 ||

“Breath springs from the Self” (Chandogya Upanishad 7.26.1).

एवमेवैष सम्प्रसादोऽस्माच्छरीरात्समुत्थाय परं
 ज्योतिरुपसम्पद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यते स उत्तमपुरुषः
 स तत्र पर्येति जक्षत्क्रीडन्नममाणः स्त्रीभिर्वा यानैर्वा
 ज्ञातिभिर्वा नोपजनं स्मरन्निदं शरीरं स यथा
 प्रयोग्य आचरणे युक्त एवमेवायमस्मिञ्छरीरे प्राणो युक्तः ॥ ८.१२.३ ॥

evamevaiṣa samprasādo'smāccharīrātsamutthāya paraṃ
 jyotirupasampadya svena rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyate sa uttamapuruṣaḥ
 sa tatra paryeti jakṣatkrīḍanramamāṇaḥ strībhirvā yānairvā
 jñātibhirvā nopajanaṃ smarannidaṃ śarīraṃ sa yathā
 prayogya ācaraṇe yukta evamevāyamasmiccharīre prāṇo yuktaḥ || 8.12.3 ||

“As an animal is attached to a chariot, even so is the Breath attached to this body” (Chandogya Upanishad 8.12.3). Because of breath the body moves (“lives”).

3.5.6 Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

अथ कर्मणामात्मेत्येतदेषामुक्थम् अतो हि सर्वाणि कर्माण्युत्तिष्ठन्ति
एतदेषां सामैतद्धि सर्वैः कर्माभिः समम् एतदेषां ब्रह्मैतद्धि सर्वाणि कर्माणि विभर्ति ।
तदेतत्त्रयं सदेकमयमात्माऽऽत्मो एकः सन्नेतत्त्रयम् । तदेतदमृतं सत्येन छन्नम् ।

प्राणो वा अमृतम् नामरूपे सत्यम्

ताभ्यामयं प्राणश्छन्नः ॥ ३ ॥ इति षष्ठं ब्राह्मणम् ॥

atha karmaṇāmātmetyetadeṣāmuktham ato hi sarvāṇi karmāṇyuttiṣṭhanti
etadeṣāṃ sāmaitaddhi sarvaiḥ karmabhiḥ samam
etadeṣāṃ brahmaitaddhi sarvāṇi karmāṇi bibharti ।
tadetattrayaṃ sadekamayamātmā"tmo ekaḥ sannetattrayam ।
tadetadamṛtaṃ satyena channam । prāṇo vā amṛtam nāmarūpe satyam
tābhyāmayam prāṇaśchannaḥ । । 3 । । iti ṣaṣṭham brāhmaṇam । ।

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad we have an interesting variation of the parable regarding the supremacy of the breath. In it Death seized each of the body’s powers in turn and they ceased, but Death was unable to even touch the breath, which was immortality itself. Then the upanishad says this is true even of the gods in the high astral worlds—breath is their life. And the subject is concluded by the words: “Breath, verily, is the Immortal” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.6.3).

स होवाच गार्ग्यो य एवायं वायौ पुरुष

एतमेवाहं ब्रह्मोपास इति ।

स होवाचाजातशत्रुर् मा मैतस्मिन्संवदिष्टा ।

इन्द्रो वैकुण्ठोऽपराजिता सेनेति वा अहमेतमुपास इति ।

स य एतमेवमुपास्ते जिष्णुर्हार्पराजिष्णुर्भवत्यन्यतस्त्यजायी ॥ ६ ॥

sa hovāca gārgyo ya evāyaṁ vāyau puruṣa
etamevāhaṁ brahmopāsa iti ।
sa hovācājātaśatrur mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhā ।
indro vaikuṅṭho'parājitā seneti vā ahametamupāsa iti ।
sa ya etamevamupāste jiṣṇurhāparājiṣṇurbhavatyanyatastyajāyī ॥ 6 ॥

“The being who is the breath within—him I meditate upon as Brahman. That which breathes in is thy Self, which is within all. That which breathes out is thy Self, which is within all. Breath is the abode of Brahman” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.1.6).

स यथोर्णाभिस्तन्तुनोच्चरेद्यथाऽग्नेः क्षुद्रा विष्फुलिङ्गा व्युच्चरन्त्येवमेवास्मादात्मनः

सर्वे प्राणाः सर्वे लोकाः सर्वे देवाः सर्वाणि

भूतानि व्युच्चरन्ति । सर्वे ॥ । व्युच्चरन्ति तस्योपनिषत्सत्यस्य सत्यमिति

प्राणा वै सत्यं तेषामेष सत्यम् ॥ २० ॥ इति प्रथमं ब्राह्मणम् ॥

sa yathorṇābhistantunoccaredyathā'gneḥ kṣudrā viṣphuliṅgā
vyuccarantyevamevāsmādātmanāḥ sarve prāṇāḥ sarve lokāḥ sarve devāḥ sarvāṇi
bhūtāni vyuccaranti । sarve ॥ । व्युच्चरन्ति
tasyopaniṣatsatyasya satyamiti prāṇā vai satyaṁ
teṣāmeṣa satyam ॥ 20 ॥ iti prathamam brāhmaṇam ॥ ।

“As a spider moves along the thread, as small sparks come forth from the fire, even so from this Self come forth all breaths....The breaths are the Real [in manifestation] and the reality of the breaths is the Self” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.1.20).

तस्य हैतस्य पुरुषस्य रूपम् । यथा माहारजनं वासो

यथा पाण्ड्वाविकम् यथेन्द्रगोपो यथाऽग्न्यर्चिर्यथा पुण्डरीकम्

यथा सकृद्विद्युत्तः । सकृद्विद्युत्तेव ह वा अस्य श्रीर्भवति

य एवं वेदाथात आदेशो नेति नेति

न ह्येतस्मादिति नेत्यन्यत् परमस्त्यथ नामधेयं सत्यस्य सत्यमिति

प्राणा वै सत्यन्तेषामेष सत्यम् ॥ ६ ॥ इति तृतीयं ब्राह्मणम् ॥

tasya haitasya puruṣasya rūpam | yathā mähārajanam vāso

yathā pāṇḍvāvīkam yathendragopo

yathā'gnyarciryathā puṇḍarīkam yathā sakṛdvidyuttaṁ |

sakṛdvidyutteva ha vā asya śrīrbhavati

ya evaṁ vedāthāta ādeśo neti neti

na hyetasmāditi netyanyat paramastyatha nāmadheyaṁ satyasya satyamiti

prāṇā vai satyamteṣāmeṣa satyam || 6 || iti tṛtīyaṁ brāhmaṇam ||

“The Self is The Truth of Truth, and verily the Breath is Truth, and the Self is the Truth of the Breath” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.3.6).

अयं वायुः सर्वेषां भूतानां मध्वस्य वायोः सर्वाणि भूतानि मधुयश्चायमस्मिन्वायौ

तेजोमयोऽमृतमयः पुरुषो

यश्चायमध्यात्मं प्राणस्तेजोमयोऽमृतमयः पुरुषोऽयमेव स योऽयमात्मेदं अमृतम् ।

इदं ब्रह्मेदं सर्वम् ॥ ४ ॥

ayaṁ vāyuḥ sarveṣāṁ bhūtānāṁ madhvasya vāyoḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni

madhuyaścāyamasminvāyau tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo

yaścāyamadhyātmaṁ prāṇastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo'yameva sa yo'yamātmedam

amṛtam |

idaṁ brahmedaṁ sarvam || 4 ||

“This shining, immortal Person who is Breath is this Self” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2.5.4).

याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच यदिदं सर्वं पूर्वपक्षापरपक्षाभ्यामाप्तं

सर्वं पूर्वपक्षापरपक्षाभ्यामभिपन्नं केन यजमानः पूर्वपक्षापरपक्षयोराप्तिमितिमुच्यत

इत्युद्गात्रत्विजा वायुना प्राणेन प्राणो वै यज्ञस्योद्गाता ।

तद्योऽयं प्राणः स वायुः स उद्गाता सा मुक्तिः साऽतिमुक्तिः ॥ ५ ॥

yājñavalkyeti hovāca yadidaṁ sarvaṁ pūrvapakṣāparapakṣābhyāmāptaṁ
sarvaṁ pūrvapakṣāparapakṣābhyāmabhipannaṁ kena yajamānaḥ
pūrvapakṣāparapakṣayorāptimatimucyata ityudgātrartvijā vāyunā prāṇena
prāṇo vai yajñasyodgātā | tadyo'yaṁ prāṇaḥ
sa vāyuḥ sa udgātā sā muktiḥ sā'timuktiḥ || 5 ||

“Verily, the breath is the priest of the [cosmic and individual] sacrifice. That which is this breath is liberation—complete liberation” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.1.5).

अथ हैनमूषस्तश्चाक्रायणः पप्रच्छ । याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच

यत्साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म य आत्मा सर्वान्तरस्तं मे व्याचक्ष्वेत्येष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ।

कतमो याज्ञवल्क्य सर्वान्तरो ।

यः प्राणेन प्राणिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो

योऽपानेनापानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो

यो व्यानेन व्यानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो

य उदानेनोदानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तर एष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ॥ १ ॥

atha hainamūṣastaścākrāyaṇaḥ papraccha |
yājñavalkyeti hovāca
yatsākṣādaparokṣādbrahma ya ātmā sarvāntaras
taṁ me vyācakṣvety
eṣa ta ātmā sarvāntaraḥ |
katamo yājñavalkya sarvāntaro |
yaḥ prāṇena prāṇiti sa ta ātmā sarvāntaro
yo'pānenāpāniti sa ta ātmā sarvāntaro
yo vyānena vyāniti sa ta ātmā sarvāntaro
ya udānenodāniti sa ta ātmā sarvāntara eṣa ta ātmā sarvāntaraḥ || 1 ||

“He who breathes through your breath is your Self” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.4.1).

यः प्राणे तिष्ठन्प्राणादन्तरोयं प्राणो न वेद यस्य प्राणः शरीरं

यः प्राणमन्तरो यमयत्येष त आत्माऽन्तर्याम्यमृतः ॥ १६ ।

yaḥ prāṇe tiṣṭhanprāṇādantaro
yaṁ prāṇo na veda yasya prāṇaḥ śarīraṁ
yaḥ prāṇamantaro yamayatyēṣa ta ātmā'ntaryāmyamṛtaḥ ।। 16 ।

“He who dwells in the breath, and is within the breath, whose body the breath is, and who controls the breath from within, he is your Self, the inner controller, the immortal”

(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.7.16).

तदाहु र्यदयमेक एव एक इवैव पवते । आथ कथमध्यर्ध इति ।

यदस्मिन्निदं सर्वमध्याध्नोत्तेनाध्यर्ध इति ।

कतम एको देव इति ।

प्राण इति स ब्रह्म त्यदित्याचक्षते ॥ ९ ॥

Tadāhur yadayameka eva eka ivaiva pavate । ātha kathamadhyardha iti ।
yadasminnidaṁ sarvamadhyārdhnottenādhyardha iti ।
katama eko deva iti ।
prāṇa iti sa brahma tyadityācakṣate ।। 9 ।।

“Which is the one God? The Breath. He is Brahman. They call him That” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.9.9). That–Tat–is a common designation of God.

कस्मिन्नु त्वं चात्मा च प्रतिष्ठितौ स्थ इति । प्राण इति ।

कस्मिन्नु प्राणः प्रतिष्ठित इत्य

अपान इति ।

कस्मिन्नुपानः प्रतिष्ठित इति ।

व्यान इति । कस्मिन्नु व्यानः प्रतिष्ठित इत्य

उदान इति । कस्मिन्नूदानः प्रतिष्ठित इति ।
समान इति । स एष नेति नेत्यात्माऽगृह्यो
न हि गृह्यतेऽशीर्यो न हि शीयतेऽसङ्गो न हि सज्यते
ऽसितो न व्यथते न रिष्यत्य एतान्यष्टावायतनान्य्

kasminnu tvaṁ cātmā ca pratiṣṭhitau stha iti ।

prāṇa iti ।

kasminnu prāṇaḥ pratiṣṭhita ity

apāna iti ।

kasminnvapānaḥ pratiṣṭhita iti ।

vyāna iti ।

kasminnu vyānaḥ pratiṣṭhita ity

udāna iti ।

kasminnūdānaḥ pratiṣṭhita iti ।

samāna iti ।

sa eṣa

neti

netyātmā'gr̥hyo

na hi gr̥hyate

'śīryo

na hi śīryate

'saṅgo na hi sajyate

'sito na vyathate

na riṣyaty

etānyaṣṭāvāyatanāny

अष्टौ लोका

अष्टौ देवा

अष्टौ पुरुषाः ।

स यस्तान्पुरुषान्निरुह्य प्रत्युह्यात्यक्रामत्

तं त्वौपनिषदं पुरुषं पृच्छामि ।

तं चेन्मे न विवक्ष्यसि
मूर्धा ते विपतिष्यतीति ।
त५ ह न मेने शाकल्यस्
तस्य ह मूर्धा विपपात
अपि हास्य परिमोषिणोऽस्थीन्यपजहु
अन्यन्मन्यमानाः ॥ २६ ॥

aṣṭau lokā
aṣṭau devā
aṣṭau puruṣāḥ ।
sa yastānpuruṣānniruhya pratyuhyātyakrāmat
taṁ tvaupaniṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ pṛcchāmi ।
taṁ cenme na vivakṣyasi
mūrdhā te vipatiṣyatīti ।
taṁ ha na mene śākalyas
tasya ha mūrdhā vipapāta
api hāsya parimoṣiṇo'sthīnyapajahrur
anyanmanyamānāḥ ॥ 26 ॥

“On what do the body and the heart rest? On the Breath” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 3.9.26).

यदेव ते कश्चिद्ब्रवीत्तच्छृणवामेत्यब्रवीन्मे बर्कुर्वाष्णश्चक्षुर्वै ब्रह्मेति ।
यथा मातृमान्पितृमानाचार्यवान् ब्रूयात्तथा तद्वाष्णोऽब्रवीत्तच्छुर्वै ब्रह्मेत्यपश्यतो हि किं
स्यादित्यब्रवीत्तु ते तस्याऽऽयतनं प्रतिष्ठाम् ।
न मेऽब्रवीदित्येकपाद्वा एतत्सम्प्राडिति ।
स वै नो ब्रूहियाज्ञवल्क्य ।
चक्षुरेवाऽऽयतनमाकाशः प्रतिष्ठासत्यमित्येतदुपासीत ।

का सत्यता याज्ञवल्क्य ।

चक्षुरेवसम्राट्

इति होवाच

चक्षुषा वै

सम्राट्

पश्यन्तमाहु

अर्द्राक्षीरिति ।

स आहाद्राक्षमिति

तत्सत्यं भवति

चक्षुर्वै

सम्राट्

परमं ब्रह्म

नैनं चक्षुर्जहाति

yadeva te kaścīdabravīttacchṛṇavāmetyabravīnme barkurvārṣṇaścakṣurvai brahmeti ।

yathā māṭṛmānpiṭṛmānācāryavān brūyāttathā tadvārṣṇo'bravītccakṣurvai

brahmetyapaśyato hi kiṁ syādityabravīttu te tasyā'yatanam̐ pratiṣṭhām ।

na me'bravidityekapādvā etatsamrāḍiti ।

sa vai no brūhiyājñavalkya ।

cakṣurevā'yatanamākāśaḥ pratiṣṭhāsatyamityetadupāsīta ।

kā satyatā

yājñavalkya ।

cakṣureva

samrāḍ

iti hovāca

cakṣuṣā vai

samrāḍ

paśyantamāhur
adrākṣīriti ।
sa āhādrākṣamiti
tatsatyam bhavati
cakṣurvai
samrāṭ
paramam brahma
nainam cakṣurjahāti

सर्वाण्येनं भूतान्यभिक्षरन्ति ।

देवो भूत्वा देवानप्येति

य एवं विद्वानेतदुपास्ते ।

हस्त्यृषभꣳ सहस्रं ददामीति होवाच जनको वैदेहः ।

स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यः

पिता मेऽमन्यत

नाननुशिष्य हरेतेति ॥४ ॥

sarvāṅyenaṁ bhūtānyabhikṣaranti ।
devo bhūtvā devānapyeti
ya evaṁ vidvānetadupāste ।
hastyṛṣabhaṁ sahasraṁ dadāmīti hovāca janako vaidehaḥ ।
sa hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ
pitā me'manyata
nānanuśiṣya hareteti ।।4 ।।

“The Breath, verily is Brahman. Breath is, in truth, the highest Brahman. Breath does not desert him who, knowing thus, worships it as such. All beings approach him. Having become a god, he goes to the gods” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.1.3).

प्राणेन रक्षन्नपरं कुलायम्

बहिष्कुलायादमृतश्चरित्वा

स ईयतेऽमृतो यत्रकामः

हिरण्मयः पुरुष एकहंसः ॥ १२ ॥

prāṇena rakṣannaparaṁ kulāyam
bahiṣkulāyādamṛtaścaritvā
sa īyate'mṛto yatrakāmaḥ
hiraṇmayāḥ puruṣa ekahaṁsaḥ | | 12 | |

In the upanishads both the universal Self and the individual Self are symbolized as a swan (hansa). In verse 4.3.12, it is said that the swan-Self protects its “nest”—the body—through the breath, and also moves out of the body by means of the breath.

प्राणस्य प्राणमुत चक्षुषश्चक्षु

र्तुत श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं

मनसो ये मनो विदुः ।

ते निचिक्युर्ब्रह्म पुराणमग्रयम् ॥ १८ ॥

prāṇasya prāṇamuta cakṣuṣaścakṣur
uta śrotrasya śrotraṁ
manaso ye mano viduḥ |
te nicikyurbrahma purāṇamagyam | | 18 | |

“They who know the breath of the breath have realized the ancient primordial Brahman”
(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.18).

यजुःप्राणो वै यजुःप्राणे हीमानि सर्वाणि भूतानि युज्यन्ते ।

युज्यन्ते हास्मै सर्वाणि भूतानि श्रेष्ठयाय

यजुषः सायुज्यं सलोकतां जयति

य एवं वेद ॥ २ ॥

yajuhṣprāṇo vai yajuh
prāṇe hīmāni sarvāṇi bhūtāni yujyante ।
yujyante hāsmāni sarvāṇi bhūtāni śraīṣṭhyāya
yajusaḥ sāyujyaṁ salokatām jayati
ya evaṁ veda ॥ २ ॥

In 5.13.1-4, we find a passage that is very hard to translate, but the gist of it is that the breath is the vitalizer of all, that which puts us in touch with all things through perception, that which unites us mentally with whatever we desire to know, and is the ruler and protector that needs no ruler and protector itself. Those who know this attain union with the Self in the transcendental world of the Self.

सैषा गायत्र्येतस्मिंस्तुरीये दशति पदे परोरजसि

प्रतिष्ठिता

तद्वै तत्सत्ये प्रतिष्ठितं

चक्षुर्वै सत्यमचक्षुर्वै सत्यमन्तस्माद्यदिदानीं द्वौ विवदमानावेयातामहम् अदर्शम्

अहमश्रौषमिति

य एव एवं ब्रूयाद्

अहम् अदर्शमिति

तस्मा एव श्रद्दध्याम ।

तद्वै तत्सत्यं बले प्रतिष्ठितम्प्राणो वै बलमन्तत्प्राणे प्रतिष्ठितमन्तस्मादाहु

बलं सत्यादोगीय इत्येवं वेषा गायत्र्यध्यात्मं प्रतिष्ठिता ।

सा हैषा गयाऽस्तत्रे
प्राणा वै गयास्तत्प्राणाऽस्तत्रे
तद्यद्गयाऽस्तत्रे
तस्माद् गायत्री नाम ।
स यामेवामूँ सावित्रीमन्वाहैषैव सा ।
स यस्मा अन्वाह
तस्य प्राणाऽस्त्रायते ॥ ४ ॥

saiṣā gāyatriyetasmiṁsturiye darśate pade parorajasi
pratiṣṭhitā
tadvai tatsatye pratiṣṭhitam
cakṣurvai satyamcakṣurhi vai satyamtasmādyadidānīm dvau
vivadamānāveyātāmaham adarśam
ahamaśrauṣamiti
ya eva evam brūyād
aham adarśamiti
tasmā eva śraddadhyāma ।
tadvai tatsatyam bale pratiṣṭhitamprāṇo vai balamtatprāṇe pratiṣṭhitamtasmādāhur
balaṁ satyādogīya ityevam veṣā gāyatyadhyātmanam pratiṣṭhitā ।
sā haiṣā gayāṁstatre
prāṇā vai gayāstatprāṇāṁstatre
tadyadgayāṁstatre
tasmād gāyatri nāma ।
sa yāmevāmūṁ sāvitṛīmanvāhaiṣaiva sā ।
sa yasmā anvāha
tasya prāṇāṁstrāyate ॥ 4 ॥

“The Breath is Strength” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5.14.4).

ॐ । ॐ यो ह वै ज्येष्ठं च श्रेष्ठं च वेद
ज्येष्ठश्च श्रेष्ठश्च स्वानां भवति ।

प्राणो वै ज्येष्ठश्च श्रेष्ठश्च ।
ज्येष्ठश्च श्रेष्ठश्च स्वानां भवत्यपि च येषां बुभूषति
य एवं वेद ॥ १ ॥

om yo ha vai jyeṣṭhaṁ ca śreṣṭhaṁ ca veda
jyeṣṭhaśca śreṣṭhaśca svānām bhavati ।
prāṇo vai jyeṣṭhaśca śreṣṭhaśca ।
jyeṣṭhaśca śreṣṭhaśca svānām bhavatyapi ca yeṣāṁ bubhūṣati
ya evaṁ veda ॥ 1 ॥

“Verily, he who knows the oldest and the greatest becomes the oldest and the greatest. Breath is, indeed, the oldest and the greatest. He who knows this becomes the oldest and the greatest” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 6.1.1).

3.5.7 Shvetashvatara Upanishad

पञ्चस्रोतोम्बुं पञ्चयोन्युग्रवक्रां
पञ्चप्राणोर्मिं पञ्चबुद्धयादिमूलाम् ।
पञ्चावर्तां पञ्चदुःखौघवेगां
पञ्चाशद्भेदां पञ्चपर्वामधीमः ॥५॥

[pañcastrotombuṁ pañcayonyugravakrām
pañcaprāṇormiṁ pañcabuddhayādimūlām ।
pañcāvartām pañcaduḥkhaughavegām
pañcāśadbhedām pañcaparvāmadhīmaḥ ॥ 5 ॥

In the fifth verse of the first section of the Shvetashvatara Upanishad it is said that the Self is like a river and the breath is the streams of that river.

3.6 CONCEPT OF BREATH AND PRANAYAMA ACCORDING TO THIRUMANTHIRAM:

Thirumanthiram is an ancient Tamil text written by Saint Thirumoolar who was contemporary to Saint Patanjali. Thirumanthiram (Thiru means holy or sacred or noble, manthiram means chant or mantra or hymn or sutra) consists of over 3000 poems referring to various practices including Ethics, Devotion, and Yoga. In this anthology there are 14 poems (verses 564 to 577) dedicated to the practice of Yogic Breathing (YB, Pranayamam or Pranayama). These 14 poems speak in depth about the benefits of YB and explain how breathing an important connection between mind and body.

ஐவர்க்கு நாயகன் அவ்வூர் தலைமகன்
உய்யக்கொண்டேறுங் குதிரைமற்றொன்றுண்டு
மெய்யர்க்குப்பற்றுக்கொடுக்குங் கொடாதுபோய்ப்
பொய்யரைத் துள் ளி விழுந்திடுந் தானே

Master the Steed of Breath: The Jiva is the master of senses five; he is the head of the body habitat; there is a steed he rides to his destined goal; the masterly one the steed carries, the feeble one it throws away that steed the prana breath is.

ஆரிய னல்லன் குதிரை இரண்டுள
வீசிப் பிடிக்கும் விரகறி வாரில்லை
கூரிய நாதன் குருவின் அருள்பெற்றால்
வாரிப் பிடிக்க வசப்படுந் தானே

Control of Inhalation and Exhalation: A goodly one is jiva he has steeds two, but he knows not how to master them if the lordly guru lends his grace, the steeds will tame become.

புள் ளினும் மிக்க புரவியை மேற்கொண்டாற்
கள்ளுண்ண வேண்டாந் தானே களிதருந்
துள் ளி நடப்பிக்குஞ் சோம்பு தவிர்ப்பிக்கும்
உள்ளது சொன்னோம் உணர்வுடை யோருக்கே

Breath Control Activates Body: Faster than bird that steed flies, far headier than wine the pleasure it gives; it infuses vigour, dispells laziness true we say this, let the wise listen.

பிராணன் மனத்தொடும் பேரா தடங்கிப்
பிராண னிருக்கிற் பிறப்பிறப் பில்லை
பிராணன் மடைமாறிப் பேச்சறி வித்துப்
பிராண னடைபேறு பெற்றுண்டீர் நீரே
தடங்கிப்

Breath Control Yields Life Nectar: Let prana merge in mind and together the two be stilled then no more shall birth and death be; therefore, learn to direct breath in streams alternating left and right and in silentness chant "aum" then shall you seville of the nectar of life.

ஏறுதல் பூரகம் ஈரெட்டு வாமத்தால்
ஆறுதல் கும்பம் அறுபத்து நாலதில்
ஊறுதல் முப்பத் திரண்டதி ரேசகம்
மாறுதல் ஒன்றின்கண் வஞ்சக மாமே
கும்பகம்

Puraka Kumbhaka Resaka Alternated Cleansing of Nadis: Purakam is to inhale by left nostril matras six and ten Kumbhakam is to retain that breath for matras four and sixty Resakam is to exhale thereafter for matras two and thirty thus alternate from left to right and right to left With Kumbhakam in between.

வளியினை வாங்கி வயத்தில் அடக்கில்
பளிங்கொத்துக் காயம் பழுக்கினும் பிஞ்சாந்
தெளியக் குருவின் திருவருள் பெற்றால்
வளியினும் வேட்டு வளியனு மாமே
வயிற்றில்

Breath Control Makes Body Light as a Carpenter-Bee: If you control the breath within, however old your body, young and crystal-hard it turns and with the goodly guru's benign grace, well may you wing your way in heaven as unto a carpenter-bee.

எங்கே இருக்கினும் பூரி இடத்திலே
அங்கே யதுசெய்ய ஆக்கைக் கழிவில்லை
அங்கே பிடித்தது விட்டள வுஞ்செல்லச்
சங்கே குறிக்கத் தலைவனு மாமே

Breath Control Gives Supreme Strength: Control and exhale in measure prescribed, well may you become a triumphant lord with the conch of victory, your achievement heralding.

ஏற் றி இறக்கி இருகாலும் பூரிக்குங்
காற்றைப் பிடிக்குங் கணக்கறி வாரில்லை
காற்றைப் பிடிக்குங் கணக்கறி வாளர்க்குக்
கூற்றை யுதைக்குங் குறியது வாமே

Knowledge of Science of Breath Leads to Immortality: Inhalation, exhalation, and retention both ways the science of breath thus consisting they know not; they who know the science of breath are destined to spurn the god of death.

மேல்கீழ் நடுப்பக்க மிக்குறப் பூரித்து
பாலாம் இரேசகத் தாலுட் பதிவித்து
மாலாகி யுந்தியுட் கும்பித்து வாங்கவே
ஆலாலம் உண்டான் அருள்பெற லாமே

Effect of Puraka, Kumbhaka Resaka: In purakam inhale breath deep 135 to pervade up, down and middle in kumbhakam retain it around the navel center; in resakam it is absorbed within in due measure they who practice the science of breath thus reach the grace of lord who consumed poison deadly.

வாமத்தில் ஈரெட்டு மாத்திரை பூரித்தே
ஏமுற்ற முப்பத் திரண்டும் இரேசித்துக்
காமுற்ற பிங்கலைக் கண்ணாக இவ்விரண்
டோமததால் எட்டெட்டுக் கும்பிக்க உண்மையே

Time Duration of Inhaling Retaining and Exhaling Breath: Inhaling six and ten matras by left nostril retaining four and sixty in the navel exhaling two and thirty by the right nostril, they who control breath thus, chanting aum have verily seen the light of truth.

இட்ட தவ்வீடிகா திரேசித்துப்
புட்டிப் படத்தச நாடியும் பூரித்துக்
கொட்டிப் பிராணன் அபானனுங் கும்பித்து
நட்டம் இருக்க நமனில்லை நமக்கே

How to Practice Pranayama: Inhale deep and steady, that prana fills the nadis ten; exhale slow that the body does not stir; retain prana breath and downward move apana breath thus sit erect and vanquish death.

புறப்படுப் புக்குத் திரிகின்ற வாயுவை
நெறிப்பட வுள்ளே நின்மல மாக்கில்
உறுப்புச் சிவக்கும் உரோமங் கறுக்கும்
புரப்பட்டுப் போகான் புரிசடை யோனே

Purify Body by Breath Control: The breath within rises and wanders as it lists; control that and purify within; then shall your limbs glow red your hair turn dark and god within shall leave you never.

கூடம் எடுத்துக் குடிபுக்க மங்கையர்
ஓடுவர் மீளுவர் பன்னிரண் டங்குலம்
நீடுவர் எண்விரல் கண்டிப்பர் நால்விரல்
கூடிக் கொளிற்கோல அஞ்செழுத் தாமே

Inhale 12 Matras; Retain 4 Matras: The Prana breath that is damsel within body-house runs in and out constant; if twelve matras inhaled eight matras exhaled, 136 the four matras retained shall make you divine in Siva.

பன்னிரண் டானை பகல்இர வுள்ளது
பன்னிரண் டானையைப் பாகன் அறிகிலன்
பன்னிரண் டானையைப் பாகன் அறிந்தபின்
பன்னிரண் டானைக்குப் பகல்இர வில்லையே
டானைக்குப்

Learn to Control Breath and Master Death: The elephant that is twelve-matra breath is awake night and day; the mahout (Jiva) knows not elephant; when mahout learns to control elephant the elephant knows not night and day; (Thirumanthiram verses 564 - 577)

DEFINING PRANAYAMA:

तस्मिन् सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः ॥४९॥

[tasmin sati śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ | 49 |]

“Controlling the motion of the exhalation and the inhalation follows after this”

When the posture has been conquered, then this motion is to be broken and controlled, and thus we come to Pranayama; the controlling of the vital forces of the body. *Prana* is not breathe, though it is usually so translated. It is the sum-total of the cosmic energy. It is the energy that is in each body, and its most apparent manifestation is the motion of the lungs. This motion is caused by *Prana* drawing in the breath, and is what we seek to control in *Pranayama*. We begin by controlling the breath, as the easiest way of getting control of the *Prana*. (Patanjali Yoga Sutra –Chapter 2 – 49)

3.8 CONCEPT OF PRANAYAMA PRACTICES:

चले वाते चलं चित्तं निश्चले निश्चलं भवेत् ।

योगी स्थाणुत्वमाप्नोति ततो वायुं निरोधयेत् ॥२॥

[cale vāte calaṁ cittam niścale niścalaṁ bhavet |
yogī sthāṇutvamāpnoti tato vāyuraṁ nirodhayet | | 2 | |]

When prana moves, chitta (the mental force) moves. When prana is without movement, chitta is without movement. By this (steadiness of prana) the yogi attains steadiness and should thus restrain the vayu (air).

पवनो बध्यते येन मनस्तेनैव बध्यते ।

मनश्च बध्यते येन पवनस्तेन बध्यते ॥२१॥

[pavano badhyate yena manastenaiva badhyate |
manaśca badhyate yena pavanastena badhyate | | 21 | |]

Through restraining the prana, thought/counterthought is restrained and through restraint of thought/counterthought, prana (air) is restrained.

हेतुद्वयं तु चित्तस्य वासना च समीरणः ।

तयोर्विनष्ट एकस्मिन् तौ द्वावति विनश्यतः ॥२२॥

[hetudvayaṁ tu cittasya vāsanā ca samīraṇaḥ |
tayorvinaṣṭa ekasmin tau dvāvati vinaśyataḥ | | 22 | |]

Chitta has two causes, vasana and prana. When one of the two is destroyed or inactivated the other also will become immobile.

मनो यत्र विलीयेत पवनस्तत्र लीयते ।

पवनो लीयते यत्र मनस्तत्र विलीयते ॥ २३ ॥

mano yatra vilīyeta pavanastatra liyate |
pavano liyate yatra manastatra vilīyate | | 23 | |]

Where mind is stilled, then the prana is suspended there, and where prana is suspended, there the mind is still.

दुग्धाम्बुवत्संमिलितावुभौ तौ
तुल्य-क्रियौ मानस-मारुतौ हि ।

यतो मरुत्तत्र मनः-प्रवृत्ति

र्यतो मनस्तत्र मरुत्-प्रवृत्तिः ॥ २४ ॥

dugdhāmbuvatsammilitāvubhau tau
tulya-kriyau mānasa-mārutau hi ।
yato maruttatra manaḥ-pravṛttir
yato manastatra marut-pravṛttiḥ ।। 24।।

Mind and prana are mixed like milk and water. Both of them are equal in their activities. Where there is pranic movement or activity there is mind (consciousness). Where there is consciousness there is prana.

तत्रैकनाशादपरस्य नाश एकप्रवृत्तेरपरप्रवृत्तिः ।

अध्यस्तयोश्चेन्द्रियवर्गवृत्तिः प्रध्वस्तयोर्मोक्षपदस्य सिद्धिः ॥२५ ॥

[tatraikanāśādaparasya nāśa ekapavṛtteraparapavṛttiḥ ।
adhyastayoścendriyavargavṛttiḥ pradhvastayormokṣapadasya siddhiḥ ।। 25।।]
Therefore, if one is annihilated, the other is eradicated; if one is active, the other becomes active, and while they exist, all the senses are active. If they are controlled, the state of moksha or liberation is attained. (Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 4 Verse 21-25)

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ।

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ॥२९ ॥

[apāne juhvati prāṇam prāṇe'pānam tathāpare ।
prāṇāpānagatī ruddhvā prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ ।
apare niyatahārāḥ prāṇānprāṇeṣu juhvati ।। 29।।]

Still others, who are inclined to the process of breath restraint to remain in trance, practice by offering the movement of the outgoing breath into the incoming, and the incoming breath into the outgoing, and thus at last remain in trance, stopping all breathing. Others, curtailing the eating process, offer the outgoing breath into itself as a sacrifice. This system of yoga for

controlling the breathing process is called *prāṇāyāma*, and in the beginning it is practiced in the *haṅga-yoga* system through different sitting postures. All of these processes are recommended for controlling the senses and for advancement in spiritual realization. This practice involves controlling the airs within the body so as to reverse the directions of their passage. The *apāna* air goes downward, and the *prāṇa* air goes up. The *prāṇāyāma-yogé* practices breathing the opposite way until the currents are neutralized into *pūraka*. Equilibrium. Offering the exhaled breath into the inhaled breath is called *rechaka*. When both air currents are completely stopped, one is said to be in *kumbhaka-yoga*. By practice of *kumbhaka-yoga*. One can increase the duration of life for perfection in spiritual realization. The intelligent *yogé* is interested in attaining perfection in one life, without waiting for the next. For by practicing *kumbhaka-yoga*. The *yogés* increase the duration of life by many, many years. (Bhagavad Gita - chapter 4 – verse 29)

Swara etymologically means 'the sound of one's own breath'. *Yoga* means 'union'. Therefore, *swara yoga* enables the state of union to be reached by means of one's breath. Through the practice of *swara yoga*, one can realize the breath as being the medium of the cosmic life force. The breath has so much importance in human existence that the ancient rishis or seers evolved a complete science around it just from studying the simple process of respiration. (Swara Yoga)

According to the *swarashastras*, by analysis of the breath deeper understanding of the cosmos is unfolded and the wisdom revealed within the Vedas can be realized. Through knowledge of the *swara*, a *sadhaka* can become a perfected *yogi* (Swara Yoga).

“*Pranayama is a technique bringing under control all that is connected with Prana (Vital Force)*
(Vishnu Puranam-Vi, 40)

प्राणायामस्त्रिधा प्रोक्तो रेचपुरककुम्भकैः ।

सहितः केवलश्चेति कुम्भको द्विविधो मतः ॥७१॥

[*prāṇāyāmastridhā prokto recapurakakumbhakaiḥ |
sahitaḥ kevalaśceti kumbhako dvividho mataḥ | | 71 | |]*

Pranayama is said to be of three types: exhalation (*rechaka*), inhalation (*pooraka*), and retention (*kumbhaka*). *Kumbhaka* is again of two types: connected (*sahita*) and unconnected (*kevala*).

यावत्केवलसिद्धिः स्यात्सहितं तावदभ्यसेत् ।

रेचकं पूरकं मुक्त्वा सुखं यद्वायुधारणम् ॥७२ ॥

[yāvatkevalasiddhiḥ syātsahitaṁ tāvadabhyaset |

recakaṁ pūrakaṁ muktvā sukhaṁ yadvāyudhāraṇam | |72| |]

Until kevalakumbhaka is perfected, sahita kumbhaka has to be practiced. When (you are) freed of inhalation/exhalation then the breath/prana is retained easily.

प्राणयामोऽयमित्युक्तः स वै केवलकुंभकः ।

कुंभके केवले सिद्धे रेचपूरकवर्जिते ॥७३ ॥

[prāṇayāmo'yamityuktaḥ sa vai kevalakumbhakaḥ |

kumbhake kevale siddhe recapūrakavarjite | |73| |]

Perfection of isolated retention is freedom from inhalation and exhalation This pranayama spoken of is verily kevalakumbhaka.

(Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 2 Verses 71-73)

3.9. IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCES OF PRANAYAMA:

कुंभकप्राणरोधांते कुर्याच्चित्तं निराश्रयम् ।

एवमभ्यासयोगेन राजयोगपदं व्रजेत् ॥७७ ॥

[kumbhakapraṇarodhānte kuryāccittaṁ nirāśrayam |

evamabhyāsayogena rājayogapadaṁ vrajet | |77| |]

By stopping the prana through retention, the mind becomes free from all modifications. By thus practicing (this yoga), one achieves the stage of raja yoga (supreme union). (Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 2 77)

चले वाते चलं चित्तं निश्चले निश्चलं भवेत् ।

योगी स्थाणुत्वमाप्नोति ततो वायुं निरोधयेत् ॥२॥

[cale vāte calaṁ cittaṁ niścale niścalaṁ bhavet |

yogī sthāṇutvamāpnoti tato vāyuṁ nirodhayet | | 2 | |]

When prana moves, chitta (the mental force) moves. When prana is without movement, chitta is without movement. By this (steadiness of prana) the yogi attains steadiness and should thus restrain the vayu (air). (Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 2 -2)

विधिवत्कुंभकं कृत्वा रेचयेदिडयानिलम् ।

वातपित्तश्लेष्महरं शरीराग्निविवर्धनम् ॥६५॥

[vidhivatkuṁbhakaṁ kṛtvā recayedidāyānilam |

vātapittaśleṣmaharaṁ śarīrāgnivivardhanam | | 65 | |]

Having performed (pranayama and) retention systematically, exhale through the left nostril. Thereby imbalances of wind, bile and mucus are annihilated and the digestive fire increased. (Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 2 -65)

न तस्य दुर्लभं किञ्चित्त्रिषु लोकेषु विद्यते ।

शक्तः केवलकुंभेन यथेष्टं वायुधारणात् ॥७४॥

[na tasya durlabhaṁ kiñcitrīṣu lokeṣu vidyate |

śaktaḥ kevalakumbhena yatheṣṭaṁ vāyudhāraṇāt | | 74 | |]

Nothing in the three planes of existence is unobtainable by him who has mastery of kevala kumbhaka and can retain the breath as desired. (Hatha yoga pradipika Chapter 2 -74)

3.10 DIFFERENT PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUES:

3.10.1 Bhramari

वेगाद्धोषं पूरकं भृङ्ग-नादं

भृङ्गी-नादं रेचकं मन्द-मन्दम् ।

योगीन्द्राणमेवमभ्यास-योगाच्चित्ते जाता काचिदानन्द-लीला ॥ ६८ ॥

vegādghoṣaṁ pūrakam bhṛṅga-nādaṁ

bhṛṅgī-nādaṁ recakam manda-mandam ।

yogīndrāṇamevamabhyāsa-yogāccitte jātā kācidānanda-līlā ॥ 68 ॥

Breathe in quickly, making a reverberating sound like the male black bee, and exhale slowly while softly making the sound of the female black bee. By this yogic practice one becomes lord of the yogis and the mind is absorbed in bliss.

This is *bhramari*, ‘the humming bee’ pranayama, so called because the sound you make during respiration imitates that of a black bee. **Technique:** Sit in any comfortable meditative pose, relax the body and practice *kaya sthairyam*. Keep the eyes closed throughout the practice. Inhale slowly and deeply through the nose, listening to the sound of the breath. Close the ears with the index and middle fingers by pressing the middle outer part of the ear ligament into the ear hole.

Keep the ears closed and exhale, making a deep soft humming sound. Concentrate on the sound, keeping it low pitched. When exhalation is complete, lower the hands to the knees and breathe in slowly. Continue to practice in the same way, performing ten to twenty rounds. When finished, keep the eyes closed and listen for any subtle sounds. (Chapter 2 Verse 68 Hatha Yoga Pradipika)

3.10.2 Bhastrika

ऊर्वोरुपरि संस्थाप्य शुभे पादतले उभे ।

पद्मासनं भवेदेतत्सर्वपापप्रणाशनम् ॥५९ ॥

[ūrvorupari saṁsthāpya śubhe pādātale ubhe |
padmāsanam bhavedetatsarvapāpapaṇāśanam | |59| |]

Placing both soles of the feet on top of the thighs is padmasana which destroys all sins (bad karma).

सम्यक्पद्मासनं बद्ध्वा समग्रीवोदरः सुधीः ।

मुखं संयम्य यत्नेन प्राणं घ्रणेन रेचयेत् ॥६० ॥

[samyakpadmāsanam baddhvā samagrīvodaraḥ sudhīḥ |
mukhaṁ saṁyamya yatnena prāṇam ghraṇena recayet | |60| |]

Sitting properly in padmasana, keeping neck and abdomen in alignment, exhale prana through the nose.

यथा लगति हृत्कण्ठे कपालावधि स-स्वनम् ।

वेगेन पूरयेच्चापि हृत्पद्मावधि मारुतम् ॥ ६१ ॥

yathā lagati ḥṛt-kaṇṭhe kapālāvadhi sa-svanam |
vegena pūrayeccāpi ḥṛt-padmāvadhi mārutam | | 61 | |

And again, the air should be quickly inhaled up to the heart lotus. Accordingly, the resounding is felt from the heart and throat up to the cranium.

पुनर्विरेचयेत्तद्वत्पूरयेच्च पुनः पुनः ।

यथैव लोहकारेण भस्त्रा वेगेन चाल्यते ॥६२ ॥

[punarvirecayettadvatpūrayecca punaḥ punaḥ |
yathaiva lohakāreṇa bhastrā vegena cālyate | |62| |]

In that way it (the breath) is inhaled and exhaled repeatedly, with the same motion as a pair of bellows being pumped.

तथैव स्वशरीरस्थं चालयेत्पवनं धिया ।

यदा श्रमो भवेद्देहे तदा सुर्येण पूरयेत् ॥६३ ॥

[tathaiva svaśarīrasthaṁ cālayetpavanaṁ dhiyā |
yadā śramo bhaveddehe tadā suryeṇa pūrayet | |63| |]

Thus, in this way, one keeps the breath moving with mindfulness (awareness) and body steadiness. When the body is tired then inhale through the right nostril.

यथोदरं भवेत्पूर्णमनिलेन तथा लघु ।

धारयोसिकां मध्यातर्जनीभ्यां विना दृढम् ॥६४ ॥

[yathodaraṁ bhavetpūrṇamanilena tathā laghu |
dhārayosikāṁ madhyātarjanībhyāṁ vinā dṛḍham | |64| |]

Accordingly, when the abdomen becomes full of air, then quickly hold the nostrils (and breath) firmly, without using the index and middle fingers (i.e. using the thumb and ring finger as in nasikagra mudra).

विधिवत्कुंभकं कृत्वा रेचयेदिडयानिलम् ।

वातपित्तश्लेष्महरं शरीराग्निविवधिनम् ॥६५ ॥

[vidhivatkuṃbhakaṃ kṛtvā recayedīḍayānilam ।

vātapittaśleṣmaharam śarīrāgnivivadhinam । ।65 । ।]

Having performed (pranayama and) retention systematically, exhale through the left nostril. Thereby imbalances of wind, bile and mucus are annihilated and the digestive fire increased. Bhastrika is the name of the pranayama which imitates the action of the bhastra or 'bellows' and fans the internal fire, heating the physical and subtle bodies. Bhastrika pranayama is similar to vatakramakapalbhati, but in bhastrika, inhalation and exhalation are equal and are the result of systematic and equal lung movements. The breath has to be sucked in and pushed out with a little force. In kapalbhati, inhalation is the result of forced exhalation. Bhastrika should not be done so forcefully that the nostrils are sucked in with inhalation. The air creates a sound as it passes in and out of the nose, but it should not be a heavy sound. It should come from the nose and not the throat. Throughout the practice the body should remain steady. The shoulders and chest should not move at all, only the lungs, diaphragm and abdomen should move. The correct sitting position for bhastrika is padmasana, but if it cannot be practiced, ardhapadmasana or siddhasana/siddha yoni asana are good alternatives. In padmasana and siddhasana the body is firmly locked so that physical movement is restricted and the spine remains straight. Nervous impulses are then able to travel directly up through the central nervous system. Siddhasana also maintains the blood pressure.

Sit comfortably in your meditative posture with the hands on the knees and the eyes closed. Take a slow deep breath in. Breathe out quickly and forcefully through the nose, but do not strain, and immediately afterwards breathe in with the same force. When you breathe out the abdomen comes in and the diaphragm contracts. When you breathe in the diaphragm relaxes and the abdomen moves out. These movements should be slightly exaggerated. Continue to breathe in this manner counting ten breaths. At the end of ten breaths, take a deep breath in and out slowly. This is one round. Practice three to five rounds. As you become accustomed to this style of

breathing, gradually increase the speed but keep the breath rhythmical. Inhalation and exhalation must be equal. (*Chapter 2 Verses 59-65 Hatha Yoga Pradipika*)

3.10.3 *Kapalbhati*

भस्त्रावल्लोहकारस्य रेचपूरौ ससंभ्रमौ ।

कपालभातिर्विख्याता कफदोषविशोषणी ॥३५॥

[bhastrāvallohakārasya recapūrau sasambhramau |

kapālabhātirvīkhyātā kaphadoṣaviśoṣaṇī | | 35 | |]

Perform exhalation and inhalation rapidly like the bellows (of a blacksmith). This is called kapalbhati and it destroys all mucous disorders.

Kapalbhati technique which invigorates the entire brain and awakens the dormant centers which are responsible for subtle perception. In English it is called the ‘frontal brain cleansing’ technique. It is a similar practice to bhastrika pranayama except that exhalation is emphasized and inhalation is the result of forcing the air out. In normal breathing, inhalation is active and exhalation is passive. This practice reverses that process so that exhalation becomes active and inhalation passive. As described in the sloka, the breathing should be done like the pumping action of a pair of blacksmith’s bellows. When the bellows are closed, the air is pushed out and when they are opened the air is sucked in due to the vacuum effect that is created. Similarly, when you inhale in kapalbhati, it should be the reaction to the forced exhalation. In bhastrika, inhalation and exhalation are equal, but in kapalbhati it is not so. (Verse 35 Chapter 2 Hatha Yoga Pradipika)

3.10.4 Kumbhaka

पावनो बध्यते येन मनस्तेनैव बध्यते ।

मनश्च बध्यते येन पवनस्तेन बध्यते ॥२१॥

[pāvano badhyate yena manastenaiva badhyate ।

manaśca badhyate yena pavanastena badhyate । । 21 । ।]

Through restraining the prana, thought/counterthought is restrained and through restraint of thought/counterthought, prana (air) is restrained. (Chapter 4 Verse 21-25 Hatha Yoga Pradipika)

कुंभकप्राणरोधांते कुर्याच्चित्तं निरश्रयम् ।

एवमभ्यासयोगेन राजयोगपदं व्रजेत् ॥७७॥

[kumbhakapraṇarodhānte kuryācchittaṁ niraśrayam ।

evamabhyāsayogena rājayogapadaṁ vrajet । । 77 । ।]

By stopping the prana through retention, the mind becomes free from all modifications. By thus practicing (this yoga), one achieves the stage of raja yoga (supreme union). (Chapter 2 , Verse 77Hatha Yoga Pradipika

yāvadbaddho marud-deśe yāvachchittaṁ nirākulam ।

yāvaddṛṣṭīrbhruvormadhye tāvatkāla-bhayaṁ kutaḥ । । 40 । ।]

So, long as the breath is restrained in the body, so long as the mind is undisturbed, and so long as the gaze is fixed between the eyebrows, there is no fear from Death. (Chapter 2, Verse 40, Hatha Yoga Pradipika)

3.11. SUMMARY OF ANCIENT LITERATURE

Prana-the cosmic energy, is a life force behind everything that existed, existing and will exist. Pranayama is a technique to regulate the grosser prana. Our ancient text has prescribed various pranayama techniques to bridge the body and mind. Manipulating the breathing is the tool, to manipulate the mind. Thus, mind can be controlled by bringing the control over the breath.

Veda describes breath as a component of atman. Breath manifest from within, our breath pervades in each cells of the body. So regulating breathing helps to regulate each component of the body. Breath has 3 aspects: 1) inhalation, 2) exhalation and 3) retention. Retention of breath has 2 types: 1) Voluntary and 2) Spontaneous. Voluntary retention has 2 types: 1) internal and 2) external. So altering these aspects of breathing is the practice of pranayama.

Thirumandiram describes, by manipulating the breath and making the breath still, we can enjoy the nectar of life. Pathanjali yoga sutra describes that controlling the breath is the easiest way of getting control over the mind. Bhagavat gita emphasize that by practicing Kumbhaka, a person can attain perfection in spiritual realization. Vishnupurana describes pranayama as a technique to bring control over everything that is connected with prana. Hatha yoga pradipika emphasize that by practicing pranayama, one can achieve the state of raja yoga.

Our ancient sages have realized the significance of breathing and found a system to study exclusively about prana, breathing and its techniques called “Swara Yoga”. Many ancient text describes the benefits of various pranayama techniques. For example, practice of Bhramari leads to blissful state of mind, Bhastrika leads to state of mindfulness, Kapalbhata helps in cleansing the thought process, and Kumbhaka leads to keep the mind still and body light.

Controlling Mind through Breathing- Exploring the Traditional Text

