



The Essence of Asana

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essence /'esəns/

noun : the most significant element, quality, or aspect of a thing or person

According to the Taittiriya Upanishad (an ancient Indian text), there are five bodies or veils called koshas that cover our higher consciousness or essence. The koshas adhere to the principle of tensegrity – all layers are inter-related and when one changes, they all change.

The koshas are:

The Physical Body (Annamayakosha)

Breath/Energetic Body (Pranamayakosha)

Mental/Emotional Body (Manomayakosha)

Wisdom/Intuition Body (Vijnanamayakosha)

Bliss Body/Body of Joy (Anandamayakosha)

When we integrate the concept of the koshas into our yoga practice, we infuse a juiciness that can only be described as our essence. Using the following seven components, we're able to see through the veils that cover our true self and deepen our connection to our source.

Asana – Physical postures of yoga

Pranayama – Specific breathing techniques used to control life force

Kriya – Repetitive movements used to shift energy and create focus

Mudra – a hand or body “seal” used as a means to control the energy (prana) of the body

Affirmation - a positive statement made in the present tense to create change in thought process

Visualization – using mental imagery to create focus

Meditation – focusing the mind on something specific (i.e. mantra) to connect to our source

There are many common mudras practiced in yoga, including prayer hands (Anjali Mudra) and index finger connected to thumb (Gyan Mudra). In The Essence Of Asana, we will be creating our own full body mudra to use off the mat when we feel disconnected and need to remember our truth.

The Essence Of Asana: Class Elements

Asana

- Warrior 1 > humble warrior
- Mountain climbers

Pranayama

- Surya Bhedana (Right Nostril Breathing)
- Chandra Bhedana (Left Nostril Breathing)

Kriya

- Flowing Warrior
- Strong Warrior Breathing

Mudra

- Ganesha Mudra

Affirmations

- I am _____ <create your own>

Visualization

- Create a picture in your mind's eye of what your fullest expression of life is

Meditation

- Kirtan Kriya – the meditation for mental balance
Chant Sa Ta Na Ma with mudra, 1 minute out loud, 1 minutes as a whisper, 2 minutes quietly in the mind, 1 minute as a whisper, 1 minute out loud. End with one minute of stretching

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