

Normal Breathing (sitting)

THIS GIVES training in sitting as well as in normal breathing.♦♦♦

Sit in Sukhāsana (p. 53) on two folded blankets. Place the fingertips beside the hips and stretch the trunk up. Bend the elbows and rest the backs of the hands on the thighs. Relax the upper arms and elbows and take them slightly back. Relax the palms and fingers.

Raise the coccyx, sacrum, and lumbar. Draw the pubis and lower abdomen toward them. Extend the spine up. Stretch the sides of the body and raise the rib cage. Keep the sternum and the collarbones up. Bring the armpits and the chest forward, widen the shoulders and take them back. Pull down the back of the shoulders and the shoulder blades. Move the back ribs in and make the dorsal spine concave.

Keep the head straight, the eyes level, and the crown facing the ceiling. Lift the back of the skull. Keep the ears perpendicular. Close the eyes and draw the eye-balls into their sockets. Draw the gaze of the eyes back and down into the chest.

Sit for a few moments, observing every movement of the body. Counteract the downward trend of the spine and lower back.

Without collapsing the chest, extend the back of

the neck toward the skull and lower the head. Do not constrict the throat.

Watch the normal course of the breath. Make it regular. Observe the various movements of the breath in the rib cage. Gradually the upright position of the body will be supported by the breath.

Stay for five to ten minutes. Then relax in Śavāsana.

When practicing: sit against the wall, with a blanket folded behind the waist and rib cage.

Sit in Padmāsana (p. 59), Vīrāsana (p. 50) or Baddha Koṅāsana (p. 57).

To learn to relax the hands, keep them face down on the knees.

If the knees are strained, support them on a blanket.

Refinement of the Technique

- Do not inflate the abdomen, but keep it drawn in and up from below. Keep the anus lightly closed to maintain a lift of the coccyx.
- With every inhalation let the chest rise and the crown of the head go down. Do not collapse the chest while exhaling.

