

The Sound of Silence

Looking for a quieter mind? Try slipping into stillness with **Brahmari**, an advanced pranayama that simulates the drone of a bumblebee.

According to the yoga tradition, if one concentrate on the drone produced in his nasal cavity during Brahmari, random thoughts fade away, the nervous system is soothed, and the mind becomes tranquil and calm. It's a great way to unwind after a long day, or to make the transition into a deeper meditation.

Learning the Practice:

- Sit in a comfortable seated position, close your eyes, and take a deep diaphragmatic breath through the nostrils.
- Start by humming at the pitch of your normal speaking voice.
- Then press the rear of the tongue toward the roof of the mouth.
- If the tongue presses too firmly against the soft palate, the air passage in your throat will be completely blocked; no air will escape and no sound will be produced. Notice how a *slight* lift of the tongue shifts the sound from your throat to the nasal chamber.
- The beelike drone of brahmari should be felt as a vibration in the nasal chamber.

In this beginning stage of practice, the drone is made only during the exhalation. Allow your tongue and throat to relax as you inhale normally. As you progress, try to make the drone steady on each exhalation.

Further Guidelines

- Practice brahmari on an empty stomach for two to three minutes daily, gradually building up to five minutes, as long as you find the practice pleasant and comfortable.
- If you experience any symptoms of mild hyperventilation, such as dizziness or tingling (especially in the lips or fingertips) or a general feeling of agitation, then switch to simple diaphragmatic breathing and stop practicing for the day.