

Short Yoga Nidra Practice

Use the scientific methods of Yoga Nidra practice to achieve complete mental, emotional, and physical relaxation. Yoga Nidra means, “the sleep of the yogis.” Yoga Nidra takes you to a place between sleep and wake where the conscious and the unconscious minds merge. During this psychological rest and rejuvenation, the body can repair muscular, emotional, and mental tensions.

Developing the ability to relax the mind and calm the body helps you control your energy levels and channel your focus. Individuals need to have an awareness of when their body has had enough or when it needs rest. Yoga Nidra develops this awareness. The key to being resilient is rest. The body needs to run on rest, just as it runs on fuel.

In the practice of Yoga Nidra, the awareness is rotated between different areas of the body. Follow this simple script for a short Yoga Nidra power nap.

Lie down on your back. You can make yourself as comfortable as possible with blankets and pillows.

Take a few slow, deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling through the nose. Keep your mind alert and tuned in to your breath—this anchors you in the present moment.

Starting with the right pinky toe, move your awareness through each toe one at a time, to the top of the foot, sole of the foot.

Bring your awareness to the inner ankle, outer ankle, lower shin, upper shin, calf, back of the knee, kneecap, quadricep, lower hamstring, upper hamstring, right glut, perineum, left glut—then down the left leg spending time on each area.

Bring your awareness to the lower abdomen, upper abdomen, diaphragm, left side of the chest, middle of the chest, right side of the chest.

Bring your awareness into the right shoulder, right bicep, right tricep, right elbow, forearm, wrist, palm, back of the hand, each finger one at a time, and the thumb. Repeat on the left arm.

Bring your focus to the throat, back of the neck, jaw, chin, lips, tongue, cheeks, nose, eyes, eyelids, eyebrows, forehead, scalp, crown of the head.

Relax every part, letting go of all tension, feeling your body melt into the ground.

Imagine your body is as light as a fluffy white cloud floating in the sky. Then, visualize your body as heavy as a boulder grounded in the earth.

Try to spend at least twenty minutes practicing Yoga Nidra on a regular basis. With time, you can build up to longer practices. It can be challenging to stay awake and alert, but the benefits are worth it! Research has found changes in the brain’s alpha waves with even a short Yoga Nidra practice. Alpha waves are the brain waves of being in the here and now. They help with mental coordination, calmness, alertness and integrating learning between the mind and the body. Enjoy a yogic power nap today!