

5 BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING A YOGA NIDRA PRACTICE



Yoga nidra, or yogic sleep as it is commonly known, is an immensely powerful meditation technique, and one of the easiest yoga practices to develop and maintain. While the practitioner rests comfortably in savasana (corpse pose), this systematic

meditation takes you through the pancha maya kosha (five layers of self), leaving you with a sense of wholeness. No longer do you have to dread spending hours sitting on the floor waiting for liberation.

For those who are curious - Here is a bit of reading which outlines the five benefits of developing a yoga nidra practice.

1. Anyone Can Do Yoga Nidra

Yoga nidra, is a practice that everyone, from children to seniors, can do. It's easy to follow at any age. All that your body needs to do is lie down on the floor. And even if you can't lie down on the floor, you can still do this practice seated.

2. You Cannot Practice Yoga Nidra Incorrectly

As you lie down, supported in savasana, all you have to do is follow the voice that is guiding you. It's likely that you will remember certain parts of the meditation and not others. Every time you come to the practice you encounter a new experience—none of which is wrong. Falling asleep is okay too, as you will still receive benefits while the unconscious mind is absorbing the practice.

3. Yoga Nidra Is Easy to Incorporate into Your Daily Life

Seated meditation can be frustrating—trying to clear the mind, bring awareness back to the breath, or find inspiration for focusing. Yoga nidra is always guided, so there is no intense thinking or wondering why you are staring at a blank wall. A yoga nidra practice can be as short as five minutes

and as long as an hour. You choose the length. You may find that the easiest way to accommodate a yoga nidra practice is to make it part of your daily bedtime routine. Put the headphones on, practice right in your bed, and then drift off to sleep. Although this is not the most conventional way to practice yoga nidra, you have no excuse not to do it if you're going to be lying down anyway.

4. It's a Simple Way to Reduce Stress

Yoga nidra promotes deep rest and relaxation that isn't found in your average meditation practice. The stages of body scan and breath awareness alone can be practiced to calm the nervous system, leading to less stress and better health.

5. Yoga Nidra Offers the Opportunity to Learn About Yourself Intimately

Some people crave the profound relaxation that this practice instills, while other practitioners use the non-judgmental and secure atmosphere that yoga nidra provides as a window into themselves. Yoga nidra offers a space to explore what you need in the moment, as well as an opportunity to work on releasing long-held emotions. During yoga nidra you are able to experience an emotion and come "face to face" with what you want to overcome, without "diving into it" completely—meaning without feeling the emotion so completely that you become overwhelmed. Over time you continue to experience the emotion and associated feelings, moving deeper into the practice.

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Yoga nidra can serve as a pathway to freedom without creating bodily stress. A samskara (mental groove) is formed by a repetitive thought or habit that is deepened in the mind and body, creating a mental impression (groove) over time. These impressions can cause negative reactions and emotions which prevent a unification of the five layers (koshas) of one's self. If these negative emotions continue to plague you, the mental/emotional layer of the self is

unable to integrate with the other layers: physical, energetic, higher wisdom, and bliss body. This is where yoga nidra can be especially helpful.

A samskara can be used as an intention within the yoga nidra practice. You might come into the practice knowing what you would like to work on. The intention, often prompted by the teacher, is then set at the beginning of the practice. When a samskara then arises during the practice, you may touch upon the feelings that arise, and then allow yourself to experience these feelings more and more. By working with this method (and feeling secure throughout the journey), with each subsequent practice you move deeper into a samskara, are better able to understand your reaction, and then ultimately can allow the samskara to release into the ocean of consciousness. At that point, it is no longer a deep impression. You are liberated from that samskara!

Now you know! Yoga nidra is an accessible meditation practice that focuses on cultivating multiple levels of well-being. Practiced with consistency and awareness, you may likely discover that you can find a good amount of peace in a short period of time.

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Thanks to Yoga International