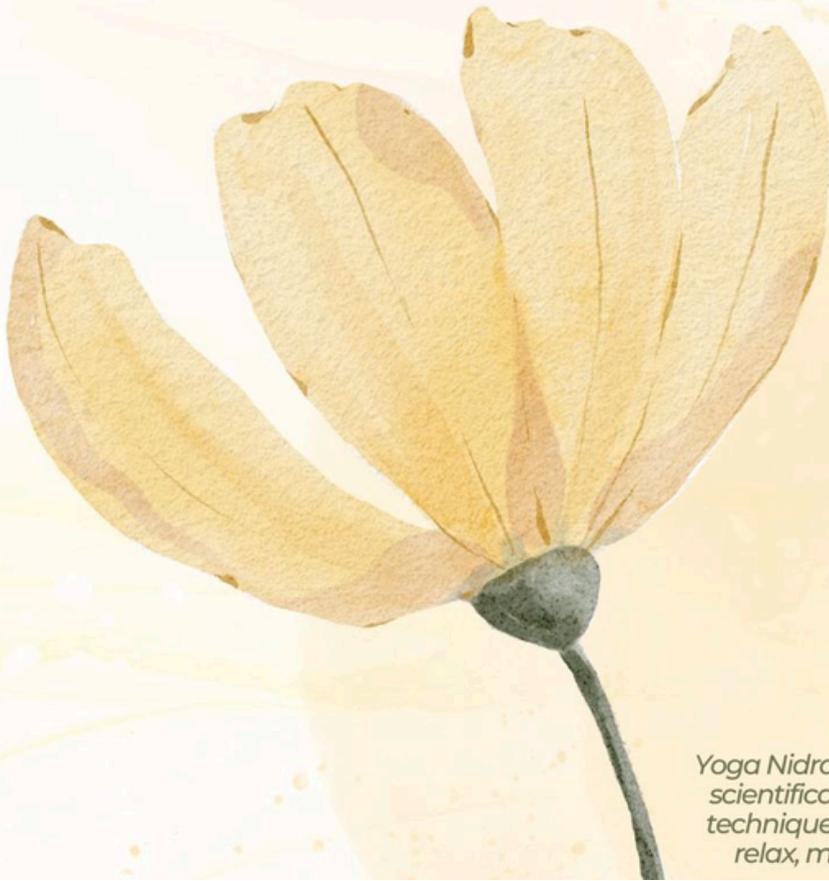


**Krishna Prakash**

# **Yoga Nidra**

**a starter's handbook**



*Yoga Nidra is one of the most scientifically studied ancient techniques that helps you to relax, manifest and realise*

Dedicated to  
Master *Sri*

Due to Her infinite Grace, She, the Divine Mother,  
appears in the form that we can relate to, and ensures  
the knowledge is shared. To that form which we at  
Shrimath relate to,  
Master *Sri*

कृपासागरमज्ञानमूर्ति सदाऽनन्दमयमातृस्वरूपं ।  
सद्गुरुश्रीसैलश्रीपूणानन्द प्रियनन्दनम् ॐ श्रीं प्रणमाम्यहम् ॥

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विश्रान्तिः ॥ प्रकाशनम् ॥ बोधः  
Relax. Manifest. Realise



Special thanks to Lalita Lidia, Babu, Vijayalakshmi Babu, Bhavana Rajesh, Shanti Arunkumar, Michael Lowman, Ushana Chetty, Rashmi Rajesh, Chitra Narayanan, Jana Fuglistaler & Rajashree Anand for undertaking a deeper exploration of *Yoga Nidra* & also for their invaluable suggestions in shaping this booklet.

## 1. What is Yoga Nidra?

*Nidra* means sleep and *Yoga Nidra* is its antonym. The former is an unconscious act and the latter is a conscious practice.

Yoga Nidra is a practice as old as time, says Indian living traditions. More on this would be elaborated in the upcoming book on *Yoga Nidra*.

To begin with we can understand that the practice of *Yoga Nidra* allows one to rest, relax, rejuvenate, manage stress, understand oneself and also helps to realize chosen desires.

At the same time, a seeker never limits the purpose of *Yoga Nidra* to manifestation of desires but takes it as a first step towards the goal of *Yoga* i.e. *Samadhi*.

This booklet aims to give an elaborate introduction as well as provide you access to resources to understand and practice *Yoga Nidra*.

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Relaxation does not mean sleep. Relaxation means to be blissfully happy; it has no end. I call bliss absolute relaxation; sleep is a different matter. Sleep gives only mind and sense relaxation. In tantra, *Yoga Nidra* is the doorway to *Samādhi*.

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

## 2. Why we NEED Yoga Nidra?

*Namaste!* A few questions to ponder upon ...

1. Thanks to technology, we live in a more connected World but are we connected truly to our core (self), family, culture, traditions and relationships?
2. Uncertainty had better acceptance in most of the ancient cultures as they understood change is an integral part of life. Are we mentally prepared to / for change?
3. The colonization of the various parts of the World through conquests, trade, inducement & coercion of organized religions, followed by rapid industrialization deprived us from 'being humane' and also deluded us to believe that we can conquer, exploit and subjugate people and nature, at will. But is this sustainable?

If your response is NO to even one of the above questions then you could try the time-tested *Yoga Nidra* process as scores of people practice it because it helps to:

- (1) connect with our core,
- (2) embrace change and
- (3) graduate to sustainable living.



**Marja van Riemsdijk**  
The Netherlands

*If you are looking for an authentic, small scale, non-commercial, quality ashram: Shrimath Yoga will be your choice. We (married couple) attended a Yoga Nidra Course at Shrimath Yoga this February (2018). Here you find yoga brought in practice in daily life. Absolutely advisable!*

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### 3. Are there studies being done to understand sleep (Nidra) & psychic sleep (Yoga Nidra)?

The John Hopkins University continues to pursue research & discoveries on Sleep and its effect on our psychophysical energy system. Neuroscientist & Sleep expert Mark Wu states that **circadian rhythm & sleep drive** are the two main processes that regulate sleep.

The World Sleep Foundation is preparing professionals through internships now so that the future gets Sleep Professionals across the Globe.

Whereas the outside-in approach is essential to drive home the necessity of *Nidra* (sleep) in day to day life for effective functioning of vital organs of the body and the functioning of mind while we are awake, the living traditions of India recommend the inside-out approach to learn and experience the benefits of holistic health through the science of *Yoga Nidra*. Shrimath Yoga is in the forefront of implementing this recommendation.

#### 4. How Yoga Nidra works?

The following is in by no means designed to give the comprehensive list of **scientific studies** that are going on in the field of Sleep, Meditation, consciousness etc. but to highlight the incident that probably could be the turning point in **neuroscience** and to validate how one's life can be altered by conscious & consistent practice of a time-tested process like *Yoga Nidra*.

#### **The first Scientific Study on *Yoga Nidra***

Elmer and Alyce Green of the Menninger Foundation in the US brought out the efficacy of *Yoga* practices using the well-equipped laboratory designed to investigate voluntary control of psychophysiological processes. *Swami Rama* met them in 1971 and after listening to their work, He decided Menninger Foundation is the right place to realize his Master *Bengali Baba's* ambition to document scientifically the abilities manifested by a masterful practice of *Yoga*.

One of these involved a demonstration of a *Yogic* practice called *Yoga-Nidrā*, conscious entry into deep, non-REM, delta wave sleep. He was connected to an electroencephalogram and *Swāmī Rāma* then entered into a delta wave state where he was creating delta waves almost exclusively.

During the period of the experiment, two technicians were quietly talking in the next room. When he resumed ordinary waking awareness after the experiment, *Swāmī Rāma* recounted that conversation verbatim. This illustrated the criterion he articulated that in addition to being focused on his inward state, he also remained aware of his external environment. There is no current explanation in neuroscience for his ability to do this.

*Swāmī Rāma's* close disciple *Swāmī Veda Bhāratī* set out to replicate his master's experiments at the Institute

for Noetic Sciences in California in 2006 under the experimental leadership of Dean Radin Ph.D. During these trials, in addition to duplicating Swami Rama's experiment, Radin accidentally discovered that *Swāmī Veda* remained almost perpetually in a state of *Yoga-Nidrā*, his brain producing theta and delta waves even with his eyes open, talking and moving around.

The examples of *Swāmī Rāma* and *Swāmī Veda* indicate that collaboration with accomplished Yoga practitioners offers an opportunity to further extend the frontiers of neuroscience. And the relationship between *Yoga-nidrā* and the deepest states of meditation (*samādhi*) provides one measurable way to investigate them.

**Reference:** [Menninger Foundation – an overview | ScienceDirect Topics](#)

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## 5. How is Yoga Nidra actually practiced?

Sound is the subtlest of the sensory inputs among the other inputs such as touch, taste and smell. Thus, *Yoga Nidra* teachers use verbal instruction as the method to lead the students into the practice as well as the depths of experience that *Yoga Nidra* offers.

From the instructions that help to relax the body, the practice then leads the students to the various energy centers of the body and by using breath as a tool these energy centers are worked upon to get deeper access into ourselves, more particularly the physiological aspects, our tendencies and more.

Finally, visually shown instructions invoke various emotions, thoughts etc. and help us to understand and sort out many issues that are hidden in the deeper recesses of our being.

The key to the success of *Yoga Nidra* practice is the timely introduction of a *Sankalpa*, meaning a resolve at two strategic places during the flow of the practice. A resolve is a desire that is your deeper need, something that you wish to see coming true in this life. In tradition, thus, *Yoga Nidra* is not taught as a simple weekend module but as an elaborate life changing process. This is done by introducing various concepts from the *Veda*, *Tantra* and *Yoga* traditions that help practitioners to understand, refine, finetune and finalize the set of resolves which can be used in the practice of *Yoga Nidra*.

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## 6. What are the benefits of Yoga Nidra?

Apart from the immediate benefits of relaxation, stress relief and desire manifestation through resolve(s), Yoga Nidra prepares us to enter the higher limbs of Yoga such as Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (transcendence).

Yoga Nidra trains us to use judgement at appropriate times in life rather than everyday goggles, which might make us blind. It helps us to develop trust, confidence, clarity of mind, emotional stability, perseverance and, above all, *Yoga Nidra* saves us from falling into the gallows of complexes, be it inferior or superior.

*Yoga Nidra* promotes self-healing and is highly therapeutic. This is evident from the feedback of seasoned *Yoga Nidra* practitioners from across the globe.

## 7. What Yoga Nidra is not!

Yoga Nidra is not hypnotism, mesmerism, counselling or psychological intervention as understood in a contemporary context because the person undergoing Yoga Nidra is completely under control of their body and mind.

Even the 'resolve' is personal and is decided by the one who chooses to practise Yoga Nidra. The instructor / teacher provides only the knowledge and principles from the ancient traditions of Veda, Tantra and Yoga to help the student with framing a personal resolve.

Thus, Yoga Nidra can be considered as a confidential process that helps in self-transformation.

## 8. Can I have access to resources on Yoga Nidra?

Yes. Do visit [www.traditionalyoganidra.com/resources](http://www.traditionalyoganidra.com/resources)

## 9. About studying at Shrimath Yoga

*The following is a brief review of what I learned in the Yoga Nidra training at Shrimath Yoga. The setting was so appropriate for training in deep relaxation. My most important insight was that we can only lead people to states that we have experienced ourselves. Simply reading the script for a session is not enough. One must have the awareness that comes from deep and honest experience.*

*I cannot imagine a better setting for this learning. Surrounded by forest full of birds and a field where sheep and cows quietly grazed, I was able to sink in to the peace and stillness in a way that I have never felt in my hectic American lifestyle. Lulled by songs of birds and the gentle sounds of an Indian village, I relaxed into the simple schedule of an ashram lifestyle and found an inner landscape I had rarely known.*

**Harriett Nettles (HumanRights Specialist, USA)**

You can find out more on Shrimath Yoga through





A Cultural Heritage Organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the ancient yet ever relevant Indic Knowledge Systems and its applications in daily life.

[Foundation for Indic Wisdom](#) is a formal name & initiative to efforts that are being done in this field of since 2011.

The primary objective is to facilitate the move from mere living to enlightened living.



[Shrimath Yoga](#) is the only YOGA SCHOOL listed in international travel portal TripAdvisor to be consistently ranked in the top #3 since 2013. Since 2015 we started to receive CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE.

In 2019, Shrimath Yoga entered the HALL OF FAME in TripAdvisor for securing CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE for 5 consecutive years since 2015.

In 2020 we were awarded the TRAVELLER'S CHOICE that's offered only to the top 10% hospitality properties of the World.

Do feel free to write directly to our students reviewers and get to know about their experience on studying at Shrimath Yoga.

Jai Ma!

# Yoga Nidra

## a starter's handbook

### About the Author



### Krishna Prakash

**Founder, Shrimath Yoga & Foundation for Indic Wisdom**  
ICF (ACC) | E-RYT 500 | MSc (Yoga) | Yoga Adhyapak (BSY)

**Traditional Teacher of Indic Wisdom**  
(in Coaching, Leadership & Living)

**Krishna Prakash** is a student of Master Sri (an alumnus of IIT Chennai 1975 - 80) who has dedicated his life to the transmission of Indic Wisdom as per the direction of Sri Swami Poornananda Natha (Sri Sailam).

Through Master Sri, Krishna is directly connected to the traditions of Bhagawan Nityananda of Ganeshpuri & Sri Ramakrishna Mutt. Through family, Krishna is also connected with Sringeri Mutt, Kanchi Mutt, Bihar School of Yoga & a few other Siddha traditions.

He has a PG in Business Management (with a special emphasis on Indian Sastras) from Sri Sringeri Sharada Institute of Management, under the Chairmanship of Dr MB Athreya PhD.

Early in his career, he was involved in 2 IT startups, served as a Management Faculty, and subsequently started Spatikam (a life skills training company) & FirstResource. Net (Placements & IT Projects). Since 2003 he was with Shreyas Retreat and left as Vice President (Content Research & Marketing).

In 2011, along with his wife Smrithi he started Shrimath (India), a traditional gurukul model Yoga School. His Corporate clients and students are spread across 45 Countries.

Shrimath Yoga has bagged all possible awards from international travel portal TripAdvisor like Travellers Choice 2020, Hall of Fame 2019 and since 2014 continues to bag the Certificate of Excellence. It is a matter of pride that Shrimath is the only Yoga School in the World to achieve these recognitions.

In 2013, Shrimath was the first Yoga School in the World to be approved by Yoga Alliance International to offer teacher training in Yoga Nidra.

In 2019, Krishna was inducted as a "Life Time Member" at Government of India supported Indian Yoga Association (IYA) conceived by BKS Iyengar, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Sri Jaggi Vasudev, Swami Ramdev, Hansaji, Sri Ishwar Basavaraddi and other living Yogis.

Krishna has been a Keynote Speaker at all platforms managed by Indian Yoga Association on Yoga Nidra & Antar Mouna for many years now. In 2023, He was invited to present on Yoga Nidra at the first International Conference organised by Indian Yoga Association at Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar.

Krishna started Foundation for Indic Wisdom in 2023, a not-for-profit to promote, educate and certify programs / workshops that are rooted in Indic Wisdom.