

Persist with Purpose : The Path to True Happiness Through Pranayama and Habit Formation

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Abstract : True happiness can only be found in the serene of the mind and the discipline of the soul, not in transient pleasures or material gains. The article examines how pranayama (yogic breathing) and the development of mindful habits can result in ananda—lasting bliss—by bridging the gap between traditional knowledge from the Bhagavad Gita and contemporary science. We look at how mindful breathing and modest, deliberate activities can ground us in the present, rewire our neurophysiology, and foster tranquillity.

Keywords: Breathe, Tiny Habits, Happiness, Ananda, Bliss.

Introduction - “As the waters of different rivers enter the ocean, which though full on all sides remains undisturbed, likewise he, in whom all desires merge, attains peace; not the one who is full of desires.”

In a world that constantly pulls us outward, the quest for lasting happiness leads us inward. True happiness is not a product of possessions, achievements, or external approval—it is the calm that arises from a peaceful mind, untouched by circumstances.

The *Bhagavad Gita* offers timeless wisdom on this journey. It teaches that real joy is **sattvik** in nature—born from self-discipline and inner clarity. Though it may feel difficult at first, like poison, it ultimately becomes sweet as nectar. In contrast, **rajasik** happiness, derived from sensory pleasure, fades quickly, and **tamasik** happiness, based on laziness or ignorance, leaves the soul stagnant.

To attain pure happiness, one must take **full responsibility** for their experiences. This shift from blame to ownership empowers healing. Through **meditation**, we access the healing energy within and gradually free the mind from emotional clutter, bringing focus, resilience, and peace.

Pranayama, Meditation, and Mindfulness: Tools for Inner Growth

Life begins and is sustained by breath, yet in the confusion of modern life, we frequently ignore its full power. Pranayama, originating from Sanskrit (“prana” meaning life energy and “ayama” meaning control or expansion), is an ancient yogic technique centered on the purposeful management of breath. According to Patanjali’s Yoga

Sutras, Pranayama is the fourth limb of yoga, emphasizing its importance in bodily vigor, mental clarity, and spiritual awakening.

Pranayama is more than just breathing in and out; it is a purposeful act that balances the mind and body. Nadi Shodhana (alternate nostril breathing) and Bhastrika (bellows breath) are two practices that have been demonstrated to significantly reduce stress and improve cognitive functioning (Kuppusamy, 2017). Furthermore, research shows that pranayama practices assist control the HPA axis, resulting in decreased cortisol levels and higher emotional resilience (Sengupta, 2012 Jul;3(7)).

Meditation complements Pranayama by cleansing the mind of clutter, overthinking, and stress, just as bathing does for the body. Meditation may appear monotonous at first, but with consistent practice, it transforms into a peaceful refuge. Meditation encourages individuals to rest in themselves, shifting from being the “seen” to becoming the “seer.” It gradually increases self-awareness and promotes emotional balance.

Mindfulness connects Pranayama and Meditation. It is the practice of remaining focused on the current moment without judgment. In mindfulness practice, unwavering concentration brings the mind to a condition of calm and clarity. However, cultivating deep awareness in the face of today’s distractions is difficult. Mantra chanting is one supportive way. A mantra—a sacred phrase or sound—acts as a mental anchor. Repeating a mantra diverts attention away from stress and bad emotions, resulting in improved

mental stability and inner serenity. Over time, the mantra gets embedded in the subconscious, offering a steady source of power and peace, even when not explicitly repeated. Regular mantra recitation improves respiration, relaxes the nervous system, and builds resilience.

Pranayama, meditation, and awareness constitute a trio for internal growth. Pranayama energizes and calms the body, meditation purifies and stabilizes the mind, and mindfulness cultivates persistent awareness. These techniques not only alleviate stress, but also improve emotional management, cognitive performance, and spiritual development. They lead people to a life of balance, compassion, and clarity. In a world that continuously demands our attention outside, these ancient techniques gradually turn our focus within, helping us grow in strength, calmness, and self-understanding.

The Transformative Power of Tiny Routines: Cultivating Enduring Joy: In the never-ending pursuit of happiness, people frequently underestimate the huge influence of little, consistent behaviours. Just like the daily habit of showering cleanses the body, looking to one's inner well-being through intentional rituals can build long-term joy (Kennon M. Sheldon, 2007). The key to long-lasting happiness is not in spectacular gestures or brief moments of excitement, but in the accumulation of these modest, pleasant habits woven into the fabric of daily existence. Happiness is a result of tiny, regular actions rather than a big event. Small practices, such as journaling about gratitude or practicing mindfulness in the morning, can rewire the brain to feel happy and valuable (Fogg). These small changes gradually clear mental clutter and strengthen a good identity.

Daily activities like gratitude, mindfulness, or compassion have been shown to dramatically improve long-term well-being (Keltner). Developing thankfulness has been demonstrated to lower anxiety and depression while increasing happiness and life satisfaction. Gratitude has been shown to strengthen the immune system, lower blood pressure, improve sleep quality, and increase sentiments of joy, optimism, and other positive emotions. These advantages imply that integrating thankfulness exercises into regular activities can greatly enhance general wellbeing. Every tiny deed fills the reservoir of Ananda like a drop of water.

The Interaction between Behaviour and Breath: As pranayama develops into a habit, it transforms into more than merely breath. It has been demonstrated that practicing Bhastrika pranayama for four weeks greatly lowers anxiety and enhances emotional processing. When we look inward—through prāṇāyāma, the profound respect and recognition of our actual Self—the tension between our thoughts and our actions starts to fade. Understanding the mind means seeing its waves, and understanding the Self means identifying the ocean from which those waves originate.

“The wave is the mind. The ocean is the self.

We return to this awareness through breath. Habit is the foundation of consistency. Breath is the foundation of awareness. These two—breath and habit—create a route to inner serenity when they work together harmoniously.

Pranayama is sacred remembrance, not just breathwork. A reminder that there is a quiet, unmoving depth that remains unexplored beyond every agitated idea and every passing feeling. That's who you are. Living from such location means living in harmony.

Spirituality and Silence: The Inner Compass

One of the greatest teachers we have is silence.

When there is silence, we start to listen—really listen—rather than merely hearing the lack of sound. Not only to our thoughts, but also to the calm voice of our own souls and the wisdom of the universe. Forcing the mind to be empty is not the goal of inner silence. It's about making space—space where we may softly revert to ourselves, where the world's cacophony subsides, and where worries no longer hold us.

Sitting in solitude can cause your mind to race with ideas, some of which are welcome and many of which are not. Allow them to arrive. Avoid arguing with them. Avoid following them. Simply watch. Because you are the consciousness that underlies your thoughts, not your thoughts themselves.

Equanimity, a balanced condition where life's highs and lows no longer disturb you, is found in this knowledge. Being equanimous is approaching each situation with a level head—not apathy, but a strong sense of purpose. Allowing emotions to flow through you without resistance or clinging is more important than trying to avoid them. True silence occurs when your heart is joyful and your intellect is calm. You are most alive and connected at that moment, not just to yourself but to something much bigger. Being at peace means having a calmness inside, regardless of what the outside world throws at you. It does not mean being immune to it. It is in the silence that we find ourselves. Truth slowly comes to light in the calm of the heart and the quiet of the mind. Silence is presence, not emptiness. It is the hallowed place where healing starts—not by running away from life, but by fully and mindfully returning to it.

Spirituality is our anchor in the world, not a way out of it. We do not go away in silence; rather, we return to ourselves. We start to declutter our emotions, regain our inner equilibrium, and discover our value through meditation and inner quiet. True healing is achievable when we move from blaming to taking responsibility. Understanding comes from reflection, then it develops into acceptance, and finally it blossoms into transformation. In order to cultivate this quiet, spirituality is essential. It cultivates virtues like patience, humility, and soul-consciousness by teaching us to conform to the spiritual principles of nature. We start to perceive ourselves as aware souls with a mission rather than just as bodies or thoughts.

Our inner foundation is strengthened by spiritual

practices like meditation and mindful thought, which enable us to behave with compassion and clarity, observe without reacting, and develop patience in the face of uncertainty. Every moment becomes sacred, every breath becomes a prayer, and every deed reflects inner calm when we live soul-consciously.

Practical Practice Paths: Unlocking Your Personal Path to Happiness: The tiniest steps, followed regularly, with love and intention, are the first steps toward true transformation. These daily routines are offerings—to your potential, your purpose, and your serenity—rather than duties.

1. **Breathe first:** Spend two to five minutes each morning practicing Nadi Shodhana, or alternate nostril breathing. Allow it to soothe your body and establish a balanced attitude for the day.
2. **Stack with intention:** To naturally establish the habit in your life, tie your breathwork to an existing routine, such as brushing your teeth. You can incorporate quiet into your regular routine in this way.
3. **Express gratitude:** By writing down one thing for which you are grateful every night. It offers clarity, soothes the heart, and draws in additional things for which to be thankful.
4. **Be present in the mundane:** Feel the water while you wash your hands. Pay attention to the sounds around you while you stroll. Take note of the flavor and texture as you consume. These are gates to presence, not ordinary moments.
5. **Offer inwardly:** Every atomic habit is a flower offered to your own soul, just as a flower offered at the altar is a gesture of love to the Divine. When you consistently and carefully take care of your well-being, you are honoring the sanctity within.

You can unlock the doors to happiness by taking these modest yet serious steps. They influence not only your day but also your future. Keep coming back, keep giving, and keep believing that you are the treasure you are looking for.

Conclusion: “You experience joy and a river flowing through you when you act from your soul.”-Rumi

Persistence is the quiet power that gets us through times of uncertainty, distraction, and adversity on the path to inner transformation. Persistence becomes more than just endurance when combined with a contemplative mind that is composed, alert, and grounded; it becomes a deliberate decision to change. Meditation teaches the mind to repeatedly return to clarity and silence while also observing without passing judgment. By doing this, we develop resilience, patience, and understanding while progressively releasing reactive tendencies. Growth is frequently the silent realization of our greater potential, fostered by consistent work and quiet introspection. It is not always loud or instantaneous. We become in tune with the beat of our soul's journey when we continue to be present. We become more centred, more aware, and more connected—to ourselves, to others, and to the more profound realities of life—one breath at a time.

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