



Magnetize the Spine Maha Mudra

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Spring is the dynamo of seasons—a time of new beginnings. It's as if the Earth wakes up and the sprouting of nature begins; energy moves up; things come into full bloom, alive in a rainbow of colors. One of my favorite parts of spring is being outdoors, bathing in warm sunshine, and listening to the symphony of joyous bird songs. Spring invites us to open back up, delight in warmer days and cultivate a spirit of aliveness.

Yoga can bring a similar experience of being fully alive. Just as spring calls us to shift from the dormancy of the winter months to an awakening of rebirth, so yoga invites us to awaken dormant energy at the base of the spine to move upward toward the higher spiritual centers. As prana flows upward, the spine is magnetized, which prepares us to enter more easily into superconscious meditation.

The spine and the brain are the altars of God. That's where the electricity of God flows down into the nervous system into the world. And the searchlights of your senses are turned outwards. But when you reverse the searchlights ... and be concentrated in the spine, you will behold the Maker.

— Paramahansa Yogananda

PRACTICE

The practice of *maha mudra* opens the central spinal pathway, sushumna, and magnetizes energy inward and upward toward the brain to facilitate greater concentration and awareness.

Benefits

- Aligns the spinal vertebrae
- Massages internal organs
- Increase flexibility in the back and spine
- Energizes the spine and brain
- Purifies the nervous system
- Quiets the mind and emotions

Maha Mudra (*The Great Seal*)

1. Sit on the heel of your left foot. With both hands, pull your bent right knee toward your chest.
2. Inhale and exhale. Contract your anal sphincter (*mula bandha*), and pull your lower abdomen in and upward (*uddiyana bandha*). Inhale with *ujjayi* breath, or breathing through the spine, pulling the life force up to the brain and the spiritual eye. Hold it there.
3. Drop your chin toward your chest (*jalandhara bandha*). Extend your right leg along the floor, bend forward, grasping your right foot with both hands and pull, and extend your trunk forward with your forehead towards the knee. If you are not limber enough, bend the outstretched leg or grasp the lower leg. The main thing is to get the feeling of stretching the spine.
4. Relax the chin lock, drawing the right knee back in toward the chest, while slowly exhaling.
5. Reverse the leg positions and repeat on the opposite side.
6. Extend both legs and repeat.
7. Assume your usual meditation posture, begin your practice with your regular pranayama routine, and enter into superconscious meditation. 🙏

Acharya Sundari Jensen serves as a Senior Kriya Teacher at the Center for Spiritual Enlightenment.

Note: Always use your best judgment about which practices are useful for your unique situation. Consult with your physician if needed. Study with a hatha yoga instructor for more detailed practices.