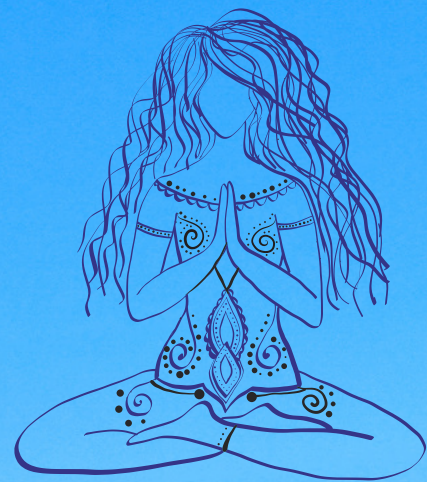


# The Magic of Mudras



Three Mudras to Enhance Your Practice



# MUDRA

Mudra is a Sanskrit word that means a “seal”, or a ‘gesture’ or a “mark”.

Mudras are described as gestures, attitudes or symbols expressed through the hands, the body, and/or face.

In the yoga tradition, there are whole body mudras however, most often in the physical practice of yoga, there's a focus on Hasta Mudras -- or gestures of the hands.

Hand gestures/mudras are sacred and are often used during yoga and meditation practice as a means of channeling the flow of vital life force energy known as prana.

Each area of the hand has a reflex reaction in a specific part of the brain. Mudra locks and guides energy flow and reflexes to the brain, and coupled with Bhandas, mudras redirect the energy flow, linking the individual pranic energy with universal force.

There are specific methods of touching and aligning the fingers and hands with each other to help bring and maintain the balance of the five elements. These are referred to as ‘Hast-Mudras’ -- which are easy and generally very accessible and do-able as a means of therapy and can be practiced at anytime.



\*Bhanda – Bandha means to lock, close-off, to stop. In the practice of a Bandha, the energy flow to a particular area of the body is blocked.

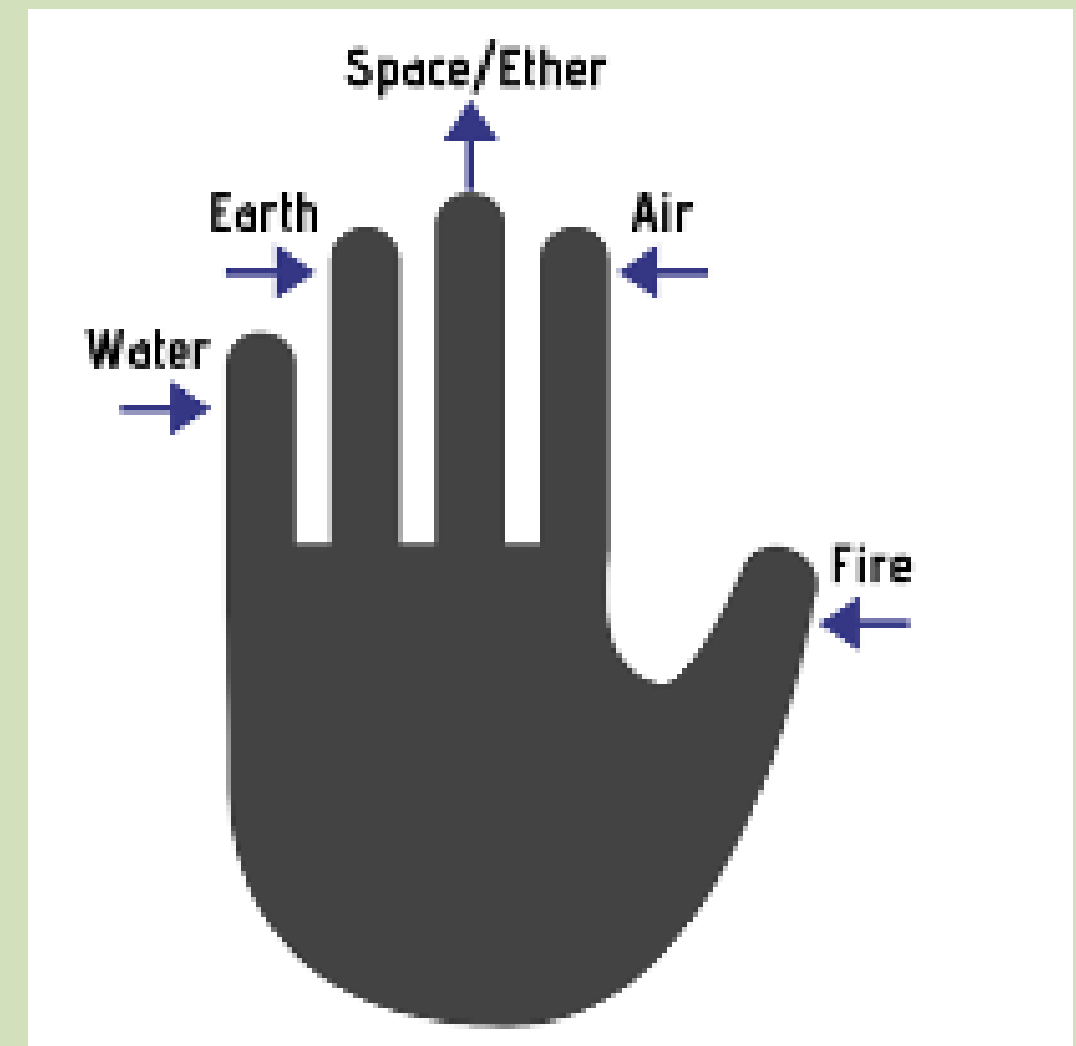
# Yoga-Mojo Magic of Mudras



According to ancient Vedic wisdom, your health is literally in your hands. The four fingers and the thumb represent the five major building blocks or the 'Panchamahabhootas' (Five Great Elements) of which the entire universe is made . Sky (Ether), Air, Fire, Water and Earth.

## Finger Reference Points

- The thumb represents the power of agni (fire)
- The index finger represents the power of vayu (air)
- The middle finger represents the power of akasha (space)
- The ring finger represents the power of prithvi (earth)
- The little finger represents the power of ap (water)



# ANJALI MUDRA

## Anjali Mudra Close Up



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## Benefits

- Bring a calming, centering energy.
- Create clarity
- Increase concentration
- Create harmony, balance
- Bring silence
- Harmonize coordination of left and right brain hemispheres.
- Express reverence, praise or gratitude
- Support meditation
- Facilitates connection to the heart and central channel – sushumna nadi.

## Anjali Mudra / Self Seal

Aka Atmanjali Mudra (Reverence to the Self Seal). It is also referred to as Namaskar or Namaskara Mudra.

In yoga classes, you'll often hear, "Take your hands to Namaste" which is a placing of prayer hands to the heart center.

Anjali Mudra is a gesture of respect or reverence, greeting, prayer or gratitude and a mudra for calming the mind, harmonizing opposing energies and supporting meditation. It is the most common mudra that can be found in many cultures.

## Basic Instructions

Place both hands together in front of chest / heart chakra with the fingertips gently touching.

Another option is to take the hands behind the heart, outer edge of little fingers against back. This form is often called "Reverse Namaskar."

You might press heels and fingers of hands together firmly and evenly, leaving a small space between palms (e.g. "cup" the hands slightly).

This small space between the palms might be considered a place to hold the seed of your intention or prayer.

Hands may be held slightly away from the chest or sometimes, you may be instructed to place the thumbs lightly against the chest -- at heart center.

## Meaning / Location of Anjali Mudra

- Place hands above head for deities.
- Place hands in front of face for elders and teachers.
- Hold hands in front of chest for general respect.



# Jnana Mudra



## Benefits

- Cultivates a balance of relaxation and alertness
- Gently activates Udana vayu, the uppermost current of energy
- Cultivates mental clarity and equanimity
- Creates 'space' between thoughts
- Opens and balances the sixth chakra, center of wisdom



## Jnana Mudra - Consciousness Seal

### Gesture of Higher Knowledge for Awakening Clear Seeing

Known as the gesture of consciousness, jnana mudra is one of the most widely used mudras during meditation. Jnana is a Sanskrit word meaning "wisdom" or knowledge".

Jnana mudra supports clear seeing -- allowing one's authentic being to come forward -- allowing ones thoughts and feelings to be witnessed objectively. This mudra directs prana and our awareness to the 'third eye', our center of spiritual clarity and one-pointed concentration.

The thumb is believed to symbolize Brahman, or universal consciousness, whereas the index finger symbolizes jivatma or the individual self. The little, ring and middle fingers represent the three gunas (qualities of nature: rajas, activity; tamas, inertia; and sattva, purity. The three fingers are released downward to return the gunas to a state of balance, helping one to meditate.

## Basic Instructions

To practice this mudra, touch the tip of the index finger and thumb together forming a full circle. The remaining three fingers are extended. The back of the hands can rest on the thighs or knees, with palms facing upward. Jnana mudra is often and most commonly used in a grounded seated position such as sukhasana (easy seated pose) however it can be used at any time. A variation of this gesture the index fingers are tucked under the tip of the thumb, forming a circle.

Relax the shoulders back and down.

# Padma Mudra



## Benefits

- Brings a calm and grounded sensation to the mind & body
- Helps to release tension
- Reminds you of your natural, inner beauty
- Helps to cultivate love and affection -- and to ease loneliness

## PADMA MUDRA / Lotus Mudra A mudra to honor your inner light

The Lotus seal represents the purity and perseverance of the lotus flower whose roots remain embedded in the muddy bottom of water and whose journey is moving upward to the Sun. It is a symbol of the light and beauty that emerges from the dark -- as it floats above the muddy waters of desire, fear and attachments.

The Lotus Mudra opens the heart chakra and is a symbol of purity.

The Lotus Mudra helps one to stay connected to their roots and to be strong yet vulnerable. To open yourself to the light from an open heart.

Padma mudra is a visual representation of the sacred space of the heart. It is also a gesture of expansion from that space, an opening or a blossoming of one's self.

The Lotus Mudra opens our heart chakra to receive love, grace, compassion and abundance.



## Basic Instructions

Bring the base of the palms together at the heart center in Anjali Mudra. Then, keeping the thumbs and pinky fingers lightly touching, spread the rest of the fingers out like the lotus flower opening toward the light of the sun.