

KUNDALINI RISING**BY SHAZIA OMAR**

is a yogini. Her classes are available at studio 107. shaziaomar@gmail.com



Surya Namaskar, or sun salutation, is a series of yogic postures meant to help you make sure everything in your body is healthy and flowing in the morning. It is also an act of offering gratitude for waking up to enjoy another beautiful sunrise. Nothing could exist without the sun. The sun sustains life, nurtures it, melts ignorance and illuminates. While performing this exercise, one can feel the radiant quality of the sun within oneself, the vitality, the energy, the pure joy of being alive. Here also we see the seed of the idea of complete surrender to the divine.



Sonic salutations to the sun

Surya Namaskar has many benefits. Here are a few: weight loss, better blood circulation, strengthening of muscles and joints, improved flexibility and toning, improved digestion and respiration, improved sleep, reduced depression and anxiety, regularised menstrual cycle, reduced blood sugar level, detoxification of the body and calming of the mind.

I recently came across the magical experience of sonic healing. Sound therapy has been around for thousands of years. The icaros sung by Shamans in Central America were known as medicinal melodies. Hindus, Buddhists, and Sufis use sound as a portal to the divine because sound helps to facilitate shifts in our brainwaves. Recent science has found that water molecules, when examined under a powerful microscope change their vibration pattern, depending on the energy frequency (light and music) in the surroundings.

Our bodies are made mostly of water and so similarly our inner vibrations are affected by the environment. The British Medical Council endorses the use of sound as therapy to help people heal. Not only does applying chanting to the 'yogic asana'

sequence have healing effects, but also, it feels good!

HRAH HREEM HROOM HRAIM HRAUM HRAHA.

HRAH HREEM HROOM HRAIM HRAUM HRAHA....

This chant is called 'surya namaskar's bija mantras.' It consists of six syllables repeated twice per sun salutation. These six syllables are the 'bij' (seed) or 'sonic distillation' of the twelve names of 'Surya', the Sun.

'Bija' are sonic seeds that when chanted are planted in the body-mind plane, where if nurtured, they may grow into higher consciousness. They are sonic representations of particular energetic states, subtle forms or deities. By planting the 'bija' mantras within ourselves, we align ourselves with the vibration of the idea or energy each represents. Sacred seeds have been known and used since Vedic times. Shiva Rea's Embodying the Flow translates Surya's names in the chant as follows:

Om Mitrayanamah – HRAH - Friend of All
Om Ravayenamah – HREEM - Shining One
Om Suryayanamah – HROOM - Source of Creation

Om Bhanavenamah – HRAIM – Illuminator

Om Khagayanamah – HRAH - Moves through Sky

Om Pooshnenamah – HRAHA - Giver of Strength and Nourishment

Om Hiranyagarbhayanamah – HRAH - Golden Womb

Om Mareechayanamah – HREEM - Rays of Sun

Om Adityayanamah – HROOM - Infinite Cosmic Mother

Om Savitrenamah – HRAIM - Rising Sun

Om Arkhayanamah – HRAUM - Source of Life Energy

Om Bhaskarayanamah – HRAHA - One who leads to Enlightenment

This chant can be performed along with the physical postures of the sun salutation. If you do not know the physical postures, you might see how it feels to just to chant it, or listen to it online. If any of the names of the sun resonates with you, meditate on that meaning in your mind, putting special emphasis as you create this energy's sonic form.

Each mantra consists of 'h', 'r', vowel and ends in 'm'. The vowels are 'aa', 'ee', 'uu', 'ai', 'ou' and 'visarga or hah'. The chanting of AUM mantra activates stomach, heart, brain

and the overall body/mind, creating vibrations in the associated chakras.

Digestion, respiratory and sensory activities go through the powerful lens of AUM turning intellect and memory into sharp and powerful tools. The root alphabets of the Bija Mantra or Bija akshara are:

H – The heart is the source of its pronunciation. It empowers the heart to perform all its functions in a better manner.

R – The centre of the forehead is the source of its pronunciation. The palate and the brain are gently buffeted by the vibration. The result is good taste and better intellect.

Swar (vowels) – various organs are impacted by the sound vibrations, making these organs strong and sensitive.

aa as in 'hraam': vibrations stimulate brain, heart and respiratory organs.

ee as in 'hream': vibrations work on palate, vocal cord and nasal area.

uu as in 'hruum': vibrations work on stomach, small intestine, and pancreas.

ai as in 'hram': vibrations work on kidney and urinary passage.

ou as in 'hroum': vibrations work on excretory system.

Visarga (hah) as in 'hrahah' – vibrations work on the chest and the vocal cord.

The mantras chanted while performing the 'namaskar' generate minute vibrations in the body which help correct the functioning of all systems in the body – glandular, sensory, respiratory, circulatory, digestive, nervous, etc. Balanced state of emotions, concentration and profound mental powers also result.

Ancient 'rishis', through meditation, insight, study and research, understood how the various organs of the body can be kept in optimal and strong functioning levels. Their knowledge and understanding of the externals and the internals are amazing. Modern science is only gradually scratching the surface of the vast knowledge hidden in the Vedas. Now you can start small, enjoy as you go and derive the full pleasure and benefits of chanting while performing 'namaskars'.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Shazia Omar

Shazia Omar is a writer, activist and yogi. Visit her website www.shaziaomar.com.

To view the companion video, keep your eyes on "Star Live" – the official YouTube channel of The Daily Star.

