

# Ep #133: Nadi Shodana: 2 Practices for a Calm Clear Mind



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Susi Hately**

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**Male Announcer:** You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

Welcome and welcome back. With this episode I want to teach you two versions on Nadi Shodhana and I'm going to be building upon episode 116 where I first introduced. Nadi Shodhana is alternate nostril breathing and we know scientifically that it helps to reduce anxiety, it helps to reduce stress, it helps to improve your breathing obviously. But it can be so quiet and calming.

And when I first started teaching the practice many, many moons ago a lot of my clients used it to help them drift off to sleep. Particularly ones who found that their heads were sort of ping-ponging all over the place with thoughts.

When they could utilize something like alternate nostril breathing or Nadi Shodhana they were able to focus their mind as well as quiet and lengthen their breath, which is really helpful for down regulation. And then they found themselves drifting off to sleep. So these practices might support you in that endeavor as well.

So how this episode will go is I'll walk you through the first one and then we'll take a pause and then I'll walk you through the second one. As a reminder I'm not really picky about how you place your fingers. When I'm teaching these practices I simply want someone to be able to practice them and then as they get comfortable with it then we can get into more mudras.

The key piece though that I do instruct is if you can feel where the bridge of your nose is and where the indent is before the nostril flares, that's where you can place the tip of your fingers. Now, traditionally speaking the mudra, or one of the mudras anyway, is you use your right pinky finger and your right thumb.

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The right pinky finger goes to the left nostril and the right thumb goes to the right. And then you can either curl the middle three fingers in or place the three fingers us closer to the mid-brow level. To me it depends of comfort. If the hand position doesn't work or the right hand is not working you can place two index fingers, one on either side, really whatever works for you.

And I realize those with a long standing yoga breathing practice might go, "Ah!" That's okay, I simply just want people to get the practice in, okay? So you can play with it if you want. To get a little bit more on the background on Nadi Shodhana then do go to episode 116, and in the meantime lets practice this set of two exercises.

All right, so what we're going to begin with is starting breathing through the left nostril. And the reason I'm choosing the left nostril is because it's tends to be more cooling, considered more cooling. It tends to be where people focus on settling more easily. So we're going to start with the left nostril, to play there. And by all means you can do the mirror of this if you would like and you can explore the distinction between starting with the left versus starting with the right.

With both practices we're going to start with doing an inhale and an exhale, and then a full inhale, and then exhaling totally out of the left nostril. Okay, so let me walk through that again, you're going to inhale fully, exhale fully, both your both nostrils, inhale fully through both, and then exhale through the left. We're going to stay with the left nostril about three repetitions and then we're going to move over to the right and do the same thing through the right, all right?

So let me guide you through this. Bear in mind your breathing rhythm might be different than mine, particularly as I'm talking people through this I might speak faster or slower than your breathing. So what I recommend is you just get the rhythm of it and then you can pause me and then go on your own rate, okay?

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So setting yourself up, getting yourself ready you're going to inhale fully through both nostrils. And then exhale fully through both nostrils. And one more, inhale fully. And then when you get to the top of that inhale, block the right nostril and then start to exhale through the left.

Then inhale through the left. And exhale through the left. Then inhale through the left. Exhale through the left. One more inhale, inhale through the left. And then block the left, exhale through the right.

Inhale right. Exhale right. Inhale right. Exhale right. Inhale right. And then block the right, exhale through the left. Inhale left. Exhale left. Inhale left. Exhale left. Inhale left. Exhale left. Inhale left. Exhale right. Inhale right. Exhale right. Inhale right. Exhale right. Inhale right. Exhale left.

All right, now you go on your own rate, inhaling and exhaling left. Do two or three or four inhales and exhales.

And then when you're ready one inhale on your left, and then exhale right. Inhale right. Super easy. Just do as many inhales and exhales on this right side. When you finish that last inhale on the right then breathe out through both nostrils. So now just breath without your nasals being blocked, just inhale and exhale through both nostrils and feel what it is that you feel.

Okay, so now the next pattern we're going to follow is, again, exhaling through the left but this time we're going to exhale through the left then inhale through the right. Exhale through the left, inhale through the right. Exhale through the left, inhale through the right. And then exhale through the right, inhale through the left, exhale through the right.

So we'll see how that rolls, I'll walk you through it where we'll do the cycle of exhaling through the left, inhaling through the right. And then after a few of those we'll switch to exhaling through the right and inhaling through the left, all right?

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So when you're ready we're going to do inhale and exhale through both nostrils and then inhale through both nostrils and then exhale, okay? So here we go.

Inhale through both. Exhale through both. Inhale through both. And then get ready, close the right, exhale through the left. Close the left, inhale right. Close right and exhale left. Close left, inhale right. Close right, exhale left. Close left, inhale right.

Maintain nostril, exhale right. Close right, inhale left. Close left, exhale right. Close right, inhale left. Close left, exhale right. Close right, inhale left. Exhale left. Inhale right. Exhale left. Inhale right. Exhale left. Inhale right. Exhale right. Inhale left. Exhale right. Inhale left. Exhale right. Inhale left, and exhale both.

And now notice what it is that you feel. Notice what you're feeling in terms of how your breath feels in your nose, maybe between your eyes or your eyebrows, maybe in your head or around your skull or down into your neck. Maybe something is different in your ribs or your abdomen, maybe your pelvis or your pelvic floor perhaps, down to your feet.

The key is to simply notice what is now present having done the experience. And if one or the other of these techniques worked with you, then just practice it and see how it continues to evolve for you.

Now, normally speaking when I'm teaching my clients I don't tend to suggest doing these practices when there is a congested nose, congested sinuses, or just like a whole lot of mucus and, you know, dare I say snot. And as you continue with the practice sometimes that can clear it but it's not something I would recommend to beginners, particularly over an audio podcast where I can't see you.

So just play with it when you've got a clear nose. Experiment and experience it based off of what you're feeling and see where the practice takes you. See if it contributes to an inner quiet for yourself.

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Now, if this has resonated with you and you are someone who is a health professional or a yoga teacher and you want to dig into more breathing that is just really easy to apply and teach, you want to dig into therapeutic aspects of yoga, you would really like our yoga therapy certification program that's IAYT accredited.

I recommend that you give us a shout at [health@functionalsynergy.com](mailto:health@functionalsynergy.com) because we take these concepts and we go deep, both in your own experience as well as the experiences that you are guiding and facilitating and teaching your student base. All right, we'll see you next time. Have a great time exploring.

If this episode has resonated and you're looking to deepen this idea of getting your body back on board, of listening deeply to your symptoms, of listening to the whispers so you don't have to hear the screams and you're looking for one to one support or professional training, then reach out to us at [health@functionalsynergy.com](mailto:health@functionalsynergy.com) where we can customize your learning path. That's [health@functionalsynergy.com](mailto:health@functionalsynergy.com). Looking forward to hearing from you.