

Samavritti -The Square Breath - Ratio 1:1:1:1

Precautions

- If pregnant do not retain breath in or out
- If unable or uncomfortable to retain breath in or out, just pause, then continue until you feel happier to try for a longer period.
- Do not strain - reduce your count.

Samavritti (Square) is a ratio breath using 1:1:1:1. It is an even ratio breath - so if you count in for 4, you hold for 4, breathe out for 4 and hold the out breath for 4. This practice is not about how long you can breathe for - it is about developing a balanced breath and bringing calm to the whole body.

Each breath has a name:

- The inhalation is known as Puraka
- The exhalation is known as Rechaka
- The held in breath is known as Antaka Kumbhaka.
- The held out breath is known as Bahir Kumbhaka.

This Pranayama is excellent as a preparation for meditation. The rhythm of the count, the mental concentration, and breath retention all help to bring calmness into the body - physical as well as mental. It can be practiced safely for as long as you want so long as you are comfortable. All phases of this practice must be practiced with equal importance -it is not just about how long you can retain the breath for - concentration and rhythm are equally as important.

Developing a Rhythm

It is important to develop a rhythm with which you are comfortable. Remember that there is **no strain** whilst doing this practice. To develop a rhythm please use a metronome or clock with second hand or mentally count OMS as I do. For example, if I am doing 4:4:4:4 I would inhale to '1' Om - '2' OM - '3' OM - '4' OM etc. as if each count were a second in length. You need to practice and practice in order to extend the length of the breath. It takes time!

How to Practice

Sit in a comfortable position.

Check spine is long, head balanced, mouth and face muscles softened.

Develop your rhythm for the day. Imagine a square around the front of the body if it helps. Inhale to your count, retain it inside for the same count, exhale for the same count and hold it out for the same count. That is one round.

Continue...remember there is no strain. Do ten rounds to start with and develop over weeks. You may find the ratio number may also change.