

**The Science of Upanishads – Part 43: Foundations of Modern Yoga Practice**  
**(Contd.): Continuation of Descriptions of Individual Asanas (Physical Poses) as**  
**Part of The Third Anga (Limb) of The Ashtanga Yoga (Eight Limbed Yoga) of The**  
**Yoga Sutras of Patanjali**  
**(January 10-January 16,2018)**

The last week's Mandir Bulletin listed **Twelve Major Asanas** suggested in the original Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, including (1) Padmasana (lotus), (2) Veerasana (heroic), (3) Bhadrasana (decent), (4) Svastikasana (auspicious like the mystical sign), (5) Dandasana (staff), (6) Sopasrayasana (supported), (7) Paryankasana (bedstead), (8) Krauncha-nishadasana (seated heron), (9) Hastanishadasana (seated elephant), (10) Ushtranishadasana (seated camel), (11) Samasansthanasana (evenly balanced) and (12) Sthirasukhasana (any motionless posture that is in accordance with one's pleasure). We also discussed last week the first two Asanas, namely, **(1) Padmasana and (2) Veerasana**, including a brief outline of each Asana, what it entails and what health benefits would it offer. In this bulletin, we will discuss two additional Asanas in sequence of the 12 Asanas listed above: **(3) Bhadrasana (decent), and (4) Svastikasana (like the mystical sign).**

**(3) Bhadrasana** or decent/gracious pose The name is derived from the Sanskrit word "Bhadra" (भद्र), which means "Auspicious" or "Throne" and "Asana" (आसन) means "Pose" or "Posture." In the final position of Bhadrasana the body looks very gracious or decent and hence it is called the Decent or Gracious Pose. The procedure for performing Bhadrasana includes (a) sit on the floor with legs stretched out, (b) fold both the legs and bring them close to each other. The soles of the feet must touch each other, (c) use the hands to hold the toes of the feet. Pull the legs towards the perineum. The legs should rest on the ground, touching the floor. This will require a good amount of flexibility in the beginning, (d) keep the spine straight and relax the trunk especially the shoulders. Maintain this final pose for as long as comfortable.



The benefits of Bhadrasana include:

- It strengthens the thighs, hips and buttocks.
- It is good for developing flexibility of the legs
- It is an excellent posture for meditation. The posture directs the pranic energy upwards. It also calms the brain and reduces mental activity.
- It is mainly practiced for its spiritual benefits as it is one of the four main asanas mentioned in classical texts for practice of dhyana.

- It suitable for prolonged periods of sitting.
- **(4) Svastikasana** or the auspicious pose. The name is derived from the Sanskrit words *svastik* (स्वस्तिक; svastik) meaning "auspicious" and *asana* (आसन) meaning "posture" or "seat". The steps involved in performing Svastikasana are: (a) First sit comfortably on the ground or floor and spread out your legs in front of you. (b) Fold your left leg; keep the sole of your left leg against the inner thigh of your right leg. (c) Now bend your right leg and keep your right foot in the space between left thigh and calf muscles. (d) Catch your left foot by the toes and try to pull it up and place it between the right calf and thigh. (e) Your knees have to firmly touch the floor. (f) Maintain the pose so that you feel relax. (g) Your body and trunk should erect. (h) Place your hands on your knees in any mudra. (i) Control on your breath. Breathing slowly and normally. (j) You may also focus on the tip of your nose or center of eye brow it's depending on the type of meditation technique, and (k) In the beginning try to sit for 10 to 15 minutes in this meditative pose, day by day increase the time of sitting.



The benefits include:

- It is the best Asana for those people who cannot sit comfortably or find difficulties in classical poses like Padmasana and Siddhasana.
- Those people who are suffering from varicose veins and pain in the leg muscles can perform this Asana.
- Daily practice of this meditative pose increases the concentration level.
- Gives calmness to the mind.
- Suitable for everybody in any age group.

More to follow. Stay tuned.....

**Read Here for More on [Bhadrasana](#) and [Svastikasana](#) as Part of Asanas as the Third of the Eight Principal steps of Ashtanga Yoga Described in Yoga Sutras of Patanjali**