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# JOURNAL

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## Stay Centred and Energised During Vata Season



Surya Namaskar at the sala at Sammati

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Looking at my notes to share for this month journal I realised that it is better to share what is helping me in these months with my daily routine.

It is Vata season, late fall and winter are known as “Vata season” because they are marked by some of the same qualities that characterise Vata: cold, dry, light, clear, and moving. All body types are vulnerable to Vata derangement during autumn and winter, but those who are predominantly Vata types need to be particularly vigilant about staying in balance.

As long as these qualities are in balance, a person whose dosha is predominantly Vata will be healthy, creative, and exuberant. But when too much Vata accumulates in the body and mind, the imbalance may manifest as physical or emotional disorders, including insomnia, dry skin, arthritis, constipation, high blood pressure, anxiety, and depression.

What I need in this season is a simple, warming practise that helps me to keep focused. Of course I adjust it every time a little bit to stay focus on and of the mat.

In Yoga, we use our breath to increase our vital energy and life-force. We direct and strengthen the flow of this energy, prana, through the practice of conscious breathing, pranayama.

By learning to move the prana through our bodies, we learn to relax when we are in a state of stress, to address challenging situations in life with greater ease, and to support our bodies and minds to process and integrate our daily experiences. This could translate to better digestion, more energy, stronger bodies, peaceful minds.

This foundational pranayama practice is a perfect one to begin with and return to time and time again. Sama Vritti means same or equal fluctuations in Sanskrit. In practice, it is a steady inhalation and exhalation of equal duration. This even breathing pattern is both soothing for the mind and body. When you find yourself anxious, overwhelmed, or simply disconnected from your body/ mind, this breath teaches you steadiness and supports a gentle shift into your parasympathetic nervous system. It grounds and stabilises an overactive Vata, so the mind and body can relax again. Sama Vritti is also the breathing pattern used in asana practice, so by learning this breath in a seated practice you'll increase your ability to flow through movement with deeper connection to steady breathing.

### **Sama Vritti Pranayama practise:**

- 1 Find a comfortable seated position that elevates the hips above the knees. You can sit on a blanket, pillow or in a chair to support the diaphragm to be open for easier breathing. You may also do this practice lying down for greater ease.
- 2 As you settle in, begin to notice your natural inhale and exhale. Notice the length, the sensations in the body and how the breath is flowing. Notice the transition between the inhale and exhale. If there is tension in your breathing, see how you can flow the breath to be quiet, gentle and smooth between the transitions.
- 3 Then, start to count the inhale. Breathe in slowly for four steady counts. Gently turn to exhale, breathing out for four steady counts. Continue this for several rounds.
- 4 If this counting feels too short, slowly start to increase the count working your way up to a steady count of 10 (ie. breathe in for 6, out for 6, breath in 8, out 8, breath in 10, out 10). Only go to a count that you maintain comfort and ease in the body and mind.
- 5 Do 10 rounds of this breath at a gentle pace, continuing to relax the effort and remaining present. If you lose count, simply begin again.
- 6 As you finish your practice, let the breath return to normal. Notice the peaceful changes in your body and the mind with the rhythmic, balanced breathing.

## Surya Namaskar (sun salutation)

Surya in Sanskrit means sun, and Namaskar is a salutation, greeting or offering. The yoga sequence, Surya Namaskar, is a the most ubiquitous set of postures shared in yoga class as it's a powerful way to sync breath, movement and mind in a steady, flowing sequence. It heats the body, bringing the warming solar energy through the breath and movement of the body through the postures. Your body becomes a prayer to the source that feeds all life on earth.



Sunrise at Sammati

As a daily practice, starting each morning with 5 rounds of focused Surya Namaskar is a simple way not only to move energy in the body and ignite fire in the belly to increase digestion, but a way to connect with the element of fire and offer gratitude to the solar energy in our lives.

Do the Surya Namaskar which you know from your yoga class or book a spot in one of the Bespoke Introduction to Yoga Clinics or come along to one of the weekly classes here held at Sammati ([sammatiwellnessfinca.com](http://sammatiwellnessfinca.com)).

Just keep in mind as you weave these or a Vata-balancing practices into your life, that Vata thrives on regularity and routine. This includes getting up and going to bed at about the same time every morning and evening; eating meals on a predictable schedule rather than “grazing” or skipping meals or eating on the run; and planning time each day for exercise, rest, and relaxation. As you create a daily balancing routine that nourishes your mind, body, and spirit, you will find yourself feeling more energised and centred.