

Swami Rama: On Agni Sara

BY Swami Jnaneshvara Bharati

Agni Sara is one of the practices that Swami Rama taught for many years as being extremely important. He often spoke of it and tried to teach it in the ancient way, as he had learned it directly from the masters. However, he also often told large meetings of his students that they were doing it wrong often confusing Agni Sara with a stomach lift as he repeatedly attempted to explain the practice what he sometimes called the "real" Agni Sara.

I personally had the experience of working in the art department on a brochure on Agni Sara. I was just doing the computer graphics layout, and was not one of the decision makers about what went into the brochure. Literally the same week that we were working on this brochure, Swami Rama spoke in the main lecture hall about the wrong and right agni sara. My mention of this to the bosses made no difference. We produced the agni sara brochure in exactly the way he was saying was the wrong agni sara. The teaching he was giving was ignored. The same situation exists today, over 25 years later. Here is one of the places where he explains "the real agnisara," in the book "Path of Fire and Light, Volume II," published in 1988:

You should know, understand, and do agnisara. It is a very unique and useful exercise that has the benefits of all the other exercises. If you cannot do any other physical exercise on a particular day, at least do this one exercise. It cures many diseases.

Agnisara is different from the stomach lift and it is important not to confuse it. Unlike the stomach lift, which focuses at the navel center, agnisara is an exercise for the lower abdomen and pelvic region. It is called "agnisara" because it energizes the entire solar system of the body. The solar system is the largest network in the human body and agnisara provides warmth to this entire system.

To do agnisara, stand with your feet about six inches apart and rest the weight of your body through your arms on your knees, keeping the back relaxed. Then as you exhale, contract the muscles in the lower abdomen and pull them in and up. As you inhale, you gently release the muscles, allowing the lower abdomen to return to its natural position. When you pull in the abdomen it helps you to expel all the waste gasses of the lungs. When you allow the abdomen to come out, it creates more space in your lungs for oxygen. You should make this exercise a

habit.

To do agnisara correctly, coordinate it with your normal breathing. You exhale, pulling in and up and you inhale and release. Exhaling, you contract the lower abdominal muscles and the area just above the pelvis, drawing them inward and upward, more tightly; and then inhaling, you release. It is not a stomach lift; it involves the lower abdomen. This is the real agnisara.

The exercise starts with the pelvis and ends at the pelvis. If you can do agnisara 100 to 150 times a day, you do not need any other exercise. You will have so much energy you will feel like you are floating. It creates perfect digestion and terrific energy. You will become more efficient in any field. Begin the practice of agnisara with twenty-five repetitions and increase to beyond a hundred.

This exercise should not be done by pregnant or menstruating women.