

Ida, Pingala & Sushumna Nadi & Chakra Systems



Nādi (literally "river", here in the sense "tube, pipe") are the channels through which, in traditional Indian medicine and spiritual science, the energies of the 'subtle body' are said to flow. They connect at special points of intensity called chakras.

In regard to Kundalini Yoga, there are three of these "Nadis"; "Ida", "Pingala", and "Sushumna". "Ida" lies to the left of the spine, whereas "Pingala" is to the right side of the spine, mirroring the "Ida". Sushumna runs along the spinal cord in the center, through the seven chakras, "Mooladhara" at the base, and "Sahasrara" at the top (or crown) of the head. It is at the base of this "Sushumna" where the "Kundalini" lies coiled in three and a half coils, in a dormant or sleeping state.

Sushumna (alternatively known as Susumna) Nadi connects the base chakra to the crown chakra. It is very important in Yoga and Tantra in general. Alternative medicine also refers to Sushumna sometimes. In Raja Yoga or Yoga of Patanjali, when the mind is quieted through Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama the important state of Pratyahara begins. A person entering this state never complains of Dispersion of Mind. This is characterized by observing the movements/jerks in Sushumna, the central canal in the subtle body. The movements indicate the flow of Prana through the central canal and in the process, the Sushumna makes the way for the ascent of Kundalini.

Pingala is associated with solar energy. The word *Pingala* means "tawny" in Sanskrit. Pingala has a sun like nature and male energy. Its temperature is heating and courses from the left testicle to the right nostril. It corresponds to the river Yamuna. The Ida and Pingala nadis are often seen as referring to the two hemispheres of the brain. Pingala is the extroverted, solar Nadi, and corresponds to the left hand side of the brain. Ida is the introverted, lunar Nadi, and refers to the right hand side of the brain.

Ida is associated with lunar energy sometime it is based on solar energy. The word *Ida* means "comfort" in Sanskrit. Idā has a moonlike nature and female energy with a cooling effect. It courses from the right testicle to

the left nostril and corresponds to the Ganges River. Ida Nadi controls all the mental processes while Pingala Nadi controls all the vital processes

These three nadis are called **Ida, Pingala and Sushumna**.

Ida Nadi controls all the mental processes while Pingala Nadi controls all the vital processes. Ida is known as the moon, and Pingala as the sun. A third Nadi, Sushumna, is the channel for the awakening of Spiritual Consciousness. Now the picture is coming clear; Prana Shakti- Sushumna.

You may consider them as:

1. Pranic Force,
2. Mental Force and
3. Spiritual Force.

As Sushumna flows inside the central canal of the spinal cord, Ida and Pingala simultaneously flow on the outer surface of the spinal cord, still within the bony vertebral column. Ida, Pingala and Sushumna Nadis begin in Mooladhara in the pelvic floor. From there, Sushumna flows directly upwards within the central canal, while Ida passes to the left and Pingala to the right. At Swadhisthana chakra, or the sacral plexus, the three nadis come together again and Ida and Pingala cross over one another. Ida passes up to the right, Pingala to the left, and Sushumna continues to flow directly upwards in the central canal. The three Nadis come together again at Manipura chakra, the solar plexus, and so on. Finally, Ida, Pingala and Sushumna meet in the Ajna chakra.

Ida and Pingala function in the body alternately and rather than simultaneously. If you observe your nostrils, you will find that generally one is flowing freely and the other is blocked. When the left nostril is open, it is the lunar energy or Ida Nadi which is flowing. When the right nostril is free, the solar energy or Pingala Nadi is flowing.

Investigations have shown that when the right nostril is flowing, the left hemisphere of the brain is activated. When the left nostril is flowing, the right hemisphere is activated. This is how the Nadis or energy channels control the brain and the events of life and consciousness.

Now, if these two energies- Prana and Chitta, Pingala and Ida, Life and Consciousness, can be made to function simultaneously, then both hemispheres of the brain can function ideally in a simultaneous flow resulting in a participating together in thinking, living, intuitive and regulating processes.

In ordinary life this can happen when the simultaneous awakening and functioning of life force and consciousness has taken place and only after the central canal- Sushumna, is connected with Kundalini, the source of energy. If Sushumna can be connected in the physical body, it can reactivate the brain cells and create a new physical structure.

Sushumna Nadi, Ida and Pingala and the Benefit of Pranayam

Sushumna Nadi is regarded as a hollow tube, in which there are three more concentric tubes, each being progressively more subtle than the previous one. The tubes or nadis are as follows:

1. Sushumna- signifying Tamas,
2. Vajrini -signifying Rajas,
3. Chitrini signifying Sattva, and
4. Brahma- signifying consciousness.

The higher consciousness created by Kundalini passes through Brahma Nadi.

When the Kundalini Shakti awakens it passes through Sushumna Nadi. The moment awakening takes place in Mooladhara chakra; the energy makes headway through Sushumna up toward Ajna chakra. Mooladhara chakra is a powerful generator. The generator is started by some sort of pranic energy. This pranic energy can be generated through pranayama. When pranayama is practiced you generate energy and this energy is forced down by a positive pressure which starts the generator in Mooladhara. Then this generated energy is pushed upward by a negative pressure and eventually reaches Ajna Chakra.

Therefore, awakening of Sushumna is just as important as awakening of Kundalini. Supposing your generator has been started yet you have yet to have plugged in the cable, the generator will keep running however distribution has yet to take place. You have to connect the plug into the generator so the generated energy can pass through the cable to the different areas of your house.

When only Ida and Pingala are active without Sushumna, it is like having the positive and negative lines in your electrical cable, without grounding. When the mind receives the three currents of energy all the lights start working, and if you remove the earth wire, the lights will go out. Energy flows through Ida and Pingala all the time, yet its effulgence is very low. When there is current flowing in Ida, Pingala and Sushumna, then enlightenment is on its way to taking place. This is one way to understand the awakening of Kundalini, Awakening of Sushumna and the Union of the three in Ajna chakra.

The whole science of Kundalini yoga concerns the awakening of Sushumna, for once Sushumna comes to life, a means of communication between the higher and lower dimensions of consciousness is established and the Awakening of Kundalini occurs. Shakti then can start traveling up Sushumna Nadi to become One with Shiva in Sahasrara chakra.

When the roots of a plant are watered properly, over time the plant grows and its flowers bloom forth beautifully. Similarly, when Kundalini awakening occurs in Sushumna awakening occurs in all the stages of life. However, if awakening only occurs in Ida or Pingala or in one of the other centers, it is incomplete. Only when Kundalini Shakti awakens and travels up the Sushumna passage to Sahasrara, does the entire store of higher energy in man begun to be unleashed. Enlightenment is the beginning of 'Real Life' and the Infinite unfolding begins.