

The Power of Yantra Yoga and Breathing

This interview with Fabio Andrico, conducted at the Librería del Palacio (Córdoba, Argentina), explores the depths of Yantra Yoga and the vital importance of natural breathing. Fabio—a senior instructor and direct disciple of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche—explains how bodily movement serves as a tool to coordinate vital energy (*Prana*) and calm the mind. The talk integrates traditional concepts with modern discoveries from neuroscience and somatic psychology, offering a practical vision for improving daily well-being.

[Adriana Batiti]: Welcome to our first meeting of the year at the Librería del Palacio. Today is a special adventure because we are connecting with the spiritual through books. We have the great honor of welcoming Fabio Andrico—a personality with immense life experience and knowledge—who has come to share his wisdom regarding Yantra Yoga and his latest book, *Tibetan Yoga of Movement*. Fabio, thank you very much for being here in Córdoba. My first question is: what step initiated your long path in yoga?

[Fabio Andrico]: First of all, thank you very much for the invitation. It all started somewhat fortuitously. I was living in a small city in northern Italy, and a friend suggested going to India. She did not want to go alone and had the financial means to help me. I accepted and ended up in Bangalore, in southern India, in a very peaceful and traditional environment.

There, I met my first Hatha Yoga teacher. My body was strong from working in the fields, but intensive practice for 5 to 10 hours a day over several months changed me completely. My body became flexible, and my mind grew calm. My original idea was to study medicine in Italy to integrate yoga with naturopathy, but later I found my definitive teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, who taught me Yantra Yoga. Since then, I have never stopped practicing or teaching it.

[Adriana Batiti]: Fabio, for those unfamiliar with the term, how would you define Yantra Yoga?

[Fabio Andrico]: Yantra Yoga can be defined as a "dance of energy." Through sequences of movement, we influence how the breath moves. Energy is

movement; if it is blocked, we cannot express our full potential. The fundamental point is the breath. In traditional internal science, breathing is described as the "remote control of the mind." If you are agitated, you breathe agitatingly; if you achieve a fluid and deep breath, the mind naturally calms itself.

In Yantra Yoga, we work with internal energy or *Prana*, which governs all our biological and mental functions. The goal is to find a balance between the body, energy, and mind. It is not about performing complicated postures for the sake of flexibility, but about using the body to coordinate the energy.

[Adriana Batiti]: You mentioned that breathing is the health of the spine. How are they linked?

[Fabio Andrico]: They are extremely interdependent. A correct inhalation must be diaphragmatic. The diaphragm is the primary actor; the lungs are passive organs that depend on the opening of the thoracic cage. If the spine is misaligned, breathing becomes thoracic and superficial, which activates the sympathetic system and generates constant stress.

Today, we live surrounded by "imaginary lions": the stress of work, smartphones, and permanent distraction. By recovering diaphragmatic and fluid breathing (about six breaths per minute, always through the nose), we activate the parasympathetic system and allow the body and mind to truly relax.

[Adriana Batiti]: In your book, you mention practical exercises. Could you guide us through something simple?

[Fabio Andrico]: Certainly. The foundation is perception. A very simple exercise is placing a hand over the navel. Feeling the warmth of the hand helps the mind focus there, and the diaphragm begins to work spontaneously. In Yantra Yoga, we use bodily position to facilitate this. For example, if you sit with your knees open and rest your elbows on them, you will notice that your shoulders do not rise when you inhale; breathing becomes lateral and dorsal automatically. This is interoception: feeling the body from within.

Another vital point is deep exhalation. In Yantra Yoga, we begin with the "nine purification exhalations" to eliminate impure air from the lower lobes of the lungs. Normally, exhalation is passive, but to clear the system, we need it to be active and deep. Only when we fully empty the lungs can we allow for a truly fresh and deep inhalation.

[Adriana Batiti]: It is incredible how something as basic as breathing can change our presence and attention.

[Fabio Andrico]: Exactly. My teacher always said that everything must arise from the individual, spontaneously. It is not about proselytism, but about verifying if the practice works for you. If you manage to be relaxed but present (*Rilassato ma presente*), your daily life improves: you chop a tomato without cutting your finger, you drive the car with attention, and you enjoy reality more without being conditioned by tensions.

[Adriana Batiti]: Fabio, thank you very much. Your book *Tibetan Yoga of Movement* is masterfully illustrated and is an excellent tool for deepening practice. Thank you for this meeting in Córdoba.

[Fabio Andrico]: Thank you. Yantra Yoga is a gift of ancient wisdom that we need today more than ever to navigate the complexity of the modern world.