

## **The Science of Upanishads-Part 9A: Kriya Yoga,**

### **The Ultimate Pranayama Technique,**

### **Is The Way to Self-Realization**

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Kriya Yoga is an ancient meditation technique of energy and breath control, called *Pranayama*. It is also a comprehensive spiritual path to *Self-Realization*. The technique was hidden in secrecy for many centuries until it was first revealed by great Yogi Mahavatar Babaji to his disciple Lahiri Mahashaya in 1861. It was most popularized by Swamy Paramahansa Yogananda and was brought to the West in early 20th century. It is widely believed in spiritual circles that Kriya is the most effective technique available to mankind today for reaching the goal of Yoga: The Union With The Divine. Kriya Yoga is so effective because it works directly with the source of growth — the spiritual energy deep in our spines. All yoga techniques work with this energy, usually indirectly. Yoga postures, for example, can help open up the spinal channels, and balance the energy in the spine. Yoga breathing exercises like Kriya Yoga can help to awaken that energy. The Kriya technique is more direct. It helps the practitioner to control the life force by mentally drawing it up and down the spine, with awareness and will. According to Swamy Paramahansa Yogananda, one Kriya, which takes about 30 seconds, is equivalent to one year of natural spiritual growth.

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