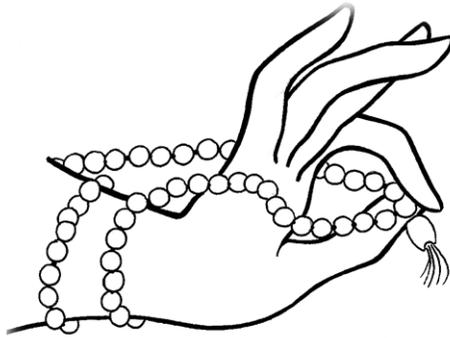


Celestial Prayer Malas



exquisitely hand-crafted
by



The word "Mala" means Garland.

A mala is a strand of 108 beads used to count prayers, mantras or chants. The large rudraksha bead at the end is called the Guru bead. It represents the inner teacher or Guru, and should not be crossed over in doing the round of beads. 108 is a number of significance in many spiritual traditions, one of which has to do with the heart chakra.

The chakras are the intersections of energy lines within the body, and there are said to be a total of 108 energy lines converging into the heart chakra. One of them, the Sushumna, leads to the crown chakra, and is said to be the path to Self-Realization. Malas are used as part of a spiritual practice in many traditions, including Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, and Christian.

Planetary Japa as Meditation

Planetary Japa meditation is the repetition of the sacred syllables (bijas) or mantras of the planets.

Reciting your planetary Mantra is an excellent way to begin your daily meditation practice. Planetary Mantra recitation quiets the mind, allowing you to become centered and to connect with your Source. Often when we sit to meditate, our minds are so busy and scattered that it is hard to come to a quiet centered place. By opening our meditation with a round of planetary Japa mantras with Mala beads, we help to give the mind a focus on something other than its own thoughts.

The sacred planetary syllables and mantras resonate throughout the mindspace and clear the way for a quiet mind. When the chanting stops, our minds have "gotten out of our way" and we can sit in the silence that follows. Planetary Japa is like a doorway into meditation, and a powerful practice in itself, as the vibrations of the planetary sounds activate the Chakras and other energy centers within the body as a form of sound healing.

Using Your Mala

When you first receive your planetary Mala beads, they should be attuned to your energy. Regardless of the planetary Mantra you wish to use for your Japa practice, the first round you can say on your Mala is "Hrim" (pronounced Hreem). Hold the Mala at the level of your heart and visualize your heart opening to your Mala and to your upcoming practice. Hrim is the seed sound of the Heart Chakra.

To use the beads, hold the strand in your right hand. Hold the 1st bead next to the rudraksha bead between your thumb and middle finger. Say your planetary mantra over the first bead, move your fingers to the next bead, and say your planetary mantra again. Continue this for all 108 beads. When you get to the rudraksha bead, turn the strand around and continue back the other way. You can say your planetary mantra out loud or silently in your mind. It's a powerful practice to say one round out loud and the second round silently. You will find that the vibration of the mantra still resonates as if you were still saying it audibly.

How to Begin Your Planetary Mantra Practice

One common way to begin a daily practice with your planetary mantra is to do a 40 day discipline. Say a round of your planetary mantra twice a day, morning and evening, for 40 days. Begin on the day ruled by the planet whose mantra you will be reciting: Sun (Sunday), Moon (Monday), Mars (Tuesday), Mercury (Wednesday), Jupiter (Thursday), Venus (Friday), Saturn (Saturday).

Planetary Bījas & Mantras

Sun	<i>hrim</i> (pronounced hreem), the power to energize, hold, attract and vitalize. <i>Om hrim sum Surayaya namaha</i>
Moon	<i>shrim</i> (pronounced shreem), the power of love, peace, tenderness and delight. <i>Om shrim som Somaya namaha</i>
Mars	<i>krim</i> (pronounced kreem), the power of transformation, motivation and action. <i>Om krim kum Kujaya namaha</i>
Mercury	<i>aim</i> (pronounced I'm), the power of articulation, learning, guiding and teaching. <i>Om aim bum Budhaya namaha</i>
Jupiter	<i>strim</i> (pronounced streem), the power of expansion, abundance and wisdom. <i>Om strim brahm Brihaspataye namaha</i>
Venus	<i>klim</i> (pronounced kleem), the power of love, beauty, creativity and fulfillment. <i>Om klim shum Sukraya namaha</i>
Saturn	bija is <i>hlim</i> (pronounced hleem), the power of delaying, stopping or terminating. <i>Om hlim sham Shanaye namaha</i>