Homework #4

based on Chapter 9 (meditation) and Chapter 7 (pranayama) of the textbook, our group asana practices, and your home practice

1. Which posture have you chosen for your meditation practice? Please give the name in English and Sanskrit if it has a Sanskrit name (see textbook). Why did you choose this posture? Is it comfortable for you for 10-15 minutes or do you have physical discomforts over time?
2. What would you describe as your greatest challenge in meditation?
3. *In your own words*, what is a mantra? Why use one? Do you use the so’ham mantra in your practice or something else?
4. Consider the pranayama exercises that you have learned so far: diaphragmatic breathing, the complete breath, brahmari breath (bee breath), kapalabhati (skull shining breath) and nadi shodhanam (alternate nostril breathing). Which would you choose for:

* Focusing the mind before meditation
* Deeply relaxing
* Cleansing the lungs and nasal passageways
* Relaxing and invigorating the body, increasing breathing capacity
* Focusing the mind on sound coupled with breath

Pick only one practice for each.

1. Which pranayama exercise do you most enjoy practicing?