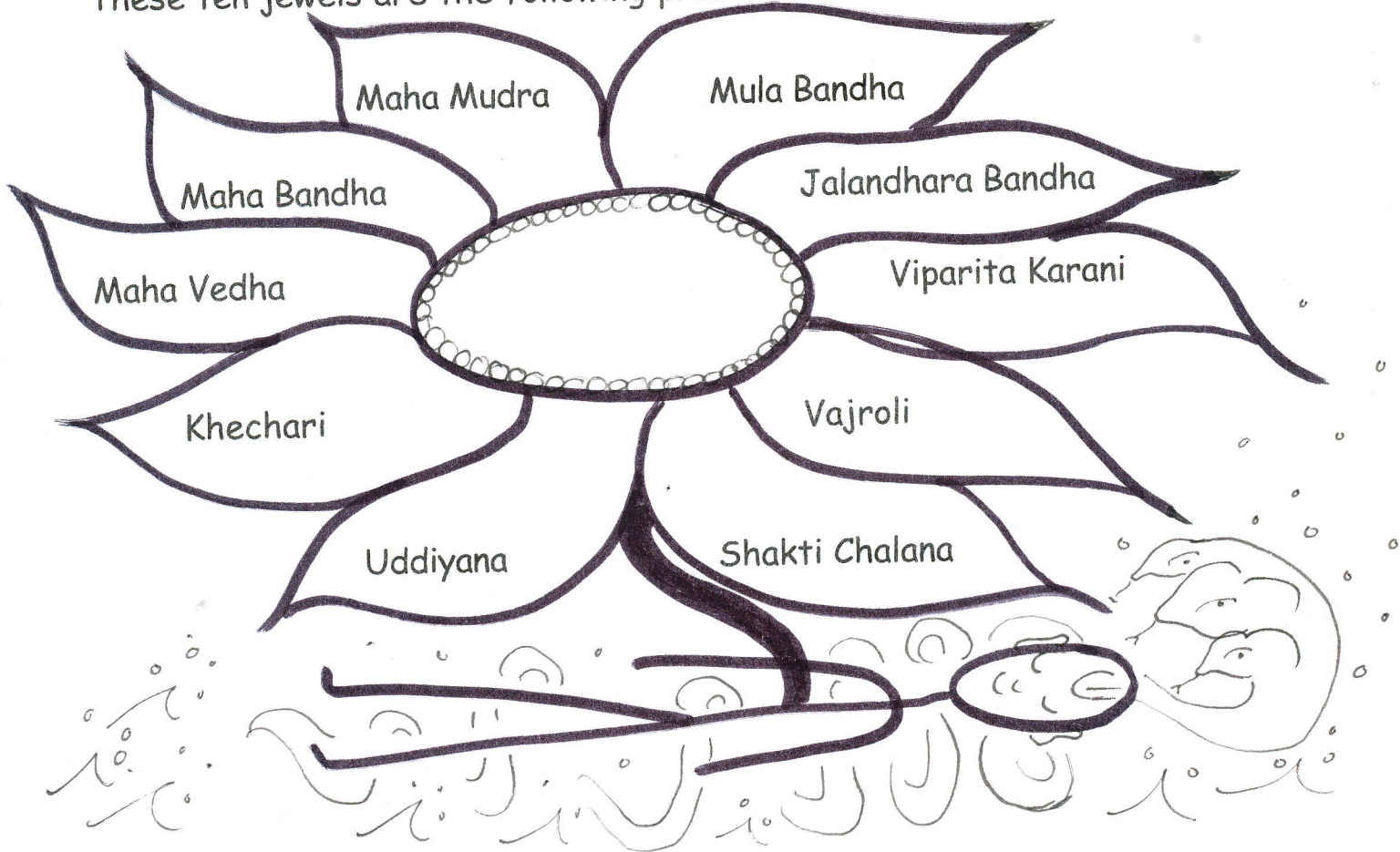


The Ten Jewels

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika speaks of ten jewels, which must be kept as secret as a box of diamonds and not to be told as anybody¹. These ten jewels are the following practices:



The aim of all Hatha Yoga is to concentrate energy in order to usher us from the relative to the absolute. These jewels are the principal mudras and bandhas, concerned with the internal management of energy: by reversing the flow of Apana and prana, we distil the Samana behind the Nabhi, or navel, and shift the prana back to the spine that it may fly upwards. This 'in, up and out' model is not necessarily one of withdrawal, but it does bestow a fresh point of view; the umbilical cord is our lifeline as we move from the womb to the manifest world. Just as Brahma the creator is said to have arisen from Vishnu's navel, so by practising Yoga we can create new worlds and new visions, thereby shedding indiscriminate light on both our own limitations and our unlimited potential.

¹ HYP, 3,9