

YOGA- A HOLISTIC WAY OF LIFE

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Abstract

Yoga is a scientifically proven system that can be adopted in daily life to maintain good health .It is the ancient Indian science that has attracted the attention of the world .The positive effects of yoga on physical and mental health are well known and well researched over the past few decades. It is one of the most powerful drugless system of treatment .It has its own concept of wellness which has been scientifically understood and presented by many scholars. Yoga can be adopted as lifestyle for the improvement of our physical and mental health.

Keywords- Yoga Practice, Immunity, Contemporary, Connection Prevention, Stress

Health is a positive concept. The word health refers to a state of complete physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social well-being. It doesn't mean merely freedom from disease but involves feeling of well-being with an amount of capability to easily develop immunity against particular offending agents. In the world of today life has become a very complicated and daily dealings of people often cause mental stress, tension and emotional disturbances. Sound sleep and peace is seen nowhere. Modern life style has brought tremendous effects on health of the people physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually as well. Although modern life style seems to ease the life of contemporary society but has a negative impact on health regarding every aspect of life. The causes for such problems are innumerable to mention as lack of physical exercises, fast food, use of technology or spending too much time on Television and mobile like gazettes, nuclear family and sitting for long duration at the work place. This modern life style has intensified the risk of various physical and mental diseases. . Maximum people are suffering from social isolation because of using internet and social media for long. There is a need for increasing awareness about the effect of modern life style to control its adverse effects and society and its unit i.e.individual.

The modern people have several problems in the form of tension due to fast life style driven by science and technology. Even for taking rest People make themselves busy in chatting on mobile which create mental stress in their life. There are many modern and indigenous methods and disciplines that can enable us to maintain health and combat with diseases. The fast paced and competition oriented modern life-style tends to overtax the psychosomatic homeostasis of human beings is resulting into stress related disorders.

Yoga is a scientifically proven system that can be adopted in daily life to maintain good health .It is the ancient Indian science that has attracted the attention of the world .The positive effects of yoga on physical and mental health are well known and well researched over the past few decades. It is one of the most powerful drugless system of treatment .It has its own concept of wellness which has been scientifically understood and presented by many scholars. Yoga can be adopted as lifestyle for the improvement of our physical and mental health. It would be of great help in inculcating healthy habits and a healthy lifestyle in order to maintain good health. It also helps in prevention of several psychosomatic disorders where psychological stress is believed to play a role. The word "Yoga has been derived from Sanskrit word "yuj" which means "connection",

“join” or “unite”. It is essentially a connection with (a) feelings, (b) body, (c) people and (4) universe. First connection is with how one feels .He may be present in the office and thinking about family for a few minutes then he is in yoga with them. This is important point to contemplate how many of us feel in common and healthy way ,If not so , indicates , there is something inappropriate in yoga .Second feature of yoga is connection with body i.e. how healthy we are .Third point of yoga indicates connection with people that stands for relationships with the people in life. Fourth point is related to yoga with the atmosphere or world. In the view of yoga experts all these connections related to emotions, health, relationships, and worldliness are shifting towards wrong directions so it is needful to establish connection with fifth yoga with almighty. If human being develop affinity with the supreme identity, all the four connections will be automatically good. That spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. The practice is said to have originated thousands of years ago in India and has been adapted in other countries in a variety of ways.

Yoga was refined and developed by Rishis who documented their practices and beliefs in the Upanishads. According to scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness which indicates a perfect harmony between the mind and body or man and nature. In the western part of the world it took off in the late 1890s when Indian monks started spreading their knowledge to the Western world for the first time. The credit of introducing yoga to the West goes to Swami Vivekananda. He described yoga as a “science of the mind”. He translated Yogic texts from Sanskrit to English and sparked the interest among people by demonstrating Yoga at the Chicago World’s Fair. Consequently it became popular across the world. The United Nations General Assembly established 21st June as the International Day of Yoga. It has been celebrated every year around the world since 2015. It was listed as an intangible cultural heritage.

The great Sage Maharishi Patanjali systematized and codified the practices of Yoga, its meaning and related knowledge through his Yoga Sutras. These sutras show us the way to sublimate our negative emotions into positive ones. In day-to-day life a person may have negative attitudes e.g. may be jealous of the successful people leading life in better position or a person may be indifferent towards the suffering of others or one may get angry with vicious people. All these behaviors show the negative attitude. Patanjali stressed that we should have positive attitudes as Jealousy is to be replaced by friendliness, indifference and disgust for miserable people is to be replaced by compassion, indifference by gladness and disgust towards vicious people is to be replaced by indifference. These positive attitudes bring happiness within and also help in our social, emotional and spiritual development and this task is possible if Astanga Yoga is followed in life properly.

Astanga Yoga: Ashtanga Yoga is a yogic system devised by Maharishi Patanjali. It consists of eight components. Astanga –Yoga includes Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yama: Ahimsa-satya-asteya-brahmacharya-aparigraha-yama.

This is the initial set of principles that are concerned with our conduct in individual and social life. It is a discipline to cultivate will power. Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (Abstention from falsehood), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (continence), Aparigraha (non-collectiveness) are yamas that are very important and guide an individual to behave in social life.

Niyama: Shaucha-santosha-tapah-swadhyaya-Ishwara-pranidhana-niyama

It is related to moral culture and aims at the cultivation of good habits. The five principles of niyama are Shaucha (cleanliness), Santosh (satisfaction), Tapah (austerity), Swadhyaya (study of self through introspection and good literature) and Ishwara-pranidhana (dedication to supreme power). Practicing niyama in day-to-day life promotes emotional stability, knowledge about self and sense of right and wrong.

Asana: Sthira-sukham-asanam

Asana means the steady and comfortable posture that help to regulate the pranika flow in the body and facilitate the functioning of various systems and organs of the body. The asanas assist physical and emotional dimensions of an individual.

Prāṇāyāma: Tasmin sati Pranayama consists of breathing techniques related to respiratory process. Practicing Pranayama helps in physical development by modifying functioning of lungs and assist in emotional development also by activating the parasympathetic system of the Central Nervous System that makes a person relaxed and energetic. During Pranayama there should not be any strain on any part of the body.

Pratyahara: Sva-visaya –asamprayoge chitta swarupanukara ivendriyanam pratyaharah

Pratyahara means withdrawal of sense organs from the objects in order to control mind. It aims at reversing the outward traffic of senses and making them flow towards the internal goal. Pratyahara protects the people from emotional turbulences caused by worldliness. Introspection and self-analysis are some practices helpful to manage emotional, intellectual and spiritual development leading towards self-improvement.

Dharana: Desabandhas-chittasya dharana

Dharana is the discipline of fixing the mind on a particular object .It helps to improve concentration and stabilize the mind and develops emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

Dhyana: Tatra pratyayaikatanatadhyanam

Dhyana means the steady and uninterrupted flow of chitta towards the the object of meditation. The practice of dhyana promotes the concentration and leads an individual towards emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

Samadhi: Tadevarthamatra-nirbhasam swarupa –sunyamiva samadhih

Samadhi is the final stage of Yoga and it leads an individual to the state of absolute contemplation and self-realization. At this stage all emotions go away and the individual attains inner peace and eternal bliss.

All these eight limbs of of Astanga, if practiced together are relevant for the development of an

individual's personality in a holistic manner. Yama and Niyama lead to emotional, social and spiritual development, Asanas and Pranayama are liable for physical and emotional development while Pratyahara, Dharana , Dhyana and Samadhi leads towards emotional ,intellectual and spiritual development.

All the parts of Astanga are inseparable. If body is doing right but mind is not creating right thought and is full of worries then getting proper physical health is not possible. Suppose an individual is practicing s physical asana or a posture and doesn't create right thought at that time and feels worried about rest of the day or is in possession of hatred for someone, after some years that feeling of worry or hatred may result in physical disease. Why it is so evenif someone makes practice of physical asana and posture because clean mind creates positive energy. A person should be physically flexible but his thoughts shouldn't also be rigid He should be ready to adjust with people. Only then yoga will be complete. It is obvious that one should be master of art to create right thought during yoga.

“Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self “. **BhagwadGita**. The process of the eightfold yoga system is a means to control the mind and senses. Everyone acts in this world to maintain his family and his paraphernalia but no one is working without some self-interest, some personal gratification. The parts of the body do not perform for their own self-satisfaction but for the satisfaction of the complete whole .Same is with the living entity who performs not only for personal satisfaction but for the satisfaction of the whole world.

This may be understood as the union of physical mental and spiritual dimensions of personality of an individual. Yoga helps in developing physical, emotional and mental health and in inculcating human values.

Yoga cannot be time specific but yogic life style. Two types of style are prevailing in the modern times (a) Yogic life style and (b) Bhogi life style. Yogic life style means a person may be yogi living with family members while bhogi life style is unhealthy way of leading life so suffers from sorrows. There is need to broaden

this paradigm and understand that yoga is nothing but yogic style is a source of power and energy. Here yogi does not mean a person living in ashram or wearing any special kind of dress but leading life with family and doing business or service as well.

Yogic life style means simply some change in style. This yogic style consists of personal connection with God and it results in automatic improvement in all the relations. Doors of emotions are open and person's role with people is beyond expectation. He doesn't expect from people to give anything in return when he comes out to the world but always thinks of giving. A person prays for a few minutes, takes energy from Him and throughout the day is able to shift from expectations to acceptance. No need to say he doesn't make any expectation from people but accepts them as they are. So one should start his day without devoting a few minutes to connect with Him. After that the first information will be full of divinity i.e. jnan yoga. Afterwards posture related yoga for body and pranayama will help to create right thought. It will help releasing the toxin (bad thoughts) through breathing out.

In the modern life the habit of taking meals has also changed. Earlier people used to have natural, fresh fruits and vegetables. This habit has been replaced from artificial ways like fast

foods. It has negative impact in the life of the people. Food is also considered emotional nutrient and energy for state of mind. Food cooked in pure state of mind and feelings of the cook have great impact on it. Right vibrations always influence to shift to the right. Every thought and every word has an energy. Positive energy can make and negative energy can kill a living being. Today we are ready to do much efforts for our physical health but we should remember that physical health is based on our thoughts. So first is feeling and second is health. Third the person for whom the thought is being created and it reaches to him. Thoughts reach food, water, trees and person so no shouting, screaming should be at home environment.

According to WHO –“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.” Generally people relate yoga with physical exercise only but that is not correct. It provides valuable understanding to make our life best including not only the physical but also the emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of life. Yoga is not merely an exercise but a way to attain peace through physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Peace and harmony are related to yoga and so people of all ages must include it in daily routine to attain positive thinking and perfect equilibrium and harmony.

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