

YOGA: A WAY TO HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL LIFE

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Abstract

The wish of every human being is to live in harmony and peace with oneself and the environment. However, in modern times greater physical and emotional demands are constantly placed upon many areas of life. Further, today's generation is leading an almost dependent life on the 'Technology' to carry out day to day activities from home to work place and back. There is hardly any scope and time for physical activities. Hence, this inactive stressful life-style in a highly polluted atmosphere leads people to suffer from various types of diseases, headache, migraine, obesity, low backache, diabetic mellitus, hypertension, depression, anxiety, insomnia, frustration, mental pressure, and hectic life is so high that there is an imbalance in day to day activities. Consequently, most of the people desperately look for peace. For the outcome of this predicament, 'Yoga' is an exceptional way to overcome the illness. Yoga is the only way to achieve and live a balanced peaceful life. Yoga aims for the integrity of all three aspects of life, the body, mind and spirit through a system of 'Asana', 'Pranayama' and 'Meditation'. With the integration of the body, mind and spirit, one can attain a balance (physically and mentally) in the life. Although it was largely practiced in the yesteryears, it has enhanced its importance in the modern life too. If we were all engaging with this capacity, peace would be inevitable. The paper is supported with secondary sources collected from standard publications, journals, and World Wide Web references. The paper attempts to throw light upon the significant use of 'Yoga' for peaceful life, as it is the essential need for today's life.

Key words: *Technology, stressful life-style, yoga, peaceful life.*

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Introduction:

In this 21st century, 'YOGA' is a mind and body practice with historical origins in ancient 'Indian Philosophy'. Like other meditative movement practices used for health purposes, various styles of yoga typically combine physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation or relaxation. The present advanced medical system has almost replaced all the traditional systems of medicine in various parts of the globe because of its rational basis. It has proved itself most effective in saving man from the fatal hands of contagious and infectious diseases. However, rapidly increasing incidence of stress related ailments; in-active physical activities, highly polluted atmosphere leading human beings to diseases, hypertension, depression, anxiety, frustration, headache, migraine, obesity, low backache, diabetic mellitus, and etc. are posing a great challenge to the modern medical system. It is here that Yoga appears to make a vital contribution to the modern medical system. *Swami Vivekananda* has rightly said that, 'Yoga is a systematic conscious process for accelerating the growth of a human being from his animal level towards the ultimate state of divinity. It is a systematic methodology for all-round personality development i.e. physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and spiritual components of man'. Thus, Yoga in its general methodology for the growth of man towards divine heights includes techniques useful for therapeutic applications in making man healthier.

Meaning of The Word Yoga and its Origin:

The word "Yoga" is derived from Sanskrit root "yuj" means "union" i.e., spiritual union of the individual soul with the universal soul and is used in this sense in the Vedanta. This word is also used in variety of senses. In simple, it means 'method' or 'the sense of yoking'. Yoga acquired a universal appeal to all kinds of people in various Countries.

As to the origin of Yoga, its history goes many years back. Archaeologists opine that, the conceptual background of yoga has its origins in ancient Indian philosophy to a period of about five thousand years ago, almost during the great Indus Valley Civilisation. It was Rishi Patanjali,

rightly called the 'Father of Yoga', who around 200 B.C., compiled, synthesized, modified, systematized and refined yoga in a metaphysical whole, grafted on 'Sankhya Philosophy' and laid down with steps which form the basis on which the whole system of yoga works.

Significance and Objective of the Study:

In recent days, Anxiety, Mental Stress, Frustration etc. mental related diseases are increasing in the society. Due to these diseases many people feel isolation, anger, confusion, depression, mood disorders, attention deficit-hyperactive disorder, obsessive disorder, adjustment disorder etc. The training of 'Yoga' will give the proper direction for the betterment and give much positive effect for living peaceful life.

The present paper is an observed study, and also supported with substantial secondary sources collected from standard publications, journals and with an updated worldwide web references. The paper attempts to throw light upon the significant use of 'Yoga' for proper health-care maintenance, as it is the- '*Essential need of today and the culture of tomorrow*'. The study will provide a proper way of keeping meditation in all walks of learning process, and adjustment for healthy, clam, fertile and qualitative life.

Yoga: A Need for Healthy and Peaceful Life:

Historically speaking, yoga was more than just a method of teaching and it was a 'healthy way of life'. Its philosophy is rooted in a physical culture of health and well-being that is still emphasized and explains why over millions and millions of people around the world practice this ancient tradition.

There are numerous modern schools or types of yoga i.e., Iyengar, Viniyoga, Sivananda, etc., each having its own distinct importance regarding the relative content of physical postures and exercises (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), deep relaxation, and meditation practices that cultivate awareness and ultimately more profound states of consciousness. The functioning of yoga as a therapeutic intervention, which began early in the twentieth century, takes benefit of the various psycho-physiological benefits of the component practices. The physical exercises (asanas) may increase patient's physical flexibility, coordination, and strength, while the breathing practices and meditation may calm and focus the mind to develop greater awareness and diminish anxiety, and thus result in higher quality of life. Other beneficial effects

might involve a reduction of distress, blood pressure, and improvements in resilience, mood, and metabolic regulation. Every yoga asana (pose) has a different name and includes standing postures, seated twists, backbends, arm balances, inversions, and core holds. The downward facing dog for example, is in itself said to calm the brain, energise the body, improve digestion, strengthen arms and legs, and be therapeutic for high blood pressure. Whilst these benefits come as a given with most postures, the practice of yoga as a whole gives many more benefits.

As Sri Sri Ravi Shankar puts it, *“Health is not a mere absence of disease. It is a dynamic expression of life – in terms of how joyful, loving and enthusiastic you are.”* This is where yoga helps: postures, pranayama (breathing techniques) and meditation are a holistic fitness package. As per the *‘Art of Living’*, following are the best benefits of yoga practices:

➔ **Lowers Stress and Improves Mood:**

Some yoga methods use specific meditation techniques to focus the mind on breathing that quietens the constant 'mind chatter', relieves stress and feel relaxed. Practising yoga can also boost oxygen levels to the brain, feeling happier and more content with everyday life. A few minutes of yoga during the day can be a great way to get rid of stress that accumulates daily - in both the body and mind. Yoga postures, pranayama and meditation are effective techniques to release stress. You can also experience how yoga helps de-tox the body and de-stress the mind.

➔ **Benefits Breathing and Lowers Blood Pressure:**

If yoga is practised consistently, lung capacity will increase as a result of the deep breathing process. This will then have a positive effect on more intense sports that might be a part of, increasing stamina and endurance. In addition, meditation and calming yoga asanas slow down heart rate which in turn lowers blood pressure and also improves the immune system and lowering cholesterol.

➔ **Boosts Confidence:**

The act of meditation can actually boost confidence. The process works by releasing tension from mind and can feel confident about ones physical body. Without any forms of anxiety, one can establish an internal connection with himself. This is consequently reflected in ones perception of others and will help to better ones relationships by improving

compassion and awareness.

➔ **Lowers the Risk of Injury:**

Exercise, such as running, is usually a series of rapid, forceful movements, which means that effort is at a maximum and there is a higher risk of injury and increased muscle tension. Often, strenuous exercise also engages in an imbalance of opposing muscle groups whereas yoga concentrates on balancing this activity. Yoga unites body and mind and therefore allows to move in a way that results in an injury free and healthy.

➔ **Helps Lose Weight:**

What many want! Yoga benefits here too. Sun Salutations and Kapal Bhati pranayama are some ways to help lose weight with yoga. Moreover, with regular practice of yoga, we tend to become more sensitive to the kind of food our body asks for and when. This can also help keep a check on weight. Being overweight is a sign that there are imbalances in everyday life and one major contributor to weight gain is excess stress. Practising yoga enables to bring a deep sense of relaxation to body and mind, helping to de-stress and allowing to lose weight naturally.

➔ **Increases Flexibility:**

People often say that, they are not flexible enough to do yoga. The truth is it doesn't matter how tight your muscles are, as yoga-asanas works by safely stretching your muscles and help to practise it further. Moreover yoga also stretches other soft tissue in the body such as ligaments and tendons, increasing the range of motion in the joints and allowing to move around more freely. You only need to include yoga in your daily routine to benefit from a body that is strong, supple and flexible. Regular yoga practice stretches and tones the body muscles and also makes them strong. It also helps improve your body posture when you stand, sit, sleep or walk. This would, in turn, help relieve you of body pain due to incorrect posture.

➔ **Improves Muscle Tone and Strength:**

Many yoga-asanas have a profound effect on upper body strength, such as the downward

and upward dog and the plank focuses on core. Likewise standing poses strengthen upper leg muscles and lower back. Essentially any pose will strengthen an area of the body if it is practised in the right way, without putting too much stress on specific muscle groups.

➔ **Improves Posture:**

By practising yoga one can maintain a healthier weight, become more flexible and improve muscle tone and strength. One will find that their posture will greatly improve because of this. Abdominals and back muscles can now fully support weight and will be able to sit and stand tall, preventing niggling injuries, aches and pains.

➔ **Yoga for Perception:**

Meditation has been described as training in awareness, which when kept over long periods produces definite changes in perception, attention and cognition.

➔ **Inner peace:**

We all love to visit peaceful, serene spots, rich in natural beauty. Little do we realize that peace can be found right within us and we can take a mini-vacation to experience this any time of the day! Benefit from a small holiday every day with yoga and meditation. Yoga is also one of the best ways to calm a disturbed mind.

Yoga- Practice with Caution:

While practising yoga, a great word of caution is also required. Though Yoga and its therapy are very useful in bringing about a state of total health it is not a miracle cure for all problems. It needs a lot of discrimination on the part of both the therapist as well as the patient. It may not be useful in emergency conditions and there is a strong need to consult a qualified medical doctor where in doubt. Every patient is different and so the therapy has to be moulded to suit the individual needs rather than relying on a specific therapy plan for patients suffering the same medical condition. A very true problem is that there is a different approach of the different schools of Yoga to the same condition. It is better to follow any one system that one is conversant with, rather than trying to mix systems in a 'Yogic- Cocktail'. One must also be cautious as there is a strong presence of numerous quacks pretending to be Yoga therapists and this leads to a bad name for Yoga therapy as well as Yoga in general.

Summing up

Bhagavad Gita highlights, Yoga as ‘Samatvam’, meaning thereby that ‘Yoga is equanimity at all levels’. (*yogasthah kurukarmani sangam tyaktva dhananjaya siddiyasidhyoh samobutva samatvam yoga uchyate – Bhagavad Gita II: 48*) This may be also understood as a perfect state of health wherein physical homeostasis and mental equanimity occur in a balanced and healthy harmony. It aims at enabling the individual to attain and maintain a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual well being. The art and science of Yoga has infinite possibilities for providing answers to most health problems troubling modern humankind. The dedicated practice of Yoga as a way of life is no doubt a solution for problems related to stress related physical, emotional and mental disorders and helps to regain birthright of health and happiness. With the adoption of a proper attitude and lifestyle through the Yogic way of life, one can rise above their own circumstances and their life can blossom as a time of variety, creativity, and fulfillment. Yoga helps to regain the ease that was lost through disease. Thus, practising yoga regularly with firm determination enables one to move from a state of illness and disease to a healthy, wellbeing life and success will be certain.

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