

Role of Yoga in Reducing Stress

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Abstract - With every passing day depression and loneliness are increasing and every person in their life want to live a healthy, successful, happy, peaceful life and to be satisfied. And overall, this is the destination of every human being or you can say of every life. Yoga helps to attain that goal or to reach that destination. It is so important that everyone should merge/ inculcate yoga in his life. In this paper, we discuss yoga's effect on one's body, mind and soul; yoga helps to heal our inner-self, to freshen up our mind and accelerate our body in the right direction; how yoga helps to lead a happy and peaceful life.

Keywords: Yoga, Body, Mind, Inner-self, Peaceful Life, etc.

1. Introduction

Day by day the technology dependence is increasing in human being and nobody around children is captured in tablets, relationships. They become an isolated character on face book, twitter, blog, whatsapp. Now, the relationship is building by figures, eyes, minds. Heart feelings are also shared through technology by sending smiles. 90% people are suffering from depression in this so called progressive world. So do we want a solution for this problem? Do we want to live a peaceful life? If yes, then Yoga can help us. Yoga helps to join individual self with the universal self. According to Patanjali, "Yogas citta vritti nirodhoh (Yoga Sutra – 1.2). It is the process which helps us to control our mind or to calm down the mind. Yoga is necessary for all-round fitness of peoples now a days.

Yoga is a form of exercise which is about 5000 yrs. Old & originated in India. The word Yoga is derived from "Yuj" which means union or joining. According to Sri Sri Ravi Sankar, "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.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Yadav (2015) studied about stress management through yoga and concluded that practice of yoga on daily basis helps to reduce stress in anxiety and depression situation. They further stressed that Yoga can also improve digestion, strengthen immunity, help in effective elimination of toxic wastes and also increase lung capacity.

Parsad (2004) conducted a study on Role of yoga in stress management and the results shows that psychologically yoga helps the practitioners to become more resilient in stressful conditions and reduce a variety of important risk factors for various diseases, especially cardio-respiratory diseases.

Balaji (2012) studied Stress and Yoga and found that yoga can be a great remedy for stress and can offer some stress relief. Yoga has combined set of principles and exercises that can greatly benefit you and help you to deal with stress and also Yoga provides a combination of benefits such as breathing exercises, stretching exercises, fitness programs etc.

Bali (2008) conducted a research on the role of yoga in reducing stress management and reported that Yoga is said to be a complete science, as it fulfills the WHO's definition of health by addressing the individual at all physical, psychological, and social levels. Stress affects individuals of all age groups, and people of all sectors and occupations, including doctors. Though many modalities of treatments are available for reducing stress, people are trying to find an alternative to be relieved from stress without medications.

Li and Goldsmith (2017) studied about the effect of yoga on Anxiety and Stress and concluded that there is a direct relation between yogic practice and decline in stress and anxiety. They further stressed that yoga works as supplement to reduce stress and anxiety.

2. Yoga for Body-

Yoga is very important for body. It develops strength and flexibility. Its poses encourage focus and concentration. Yoga postures, pranayama and meditation are effective techniques to release stress. Breathing techniques improve immunity. Yoga poses massage the organs and strengthens the muscles. It helps in improving physical as well as mental health. Regular yoga

practice boosts our energy and keeps us fresh. Yoga helps to improve our body postures by correcting when we stand, sit, sleep or walk and it reduces the body pain.

Sukhasana, Padmasana help in erecting the spine and bring stability to the mind. Sasankasana breathing, Vrkasana, Garudasana, Bhramari, Dhyana (on flower) improve concentration and train the mind. Vajrasana, Halasana, Kapalabhati, Bhramari, Meditation (silencing the mind with slow breathing) improve memory. Some Yoga practices are used in improving eye sight, voice culture, IQ development (Navasana breathing, spinal stretch, butterfly stretch, Gomukhasana, Ardha Sirasana, Surya Anuloma Viloma, Kapalabhati). A survey by the Journal Advances in Mind/ Body Medicine in 2015 found yoga being offered in 940 U.S. schools.

3. Yoga for Mind: According to Kathopanished, *“when the senses are stilled, when the mind is at rest, when the intellect wavers not then, say the wise, is reached the highest stage. This steady control of the senses and mind has been defined as yoga. He who attains it is free from delusion.”*

Yoga helps us to understand our inner self as it is making an individual to gain mastery over the mind. Further by performing yoga we can control emotions which are most important. The real freedom of mind comes when we control our free-flowing emotions, as our mind is in continuous work and thinking leads to restlessness of mind. Purification of mind and body comes while practicing of certain Asanas like Pranayama (control of breathe) and Pratyahara.

4. Yoga for Inner-self (soul):

Happiness is the ultimate goal of every human being. That permanent happiness is right within us. When mind is free of thoughts; when there is no thought in one's mind that is state of silence; silence from outer world & silence in inner-self. When we come to know how to distinguish the real from the unreal, the eternal from the transient and the good from the bad by our discrimination and wisdom, we feel happy. Our senses controlled by mind. Thoughts are developed in mind and mind is restless. It is very difficult to control our mind but yoga is the best way to control and calm down our disturbed mind. When we are able to control our mind, senses, thoughts and passions, we can feel that happiness because everything is in our own control. Yoga helps to attain that permanent state of happiness or paramananda with self-realization. Generally, we see the outer world but not the inner-self. The spirituality or divinity of a person concerns with the inner world. Journey to know that divinity starts from self-realization; introspection should be there to reach that spirituality; for that, concentration is must. It is the ability to direct one's thinking in whatever direction on world intend. Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Smadhi (self-realization) yoga technique is best for it. The basis of yoga is search for happiness.

Yoga helps to feel happier. In yoga, chakra is an energy point within the body. Sarvangasana, halasana or setubandhasana helps in improving communication skills with others and to develop relationships. virabhadrasana allows courage to develop seventh charka (sahasrara) which is related to one's higher self. One can attain internal peace by yoga.

Hence, it can be seen that yoga helps in almost every field of our life strengthening one's body, mind and inner self which leads to live peaceful life by gaining more health, happiness and innerpeace.

5. We should take care of some basic points while practicing yoga---

1. We should breathe normally/ naturally as possible. We should not require manipulating it.
2. Females should avoid Yoga practice during the advanced stage of pregnancy or the menstruation.
3. Yoga should be practiced in well ventilated room with a clean carpet underneath.
4. The practice sequence of Asanas should be standing, prone, and supine position followed by breathing practice, Bandhas, Mudras, relaxation and meditation.
5. We should relax in between two postures.
6. Before and after practicing asanas, savasana should be performed to make breathing normal.
7. In yoga inhalation and exhalation should be prolonged gradually.
8. We can start with those Asanas which we can do easily and comfortably.
9. In the beginning stage, learn to maintain 1:2 ratio of breathing which means exhalation time should be double that of the inhalation.
10. Lukewarm water and salt should be used for vamana dhauti and jala neti.
11. For meditation sit comfortably, in a meditative posture, with head, neck and trunk properly aligned. The body should not bend forward or backward.

6. IMPORTANCE OF SOME YOGIC PRACTICES

1. Vrksasana improves body-mind co-ordination.
2. Sitting in vajrasana after meal helps in better digestion.
3. Sasankasana helps to strengthen the muscles of the leg, thighs and back; to tone up the spinal nerves.
4. Vakrasana helps to remove constipation, flatulence. It reduces rigidity of spine by getting more flexibility and elasticity.
5. Pranayama :
 - (a) Anuloma-Viloma relieves from every tension and have a healing power of many serious health conditions. It also helps in curing diseases like asthma , depression and high blood pressure.
 - (b) Surya anuloma viloma helps to increase concentration and intelligence; improves analytical power and discrimination; strengthens the Surya nadi. People with high B.P. and heart problem should avoid it.
 - (c) Bhramari Pranayama
7. Kapalabhati helps in improving heart and lungs capacity, blood circulation and it tones up the abdominal muscles.
8. Meditation
 - (a) Breath meditation
 - (b) OM relaxes the body as well as mind and gives the peace, self control and self realization.

7. Conclusion:

Practicing yoga regularly will rejuvenate our body, mind and inner-self. We feel relaxed, energetic and calm with full positivity. Negative thoughts are vanished and we feel complete with our own self by finding that supreme divinity in our self and attaching with outer world happily. We feel that spirituality and divinity everywhere. With the help of yoga one can search that inner and immortal happiness which leads to a peaceful life.

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