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Significance of Yoga in Modern World

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Abstract:

Yoga is a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. Obviously, modern life-style has made the life of a modern man full of luxurious and comforts. However, it also has a negative effect on health physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually. Modern life style increases the health problems like diabetes, heart diseases, cancer etc. In modern time, Yoga is the best solution for the sufferings of the modern man, caused by his/her nature of dependency on modern technology and sedentary behaviour. Hence, the contribution of Yoga in providing integrated benefit to individuals is tremendous. There is a strong inter-relationship between the physical, mental, social and spiritual world. It is only when the physical body is healthy that the mind functions properly. In order to see the bottom clearly, it is essential that the lake should be clear and still. In the same way, smooth and calm mind is essential for concentrating and understanding a thing vividly. Yoga is a great remedy for physical and mental well being as its aim is self-realization leading to 'the state of liberation'.

Key-words: *Comfort, Disease, Luxurious, Remedy, Suffering, Yoga.*

Introduction:

"Yoga is the golden key that unlocks the door to peace, tranquility and joy."

"The nature of yoga is to shine the light of awareness into the darkest corners of the body."



- **Jason Crandell**

Yoga is an art and science of healthy living. It is a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. The holistic approach of 'Yoga' is well established in all walks of life and thus, known for disease prevention, promotion of health and management of many lifestyle - related disorders.¹

Before discussing the importance of Yoga in modern lifestyle, it is essential to discuss the problems associated with modern life. It is obvious that modern life-style has made the life of today's man easy. However, it also has a negative effect on health physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually. Modern lifestyle intensifies the risk of obesity; consequently, creating the hazards of diabetes, heart diseases, cancer etc. Pollution due to modern technologies causes different respiratory diseases. Psychologically, persons are susceptible to increased stress and depression. In such conditions, yoga can be a remedy for the problems resulted from modern life-style.

Purpose of the Study:

Today's hectic lifestyle is full of stress and cut-throat competition. Man has become a slave to his ambitious aspirations. In such circumstances where there is a lack of natural and healthy

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diet, we ought to practice Yoga in order to lead a hale and hearty life. The purpose of the paper is to create awareness among the people about remedial power of Yoga so that people can live and work vigorously and enthusiastically.

Research Methodology:

Secondary data and pertinent literature have been consulted. Documented sources including internet sources have also been perused. Moreover, previous studies, surveys and literature were also consulted for insight stimulation on the topic of the paper.

Origin of Yoga :

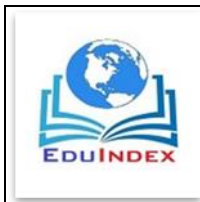
The term 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' meaning 'to join' or 'to yoke' or 'to unite'. As per Yogic scripture, the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the universal consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body as well as man and nature. The aim of Yoga is self-realization, to overcome all kinds of sufferings leading to 'the state of liberation'. Yoga is one of the oldest sciences of the world, originated in India. It is very useful for preserving and maintaining one's physical and mental health and also for 'spiritual evolution'. Yoga, being widely considered as an 'immortal cultural outcome' of Indus Valley Civilization – dating back to 2700 B.C. – has proved itself catering to both material and spiritual uplift of humanity. Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-vedic period (2700 B.C.), the great sage Maharshi Patanjali systemized and codified the then existing practices of Yoga, its meaning and its related knowledge through his Yog Sutras. After Patanjali, many sages and yoga masters contributed greatly to the preservation and development of the field through their well-documented practices and literature.³

Utility of Yoga in Modern Life:

The efficacy of Yoga in modern life can be categorized under physical, mental and spiritual benefit. In practicing Yoga, several people relate 'Yoga' with physical exercise only but it is not correct. It goes beyond the physical fitness or posture. It is a whole-sided system of thought that can provide us valuable understanding of how to make our life best, including not only the concern of the physical, but also the emotional, mental and spiritual parts of life. In general 'Yoga' is a way of life.

There is an inter-relationship between the mind and body. When the body is physically healthy, the mind is clearly focused, and stress is under control. Hence, practicing Yoga in the day to day life helps to maintain a healthy relationship between the mind and the body. The development and balance of the two is important for mental, physical and emotional development in all aspects of our life. There is need for finding the right science of living to cope up in the present life situation. And no doubt, 'Yoga' is the science of right living because it focuses on holistically integrated aspects of individual such as spiritual, physical, mental and social well-being.⁴

In order to understand the importance of Yoga in modern life, it is vital to understand the situation of life in modern time. It is an economic, social and environmental situation from which human being is suffering both mentally and physically. In modern society, structure and values shift quickly and family life has undergone a good deal of restructuring in this era. Just to quote a few examples: more working mothers, more financial pressure, nuclear families are not as stable



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as before, extended families are diminishing, and there are more pressured work schedules. Individualism and loneliness increases due to busy time scheduled. In other words, life in an urban society today, has become more complex and full of tension. Consequently, many people experience stressful lives and have hectic schedules which characterize a modern urban life-style.⁵

Health Benefits of Yoga:

Yoga has manifold benefits for each and every person, whether he is an employee, businessman, homemaker or athlete. Main health benefits of Yoga are –

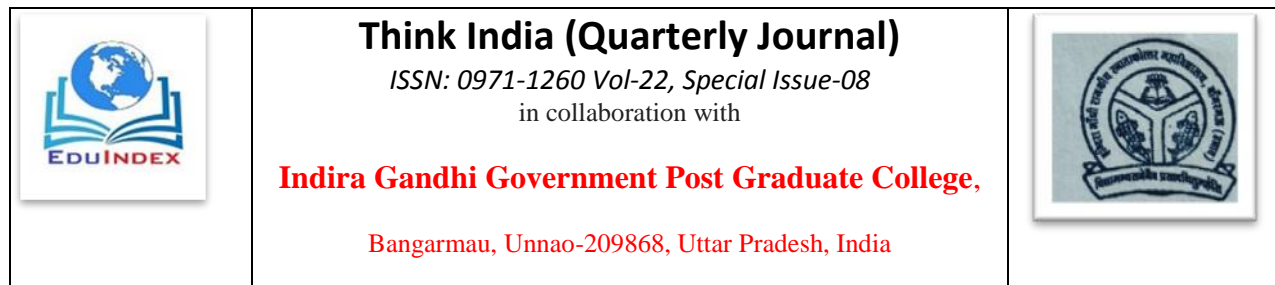
- (i) Stable autonomic nervous system equilibrium, with a tendency towards parasympathetic nervous system dominance rather than the usual stress-induced sympathetic nervous system dominance
- (ii) Pulse rate decreases
- (iii) Respiratory rate decreases
- (iv) Blood pressure decreases to a safer level
- (v) Galvanic Skin Response (GRS) increases
- (vi) Cardiovascular efficiency increases
- (vii) Respiratory efficiency increases
- (viii) Gastrointestinal function normalizes
- (ix) Endocrine function normalizes
- (x) Excretory functions improve
- (xi) Muscular-skeletal flexibility and joint range of motion increases
- (xii) Posture improves
- (xiii) Strength and resiliency increase
- (xiv) Energy level increases
- (xv) Weight normalizes
- (xvi) Sleep improves⁶

Physical and Mental fitness with Yoga:

Yoga, in modern time, is the best solution for the sufferings of the modern man due to his/her nature of dependency on modern technology and sedentary behaviour. According to WHO- 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of diseases or infirmity.' Hence, the contribution of Yoga in providing this integrated whole benefit to individuals who practice yoga in the day to day life is enormous. There is a strong inter-relationship between the physical, mental, social and spiritual world. The malfunctioning of one has an impact on the overall functioning of our system. It is only when the physical body is healthy, that the mind functions properly and tension is also controlled. This makes the social and spiritual life smooth. The breathing exercise performed in practicing yoga is a solution for stress and anxiety.⁷

Results:

After the thorough analysis of the significance of the Yoga, It can be concluded that Yoga is the cheapest and healthiest way to lead a self-restraint and healthy life. Yoga practices are complete in rejuvenating the entire system- The physical body, the mental system and the energy



system. Like every scientific theory, Yoga also offers a very practical and systematically designed technique.

Discussion:

It is considered that Yoga began in India in the pre- Vedic period. For thousands of years, Yoga has been an integral part of the Indian life style. It is India’s heritage. Yoga has the power to unite the entire human race. It is a perfect blend of knowledge, action and devotion. Considering the great significance of Yoga, The United Nations declared 21st June as the International Day of Yoga. In order to create a great level of consciousness and positivity among world-wide human population, it is necessary for them to adopt Yoga, which aims to integrate the body and the mind.

Conclusion:

Yoga helps to live in harmony with our environment, to give recognition for ourselves and to peacefully interact with the society to which we belong. "When the surface of a lake is still, one can see the bottom very clearly. To see the bottom clearly is impossible when the surface is agitated by waves". In the same way, when the mind is calm and relaxed, we can focus it positively on anything desired. Yoga gives perfect relaxation of our body and mind. Thus, practicing yoga is significant to controlling health problems resulted from hurried and worried life-style.

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