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HARNESSING THE FUTURE GENERATION THROUGH YOGA: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Yoga in daily life is a system of practice consisting of eight levels of development in the areas of physical, mental, social and spiritual health. When the body is physically healthy, the mind is clear, focused and stress is under control. This gives the space to connect with loved ones and maintain socially healthy relationships. When you are healthy you are in touch with your inner Self, with others and your surroundings on a much deeper level, which adds to your spiritual health. The word “Yoga” originates from Sanskrit and means “to join, to unite”. Yoga exercises have a holistic effect and bring body, mind, consciousness and soul into balance. The main goals of “Yoga” are physical health, mental health, social health, spiritual health, self-Realization or realization of the Divine within us. These goals are attained by Love and help for all living beings, respect for life, protection of nature and the environment, a peaceful state of mind, pure thoughts and positive lifestyle, Physical, mental and spiritual practices, Tolerance for all

nations, cultures and religions. Yogic techniques are known to improve one's overall performance.

Vedic education basically inculcates materialistic education and spiritual knowledge and that was the founder pillar of Indian culture. Materialistic knowledge was the pivot of the social structure whereas the spiritual knowledge helped to attain inner bliss through right yogic practices. That way our ancestors lived two hundred percent lives, one hundred materialistic lives and one hundred spiritualistic lives. Globalisation has introduced advanced and innovative technologies. No doubt technological advancement has made our lives smooth but excessive use of gadgets and new means of entertainment by the young generation have affected their physical, emotional, mental and creative aspects. Its time our educational system should imbibe right yogic practices in the curriculum so that they can have their mind, body and spirit aligned in order to live a healthy and prosperous life and also become a responsible citizen and contribute in nation's growth.

Keyword: Yoga, positive lifestyle, materialistic education, spiritual knowledge, globalisation, yogic practices, nation's growth.

Introduction

Yoga is a traditional method of meditation developed by the saints of ancient India. They practiced yoga as an effective method of controlling their mind and bodily activities. Yoga in daily life is a system of practice consisting of eight levels of development in the areas of physical, mental, social and spiritual health. When the body is physically healthy, the mind is clear, focused and stress is under control. This gives the space to connect with loved ones and maintain socially healthy relationships. When you are healthy you are in touch with your inner Self, with others and your surroundings on a much deeper level, which adds to your spiritual health. Yoga increases the flexibility of the spine, improves body's physical condition and heightened awareness to the importance of relaxation. It has been emphasized that each exercise be practiced slowly, coordinating movement with the breath, pausing motionless in each position and always with full concentration. Yoga teaches you to focus on breathing while you hold the poses. This attention to breath is calming it dissolves stress and anxiety. Yoga can help cure insomnia, as regular yoga practice leads to better and deeper sleep. Yoga can help fight fatigue and maintain your energy throughout the day. Yoga is an effective treatment for a variety of autoimmune diseases because it can reduce the symptoms these diseases often cause, such as stiffness, malaise, fatigue, and weakness. Even children can benefit from yoga. Those with attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity can learn to relax and get control by using yoga breathing and yoga asanas. Yoga has been used to help heal victims of torture or other trauma. Because yoga is a form of meditation, it results in a sense of inner peace and purpose, which has far-reaching health benefits. Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word, 'YUJ'. It means to join, connect or unite. It is the union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. Yoga is 5000 years old Indian philosophy. It was first mentioned in the oldest sacred text – The Rig

Veda (Vedas were a collection of texts containing mantras, spiritual information, songs and rituals to be used by Brahmins, the Vedic priests. The form of exercises performed in Yoga is called as 'Asana' which are capable of bringing about stability of body and mind. Yoga Asana are the simplest and easiest way to reduce our excess weight and keep fit.

Benefits of Yoga

- Improves flexibility of muscles
- Corrects the posture and alignment of the body
- Renders better digestive system
- Strengthens internal organs
- Cures asthma
- Cures diabetes
- Helps in curing heart related problems
- Helps in skin glow
- Promotes strength and stamina
- Tones internal organs
- Improves concentration
- Helps in mind and thought control
- Keeps mind calm by overcoming anxiety, stress and depression
- Helps in releasing tension
- Helps in blood circulation and muscle relaxation
- Weight reduction
- Protection from injury

These are among the numerous benefits of yoga. Yoga focuses on your natural tendency towards health and self-healing.

One of the main benefits of practicing yoga is that it helps manage stress. Stress is common these days and is known to have devastating effects on one's body and mind. Due to stress people develop serious problems like sleeping disorder, neck pain, back pain, headaches, rapid heart rate, sweaty palms, dissatisfaction, anger, insomnia and inability to concentrate. Yoga is known to be really effective in curing these kinds of problems over a period of time. It helps a person in

managing stress by meditation and breathing exercise and improves a person's mental well being. Regular practice creates mental clarity and calmness thereby relaxing the mind.

Reasons to Practice Yoga Regularly

Yoga is an art which connects our body, mind and soul together and makes us strong and peaceful. Yoga is necessary because it keeps us fit, helps burst stress and maintains our overall health. A healthy mind can concentrate well and do everything.

Yoga is important because by practicing Yoga you are being benefited on the following points:

Inner Peace – Yoga helps achieve inner peace and fight against stress and other problems. Yoga increases the peace level in an individual and makes him become more joyful resulting in more confidence.

Healthy – A healthy person can achieve and do more work than an unhealthy person. Life nowadays is very stressful and there is a lot of pollution around us. This is a cause of numerous health issues. Just 10-20 minutes of yoga each day can help regain your health. Better health means better life.

Activeness – People nowadays feel lazy, tired or sleepy. Due to which they miss out most of the fun in life and are not able to complete their work correctly. Being active keeps you aware of the things happening around you and also helps you complete your work more efficiently and quickly. And one way to achieve this is by practicing yoga regularly.

Flexibility – People nowadays suffer from joint pains, face difficulties while bending or touching their toes. Regular practice of yoga helps in relieving these pains. The effect can be seen in few days of practicing.

Increase Blood Flow – Yoga helps make your heart healthy and makes it work more efficiently by increasing blood flow in your body and veins. It helps in keeping your body oxygenated.

Power to Concentrate – Yoga helps your body to calm down and relax which means there is less stress and one can concentrate and focus quickly on his work. That is why children and teenagers are encouraged to do yoga because it helps them concentrate better on their studies.

Origin of Yoga

Yoga originated in ancient India thousands of years ago, long before the first religion or belief system was born. It is believed that Shiva is the first Yogi or Adiyogi and the first guru. Thousands of years ago, on the banks of Lake Kantisarovar in Himalayas, Adiyogi shared his knowledge into legendary seven sages as it was hard to put all his wisdom and knowledge in one person. The sages took this powerful yogic science to various parts of the world, including Asia, North Africa, Middle East, and South America. India is blessed to have found the yogic system in its fullest expression.

The fossil remains of Indus-Saraswati civilization are an evidence of the presence of Yoga in ancient India. This presence finds a mention in the folk traditions. It is included in the Indus

valley civilization, Buddhist and Jain traditions. According to the studies, Yoga was being practiced under the direct guidance of a Guru and its spiritual value was given a lot of importance. Sun was given the highest importance during Vedic period and that's how Suryanamaskar was invented later on.

However, Maharishi Patanjali is known as the father of Modern Yoga. He did not invent Yoga as it was already there in various forms. He assimilated it into the system. He saw that it was getting quite complex for anyone to understand it in any meaningful way. So he assimilated and included all aspects into a certain format – Yoga Sutras.

Classification of Yoga

Four main paths of yoga in brief to understand their importance.

1. **KARMA YOGA** – It is also known as ‘Discipline of Actions’ in the western culture. This form is one of the four essential pathways of Yoga. This teaches to perform one's duty without getting attached to the fruit or reward by doing selfless activities and duties. This is the main lesson which is being taught to Karma yogis. It is for those who seek the spiritual path and seek union with God. It can be also practiced in our routine life by conducting one's duty in a sincere manner without expecting the reward. This is the path of spiritual development. Basically Karma is the action we do and its subsequent reaction. A life of individual is governed by his karma cycle wherein if a person has good thoughts, good actions and good words he/she will lead a happy life where as if a person has bad thoughts, bad actions and bad words, he will lead an unhappy & difficult life. In today's world it is very difficult to lead such a selfless life as human beings are prone to fruits of labor they do. These are the reason why we are facing problems like high stress, mental illness and depression. Karma Yoga teaches to get rid of all the materialistic paths and lead a happy and content life.
2. **JNANA YOGA** – It is also known as the ‘Wisdom Yoga’. It is a very difficult and complex path among all. This teaches a person to merge with the inner self by practicing various mental techniques by meditating into deep conscience mind and conducting self questioning sessions. It tells an individual to differentiate between permanent conscious and temporary materialistic world. This path teaches to steady the mind and emotions by focusing on 6 fundamental virtues – calmness, control, sacrifice, tolerance, faith and focus. It is often advised to practice Jnana Yoga under the guidance of a competent guru to achieve the goal and to perform it in the best way.
3. **BHAKTI YOGA** – Also known as ‘Spiritual or Devotional Yoga’. It is associated with divine love as it is the greatest pathway to spiritual enlightenment through love and devotion. In this path an individual sees God as the supreme expression and embodiment of love. Its main features are – to chant the lord's name, singing his praise or bhajans and engaging in worship and ritual. It is the easiest and the most popular one. Bhakti Yoga leads to the purification of mind and heart and can be achieved by numerous mental & physical yoga practices. It also gives courage in

adverse situations. It is basically developing compassionate feeling and focusing on purifying inner self with pure divine love.

4. **KRIYA YOGA** – It is the physical practice wherein several body postures are performed through meditation techniques of energy and breath control or pranayama. In this, the development of body, mind and soul takes place. By practicing the Kriya yoga the entire human system is energized in a short time. All the internal organs such as the liver, pancreas etc are activated. Necessary hormones and enzymes are secreted to keep body healthy. The blood absorbs high amount of oxygen and becomes de-carbonized quickly which helps in general well being and number of psychosomatic diseases are avoided. Through more circulation in the head, the brain cells are energized, the working capacity of brain is enhanced and the memory becomes sharp and a person does not get tired easily.

Peace of Mind, Consciousness and Soul

To live in harmony with oneself and the environment is the wish of every human. However, in modern times greater physical and emotional demands are constantly placed upon many areas of life. The result: more and more people suffer from physical and mental tension such as stress, anxiety, insomnia, and there is an imbalance in physical activity and proper Exercise. This why of methods and techniques for the attainment and improvement of health, as well as physical, mental and spiritual harmony, are of great importance, comprehensively offers an aid to help one's self. It is systematic and graduated, integrating all areas of life and offering something valuable for each phase of life. Regardless of age or physical constitution, this system opens the classical path of Yoga to all. In developing this system to accommodate the needs of today's people, much consideration was given to the conditions within modern society, without losing the originality and effect of the ancient teachings. The word "Yoga" originates from Sanskrit and means "to join, to unite". Yoga exercises have a holistic effect and bring body, mind, consciousness and soul into balance. In this way Yoga assists us in coping with everyday demands, problems and worries. Yoga helps to develop a greater understanding of our self, the purpose of life and our relationship to God. On the spiritual path, Yoga leads us to supreme knowledge and eternal bliss in the union of the individual Self with the universal Self. Yoga is that supreme, cosmic principle. It is the light of life, the universal creative consciousness that is always awake and never sleeps; that always was, always is, and always will be. Many thousands of years ago in India, Rishis (wise men and saints) explored nature and the cosmos in their meditations. They discovered the laws of the material and spiritual realms and gained an insight into the connections within the universe. They investigated the cosmic laws, the laws of nature and the elements, life on earth and the powers and energies at work in the universe - both in the external world as well as on a spiritual level. The unity of matter and energy, the origin of the universe and the effects of the elementary powers have been described and explained in the Vedas. Much of this knowledge has been rediscovered and confirmed by modern science. These are experiences and insights a far-reaching and comprehensive system known as Yoga originated and gave us valuable, practical instructions for the body, breath, concentration, relaxation and

meditation. Positive Thinking, perseverance, discipline, orientation towards the Supreme, prayer as well as kindness and understanding form the way to Self-Knowledge and Self-Realization.

The main goals of Yoga are:

Physical Health•

Mental Health•

Social Health•

Spiritual Health•

Self- Realization or realization of the Divine within us•

These goals are attained by:

Love and help for all living beings• Respect for life, protection of nature and the environment•
A peaceful state of mind• Pure thoughts and positive lifestyle• Physical, mental and spiritual practices• Tolerance for all nations, cultures and religions•

Physical Health

The health of the body is of fundamental importance in life. To preserve and restore health there are physical exercises (Asanas), breath exercises (Pranayama) and relaxation techniques. Within “Yoga in Daily Life” the classic Asanas and Pranayamas are divided into an eight-level system, beginning with “SarvaHitaAsanas” (meaning, “Exercises that are good for everyone”). Seven other parts follow this preparatory level and lead progressively through the practice of Asanas and Pranayamas. Several special programs have been developed from the basic exercises: “Yoga for Back Pain”, “Yoga for Joints”, “Yoga for Seniors”, “Yoga for Managers” and “Yoga for Children”. To maintain good health, other valuable exercises within “Yoga in Daily Life” are the purification techniques of Hatha Yoga. These involve Deep Relaxation (Yoga Nidra), Concentration Exercises (e.g. Trataka) as well as Mudras and Bandhas (special Yoga techniques). An even greater factor in the maintenance of good health is the food we eat. What we eat influences both our body and psyche - our habits and qualities. In short, the food we eat has an effect upon our whole being. Food is the source of our physical energy and vitality. Balanced and healthy foods include: grains, vegetables, pulses, fruit, nuts, milk and milk products, as well as honey, sprouts, salads, seeds, herbs and spices - either raw or freshly cooked. Foods to be avoided are old, reheated or denatured foods, meat (including all meat products and fish) and eggs. It is also best to avoid alcohol, nicotine and drugs as these rapidly destroy our health.

Mental Health

Negative thoughts and fears create an imbalance in our nervous system and through our physical function. This is the cause of many illnesses and sorrows. Clarity of thought, inner Freedom, contentment and a healthy self-confidence are the basis for mental wellbeing. That is why we strive to gradually overcome our negative qualities and thoughts and aim to develop positive thoughts and behavior. “Yoga in Daily Life” offers numerous methods to attain mental wellbeing: Mantra practice, the observance of ethical principles, the keeping of good company and the study of inspiring texts to purify and free the mind. An important tool in self-investigation and self-knowledge is the technique of “Self-Inquiry Meditation”, a step-by-step meditation technique of Self-Analysis. In this meditation practice we come into contact with our subconscious, the source of our desires, complexes, behavioral patterns and prejudices. The practice guides us to become acquainted with our own nature - as we are and why we are so - and then beyond self-acceptance to Self-Realization. This technique enables us to overcome negative qualities and habits and helps us to better manage life’s problems.

Social Health

Social health is the ability to be happy within oneself and to be able to make others happy. It means to nurture genuine contact and communication with other people, to assume responsibility within society and to work for the community. Social health is also the ability to relax and experience life in all its beauty. One of the growing problems of our times is drug addiction. It is a clear sign of social illness. The system of “Yoga in Daily Life” can assist in overcoming this illness and grant people a new, positive aim and purpose in life. The importance of keeping good, positive company has a great influence upon our psyche, as such companionship moulds and forms our personality and character. Positive company is of great importance in spiritual development. Living “Yoga in Daily Life” means to work for ourselves and for the benefit of others. To do valuable and constructive work for our neighbours and the community, to preserve nature and the environment and work for peace in the world. To practice Yoga means to be active in the most positive sense and to work for the welfare of all of mankind.

Spiritual Health

The main principle of spiritual life and the highest precept of mankind are: AHIMSA – PARAMO- DHARMA This precept embraces the principle of non-violence, in thought, word, feeling and action. Prayer, meditation, Mantra, positive thinking and tolerance, lead to spiritual health. Humans should be protectors, not destroyers. Those qualities that really make us human are the ability to give, understand and forgive. To protect life and respect the individuality and independence of all forms of life is a primary practice of the Yoga teachings. By following this precept greater tolerance, understanding, mutual love, help and compassion develops - not only between individuals, but between all humans, nations, races, and religious faiths.

Self-Realization or realization of the Divine within us (Healthy Life)

Moksha is the summumbonum of life. It is freedom from births and deaths. It is not annihilation. It is annihilation of this little 'I'. It is obtained through knowledge of the Self. You will have to know the Truth through direct intuitive experience. You will have to cut asunder the veil of ignorance by meditation on the Self. Then you will shine in your pristine purity and divine glory. Do not try to drive away the unimportant and irrelevant thoughts. The more you try, the more will they return and the more strength will they gain. You will only tax your energy and will. Become indifferent. Fill the mind with divine thoughts. The others will gradually vanish. Get yourself established in Nirvikalpa Samadhi through meditation. Without perfect Brahmacharya, you cannot have substantial spiritual progress. There is no half measure in the spiritual path. Control the body first. Then purify your thoughts through prayer, Japa, Kirtan, Vichara and meditation. Make a firm resolve, "I will be a perfect Brahmachari from today." Pray to the Lord to give you spiritual strength to resist the temptations of life and kill lust. Constant study of the lives of saints will enable you to lead a virtuous life. You will imbibe very noble qualities. You will be gradually moulded in the spiritual path. You will draw inspiration from them. There will be an inner urge in you to attempt for God-realization. Pray to the Lord that you may become a saint.

Conclusion

To conclude the fundamental principle of "Yoga" is religious freedom. Yoga is not a religion - it is the source of spirituality and wisdom, the root of all religions. Yoga transcends religious boundaries and reveals the way to unity. "Yoga" offers the spiritual aspirant guidance on life's path through the practices of Mantra Yoga and Kriya Yoga. As the most highly developed beings upon earth, humans are capable of realizing their real nature and inner Self, God. The spiritual goal of Yoga is God-Realization, the union of the individual soul with God. The realization that we are all one in our common root and connection to God is the first step. Decisions regarding your health and Wellbeing and a free, happy life, are in your hands. Practice regularly with firm determination and success will be certain. I wish all Yoga practitioners and those still to become practitioners much happiness, success, health, harmony, joy in life and God's blessing.

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