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Importance of yoga in twenty first century

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Abstract

In this modern world of 21st century our environment is struggling for endurance and survival and we human beings suffer from more and more physical and psychological stress and strains. We cannot always control them, but can find out the ways to face them and to this end Yoga is a good creation. The aim of yoga is achievement of physical, mental and spiritual harmony. Yoga is an internal expedition that creates an awareness and understanding of yourself and leads you to self transformation. It is a primordial science of self-development that filters your mind and body and sustains perfect balance and harmony between them. In other words, it is an art of controlling your mind, body and breath and unlocking the hidden potential energies. Yoga can be in meditation form and it could also be a form of physical exercise. Many human beings are so busy with their personal lives that they have even forgotten the correct way to breathe. Yoga is a way of life for good living and for the benefit of the body. Yoga is the only technique through which the body of any human being can be healthy without any trainer, equipment and medicine. Thus, my purpose of this paper makes an attempt to analyse the role and importance of Yoga in Modern times of 21st century as well as its effect on human beings in this contemporary times.

Keywords: yoga, psychological stress, spiritual harmony, meditation

Introduction

Yoga is a spiritual science for the integrated and holistic enlargement and magnification of our physical, mental as well as moral-spiritual facets. Yoga is based on the philosophy that is practical and useful for our daily lives. Yoga constructs desirable physiological alterations and has sound scientific foundations. Carl G. Jung the eminent Swiss psychologist, described yoga as “one of the greatest things the human mind has ever created” (“What is Yoga...”). The word Yoga originated from “the Sanskrit word Yuj’ meaning to yoke, join or unite (“Wikipedia”). This entails unifying all facets of the individual - body with mind and soul - to achieve a balanced life. The practice of yoga may lead to the unification of the human with the celestial. The aim of yoga is the alteration of human beings from their ordinary form to an ideal form. The Yogic practices began in the ancient depths of India's past. From this early period the interior attitudes and disciplines which were later acknowledged and given logical expression by Patanjali.

To the ancients, Yoga is a complete system, of which the postures are a small, though quite useful *part*. The word "Yoga" referred to the *whole*, not merely one part, which is the postures, or Asanas. The entire purpose of Yoga is spiritual in nature, according to the ancient sages. In modern times, the relative position of the postures has been elevated, so as to lead people to believe that the word "Yoga" refers to physical postures or Asanas, and that the goal of these is physical fitness. The *whole* and the *part* have been reversed, terribly misleading and confusing people about the true nature of authentic Yoga. (“Modern Yoga...”)

Our present day life is so chaotic and stressful that even thinking of ancient days soothes our heart and brain. The lifestyle of human beings with the passage of time has gradually changed. Science has dominated the present age and the modern man fully depends on it. Physical labour has reduced and ultimately the health of modern man has weakened due to lack of workout. In this age of competition, life is so hard and stressful that man is unable to cope up and hence suffering from various psychological and mental disorders. Yoga provides the best solution of these problems to which modern man is the sufferer. No other exercise, except Yoga, can deal with these problems all together. Yoga manages all problems simultaneously in

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a brilliant way. To compare with other games and exercises which provide only muscular and cardio-vascular fitness, Yoga gives an all-round development

A significant difference between the two is that Physical exercise is basically an exercise of skeletal muscles, but what about other involuntary muscles and organs. It is Yoga, which provides a solution to each and every part of our body. Yoga provides, exercise, massage and toning to all organs and to all types of muscles. In other words, the effect of Yoga reached to all internal organs to which the effect of no other exercise can reach.

For human it is not only the striated muscles which need to be strengthened, but it is the whole body which needs to treat effectively to gain strength, energy, flexibility and sound health. Now a day the definition of health has almost changed. Health is considered as the state of mental and physical, in which the individual is functionally well adjusted inwardly as concerns his body parts, and outwardly as concerns his environments. According to WHO – “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.” Recently this definition has been improved and it has been added, “Attainment of a level of health that will enable every individual to lead a socially and economically productive life” (Karalay 2015).

Yoga not only deals with this broad definition of health, but also deals with other aspects like healing of injury and psychological disorders and provides curative treatment of many diseases. Yoga along with Naturopathy, Ayurved, and Acupressure provide solution of many complicated diseases. Yoga is a universal remedy for one who sincerely wants to seek it. Here it is essential to discuss the manner in which techniques of yoga affects the physical and mental fitness; and social well-being of humanity.

Due to modern life style man is suffering from various postural deformities and diseases like Obesity, Hypertension, Diabetes, Migraine, Cervical, Backaches, Depression, Anxiety, Cancer, Insomnia, Constipation, Allergy, Asthma, Cardiac diseases and etc. Various postural deformities like Kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis, knocked knee etc. can be seen in the modern population. For these deformities congenital can be there, but the acquired especially the life style of an individual is more responsible than any other reason. The population involved in the chair job and driving generally suffered from Khyposis and as a result cervical spondylitis occurs. Yogasanas like Bhujangasana, Matyasayana, Chakarasana etc. yields best result, but in the advance stage of diseases suksham Yog is helpful as muscles are too weak to bear the stress of asanas. Obesity, wearing high heels shoes, carrying a heavy weight on the back and pregnancy in some cases results in Lordosis. These people generally suffer from back ache especially in the lumbar region. In lordosis, Scoliosis and knocked knee, whether acquired or genetic, Yoga provides the best solution. In the present era of Science, the human muscles are suffering from atrophy due to lack of muscular activity. This result in weakness, sprain and strain due to atrophy of skeletal muscle. Atrophy of involuntary visceral muscle results in constipation and other digestive ailments. Regular practice of Yoga eradicates them forever.

Various types of stresses and pollution give birth to many diseases like Hypertension, Depression, Anxiety, Insomnia, Allergy, Asthma etc. They too are cured with Asanas, Sat Karmas, Pranayam and Meditation. The vibrations of the sound waves generated in the cranium by the reverberation of the word ‘OM’ during Bhramri pranyam cure many types’

headaches and mental disorders. The modern lifestyle is the slave of intoxicated drinks and drugs, social and moral ethics are harassing. In such condition Yam and Niyam of Asthang Yog come forward to suggest the right path.

Yoga has achieved wonderful popularity in the last few years, it is the quickest growing health movement, and despite it were developed thousands years ago. Age, religion, caste, sex has no bar with breathing and meditation techniques. There are many types of yoga and it may be hard for the beginners which type of yoga he or she wants to do. The most important advantage of yoga is the physical and mental therapy, the very essence of yoga lies in accomplishing mental peace, enhanced concentration power and a relaxed state of living. There are many health benefits of yoga, studies have shown that yoga can relieve many common and life threatening illness such as arthritis, chronic fatigue, diabetes, AIDS, asthma, high blood pressure, back pain, weight reduction, obesity, common cold, constipation, epilepsy, skin problems and respiration problems. Yoga also helps in rehabilitation of new and old injuries.

Regular yoga practice builds mental lucidity and coolness, boost body awareness, relives stress patterns, relaxes the minds and sharpens concentration. Yoga provides tools through which one can manage which the pain and helps contradict with the feeling of helplessness and depression. Yogic breathing and stretching exercises have been seen to result in better mental and physical energy and improved mood. The mental performance also increases with yoga. Doctors also have suggested that yoga can enhance cognitive performance.



1 What are the benefits of yoga?

- Improves your flexibility
- Builds muscle strength
- Perfects your posture
- Prevents cartilage and joint breakdown
- Protects your spine
- Better your bone health
- Increases your blood flow
- Drains your lymph and boost immunity

2. Yoga for weight loss

Desire of many! *Yoga helps* here too. Sun Salutations and Kapalbhathi pranayama 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 the time we take. This can also help keep a check on our weight.



3. Yoga for stress relief. 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 experience the calming effects of yoga in the Sri Sri Yoga Level 2 program.

4. Yoga for 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.

5. Yoga to improve immunity. Our system is a seamless blend of the body, mind and spirit. An irregularity in the body affects the mind and similarly unpleasantness or restlessness in the mind can manifest as an ailment in the body. Yoga poses massage organs and strengthens muscles; breathing techniques and meditation release stress and improve immunity.

6. Yoga to live with greater awareness. The mind is constantly involved in activity – swinging from the past to the future – but never staying in the present. By simply being aware of this tendency of the mind, we can actually save ourselves from getting stressed or worked up and relax the mind. Yoga and pranayama help create that awareness and bring the mind back to the present moment, where it can stay happy and focused.

7. Yoga for better relationships. Yoga can even help improve your relationship with your spouse, parents, friends or loved ones! A mind that is relaxed, happy and contented is better able to deal with sensitive relationship matters. Yoga and meditation keeps the mind happy and peaceful; and watch how your relations with those around you blossom !

8. Yoga to increase energy. Do you feel completely drained by the end of the day? Shuttling through chores, and multitasking continuously can be quite exhausting. A few minutes of yoga everyday provides the much-needed fillip that boosts our energy and keeps us fresh. A 10-minute online-guided meditation is all you need to charge up your batteries, in the middle of a hectic day.

9. Yoga for better flexibility & posture. *Yoga* must become

part of your daily routine to *get* 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.

10. Yoga to improve intuition. *Yoga and meditation* have the power to improve your intuitive ability so that you spontaneously realize what needs to be done, when and how, to yield positive results. It does work! You only need to experience it yourself.

Remember, yoga is a continuous process. So keep practicing! The deeper you go into your *yoga practice*, the more profound will be its benefits.



Physical benefits

There are many health benefits from yoga, studies have shown that yoga can relieve much common and life threatening illness such as arthritis, chronic fatigue, diabetes, AIDS, asthma high blood pressure, back pain, weight reduction, obesity, common cold, constipation, epilepsy, skin problems and respiration problems. Yoga also helps in rehabilitation of new and old injuries. Yogasanas like Bhujangasana, Matyasayana, Chakrasana etc. yields best result, but in the advanced stage of diseases suk sham Yog is helpful as muscles are too weak to bear the stress of asanas.

Psychological benefits

Regular yoga practice helps you to become normal from your abnormal stage of living, it also gives you mental clarity and calmness, increases body awareness, relieves stress patterns, relaxes the minds and increases concentration. Yoga provides you a tool, with the help of this tool which one can cope which their problems, helps counter with the feeling of helplessness and depression. Yogic breathing and stretching exercises have been seen to result in better mental and physical energy and improved mood.

Conclusion

So Yoga is a multidimensional aspect and its scope has increased in the modern life of twenty first century. It is obvious that yoga is a boon for the 'modern' man of twenty first century, which has become a victim of everyday stress. Modern research has recognized the scientific roots of yogic practices and yoga has now achieved international recognition and acclaim. As we all know, 21st June has declared as Yoga

Day in all over the world and it has celebrated in all over the world. Today, yoga is a painstakingly worldwide phenomenon, it has taken the world by tempest and is gaining reputation day by day. It is enviable that yoga must be made an integral part of our educational as well as health care systems. If our masses practice yoga, they will be physically, mentally and spiritually healthy. The rush and burden of our hospitals will be greatly reduced. Hence, there is an urgent need to popularize yoga among the human beings. Yoga is reliable with our ethnicity and harmonizing to science, so, it is our primary duty to endorse it further.

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