

Yoga: A Way for Wholesome Development of an Individual in Modern Era

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Abstract

Yoga is not merely an activity, but, a way of life. It is an ancient Indian Philosophical System known believed to be practiced since around 5000 years mainly by the hermits. It is now an established fact that the practice of yoga improves various aspects of the personality of an individual and leads him towards the attainment of the supreme goal of life i.e. Salvation. Continuous practice of yogic poses and exercises helps the smooth and efficient transmission of oxygen to all parts of the human body. Yogic practice enhances and complements the various abilities of a person, thus helping in his overall development. Yoga is not only beneficial to sports persons, but it is necessary to common man also in the modern world of stress and turmoil. Yoga is not merely associated with physical and mental faculties of human being but leads to the attainment of spiritual awakening through continuous efforts. This of course requires considerable time, energy and commitment to practice if one has to achieve this goal. A flexible, strong and healthy human body is the most important requirement to lead a happy life. If one is not able to move the body with the grace, velocity and speed required, then his performance in any field of will also be lackluster. So, we can say that Yoga in modern times is very much beneficial to everyone especially for overburdened working class.

Keywords: Yoga, Philosophical, Wholesome Development, Salvation.

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Introduction:

Wholesome development of an individual in modern world of stress and turmoil is a burning issue especially after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world. COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the immunity of human beings and caused them to remain indoors. Wholesome development includes the harmonious development of Physical, Mental, Social and Emotional aspects of an individual. An individual is supposed to be physically fit, mentally alert, Socially adjustable and emotionally stable. Yoga practice aims at the development of physical, mental and emotional aspects of an individual, thus making him fit for social responsibilities. It has convincing scientific bases and produces consistent physiological changes in our body. It is well established fact that Yogis have remarkable endurance and excellent controlling of their autonomic functions. There is enough evidence suggesting that the yogic practices improve cardio-respiratory efficiency and performance capabilities of an individual. Through laboratory experiments, it has been demonstrated that people trained in yogic practices can achieve a state of deep mental and emotional relaxation associated with a significant reduction in oxygen consumption. Yoga has both preventive and therapeutic effects. It provides both physical and mental benefits to our body and mind. Term 'Yoga' has its origin in Sanskrit language which means 'to unite'. Yoga helps the body to unite with the other vital metaphysical aspects of the mind and spirit. It is truly considered as a lifestyle that aims to have a healthy mind within a healthy body. Yoga is most simply defined as a set of poses (Asanas), coupled with breathing techniques (Pranayama), which help impart strength, endurance and flexibility to the body while helping to balance the thought process. By practicing yoga, one can not only acquire physical health, but also mental and spiritual well-being. More emphasis should be given to the teaching and practice of yoga and yogic exercises in educational institutions to overcome physical, mental and physiological complications. Human mind and body are having certain limitations to bear the load of tensions caused by the modern hectic life style. If this load surpasses those limitations, the balance of the psycho-physiological processes of our body is disturbed which results into certain symptoms of mental disorders. Therefore, yogic practices are an ideal complement to overcome these problems. Yoga asanas are the physical positions that coordinate breath with body movement and help to stretch and strengthen

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different parts of human body. Yogic exercises cause systematically mobilization of major muscle groups of our body and help the smooth transportation of oxygen to body cells through conscious deep breathing and sustained stretching & contraction of various muscle groups. Yoga is helpful in checking any imbalance in muscular development and enables our body parts to function more efficiently. Yoga practice helps to increase flexibility, poise and balance of our body parts. Regular Yoga practice also helps to strengthen body tissues and minimize/repair the breakdown of tissues, thus helping to lessen the risk of injuries caused by overload of muscles due to over busy schedule of day-to-day work. It helps fast recovery/rehabilitation from injuries through mobility of muscles and joints. The deep rhythmic practice of 'Pranayama' breathing helps to create and build up an individual's life force energies or Prana.

Yoga for Physical Development:

Physical development includes strength, speed, endurance, flexibility and coordinative abilities of an individual. Out of these speed is an inherent ability of a person and depends mostly upon the naturally acquired traits. Rest all abilities can be acquired through proper proportion of exercise, diet and rest. In the modern era of stress and tension due to unnatural life schedule, most of us feel a need to come and plonk ourselves in our drawing or bed room after a hard day's work with very little energy to even fetch a glass of water for ourselves. This condition is caused when we are lacking in endurance or inner strength. Endurance or inner strength is very much essential in prevention of injuries caused due to overload and stress. Yoga asana and pranayama are very helpful in building up stamina thus increasing our inner strength. It is wrongfully believed that a person needs to be flexible in order to practice yoga which is not true. In fact, it is the other way round because one can make himself/herself more flexible by practicing Yoga. Flexibility improves the ability to perform our tasks more easily and efficiently. A lot of Yoga asana emphasize on stretching to improve our flexibility e.g. Trikonasana, Dhanurasana and Bhujangasana. Yoga practice not only the muscles of the body are worked out, but also the softer tissues of our body get a good exercise, resulting in less buildup of the lactic acid in our body, which is responsible for stiffness in various parts of the body. Yogic practice increases a range of motions of the less or under used inner

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muscles and helps in lubrication of body joints. This results in a more flexible body which is able to perform daily tasks more easily and efficiently. Yoga has a lot of positive effects on the cardiovascular system of our body. A healthy cardiovascular system is responsible for preventing heart attacks, strokes and hypertension. Heart disease is a problem which has roots in an improper lifestyle, faulty diet and negative thinking.

Yoga for Mental Development:

Mental development refers to the ability of a person to be 'mentally alert' towards the happenings in and around himself. Optimum mental health is of utmost importance to make oneself healthy physically as well. As discussed above, Pranayama (breathing technique) forms an integral part of Yoga because by breathing deeply in a right manner, one can inhale more oxygen thus allowing the body cells to have access to that oxygen for a longer period of time. For example, 'Anulom-Vilom' is very a common yogic practice in which an individual is to breathe only from one nostril at a time, while holding the other one closed with the tip of your finger. Research has proved that this helps increased activity of the opposite side of the brain, leading to better cognitive performance and tasks associated with the other side of the brain. Regular yoga practice helps children with attention deficit disorder and people suffering from anxiety, depression and mood swings. It also helps keep the mind calm and reduce stress and thereby increase the general well-being of the person.

Yoga for Emotional Development:

It states that an individual need to be emotionally balanced. It means one should be able 'to stay calm and poised under all circumstances i.e. situations of distress or happiness'. Our thoughts, emotions and feelings affect our body and negative emotions/thoughts send a series of complex and unhealthy chemical processes throughout the body, giving alarms that something is amiss. Yoga tends to control these by bringing in fresh life-giving oxygen. The antioxidant properties of Yoga help to block the negative emotions in our mind and promote a general well-being of an individual. Yoga also helps in better reception and retention of information for a prolonged duration as it improves one's concentration through meditation. Meditative Asana and Pranayama cause an improved blood flow to the brain, thus, making it supple

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and ready to accept more information and reproduce that information as and when required.

Conclusion:

Conclusion of the study as highlighted above is that Yoga can play an important and significant role in the wholesome development of an individual irrespective of the work he does in his daily routine. It helps to improve the various aspects of our personality to a certain extent if practiced on a regular basis. It also helps to perform our daily tasks efficiently and effectively because Individuals practicing Yoga have a higher degree of concentration and focus with a mind that is calm and controlled. Yoga can help in balance our mind and control of our thoughts even during stress and/or adverse situations. Yoga can play a key role in cultivating a Body-mind coordination which helps a person to exhibit his optimum potential in any area of work. Yoga is beneficial to each age group, gender and individuals from every walk of life. Modern stressful life styles of humans have put forth a challenge to their health and fitness aspects thus making them more vulnerable to various diseases and deformities. Yoga can play a decisive role in prevention as well as cure of various diseases and deformities thus making the life much happier

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