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IMPORTANCE OF YOGA IN DAILY LIFE

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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 in Daily Life" 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, Full vegetarian diet, 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. Pranayama is an important, yet little known part of Yoga. Until recently, this art and science of yogic breathing was almost completely unknown to the common man like many other ancient Indian arts. Pranayama techniques act to purify the nadis including these three main energy channels.

Introduction

ॐसहनाववतु।सहनौभुनक्तु।
सहवीर्यकरवावहै।तेजस्विनावधितमस्तु।
माविद्विषावहै।ॐशान्तिःशान्तिःशान्तिः॥

Om Saha Navavatu
Saha Nau Bhunaktu
Saha Virya Karvav-Hai
Te-Jasvi Nava dhitam-Astu
Ma Vidvi Şav-Hai
Om Santi॥ santi॥ santi॥

OM Paramatma, protect and bless us.

Give us strength to come to the end of the path,
To eternal knowledge,
Help us so that we do not turn against one another,
and eternally united continue on the path together.
OM Peace Peace Peace

-Swami Maheshwarananda

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

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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.

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, and it is exactly in this respect that "Yoga in Daily Life" comprehensively offers an aid to help one's self. Throughout the many years that I have been active in western countries, I have become familiar with the modern lifestyle and the physical and psychological problems faced by the people of today. The knowledge and experience I gained led me to develop the system of "Yoga in Daily Life". 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. The practices that this book offers have therefore already proven themselves over thousands of years and have been found to be helpful by millions of people.

The system “Yoga in Daily Life” is taught worldwide in Yoga Centres, Adult Education Centres, Health Institutions, Fitness and Sports Clubs, Rehabilitation Centres and Health Resorts. It is suitable for all age groups - it requires no “acrobatic” skills and also provides the unfit, as well as handicapped, ill and convalescent people, the possibility of practicing Yoga. The name itself indicates that Yoga can be and should be used “in Daily Life”.

The exercise levels were worked out in consultation with doctors and physiotherapists and can therefore with observation of the stated rules and precautions be practiced independently at home by anyone. “Yoga in Daily Life” is a holistic system, which means it takes into consideration not only the physical, but also the mental and spiritual aspects. 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 in Daily Life” 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

- Full vegetarian diet
- 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. As the Swiss-born Physician, Paracelsus, very correctly said, “Health isn't everything, but without health everything is nothing”. 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

In general, we are led through life by the mind and senses, rather than having these under our control. However, to gain control of the mind, we must first place it under inner analysis and purify it. Negative thoughts and fears create an imbalance in our nervous system and through this 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)

Cultivate indomitable will. Practice self-control and self-mastery. Have self-confidence. Develop independent judgment. Do not argue. Strive ceaselessly for Self-realization. Kill this little ego. Develop pure love. Rise above all distinctions of caste, creed and colour. Give up the idea of 'I-ness', 'Mine-ness'. Look within for the happiness which you have sought in vain in the sensual objects.

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.

The Techniques of Pranayama

Yogic techniques are known to improve one’s overall performance. Pranayama is an important, yet little known part of Yoga. Until recently, this art and science of yogic breathing was almost completely unknown to the common man like many other ancient Indian arts. Those who knew it used to be very reluctant to share their knowledge and experience with anyone, unless a student proved by tests that he was ready to receive it.

“Tasmin sati swasprawas yogativich Pranayama”

This having been (accomplished) “Pranayama” which is control of inspiration and expiration¹ the inspiration of prana-vayuisshwasa and expiration is prashwasa and the cessation of both is characteristic of Pranayama. Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra describes – Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi as eight angas (parts) of Yoga. Amongst them, in the present materialistic world, the third and fourth part, Pranayama and Asana (Postures) are considered as very important part and prescribed by modern medicine too. The beneficial effects of different Pranayama are well reported and has sound scientific basis. 2-3 There is reported evidences of Pranayama that it increases chest wall expansion and lung volumes.

The ancient sages also discovered that among the thousands of nadis there are three which are the most powerful energy channels and, when purified enough, these can promote the development of the human being in all three planes: physical, mental and spiritual, allowing us to reach higher levels of consciousness. These channels are called IDA, PINGALA and SHUSHUMNA nadis. Pranayama techniques act to purify the nadis including these three main energy channels. Yogis discovered a long time ago that breathing through the left nostril stimulates the IDA nadi or the “moon channel” (connected with the parasympathetic nervous system) and breathing through the right nostril stimulates the PINGALA nadi or the “sun channel” (connected with sympathetic nervous system). By balancing the functioning of both nadis (that is, both aspects of the autonomic nervous system) we can stimulate the main energy channel called SHUSHUMNA and harmonize the activity of the nervous system as a whole.

Conclusions

To conclude the fundamental principle of “Yoga in Daily Life” 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 in Daily Life” 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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