

Evolving Human Values through Yoga

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Abstract

Human beings are made from three components—body, mind and spirit corresponding these there are three needs—health, knowledge and inner peace. Health is physical need; knowledge is our psychological needs and inner peace is spiritual need when all three are present then there's harmony. Harmony and balance are necessity of human life.

Yoga gives us relief from countless ailments at the physical level. The practice of the postures (asanas) strengthens the body and creates a sense of wellbeing. From the psychological view point, yoga sharpens the intellect and aid in concentration; it steadies the emotions and encourages a caring for others [1,2,4].

The practice of breathing techniques (pranayama) calms the mind. within the realm of the spiritual yoga brings awareness and therefore the ability to be still. Through meditation inner peace is experienced. Thus, yoga may be a practical philosophy involving every aspect of a person's being. It teaches the evolution of the individual by the event of self-discipline and self-awareness. [2,3] Anyone regardless of age, health circumstances of life and religion can practice yoga. Yoga helps to discipline our sense of power with the “power of our own”.

If we peep into the advantages of yoga, they're numerous. It improves fitness, stress, controls general wellbeing, mental clarity and greater self-understanding. [4,5,6] People of all ages can do yoga and it also may be adapted for people with disabilities or special needs. The asanas enhance muscle strength, coordination, flexibility and may help to stay our body fit control cholesterol level, reduces weight, normalizes vital sign and improves cardiovascular performance.

Keywords: Evolving human values, Body mind and spirit, Yoga, Asana, Pranayama.

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EVOLVING HUMAN VALUES THROUGH YOGA

Introduction:

As we all are well about that the human beings are made from three components—body, mind and spirit corresponding these there are three needs—health, knowledge and inner peace. Health is physical need; knowledge is our psychological needs and inner peace is spiritual need when all three are present then there's harmony [6]. Harmony and balance are necessity of human life.

Apart from these when people actively seek to reduce the stress in their lives by consoling the mind. The body often works to heal itself. In this sense yoga can be seen not only as a way to get into shape on several levels, but also as a tool for self-healing.

In today's world of information and inter planetary voyages most of the people find it difficult to devote time towards their health and fitness. [7,8,9] This has led to drastic increase in health problems and health related stress—the number one killer in modern days. Unlike the early part of the century when infectious diseases were the leading killers, today's health problems are mostly related to life style.

Cardiovascular, heart disease, stroke, and arteriosclerosis, chronic lung disease, diabetes, cirrhosis of liver, suicide and several forms of cancer along with the newly introduced Corona Virus in china, are all related to unhealthy lifestyle and behavior. At one point of time or the other, a doctor comes into the scene in every individual's life.

Yoga as a Pathy:

Yoga is also self-diagnosis, healing prevention and maintenance. Although it is not replacement

of one's doctor, yet it has been practiced safely and successfully by millions of people who never had doctors, for thousands of years. [10] With the help of yoga, the doctor and the individual can both monitor the progress and the doctor will definitely learn from individual how beneficial yoga really is. Yoga is not just a set of physical practices while at the same time it is a mental, social, emotional and behavioral practices as well. Despite of a lot of efforts peoples of all around the world don't recognize this as a whole complete package of health, still gradually people all around the globe start realizing that there is a hope comes with the practice of yoga because it's a philosophy which has a power to change a man wholly.

In the context of self-diagnosis yoga postures and exercises can be easily done and that too with minimal possible effort. The magic of yoga is that as we begin the basic stretches we can immediately discover where our deficiencies are. If we are really up to, then we should not be discouraged by this.

We can do yoga, as perfectly as possible with a modest amount of care and patience, yoga triggers our body's natural adaptive and rejuvenating powers. Unless we use it, we will lose it and if we start using it again, we can get most of it back. Some people even claim that yoga gave them more vitality than they ever had in their lives. Even those who began later in life also benefited from its practice. [11,12]

As for athletes or sports persons, yoga can be a powerful enhancement in regular training exercises. Adding yoga in a routine training Programme helps develop strength, flexibility, range of motion, concentration, and cardio-

vascular health and reduces stress, tension and tightness. The most significant benefit of adding yoga to a training Programme is its effect on performance. [13] It allows an athlete to train harder and a higher level because of motion is greater and the fear of injury lessens.

Some people think it is divine others find it positively addictive and a powerfully effective substitute for negative habits. Whether borne of inspiration or by trial and error, yoga techniques substitute for the kinds of activities our early human ancestors must have done in the course of just living out in their arboreal lives. It is pretty to say that if we still hung around trees all our lives like other primates, then 70% to 90% of us would not end up suffering from chronic back, neck and head pain. [14,16,17]

Obviously, it takes time for our body to tuck itself in here and fill out there. Tissues have to grow. Others need to shrink. This is why it is important to drink lots of water and eats amount of wholesome food along with regular moderate exercise. In challenging those muscles to remodel themselves, we are literally clearing out lots of junks from our tissues.[15]

The essence of yoga is to make the process of life as efficient and enjoyable as possible. In the beginning it is essential that we learn not only what the stretches are, but how to stretch, how to relax and how to breathe etc. Then we will be ready to work out safely, yoga does not bring away the qualities of genuinely, wholesomeness, compassion, but rather instils them within us. It teaches us that love heals the giver at least as much as it does the recipient. In addition, therein dwells the sacred power of community, union, harmony, yoga and free and fair civilization. It is our birth right to have access to this information.

It is a sign of our wisdom if we use it, our enlightenment if we share it. [18,19]

As we start practicing simple asanas, we will immediately find out what needs attention the most while giving it the attention it calls for. The effects are immediate and the results keep becoming more apparent. The longer and more often we engage in the pure self-indulgent healing art of yoga. The more it will have a healing effect on us. Yoga is no less magical than the power of life itself. It unlocks life's wonder and unleashes hidden energies.

Through this art everyone can experience the Divine and enjoy the ecstasy of freedom from pain and ignorance apart from other gracious rewards like longevity and happiness. It has taken time for us to wind ourselves up in a knot. Naturally it takes time to unravel. If we are still breathing, it is never too soon or late to start yoga.

Radioactivity and radiation existed long before the evolution of the life on the earth, excessive radiation exposure is, no doubt, harmful and can cause genetic disorder, which may even, be fatal. Medical interest in free radicals is very recent, but chemists have been studying them closely for about 50 years. Disease cannot be wished away. In recent two decades, scientific studies have shown that ageing – in a biological sense – is due to what are called free radicals. Not only do we ingest food that gives rise to them but also does our body produce them. [20] They interfere with the body's basic metabolic processes adversely. Free radicals are the by-product of many chemical reactions in the human body and need to be managed to protect the body from their ill effects.[21]

They are considered to contribute chiefly for many diseases in general and cancer in particular.

The slew of free radical production is conventionally attributed to too much urbanization, pollution and junk food. Radioactive particles enter in the body through inhalation, ingestion, and injection. Man can receive radiation doses internally and externally. [22] External radiation exposure can be reduced by conventional methods such as time, distance and shielding. Whereas internal exposure that is more hazardous to the human body, as the radioactive particle may get sequester in the organs.

Apart from radioactive exposure and oxygen free radicals, many wrong habits and irregularity in lifestyles may lead to poor state of fitness and ultimately results in various health hazards. Therefore, there is a need to develop systematic strategy to educate the common people and making them conscious to prevent their fitness and health.

Yoga as a Medicine to Promote Health:

After much research, Larry Dossey has reached the conclusion that around 1950, scientific medicine transcended the mechanistic approach of physical medicine and entered the era of mind-body medicine. The scientific basis of mind-body medicine resides in **psychoneuroimmunology**. There is now ample evidence to show that depression and despair impair the function of the immune system, while peace, love, hopes and joy enhance immuno-competence. Yoga is of great relevance to mind-body medicine because of the way it looks at life. The yogic view of life is the best prescription even written for lasting peace and joy, which are independent of external events and circumstances. [22] Emotion is a Rajas guna of Prakriti, which is responsible for many types of disease. Psychophysiologically, emotions act upon our body through hypothalamus, which

controls ANS (Autonomic Nervous System) and the endocrine systems. Negative emotions like anger, fear, greed, jealousy give rise to somatic illness where on the other hand positive emotions like love, compassion, friendship, affection etc. give the strength to combat the stress. Illness due to negative emotions includes hyper acidity, hypertension, insomnia, menstrual disturbances, loss of appetite etc.

Mind Body & Medicine:

Yoga plays a vital role as the ancient Indian healing art. Classical Yoga is a science of human psychology. It works on three-facet viz. mental, physical & social states resulting in improved health, lesser greed for possession & efficient management of human life. The salubrious psychological effects of yoga reduce the possibility of illness. However, if illness does occur, the same psychological effects assist self-healing and relieve symptoms. [23] If even that fails, as it sometimes must, yoga guarantees that ever when afflicted with an incurable or painful disease, the person is not miserable. Concepts of mind-body medicine are being used effectively in the Integral Health Clinic (IHC) of All India Institute of Medical Sciences. IHC uses yoga as the foundation of psycho-spiritual transformation required for using the powers of the mind to heal the body.

Yoga has now become an integral part of scientific medicine. Mankind has everything to gain from this creative synthesis of the old and the new. A myriad of remedial measures was suggested in the form of modern medicine and naturopathy to neutralize the free radicals that are produced in the body. It is taken for granted that there is no way to avoid free radical production. However, the number and their consequent damage could be reduced. Yogic kriyas

emphasize to accelerate elimination of the foreign particles from the body. [22]

Yoga can be an effective measure to combat the effect of internal radiation exposures. Moreover, the cleansing process in yoga can be effectively utilized for removal of inhaled /ingested radioactive particles. Further, Yoga practices viz., Shatkarma, Asanas, Pranayama's, Bandhas, Mudras etc can be practiced to improve body resistance, which indirectly reduce the fatality in case of excessive exposure. [23] Yoga is a scientific system, which brings harmony in body and mind. It is very rational and scientific method by which a state of equilibrium in mind and body is achieved. Self-perfection or state of divinity is yoga. The yogic concept refers to the working of body and mind for a homeostatic mechanism, which contributes to a balanced integrated functioning in both external and internal stimulants. The psychological blocks, such as stress, tension, lack of attitude, motivation etc., are factors of internal imbalances and are not due to any external factors. The primary concern of yoga is to identify the elements causing ill health. Appropriate techniques i.e. Asanas, Pranayama, Mudras and Bandhas meet the specific health problems such as asthma, arthritics, back pain etc. Yoga is both preventive and curative. If yogic principles and techniques are used in proper way all types of ailments can be cured.

Human values influencing factors in Yoga:

This yogic system is Yogopathy. Yoga, being both static and dynamic in nature, improves the cardio-vascular efficiency in a healthy person as well as in a sick person. Pranayama is the function of the Pranic energy, where mind and prana are interdependent. The flow of Pranic energy through the nadis is responsible for health and vitality of the physical body. Yogic

techniques are also designed for the child and for pregnant women, to enhance the natural development of children with special needs.

Yoga therapy emphasizes on cultivation of correct psychophysiological functions. Holistic health in adult human beings is nothing else but ongoing movement towards increasingly accurate perception, appropriate feelings and precise actions with increasing pleasure, power, prosperity and profundity, perception, feelings and actions, which have been also expressed by terms Cognition, Affection and Conation respectively. In traditional parlance, this was called fulfillment of four Purusharthas, viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha through practice of Swadharama. Dharma refers to accuracy in perception, affect and conation. This leads to Artha i.e., acquisition of material gains, followed by Kaama i.e., satisfaction of the mundane desires (which are not against the Dharma i.e., principles of global welfare) Kaama is followed by Moksha i.e., liberation from all sorts of bonds.

Thus, it must be appreciated that for most of us holistic health refers to ever increasing and appropriate satisfaction of physical, instinctual, emotional, intellectual needs and fulfillment and happiness arising from it.

Along with technological revolutions, there is a need of the right kind of education which should combine science with spirituality, fitness with health, reasons with faith, *Prajna* with *karuna*, empirical knowledge with intuition and insight; which may keep both progress and peace as its goals and may be helpful in mitigating social evils.

There is a need of some change in our modern education to restore human values of truth, co-

operation, nonviolence, peace, love, respect for parents, elders, authority and hard work.

The Indian culture is deeply rooted in spiritual and ethical values and unless these values find their way into the life of students, education will lose its significance and will not fulfill its aim. Thus, inclusion of such values in the school curriculum may have real significance. Thus,

imbibing yoga in our daily lifestyle is significant and a beginning of the same is to be made through our young school age. Although it is high time to introduce Yoga in the educational system for implementing value education to young student generation, its real implication needs research-based evaluation. It was, therefore, thought desirable to undertake this article.

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