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Yogic Attitude For A Disciplined Way of Life

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ABSTRACT: -

Yoga is considered to be a practical science which can teach human beings to control the mind and emotions as well. It is a way of life that provides a rare opportunity to leave the madness of the world behind and attain inner peace. Yoga is the exact mind- body medicine and is one of the greatest treasures of the unique Indian cultural heritage. Yogic lifestyle, yogic diet, yogic attitude and various yogic practices helps us to strengthen ourselves and develop positive health. Yoga has been recognized since then as a psychotherapy for the preventive and curative aspects of different disease conditions. This is more evident when we realize that yoga enables us to adopt right attitudes towards our problems and thus tackle them effectively in a wise manner. This article tries to describe the role of yogic attitude in promoting health, relieving stress and in turn to develop a positive health and wellbeing.

Key words: holistic, spiritual, health, wellbeing, attitude



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INTRODUCTION

“Yoga is a methodized effort towards self perfection”- by Shri Aurobindo

Yoga is an ancient Indian way of life, which includes changes in mental attitude, diet and the practice of specific techniques such as *Yogaasanas* (postures), *Pranayama* (breathing practices) and meditation to attain the highest level of consciousness. It is a psychosomatic-spiritual discipline for achieving union and harmony between our mind, body and soul and the ultimate union of our individual consciousness with the universal consciousness^[1]. It is important to keep *Yoga* which holds the main key for the transformation of human life to a higher level of awareness. Skill in action, focus in perception, steady direction of energy, determination of effort and excellence in achievement along with inner calmness are all the aspects of *Yoga*. Such yogic attitudes can help us to grow and develop in life and unfold our highest personal and human potential. We should instill this during younger age itself as an important part of personal and social development^[2].

The yogic attitude might appear to be ideal but too impractical for everyday use. But just knowing about it serves no purpose unless a sincere effort is made to adopt the attitude in daily life. This is a small effort to see what it means and how it might be done.

The most important objective of *Yoga* is to attain liberation i.e., *Moksha*. Most of the people are not interested to attain this goal. Only some of them will adopt a yogic way of life for the attainment of liberation.

We all do some work, may be for a living or as a hobby. A housewife does plenty of work neither for a living nor as a hobby.

The three basic features to attain the yogic attitude are as follows:-

First, it is done without a sense of ego. The person apparently doing the work considers himself to be a mere instrument of the Divine.

Secondly, the work is done without any desire for

reward.

Third, since the work is done for the Divine, it is given away as an offering to the Divine. Done in this spirit, work brings lasting mental peace. Further, since the work is offered to the Divine, the person tries his best to make the product of the work fit for the Divine.

Even simple everyday acts such as eating, sleeping and speaking get transformed by the yogic attitude. Before eating we should say to ourselves that the purpose of eating is to sustain the body so that it can serve as an efficient instrument of the Divine. Before sleeping we should pray that the sleep may restore our strength so that we can resume with renewed vigor, the tasks for which we have been chosen by the Divine.

Just as our thoughts influence our words, words actually uttered also influence our thoughts. For example, expressing anger in words fuels anger, criticizing a person increases our hatred for him, and using of luxury goods increases our desire to possess them. On the other hand, giving expression to genuine appreciation, love or forgiveness fills us with peace and warmth.

Yoga helps us exactly that how to master our body, mind and senses, control of our attention, thoughts and emotions. *Yoga* should be an integral part of our daily life, should be added to our educational systems and a sustained learning of it should be adopted for the whole life. A yogic discipline is ideal to prepare us mentally and physically to face all the challenges in life^[3].

Yoga begins with yogic values and principles in our attitudes and behavior, which in turn means kindness, compassion, humility, respect, courage and detachment. It has its own specific principles and practices of *Dharmic* living which is the ideal foundation for the human values that we should develop in our life starting from the childhood itself.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ayurvedic samhitas, e samhitas, medical text

books, websites, and articles related to yoga which are peer reviewed and published are explored.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An overview of the eight yogic limbs:-

Yamas-

Ahimsa or non-harming will reduce the harm going on in the world. It means even the absence of ill feeling towards all living creatures in every way and all times^[4].

Satya, truthful in all aspects of life – in one's own thoughts, words, behavior. If a person establishes himself in truthfulness, whatever he says will become fruitful^[5].

Brahmacharya or control over senses and bodily urges. It means the action of a person whose awareness is absorbed in pure consciousness^[6].

Asteya, non-stealing or restraint from possessing the property belongs to others^[7].

Aparigraha or not craving what other people have. The tendency of possessiveness will always produce undesired mental fluctuation. If a person wants to store more wealth, it shows that he is much concerned about future life. Excessive concern over future life shows his attachment to the material world. When the person establishes in *Aparigraha* (non-attachment), he becomes independent and free^[8].

Such attitudes in life bring clarity and harmony to the mind and body.

Niyamas-

Saucha refers to both internal and external cleanliness. One should have purity in his thoughts, words and deeds. When a yogi establishes himself in *Saucha*, he gradually develops the indifference in one's own body. At that stage the yogi will realize that he is not the body^[9]. That is one should purify his mind by avoiding passion, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy. This will help a person to move on to the path of spirituality.

Santhosha means contentment. Lack of contentment is one of the major causes of misery^[10].

Tapas i.e., self-discipline or self-control. It is a practice of body and mind to perfect them^[11].

Svaadhyaya i.e., self-study. When a person is exposed to different interpretations of his self, it will enable him to erase many misunderstandings.

Iswarapranidhana means dedication to Divine power or to surrender oneself to the Supreme power i.e., God. It is an important way to attain liberation

Asanas-

They constitute the ideal form of exercise for giving strength, flexibility, purity, relieves stress, tension, difficulties in circulation and movement. They help to relax our body both physically and mentally so that we can move into a state of stillness and access the inner dimensions and awareness of our deeper energy from pointed to three-dimensional awareness.

When the mind visualizes a whole body or a deity or an object, the awareness will be three-dimensional. Further this awareness can be expanded. This is the state called *Anantasamaapatti* by Pathanjali. Due to the expansion of awareness there will be reduction in stress which leads to the relaxation of mind and body^[12].

Pranayama and yogic breathing-

They are very important for providing us energy both physically and mentally. All healing comes through the power of *Prana* (life) and *Pranayama* (breathing practices) allows us to develop that in a simple manner. It also helps us to consolidate our energy for the best possible actions.

The word *Prana* also indicates the vital energy, which governs the entire function of the body and mind. The entire energy requirement is met through the metabolic activity of the body. This energy is used to perform all physical and mental functions. When one tries to regulate breathing, he actually controls the muscle functions, brain function and metabolic functions. *Prana* is the force behind all these functions^[13].

Control of breath means control of the wavering tendencies of the mind. *Prana* (life) and mind are tangled each other. Fluctuation in *Prana* (life) will cause simultaneous fluctuation of mind. So by becoming aware of the nature of breath and by doing restrain of it, the whole system gets controlled^[14].

Through *Pratyahara* or internalizing our senses,

Yoga teaches how to use our senses. *Pratyahara* enhances the power of concentration of senses.

A technique used to calm down the sensual activity is to adopt the attitude of “let it go”. A prolonged attention of mind towards the same object will tempt to withdraw the mind from that object naturally^[15]. Hence it brings quietness to the mind after an initial stimulation and in turn they will stay back in its original state without excitation.

The practice of concentration helps us to develop our power of attention which is the foundation for all enduring learning. *Yoga* teaches us to direct the power of our attention where and when we wish to, not to be driven by the outside influences. This is very important in every body’s life since the childhood so that we do not fall under the control of other people or mere societal influences and are able to decide what is truly best for us to do.^[16]

Dhyana or meditation is the most important practice and essence of *Yoga* which follows from these fundamental disciplines. It teaches us to take the attitude of a witness and observe not only the outer world but also the things happening inside in our own minds.

Meditation is the most important activity and helps us to understand the purpose of our life in a better way. It is also the best way to move beyond all psychological afflictions and it should be an inevitable part of every one’s healthy lifestyle.^[17]

Samadhi or unitary awareness is the state of ultimate goal where we can get the highest inspiration, creativity, happiness and peace. By bringing harmony and balance to the body, *Prana* (life), senses and mind, *Yoga* puts us in the place of *Ananda*, i.e., bliss so that one can share true happiness and well-being with all.

At this stage the practitioner could experience himself the closeness of God. At the highest state of *Samadhi* (unitary awareness) he transforms to the state of super consciousness.

DISCUSSION

Yoga is an expression from the inside out. The external expressions of the poses are merely a reflection of that which we cannot see; our

creativity, our heart, our awareness, our intention and our attitude.

Performing *Yoga* isn’t about achieving the final posture of a particular *Asana* (postures) or even doing it with utmost perfection, but *Yoga* is about us in the pose whether or not one can pay attention, how one will respond to confrontation, the way one is speaking and so on.

That is why, attitude is the single most important aspect of *Yoga* practice, more than the breath and the poses.

Yoga way of life means to follow the ethical and moral code of conduct by understanding the *Yoga* philosophy and apply those in our life, try to visualize the true purpose of our life, live a balanced life and act with full of self- awareness, non-attachment and without any fear.

By living with yogic mode of attitude, one will be able to appreciate that most of the problems of life are self- created due to our ego, ignorance and lack of patience.

Embracing and practicing the moral, ethical and societal guidelines is beneficial for creating authentic, intimate, compassionate and sustainable healthy relationships.

Practicing non-violence towards others reduces hurt and builds trust. Living and speaking truth with others cultivates clear and honest communication. If one can reduce the greed and unhealthy cravings, one will get more ability to be kind, generous and thankful towards others. *Asana* (postures) practice helps to strengthen and sharpen mental focus, a regular meditation practice will further allow us to master our mind, achieving deeper awareness of our emotions so that we can regulate them. Cultivating concentration and focus not only stabilizes and clarifies the mind, but it can also boost our creativity, productivity and happiness. Practicing non-judgmental awareness throughout the day will bring more peace and richness into our life and will prevent us from wasting of time and energy in excessive negative thinking.

CONCLUSION

The prime objective of *Yoga* is the development of one’s own personality. It specifies the guidelines

about how to live our life and enjoy all goodness of life. It will enable us to live happily, keep others happy, do our duty and be a useful member of the society.

The practice of *Yoga* will help us to rediscover ourselves. By that we will be able to explore our inner self and understand the supreme consciousness.

The yogic attitude will take us to face both the pleasurable and the un-pleasurable events with the same detachment. With such attitude we will find that with the change in our perspective, we work more efficiently in whatever we do, our decision making is better and the prospects of all round growth.

The yogic attitude takes its journey from gross to most subtle. By various *Yoga* practices, it is possible for one to transform himself to his highest state of existence.

With this development of awareness, we start to de-identify from our mental or emotional state and become non-attached. We can slowly re-adjust our lifestyle.

The time one will be taking daily to perform *Yoga* as a routine will surely add hours of blissful health and enjoyment to one's life every day.

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