

# **Promoting Health and Happiness through “Traditional Indian Knowledge System”**

**A Dissertation for the award of Master’s Diploma in Public Administration (MDPA)**

**in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Advanced Professional Programme in**

**Public Administration (APPPA)**

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## **CERTIFICATE**

I have the pleasure to certify that Shri Anil Kishor Yadav has pursued his research work and prepared the present dissertation titled “Promoting Health and Happiness through “Traditional Indian Knowledge System” under my guidance and supervision. The same is the result of research done by him and to best of my knowledge; no part of the same has been part of any monograph, dissertation or book earlier. This is being submitted to the Indian Institute of Public Administration, for the purpose of Master’s Diploma in Public Administration, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration of Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.

I recommend that the dissertation of Shri Anil Kishor Yadav is worthy of consideration for the award of Master’s Diploma of Indian Institute of Public Administration.

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At personal level, an opportunity to research on the subject “Promoting Health and Happiness through “Traditional Indian Knowledge System” with special reference to Yoga was of immense learning value for me. I am a passionate Yoga practitioner, and the research helped me to understand this valued treasure of India better, which is helping mankind from time immemorial.

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## **Executive summary**

Health and Happiness are one of the most desirable aspects across all age groups in every walk of life. In fact, it is birth right of every individual. Good physical health and mental happiness are decisive factors, which affect almost every aspect of life. It will not be an exaggeration to say that good health is the backbone of competence through which every individual can accomplish assigned tasks successfully. Despite knowing its importance, people are not following appropriate routine to make life healthier and happier; rather they are getting trapped into several diseases. These life style diseases are not only burden to individuals but also to their nation. Huge amount of budget is siphoned off to address the issue with no avail, however easy and simple remedies are available to everyone in form of adjustments in life styles and regular practice of Yoga.

Traditional Indian Knowledge System presents a variety of solutions in form of Ayurveda, Yoga and several others, which are helping humanity from ages. The conceptual background of yoga has its origins in ancient Indian philosophy mentioned in Vedas, Upanishadas, and Patanjali Yoga Sutras etc. Yoga is instrumental in providing energized body, peace and tranquil mind, which ultimately leads to good sense of self control, health and happiness. Numerous types of yoga are prevalent today, each having its own distinct emphasis regarding the relative content of physical postures, breathing techniques, relaxation, and meditation practices.

Huge amount of research has been done in this field with an aim to search and identify those factors which are related to health and happiness. This study is an effort to find the

role of Yoga, (a traditional Indian Knowledge) in promotion of health and happiness. A survey has also been conducted to assess the views of people about Yoga and its impact. Ancient Indian texts on Yoga like Shrimadbhagwad Gita, Patanjali Yog sutra, Gherand Samhita, Gorakh samhita, Dattatreya Yogshastra, Hathyog Pradipika have been studied extensively to find out its relevant texts, apart from several other information available on open sources. It has been established through the research that ancient Indian texts on Yoga are highly beneficial for promotion of health in general and management of several diseases in particular. The various yogic insights available in these texts also help individuals in enhancing their mental well being and happiness.

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Pages</b>
Chapter I	Introduction	01-14
Chapter II	Literature Review	15-24
Chapter III	Research Methodology & Design	25-28
Chapter IV	Data Analysis	29-38
Chapter V	Promoting Health and happiness: Insights from Yoga	39-82
Chapter VI	Yogic management of digestion related issues	83-90
Chapter VII	Yogic management of obesity	91-97
Chapter VIII	Yogic management of happiness	98-107
Chapter IX	Conclusion and Recommendations	108-116
	Bibliography	117-120
	Annexure	121-124

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

*“We owe a lot to the ancient Indians, teaching us how to count. Without which most modern scientific discoveries would have been impossible”*

- Albert Einstein

### 1. Traditional Indian Knowledge System

‘Traditional Knowledge Systems’<sup>1</sup> is defined by the United Nations as-

“Traditional knowledge or local knowledge is a record of human achievement in comprehending the complexities of life and survival in often unfriendly environments. Traditional knowledge, which may be technical, social, organizational, or cultural, was obtained as part of the great human experiment of survival and development.”

Traditional Indian Knowledge system (TIKS) finds its roots in Indian civilizations, which have accorded immense importance to knowledge and its management. Prior to advent of printing and publications, the knowledge system was passed on to generations through oral traditions. India is known for its amazingly vast body of intellectual texts, the world’s largest collection of manuscripts, and schools of various domains of knowledge. Lord Shri Krishna in Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, told Arjuna that knowledge is the great purifier and liberator of the soul. Traditional Indian Knowledge system of India is uninterrupted from the Vedas; Upanishads till date, and always remained centre of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sanskritimagazine.com/india/traditional-knowledge-systems-of-india/>

attractions for administrators and intellectuals. Indian knowledge system is not limited but spread over in fields like philosophy, architecture, grammar, mathematics, astronomy, economy and polity, ethics, geography, logic, military science, weaponry, agriculture, mining, trade and commerce, metallurgy, medicine, yoga, poetics, etc. Despite widespread loss and historically recorded destruction, vast number of ancient texts is still available in this regard.

## **1.1 Ancient India's contributions to the world**

### **i. Yoga Science**

Yoga is popular today in whole world for addressing issues of health and happiness. Raj Yoga, Hath Yoga, Kriya Yoga and several other forms of Yoga are the gift of India to world by great Indian sages from time immemorial. Lord Shri Krishna had given knowledge of 'Karma Yoga' the Yoga of action to Arjuna.

### **ii. Civil Engineering**

Indus Sarasvati Civilization was the world's first civilization which built planned towns, underground drainage, civil sanitation, hydraulic engineering, and air-cooling architecture. Approximately 4,000 BC, oven baked bricks were invented in India. Ancient India's indigenous technologies were very sophisticated in design, planning, water supply, natural air conditioning, complex stonework, and construction engineering.

### **iii. Traditional Medicine:**

Ayurveda, Charak samhita, are well-known and highly respected in field of medicine. Indian medicine and surgery has evolved in India over thousands of years. The world



famous Susruta-samhita<sup>2</sup> dated back 400 BC, is devoted to surgery and also include medicine, pathology, anatomy, midwifery, biology, ophthalmology, hygiene, and psychology.

#### **iv. Mathematics, Logic and Linguistics**

The concept of zero, the base-ten decimal system, and many important trigonometry and algebra formulae, besides other sciences, are developed by India. Diverse schools of logic, philosophy and astronomical discoveries are Indian contribution to the world. 'Panini' the great Indian scholar is known as the founder of linguistics, and his Sanskrit grammar is still the most complete and reliable work of any language in the world.

Ancient Indian scriptures are reservoir of knowledge in each & every aspect of life. A large number of ancient Indian Yogic texts, which are beneficial in management of health and happiness for humanity, are abundantly available. Following texts from Traditional Indian Knowledge System are referred in this research work.

- i. Shrimadbhagwad Gita
- ii. Patanjali Yoga Sutras
- iii. Gheranda Samhita
- iv. Hath Yog Pradipika
- v. Gorakh Samhita
- vi. Dattatreya Yoga Shsatra

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3752885/#:~:text=It%20is%20known%20as%20Ayurvedic,%3A%20Herbs%20and%20specialized%20diets.>

## 1.2 Ancient Indian Yogic scriptures

- **Shrimadbhagwad Gita**

Bhagavad Gita offers an opportunity to achieve perfection in form of God realization and unleash enlightenment in the form of divine knowledge and peace of mind. It is in form of a dialogue that took place between Lord Krishna and his loyal devotee Arjuna. The philosophical concepts of existence, the goals of action and the certainty of death are described in very lucid and easy manner. The core of the teachings is Karm Yoga i.e. right action without expectation of fruits. Geeta illustrates the relationship of the individual soul to the God and lays emphasis on equanimous state of mind in all situations. समत्वं योग उच्यते. It describes techniques for controlling modifications of mind in routine life. These techniques are termed as “Yoga.” Hence, the Bhagavad Geeta is also called “Yog Shastra,” meaning, the scripture that teaches the practice of Yoga.

- **Patanjali Yoga Sutra**

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is a collection of 196 verses, which are also called aphorisms. These verses are simple yet powerful medium to attain wisdom and self-realization through Yoga. Sage Patanjali the most renowned authority on Yoga had written it approximately 400 C.E. These sutras are regarded as the basis of yoga philosophy.

There are four chapters viz Samadhi, Sadhana, Vibhuti, and Kaivalya padas in Patanjali Yoga sutra. Yoga Sutras provide depth and practical wisdom to explore the central meaning of yoga.

## **i. Samadhi Padas**

Samadhi means blissful state of mind which emerges when the fluctuations in the mind are stilled. The section deals with controlling fluctuations, explaining that unity with the Divine can only arise when the mind is separated from a sense of self or ego.

## **ii. Sadhana Padas**

In this section limbs of Yoga have been discussed in great detail.

## **iii. Vibhuti Padas**

In this section, Patanjali delineates the power and manifestation that result from intense practice of Yoga. Dhyana and Samadhi are discussed as ultimate goal of life and several techniques are also mentioned to achieve it.

## **iv. Kaivalya Padas**

The chapter focuses on liberation and freedom from sufferings through Yoga techniques.

- **Gherand samhita**

Gheraṇḍ Samhita is a classical yogic text authored by Sage Gheraṇḍa, which teaches 'Ghaṭastha Yoga'. The Ghaṭastha Yoga' focuses on integration of body, prana i.e. vital life force and the mind through various yogic practices with ultimate aim to have knowledge of the Self. Some scholars claim that Gheraṇḍa Samhita was composed in the Seventeenth Century, however not much information is available about Sage Gheraṇḍa regarding his time of birth and place. Gheraṇḍa talks about 'Saptanga Yoga' i.e. the

seven limbs of yoga. Sage Gherand does not talk about Yamas and Niyamas which are first two limbs of sage Patanjali's Ashtang Yoga.

Gheraṇḍa Samhita starts with ṣaṭkarma (six activities), the six yogic cleansing processes of body. Cleansing processes are very important to get rid of diseases from the body and purify it properly to prepare for next level of practices.

Asanas or postures are the second aspect in this yogic practice, which help to create firmness and stability in the body. 'Saptanga Yoga' lays emphasis on strong and disease free body to advance on yogic path of spirituality and well being. The third practice is the Mudras and Bandhas (Attitude and locks) which are used to control the flow of vital life force, retain and circulate it within the body. Then comes the Pratyahara, (withdrawal of senses) which happens naturally, after purification of the body through Satkarmas, and stability through Asans and Bandhas.

Next aspect of practice is Pranayama or breathing techniques. Pranayama has been given huge importance in the Yoga system, to control fluctuations of mind. Sage Gheranda says that through proper practice of Pranayanma one becomes equivalent to Deities प्राणायामस्य यद्विधिम्, यस्य साधनमात्रेण देवतुल्यो भवेन्नरः. The sixth limb is Dhyana and last one is Samadhi or blissful state of mind.

- **Hath Yog Pradipika**

Hatha Yoga Pradipika (Light on Hatha Yoga) was compiled by Maharishi Swatmarama a disciple of Guru Gorakhnathji. It is in Sanskrit which was later translated by Swami

Satyananda and Swami Muktibodhananda. Hatha Yoga Pradipika elaborates the entire science of hatha yoga specially asana, pranayama, shatkarma, mudra and bandha and samadhi. This practice was conceived not only for health and fitness, but for awakening of the vital energies and advancement in spiritual journey. The book emphasizes that hatha yoga is not just a physical practice but a process of cellular transmutation from gross to subtle to divine. In modern world, majority of yoga practitioners are practicing hatha yoga which is considered as the foundation of all other yoga practices.

The processes and activities related to limbs of yoga are discussed in detail with original Sanskrit text followed by commentary. Techniques of performing the activities, its benefits with contradictions are discussed in very lucid manner. The text lays emphasis on physical guidance of a teacher for yoga practice to get its maximum benefits and to avoid complications.

- **Gorakh Samhita**

Great Yogi Gorakshanatha, a renowned spiritual master, has written Goraksha Samhita. He is acknowledged as an enlightened yogi and highly respected, revered and worshipped spiritual master. He established Nath Pantha, and huge number of his followers, are spread all over the world. Gorakshanatha was an Eighth Century Yogi, but some say that his physical presence occurred somewhere from the 8th to 11th century.

Goraksha Samhita emphasizes the purification of the body, prana the life force and the mind. Total purification of all impurities on both the physical and pranic levels are absolutely necessary in order to purify the mind. Elimination of impurities from the body

is the foundation for advance practices in Yogic system. Guru Gorakhanatha in Goraksha Samhita elaborates the various aspects of Hatha Yoga practices e.g. asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha and dhyana, etc., which are a solid foundation for the preparation and practice of Yoga. Goraksha Samhita says that the objective of Hatha Yoga is to create a harmonious balance between the physical bodies, prana the vital energy and the mind. The impulses generated by this harmonious balance stimulate the awakening and the evolution of consciousness or union between soul and super soul.

- **Dattatreya Yoga Shashtra**

This Yoga Shastra is a dialogue between Sankriti and Lord Dattatreya, a revered classical yogic text which emphasizes heavily on committed practice of yoga. It clearly says that Yoga can be practiced by anyone irrespective of his caste, creed, religion or nationality. This Shastra mainly describes four types of yoga that are Mantrayoga, Layayoga, Hathayoga and Rajayoga. Right concept and rational knowledge of yoga, has been elaborated in very simple and easy to understand manner. Rajayoga has been considered as the highest yoga practice for achieving success. Yoga of actions or 'Karmayoga' is also described in the text as another type of yoga which is similar to Ashtangayoga.

The Yoga Shastra says 'One cannot achieve success in yoga just by reading scriptures, by wearing special garbs or dresses, by repeating mantras and by worshiping Gods and deities, but only by constantly practicing it without laziness'. Pranayama has been given extra weightage to achieve control over modifications of mind. Practices of Pratyahara,

Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi after Asana and Pranayama leads to liberation from human life, this Yoga Shastra says.

## **2. Non communicable diseases (NCDs)<sup>3</sup>**

Non communicable diseases (NCDs) commonly known as life style diseases are recorded as a fast growing ailments globally in last few decades. Sedentary life style, enormous shift in working patterns, behavioral changes, heavy intake of fast food and bad eating habits are primarily responsible for common NCDs like hyper tension, diabetes, obesity, cardiac problems, weak metabolism etc.

These ailments are posing significant financial burden to individuals and governments with loss of independence and untimely death of millions in the world. Rich people are contracting NCDs because of job related stress, familial issues, excessive tobacco and alcohol consumption, bad eating patterns and physical inactivity, while poor are facing the burnt because of malnutrition, unemployment, bad societal conditions and faulty education system. As per World Health Organization (WHO) report, about 41 million deaths annually are attributed to NCDs, equivalent to 71 % of all deaths globally, out of which 16 million are premature ( under age of 70) deaths. The burden of NCDs falls adversely on developing countries, where 82 % of premature deaths are from these diseases only. WHO agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes NCDs as a major challenge and plan to reduce one third premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment by 2030<sup>4</sup>. According to study report “India: Health of the Nation's States”- The India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative in 2017 by Indian

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

Council of Medical Research (ICMR), it is estimated that the proportion of deaths due to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in India have increased from 37.9% in 1990 to 61.8% in 2016.<sup>5</sup>

## **2.1 Non communicable diseases and mental health<sup>6</sup>**

World health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged the important role of mental health in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Mental disorder in form of depression is one of the leading causes of disability in the world. Mental disorder is supposed to be a leading factor of suicide which is one of the fourth leading causes of death among 15-29-year olds. Premature deaths have been reported with people with severe mental health conditions as much as two decades early. And these premature deaths can be prevented if interventions start at right time. Human rights violations, discrimination, and stigma are often reported by people suffering from mental health conditions. Several mental health issues can be effectively resolved successfully with proper interventions of medications and counseling. However the gap between people needing care and those with access to care remains very high and effective treatment coverage remains extremely low.

Mental disorders can affect an adolescent child to an aged person equally. In early life, developmental disorders and childhood behavioural disorders are the biggest manifestations of ill mental health. Depression and anxiety disorders are more prevalent in adults and aged people, World Economic Forum reports that mental health conditions

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<sup>5</sup> <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1796435>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>



cost the world economy approximately US\$ 2.5 trillion in 2010, combining lost economic productivity (US\$ 1.7 trillion) and direct costs of care (US\$ 0.8 trillion). This total cost was projected to rise to US\$ 6 trillion by 2030 alongside increased social costs. This burden is more than the researchers projected for the costs of cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease combined.

Non availability of trained workforce for addressing mental health is a serious cause of concern. Approximately half the world's population lives in countries where there is just one psychiatrist to serve 200 000 or more people, without adequate number of supporting staff like mental health nurses, psychiatric social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors etc. Several mental conditions are outcome of prolonged NCDs like diabetes, cancer, respiratory problems etc. those who are suffering from chronic physical conditions have higher rates of prevalence of mental conditions, especially depression and anxiety.

### **3. Significance of Yoga**

In modern world, Yoga has emerged as a powerful tool to address health and happiness issues in routine life. Considering its simplicity and significance for providing sustainable solution of physical and mental problems, yoga is slowly becoming popular and indispensable for one and all. Few years back, the image of the 'Yoga' was merely physical and breathing exercises with tough body postures; however this myth has been totally rooted out today. Yoga has been unanimously accepted as a complete package for health and happiness. Yoga is as old as civilizations are, however some section of society

still have misconception that Yoga is evolved over the last few decades. In Shrimad BhagwadGita, Lord Krishna says that Yoga was in practice even prior to Mahabharata period.

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम्।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत्<sup>7</sup>

Lord Krishna told Arjuna that he himself had imparted this imperishable science of yoga to the Sun God Vivasvan. Later Vivasvaan narrated it to Manu, the first man on the earth. Further Manu had spread this pious knowledge to Ikshvaku, and the journey continues till today. Yoga offers a way of life for excellent living. It is a traditional divine Indian Knowledge which promotes healthy lifestyles by a consistent and continuous practice every day. Through its eight limbs, Yoga offers ways and means to maintain good behavior, character, attitude, sound health and spiritual growth in life. Yoga is the science which works on the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual dimensions of a person.

The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word yuj, which means ‘to join’, ‘unity’ or ‘oneness’. In spiritual terms it is defined as the union of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness for balancing and harmonizing the body, mind and emotions. This is achieved through the practice of eight limbs of Yoga i.e. Yama, Niyama, Asanas, Pranyama, Pratyahara, Dharna, Dhyana, Samadhi.

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<sup>7</sup> Shrimad Bhagwad Gita chapter four vers 1

Through Yama and Niyamas foundation of good behavior, character and compassionate attitude are established. The Asanas or postures work on first stage of harmony and strengthen the outermost aspect of the personality, the physical body. Without stability in body at physical level, the organs, muscles and nerves no longer function in harmony, rather they act opposite to each other. Through Pranyama and Pratyahara, yoga moves on to the mental and emotional levels. Dharna, Dhyan and Samadhi develop awareness of the interrelation between the emotional, mental and physical levels, and settle disturbance of body and mind. Raja, Hatha, Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, Mantra, Kundalini and Laya are different branches of Yoga in traditional Indian knowledge system.<sup>8</sup>

In a study it is revealed that maintenance of healthy weight, exercising regularly, nutritious diet, and no smoking can reduce 80 per cent risk of developing the most common NCDs<sup>9</sup>. WHO recognized Yoga as a powerful tool for individuals, communities and countries to improve both physical and mental health, prevent and control non communicable diseases<sup>10</sup>. To recognize its sound and positive impact on health and happiness, United Nation proclaimed '21 June' as the International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131 on 11 December 2014.<sup>11</sup> The main aim behind declaring The International Day of Yoga is to raise awareness worldwide about benefits of practicing yoga.

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<sup>8</sup> Saraswati, Swami Satyananda. Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha (p. 2). Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India. Kindle Edition

<sup>9</sup> lifestyle diseases: An Economic Burden on the Health Services | United Nations

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.who.int/southeastasia/news/opinion-editorials/detail/yoga-for-humanity>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/observances/yoga-day#:~:text=Recognizing%20its%20universal%20appeal%2C%20on,many%20benefits%20of%20practicing%20yoga.>

International Day of Yoga was proposed by India in United nation with endorsement of 175 member states. Proposal was mooted by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address during the opening of the 69th session of the General Assembly. He said: “Yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, a holistic approach that is valuable to our health and our well-being. Yoga is not just about exercise; it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with self, the world and the nature.”<sup>12</sup> Yoga is a blessing of realized souls and great sages of India from time immemorial and remained an important tool to normalize physiological and psychological functions of human body with single motto of spreading health, happiness and mental peace to mankind.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/observances/yoga-day#:~:text=Recognizing%20its%20universal%20appeal%2C%20on,many%20benefits%20of%20practicing%20yoga.>

## Chapter 2

### Literature review

#### 1. Literature review on ‘Traditional Indian Knowledge System’

Indian subcontinent is the oldest living civilization of the world. Spiritual and physical science of ancient India remained in lime light of the world for most of the known world history. Indian culture emphasized on living in harmony with oneself, one’s environment, and universe as a family ‘वसुधैव कुटुंबकम’. Current models of development around the world are found unsustainable and are in serious conflict with nature. The inequalities are rising in the modern world, which compels to evolve new paradigms of development. Traditional Indian development model is both sustainable and strives for the welfare of all. सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः

The United Nations<sup>13</sup> definition of ‘Traditional Knowledge Systems’ is:

‘Traditional knowledge refers to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples. Developed from experience gained over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment, traditional knowledge is often transmitted orally from generation to generation. It tends to be collectively owned and can be expressed in stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, cultural values, beliefs, rituals etc. It is also the source for the traditional use and management of lands, territories and resources, with

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2019/04/Traditional-Knowledge-backgrounder-FINAL.pdf>

indigenous agricultural practices that care for the earth, without depleting the resources. Indigenous peoples follow oral traditions, with dances, paintings, carvings and other expressions, that are practiced and passed down through millennia’.

Malhotra (2013) in his very interesting study<sup>14</sup> narrated that until the 1800s, traditional knowledge of India had generated large scale economic prosperity in Indian sub continent. In ancient times, India was one of the richest regions in the world with rich heritage of culture and prosperity.

Indian medical systems, particularly Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy and several others are now being revived to complement modern medicine. Yoga and other healing techniques are found highly suitable in stress management, where modern therapies are not in able to address the issue satisfactorily.

Rashmi (2021) found<sup>15</sup> that Yoga practices are one of the biggest global trends of the 21st Century, due to its physical, mental and spiritual benefits. Shrimad Bhagwadgita, a source of knowledge and wisdom is extremely useful in addressing the conflicts of the society and problem of ever rising moral crisis. This time tested Indian vedic wisdom are well proven over thousands of years and have great potential to contribute to the human civilization as a whole. Karma yoga or Yoga of actions is very useful in developing a

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.indianscience.org/index.htm>

<sup>15</sup> <https://journalofipstudies.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/traditional-knowledge-and-indiae28099s-backbend-on-yoga-converted.pdf>

realistic management model that aims to address the grass-root issues relating to organization in general, and management in particular. (Tripathi<sup>16</sup>, 2009)

Sucheta (2019) researched on the topic<sup>17</sup> ‘Combating Stress through the Bhagavad Gita’ found that its verses are extremely beneficial in management of mental conflicts and stress.

Shrimad Bhagavad Gita teachings to combat stress are:

- i. The attachments and desires bring sufferings accompanied by stress.
- ii. A duty discharged without any attachment and expectation of fruits keeps stress away.
- iii. Regular and conscious practice of Yoga reduces stress and enhances mental strength.
- iv. The path of righteousness brings ultimate peace and bliss to life.

Deekshitulu (2017) in his study<sup>18</sup> on ‘**Yoga** on Mental and Physical Health’ found that yoga may be beneficial on therapeutic intervention for many physical health conditions like anxiety, depression and pain. Further positive benefits of yoga may help to improve patient self efficacy, self competence, physical fitness, and group support, and may well be effective as a supportive adjunct to mitigate medical conditions and improving general well being. Few studies recommend that yoga should be a part of health-care facilities for elderly as it enhance the quality of life by improving their overall mental health status. Yoga may help to improve patient self-efficacy, self-competence, physical fitness, and

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<sup>16</sup> [https://iba.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/july\\_december\\_2009-1stjournal.pdf#page=70](https://iba.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/july_december_2009-1stjournal.pdf#page=70)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.indianjournals.com/ijor.aspx?target=ijor:rjhss&volume=10&issue=2&article=037>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gavinpublishers.com/article/view/yoga-on-mental-and-physical-health>

group support, and may well be effective as a supportive adjunct to mitigate medical conditions.

Dayal Sandhu (2018) in his study<sup>19</sup> on ‘Patanjali Yoga Practice and its Effect on Mental Health and Moral Judgment Amongst Juvenile Delinquents’ found that Yoga practices improved mental health of juvenile delinquents remarkably. Patanjali Yoga practice has sound impact on mental health factors which are emotional stability, adjustment and self control. In a nut shell a positive change seen amongst juvenile delinquents after practice of Patanjali Yoga. Several practitioners requested institutional training of Yoga so that they can continue to practice it through life.

Ballantyne (1885) in his work<sup>20</sup> on The ‘Yoga Philosophy, being the Text of Patanjali, With Bhoja Raja’s Commentary’ says that that though Patanjali was founder of school of Yoga philosophy, he is not the originator of Yoga. The Yoga system is divided into two principal segments; hath Yoga and Raj Yoga. Sage Matsyendra nath ji and Guru Gorakhnath ji were co founder of Hath Yoga. This Yoga deals with physiological part of man with a view to establish his health and train his will. Raj Yoga tries to control the mind by the techniques suggested by Patanjali, that is eight limbs of Yoga i.e. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranyama. Pratyahara, Dharna, Dhyana, Samadhi.

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<sup>19</sup> Patanjali Yoga Practice and its effect on mental health and moral judgment amongst juvenile delinquents published in Indian Journal of public Health Research and Development vol.11, No.02, Feb 2020

<sup>20</sup>[https://sriyogaashram.com/ebook/tatya\\_the\\_yoga\\_philosophy\\_of\\_patanjali.pdf](https://sriyogaashram.com/ebook/tatya_the_yoga_philosophy_of_patanjali.pdf)



In traditional Indian knowledge system large number of reliable texts on Yoga is abundantly available. Few to name are Shrimadbhagwad Gita by Lord Shri Krishna himself, Patanjali Yog Sutra by great sage Patanjali, Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Yogi Swatmarama , Goraksha Samhita by Guru Gorakhnath ji, Gheranda Samhita by sage Gheranda, Yog shastra by sage Dattatreya. These texts are considered as authentic books on Yoga. Few decades' earlier yoga was treated as a preparation for spirituality and higher states of consciousness. The yoga practices which were designed by the sages for the evolution of mankind got forgotten and were utilized in a very limited sense. However this perception has been changed, now yoga has emerged as an important tool to transform the health as well. Yoga regained its lost glory and is spreading health, happiness and spirituality in the world.

नास्ति माया सम पसो नास्ति योगात् परम् बलम् ।

न हि ज्ञानात् परो बन्धुर् नहम्कारात् परो रिपु ॥

The verse from Gheranda Samhita explains the crux of ancient knowledge system. Illusion or maya is the biggest bondage. Strength derived from practice of Yoga is ultimate. Knowledge is true friend and ego is the greatest enemy.

Rakshith (2019), in a study on important benefits of Ashtanga Yoga<sup>21</sup> , found that by practice of limbs of Ashtanga Yoga, cheerfulness, vibrancy and life energy are achieved in due course. Yoga impacts all the dimensions of health positively. Maurya (2021), in a research on yogic diet for healthy modern life<sup>22</sup> found that people are following

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<sup>21</sup> <http://medicaljournalshouse.com/index.php/JournalofADR-AYUSH/article/view/249/154>

<sup>22</sup> <https://nkdcstrust.in/pdf/researcharticle/2022/DrShardkumarMaurya/DrShardkumarMaurya-4.pdf>

unnatural modern life style, food habits and unknowingly getting trapped into highly disastrous life habits and diseases. Human values are losing their meaning very fast. In this prevailing situation, Yogic diet is found suitable for prevention of various life style diseases.

Hathyog Pradipika an ancient Indian text is a complete book on Yoga. Desikachar (2016) in his research on Hatayogapradīpika Jyotsnayuta<sup>23</sup> delineates that practices and the reference to any health related problem mentioned in the text should be taken contextually to bring a balance in the subtle order of the body. Hath Yoga Pradipika explains the entire science of Hatha Yoga, with focus on cellular transmutation from gross to subtle to divine. Patanjali Yoga Sutras are ancient Sanskrit texts on Yoga, have been referred extensively in this study.

Patanjali had given, eight limbs of yoga in which, Yama and Niyama are the first two, followed by Asana and Pranayama. Last four pillars of Ashtanga Yoga are Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Scientific details about consciousness, characteristics of mind, sources of mental conflicts and modifications are extensively discussed. Yoga sutra illustrates ideas about the nature of mind, its functions and suggests measures to control its modifications<sup>24</sup>.

Patanjali emphasizes upon discipline in life through regulations called Yama and Niyamas. Pranayama and Pratyahara have been suggested to control mental agitations

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<sup>23</sup> Dr. Kausthub Desikachar Publisher: Media Garuda, Krishnamacharya Healing and Yoga Foundation, Chennai, India Year: 2016

<sup>24</sup> Desikachar, T.K.V (1987) Reflections on Yoga sutras of Patanjali, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram Publication, Chennai.

and deflections. Desikachar, 1987, studied effect of Dhyana, Dharna and Samadhi<sup>25</sup> on integration of body, mind and soul .Gherand Samhita and Gorakh samhita talks about seven limbs of Yoga for health and development of mental faculties. In these texts, top priority has been given on strength and stability of the body for advancement on the path of Yoga and hence physical fitness has been given top priority. Smith C, 2007, researched on 7 limbs of Yoga or Saptanga Yoga, also called as "Ghatastha Yoga" promulgated by Guru Gorakhnathji and sage Gheranda where 'Ghata' literally means an earthen pot which symbolizes the human body mind complex<sup>26</sup>.

These seven limbs are-

### **i. Shatkarmas**

The purification and cleansing of body is emphasized for removal of impurities and diseases. The Shatkarmas remove all impurity and diseases, increase immunity and prepare the body for next level of Yoga practices like Asanas, Pranayamas and Meditation.

### **ii. Asanas or postures**

The virtue of Asanas is to strengthen the body, make it stable and bring it under total control.

### **iii. Pranayama**

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<sup>25</sup> Smith,C;Hancock,H;Blake Mortimer,J;Eckert,K.(2007)Randomised Controlled trial of Yoga and relaxation to reduce stress and anxiety.Complementary therapies and Medicine.15(2):77-83

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.arnavh.com/gheranda-samhita>

Pranyama is essential for regaining control over mind. Gheranda and Gorakh Samhita mention pranayamas along with its techniques in detail. Pranayama has direct impact in enhancing vital force that is Prana Shakti and thus rejuvenates the whole system.

#### **iv. Mudras and Bandhas**

Mudras and Bandhas are practiced during and after Pranayamas. Various mudras along with bandhas and the technique to practice them are elaborately mentioned in these samhitas. Mudras are supposed to arrest the Pranic Shakti and prevent it from dissipating. Bandhas enhance the quality of Prana and help in stimulating hidden energy, and bringing further control on the breath.

#### **v. Pratyahara**

David Frawley (2004), found that withdrawal of senses, or sensory inputs into our physical being through knowledge and various techniques are mentioned in yoga texts and samhitas<sup>27</sup>. This is called Pratyahara and basis to fix the concentration and dive deep into meditation & Samadhi i.e. blissful state of mind.

#### **vi. Dhyana**

Fixing the concentration for longer durations is called Dhyana or meditation. Three main types of meditation are;

- a. Antaranga Dhyana or Internal meditation
- b. Bahiranga Dhyana or external meditation

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<sup>27</sup> Yoga and Ayurveda, by David Frawley, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 2004. ISBN 81-208-1879-2, Chapter 16: Pratyahara: the Forgotten Limb of Yoga, page 261.

c. Ekachitta Dhyana or One-pointed meditation.

## **vii. Samadhi**

Blissful state of mind which is the ultimate goal of life is called Samadhi. Sage Gheranda had suggested practical techniques to enter into Samadhi.

According to Mishra (2017) Yogic Practices of Hatha yoga mentioned in Hatha yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita and Shiva Samhita' are deep rooted in Indian culture. Ancient sages were experts and specialists in knowledge of the physiology and psychology of the body. They were well acquainted with the transcendental aspects of the body and subtle systems of the body. As per their opinion, body is a tool for higher spiritual practices i.e. sadhana.

In olden days the knowledge was transferred through teacher pupil tradition fondly called Guru Shisya parampara. Apart from physical practices, an experience of bliss and divinity was the ultimate aim. Obstacles and distracting factors in process of sadhana are elaborately mentioned. Hatha yoga as per author, described in classical texts may be implemented in true words and spirits, to live healthy and peaceful life in coordination with the environment. Mallinson (2013) in his book 'Dattatreya's Discourse on Yoga' says that devoted yogis, who practice Yoga, have lived happily for a long time, free from diseases. Practice of yoga is the reward of being born; everyone can experience the bliss through the grace of the Yoga.

Gokulchand (1985) in his study 'A Critical Study of Goraksha Samhita' explains that Goraksha Samhita contains an in depth analysis of matters related to life, particularly art of Yoga. It makes a thorough analysis of all aspects of Yoga and suggests how to control mind, which is a storehouse of energy. Content of the Samhita are relevant all time and benefitting mankind in getting liberation from the material world.

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology and Design

The methodological orientation of the study is largely based on secondary sources of information with exploratory focus. Secondary sources are considered to be authentic sources where minor or major findings of the study are discussed. In research activities, secondary source refers to information that has been collected by other researchers and recorded in books, articles, and other publications. A secondary source is a report on the findings of the primary source. While not as authoritative as the primary source, the secondary source often provides a broad background and readily improves one's learning outcomes. Ancient Yogic textbooks are secondary sources. Considering the features as stated above, the information has been taken from various books, journals, internet and other open sources in this study.

In this research qualitative research strategy with exploratory design has been used to study the impact of Yoga techniques in promoting health and happiness with special reference to:

- i. Impact of Yoga in management of general health.
- ii. Impact of Yoga in management of happiness.
- iii. Impact of Yoga in management of weak digestive system, obesity and mental issues.

Above information are collected and collated from secondary sources as well which include;

- i. Ancient Yogic scriptures.
- ii. Commentary on Yogic scriptures.
- iii. Previous research papers.
- iv. Information available on the subject in open sources including news, articles in various magazines and digital documents and reports.

Primary data has been collected online via Google survey forms. A detailed questionnaire was prepared and given to personnel of all strata of society for qualitative interpretive research. Information received through secondary sources and data received from questionnaire were analyzed to conclude recommendations and findings. It is observed that the information available on the subject is general in nature. It is precisely because, either more focus has been given on general aspects of Yoga or attention has been paid to diseases that too, in bits and pieces. Hence the main focus of the study is based on assessing relevance and utility of ancient yogic texts in promoting health and happiness.

### **3.1 Research objectives**

- i. To assess perception of people about Yoga in promotion of Health and Happiness.
- ii. To explore Yogic scriptures and verses which promote Health.
- iii. To explore Yogic scriptures and verses which promote Happiness.

### **3.2 Research questions**

- i. Is Yoga beneficial in achieving good physical health?



- ii. Is Yoga beneficial in enhancing the level of happiness?
- iii. Is Yoga beneficial for mental peace and blissful state of mind?
- iv. Is Yoga beneficial in preventing and cure of life style diseases like digestive disorders, Obesity, mental health issues etc?

### **3.3 Rationale of the study**

Researches and several studies support the claim, that yoga reduces stress, anxiety and elevate mood<sup>28</sup>. Practice of Yoga Asanas and Pranayama have direct impact on mental and physical health with remarkable reduction in fear, anger, and fatigue<sup>29</sup>. Ancient Yogic texts are full with several yogic techniques which can boost feel-good factor within minutes. However it is found that yogic texts are having similar or contradictory opinions about various practices and techniques. For maximum benefits, detailed deliberations and committed study about relevant facts from prominent scriptures on a particular technique is the need of hour. Several studies have been conducted on popular Yoga practices; however more effort is still needed for larger interests and benefits.

Purpose of the study is to identify the relevant verses of ancient Yogic scriptures which are beneficial in promoting health and happiness. The question ‘How to promote health and happiness through Yoga’ is being addressed in this study. Applicability of ancient Yogic verses in management of health and happiness through these techniques are also being explored.

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/08/100819112124.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Granath J, Ingvarsson S, von TU, Lundberg U: Stress management: a randomized study of cognitive behavioural therapy and yoga. *Cogn Behav Ther.* 2006, 35: 3-10.

### **3.4 Limitations of the study**

Traditional Indian Knowledge System have vast and mixed content over management of health and happiness issues, however because of limitations of time and expertise, only Yogic verses are explored for subject purpose.

# Chapter 4

## Data Analysis

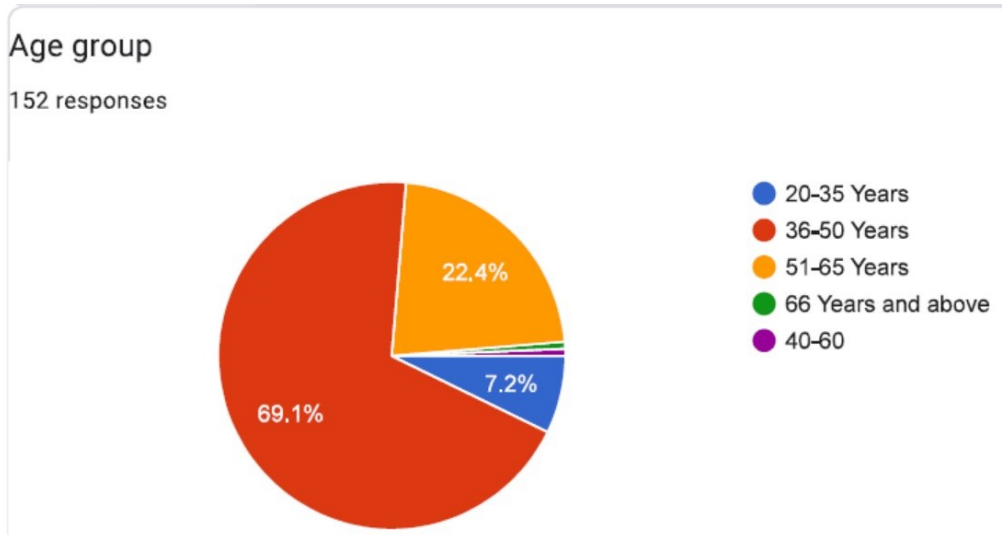
### 1. Primary data analysis

Online Google form comprising of a questionnaire was sent to 178 personnel for their considered views on the subject. Out of which, 152 personnel responded the questionnaire. These personnel are from all strata of society which include intellectuals, academicians, government servants and students.

#### A. Demographic Profile of respondents

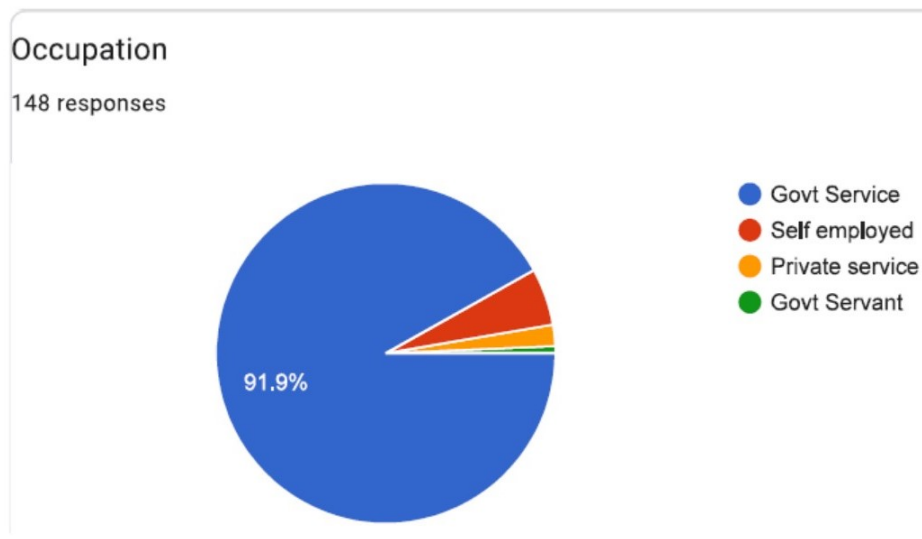
##### i. Age group

Out of 152 respondents, 7.2 % are from age bracket of 20-35 years followed by 69.1% from 36-50 years, 22.4 % from 51-65 and 1.3 % above 66 years of age.



## ii. Occupation

Out of 148 respondents, 91.9 % are in Govt. Service, 6.9 % are self employed, and 2% are in private service.



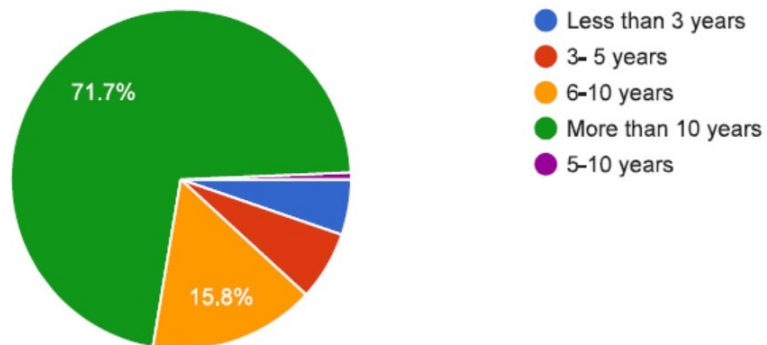
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nI4wjMzUi4-8y7j\\_03PDfe9PWGzwbYjxE4Ky1T4pbeU/viewanalytics](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nI4wjMzUi4-8y7j_03PDfe9PWGzwbYjxE4Ky1T4pbeU/viewanalytics)

## B. Awareness about Yoga

i. Out of 152 respondents, 5.4 % are aware about Yoga for less than 3 years, 7.1 % came to know about Yoga for 3-5 years, 15.8% for 6- 10 years and 71.7 % for more than 10 years.

### I am aware about Yoga for

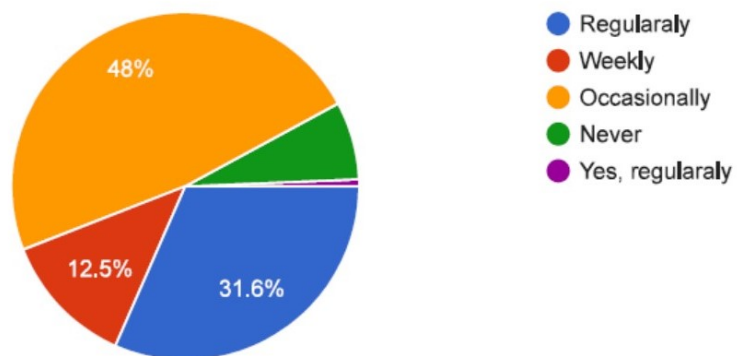
152 responses



ii. Out of 152 respondents, 31.6 % are practicing Yoga regularly, 12.5% weekly, 48% occasionally and 7.9% are never practicing yoga.

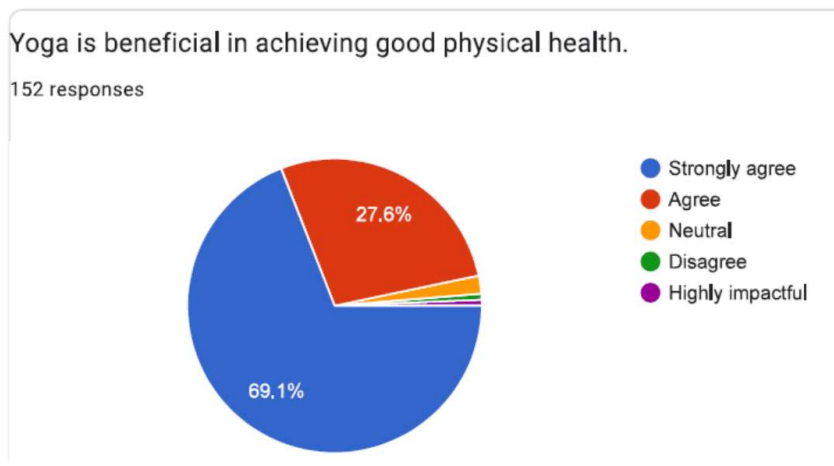
### I practice Yoga

152 responses



### C. Benefits of Yoga

Out of 152 respondents, 69.1% strongly agree, 27.6% agree in response that Yoga is beneficial in achieving good physical health, however 2.1 % are neutral in their response and 1.2 % disagree that yoga is not beneficial in achieving good physical health.



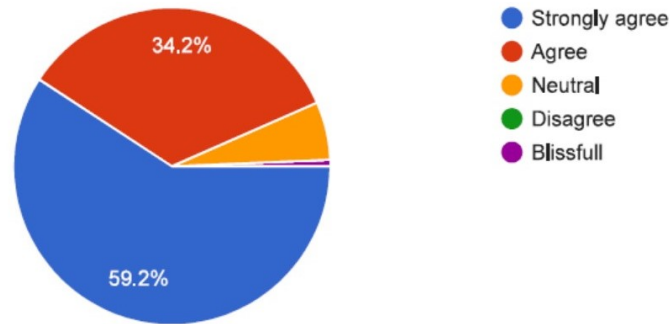
### C. Role of Yoga in enhancing happiness

Out of 152 respondents, 59.2% strongly agree, 34.2% agree in response that Yoga is beneficial in enhancing the level of happiness, however 6.6 % are neutral in their

responses, however not a single respond disagreed.

Yoga is beneficial in enhancing the level of happiness.

152 responses

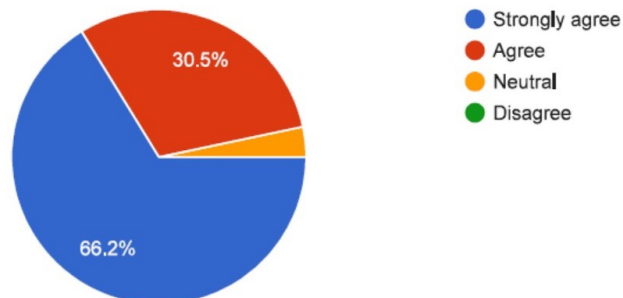


#### D. Benefits of Yoga for mental peace

Out of 152 respondents, 66.2% strongly agree, 30.5% agree in response that Yoga is beneficial for mental peace and blissful state of mind, however 3.3% are neutral in their responses, however not a single respond disagreed.

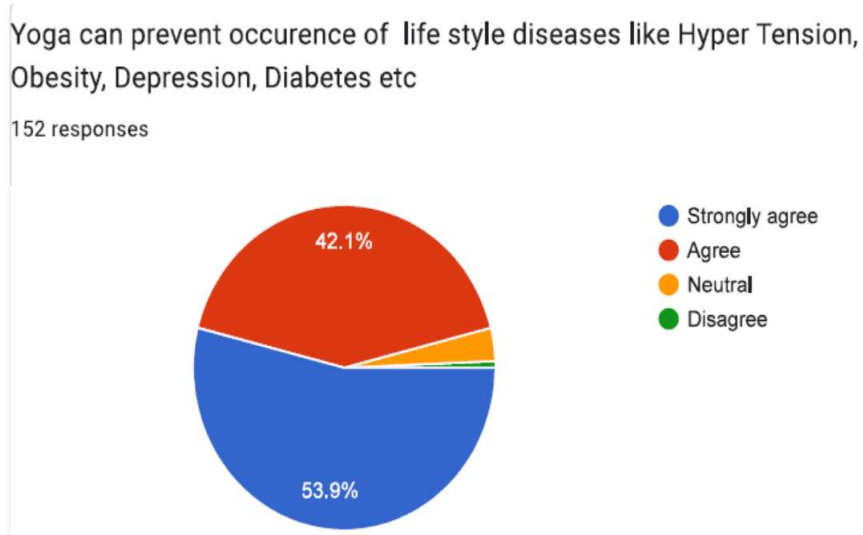
Yoga is beneficial for mental peace and blissful state of mind.

151 responses



### **E. Role of yoga in preventing life style diseases**

Out of 152 respondents, 53.9% strongly agree, 42.1% agree in response that Yoga can prevent occurrence of life style diseases like Hypertension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc, however 3.2% are neutral in their responses, however 0.8% disagreed.



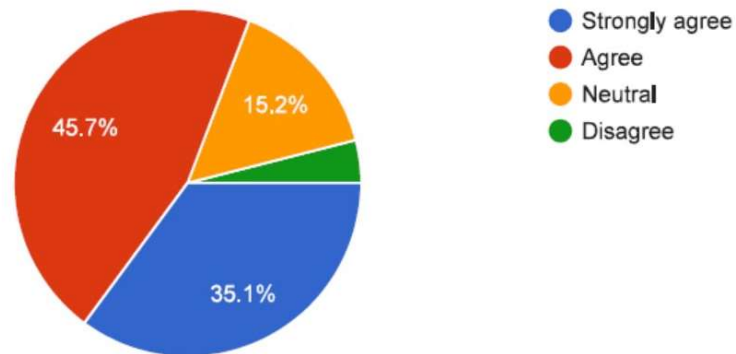
### **F. Role of yoga in cure of life style diseases**

Out of 151 respondents, 35.1% strongly agree, 45.7% agree in response that Yoga can permanent solution of life style diseases like Hypertension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc, however 15.2% are neutral in their responses, however 4.0% disagreed.



Yoga can provide permanent solutions for life style diseases like Hyper Tension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc

151 responses

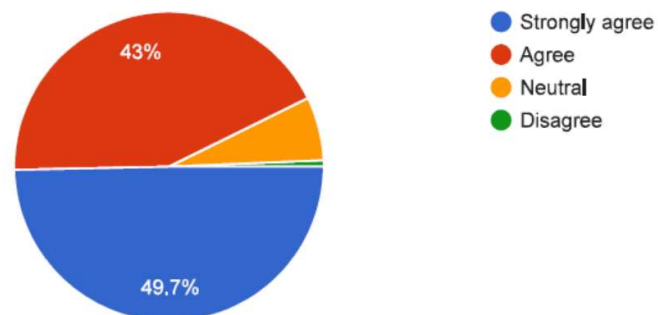


### G. Role of yoga in spiritual journey

Out of 151 respondents, 49.7% strongly agree, 43% agree in response that Yoga is beneficial in spiritual journey; however 6.2% are neutral in their responses, however 1.1% disagreed.

Yoga is beneficial in spiritual journey

151 responses

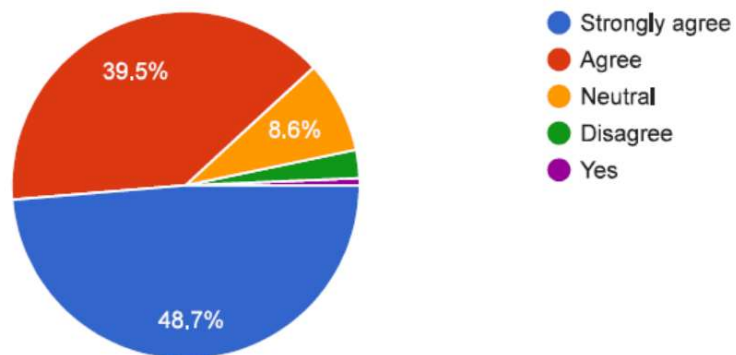


## H. Necessity of research on Yoga for betterment of health & happiness of mankind.

i. Out of 152 respondents, 48.7% strongly agree, 39.5% agree in response that more research is required in field of Yoga for betterment of Health and Happiness of mankind, however 8.6% are neutral in their responses, and however 3.2% disagreed.

More research is required in field of Yoga for betterment of Health and Happiness of mankind?

152 responses

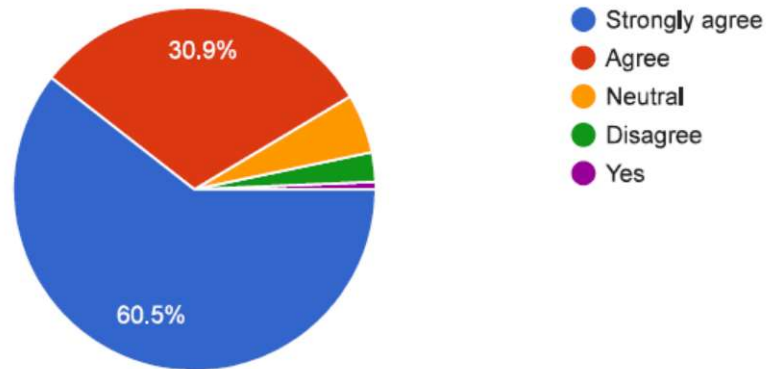


## I. Incorporation of Yoga in course curriculum

Out of 152 respondents, 60.5% strongly agree, 30.9% agree in response that more research is required in field of Yoga for betterment of Health and Happiness of mankind, however 5.5% are neutral in their responses, and however 3.1% disagreed.

Yoga should be incorporated in course curriculum of upper primary to higher education in India?

152 responses



## Discussion

i. Ancient Yogic texts strongly approve the fact that Yoga is good for strength and stamina of the body, which are reflection of good health. It is a matter of general belief as well. The matter is included in the survey and majority of respondents agreed that Yoga is beneficial in achieving good physical health.

ii. Yoga means integration of body, mind and soul. Lord Shri Krishna narrated whole Shrimadbhagwad Gita to his friend Arjuna about controlling modifications of mind and follow righteous path of action. He assures that if someone follow Karma Yoga i.e. Yoga of action, he will be liberated. Through survey it is found that majority of people are in agreement that Yoga is beneficial in enhancing the level of happiness.

iii. Samadhi is found prominent place in all Yogic texts, which means transcendental state of mind. In survey, it is found that people are of the opinion that Yoga is beneficial for mental peace and blissful state of mind.

iv. Hathyoga is based on physical health followed by spiritual growth. It lays emphasis on disease free body, and affirms that only a healthy person can advance in the path of Yoga. Hath Yoga Pradipika contains large number of verses on management of diseases. Majority of people agreed that Yoga can prevent occurrence and provide sustainable solution of life style diseases like Hypertension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc.

v. Yoga is best trend setter of modern times. Studies and researches are being conducted extensively on the subject. However, keeping in view rich Yogic heritage and health benefits of Yoga, it is strongly felt that more research and study will be beneficial in enhancing health and happiness to the mankind. Survey reaffirms this belief and majority of respondent agreed that more research is required in field of Yoga for betterment of Health and Happiness.

## **Chapter 5**

# **Promoting Health and happiness through Yoga: Insights from Traditional Indian Knowledge System**

## **1. Defining health**

State of complete emotional and physical wellbeing is called health. World Health Organization in 1948, defined health as “Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” In 1986, WHO rephrased definition of health as “A resource for everyday life, not the objective of living, health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities”. Traditional and modern healthcare systems are instrumental in helping people to maintain the optimal state of health.

### **1.1 Types of Health**

Health is broadly divided as physical and mental health. Spiritual, emotional, social and financial factors influence overall health of individuals.

- **Physical health**

A good physical health is a manifestation of bodily functions and processes, working at their peak. Maintenance of physical health and mental well-being is possible only through healthy lifestyle, regular workout and Yoga.

- **Mental health**

Mental health is defined as a person's emotional, social, and psychological well-being. A person's good mental health is synonymous to absence of problems like depression and anxiety with ability to:

- i. Enjoy life to the fullest.
- ii. Face difficult experiences boldly and adapt to adversity.
- iii. Establish fine balance different in elements of life, such as family and finances.

It is important to integrate the concept of physical and mental health, as both have strong connections and are linked.

## **1.2 Preservation of good health**

The wellness and good health are maintained through healthy lifestyles rather than waiting until sickness or infirmity to occur for addressing the issue. Optimal health gives the realization of the fullest potential of an individual physically, psychologically, socially, spiritually, and economically. Only a healthy person can fulfill the expectations of the family, community, and other settings.”

## **1.3 Yogic concept of health**

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः।

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते<sup>30</sup> ॥

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<sup>30</sup> Yogi Adityanath. Hathyoga : Swaroop Evam Sadhna

Gheranda samhita says that a person is healthy whose body, mind and soul are in normal state and all physiological actions are proper, not the person who is physically healthy but mentally and spiritually sick. A person is said to be healthy, when he is happy from within and his metabolism is at its peak with fine balance of other bodily systems. This Yogic definition of health closely resembles to the definition given by World Health Organization (WHO). The Yogic texts has said thousands of years ago what WHO admits today.

## 2. Yogic concept of happiness and wellbeing

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम्।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः<sup>31</sup> ॥ 21॥

In Shrimadbhagwadgita Lord Krishna says that union of mind with God is the expression of bliss. It is beyond the scope of the senses which soul experiences during the state of Samadhi. Ultimate aim of Yoga is attainment of supreme bliss in state of Samadhi.

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसञ्ज्ञितम्।

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा<sup>32</sup> ॥ 23॥

Yoga advocates dissociating oneself consciously from sorrows, treating them temporary in nature. This state is achieved through rigorous practice of Yoga.

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<sup>31</sup> Shrimadbhagwadgita

<sup>32</sup> Shrimadbhagwadgita

### **3. Role of different Yogic lineages in improving Health**

Yoga is prevalent in world since ages. Lord Shiva is known as Aadi Yogi or first Yogi. Lord Shri Krishna laid emphasis on Karma Yoga (Yoga of actions), Bhakti Yoga (Yoga of devotion), Gyan Yoga (Yoga of knowledge). Sage Patanjali established the foundation of RajYoga which is commonly known as Ashtang Yoga. Guru Gorakhnathji and sage Gheranda propagated Saptang Yoga or Yoga of seven limbs.

In modern day, Yoga has become very popular and practiced by majority of people for health and happiness. Many changes are prevalent in Yoga practices these days in terms of Asanas and Pranayama, however important aspects related to all limbs of Yoga as mentioned in Yogic literature are:

#### **3.1 Yama**

Sage Patanjali describes Yama as

**यमाः अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा ॥ 30-1 ॥**

Non violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and non-receiving, are referred as Yama in Patanjali Yoga Sutra.

##### **i. Non violence**

Non violence is the backbone of harmony and shared growth. When there is no fear of violence, develops love and compassion. Nature is having its own arrangements of construction and destruction, putting hindrance in this process is also a type of violence.



One should go by rules of nature to live peaceful life. Stress & mental disorders are resultant of violent character and can be addressed suitably by practicing non violence.

तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां ॥<sup>33</sup>

When non violence is established, all enmities cease to exist. It is said that if a man is passionate in the idea of non injuring others, even ferocious animal will become peaceful in his presence. When someone achieves that state, then alone he will understand that he had firmly established in non violence. This state is established when someone firmly practices non violence. There are several stories about Mahatma Buddha and Mahvira swami's which says that several dreaded killers became saint in their presence. This is the proof of their firm establishment towards non violence.

## **ii. Truthfulness**

Truthfulness makes a man confident in all situations. Telling a lie, or causing another to tell a lie, or approve of another doing so, is equally sinful. One should always refrain telling a lie and practice truthfulness in all situations.

क्रियाफलाश्रयत्वम् सत्यप्रतिष्ठाया ॥

When truthfulness is established the Yogi gets the power of attaining the fruits of work and even in dreams also, he will never tell an untruth, in thought, word or deeds.

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<sup>33</sup> Patanjali Yog Sutra

### **iii. Non stealing or Asteya**

Non-stealing or Asteya is being contented what you have. Theft is counted as heinous crime in all societies of the world.

सर्वरत्नोपस्थानम् अस्तयप्रतिष्ठायां ॥

A yogi gets all wealth by establishing himself in non-stealing. The more one runs behind riches the more she runs away, and if one does not care for her at all, she becomes his slave.

### **iv. Continence**

Continence is the most debated subject in western countries, however in Indian mythology it is treated as the most important aspect of energy, which must be preserved at all costs.

वीर्यलाभः ब्रह्मचर्यप्रतिष्ठायां ॥<sup>34</sup>

When continence is establishment energy is gained. It is found that those who are practicing continence are having tremendous energy, gigantic will power and mental strength.

### **v. Non receiving or Aparigraha**

Receiving gifts from others is just as bad as stealing. Wealth must be utilized for betterment of society. One who receives gifts receives gifts; his mind becomes slave of

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<sup>34</sup> Patanjali yog sutra

the giver. Everyone on the earth comes with nothing and will go back in same condition then why collections?

अपरिग्रहस्थैर्य जन्मकथंतासंबोधः ॥

One should not receive gifts from others to save himself from physical and mental slavery of the giver. When someone accepts gift which is generated through evil means, he also accept the wrongdoings of others simultaneously.

### **3.2 Niyama**

Internal and external purification, contentment, self study and surrender to God are Niyamas. Sage Patanjali describes Niyamas as

शौचसंतोषतपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः ॥ 32 ॥

शौचात् स्वाङ्गजुगुप परैरसंसर्गः ॥

सत्त्वशुद्धिसौमनस्यैकाग्र्येन्द्रियजयात्मदर्शनयोग्यत्वानि च ॥ 41 ॥

#### **i. Shauch or internal and external cleansing**

Internal and external purifications lead to radiant and cheerful body without sense of ego. Everything is pleasurable for whom who he is pure and cleansed. Yogi sees bliss and cheerfulness in each and everything. One should always practice purification of the body and cheerfulness of mind.

## **ii. Santosh or contentment**

Maharishi Patanjali says that one can gain unexcelled happiness, mental comfort, joy and satisfaction by practicing contentment.

संतोषाद् अनुत्तमः सुखलाभः ॥ 42 ॥

## **iii. Tapa or continent**

One should do mortification for bringing powers to the organs and the body. These powers can be achieved through efforts and destroying the impurities of body and senses.

कायेन्द्रियसिद्धरशुद्धिक्षयात् तपसः ॥<sup>35</sup>

## **iv. Swadhayay or self study**

Regular study of self and audit of performances on physical and spiritual growth is one of the Niyamas prescribed by sage Patanjali.

स्वाध्यायाद् इष्टदेवतासंप्रयोगः ॥ 44 ॥

Self study about compliance of Yama and Niyamas in daily life is also essential. Success can be achieved through harder practices only.

## **v. Ishwar pranidhan or Surrender to the God**

Surrender to the God is the final act; one should aspire for, whether it is good or bad.

समाधिसिद्धिरीश्वरप्रणिधानात् ॥ 45 ॥

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<sup>35</sup> Patanjali Yog sutra

### **3.3 Asanas or postures**

Sage Patanjali has defined asana as “aasanam sthiram sukham”, which means that a position which is comfortable and steady. Asana is a state in which one can remain physically and mentally steady, calm and comfortable for longer durations. These asanas are practiced to develop ability for sitting in comfortable position in longer durations to practice Pranayam and mediation. Asanas are designed to open the energy channels and psychic centers by mounting pressure on targeted parts of the body. Unity of body, mind and consciousness, are achieved by stability of the body through asana. Thus yoga, not only strengthens the body and improves health, but also activates and awakens the higher centres responsible for the awakening of human consciousness.

Dynamic and static type of asanas is being taught today by teachers of yoga. Dynamic asanas are series of asanas practiced in continuity, intended to increase flexibility, improve circulation, tone the muscles and joints, release energy blocks and remove waste from different parts of the body. These practices often involve energetic movements of the body which strengthen the lungs and improve the digestive and excretory systems. Dynamic asanas series include the Surya namaskara, dynamic Paschimottanasana and dynamic Halasana, Pawan muktasana etc.

Stationery poses are Padmasana, Sidhhasana, etc and performed by experienced practitioners. These poses have a more subtle and powerful effect on the pranic and mental bodies. Body remains comfortable for longer durations in these poses and intended to gently massage the internal organs, glands and muscles as well as to relax the

nerves throughout the body. Advance practices of yoga like meditation is done in these postures to bring tranquility to the mind.

Hatha yoga Pradipika says that

स्थैर्यमारोग्यं चांगलाधवम् कुर्यात्तदासनं ।—(1/19)

Practicing of Yoga asanas gives stable, steady, diseases free and light body. Stable steady and disease free body is the basic requisite for advancement in Yoga practices. 84 Yoga postures described in ancient texts are found useful and easy to practice. Sage Gheranda in his book Gheranda samhita described 32 important yoga postures.

भद्रं मुक्तं बज्रं सिद्धं तथा पद्मं च स्वास्तिकम्।

सिंहं च गोमुखं वीरं धनुरासनमेव च॥

मृतं गुप्तं तथा मत्स्यं मत्स्येन्द्रासनमेव च।

पश्चिमोत्तानं उत्कटं संकटं गोरक्षं तथा

मयूरं कुक्कुटं कूर्मं तथा चोत्तानकूर्मकम्।

उत्तानमण्डुकं वृक्षं मण्डूकं गरुडं वृषम्॥

चोष्ट्रं शालभं मकरं भुजंगं योगमासनम्।

तु मर्त्ये सिद्धिं प्रदानि द्वात्रिंशदासनानि च॥

Siddha, Padma, Bhadra, Vajra, Swastik, Singh, Gaumukh, Veer, Dhanush, Mrit, Gupt, Matsya, Goraksha, Pashchimotta, Utkat, Sankat, Mayur, Kukkut, Koorma, Uttankurma

Uttanmanduk Vriksha, Mandook, Vrishabh, Shalabh, Makar, Ushtra, Bhujang, And Yogasan , these are 32 asanas, which gives desirables in human life.

## **i. Siddhasana**

Hathyog pradipika Siddhasana as

मूल-घटितं कृत्वा दृढं विन्यसेत योनि-सथानकमङ्घ्रि

मेण्ड्रे पादमथैकमेव हृदये कृत्वा हनुं सुस्थिरम ।

अछल-दृशा पश्येद्भ्रुवोरन्तरं सथाणुः संयमितेन्द्रियो।

हयेतन्मोक्ष-कपाट-भेद-जनकं सिद्धासनं परोच्छते ॥ 37 ॥

सिद्धमेव सदाभ्यसेत छतुरशीति-पीठेषु ।

दवासप्तति-सहस्राणां नाडीनां मल-शोधनम ॥ 41 ॥

Yoga practices in siddhasana leads to liberation. It cleanses all the energy channels for easy flow of Pranic Shakti. It is a preferable pose of yogis for practicing Pranayam and meditation.

## **Technique**

Practitioner presses his perineum with the heel of one foot, place the other foot on top of the genitals, rests his chin on to the chest. Steadily grazes into the eyebrow centre, remains still and steady, with the senses controlled.

A purely meditative posture Siddhasana is designed to channelize the prana, or vital energy. Placing of chin on pit of the neck, it becomes simplified form of jalandhara

bandha (A type of lock) and ujjayi Pranayam is automatically performed. The postures adjust the heart rate, blood pressure and brain wave pattern automatically. These adjustments help in ceasing mental fluctuations, resultantly inner consciousness blooms forth and body metabolism got balanced. Siddhasana regulates the production of the male hormone testosterone as heel is in continuous touch of genitals.

Base of the spine and centre of eye brows, the two main energy centres of the body got stabilized, which in turn redirects prana the vital energy to move upwards, towards the higher centres. Free flow of energy within these two centres is good for resolution of many health problems. Base of the spine is the root centre in which an infinite source of pranic energy lies dormant, and this posture has direct impact on revitalization of this vital energy.

## **Benefits**

Siddhasana is found very much useful in practice of Pranayam. This posture is one among the most favorite postures of learned yogis.

## **ii. Padmasana or Lotus pose**

वामोरूपरि दक्षिणं छ छरणं संस्थाप्य वामं तथा  
दक्षोरूपरि पश्चिमेन विधिना धृत्वा कराभ्यां दृढम |  
अङ्गुष्ठौ हृदये निधाय छिबुकं नासाग्रमालोकयेत्  
एतद्व्याधि-विनाश-कारि यमिनां पद्मासनं परोच्छते || 46 ||  
इदं पद्मासनं परोक्तं सर्व-व्याधि-विनाशनम् |  
दुर्लभं येन केनापि धीमता लभ्यते भुवि || 48 ||



Padmasana is known as the traditional meditative posture and destroyer of diseases. This posture balances metabolic structure and brain patterns of the body, which in turn creates balance in the whole system.

## **Technique**

In this posture practitioner places right and left ankles on opposite thighs respectively. The body is locked firmly in its position and physical movements are reduced to a minimum. The lower back is naturally held straight. One can feel the balancing effect on the body in this posture.

## **Benefits**

In this posture, blood flow in the lower body parts is significantly reduced and extra blood got directed towards abdominal region. Enhanced blood flow in abdominal region gently massages internal organs and thus enhances digestive fire and metabolic processes. Padmasana is the best posture to perform various Pranayam and meditation. However, people with problem in legs and knee joints should avoid Padmasana until the problem is resolved.

## **iii. Dhanurasana**

पादाङ्गुष्ठौ तु पाणिभ्यां गृहीत्वा शरवणावधि ।

धनुराकर्षणं कुर्याद्भिनुर-आसनमुच्छ्रयते <sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Muktibodhananda, Swami. Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.

In Dhanura asana Body posture is made like a bow by catching the toes of the feet with both the hands and lifting them upwards.

## **Technique**

Practitioner lies flat on the stomach resting on the floor and holds both ankles bending the knees widely separated. Mount the whole body on abdomen and raise the knees, head and chest, at the same time pull the feet away from the hands and upwards. Breathe normally. While releasing the posture exhale and relax. Repeat the process for several rounds.

## **Benefits**

The posture stimulates the solar plexus and regulates the digestive, eliminatory and reproductive organs. This asana has direct impacts on liver and pancreas which is very useful for yogic management of diabetes. Leg, back and hands muscle got properly toned.

## **iv. Matsyendra asana**

वामोरु मूलार्पित दक्षह पादं

वाम-पादम जानोर्बहिर्वेष्टित |

परगृह्य तिष्ठेत्परिवर्तिताङ्गः

शरीमत्सनाथोदितमासनं सयात || 28 ||

जठरपरदीप्तिं मत्स्येन्द्रपीठं

परछण्ड रुग्मण्डल खण्डनास्त्रम |

कुण्डलिनी परबोध अभ्यासतः

छन्द-सथिरत्वं छ ददाति पुंसाम ॥ 29 ॥<sup>37</sup>

## Technique

The asana was practiced by Yogi Sri Matsyendranath in which right foot is placed at the base of the left thigh, the left foot at the side of the right knee. Practitioner holds the left foot with the right hand, passes the left arm behind the waist and maintain the posture with the body turned.

## Benefits

This asana has direct impact on internal organs of the stomach. It enhances digestive Fire that is Jathar agni which is an essential ingredient of healthy digestion system. Further it stimulates the pancreas, liver, spleen, kidneys, and ascending and descending colons. It is useful in the treatment of diabetes, constipation, dyspepsia and urinary problems.

## v. Mayura asana or Peacock pose

धरामवष्टभ्य कर-दवयेन

तत-कूर्पर-सथापित-नाभि-पार्श्वः ।

उच्छासनो दण्डवदुत्थितः खे

मायूरमेतत्प्रवदन्ति पीठम ॥ 32 ॥

हरति सकल-रोगानाशु गुल्मोदरादीन

अभिभवति छ दोष्हानासनं शरी-मयूरम ।

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<sup>37</sup> Muktibodhananda, Swami. Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

बहु कदशन-भुक्तं भस्म कुर्यादशेषं

जनयति जठराग्निं जारयेत्काल-कूटम ॥ 33 ॥

Practitioner lies on the stomach, placing both hands on the ground and the elbows at the sides of the navel and raises the body high, keeping it straight like a stick. This is called the peacock pose.

### **Technique**

This asana is performed on the power of hand and stomach muscles. Hence prior to practice of this pose, one should strengthen his hands and stomach muscles through targeted muscle exercises. Elbows are placed at each side of the navel and waist. While exhaling raise the legs and inhale during putting it down. Jerk to the body into the position must be avoided. Hold the position for as long as is comfortable and breathe normally and lift the legs as high as possible.. Relax in Shavasana after practice.

### **Benefits**

Mayurasana eliminates all diseases of stomach disorders by raising digestive fire. Imbalance of the humours (vata, pitta, kapha) is also rectified. Mayurasana promotes digestion and elimination of toxins, and checks circulation or storage of poisonous substances in the body. This asana helps in purification of blood, alleviates constipation, flatulence, indigestion, dyspepsia and chronic gastritis. It stimulates the liver, kidneys and gallbladder.<sup>38</sup>

## vi. Vajrasna

जङ्घाभ्यां वज्रवत्कृत्वा गुदपार्श्वे पदावुभौ ।

वज्रासनं भवेदेतद्योगिनां सिद्धिदायकम्<sup>39</sup> ॥ 12॥

Practitioners place both the legs below the buttocks. This is called vajrasna which makes body as hard as Vajra i.e. stone. Practice of various pranayams and mudras are performed in this pose. This is the only asana which is recommended post meals and helpful in pouring extra blood flow in abdomen.

### Technique

Sit straight with extended legs. Bend the knees and assume high kneeling position. Keep the hips on the heels and big toes facing backward and touching each other. Spine head and shoulders should be kept straight. Remain in the posture few minutes and relax. This posture is very good for bhastrika Pranayama.

### Benefits

The posture is good for several pranayams. It enhances blood flow in lower abdomen which enhances digestive fires and relieves gases and flatulence. It is good in relieving symptoms of constipation. It works on thigh and calf muscles also. This is the only posture which is advised after meals.

## vii. Bhujangasana

अङ्गुष्ठनाभिपर्यन्तमधोभूमौ विनियसेत् ।

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<sup>39</sup> Gherand Samhita

धरां करतलाभ्यां धृत्वोर्ध्वशीर्षं फणीव हि ॥ 42 ॥

देहाग्निर्वर्धते नित्यं सर्वरोगविनाशनम् ।

जागर्ति भुजङ्गीदेवी भूजङ्गासनसाधनात्.<sup>40</sup>

Practitioners places the body facing down from the toes to the navel on the floor and placing the palms of the hands firmly on the floor, raises his head like Cobra. This Asana increases the digestive fire of the body and destroys the diseases.

## **Technique**

Practitioner lie down flat on the floor soles facing upwards and forehead on the ground. Both hands placed in such a way that palms are touching ground under shoulders, elbows parallel and close to torso. While inhaling slowly lift head, chest and abdomen keeping the navel on the floor. Stretch arms as far as possible and feel the sensations vertebra by vertebra in spinal cord.

Maintain the pose for few minutes while breathing normally. Rest is Shavasana after the practice.

## **Benefits**

It is said as destroyer of diseases. Digestive fire increases and spinal cord and back muscles got maximum massage in this asana.

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<sup>40</sup> Gorakh samhita

### **viii. Pashchimottasana or Back stretching pose**

परसार्य पादौ भुवि दण्ड-रूपौ

दोभ्यां पदाग्र-दवितयं गृहीत्वा ।

जानूपरिन्यस्त-ललाट-देशो

वसेदिदं पश्चिमतानमाहुः ॥ 30॥

इति पश्चिमतानमासनाग्र्यं

वाहिनं करोति पवनं पश्चिम ।

जठरानलस्य कुर्याद उदयं

काश्यमरोगतां उदरे छ पुंसाम ॥ 31 ॥

Practitioner sits straight both legs extended on ground like stick. Bend forward without bend in spinal cord and catch toes of both the legs by both the hands. Places his forehead on knees, this is called Back stretching pose or Pashchimottasana.

### **Technique**

Practitioner sit with the legs stretched, and puts his hands on the knees, raises both the hands and inhales keeping the back straight. Bend forward from the hips and keep the head between the shoulders so that the spinal column is stretched and exhales slowly. Catches the big toes with the hands and put his forehead on the knees. In case it is not possible, holds the calf muscles and bent forward as much as possible. Effort should be made to keep the back straight not curve or hunch. While reaching in final pose, breathing should be kept normal and remain in the pose for few minutes. While releasing the asana, inhale and raise the arms above the head and sit up. In the dynamic form

rocking and rolling backwards and forwards takes place in several rounds with medium speed.

## **Benefits**

Back stretching pose is the best among asanas. The asana revitalize Pranic current, increases the digestive fire. Practitioner's abdomen becomes flat, back, shoulder, arm and leg muscles are toned. Internal organs massaged properly, in particular the pancreas, spleen, kidney, liver, reproductive organs etc. hence, it is useful in the management of digestive disorders, constipation, flatulence, and loss of appetite. Dynamic form, of the pose helps to remove excess fat deposits from the abdomen and thighs. In short, this pose has numerous benefits in promoting health and happiness.

## **ix. Veerasana or Hero's pose**

एकं पादं तथैकस्मिन्विन्यसेदुरुणि सथिरम |

इतरस्मिंस्तथा छोरुं वीरासनमितीरितम ||23 ||

Placing one foot under the opposite thigh and other foot under the same thigh is called hero's pose.

## **Technique**

Practitioner places his left foot behind the left buttock and big toe under the buttock as in vajrasana. Right foot is placed on the left thigh and the knees kept widely separated, hands on the knees, in chin or jnana mudra, spine erect, head straight. The position is repeated on the other side, changing the leg position.



## **Benefits**

This asana is also called mahaveerasana. Word Mahaveer symbolizes with heroic power and the ability to subdue. Mahaveer is the name of lord Hanuman who is a highly powerful warrior in Hindu mythology. The asana named as Veerasana gives us a clear indication of the benefits and its purpose. The asana increases willpower and strengthens the body by stimulating the specific energy channels in the legs which are connected to the sex glands, sex organs organs and brain centres.

## **x. Shavasana or Corpse pose**

उत्तानं शबवद्भूमौ शयनं तच्छवासनम् ।

शवासनं शरान्ति-हरं छित्त-विश्रान्ति-कारकम् ॥ 34 ॥

Practitioner lies down on the ground like a corpse in Shavasana. It removes fatigue and gives rest to the mind and practiced after tough postures and Pranayam. Shavasana is a pose of relaxation and essential to practice after a busy day for calm and peace.

## **Technique**

Practitioner lie flat on the back with slightly separated feet, place the hands by the sides of the body, palms facing upwards. The legs, back, head and the whole body remain in relaxed position like a corpse. Normal breathing is practiced with mild focus on breath.

## Benefits

This is a relaxation pose which is useful for developing body awareness and pratyahara. This is found helpful in yogic management of high blood pressure, anxiety, hysteria, and all psychosomatic diseases. It is advised after completion of Yoga sessions for complete relaxation and peace.

### 3.3.1 Mudras & Bandhas

The Bandhas or locks are part of yogic activities with aim to lock the Pranas or vital energy in particular areas and redirect their flow in desired energy channels. Bandhas are instrumental in faster and fruitful results in Yoga. There are four types of Bandhas, described in Hathyoga Pradipika.

Mudra is defined as a specific body position. Mudras are instrumental in channelizing the energy produced by asana and Pranayam into the various centres and arouse particular states of mind. These are performed separately after asana and Pranayam as well as during asana and Pranayam for desired results. In beginning Mudras are practiced with asanasa and pranyama, however after certain degree of advancement in yoga, these occur spontaneously and effortlessly. Hathyog Pradipika gives detail of the Mudra as-

महाबन्धो महामुद्रा महावेधश्च खेचरी ।

मूलबन्धश्च उड्डीयानं बन्धो जालन्धराभिधः ॥ 6 ॥

वज्रोली शक्ति-छालनम करणी विपरीताख्या ।

जरा-मरण-नाशनम इदं हि मुद्रा-दशकं ॥ 7 ॥

There are ten Bandhas and Mudras described in Hthyoga Pradipika which destroy old age and death.

- i. Maha mudra
- ii. Maha bandha
- iii. Maha vedha
- iv. Khechari
- v. Uddiyana
- vi. Moola bandha
- vii. Jalandhara bandha
- viii. Vipareeta karani mudra
- ix. Vajroli
- x. Shakti chalana,

### **i. Maha Mudra**

पाद-मूलेन वामेन योनिं सम्पीड्य दक्षिणाम् ।

परसारितं पदं कृत्वा धारयेद्दृढम कराभ्यां ॥ 10॥

समारोप्य कण्ठे बन्धं धारयेद्वायुमूर्ध्वतः ।

यथा दण्ड-हतः सर्पो दण्डाकारः परजायते ॥ 11 ॥

महा सिद्धैः परदर्शिता इयं खलु महामुद्र ।

महलेशादयो दोष्हाः कष्ठीयन्ते मरणादयः ।

महा विबुधो मुद्रां छ तेनैव वदन्ति तमाः ॥ 14 ॥

## Technique

Sit both leg extended in front. Bend left leg and press the heel into the perineum. While exhaling, catch right toe and keep the head and spinal cord erect. Breathe normally and feel the tension in legs hands and abdomen. Shift attention on eyebrows and other places where tension still persist. Repeat the process with other foot and perform it for six rounds.

## Benefits

Maha mudra is the destroyer of the worst afflictions and diseases. It is called ‘the great attitude’ which purifies the entire network of energy channels, balances the three Doshas and increases vitality, stimulates digestion and harmonizes all bodily functions. It helps in overcoming depression by clarity of thoughts.

न हि पथ्यमपथ्यं सर्वेऽपि नीरसाः वा रसाः |

अपि पीयूषमपि जीर्यति भुक्तं विष्वं घोरं || 16 ||

कष्हय-कुष्हठ-गुदावर्त-गुल्माजीर्ण-पुरोगमाः |

तस्य दोषाः कष्हयं यान्ति महामुद्रां तु योऽभ्यसेत || 17 ||

Digestion and assimilation of food got stimulated in turn vital energy got boosted. Digestion and metabolism touches the optimum level and practitioner can digest what he consumes easily. This Mudra eliminates mental depression by removing all energy blockages which are the main cause of the problem. Mahamudra is highly recommended and powerful preparatory practice for meditation.

## ii. Mool Bandha or Perineum/cervix retraction lock

सम्पीड्य योनिमाकुनछयेद्गुदम पाष्णि-भागेन ।

अपानमूर्ध्वमाकृष्य मूल-बन्धो अभिधीयते ॥

In moola bandha, perineum is pressed with the heel and the rectum contracted forcefully.

### Technique

Sit in comfortable pose preferably in siddhasana; keep the hands on the knees close the eyes. Body completely relaxed, head and spine are comfortably erect. Concentrate in the area of perineum and contract it. Continue the contraction for twenty times in normal breathing conditions. In beginning contraction should start off gently and only partially. Contract and hold just a little and then release slowly. Contract a little more and continue like this, gradually increasing the tension until full contraction is reached. Breathe normally and hold the full contraction for as long as possible.

### Benefits

कष्यो मूत्र-पुरीष्योः अपान-पराणयोरैक्यं ।

सततं मूल-बन्धनात् युवा भवति वृद्धोऽपि ॥ 65॥

By continuous practice of Mool Bandha even old person become young. Mool Bandha practice increases the metabolic rate for a short period, and as a result absorption and assimilation improve, and the nervous system, blood circulation and brain functions are

greatly stimulated. Sensual desires and the need for sleep decrease as the mind becomes more alert. Mool Bandha has direct impact on naval Plexus which is responsible for maintaining the body temperature and regulating the digestive fire.

### **iii. Uddiyana Bandha or Abdominal retraction lock**

बद्धो येन सुष्हुम्णायां पराणस्तूङ्घीयते यतः ।

तस्मादुङ्घीयनाख्योऽयं योगिभिः समुदाहृतः ॥ 55 ॥

उदरे पश्चिमं तानं नाभेरूर्ध्वं च कारयेत् ।

उङ्घीयानो हयसौ बन्धो मृत्यु-मातङ्ग-केसरी ॥ 57 ॥

Uddiyana means “upward” and bandha means “binding," "uniting" or "contracting” the abdominal muscles and creating a natural upward flow of energy. It is often translated as ‘the stomach lift’. Uddiyana bandha can be done while sitting, standing or lying flat on the back as it involves the sucking in and pulling up of the abdomen and stomach. Beginners should practice it in standing poses. Prerequisite of this Bandha is completely empty stomach and the bowels should preferably be evacuated first.

### **Technique**

Practitioners stand with the feet approximately half a meter apart and bends the knees slightly and rest the hands above the knees. The head and spine must remain straight, Inhale and exhale completely. Pull the abdomen and stomach inward towards the spine and up and hold for a few seconds. Inhale and release the bandha slowly. Take normal breath and repeat the practice.

## **Benefits**

गुरुणा कथितं सदा उड्डीयानं तु सहजं ।

वृद्धोऽपि तरुणायते यस्तु अभ्यसेत्सततं ॥ 58 ॥

नाभेरूर्ध्वमधश्चापि तानं कुर्यात्प्रयत्नतः ।

षहण्मासमभ्यसेन्मृत्युं जयत्येव न संशयः ॥ 59 ॥

The abdominal muscles above and below the navel should be drawn backward forcefully. This is destroyer of diseases.. Regular practice of uddiyana bandha vitality increases as uddiyana has a powerful toning effect on the visceral organs, muscles, nerves and glands. The contraction of muscles stimulates blood circulation and absorption. The processes of digestion, assimilation and elimination are improved. Uddiyana impacts maximum in abdominal region, thereby overcoming many related diseases related to abdomen.

## **iv. Jalandhara Bandha or Throat lock**

Jalandhar bandha is locking the chin in pit of the neck. In this action, visceral compartment of the neck are impacted, which contains important structures in the endocrine system (thyroid, parathyroid, and thymus), the respiratory system (larynx and trachea), and the digestive system (the pharynx) system is our system of chemical messengers called hormones that help regulate everything from growth to sleep to our response to fear.

कण्ठमाकुनछ्य हृदये सथापयेछिछबुकं दृढम ।

बन्धो जालन्धराख्यो अयं जरा-मृत्यु-विनाशकः ॥ 70 ॥

बध्नाति हि सिराजालमधो-गामि नभो-जलम ।

कण्ठ-दुःखौघ-नाशनः ततो जालन्धरो बन्धः ॥ 71 ॥

## **Technique**

Sit in easy pose like siddhasana/, padmasana, sukhasana or vajrasana with palms of the hands on the knees and allow the whole body to relax. Slowly and deeply inhale and retain the breath lower the chin so that it rest on pit of the neck joining the chest. Straighten the elbows and raise the shoulders, hold for as long as is comfortable. Exhale and slowly release the Bandha. Breathe normally and repeat the practice for five rounds.

## **Benefits**

This bandha is useful in management of throat disorders such as inflammation, stuttering, excess mucus in the throat, tonsillitis, etc. Quality of the voice improves. Major nerve fibers pass through the neck and when jalandhara is performed it exerts pressure on them. This pressure activates higher centers in the brain.

## **v. Maha Bandha or The great lock**

The MahaBandha is combination of all three locks (Mool, Uddiyana and Jalandhara) and applied simultaneously.

## **Technique**

Practitioner sit in padmasana, siddha asana or sukhasana with the hands on the knees. The head and spine must remain straight, Inhale and exhale completely. Retaining the



breath outside successively perform jalandhara, uddiyana and moola bandhas respectively. Bandhas and the breath may be hold for as long as is comfortable without straining. While releasing, moola, uddiyana and jalandhara bandhas may be released in order. Relax the body and let the breath return to normal before commencing the next round. Repeat the practice for two to three rounds.

## **Benefits**

Maha bandha gives combined benefits of all three bandhas and affects the hormonal secretions of the pineal gland. Ageing processes are checked and every cell of the body is rejuvenated. Metabolic level of the body increases with enhanced digestive fire.

## **vi. Vipareeta Karani Mudra or Reversing attitude**

This mudra is practiced by raising the legs above the ground and focus on thoracic region.

ऊर्ध्व-नाभेरधस्तालोरूर्ध्वं भानुरधः शशी |

करणी विपरीताखा गुरु-वाक्येन लभ्यते || 79 ||

## **Technique**

Lie on your back. Bringing the legs together, palms of the hands on the floor beside the body, raise the legs up to 45 degree, and support the back with the hands. The hands should hold the buttocks or the sides of the waist. Hold the position as long as possible, breathing normally and concentrate on the throat centre. Inhale and slowly come out of the position, slowly lower the back onto the floor, keeping the legs raised. Lower the legs and relax in Shavasana. Repeat the practice for three to four rounds.

## Benefits

Practice of vipareeta karani mudra reverses the flow of fluids from the brain centre by reversing the natural upright body position. In this position all the fluids of body flow back towards the head without undue force or pressure. This asana creates pressure in the throat which stimulates the thyroid for its optimal functioning.

नित्यमभ्यास-युक्तस्य जठराग्नि-विवर्धनी ।

आहारो बहुलस्तस्य सम्पाद्यः साधकस्य छ ॥ 80॥

The positive effects of vipareeta karani are an increased capacity to digest and assimilate food and hence a moderate diet should be taken at regular intervals. Due to inverted position of Vipreet Karni, while draining the lower body, it simultaneously enhances blood flow to the brain, especially the cerebral cortex and the intracranial glands, i.e. the pituitary and pineal which has a revitalizing influence upon the human aura.

वलितं पलितं छैव षहण्मासोर्ध्वं न दृश्यते ।

याम-मात्रं तु यो नित्यमभ्यसेत्स तु कालजित ॥ 82 ॥

Six months of continuous practice results in wrinkles free body. Grey hair becomes inconspicuous. It is advisable to practice a backward bending posture such as matsyasana, bhujangasana or ushtrasana on completion of the practice.

## vii. Khechari Mudra or Attitude of dwelling in supreme consciousness

Turning the tongue backwards into the cavity of the cranium and turning the eyes inwards towards the eyebrow centre is Khechari mudra.

परविष्टा विपरीतगा कपाल-कुहरे जिह्वा ।

भवति खेचरी भरुवोरन्तर्गता दृष्टिर्मुद्रा ॥ 32 ॥

### Technique

Khechari Mudra is done by turning the tongue back so that the under surface touches the upper back portion of the soft palate and the tip of the tongue is inserted into the nasal orifice. This is a complex exercise and needs rigorous practices.

### Benefits

रसनामूर्धगां कृत्वा कषणार्धमपि तिष्ठति ।

विष्वैर्विमुच्यते योगी वयाधि-मृत्यु-जरादिभिः ॥ 38 ॥

Hathyoga Pradipika says that one who remains with the tongue going upwards for even half a second is freed from toxins, disease, death, old age, etc.

न रोगो मरणं तन्द्रा न निद्रा न कषुधा तृष्णा ।

न छ मूर्च्छा भवेत्तस्य यो मुद्रां वेत्ति खेचरीम ॥ 39 ॥

Successful practitioner of this khechari mudra is neither troubled by diseases, nor death, sleep, hunger, thirst or unconsciousness. This directly influences brain functions and awakens the higher centres of awareness. This mudra also influences the salivary gland and the faculty of taste, which in turn are also connected to the lower nerve plexuses involved in the digestive and assimilative processes.

## **viii. Yoga Mudra or Attitude of psychic union Technique**

### **Technique**

Sit comfortably in padmasana or vajrasna. Hold one wrist behind the back and close the eyes, relax the whole body. Slowly inhale and feel the breath gradually rising from lower body to higher centers, retain the breath for a few seconds and concentrate in between eye brows. While exhaling, slowly bend forward from the hips and synchronize the movement with the breath. Move forward until forehead just touches the floor in yogamudrasana as the air is fully expelled from the lungs. Be in position for few minutes and breathe normally. While releasing the mudra, inhale slowly and raise the trunk to the vertical position. This is one round of Yog mudra. After the practice perform any backward bending asana such as bhujangasana or ushtrasana.

### **Benefits**

Good massages of the abdominal organs happen in this mudra. Forward bending gives good stretching to the back, contributing to good health. This is also treated as an excellent preparatory practice for meditation. Calmness and tranquility are experienced after this pose.

## **3.4 Pranayama**

Yoga has been defined by sage Patanjali as ‘योगश्चित्तवृत्ति निरोधः’ which means ‘cessation of mind’. The question arises that how the cessation of mind can be achieved. Sage

Patanjali has given solution as अभ्यास वैराग्य तन्निरोधः means cessation of mind can be achieved through practice. In Shrimadbhagwad Gita Lord Krishna says असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलं। अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते॥6.35॥. ‘Cessation of mind is the toughest job and cannot be done easily, however through detachment and regular practice it can be achieved’. In Gherand Samhita Sage Gherand says आनन्दो जायते चित्ते प्राणायामी सुखी भवेत् means ‘mind becomes cool and calm through Pranayam’.

The word Pranayam is comprised of ‘prana’ and ‘ayama’. Prana is the ‘vital energy’ or ‘life force’ which exists in all things, whether animate or inanimate. Prana is not simple breath but a form of life energy, which flows in energy channels of the pranamaya kosha or energy body. Pranayam means ‘extension or expansion of the dimension of prana’ and the techniques of Pranayam provide the method to strengthen life force for attaining a higher state of vibratory energy and awareness.

Sage patanjali says that ‘तस्मिन्सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः ॥ 2.49 ॥ ‘ means breaking the rhythm of inhalation and exhalation is Pranayam. Continuous practice of Pranayam removes veil of darkness on the soul fast. ‘ततः क्षीयते प्रकाशावरणम् ॥ 2.52 ॥

Steps involved in Pranayam are-

बाह्याभ्यन्तरस्तंभवृत्तिर्देशकालसंख्याभिः परितृष्टो दीर्घसूक्ष्मः।

- i. Inhalation or Pooraka or Bahya
- ii. Exhalation or Rechaka or abhayantar

- ii. Internal breath retention or Antar kumbhaka or stambhvritti
- iv. External breath retention or Bahir kumbhaka or stambhvritti.

The Pranayam practices involve various techniques and utilize these four aspects of breathing. One more mode of Pranayam, called kevala kumbhaka or spontaneous breath retention is also described, which occurs during high states of meditation. In this state, the fluctuation of vital force ceases and a higher vision of reality are attained. Therefore, in the Pranayam practices more emphasis is given to inhalation and exhalation at the beginning, in order to strengthen the lungs and balance the nervous and pranic systems in preparation for the practice of kumbhaka. Pranayam practices influence the flow of prana in the nadis, purifying, regulating and activating them, thus inducing physical and mental stability with peace and tranquility. According to yogic physiology, the pranic body is comprised of five bodies, commonly known as

- i. The food or material body or Annamaya kosha
- ii. The mental body or Manomaya kosha
- iii. The vital energy body or Pranamaya kosha
- iv. The psychic or higher mental body or Vijnanamaya kosha
- v. The bliss body or Anandamaya kosha.

The practices of Pranayam work mainly with the vital energy body or pranamaya kosha. The Pranayam techniques energize and balance the different pranas within pranamaya kosha. The yogis and rishis of ancient India studied nature in great detail and realized the

importance of breathing for increasing the human lifespan. Rhythmic and deep and breathing increases the absorption of energy in pranamaya kosha and enhances dynamism, vitality and general wellbeing.

## **Types of Pranayam**

### **i. Kapalbhāti or Frontal brain cleansing**

In this Pranayam, exhalation and inhalation are done rapidly like the bellows (of a blacksmith). Kapal means forehead and bhāti means shining, and thus who practices Kapalbhāti, his forehead shines radiantly.

भस्त्रावल्लोह-कारस्य रेच-पूरौ ससम्भ्रमौ ।

कपालभातिर्विख्याता कफ-दोष-विशोषणी 35

पराणायामैरेव सर्वे परशुष्यन्ति मला इति ।

आचार्याणां तु केषांछिदन्यत्कर्म न संमतम् ॥ 37 ॥

In this Pranayam. Breathing in and breathing out are done forcefully like the pumping action of blacksmith's bellows. It is a similar practice to bhastrika Pranayam except that exhalation is emphasized and inhalation is the result of forcing the air out. Generally while breathing, inhalation is an active process and exhalation is passive, however Kapalbhāti reverses the normal process of breathing, in which exhalation becomes active and inhalation passive.

## **Technique**

Sit in siddhasana or any comfortable sitting pose, keeping the spine and head erect and relax. Take few deep inhalations and relax. Now forcefully flush out air continuously from both the nostrils placing more emphasis on exhalation. When feel complete, apply mahabandha and maintain kumbhaka. Remain in the position as long as possible and release the Bandhas in order. Three rounds of fifty breaths may be practiced in beginning and can be increased to five rounds at later stage and so on. The process expels more carbon dioxide and other waste gases from the cells and lungs than normal breathing.

## **Benefits**

Kapalbhati helps relax facial muscles and nerves and rejuvenates tired cells and nerves, keeping the face young, shining and wrinkle-free.

## **ii. Bhastrika Pranayam or Bellows breath**

Bhastrika Pranayam is similar to kapalbhati in which inhalation and exhalation both are done equally and forcefully. Gherand samhita says-

भस्त्रैव लोहकाराणां यथाक्रमेण सम्प्रमेत् ।

तथा वायुं च नासाभ्यामुभाभ्यां चालयेच्छनैः ॥ 75 ॥

Practitioner sits in padmasana, keeping neck, head and abdomen erect, exhales through the nose and again inhale the air quickly at the fullest. The process of inhalation and exhalation repeated continuously with the same motion as a pair of bellows being pumped.



## Technique

Sit comfortably in comfortable posture with the hands on the knees and body relaxed. Keep the spine, neck and head erect. Take few deep breaths in and relax. Start breathing out quickly and forcefully through the nose, and immediately afterwards breathes in with the same energy. During breathing out the abdomen comes in and the diaphragm contracts and when you breathe in the diaphragm relaxes and the abdomen comes out. The process to be continued in this manner for twenty breaths and at the end of twenty breaths, take a deep breath in and out slowly and relax. Three to five such rounds may be practiced. Gradually increase the speed but inhalation and exhalation must be equal.

## Benefits

Gherand samhita says-

एवं विंशतिवारं च कृत्वा कुर्याच्च कुम्भकम् ।

तदन्ते चालयेद्वायुं पूर्वोक्तं च यथाविधि ॥ 76 ॥

त्रिवारं साधयेदेनं भस्त्रिकाकुम्भकं सुधीः ।

न च रोगो न च क्लेश आरोग्यं च दिने दिने ॥ 77 ॥

Bhastrika is the destroyer of diseases, miseries and promotes good health. It is pleasant and beneficial, and removes obstruction in energy channels. The rhythmic pumping of the diaphragm and lungs stimulates the heart and blood circulation in whole body. It also stimulates the visceral organs with massaging effect. Bhastrika is helpful in clearing

away excess mucus and building up immunity to colds and all respiratory disorders, improves digestion and accelerates the metabolic rate of the body.

### **iii. Nadi Shodhan Pranayam or Alternate breathing**

This Pranayam is known as cleansing technique for all energy channels of vital energy body. Practitioners inhales through the left nostril and hold the breath to capacity, and then exhale through the right nostril in comfortable sitting posture. Again inhales through the right nostril, then exhale completely through the left nostril. Inhales again with the same nostril through which exhalation was done, and exhales through the other nostril slowly and not forcibly. Repeat the process for several rounds. In advance stage of Pranayam, retention of breath is also suggested for larger benefits.

In Gheranda samhita Sage Gherand says that

योगी प्राणं चन्द्रेण पूरयेत् बद्ध-पद्मासनो |

धारयित्वा यथा-शक्ति भूयः सूर्येण रेचयेत् || 7 ||

प्राणं सूर्येण चाकृष्य पूरयेदुदरं शनैः |

पुनश्चन्द्रेण विधिवत्कुम्भकं कृत्वा रेचयेत् || 8 ||

### **Technique**

Sit in comfortable sitting position preferably in padmasana or siddhasana. Close the right nostril with the right hand thumb, and breathe in slowly and fully through the left nostril, exhale through the right, again inhale through the right and exhale through the left nostril. This is one round, repeat the process for twenty rounds. Duration of inhalation and exhalation is same in the ratio of 1:1. In later stage retention or kumbhaka is also added.

The right thumb is used to close the right nostril and the third finger is used to close the left nostril.

## **Benefits**

As it is very clear from its name, this Pranayama purifies all energy channels of the body.

This is a perfect Pranayama for preparation of meditation and blissful state of mind.

यथेष्टं धारणं वायोरनलस्य परदीपनम् ।

नादाभिव्यक्तिरारोग्यं जायते नाडि-शोधनात् ॥ 20 ॥

When impurities are removed through alternate breathing, the air can be restrained as per wish. Appetite is increased, and the body becomes disease free.

## **iv. Ujjayi Pranayama**

In this Pranayama, deep breathing is done through both the nostrils feeling it at throat with sonorous sound. Hathyoga Pradipika says

मुखं संयम्य नाडीभ्यामाकृष्ट्य पवनं शनैः ।

यथा लगति कण्ठात्तु हृदयावधि स-सवनम् ॥ 51 ॥

Ujjayi is translated as ‘victorious’; which means ‘to conquer’. The practice of ujjayi is so simple that it can be done in any position and anywhere.

## **Technique**

Sit in a Vajrasna or any comfortable pose feel the air passing down through the windpipe.

Contract the throat and inhale and exhale through the nose, with a light snoring sound.

Inhalation and exhalation should be deep, controlled and as long as possible.

## Benefits

नाडी-जलोदराधातु-गत-दोष-विनाशनम् ।

गच्छता तिष्ठता कार्यमुज्जाय्याख्यं तु कुम्भकम् ॥ 53 ॥

This Pranayam removes disorders of the body and helps in deep relaxation of mind.

## v. Bhramari Pranayam or Humming bee breath

Bhramari, the humming bee Pranayam, is named after bhramar or bee because the sound during breathing resembles that of a black bee. Hathyog pradipika says

वेगाद्घोषं भृङ्ग-नादं पूरकं

भृङ्गी-नादं रेचकं मन्द-मन्दम् ।

योगीन्द्राणमेवमभ्यास-योगा

चित्ते जाता काचिदानन्द-लीला ॥ 68॥

Practitioner makes reverberating sound like the bee while breathing. Inhalation is done fast while exhalation is kept slow. This Pranayama is known for mental peace and bliss.

## Technique

Sit in any comfortable pose, relax the body and keep the body erect. Close the eyes throughout the practice inhale slowly and deeply through the nose, listening to the sound of the breath. Close both the ears with the thumb by pressing the middle outer part of the ear ligament into the ear hole and middle and index finger on eyes and eye brows respectively. Keeping the ears closed exhale, making a deep soft humming sound of bee. Repeat the process for several rounds.

## Benefits

Bhramari is helpful in awakening of psychic sensitivity and produces peace and tranquility in mind. The soothing sound produced in bhramari relieves mental tension, anxiety and helps in reducing anger. This Pranayama should be practiced after asana, nadi shodhana Pranayama, and before meditation or sleep.

## 3.5 Pratyahara

Pratyahara means absolute control over senses. There are five senses; taste, smell, hearing, touch and sight. Mind is moving like monkey to enjoy these senses mindlessly. Sage Patanjali says ततः परमा वश्यतेन्द्रियाणाम् means pratyahara is absolute control over sens organs.

स्वविषयासंप्रयोगे चित्तस्य स्वरूपानुकार इवेन्द्रियाणां प्रत्याहारः ॥ 51 ॥

One should try his level best to bring back all senses in their original form, for the purpose they are made of and this is called Pratyahara.

In Gherand samhita sage Gherand says that

मधुराम्लकतिक्तादिरसं गतं यदा मनः ।

तस्मात्प्रत्याहरेदेतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ 5 ॥

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ 2 ॥

As and when mind becomes attracted to sour, sweet, bitter, and other kind of tastes, withdraw it from them and bring it back to control of mind. Whenever mind becomes unstable and wanders here and there, bring it back under control.

### **3.6 Dharna or Concentration**

देशबंधश्चित्तस्य धारणा ॥1॥

Concentration is holding the mind on to some object either in the body, or outside the body, and keeps itself in that state.

### **3.7 Dhyana or Meditation**

Sage Patanjali says

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम् ॥2॥

An unbroken flow of concentration to a particular object is Dhyana or meditation.

### **3.8 Samadhi**

तद् एवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यम् इव समाधिः ॥ ३ ॥

Blissful state of mind i.e. Samadhi is defined as form less.

त्रयम् एकत्र संयमः ॥ 4 ॥

Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi becomes Samyama when a man can direct his mind to any particular object and fix it there, and then keep it there for a long time, making all three one. In this state the form vanishes, and only its meaning remain in the mind. Success in

making the Samyama, results with self control and should be first practiced to gross things, slowly by stages, it should be brought to finer things. This brings tremendous powers to the practitioner.

बलेषु हस्तिबलादीनि ॥ 25 ॥

When someone makes Samyama on the strength of the elephant, etc., he becomes highly powerful. The body is source of infinite energy, which can be trained to exercise through proper Yoga practices.

रूपलावण्यबलवज्रसंहननत्वानि कायसंपत् ॥ 47 ॥<sup>41</sup>

When someone makes samyama on body, he gets radiant, cheerful and body with strength of Vajra (thunderbolt). His body becomes indestructible; fire cannot harm it, nothing can injure it. The Yogi gets a body which cannot be destroyed by time or ageing process.

ग्रहणस्वरूपास्मितान्वयार्थवत्त्वसंयमाद् इन्द्रियजयः ॥ 48 ॥

When someone makes Samyama on the objectivity, knowledge and egoism of the organs, he gets control over the functions of these organs. By this practice all the organs will be conquered and Yogi becomes इन्द्रियजयः victorious over his five senses.

A regular and continuous practice of Yoga is an assurance of good physical health and peaceful life. In modern world, where life is so disturbed, Yoga is the only solution for

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<sup>41</sup> Patanjali Yog Sutra

overall health and happiness. Yoga is essential for all including children, adults and old ages personnel and equally beneficial.

Gherand samhita Says

युवो वृद्धो अतिवृद्धो वा वयाधितो दुर्बलो अपि वा

अभ्यासात्सिद्धिमाप्नोति सर्व-योगेष्वातन्द्रितः

Everyone who practices Yoga definitely gets its benefit, without iota of doubt.



## Chapter 6

### Yogic management of digestion related issues

“सर्वेपि रोगाः जायन्ते मन्दे अग्नेः”<sup>42</sup>

#### **Weak digestion is the root of all diseases.**

A healthy digestive and eliminative system is synonymous to good physical and mental health. It is found that large number of chronic diseases and metabolic disorders are secondary effects of weak digestive system. A Survey on Digestive Health' of Indian families', ahead of World Digestive Health Day on May 29, 2021 reveals that 56% of Indian families have reported digestive health problems<sup>43</sup>. Another survey suggests that 22% of the adult Indian population is suffering from constipation, with 13% complaining of severe constipation. 6% of the Indian population suffers from constipation associated with certain co morbidities<sup>44</sup>. People suffering from digestion related issues have a high chance of depression, stress, anxiety, and impaired central nervous system functioning<sup>45</sup>.

#### **1. What is digestion?**

The role of digestive system of the body is to break down food and absorb the powerful nutrients. These nutrients include vitamins, minerals, fats, carbohydrates and proteins and

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<sup>42</sup> Charak samhita

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/health/56-of-indian-families-report-digestive-health-issues-reveals-survey>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.abbott.in/media-center/press-releases/indian-adults-suffer-from-constipation.html>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9549910/#:~:text=In%20India%2C%20the%20prevalence%20of%20gastrointestinal%20problems%20was%2018%25.>

used by body for energy, growth and repair. Another important aspect of the digestion process is removal of waste products. This removal process is carried out by the liver, kidneys, colon and lungs. Kidneys filter blood and remove the toxins through urine. The colon helps in removal of the toxins through bowel movements. To get maximum efficiency of the body our internal organs should have strong muscles for digestion as well as removal of wastes.

## **1.2 Symptoms related to digestive problems**

Symptoms of weak digestive system are -

- Vomiting
- Bloating, Heart burn
- Indigestion
- Abdominal pain
- Constipation
- Anxiety and stress related to symptoms

**Good digestive system** is a priceless gift of nature to human body. It is treated as backbone for good health and well-being. Yoga, a time tested technique is a better alternative and preventive therapy for maintaining good digestive system with **no side effects**. Its overall health benefits are enormous and countless. The **great sage Patanjali** has referred to asanas and pranayama are important limbs of yoga. Asanas and Pranayama are found helpful in developing a healthy mind body system.

### **1.3 Role of asanas in improving digestion**

Several asanas are designed to stimulate digestive fire or agni, which increases the appetite by balancing the metabolism. Asanas are instrumental in massaging the abdominal muscles and facilitate easy move of food efficiently along the digestive tract. Pranayama like 'Nauli' balances the bowel movement and thus constipation is relieved. Nauli and Agnisar kriya enhances blood flow to the digestive organs which helps in good digestion.

#### **A. Yoga asanas for good digestion**

स्थैर्यम् आरोग्यं चाङ्गलाघवम् कुर्यात् तद् आसनं <sup>46</sup>

Hatha Yoga Pradipika says that disease free, steady and light body is achieved through practice of Yoga asanas. Some postures which help in stimulating digestive fire and gently massage the internal organs are as under-

#### **i. Dhanurasana**

In Dhanura asana Body posture is made like a bow by catching the toes of the feet with both the hands and lifting them upwards. This is helpful in massaging, and regulating the digestive and excretory organs which in turn enhances digestive fire.

#### **ii. Matsyendra asana**

The asana was practiced by Yogi Sri Matsyendranath in which right foot is placed at the base of the left thigh, the left foot at the side of the right knee. Practitioner holds the left

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<sup>46</sup> Muktibodhananda, Swami. Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.

foot with the right hand, passes the left arm behind the waist and maintain the posture with the body turned.

This asana has direct impact on internal organs of the stomach. It enhances digestive Fire that is Jathar agni which is an essential ingredient of healthy digestion system. Further it stimulates the pancreas, liver, spleen, kidneys, and ascending and descending colons. It is useful in the treatment of diabetes, constipation, dyspepsia and urinary problems.

### **iii. Mayura asana**

Practitioner lies on the stomach, placing both hands on the ground and the elbows at the sides of the navel and raises the body high, keeping it straight like a stick. This is called the peacock pose. Mayurasana eliminates all diseases of stomach disorders by raising digestive fire. Imbalance of the humours (vata, pitta, kapha) is also rectified. Mayurasana promotes digestion and elimination of toxins, and checks circulation or storage of poisonous substances in the body. This asana helps in purification of blood, alleviates constipation, flatulence, indigestion, dyspepsia and chronic gastritis. It stimulates the liver, kidneys and gallbladder.<sup>47</sup>

### **iv. Vajrasna**

Practitioners place both the legs below the buttocks. This is called vajrasna which makes body as hard as Vajra i.e. stone. Practice of various pranayams and mudras are performed

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<sup>47</sup> Muktibodhananda, Swami. Hatha Yoga Pradipika Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.

in this pose. This is the only asana which is recommended post meals and helpful in pouring extra blood flow in abdomen.

### **V. Bhujangasana**

Practitioners places the body facing down from the toes to the navel on the floor and placing the palms of the hands firmly on the floor raises his head like Cobra. This Asana increases the digestive fire of the body and eliminates the diseases.

## **B. Yogic Mudras and Kriyas for good digestion**

Mudras and Kriyas find very important place in practice of Yoga. Some important are mentioned below -

### **i. Mahamudra**

Through proper practices of Mahamudra, diseases like constipation, enlargement of the spleen, indigestion, etc. eliminated easily.

### **ii. Viparitkarni**

Viparitkarni mudra is practiced by placing foot upward and head downward. Its regular practice enhances digestive fire.

### iii. Agnisara

नाभिग्रन्थिं मेरुपृष्ठे शतवारं च कारयेत् ।

उदरामयजं त्यक्त्वा जाठराग्निं विवर्धयेत् ॥ 20॥<sup>48</sup>

Practitioner pulls the navel knot towards the spinal column and then push out one hundred times. This ctivity is known as agnisaradhauti which rejuvenate digestive system and enhances digestive fire.

### iv. Mool Shodhana

निवारयेत् वारयेत्कोष्ठकाठिन्यमामाजीर्ण ।

वह्निमण्डलदीपनम् कारणं कान्तिपुष्टयोश्च<sup>49</sup> ॥ 44 ॥

The practice of moolashodhana destroys constipation, indigestion and digestive disorders. It increases the beauty and vitality of the body and activates the digestive fire.

### v. Lauliki or Nauli

अमन्दवेगेन तुन्दं भ्रामयेदुभपार्श्वयोः ।

सर्वरोगान्निहन्तीह देहानलविवर्धनम्<sup>50</sup> ॥

Practitioner rotates the abdominal muscles quickly from one side to another continuously. This Nauli Kriya raises digestive fire and bestows good health. Nauli is useful for relieving constipation, indigestion, acidity, flatulence, depression, laziness, dullness, lack of energy and emotional disturbances.

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<sup>48</sup> Gherand samhita

<sup>49</sup> Gherand samhita

<sup>50</sup> Gorakhsamhita

## **1.4 Role of Pranayama in improving digestion**

Environmental or psychological stresses are closely related with gastrointestinal distress. Sometimes stress triggers heavily on gastrointestinal system and vice versa<sup>51</sup>. Patanjali Yogsutra says that that Pranayamas are very much helpful in calming down stress.

आनन्दो जायते चित्ते प्राणायामी सुखी भवेत्<sup>52</sup> ॥

### **i. Kapalbhata**

Kapalbhata Pranayam is destroyer of all Doshas and helpful in strengthening internal digestive organs.

### **ii. Anulom Vilom**

Anulom Vilom or Nadi Shodhana pranayam is a pranayama, which is also called as alternate breathing technique. As it is clear from its name, during practice one nostril is closed while inhaling, and then holding the other nostril closed while exhaling. Again the process is reversed and repeated. This practice is found very much useful in calming down and regaining blissful state of mind. Stress free mind promotes good digestion system of the body.

### **iii. Bhastrika**

This Pranayama is very powerful in eliminating stomach related ailments and enhancing the vigor and vitality of the body.

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<sup>51</sup> [https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter\\_article/stress-and-the-sensitive-gut](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/stress-and-the-sensitive-gut)

<sup>52</sup> Gherand samhita

## 1.5 Role of diet in improving digestion

Diet is utmost important while dealing with weak digestive system. Yoga lays emphasis on Mita ahara or light diet. In shrimadbhagwadgita Lord Krishna says that appropriate food is essential for success in Yoga and destruction of all miseries.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा

Further Gherand muni says that one should keep one fourth of his stomach empty for water and air while taking food.

सुस्निग्धं मधुराहारं चतुर्थाशविवर्जितम् ।

भुज्यते स्वरसं प्रीत्यै मिताहारी स उच्यते

By following a yogic diet, overeating is avoided automatically. Yoga provides a holistic and integrated approach for management of weak digestive system. Appropriate diet and proper eating habits in combination with asanas and Pranayama, makes digestive fire strong and strong digestive system of the body is a guarantee of good physical and mental health.



## Chapter 7

### Yogic management of Obesity

Obesity is a condition, defined as abnormal or excessive storage of fat which presents a risk to human body. Body mass index<sup>53</sup> (BMI) over 25 is assumed as overweight, and above 30 is treated as obese. According to the global burden of disease, more than 4 million people are dying each year as a result of being overweight or obese. Huge number of overweight or obese children lives in developing countries, where the rate of increase has been estimated more than 30% higher than that of developed countries.<sup>54</sup>

Obesity badly affects internal system mechanism of body with serious metabolic consequences like raised blood pressure, diabetes and arthritis etc. Reduced vitality, mental dullness and depression are predominant symptoms of the disease. Consumption of more than needed calories is the main cause of obesity. Because of inbuilt mechanism, body stores excess calories in form of body fat. If not controlled, the accumulation continues with passage of time and fat piles up. Overeating is very common these days because of changed life styles and several other environmental factors. Extra calories clubbed with wrong selection of food are adding the miseries. Today people are using excessive oils, spices, sugar and refined products in place of nature based diet like fresh vegetables, whole grain, fruits and getting trapped in the dreaded diseases.

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<sup>53</sup> BMI, formerly index, is a measure for indicating nutritional status in adults

<sup>54</sup> [https://www.who.int/health-topics/obesity#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/obesity#tab=tab_1)

Two types of people are facing obesity. First are those who are so called modern and rich, they eat too fast, without any awareness and treat food like channel to release energy required for routine work. They have all time and commitment for their professional work, but least bothered about type and time of food during its consumption. Second types of people are those who overeat out of boredom. They eat and eat just to avoid boredom and getting themselves engaged in some sort of activities. Eating is the simplest activity for them. In the instant case overeating is due to frustration, where unfulfilled creative energy is wrongly channeled into excessive desire for food.

## **1. Yoga is effective in management of obesity.**

Yoga is the most significant tool in getting slim body. Gheranda samhita says-

**वपुः कृशत्वं वदने परसन्नता**

Practice of Yoga assures slim body. Obesity can be holistically treated through continuous and respectful practice of all eight limbs of Yoga.

### **1.1 Role of Asanas obesity management**

The word Asana is one among the eight limbs of Yoga mentioned in Patanjali Yog Sutra. Asanas are found helpful in not only burning of extra calories, but also to develop body awareness. In Indian scripture 84 Asanas are described, and all are equally good for different purposes. Obese people may start simple postures for getting stability in the body first. After getting certain degree of stability through simple postures, advance postures may be practiced for further success in other limbs of Yoga. Some useful asanas in reducing obesity are as under-

### **i. Padmasana**

Practitioner places the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh, the arms behind the back crosswise, holds the big toes and rest the chin on the chest and fixes the gaze on the tip of the nose. This is Padmasana, destroyer all kinds of diseases of the body. Regular practice of pranayama in this pose is helpful in reducing obesity.

### **ii. Vajrasna**

Practitioners place both the legs below the buttocks. This is called vajrasna which makes body as hard as Vajra i.e. stone. Practice of various pranayams and mudras are performed in this pose.

### **iii. Simhasana**

गुल्फौ च वृषणस्याधो व्युत्क्रमेणोर्ध्वतां गतौ ।  
चितिमूलौ भूमिसंस्थौ करौ च जानुनोपरि  
व्यक्तवक्त्रो जलन्धरं च नासाग्रमवलोकयेत् ।  
सिंहासनं भवेदेतत्सर्वव्याधिविनाशकम् ॥

Practitioners places both the heels under the scrotum with the feet crosswise turning upward and knees on the ground, hands on them with open mouth. Then, practices jālandhara bandha and fixes the gaze on the tip of the nose. Gheranda samhita calls it Simhasana, which is the destroyer of all diseases.

### **iv. Surya namaskar**

surya namaskar is a set of twelve postures and complete workout for healthy weight loss. Practice of one complete round of Surya Namaskar burns up to 13.90 calories for an average weighing person<sup>55</sup>. Surya namskar practice has good effect on the heart, liver, intestine, stomach, chest, throat, and legs and the whole body. Enhanced blood circulation because of practice, purifies the blood and ensures proper functioning of the stomach, bowels, and nerve centers etc. This also balances the three Doshas namely Vata, Pitta and Kapha. 12 sets of Surya namskar translates into doing 288 powerful yoga poses and can be completed in 12 to 15 minutes of time in limited space also.

### **Calories burnt in your 30-minute various workouts<sup>56</sup>**

**Weight lifting = 199 calories**

**Tennis = 232 calories**

**Basketball = 265 calories**

**Beach volleyball = 265 calories**

**Football = 298 calories**

**Bicycling (14 – 15.9 mph) = 331 calories**

**Rock climbing = 364 calories**

**Running (7.5mph) = 414 calories**

**Surya Namaskar = 417 calories**

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<sup>55</sup> <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga/yoga-poses/surya-namaskar-sun-salutation12-poses-leaner-you>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga/yoga-poses/surya-namaskar-sun-salutation12-poses-leaner-you>

One can easily see that Surya namskar is ahead of several exercises when it comes to count of calorie consumption.

## 1.2 Role of Pranayama in obesity management

Regular and conscious practice of pranayama guarantees slimness of body.

*प्राणायामाळाघवञ्च ध्यानात्प्रत्यक्षमात्मनि<sup>7</sup>*

Pranayama is a natural, healthy and beneficial way to lose weight when practiced regularly and properly under guidance of a master.<sup>58</sup>

### i. Bhastrika

It is similar to movements of bellows of a blacksmith, inhalation and exhalation comfortably. Bhastrika a breathing technique strengthens abdominal muscles through forced exhalation and generate heat in body by squeezing blood in the digestive organs. It stimulates digestive fire and helps in getting rid of waste products. Fast and active breathing enhances energy levels and pumps the oxygen in whole body. Metabolism of the body increases, which assists in burning of calories with weight loss. Through the practice of Bhastrika diseases and afflictions do not appear and good health is achieved.

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<sup>57</sup> Gherand samhita

<sup>58</sup> <https://theconsciousclub.com/articles/pranayama-weightloss-the-conscious-club#:~:text=Moreover%2C%20the%20active%20breathing%20boosts,for%20body%2C%20mind%20and%20soul.>

## ii. Kapalbhati

Kapalbhati destroys all types of disorders arising out of Kapha (phlegm). Proper practice of Kapalbhati under guidance of a master, body of practitioner becomes lustrous. Kapalbhati increases weight loss by improving metabolism, enhances capacity of lungs and make them stronger. Stimulation of abdominal organs improves digestive tracts functioning, absorption and assimilation of nutrients with enhanced blood circulation which helps immensely in diabetes. As it popularly known as skull shining breathing technique, it adds radiance to the face.<sup>59</sup>

### 1.3 Role of diet in obesity management

Obesity is direct product of over and faulty eating patterns. In Shrimadbhagwad Gita Lord Krishna laid emphasis on appropriate diet for Yoga practitioners.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ।

Daily diet of should be made wholesome with simple food. Regular meals with nutritious snacks in between if required without use of excessive oil, spices, sugar, must be ensured.

सुस्निग्धं मधुराहारं चतुर्थांशविवर्जितम् ।

भुज्यते स्वरसं प्रीत्यै मिताहारी स उच्यते<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Aol <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga/breathing-techniques/skull-shining-breath-kapal-bhati>

<sup>60</sup> Gherand samhita

Food should be sweet, rich in natural oils, smooth and one fourth of the stomach be kept empty.

Overeating must be avoided.

Obesity is life style disease which can be reversed through yoga, appropriate diet and treatment of underlying causes. Obesity decreases the immunity of human body and produce lot of complication in life. Yoga offers specific asanas, pranayama which stimulate auto human system of body. Through proper Yoga practices one can get radiant skin, slimmed body and glowing face.

## Chapter 8

### Insights from yoga for happiness

A human life's contributes in nation building at the fullest when its physical and mental faculties are working in its optimal level. Physical health in particular, however mental health manifests itself in subtler forms. It is a state of happiness and mental wellbeing that helps people to adjust with stresses of life. Sound mental health has a positive impact on thought process, decision making and developing relations among communities and is crucial for personal, community and socio-economic development<sup>61</sup>.

Referring world health organization (WHO) report, it is revealed that more than half the world's population are currently in work and 15% of working-age adults live with a mental disorder. Mental health conditions are also referred as mental disorders. These conditions hamper performance at work place, individual's confidence and sometimes creates identity crisis as well. Worst impact of mental health conditions are families, careers, colleagues, communities, and society at large. The loss of approx US\$ 1 trillion from global economy each year with reduced productivity is due to depression and anxiety<sup>62</sup>.

Some important facts pertaining to mental disorder<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.who.int/teams/mental-health-and-substance-use/promotion-prevention/mental-health-in-the-workplace>

<sup>63</sup> Mental disorders (who.int)



- 1 in every 8 people in the world live with a mental disorder.
- Mental disorders involve significant disturbances in thinking, emotional regulation, or behavior.
- There are many different types of mental disorders.
- Effective prevention and treatment options exist.
- Most people do not have access to effective care.

National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) of India in a significant survey found that more Indians are suffering from a variety of mental health issues. Availability of psychiatrists in India is scarce. Since the problem is not emergent in nature, people are very much reluctant to seek help and suffer in silence. Approximately 150 million Indian people are in need of mental health care services, but lesser than 30 million are actually taking medical help. More than 10% of the population of India has symptoms of diagnosable mental health or substance use disorder. This is an alarming situation and treatment for mental disorders is not a luxury but a necessity. There are only 0.75 psychiatrists for every 100,000 patients in India, whenever desired ratio is 3 to 100,000.<sup>64</sup> World happiness report 2023 suggests that most populous country China rank 82 and second largest India ranks 136 among the list of 146 countries who had participated in survey<sup>65</sup>.

The data mentioned in preceding paragraphs state that mental health conditions are fast rising and affecting happiness, human relations, competency and world economy

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<sup>64</sup><https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/india-fails-to-address-growing-mental-health-problem-101667038300362.html>,

<sup>65</sup> UN World Happiness Report 2022: India Ranks 136th 2022 (adda247.com)

abruptly. Modern health care system contributed immensely in dealing with such problems, however because of its own limitations, not able to cater far for such huge affected population. Traditional Indian Knowledge System has a vast treasure of knowledge in management of mental health related issues from time immemorial.

#### **4.5 Yogic management of mental health**

Patanjali yoga sutra describes eight limbs of yoga for health happiness and general well being.

##### **Yama**

Yamas are defined as 'restraints'. These restraints are having five main elements, non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-excess, and non-possessiveness. These restraints open the path to happiness.

**अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः<sup>66</sup>**

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तसन्निधौ वैरत्यागः

Even dreadful animals leave violence in the vicinity of someone who is established in non violence. It is said that in the company of Lord Buddha even violent people become compassionate and kind. Wild animals also abandon violence in the close proximity of saints.

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<sup>66</sup> Pataanjali Yog sutra

## Niyama

शौचसन्तोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः<sup>67</sup>

The word Santosh or contentment means being satisfied and happy. Happiness is also a habit, an attitude. If someone has a habit of being sad, he will remain sad and irritable even in all good circumstances, nothing in the world can please him. One should try his level best to remain happy and contented. Contentment is a tool of happiness and should be practiced under circumstances.

Santosha i.e. contentment leads to blissful happiness means the attainment of the best happiness. Developing habit of being happy and satisfied and not hurting anyone makes a person blissful forever. Practice of happiness develops as an attitude which believes in "come what may I'll be happy." And in problematic situations also practitioner of contentment is confident that "I will get out of this situation too."

वितर्कबाधने प्रतिपक्षभावनम् ॥33 ॥<sup>68</sup>

एकसमये चोभयानवधारणम् ॥

Whenever jealousy, anger, hatred etc trouble someone, he should immediately provoke the feelings of affection, love and compassion. Continuous practice of opposite positive thoughts against negative ones, happiness arises automatically. Sage Patanjali says that mind cannot hold two things together hence whenever negative thoughts or unhappiness is surfacing, immediately remove it with positivity and joy, situation will pass away. Root

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<sup>67</sup> Pataanjali Yog sutra

<sup>68</sup> Pataanjali Yog sutra

cause for all miseries is unstable mind filled with negativity. Sage Patanjali dedicated his first verse towards discipline in life.

अथ योगानुशासनम् ॥ 1.1॥

Yoga starts with discipline of body and mind. When things are not in order discipline is must. The happiness which is attained in discipline is everlasting, otherwise it deteriorates very fast.

"तदा दृष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्

This discipline helps in establishing self in soul's true nature which is joy and bliss.

Mind is like monkey, which moves faster than speed of light. Miseries are resultant of five obstacles described by sage Patanjali.

वृत्तयः पञ्चतयः क्लिष्टा अक्लिष्टाः

प्रमाणविपर्ययविकल्पनिद्रास्मृतयः 1.6

There are five types of vrittis which are hurdle in path of joy. There are five classes of modification, painful and not painful.

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः

Yoga offers the way out to deal with these hurdles. Living in present moment with awareness of past and future is helpful in cessation of unstable trends of mind. Lord Krishna also accepted that it is tough to control the mind; however continuous and dedicated practice leads to cessation of mind.

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलं।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते॥6.35॥<sup>69</sup>

अभ्यास वैराग्य तन्निरोधः<sup>70</sup>

Modifications or Vritties can be controlled by practice and non-attachment. Habits of a man are result of his behaviours. Our character is the sum-total of these behaviors and habits. If good habits prevail in someone he becomes good, if wickedness one wicked, if joyfulness one becomes happy. Bad habits can be overcome through good habits; bad habits that have left their impressions are to be controlled by good habits. Character is repeated habits. One should practice happiness as a habit to make it his permanent character.

What is Abhyasa or practice?

सा तु दीर्घकाले नैरन्त्र्यम दृढभूमे सत्कारसेवितो<sup>71</sup>

Longevity, continuity with firm determination and due respect are prerequisites of practice

## **Asanas**

ततो द्वन्द्वानभिघातः॥48॥<sup>72</sup>

Rishi Patanjali says that Asana have direct impact in removing inner conflicts and troubles. In case of confusion and conflicts one should sit down to do asanas. Sitting

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<sup>69</sup> Shrimad BhagwadGita

<sup>70</sup> Pataanjali Yogsutra

<sup>71</sup> Pataanjali Yogsutra

<sup>72</sup> Pataanjali Yog sutra

cool, calm and happy, clarity in the mind arises immediately and duals of conflicts and confusion wanes away.

## **Pranayama**

प्राणायामात् खेचरत्त्वं प्राणायामाद् रोगनाशनम् ।

प्राणायामाद् बोधयेच्छक्तिं प्राणायामान्मनोन्मनी ।

आनन्दो जायते चित्ते प्राणायामी सुखी भवेत् ॥ 56 ॥<sup>73</sup>

Practice of pranayama eliminates all diseases, bestows state of Samadhi and experiences of a special kind of happiness or joy in the mind that is called blissful state. In fast moving life people are facing several life style changes, and one prominent among them is absence of natural breathing. Breath is the thread which connects life with body, mind and soul. To regain natural flow of breathing and enhance Prana shakti sage Patanjali recommends Pranayama. In pranayama practitioner sits in comfortable posture and take his attention to different parts by taking long, deep and subtle breaths with conscious counting by blocking the natural flow of breathing. Pranayama has positive impact on mood and elevating happiness.

वाह्याभ्यन्तरस्तम्भवृत्तिः देशकालसङ्ख्याभिः परिदृष्टो दीर्घसूक्ष्मः ॥ 50 ॥

All types of pranayama have been described together as inhalation, pause and exhalation. Pranayama cleans the energy channels of the body and prepare for next level of spiritual

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<sup>73</sup> Gherand samhita

practices. Deep, medium and fast pace breathing techniques with appropriate numbers are practiced for strengthening Prana shakti.

Majority of people do not breathe properly. Lungs are not filled enough during breathing. Regularity of breath purifies the body and quiets the mind. When someone is peaceful, his breath is rhythmic and goes on peacefully. If the breath is rhythmic, the person is peaceful and vice versa. Broken breath is symptom of disturbed mind. Bring back the breath into rhythm forcibly by practice, peaceful state of mind can be achieved easily<sup>74</sup>.

ततः क्षीयते प्रकाशावरणम्॥52॥<sup>75</sup>

Sage patanjali says that true nature of soul is covered with veil of darkness. Pranayama is having powers to weaken or break down the cover over soul. When this cover is unveiled, true happiness is reflected everywhere.

### **Dharna Dhyan Samadhi i.e. Samyam**

सत्त्वशुद्धिसौमनस्यैकाग्र्येन्द्रियजयात्मदर्शनयोग्यत्वानि च॥ 41॥<sup>76</sup>

By continuous practice of concentration and meditation, modifications of mind are controlled, and manifestation of everlasting happiness occurs. Soul experiences its true nature. Feeling of pleasure always is the nature of the soul. All pains are caused by laziness, so one must get rid of that; moroseness is one of the results of laziness. A

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<sup>74</sup> Swami Vivekananda. The Science of Breathing (p. 18). Kindle Edition.

<sup>75</sup> Pataanjali Yog sutra

<sup>76</sup> Swami Vivekanand. Patanjali Yoga Sutra (p. 70). Prabhat Prakashan. Kindle Edition.

virtuous man experiences bliss in everything. Control the mind and senses, automatically control over the body will be achieved.

मैत्रीकरुणामुदितोपेक्षणां सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम् ॥ 33 ॥

We must have friendship for all; we must be merciful towards those that are in misery; when people are happy we ought to be happy, and to the wicked we must be indifferent. So with all subjects that comes before us. If the subject is a good one, we shall feel friendly towards it; if the subject of thought is one that is miserable we must be merciful towards the subject. If it is good we must be glad, if it is evil we must be indifferent. These attitudes of the mind towards the different subjects that come before it will make the mind peaceful. Most of our difficulties in our daily lives come from being unable to hold our minds in this way. For instance, if a man does evil to us, instantly we want to react evil, and every reaction of evil shows that we are not able to hold the Chitta down; it comes out in waves towards the object, and we lose our power.

ततः पुनः शांतोदितौ तुल्यप्रत्ययौ चित्तस्यैकाग्रतापरिणामः ॥ 12 ॥

रूपलावण्यबलवज्रसंहननत्वानि कायसंपत् ॥ 47 ॥

ग्रहणस्वरूपास्मितान्वयार्थवत्त्वसंयमाद् इन्द्रियजयः ॥ 48 ॥

ततः क्लेशकर्मनिवृत्तिः ॥ 29 ॥

From that comes cessation of pains. When that cloud of virtue has come, then no more is there fear of falling, nothing can drag the Yogi down. No more will there be evils for him. No more pains.



प्राणायामाळाघवञ्च ध्यानात्प्रत्यक्षमात्मनि

समाधिना निर्लिप्तञ्च मुक्तिरेव न संशयः

वपुः कृशत्वं वदने परसन्नता

नाद-सफुटत्वं नयने सुनिर्मले ।

अरोगता बिन्दु-जयो।

अग्नि-दीपनं नाडी-विशुद्धिर्हठ-सिद्धि-लक्षणम्

Happiness is a state of mind which can be achieved for eternity through practices of Yoga. However momentarily it may be, everyone in the world experiences joy at some juncture of time, even the most miserable man in the world is known to Joy and happiness. Everyone who is capable of experiencing misery is also capable of Joy and happiness. That is why it is believed that, being happy always even in difficult situations is an art. Everyone is facing problem in holding and sustaining the happiness however prolonged joy and sustained happiness can be achieved through dedicated practices. The state of blissfulness is within, not outside. No one can debate over the fact that each one of us can create happiness for at least one moment, then why not for one more moment, one more moment and remain in joy forever.

## Chapter-9

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 1. Conclusion

This study uncovers traditional Indian knowledge pertaining to ancient Yogic scriptures that have direct impact on health and happiness. Modern science has achieved significant success in prevention, management and cure of diseases, however the magnitude of life style diseases today, is a big question mark on health management system. Still the biggest aspiration of people is good health and mental peace. For management of such issues alternate / complementary therapies are also contributing with great success, apart from modern health care system.

Yoga is a significant in promotion of health and happiness from time immemorial. Yoga transforms every cell of the body, improves strength, increases the immunity and helps in optimum functioning of all organ-systems. It relieves stress, removes diseases and brings mental peace, tranquillity and positive attitude in life. Ancient Yogic scriptures are full of texts for prevention, management and cure of several diseases without any side effects. It is time tested and timeless prescription for assurance of healthy and balanced life. The first four limbs of Ashtanga Yoga cleanse external faculties and teach how to interact with the world. The other four limbs focus on withdrawal, internal cleansing and how to relate with mind. Sage Patanjali says रूपलावण्यबलवज्रसंहननत्वानि कायसंपत् means yoga bestows handsome body, radiant skin and strengths of thunderbolt.

Some direct benefits of Yoga are enumerated as under-

### **i. Discipline in life**

First step of Yoga is discipline. Sage Patanjali says 'अथ योग अनुशासनम्'. importance of discipline in life needs no deliberation. Disturbed life styles which are the root cause of several problems can be overcome through discipline, the first stage of Yoga. Modifications and fluctuations of mind resulting non control over senses can be brought back through Yamas and Niyams and Pratyahara. If Yamas and Niyams are followed in true spirit, peace and highest level of satisfaction can be achieved. Sage Patanjali says 'संतोषाद् अनुत्तमः लाभः' means practice of contentment bestows several highest benefits. One of the important aspects of Niyamas is surrender to God 'इश्वर प्रणिधानानि'. Almighty God is the ultimate saviour from all miseries and sorrows.

### **ii. Purification of the body**

Gheranda Samhita discuss about purification of the body through Shat Karmas (six cleansing activities) षट्कर्मणां शोधनञ्च. The purification and cleansing of body is emphasized for removal of impurities and diseases. The Shatkarmas remove all impurity and diseases, increase immunity and prepare the body for next level of Yoga practices like Asanas, Pranayamas and Meditation.

### **iii. Physical health**

Yoga increases physical strength and rejuvenate, tone and make muscles more flexible and in proper shape. Gherand Samhita says आसनेन भवेद्दृढम्, मुद्रया स्थिरता. Various body

postures mentioned in texts helps to strengthen the body, make it stable and bring under total control.

Stamina and endurance gradually improve stronger core muscles, through continuous practice of Asanas. Added advantage of Ashtanga is that one can move through the practice at his own pace and level without requirement of any instrument and much space. Dynamic forms of postures like sun salutations help in improving cardio vascular health, weight management and light body. Asanas, when performed in slow pace brings balance and coordination and when done in fast pace increases heart rate and burn fat fast. Constant movement from pose to pose helps in building muscular strength and light body. Pranayama is beneficial in shredding the extra weight and getting slim body  
प्राणायामाळाघवञ्च.

#### **iv. Good coordination**

Yoga is a powerful tool to improve focus and coordination of the body parts. Swift and intense set of posture instills a better sense of rhythm and increase coordination with awareness of the movement and flow of the body.

#### **v. Emotional benefits**

Practice of Yamas, Niyamas and Pratyahara helps in maintaining balance feelings and emotions.

Pranayama helps in checking modifications and fluctuations of mind, which in turn help to deal with emotionally difficult situations with great ease. Shrimadbhgwad Gita says

समत्वं योग उच्यते means equilibrium in all situations. The equilibrium in emotions enhances competence to work more efficiently and effectively.

## **vi. Mental and Spiritual well-being**

Asana and pranyama keep body moving in coordination with the breath. Breath awareness has tremendous health benefits in bringing peace and tranquility. Meditation and constant focus on the breath purify and still the mind, relieve stress and allow body to relax at maximum level. Sage Gheerand says ध्यानात्प्रत्यक्षमात्मनि समाधिना निर्लिप्तञ्च मुक्तिरेव न संशयः means one can integrate himself with his soul through meditation. State of Samadhi i.e. blissful state of mind brings liberation.

## **vii. Ultimate health**

Continuous and holistic practice of Yoga reflects in good health, radiant body, compassionate attitude, and effective communication skills etc. Sage Gerand says

वपुः कृशत्वं वदने परसन्नता

नाद-सफुटत्वं नयने सुनिर्मले ।

अरोगता बिन्दु-जयो। अग्नि-दीपननाडी-विशुद्धिर्हठ-सिद्धि-लक्षणम्

Yoga is a science and it should be practiced under guidance of a qualified teacher only.

Hathyog Pradipika says प्राणायामेन युक्तेन सर्वरोगो भवेत् । अयुक्ताभ्यासयोगेन सर्वरोगस्य संभवः means appropriate practice of Yoga destroys all diseases, however if not done properly, it may become cause of several diseases. Lord Krishna also said that

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु । युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा means appropriate diet, appropriate actions and thought process clubbed with Yoga, destroys all type of sorrows and miseries.

## **2. Recommendations**

Since yoga is found beneficial for holistic health management, it is highly recommended that everyone should practice it under guidance of a qualified teacher. Self practice without medical checkups and guidance may lead to severe consequences and adversely affect the health of individuals. Sage Patanjali nsays योगाङ्गाऽनुष्ठानादशुद्धिक्षये ज्ञानदीप्तिराविवेकख्याते: means by practicing eight limbs of Yoga, impurities of body and mind vanishes fast knowledge illuminates up to recognition of discrimination.

### **2.1 Incorporation of Yoga in education system**

Since yoga can be practiced easily by people of all age group, it should be incorporated in education system. Yoga is recommended to children for following positive effects –

#### **i. Emotional Maturity and reduced anxiety**

The problem with anxiety and depression is very common among youth for trivial problems, the yoga practices may reduce this problem at large extent; hence it is highly recommended to mandatorily enroll yoga lessons in schools and colleges.

The ability to monitor and modify one's behavior, attention, and emotions in response to internal conflicts and the environment, is a skill that students must master in order to

thrive in school and in life. Yoga programs offered in schools may help students with self-regulation and develop emotional maturity.

## **ii. Improvement in focus and grades**

Academic achievement is typically used as the main criterion for student success in schools. Regrettably, a lot of students struggle to get or keep good marks, which might cause them to lose interest or ultimately quitting. Since yoga enhances memory and reduces stress, it will promote better learning and concentration.

## **iii. Physical Health**

Too much screen time and prolonged periods of sitting while studying can result in poor postures. These bad postures from childhood can lead to significant anatomy problems as an adult.

Yoga encourages people to accept and cherish their own bodies. Regular Yoga practices promote corrects posture, increases flexibility, and thus helpful in making our future citizens healthy and happy.

## **2.2 Yoga as a medical alternate rather than just an exercise**

The Covid era has not been far left before people realized the importance of Yoga. We must understand that it is not just an exercise routine but a medical alternate. Yoga's extensive history has long been acknowledged for enhancing immunity and preventing diseases. It is need of hour to spend money on research and development of Yoga to make it complete medical alternate.

### 2.3 Yoga as an employment

Yoga is not only limited to school students and people, it can ultimately help our country battle unemployment. The world concurs on the fact that the birthplace of Yoga is BHARAT i.e. India. We have it in our soil and blood. The practice of Yoga and its various forms is turning up to be an industry. The west has understood this as a capitalistic opportunity and is trying to take this market from us. It is recommended that we must leverage this opportunity and prepare trainers to work as full time Yoga masters and spread their wisdom all over the world.

Considering the sea of opportunities presented by yoga, our ultimate objective should be to leverage the most out of it. Once we are on this path to achieve this, we can ultimately pursue our Vedic concept of community well-being and disease free society.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामया,

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखं भागभवेत्।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

"May good fortune and happiness bestows to all, all be disease free and witness to auspicious events and no one has to be a part of miseries.



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37. <sup>1</sup> <https://www.sanskritimagazine.com/india/traditional-knowledge-systems-of-india/>
38. <sup>1</sup><https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3752885/#:~:text=It%20is%20known%20as%20Ayurvedic,%3A%20Herbs%20and%20specialized%20diets.>
39. <sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>

# ANNEXURE

## GOOGLE FORM QUESSTIONAIRE

### Research study

I, Anil Kishor Yadav, (presently pursuing Advance Professional Programme in Public Administration from Indian Institute of Public Administration, New delhi) am conducting a reserach on "Promoting Health and Happiness through Traditional Indian Knowledge System". This research work is an essential part of my training programme.

The information is being collected for academic purposes only and would be kept confidential. Clarifications, if any may kindly be sought on my Mobile No 7354723270.

Warm Regards

\* Required

1. Name \*

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2. Designation

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**3. Mob No \***

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**4. Age group \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- 20-35 Years
- 36-50 Years
- 51-65 Years
- 66 Years and above

**5. Occupation**

**Mark only one oval.**

- Govt ervice
- Self employed
- Private service

**Kindly indicate your preference by selecting the appropriate answer.**

**6. I am aware about Yoga for \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Less than 3 years
- 3- 5 years
- 6-10 year
- More than 10 years

**7. I practice Yoga \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Regularly
- Weekly
- Occasionally
- Never

**8. Yoga is beneficial in achieving good physical health. \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral Disagree
- Disagree

**9. Yoga is beneficial in enhancing the level of happiness. \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral Disagree
- Disagree

**10. Yoga is beneficial for mental peace and blissful state of mind**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

**11. Yoga can prevent occurrence of life style diseases like Hyper Tension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc\***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

**12. Yoga can cure life style diseases like Hyper Tension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc\***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree



**13. Yoga can provide permanent solutions for life style diseases like Hyper Tension, Obesity, Depression, Diabetes etc\***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

**14. Yoga is beneficial in spiritual journey \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

**15. More research is required in field of Yoga for betterment of Health and Happiness of mankind? \***

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

**16. Yoga should be incorporated in course curriculum of upper**

**primary to higher education in India?**

**Mark only one oval.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree