

Sanskrita vaangmayam- purpose of Life

**YOGA – A LARGER SENSE OF REACHING THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF
SAMADHI/LIBERATION**

By

RICHA GURNANI

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VEDA SAMSKRUTI SAMITI

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ABSTRACT

Most people know that the practice of yoga makes the body strong and flexible. It is also well known that yoga improves the functioning of the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, and hormonal systems.

Yoga also brings emotional stability and clarity of mind, and self - realization, which is the ultimate aim of yoga. Yoga is an art and science which focus on bringing harmony between mind and body, Thoughts and Action, harmony between man and nature and a holistic approach to health and well-being. The aim if yoga practice is to overcome all kinds of suffering that leads to a sense of freedom in every walk of life with holistic health, happiness and harmony.

The practice of yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. The primary aim of yoga is to restore the mind to simplicity, peace and poise, to free it from confusion and distress. This simplicity, this sense of order and calm, comes from the practice the body, the mind , the intelligence and finally, is one in which we practice at the level of the physical body.

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Chapter - 1 Introduction

“Health is a state of complete harmony of the body, mind and spirit. When one is free from physical disabilities and mental distractions, the gates of the soul open.”

— B.K.S. Iyengar

1.1 The Origins And Basis Of Yoga

The word YOGA is derived from Sanskrit Root. In Sanskrit it is called “YUJ”. YUJ means to join, to add, to bind, to attach. To direct and concentrate one's attention on to use and apply. It also means union or communication. it is true union of our will with the will of God . it means “ the yoking of all the power of body , mind and soul with the power of god.

In simple language we can say yoga means to add good qualities and good karmas to ourselves. According to BHAGVAT GEETA :-“YOGAS KARMAS KOUSHALAM”.Karm ki kushalta hi yog hai.Any task which is done sensibly is YOG. Any GOOD KARMA which is done by us is YOG.

योग: कर्मसु कौशलम्

योग: कर्मसु कौशलम् यह श्लोकांश योगेश्वर श्रीकृष्ण के श्रीमुख से उद्गीरित श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता के द्वितीय अध्याय के पचासवें श्लोक से उद्धृत है। श्लोक इस प्रकार है –

“बुद्ध्युक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते। तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्”॥इति॥

श्लोक के उत्तरार्ध पर यदि गौर करें तो दो बातें स्पष्ट होती हैं। पहली योग की परिभाषा एवं दूसरी योग हेतु प्रभु का स्पष्ट निर्देश। उनका उपदेश है कि ‘योगाय’ अर्थात् योग के लिए अथवा योग में, ‘युज्यस्व’ अर्थात् लग जाओ। कहने का तात्पर्य है कि ‘योग में प्रवृत्त हो जाओ’ यानि कि ‘योग करो’। अब प्रश्न यह है कि क्यों करें योग? इस प्रश्न का उत्तर उन्होंने श्लोक के पूर्वार्ध में दिया है कि बुद्धिमान व्यक्ति अर्थात् योगी, वर्तमान में ही अथवा इस संसार में ही ‘सुकृत’ एवं ‘दुष्कृत’ अर्थात् पुण्य एवं पाप से मुक्त हो जाता है।

गीता में ‘योग’ शब्द के तीन अर्थ हैं – १. समता; जैसे – ‘समत्वं योग उच्यते’ (२/४८); २. सामर्थ्य, ऐश्वर्य या प्रभाव; जैसे – ‘पश्य मे योगमैश्वर्यम्’ (९/५); और ३ समाधि; जैसे – ‘यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया’ (६/२०)। यद्यपि गीता में ‘योग’ का अर्थ मुख्य रूप से समता ही है तथापि ‘योग’ शब्द के अंतर्गत तीनों ही अर्थ स्वीकार्य हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त गीता में योग की तीन परिभाषाएं भी

मिलती हैं जो कि दूसरे अध्याय के क्रमशः ४८वें एवं ५०वें श्लोक में तथा छठे अध्याय के २३वें श्लोक में निर्दिष्ट हैं। ये परिभाषाएं क्रमशः इस प्रकार हैं –

“समत्वं योग उच्यते”(गीता २/४८)

“योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्” (गीता २/५०)

तं विद्याददुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम्।(गीता ६/२३)

‘योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्’ के दो अर्थ लिये जा सकते हैं –

१. कर्मसु कौशलं योगः अर्थात् कर्मों में कुशलता ही योग है।
२. कर्मसु योगः कौशलम् अर्थात् कर्मों में योग ही कुशलता है।

According to NARAD MUNI: - UNION OF SOUL AND GOD IS YOG.

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः मन अर्थात् चित्त की वृत्तियों का सर्वथा रुक जाना योग है। Yoga is hindering the Chitta from taking various forms(Vrittis). According to MAHARSHI PATANJALI :- YOGCHITVRATINIRODHA = Chit ki vratiyo ko rokna hi yog hai. The long and continue practice of yoga will lead the student to a sense of peace and a feeling of being at one with his or environment.

Yoga is an Invaluable gift of an ancient Indian Tradition. Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science which focus on bringing harmony between mind and body, Thoughts and Action, harmony between man and nature and a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. Yoga is an art and science for healthy living. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and Nature. The practice of yoga leads to the union of Individual consciousness with Universal consciousness. The aim Of yoga practice is to overcome all kinds of suffering that leads to a sense of freedom in every walk of life with holistic health, happiness and harmony. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us to deal with climate change. Yoga was co-ordinated and systematized by ‘PATANJALI’ in his classical work, THE YOGA SUTRA. Which consist of 185 sutras.

1.2 Aim

The practice of yoga aims at overcoming the limitations of the body. Yoga teaches us that the goal of every individual's life is to take the inner journey to the soul. Yoga offers both the goal and the means to reach it.

In GEETA Shri Krishna said to Arjuna :-

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ॥

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते

हे धनञ्जय तू आसक्तिका त्याग करके सिद्धिअसिद्धिमें सम होकर योगमें स्थित हुआ कर्मोंको कर क्योंकि समत्व ही योग कहा जाता है।

As we know that yoga is the true union of our will with the will of God. That means the yoking of all the powers of body mind and soul to God. It means the discipline of the intellect , the mind , the emotions, the will , which that yoga pre-supposes : it means a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly. In indian thought , everything is permeated by supreme universal spirit (parmatma or god) of which the individual human spirit (jivatma) is a part. The system of yoga is so called because it teaches the means by which the jivatma can be united to or be in communion with the parmatma and so secure liberation. (Moksha). According to lord Krishna, “ a lamp doesnot flicker in a place , where no winds blow , so it is with a yogi, who controls his mind, intellect and self, being absorbed in the spirit within him. When the restlessness of the mind intellect and self is stilled through the practice of yoga , the yogi by the grace of the spirit within himself finds fulfillment . then he knows the joy eternal which is beyond the pale of the senses, which his reason cannot grasp . he abides in this reality and moves not therefrom . he has found the treasure above all others. There is nothing higher than this . He who has achieved it , shall not be moved by the greatest sorrow . this is the real meaning of yoga- a deliverance from contact with pain and sorrow”.

Yoga has also been described as wisdom in work or skillful living amongst activities, harmony, and moderation. By moderation in eating and in resting by regulation in working and by concordance in sleeping and walking , yoga destroys all pain and

sorrows. The Kathopanishad describes yoga thus : when the senses are stilled , when the mind is at rest, when the intellect wavers not – then , say the wise, is reached the highest stage. This steady control of the senses and mind has been defined as yoga. He who attains , it is free from delusion . in the second aphorism of the first chapter of the yogasutras , patanjali describes Yoga as ‘ chitta vratti nirodhah’. This may be translated as the restraint (nirodhah) of mental (chitta) modifications (vratti). Yoga is the method by which the restless mind is calmed and the energy directed into constructive channels.

1.3 Stages of yoga

Source - Patanjali - yoga sutra 2.1

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि॥२.२९॥

यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान और समाधि; ये आठ योग के अंग हैं ।

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi; are the eight limbs of Yoga.

According to patanjali, there are 8 limbs or stages of yoga for quest of the soul . they are yama , Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahaar, Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yama and Niyama controls the yogi's passion and emotions keep him in harmony with his fellowman .

Source - Patanjali yoga sutra 2.29

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः॥२.३५॥

अहिंसा की दृढ़ स्थिति हो जाने पर उस योगी के निकट सब प्राणी वैरभाव त्याग कर देते हैं ।

On being firmly established in non-violence, all beings coming near him cease to be hostile.

Source - Patanjali yoga sutra 2.35

सत्यप्रतिष्ठायां क्रियाफलाश्रयत्वम्॥२.३६॥

सत्य में दृढ़ स्थिति हो जाने पर उस योगी की क्रिया अर्थात् कर्म फल के आश्रय का भाव आ जाता है।

On being firmly established in truthfulness the Yogi gets the power of attaining for himself and others the fruits of work without the work.

Source - Patanjali yoga sutra 2.36

अस्तेयप्रतिष्ठायां सर्वरत्नोपस्थानम्॥२.३७॥

अस्तेय अर्थात् चोरी के अभाव में दृढ़ स्थिति हो जाने पर उस योगी के सामने सब प्रकार के रत्न प्रकट हो जाते हैं । On being firmly established in non-stealing all wealth comes to the Yogi.

Source - Patanjali yoga sutras sutra 2.37

ब्रह्मचर्यप्रतिष्ठायां वीर्यलाभः॥२.३८॥

ब्रह्मचर्य में दृढ़ स्थिति हो जाने पर सामर्थ्य का लाभ होता है । When continence is established energy is gained..

Source Patanjali yoga sutra 2.38

अपरिग्रहस्थैर्ये जन्मकथंतासंबोधः॥२.३९॥

अपरिग्रह के दृढ़ प्रतिष्ठित हो जानेपर; पूर्वजन्म कैसे हुए थे ? इस बात का भलीभाँति ज्ञान हो जाता है । When a man becomes steadfast in non-receiving, he gets the memory of past life.

Asanas keep the body healthy and strong and in harmony with nature. Finally the yogi becomes free of body consciousness. He conquers the body and renders it a fit vehicle for the soul. The first three stages are the outward quests (bahiranga sadhana).

The next two stages, pranayama and pratyahara, teach the aspirant to regulate the breathing , and thereby control the mind. This helps to free the senses from the thralldom of the objects of desire. These two stages of yoga are known as the inner quests (antaranga sadhana).

Dharna , Dhyana and Samadhi take the yogi into the innermost recesses of his soul. The yogi does not look heavenward to find God. He knows that he is within, being known as the Antratra (the inner self.) the last three stages keep him in harmony. With himself and his maker. These stages are called antaratma sadhana, the quest of the soul.

Chapter - 2 Aspects of yoga

2.1 PRANAYAMA

Pranayam = Prana+ayama

Prana means breath, respiration, life, vitality, wind, energy or strength. It also connotes the soul as opposed to the body. The word is generally used in the plural to indicate vital breaths.

Ayama means length, expansion. Stretching or restraint.

Pranayama thus connotes extension of breath and its control. This control is over all the functions of breathing namely .. 1. Inhalation or inspiration, which is termed puraka (filling up). 2. Exhalation or expiration, which is called rechaka (emptying the lungs). 3. Retention or holding the breath a state where there is no inhalation or exhalation, which is termed kumbhaka.

Pranayama is thus the science of breath. It is the hub round which the wheel of life revolves. As lions, elephants, and tigers are tamed very slowly and cautiously, so should prana be brought under control very slowly in gradation measured according to one's capacity and physical limitations.

The yogi's life is not measured by the number of his days but by the number of his breaths. Therefore, he follows the patterns strengthen the respiratory system, soothe the nervous system and reduce cravings. As desires and cravings diminish, the mind is set free and becomes a fit vehicle for concentration.

The emptying the mind of the whole of its illusion is the true exhalation. The realization that "I am Atma" is the true inhalation. And the steady sustenance of the mind on this conviction is the true Kumbhaka. This is true pranayama.

Every living creature unconsciously breathes the prayer 'So'ham'= I-He (I am the Immortal Spirit) with each inward breath. So also with each outgoing breath creature prays 'Hamsah' (I am he). He offers up the very breath of his being to the lord.

2.2 DHARNA

Source - Patanjali yoga sutra 2.41

देश, बन्धः, चित्तस्य, धारणा ॥३.१॥

अपने चित्त को किसी भी एक स्थान पर (नाभि, हृदय या माथे पर) बाँधना, लगाना, ठहराना, या केन्द्रित करना धारणा कहलाती है ।

Dharana is holding the mind to one place, object or point.

When the body has been tempered by asanas, when the mind has been refined by the fire of pranayama and when the senses have been brought under control by pratyahara, the sadhaka reaches the sixth stage called DHARANA. Here he is concentrated wholly on a single point or on a task in which he is completely engrossed. The mind has to be stilled in order to achieve this state of complete absorption.

In this stage of Dharana , the ekagra person has superior intellectual powers and knows exactly what he wants, so he uses all his powers to achieve his purpose.

The sadhaka concentrates upon AUM, which is the symbol of divinity, to achieve ekagrata and then the yogi focusses his attention on his beloved Deity adding AUM to the name of the Lord.

2.3 DHYANA AND SAMADHI

The word DHYANA comes from the Sanskrit word “DHYAI”, which means “ TO THINK OF “.

DHYANA involves concentration and meditation on a point of focus with the intention of knowing the truth about it

DHYANA leads to self knowledge where one can separates illusion from reality and eventually reach the ultimate goal of yoga SAMADHI (union with the source).

The first preparative step to meditation begins with the practice of one pointedness. Maharshi PATANJALI has defined it as “ PRATYAHAR”.

Our senses are attracted to external subjects . we need to redirect them inwards. This practice helps increase concentration and reduces instability.

When the senses go about experiencing the outer world , they communicate with their subjects. Then the mind becomes fickle and sometimes get carried away by the senses, it can not directly communicate with the outer world. So whatever raw material is presented by the senses is concretised by the mind.

The wavering nature of mind is highly dependent on the instability of the senses. In meditation, you are asked to close your eyes so that you no longer communicate with the outer world. By shutting your ears, you shut out all the noises. Your communication with the outer world has broken.

The cessation of the five senses from their subjects , their restraint is in order to prevent increase in restlessness of the mind.

To establish the restless mind , it has to be fixed on a single point to enable concentration. Normally in meditation this point of concentration is one's breath. As the mind gets fixed on one object, your concentration power increases. As a result your sensory perceptions get managed more effectively . then neither the sense nor the mind will create any problems.

Finally there is the super or higher conscious mind . here problems are solved . it is the level of the world beyond the senses. Its function is knowingness –that is only knowing. The word “ONLY” is used for the world beyond the senses, for the superconscious mind. If one can understand the fact of “ONLY KNOWING “ and if this can be practiced , it can free one of all mental and emotional problems.

SAMADHI :- Samadhi is the end of the sadhak's quest. At the peak of his meditation he passes into the state of Samadhi.. where his body and senses are at rest as if he is asleep . his faculties of mind and reasons are alert as if he is awake. Yet he has gone beyond consciousness . the person in the state of Samadhi is fully conscious and alert.

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना।

अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे॥13.25॥

Hindi Translation By Swami Tejomayananda

॥13.25॥ कोई पुरुष ध्यान के अभ्यास से आत्मा को आत्मा (हृदय) में आत्मा (शुद्ध बुद्धि) के द्वारा देखते हैं; अन्य लोग सांख्य योग के द्वारा तथा कोई साधक कर्मयोग से (आत्मा को देखते हैं)॥

Chapter - 3 **YOGA THE WAY TO HEALTH**

3.1 YOGA AND STRESS

STRESS....number one cause of almost all the diseases, number one cause and reason of why people find it difficult to reduce fat and weight.

And yes, connection between weight gain and stress, and connection between stress and diseases like Diabetes, to high blood pressure, to cardio vascular to cancer is real.

So what exactly is stress ? We will talk today about the connection of stress with our body.

Through advance technology and science we have been able to conquer a lot in many fields. But there is also a dark face of technology . It has triggered widespread feelings of competitiveness and envy. Financial tension , emotional upheavals (violent changes) , environmental pollution and a sense of being overtaken by the speed of events, have all increased the stress of daily life.

All these factors strain the body, causing nervous tension, and adversely affecting the mind. This is when feelings of isolation and loneliness take over.

CONNECTION OF STRESS WITH OUR BODY.

We all need to know that everything in our body is based on our hormone balance.

Everything in our body is based on biological, physical and chemical interactions between our cells. When we are in stress for a long period there is a hormone called CORTISOL , secrets.

CORTISOL is a stress hormone which we all need . when we are in stress or go through a stressful situation , in our body CORTISOL hormone increases. And because CORTISOL has increased, our ADERNIL also increases and we have Reflex actions. We have energy to reflect the situation. We have energy to behave in fight or flight response. That's all good.

But now what is bad for us is .. chronic stress.

All of us need a little stress in our lives to motivate us. To do the things that make us wake up every morning to react in stressful situations. That's great. And that is a good stress.

Our stress level goes up and then comes back down. But the problem is CHRONIC STRESS.

That means when our stress levels go up and stay up for throughout the day. These stress levels are bad for the human body. Because it keeps that hormone CORTISOL up.

When CORTISOL is up, our THYROID falls down automatically, our TESTOSTERONE levels fall down automatically and our DHEA which is a hormone, which is a precursor to immunity also stays low.

So higher the CORTISOL ---the lower all three hormones.

HIGHER CORTISOL----- LOWER THYROID (results- THYROID ISSUES)

HIGHER CORTISOL-----LOWER TESTOSTERONE (results- FATIGUE AND TIRDMENESS)

HIGHER CORTISOL-----LOWER DHEA (results- LOW IMMUNITY)

So the issue is we all have stress today.

How do we manage this better. We can't get rid of half the stressful situations and stressful people in our life or the situation which is the reason for stress.

HOW YOGA HELPS TO MINIMIZE THE STRESS :

Yoga minimizes the impact of stress on the individual. Yogic science believes that the regular practice of asanas and pranayama strengthens the nervous system and helps people face stressful situations positively.

The worries of modern life deplete our reserves of bio-energy, because we draw on our vital energy from the storehouse- the nerve cells. This can, ultimately, exhaust our energy reserves and lead to the collapse of mental and physical equilibrium .

And because of stress, CORTISOL is up – and TESTOSTERONE IS LOW, we feel fatigue and tiredness.

Yogic science believes that the nerves control the unconscious mind and that when the nervous system is strong, a person faces stressful situations more positively . Asanas improves blood flow to all the cells of the body, revitalizing the nerve cells. This flow strengthens the nervous system and its capacity for enduring stress.

During stressful situations, however, when you inhale and exhale, the diaphragm becomes too taut to alter its shape. Yogic exercise address this problem by developing elasticity in the diaphragm, so that when stretched, it can handle any amount of stress, when stretched , it can handle any amount of stress, whether intellectual, emotional or physical.

The practice of asanas and pranayama helps to integrate (unite) the body, breath , mind, and intellect . Slow , effortless exhalation during practice of an asana brings serenity (calmness) to the body cells, relaxes the facial muscles, and releases all tension from the organs of perception : the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin.

When this happens, the brain, which is in constant communication with the organs of action, becomes shunya, or void, and all thoughts are stilled . then invading fears and anxieties cannot penetrate (go in to with force) to the brain.

when you develop this ability, you perform your daily activities with efficiency and economy . you do not dissipate (waste) your valuable bio-energy . you enter the state of true clarity of intellect. Your mind is free of stress and is filled with calm and tranquillity (a state of peace and quiet).

ASANAS FOR STRESS :-

Tadasana

Nokasana

Shashankasana

Youmudra

Kayotsarg :- shavasana or kayotsarg for 20 minutes.

PRANAYAMA :-

Deep breathing (Dheerg shwas), Sukshma Bhastrika, Anulom- Vilom , Mahapran Dhvani, Shitali , Bhramri.

MUDRA :-

GYAN MUDRA, PARIVARTAN MUDRA, SURABHI MUDRA , KALESHWAR MUDRA, KHECHARI MUDRA.

COLOUR :- Imagine white colour on the body.

MANTRA :- AUM



**SHAVASANA
THE CORPSE POSE**



**SHASHANKASANA
THE HARE POSE**



3.2 YOGA & IMMUNITY

Our immune system is of utmost important and plays a huge role in keeping us fit and healthy.

The immune system is the defence mechanism of the body and protects us from disease . It's main agent is the blood , a fluid consisting of plasma and red and white blood cells. It is white blood cells that inhibit the invasion of the blood. Stream by micro- organisms.White blood cells are the soldiers of our body, which fight and protect us from diseases. When the blood flows in speed in our body, our immune system become stronger.Yoga helps to boost the rotation of blood in our whole body and give strength to red and white cells.

Yoga is a holistic uplifting approach to our body and reduces stress level. And stress is one of the primary reason of a weak immune system. Apart from reducing stress levels yoga also helps in conditioning of the lungs . It also helps stimulating the lymphatic system , thus helping and flushing out toxins and impurities out of our system and ensuring that fresh oxygenated blood reaches all the organs of the body so that they can function properly. The thymus gland is located above the heart right in between the lungs in left reason is very closely related to immune system. That because it reduces white blood cell, called lymphocytes, that helps us fight infection virus, foreign invaders and even bacteria.So while doing yoga aasanas try and focus on the region where thymus gland is located.

SETUBANDHASANA :- it stimulates the thymus gland and help an optimum production of healthy white blood cells. That will help strengthen your immunity system.

BHUJANGASANA :- while doing this asana focus just above the heart between the lungs greatly helps open up the lungs and helps us breath better.

USHTRASANA :- focus on thymus gland.

MARJARASANA :- helps us flush out toxins and also help stimulate the lymphatic system including our thymus gland.

DHANURASANA :- open up lungs.

SURYANAMASKAR :- stimulate blood circulation in our body, and detox the body.

SARVANGASANA AND HALASANA :- stimulate thymus gland.

PRANAYAMA :-

KAPALBHATI , NADISHODHAN, ANULOM-VELOM :- are great form of detoxification and also greatly helps strengthen the immunity system.

MUDRA :- PRANA MUDRA, PRATHVI MUDRA , AGNI SHAKTI MUDRA , SHIVLING

MUDRA , HAKINI MUDRA (IMP).

MANTRA :- HRAM , HRIM (concentrate on lungs and imagine orange colour)

Apart from yoga also ensure, you are getting sufficient sleep, eating healthy at the right time and also managing your stress level through yoga , deep breathing and meditation.



3.3 DIABETES

TYPE -1 Diabetes ---- insulin dependent Diabetes.

Type - 2 Diabetes ----- non insulin dependent Diabetes.

Type- 1 Diabetes – most common form of diabetes in childhood. And it is increasing rapidly. An individual is said to have type -1 diabetes when his / her defense system (immune system) destroys the insulin producing beta cells in the pancreas. Insulin is a hormone that assists in the movement of sugar (glucose) into the cells of the body which use it for the production of energy.

When the insulin – producing cells of the body become dysfunctional or are destroyed by the immune system , the normal production of Insulin is hampered. In the absence of insulin, glucose is unable to enter the cells of the body.

This eventually causes two things :-

- *. The cell cannot utilize the blood glucose for converting it into energy . there by starving the cells.
- *. Since blood glucose is unable to move into the body cells, there is an excess build up of glucose in the blood.

Both the factors are responsible for high blood glucose resulting in type -1 diabetes.

INSULIN RESISTANCE (TYPE -2) -- NON INSULIN DEPENDENT DIABETES.

A resistance to the Hormone Insulin, resulting in increasing blood sugar.

The hormone insulin helps controls the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood with insulin resistance the body cells don't respond normally to insulin. Glucose can't enter the cells as easily so it builds up in the blood. This can eventually lead to type - 2 diabetes. The pancreas usually produces some insulin. But either the amount produced is not enough for the body's needs or the body's cells are resistance to it.

CAN WE REVERSE TYPE -2 DIABETS. ?—

Although there is no cure for type -2 diabetes .

*studies shows its possible for some people to reverse it.

*diet + life style changes (extreme diet – 625-850 callories a day for 2-5 months.)

* Weight loss

* Loose a lot of FAT (not weight)

Lower level of fat in liver and pancreas. That helps the cells to start working again to help pancreas to release insulin and control blood sugar start working again.

Yoga and Diabetes

Meditation , pranayam and aasanas ..

Meditation and yog nindra will reduce stress.....will reduce coresol hormone....will increase insulin in body.....will improve the condition of Diabetes.

Will reduce high blood pressure.

AASANA :-

ArdhaMatsyendrasana and Vakrasana , Halasana :- give pressure on pancreas.

Mandukasana , Pashchimotanasana, Janushirasana :- give strength to pancreas.

Pavanmuktasana :- boost the function of pancreas

Uttanpadasana :- boost the function of pancreas

Agnisaar :- boost the function on pancreas and produce more and more insulin.

SURYANAMASKAR :- reduce fat and help to fat loss. And also reduce L.D.L.

KRYIYA :- Agnisaar kriya.

BANDHA :- Uddhiyaan bandha.

PRANAYAMA :- through pranayama we take out maximum oxygen and take out maximum carbon di oxide. and become more active , more fresh, regenerative , become strong enough to take glucose into them.

Pranayam balance the secretion of hormone.

PRANAYAMA :- BHRAMARI, NADI-SHODHAN, BHASTRIKA , SURYA BHEDI.

MANTRA :- HUM , AUM

MUDRA :- SURYA MUDRA, PRANA MUDRA, VARUN MUDRA, SHAKTI MUDRA, LING MUDRA,

VAYU MUDRA

MEDITATION :- Concentrate on Tejas Kendra with orange colour with SURYA mudra and chant the mantra... HUM OR AUM... for 5-10 minutes. WITH giving positive suggestions that my pancreas are getting healthy, working actively.

DIET :- avoid sugar and food products made by sugar. Avoid potatoes , rice, starch in diet. Avoid fruits which contain more sugar.



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PASCHIMOTTANASANA
THE FORWARD BEND POSE



3.4 YOGA TO BALANCE HORMONES

Our body is made up of trillions of cells. Each cell performs different task in our body. These cells are useless if there is no communication in between them. Now what makes communication between each of cells in our body. ?

That called our HORMONES.

HORMONES are as chemical messenger.

Our each cell communicate with each other to perform task in our body like—lifting fingers, walking etc etc. heart health , kidney function etc.

If our hormones are working in perfect and balanced harmony all the functions of our body are work well in our body.

When hormones are disrupted , every task in our body become imbalanced.

So communication is necessary and that depends on BALANCED HORMONES.

HORMONES effects our :-

Physical health

Emotional health

Moods

Mental health

Appetite

Reproductive system

And all the other functions of our body.

These all are managed by our Endocrine system. Which regulate our hormones . things which effect hormonal balance :-

A. LIFESTYLE :-

1. SLEEP SLEEP SLEEP :- The more deep and sound we sleep the better our health become

Because of more deep long sleep , magic happens in our body.

Sleep balance two hormones in our body.

a. Leptin

b. Gratin

LEPTIN :- control our appetite (eating). This makes up feel full. No extra food we eat. When we sleep properly or sufficient , leptin is also balanced.

But when we sleep less , LEPTIN suppressed. And when Leptin is suppressed , e feel hungry and we eat unnecessary.

GRATIN :- is a hunger hormone. When we sleep sufficient, Grating is also balanced.

But when we sleep less Gratin hormone stimulated and when Gratin stimulated more we eat very much. Sugar carbs , fat, fast food etc.

So if sleep less , these two hormones become in balanced.

INSULIN :- If we sleep less, insulin dips and insulin get imbalanced.

2. EXERCISE :- Exercise balance the secretion of Insulin. Insulin pushes extra sugar and amino acid to our cells. Cells gets energy from them
If the insulin is decreased , our pancreas secretes more and more insulin and get tired.

Second thing which happenes that our cell membrane become thick. (which is called cells insensitivity).

Our cells becomes insensitive that they don't open and they don't take sugar from insulin.

So blood sugar level in our body get increased and we get diabetes no-2.

And when we exercise , it improves Insulin sensitivity . that means our body can use lesser insulin to do the job of pushing extra sugar to our cells.

So exercise is mut to balance hormones. Walking , jogging, aerobics, yoga and any form of exercise.

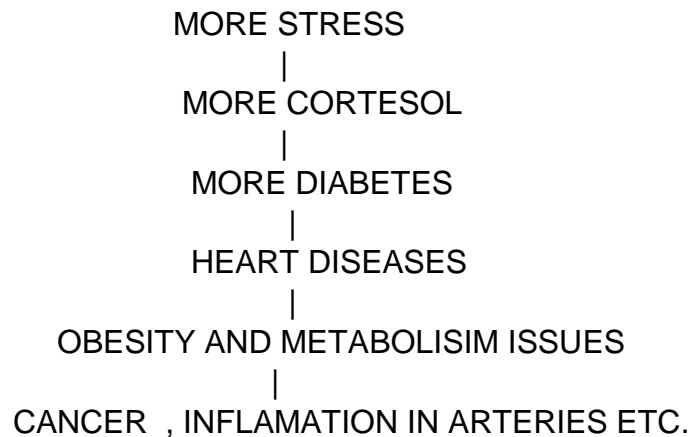
3 . SUGAR AND ZUNK FOOD -- the easiest way to imbalance of hormones.
More sugar -- more carbohydrate --more zunk food—more hormonal imbalanced.

3. STRESS - STRESS – STRESS :-IF we are stressed , we can't sleep, we cant sleep well our hormones become imbalanced.

We sleep less---- we become stressed.

We are in stress --- we can't sleep.

If we are stressed , there is one hormone which is produced – CORTESOL.



TO REDUCE STRESS :- MEDITATION, LETTING GO , MORE SLEEP,
SELF CA :- MEDITATION, LETTING GO , MORE SLEEP, SELF CA :-
MEDITATION, LETTING GO , MORE SLEEP, SELF CARE.

4. GOOD DIET :-

GOOD FAT : - coconut oil, pure ghee , which are cold pressed not refined.

GOOD NUTS :- almonds , peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds.

NUTS are sources of good fat.

GOOD FAT is necessary for health. GOOD FAT does not increase fat in our body.

Sugar , carbohydrate , zunk food that are harmful and increase fat in our body.

GOOD FAT FIGHTS (KILLS) FAT.

When we exercise more we become dull, our hair fall much, skin loosen.

All because of hormonal imbalance.

For glowing skin, less hair fall e need good diet.

OMEGA -3 ---- FLEX SEED, SABZA SEEDS, FISH , WALNUTS.

VITAMIN – D3

VITAMIN – B12

GREEN TEA --- contain EGCG . EGCG is a very strong ANTIOXIDENT , which increase our INSULIN sensitivity , means it is good for diabetes.

PROTIENS AND FIBERS ---important for hormone balance. Good quality of hormone.

It is require to keep LAPTIN LOW.

FIBER – fiber balance is necessary . not more fiber , because more fiber – increase inflammation in gut , acidity , bloating.

So all these things are necessary to balance of hormones.

IN WOMEN ---- CYSTS, PCOD, FIBROIDS , BREAST CANCER, TUMOR ETC.

IN MEN ----- BIG BELLY, LOW ENERGY , FATIGUE , LESS TESTESTRERONE HORMONE ETC.

THESE ARE SIGNS OF HORMONAL IMBALANCE.

IMPORTANCE OF YOGA TO BALANCE HORMONES :

Yoga stimulate endocrine system to work at optimum level and balance hormone secretion.

Yoga improve skin, reduce fat, balance thyroide, improve blood circulation . improves mussels mass , improve energy level and sleep cycle.

Yoga reduce the production of CORTISOL . yoga also decrease stress.

Yoga relieve tensions and calms the mind.

AASANAS :--

Ushtrasana

Bhujangasana

Setubandhasana

Bhadraasna

Marjarasana

Madhyapadshirasana

Vipritkarni

Padmasana

Deep breathing

Shavasana

PRANAYAMA :- DEEP BREATHING, ANULOM VILOM , MAHAPRANA DHWANI, BHRAMARI, SHEETALI, SUKSHMA BHASTRIKA .

MUDRA : - GYAN MUDRA , KALESHWAR MUDRA, KHECHRI MUDRA , SURBHI MUDRA ,

MANTRA :- AUM

MADITATION:- Relax the whole body . concentrate on ‘JYOTI KENDRA ‘ imagine bright white colour on jyoti Kendra. And also imagine bright white colour in the whole atmosphere. And feel extreme “ANANDA AND SHANTI “.

In this way, yoga is not simply an exercise in stretching, it is a philosophy of life that teaches the individual how to achieve a calm mind, which in turn helps to channel energy throughout the body.

The therapeutic effects can benefit anyone regardless of age, belief and physical capabilities with results ranging from the positive to the truly remarkable. The therapeutic effects are particularly relevant today with the ever increasing pace of modern life in today’s hectic world with its many and varied demands. Yoga acts as a soothing formula, counterbalancing fanatic lifestyle by quieting the mind and allowing individuals to slow down and to savor and live in the present moment.



3.5 Yogic Kriyas (Shuddhi Kriyas)

Yogic Kriyas are also known as Shuddhi-Kriyas.

In other words, we can say that just as the external organs of the body are cleaned, in the same way, cleaning their internal organs is also very important. Ancient yogis found that Kriya Yoga is a means through which it helps to clean and remove unwanted substances stored in the internal organs of the body.

There are six types of yoga kriyas Which can understand by preparing the body internally.

Benefits of Yoga Kriyas

We can get divine knowledge through the ancient yoga method “Kriya Yoga”. Kriya Yoga has techniques that help in awakening the sleeping consciousness and power of a person.

In this, the seven chakras of your knowledge, intellect, and body are awakened which accelerates the process of spiritual development.

Types of Yogic kriyas

Six activities are done specifically to keep the body healthy and clean. Those are called Shatkarma. The full benefit of Asana-Pranayama is not attained without physical purification.

The human body is made up of 3 essential elements. These known as Tridoshas or Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Any disparity between these 3 components will be the cause of the diseases. These are kept balanced through some Yogic kriyas.

These Yogic kriyas are – 1. Trataka Kriya 2. Neti Kriya 3. Kapalbhati Kriya 4. Dhauti Kriya 5. Vasti Kriya 6. Nauli Kriya

1. Trataka Kriya For EyeSight :-

“Constant gaze on an object or point is called Trataka Kriya”

How to do-

Trataka Kriya is an eye exercise that improves eye diseases or vision. Some simple steps are given below for Trataka Kriya.

Trataka kriyas are practiced by focusing the eye on a selected object.

First of all, you need to sit in a comfortable position such as sukhasana without moving.

Now, closing the eyes for a few seconds.

Open your eyes and gaze at a particular object constantly.

For this, a candle can be placed at a height parallel to the eye. And the Trataka kriya should be practiced continuously by sitting at a distance of two to three feet from it. (You can also keep a photo of your deities.)

If you feel a burning sensation in your eyes or tears roll in your eyes, blink and practice should be stopped immediately.

After that, palms should be rubbed thoroughly to warm. The warm palms are placed on the closed eyes.

Trataka kriya can be done at any time. It is however recommended that you do it early in the morning or late at night, daily for 20 minutes.

Benefits – Trataka is an important eye exercise that strengthens the eye muscles. It improves eyesight, memory, and concentrating the mind.

2. Neti Kriya For Upper Nasal Tract :-

Neti kriya also known as Jala Neti kriya .

The Neti kriya is done to keep the breathing system clean and to remove toxic substances from the nasal passages. It protects you from sinus, cold, cold, pollution, etc. Doing this also makes it easier to do pranayama.

The Neti kriya is performed in three ways – Sutra Neti, Jala Neti, and Kapal Neti.

How To Do – For Jala Neti, first of all, you need a Neti Pot Which can easily penetrate into your nose. A special vessel is used to insert water into the nose, which is called neti pot. Salty lukewarm water is used in Jal Nati. Take a little lukewarm water in the neti pot and add a pinch of salt to it. Take care not to add too much salt to the water.

To perform Jala Neti, sit down and keep a short distance between your two legs. Bend forward from the waist and tilt your head slightly down.

Keep the mouth open so that you don't have trouble breathing.

Now take a neti pot filled with water and allow the water to enter through one of the nostrils and it will automatically come out from the other hole.

Keep in mind that water is to be poured slowly and in small quantities.

After this, do this process from the second hole of the nose. After doing this action from both holes, stand up straight.

Jal Neti Yoga can also be done by standing and bending slightly from the waist.

Benefits of Jal neti kriya

By the practice of Jala Neti Kriya, bacteria in the nose are destroyed and effective treatment of nose disease and cough is also done.

It also prevents hair from becoming white.

To cure a person suffering from insomnia, Jal Neti is one of the effective yoga procedures.

Also, many diseases of the ear, nose, teeth, throat, etc. are not possible and the eyesight also becomes sharp.

3. Kapalabhati Kriya For Lower Respiratory Tract :-

Kapalabhati is performed before Pranayama and easy. It accelerates the entire brain and awakens the idle brain centers.

How To Do – Kapalabhati is a breathing technique in which the proper process of inhalation and exhalation is done. The inhalation or Puraka, it normal while the

exhalation or Rechaka is rapid and forceful. Kumbhaka or holding of breath is not done in Kapalabhati. In this yogic practice, only inhalation and exhalation is carried out.

Benefits – This pranayama cleanses the cranial sinuses, and this helps in relieving from cerebral thrombosis.

It clears the mind and helps in controlling the thoughts which essentially leads to increased concentration, focus, and peace of mind.

It drastically reduces the risk of developing hernias.

Glowing and glowing skin can be seen through its practice.

It helps in awakening the Kundalini Shakti.

It purifies the nerves as well as pranic channels

4. Dhauti Kriya For The Digestive Tract :-

Six ways of body refinement are mentioned in the Shatkarma – Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Nauli, Trataka and Kapalabhati. The meaning of dhauti is – washing, this Kriya is a part of hatha yoga. This is the most important of the 6 kriyas of Hatha Yoga.

How To Do – First of all, take a piece of fine soft cotton cloth two to three inches wide and seven to eight yards long. Boil it in water. Squeeze properly and dry in a clean place.

Now, take salty lukewarm water and soak the cloth in the water.

Sit down and keep a short distance between your two legs.

Now put the upper end of the cloth in the mouth and swallow the cloth slowly and drink a sip of warm water at the same time.

Then slowly taken out cloth carefully.

The cloth is difficult to swallow at first, but it becomes easier by daily practice.

This technique should first be practiced under the guidance of Yoga teachers.

Benefits – By its practice, all diseases are eliminated from the body and strength increases in the body.

It makes digestive power powerful also cleanses the stomach.

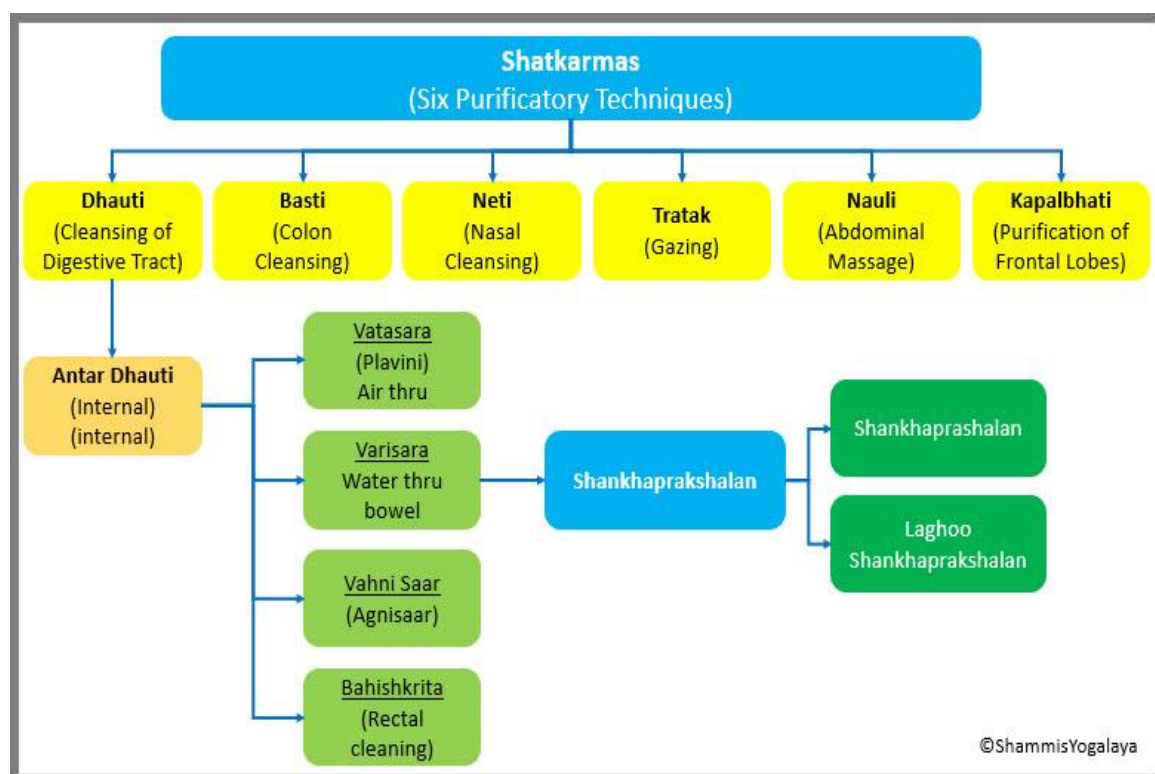
It helps in removing excess acidity and ends constipation, indigestion, gas, etc.

This Kriya is also beneficial in curing diseases like piles.

It also purifies the upper respiratory tract.

Laghoo Shankhaprakshalan :-

Shankhaprakshalana is one of the traditional shuddhi kriyas (yogic cleansing process) which is a sub kriya from the group of kriyas as Dhouti. It is a cleansing process for the whole of the colon from the mouth to the anus, by tepid saline water. In Shankhaprakshalan, water is taken from the mouth, goes through throat to the stomach, from the stomach to the small intestine, from small intestine to the large intestine and finally comes out through the anus. This process replicates the cleansing of a conch and is named Shankhaprakshalan. This is an excellent way to detoxify your body from the accumulated toxins.



Method

1. Prepare approximately three liters of lukewarm water with two teaspoons of salt for every liter. The water should taste mildly salty.
2. Drink two glasses of the prepared concoction in quick succession.
3. Perform five asanas eight times each at a steady pace without taking a break.
4. Drink two more glass and repeat the five asanas eight times each again.
5. Finally, consume the last two glasses of water and repeat the asanas eight times each for the last time.
6. You should feel the urge for motion by this time. If not, wait for a few minutes and the urge would eventually be upon you. Do not force yourself for the motion at all.

5. Vasta/ Basti Kriya And Shanka Prakshalana For The Lower Digestive Tract :

Vasta means part of the Lower abdomen or digestive tract. Vasti yoga kriya is practiced to cleanse the lower abdomen, especially the digestive system.

The Basti Kriya process is performed in two ways: Jala Basti and Sthal Basti.

How to Do – To do this Kriya, take a tub in which you can sit easily.

The water should be enough that the water should reach the navel.

In ancient times, the Kriya was done sitting in the river.

Now, Sucks water through the anus in the stomach and do Uddyayanbandh.

Stop for a while. Get out of the water, go to the toilet and discard water and sewage.

Benefits – Diseases related to Vata, Pitta, Kapha are cured through Vasti Kriya. It improves abdominal muscle tone. By this kriya, dirty air comes out and Cures digestive disorders and constipation also.

6. Nauli Kriya For Abdominal Muscles And Internal Organs :-

Nauli Kriya is the best of Kriyas. This is an important exercise for the stomach and internal organs. Navel movements are involved in this Kriya. There are four types of Nauli Kriya.

Uddhiyana Bandha: Remove the air forcefully from the mouth and pull the Nabhi inside.

Vamanauli: When the Uddhiyanabandha becomes complete, leave the muscles in the middle of the stomach. The abdominal muscles will look like a long tube. Move them to the left.

South Nauli: After that move it to the right side.

Madhyama Nauli: Keep it in the middle and quickly churn the muscles by moving from right to left and from left to right.

Therefore, it can be said that in this Kriya, more attention is paid to breathing, stopping the breath, holding the breath, and exhaling, etc.

Benefits – This is an important kriya for the stomach, Abdominal Muscles, And Internal Organs. This increases appetite. Many diseases related to the liver, spleen, and stomach are relieved. Practical health is attained by its practice. It also removes potential disabilities.

All yogic kriyas should be practiced under the specialty yoga teacher. Therefore, these kriyas should be done carefully. Make your body pure and healthy.

Chapter - 4 Conclusion

Essentially yoga is a complete science of humanics, dealing with all aspects of man from the physical to the psychological, intellectual and emotional. If practiced with dedication, yoga has the abilities to draw out positive qualities and to lessen defects. With its knowledge of anatomy, physiology and consciousness and conscience yoga is a science that is able to integrate the body, mind , breath and awareness , understanding the genuine need of each person and dealing with every aspect of health and wellbeing from the periphery to the core. We can say.....

योगः स्वस्थ जीवनम् Yoga is the healthy life.

समत्वं योगः उच्यते Yoga is the balance of mind in all situations.

योगमयी एकचित्तः Yoga is fixing of one's mind

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् Yoga is skill in action.

योगः चित्तवृत्तिः निरोधः chit stands for consciousness which is made up of mind intellect and ego.

योगः समाधिः Yoga is meditation.

दुःख संयोग वियोगं योगसंजितुम् Yoga is the severance of union with pain.

“WORDS FAIL TO CONVEY THE TOTAL VALUE OF YOGA. IT HAS TO BE EXPERIENCED.”

योगेन चित्तस्य पदेन वाचां मलं शरीरस्य च वैदिकेन ।

योपाकरोतं प्रवरं मुनीनां पतञ्जलिं प्राञ्जलिरानतोस्मि॥

जिन्होंने मन की शांति और पवित्रता के लिए योग दिया, भाषण की स्पष्टता और शुद्धता के लिए व्याकरण दिया, और स्वास्थ्य की पूर्णता के लिए औषधि, आइए हम महान ऋषि पतंजलि को नमन करें।



Yoga Nidra and hypnosis: a bridge between Eastern mysticism and western psychotherapy

Dipankar Patra, Research Scholar, Annamalai University



Abstract

Yoga Nidra has been in India since time immemorial as a form of spiritual practice as well as a healing modality. In the modern form, it exists as a psychotherapeutic treatment modality and termed as Yoga Psychotherapy.

In this document, the primary author who has been a practicing hypnotherapist and trained in the ancient sciences of Yoga Nidra describes the various references to Yoga Nidra from Indian scriptures and describes the theory and practice of it in some institutions which aims to preserve and promote Indian culture and heritage. A comparison and contrast with the key areas of Yoga Nidra with modern hypnotherapy is also drawn in the next section. The final section discusses on the future of Yoga Nidra and Hypnosis, both of which are not able to get the merit and importance it truly deserves.

It is unfortunate that in a country so rich with spiritual pursuits has failed to promote Yoga Nidra with all its manifestations. It is also a shame that Indian psychology is not taught in Indian academic institutions and a colonial hangover still exists amongst academicians, researchers, therapists and healers who draw resources from western psychology where the element of subjective internal connect, often a spiritual one is ignored or bypassed. Hypnosis and hypnotherapy have also been vogue for quite some time is also recognised as a treatment modality by the Indian government. However, not much progress has been made also in this direction in terms of making it a part of an academic curriculum for doctors and psychologists. Neither is there any governing or licensing body which could oversee and promote this amazing science which utilize the subconscious faculties of the mind.

Both hypnosis and Yoga Nidra utilises the subconscious resources of the mind and operates at an altered state of awareness. They bypass the rational faculties of the conscious mind and help to unearth hidden and latent potentials within an individual. Both hypnosis and Yoga Nidra can form a bridge between eastern mysticism and western psychotherapy. Fortunately, very recently a strong awareness is being noticed amongst young Indians to rediscover cultural and spiritual origins of our Indic heritage.

(Key words: hypnosis, hypnotherapy, Yoga Nidra)



1. Introduction:

The ocean becomes the bed of the lotus-navel Vishnu when at the termination of every Yoga that deity of immeasurable power enjoys Yoga-Nidra, the deep sleep under the spell of spiritual mediation.

– Lord Krishna in Mahabharata, Book 1, section XXI

Yoga Nidra or Yogic sleep as mentioned as early as during the time of the classic Indian epic, Mahabharata represents a state of mind where an individual represents symptoms of a state of deep, non-REM sleep including Delta waves (frequency of ≤ 4 Hz), while simultaneously remaining fully conscious.

Yoga-nidra, developed from ancient Indian yogic texts, has been introduced as a contemporary, systematic process of healing by various schools of yoga, both in India and in Western countries. Indigenous healing practices in India had always utilized altered states of consciousness as a means to facilitate healing (Campion and Bughra, 1998) and Yoga and meditation are the main healing modalities amongst others. With time, this has led to the development of a discipline called Yoga Psychotherapy. Unlike the majority of traditional Western psychotherapies, yoga psychotherapy provides the means, not only for the change at the level of personality, but for the change at a much more profound level.

As in modern psychotherapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), Yoga psychotherapy demonstrates that making peace with the current reality is in no way antithetical to change or growth. It is the foundation upon which change takes place. Some of the various attitudes and techniques are: Vairagya, Meditation, Self-acceptance (not to be confused with self-esteem construct of western psychology), Mindfulness (meditation in action), Pranayama (breath regulation) and Viveka (discrimination).

This article brings into focus India's rich tradition of spiritual science that the west has benefited from, and continues to do so in many ways. Western scientific paradigms are, in many ways, still in their infancy by comparison. The primary author who is a practising hypnotherapist and have been trained in Yoga Nidra provides us with an overview of yoga-nidra, both its origins and current form of practice. Yoga Nidra is compared to hypnosis, a systematic, mind-body, trance-inducing technique, used as an adjunct with western forms of psychotherapy.

2. References to Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra is a meditative practice that dates back to antiquity and can be traced back to scriptures like *Mahayana* and *Vajrayana Buddhism*, *Kashmiri Shaivism*, Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, and Shankaracharya's *Yoga Taravali*. The contemporary description of Yoga Nidra is equated with a kind of lucid dream state, in which dream imagery takes place for the practitioner, but they do not identify or become attached to them, but become objective observer (Miller, 2005).



Lucid dreaming is a type of state where a dreamer is aware that he is dreaming and where the dreamer has some form of control over the character, the narrative and the environment. In modern time, the concept of lucid dreaming has been popularised by an American pscho-physiologist Stephen La Berge who stayed in India for a long period of time studied Yoga Nidra and other yogic practices. In India, in recent times, Yoga Nidra has been reoriented by Yogic masters like Sivananda Saraswati and Satayananda Saraswati.

Vasistha-Saitha (Section III57-75) and Yoga Yajnavalkya (Section VII, 1-37) contain explicit descriptions of Yoga Nidra. (Ref. English translation in Bharati, 2001)

Parker, Stephen et. al (2013) contends that the scarcity of textual accounts of yoga-nidra possibly due to the fact that the practices were traditionally taught in response to individual needs and primarily communicated by word of mouth. There were hardly any written details. Some available written descriptions were often partial, incomplete and were tailor made to suit individual needs.

The earliest reference to Yoga Nidra was confined to the object of devotion rather than a form of practice. In the Vedic literature (roughly 5000 BCE to 1000 CE) and Epic literature (approximately 700 BCE to 1000 CE), yoga-nidra referred to the mythological dissolution of the cosmos, or Vishnu's cosmic yoga-nidra. We also come across Yoga-nidra in reference to a deity who was involved in the birth of Krishna (Campbell, 1974). In his book, he mentioned, "and indeed, that very night, the Goddess Yoga Nidra, 'Visionary Sleep of Spiritual Union' descended on the princess Devaki, the chaste wife of the pious prince Vasudeva".

The Mahayana Buddhist traditions, and the Vajrayana in particular, refer to a practice of clear, light sleep similar to classical yoga's account of yoga-nidra. This light sleep is also described in the fourteenth century text, Book of Three Inspirations, by Tsongkhapa the Great, guru of the first Dalai Lama. The Theravada Buddhist yoga literature contains no references to yoga-nidra. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, we come across a discipline of dream yoga, which does not apply to the state of deep sleep. It is related to the practice of clear, light sleep and involves the dissolution of all thought and an experience of nothing but pure awareness (Rinpoche, 1998). Unlike the Buddhist scripture, the Jain yoga literature on Yoga nidra does not include descriptions of yoga-nidra practice.

In the Ayurvedic literature, the Charaka-samhita, contains a discussion of the theory of sleep in the Sutra-sthana. Although this intimates that sleep is an entry point to elevated, superconscious states, no detailed description of the practice is included.

In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (approximately 200 BCE) the nature of sleep as a mental operation is explored, as are the dream and sleep states as a means to enter samadhi.

Thus, Sutra I.10, mentions of *abhava - prat yaya - alambana - vrttir- nidra*. This is a mental process (vrtti) of sleep as concentration on nescience (*abhava*) and its cause (Bharati, 1986).

Sutra 1.6 mentions of *pramana – viparya- vikalpa-nidra-smrtayah* which literally means – 'the fivefold vrittis of the mind are valid perverse cognition, imaginary cognition, sleep and memory'.

Again in Sutra 1.38 we come across Swapna Nidra or *jnanalambanam va* which when translated means – 'the mind can be steady when it has the knowledge attained from dreams and sleep as its support'. one may enter samadhi "with support of knowledge of dream and [deep] sleep" (Bharati, 1986, 361).



In Shiva - sutra 1.7 of the Shaiva tradition of Kashmir (approximately 950 CE), Vasugupta asserts that the yogi experiences the fourth state of consciousness (*turiya*) in the midst of the other three states: waking, dream, and sleep. The Sutra reads- *jagratsvapnasusuptabhede turiyabhogasambhavah*. In English it means - In the distinction of deep sleep, dreaming and waking is the source of the Fourth (or Turiya). Shiva Sutra 1.10 specifically mentions of - “*aviveko ma maya sausuptum*” . This means – Non distinction is deep sleep, which is Maya.

Verse 75 of Vigyan Bhairav Tantra describes the nature of the concentration of sleep through which it is accomplished. It reads -

Anagataya nidrayan pranasthe vajyagocharey
Sawastha manasa gamya para devi prakashtey.

In other words, by entering the state preceding sleep, where the awareness of the outer world has faded, (the mind is absorbed in the threshold state) which the supreme goddess illumines.

When sleep has not yet fully appeared, that is when one is about to fall asleep and all the external objects (though present) have faded out of sight, then the state (between sleep and waking) is one on which one should concentrate.

Though most written references describe the state of yoga nidra as the goal, three texts describe the process of achieving yoga-nidra in some detail.

First, is the Hathayogapradipika where there is mention of

abhyasetkhecharīm *tāvadyāvatsyādyogha-nidritāḥ* /
samprāpta-yogha-nidrasya kālo nāsti kadāchana || 49 ||

Thus, the Khecharī should be practised till there is Yoga-nidrā (Samādhi). One who has induced Yoga-nidrā, cannot fall a victim to death. It is to be noted that this khechari mudra is not to be confused with that practised by Kriya Yoga practitioners.

We also find details in the Shandilya Upanishad in the first chapter where the details are similar to those of Hathayogapradipika.

Some details of the process are also retrieved from Shankaracharya's Yogataravali (Deshikachar & Deshikachar, 2003). Section 17 – 26 of his important work contains elaborate details.

Vichchhinna-sankalpa-vikalpa-mule nihshesha-nirmulita-karmajale.
Nirantara-abhyasa-nitanta-bhadra sa jrimbhate yogini yoganidra. (25)

It means that by constant practice, the ever-benevolent yoga-Nidra, appears in those yogis, whose resolves, choices, and the effects of actions have been completely uprooted. The practitioner is encouraged to remain in turiya, in the *nirvikalpa* state. Thus, it is evident from Shankaracharya's explanation that activity of the sensory and disputative mind (manas) ceases entirely in the state of yoga-nidra



The contemporary yoga literature includes a number of descriptions of methods of yoga-nidra as noted in studies by Miller (2005). Satyananda, of the Bihar School of Yoga, describes several preliminary practices related to yoga-nidra which include the following:

- Making mental resolution or setting an intention (*samkalpa*),
- Initiating rotations of consciousness through the body,
- Practicing breath awareness (nostrils, throat, chest, counting the breath),
- Relaxing the mind and emotions,
- Visualizing various images, and
- Reaffirming mental resolutions or intentions.

Although this is the most detailed description of the preliminary practices of yoga-nidra in the modern times, it does not include resting the mind in the heart centre or instruction about how to enter a state of deep sleep during which the mind (or *manas*) does not function and are not consistent with Shankara's definition.

Satyananda's successor, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, also briefly discusses yoga-nidra in his book, *Yoga Darshana* (Saraswati, Swami Niranjanananda, 1993). The three divisions of Yoga Nidra - the *pratyahara* group, the *dharana* group or the *dhyana* group - aim at the removal of the *pratyahara* from the conscious or external plain, the subconscious or subtle plain and the unconscious or the causal plain.

Panda (2003) describes yoga-nidra vis-a-vis the eight limbs of yoga which contains an array of asana and pranayama techniques, as well as mudra and bandha practices. He explains the Vedantic theory of the evolution of the mind, the body sheath or *kosha* system, the *cakra* system, Kundalini, and a great deal of ancillary Yoga-Vedanta theory. In his description of the preliminary practices of yoga-nidra, he delineates several forms of external and internal rotations of consciousness, as well as a complex tantric system of *Nyasa* (Panda, 2003). He includes a discussion of Freudian psychoanalysis and contrasts it with Indian theories of mind, then briefly examines common threads between the two theories, characterizing hypnosis as an externally suggested trance and yoga-nidra as an "autosuggestion." His description of Yoga Nidra as a state between waking and dreaming is incorrect because it misidentifies the brain waves emitted during yoga-nidra as primarily theta rather than delta.

Swami Rama writes of five methods of yoga-nidra and describes two of them. The first is a full procedure that includes preliminary relaxation exercises and a short method that follows mastery of preliminary relaxation techniques (Rama, 1988). The full procedure begins with a mental statement of intention to remain aware (*samkalpa*), followed by progressive relaxation of major muscle groups. This is followed by a 61-point relaxation that focuses on *marma* points, with the goal of relaxing the subtle body, and "point-to-point breathing," or *shithali-karana*, translated as "making or doing relaxation" (Rama, 1988, p. 186–191).

In a laboratory experiment, Swami Rama demonstrated conscious entry into NREM delta wave sleep through Yoga Nidra. It is to be noted that is interesting that these are essentially user relaxation exercises and visualizations that do not lead to the absence of mental activity as described by Shankaracharya as essential to yoga-nidra.

3. Yoga Nidra practice

A review of the historical and contemporary yoga text suggests that yoga-nidra is a state during which activity of the mind is suspended. Neither thoughts nor images are present, and the practitioner



experiences conscious, deep, dreamless sleep, possessing awareness of the surroundings but neither thinking about them nor interacting with them.

Neurobiologically, Yoga Nidra is associated with increased endogenous dopamine release in the ventral striatum part of the brain. In this state, one experiences desirelessness which can be associated with the reduced flow of blood to the brain connected with controlling actions, the prefrontal cortex, the cerebellum and the subcortex. It also has been seen to positively impact in heart-rate variability, a measure of balance in the autonomic nervous system (ANS).

The process of the modern form of Yoga nidra consists of eight stages:

(1) Preparation (lying in savasana), (2) Relaxation, (using pranayama with or without mantras), (3) Resolve, (elicits sankalpa or intention), (4) Rapid Shifting of Consciousness, involving both external and internal rotation of consciousness called Nyasa (5) Mental Channel Purification, Purification (includes the use of reverse counting while imagining breathing through opposite nostrils), (6) Moving Visualization of Scenarios, (consists of the visualization of religious and nature images), (7) Resolve (repetition), and (8) Finish.

Various experiments proved the efficacy in areas like sleep disorders, anger management, obsessive-compulsive disorder, various digestive disorders, such as colitis and peptic ulcers, cardiovascular disease, arthritis, osteoporosis, dementia, and immune system function, stress and anxiety, reduction of illness-related stress in multiple sclerosis and cancer outpatients, reduction of menstrual-related difficulties, inflammation reduction and positive effects on heart rate variability. It has also been proven to be effective in treatment of soldiers suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders. Although the findings are promising, they are in the early stages of investigation, and further, more robust studies need to be conducted to provide stronger evidence of its efficacy and effectiveness.

4. A study in contrast: Yoga Nidra, Meditation and Hypnosis:

Yoga Nidra and Hypnosis have tremendous psychotherapeutic uses using trance as a medium of inner focus of awareness and both uses either a teacher/practitioner/therapist guide or are self-guided. Both demarcates a more intensified liminal space for healing than psychotherapy; the boundaries between the therapist and the patient are further removed from the typical, psychotherapeutic environment, and the therapist participates more intensely in the patient's phenomenological field. However, there are the following phenomenological differences which are worth to be noted:

- **Domain:** Unlike Hypnosis, Yoga Nidra operates within the realm of indigenous spirituality and psychology for those adhering to a spiritual paradigm. The west has taken the basic philosophy with a reductionist approach to it, as has happened in many respects to the use of Eastern methods of mind/body healing in the Western paradigm (Goldberg 2010).
- **State of consciousness:** the goal of the yogic paths, Yoga Nidra and meditation are the same. Yoga Nidra is a state in which the body is completely relaxed where the practitioner becomes aware of an inner awareness through a set of verbal instructions much like induced suggestions by a hypnotherapist.

This state of consciousness is different from meditation where usually a concentration on a single focus is required. Phenomena that can be labelled hypnotic, such as time distortion, primary



process imagery, dream imagery, and catalepsy may take place, but are not necessarily utilized as a convincer for ratification of the special, meditative state in Yoga Nidra (Bowers 1978; Yapko 2003).

This state of consciousness is also different from lucid dreaming as in lucid dreaming one is aware of the dream environment and has little or no awareness of the actual environment. Yoga Nidra results in conscious awareness of the deep sleep which is called *prajna* in the Mandukya Upanishad.

- **Use of Resolution or suggestions:** The yoga-nidra practice of Sankapla, or resolution before and after the exercise, is similar to a post-hypnotic suggestion used in Hypnotherapy. However, the resolution is decided by the client rather than the therapist giving the suggestions as in case of hypnosis. Hypnotic suggestions are typically delivered by an outside source, and there is an attempt to bypass the conscious mind and implant them in the unconscious (Yapko 2003).
- **Attachment:** Yoga-nidra differs in that amnesia and other hypnotic phenomena may be apparent, but the practitioner attempts to remain alert with non-attachment to any imagery, sensations, or experiences (Panda 2003). Some modern practitioners of hypnotherapy, like Stephen Brooks has successfully integrated Non attachment theory from Buddhist Psychotherapy with Ericksonian hypnotherapy to induce a sense of dissociation and non-attachment as a therapeutic outcome.
- **Awareness:** In Yoga Nidra, the cultivation of awareness is described as a means to produce a witness state of consciousness, between waking consciousness, *jagrata*, and dream consciousness, *Swapna* (Panda 2003; Henry 2005). While it is essentially different from Hypnosis, some theorists find a resemblance with Ernest Hilgard's idea of the *hidden observer* in the *neo-dissociation* theory of hypnosis.
- **Mode of Application:** Suggestions for rotation of consciousness and imagery used in Yoga Nidra are given quickly for the purpose of making the subject more alert. However, in hypnosis, techniques, such as fractionation (brief re-alerting and re-entrance to the trance state) and pauses in the hypnotic induction are a means for deepening the sense of trance where the conscious mind of the patient is bypassed precisely to influence unconscious cognitive sets and influence behaviour (Erickson, Rossi, and Rossi 1976; Erickson and Rossi 1989).
- **Therapeutic alliance:** The relation between the client and the therapist in Yoga nidra is in a more intensified liminal space for healing than traditional psychotherapy; the boundaries between the therapist and the patient are further removed from the typical, psychotherapeutic environment, and the therapist participates more intensely in the patient's phenomenological field.

5. Research in Yoga Nidra

Although there has been attempt by researchers to examine the effects of relaxation protocols, Yoga Nidra's physiological and neurological processes were not systematically evaluated. The operational definition of Yoga Nidra has been diluted and confused, making systematic hypothesis testing and cross study comparison and replication difficult. The research literature about yoga-nidra is scarce and limited by the lack of an empirical definition of the state of yoga-nidra. A number of investigations have examined various physiological criteria related to yoga-nidra, but their lack of empirical



consistency and rigor make it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions. The essential nature of subjective experience as in hypnosis also renders it difficult to use it as a research methodology.

Swami Veda Bharati proposed a definition of four levels of yoga-nidra practice that would provide measurable physiological hypotheses for empirical investigation.

Level 1 represents a state of deep relaxation. During this phase the brain first produces alpha waves, which may verge on theta waves during deeper practice. These deeper exercises may be used for self-healing, such as reducing blood pressure and dealing with migraine headaches, among others. These protocols are similar to those used in clinical hypnosis (Hammond, 1990).

Level 2 represents a state that is characterized by creativity, invention, achieving decisions and solutions to problems, and composing lectures and research papers, poetry, minutely detailed action plans, and the like. This stage is evidenced by theta waves that verge on delta waves during deeper practice. These bears a strong resemblance to those observed during clinical hypnosis.

During Level 3, the practices of Level 1 result in the transition to yoga-nidra, or the state of *abhava-pratyā*; that is, cognition of negation in a cave of the heart centre (Yoga Sutras I.10; Bharati, 1986; Zambito, 1992). The sutra reads *abhava-pratyālabana vrittir nidra* which means – Deep sleep is the state of mind which is based on an absence of any content.

During this state, the brain may initially produce theta waves, followed by delta waves. The participant experiences deep non-REM sleep but remains aware of his or her surroundings. Attainment of this level may require instruction by an advanced teacher.

During Level 4 the mind simultaneously remains in two states consisting of sleep and simultaneous conscious awareness (*a-japa japa*, or the effortless meditation) during which the person is aware of the subjective experience of the very subtle power of consciousness in meditation (the rising of the Kundalini).

A practitioner may alternate between theta and delta waves during this process. It is hypothesized that at this point, EEG readings may register no discernible electrical activity. Thus, yoga-nidra (yoga sleep) represents a state in which an individual demonstrates all the symptoms of deep, non-REM sleep, including delta brain waves, while simultaneously remaining fully conscious.

Once levels 3 and 4 are mastered one transitions to the 4th level or Turiya which is the highest form of meditation in Samadhi (*asampragnyata* in Yoga and *nirvikalpa* in Vedanta). Researchers have hypothesised that at this stage there are no electrical activities in EEG.

Interestingly, studies in yoga - nidra in contemporary research is focussed in relation to a state of deep relaxation and imagery generation which is actually a precursor to yoga -nidra. During this state, alpha and theta brainwaves, as opposed to the delta wave activity found during the state of yoga-nidra, are reported. The state of yoga-nidra is devoid of imagery, thought, and mantra repetition on and consists only of the awareness of being. This is characterized by awareness of the breath during which one observes the mind and body in sleep.

To date, extant research and findings are inconsistent with those of early studies. It appears that yoga-nidra as it is described by Shankaracharya and its physiological correlates have yet to be studied. Stephen Parker suggests some hypothesis to test Shankaracharya's traditional model of yoga nidra. These hypotheses challenge the contention that consciousness requires brain activity.



6. Hypnosis awareness in India and need for integration

Hypnosis, as a well-known technique of eliciting trance states that has its origins in Europe, and has been used therapeutically for at least 400 years (Hammond 2013). There is extensive research required to ascertain whether or not Hypnosis was borrowed from our Vedic scriptures. Nevertheless, it is safe to assume hypnosis as a special case of yoga-nidra.

Apart from a PG Diploma course done in some Universities in India, training on Hypnosis and hypnotherapy is in the hands of lay training institutes some with affiliate training institute in USA. Although Indian hypnotists are quite competent, in the absence of regulation and registration there is a lack of scientific rigor. Also, there is no real repercussion of potential ethical deviance and protection of the general public from negligence or maleficence. Psychotherapy in India is largely unregulated, even with an official licensing board (Hogan and Vaccaro 2007), and there is no regulation of the practice of hypnosis India. The majority of the population does not have access to counselling and psychotherapy services. With respect to mental health services, only a very small portion of the westernized population in urban areas actually uses them (Laungani 2004). There is a movement to foster professionalism in psychology, but many individuals practice unlicensed, and without degrees (Hogan and Vaccaro 2007).

Since both yoga-nidra and hypnosis are taught and utilized in India, it would appear apropos to call for an integration between indigenous and Western models of healing for Indians. The similarities between the two should be further explored, and an understanding and practice of both could inform clinical and research efforts. The systematic yoga-nidra practice from the Bihar school displays commonalities with clinical hypnosis, mindfulness meditation, Lucid dreaming, guided imagery, and relaxation training. Likewise, other schools of Yoga Nidra practised in India need to be explored and are considered for integration into practice. Training programs, run by clinical faculty, for both yoga-nidra and hypnosis could provide standardized, evidence-based, training and practice. This could potentially add more respect from academic circles for, and further application of Indian Psychology. A specific application of yoga-nidra integration with Western psychiatry could potentially be with *transcranial magnetic stimulation* for depression (TMS) (George et al. 1999). TMS therapy is an FDA-approved treatment that uses direct electromagnetic stimulation to areas of the brain that are hypoactive in depression. Yoga-nidra training with or without the integration of hypnosis as a pre-procedure could provide this, especially with patients from the Indian population.

7. Conclusion:

Despite the academic and clinical presence, psychology in India is in many ways a foreign concept. Due to colonisation impact, the Indian culture has been dominated by a feeling of inferiority and western form of science and psychology were upheld superior to indigenous ways. In fact, as per Swami Abhedananda, true psychology recognises the existence of body, mind and soul. But the modern western psychology lays more stress on the physiological and externally behavioural aspects of human behaviour. There is no soul in it. Indian Psychology according to him is true psychology as it “recognizes the existence of the mind, body and soul and tells us that what we call the physical body is the dwelling of the soul which is the source of the intelligence and self-consciousness.”



Some psychologists have attempted to cross-pollinate western philosophy with Indian culture giving rise to Indian Psychology (Sinha 1994; Bhatia 2002; Laungani 2004) although there is scant acceptance of it. According to Ramakrishna Rao, K. (2013), the goal of Indian psychology is self-realization of the inherent altruistic nature in one's life purposes. While Indian psychology has the necessary theoretical framework from which the ethics of altruism can be justified, western psychology, in contrast leans heavily on the egoistic hedonism and utilitarian purpose as delineated in positive psychology.

Even though there is a divide between rural and urban India, most therapists in India prefer the western model which are often at odds with the native models of therapies and healing. There is obvious need for more research on the efficacy of Yoga Nidra and other indigenous practices of our culture. It is high time, scholars and academicians realise the true benefit of both Yoga Nidra and Hypnosis and include them in the curriculum at universities for both psychologists and medical professionals.

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