

# Vanaprastha – Yoga for the Elderly

## Introduction

नायासेन मरणं विनादैन्येन जीवनं  
देहि मे क्रिपया शम्भो त्वयि भक्तिं अचञ्चलं

anAyAsena maraNAM vinAdainyena jlvanaM  
dehi me kripaya shambho tvayi bhaktiM achanchalaM

Death without struggle and a life without misery , provide me kindly o Lord Shambhu...  
unwavering faith/devotion in you.

Aging is inevitable. Death is certain. The goal is to age gracefully, cheerfully and meaningfully. Degradation and degeneration at the physical level is inevitable. With proper attitudes, we can acquire necessary skills and knowledge to self-manage and lead a vigorous and useful life, with as less dependence as possible.

We have three ages.

1. Chronological – From the day we are born we are moving only in one direction and keeping count of the years. It is just a number.
2. Physical Age – The body is a formation and is continuously changing. We can take charge of the change and manage it. The present structure of the body is the crystalized form of our past lifestyle.
3. Psychological age – We are what we think we are. We can be what we want to be. “Yad bhavam Tad bhavati” As we believe in so it happens.

A need has been found to design and offer a program to inspire and enthuse elderly to lead vigorous, cheerful and meaningful lives.

## Design of Yoga for elderly

1. Annamaya Kosha – Simple loosening exercises, sookshma vyayama, simple asanas, asanas with props,
2. Pranayama – Breathing exercises, vaibhageeya pranayama, kapalbhati (less speed), other balancing, cooling and vibrating pranayamas.
3. Manomaya Kosha – Guided meditations
4. Counselling
5. Bhajans Chantings