

Solomiya Pobutska

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Mid-term Research Paper

Impact of Yoga

Personal reflection

“Yoga is the process of eliminating pain – pain from the body, mind, and society.”

Amit Ray, an Indian doctor, author, and spiritual master believes that yoga can heal body pain, anxiety, and help to create a peaceful mindset. After 3 months of practicing yoga, I enriched and revealed parts of my body and mind that have been holding me off from enjoying my life without pain. For quite a while I’ve been experiencing unpleasant and disturbing pain in my lower back and knees. For almost a year I have been ignoring its weakness and instability until it became unbearable and too obvious that my body was trying to tell me about issues with my health. So did my doctor, he diagnosed me with osteoarthritis. I will not go into a deep explanation of this disease, I’ll just say that it is very common among people in their 60s, but not in their 20s. My doctor referred me to physical therapy and made me change my diet. I started running and biking to promote more activity for my body. However, I’ve noticed a tremendous difference after going to yoga class and practicing yoga at home.

"Yoga works on stretching and strengthening, and the key to long-term healing is strength" (1) says Liz Owen a founder of the Iyengar yoga discipline. In about a month I have noticed my bodybuilding strength, releasing muscle tension, improving flexibility, and bolstering joints and bones. By learning yoga in the class and practicing it at the gym and home I helped my body to balance itself, thereby alleviating pain. Harvard Health Publishing claims that “a study published in Annals of Internal Medicine found that among 313 people with chronic low back pain, a weekly yoga class increased mobility more than standard medical care for the condition. Another study published at nearly the same time found that yoga was comparable to standard exercise therapy in relieving chronic low back pain.” (2) I have my absolute agreement on this quote. Physical therapy did not make such a positive impact on my body as yoga did. “According to the

Arthritis Foundation, recent scientific studies show that when people with various types of arthritis regularly practice yoga it can help reduce joint pain, improve joint flexibility and function, and lower stress and tension. ” (3) Just in a month, my flexibility had improved and I noticed better posture with fewer aches and pain. My knee felt much easier and healthier.

Another incredible impact yoga has brought to my life is the relaxation of my body which helped me with anxiety. After practicing Pranayama in the class I started using it more often at home. “Pranayama is the formal practice of controlling the breath. The deep breathing techniques practiced in yoga are known for relaxing skeletal muscles, reducing anxious thoughts ” (3) I found it very helpful during stressful periods in my life. It really helps to calm my body and soul.

I truly believe that yoga is the key to my painless life. Of course, it requires a lot of focus and regular practice, but I am very happy to be on this journey. Many researchers have proven the benefits and results of yoga so there’s no hesitation left for me. So far, I practice different asanas and pranayamas at home which helps me to release tension and initiate my body’s relaxation response, which counteracts the negative effects on my body’s stress response.

Work Cited:

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- 3) Smalls, L., Smalls, L., Lisa, Smalls, L., & Lisa. (2018, November 5). How Yoga Helps with Pain Management. Retrieved from <https://www.bookyogaretreats.com/news/yoga-helps-pain-management>

