



From Chaos To Calm: Ancient Indian Practices For Work Life Balance

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ABSTRACT

Chaos to calm is a process of change and restore from confusion to serenity. People may find inner peace and a harmonious living by making conscious efforts, practising mindfulness, and taking care of self. Each one of us should spend some time with oneself and practice to do meditation and introspection. This paper explores the practical implementation of our ancient Indian practices in the context of work-life balance. It offers guidance on how to manage stress by doing pranayama breathing exercises, integrate mindfulness practises into the workplace, and create a regular meditation practice for maintaining the inner peace. This study also highlights the significance of self-care practices that is important part of a balanced lifestyle, such as eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and spending time with nature. The paper concludes with a call to action, encouraging individuals to adopt these tried-and-tested techniques and set up a life-changing path that will lead to a more contented and balanced life.

Keywords: Peace, ancient Indian practices, work-life balance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Bhartiya approach is persistent and aims to promote everyone's well-being. It is necessary that we recover the deep understanding of our heritage and teach the rest of the world the "Indian way" of doing things. This requires training to the generations of scholars who will demonstrate and exemplify to the world, a way of life which is so unique and peculiar to our great civilization. The main objective of drawing from our past and integrating the Indian Knowledge Systems is to ensure that our ancient systems of knowledge (Bhāratīya Drishti) is used to solve the current and emerging challenges of India and the world. By using our broad knowledge base would make it simpler to encourage and facilitate additional research to solve today's issues.

People can widen their intellectual horizons, become more confident, and have a deeper understanding of their cultural ethos by being exposed to both old and modern ideas.

However, we can't ignore the facts associated with Yoga and Ayurveda and all the positive effects they have when applied to our lives. Indeed, they really transmit high importance, concern and social well-being. That recognition is widely acknowledged and highly esteemed, as we are all aware of. We need to recognise the significance of ancient Indian practices in our lives because we live busy lives and don't have time for ourselves. Balance is the key to a fulfilling and satisfying life. It refers to a state of equal distribution of attention and importance to all aspects of life, including personal, professional and spiritual growth.

In today's race of career demands, personal responsibilities, and increasing use of technology, maintaining a healthy work-life balance has grown more and more difficult to achieve. People's personal wellbeing is often neglected in the constant search of productivity, which leaves them feeling exhausted, anxious, and isolated from their own selves. Ancient Indian practices, which provide a comprehensive approach to well-being and can promote balance and peace in our lives, offer a sign of hope amidst this chaos. India's rich culture has fostered practices that support physical, mental and spiritual harmony for generations. These ancient wisdom-based practices provide a new outlook on striking a balance between the demands of contemporary living. The meditative technique of meditation and the attentive discipline of yoga enable people to effectively manage stress, develop a sense to get inner serenity. This study explores how work-life balance might be improved in today's demanding world through studying the transforming power of ancient Indian practices. This will examine the ideas and methods of Ayurveda, yoga, and meditation and see how they affect mental clarity, emotional stability, and physical health.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1Q: - How can an individual change his/her lifestyle and maintain the work life balance by practicing ancient Indian techniques?

2Q: - What are the challenges and opportunities for integrating ancient Indian practices into modern work environments and lifestyles?

3Q: - What are the practical strategies for individuals and organizations to incorporate ancient Indian practices into their daily routines?

4Q: - What are the advantages of doing yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda that we can fit into our hectic schedule to achieve work-life balance?

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This integrated review of literature on ancient Indian practices and work life balance is based on the secondary sources of data. For which various online journals, articles, reports, books and scholarly research papers from various sites were reviewed related to this topic.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Pandey, Rastogi and Rawat (2013) analysed “Indian traditional ayurvedic system of medicine and nutritional supplementation”. They said that affluence of working population with changing lifestyles and reducing affordability of sick care, in terms of time and money involved, are some of the forces that are presently driving people towards thinking about their wellness. Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medicine, remains the most ancient yet living traditions.

Hagen and Nayar (2014) studied “Yoga for children and young people’s mental health and well-being: research review and reflections on the mental health potentials of yoga” and recommended that yoga could provide tools for children and young people to remain centred or regain focus, so they may cope with the stress and challenges they experience in their everyday lives. Research projects need to be multi-disciplinary and preferably consist of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to develop this field of yoga research.

Mittal and Singh (2015) proposed “Back to Basic Technique: Balancing Body, Mind and Spirit to achieve Work Life Balance” and found that by feeding our mind, body, and spirit wisely, we can create an amazing, balanced life in return. Man thus in the quest to find himself, would naturally create an amazingly balanced life for himself.

Mohanty and Jena (2016) studied “Work-life balance challenges for Indian employees: Socio-cultural implications and strategies” and suggested that the present-day organizations are required to create a flexible environment which would help employees to manage their work and family together.

Bansal and Agarwal (2017) studied “The gap between availability & expectations of work-life practices” and said that designing customized work life balance practices according to the requirement of individual employees would be beneficial. One fits all policy may not work in the case of work-life problems.

Vishwakarma and Singh (2018) conducted a study on “Role of Meditation and Yoga in Coping with Stress in Corporate Sector” and found that employees also agree that yoga must be a part of every corporate sector to overcome stress. It increased their satisfaction and quality of life, almost all employees believe on this.

Dagar and Pandey (2020) studied “Well-being at Workplace: A Perspective from Traditions of Yoga and Ayurveda” by three main objectives (i) To elucidate the contemporary view of health, well-being, and flourishing while highlighting the prominence of workplace well-being. (ii) To explain the common philosophy and the fundamental concepts of gunas, doshas and their vital essences, and the Pancha kosha that lie at the core of the two traditions to present an integrated view of well-being. (iii) To discuss the implications of the philosophy, view of well-being, and the underlying practices of Yoga and Ayurveda with respect to workplace and the domain of management.

Indradevi (2020) examined “Workplace spirituality: Successful mantra for modern organization” and concluded that organizations should actively seek the idea and meaning of workplace spirituality by facilitating open discussion or open seminar and requiring the active participation of all members of the

organization. To incorporate the spiritual environment in the workplace will broaden the boundaries of independence that exist within the organization, despite the highly personalized nature of spirituality.

Sharma, Anand and Kumar (2020) studied “The Role of Yoga in Working from Home during the COVID-19 Global Lockdown” and suggested that Yoga can provide the necessary tool for risk reduction, amelioration of stress and anxiety and strengthening of the immune function. The online platforms provide a good media for Yoga training at workplaces and homes.

Marques and Berry (2021) conducted a study on “Enhancing work-life balance using a resilience framework” They found that Resolution of work-life issues requires cooperative and coordinated action and effort by both individual employees and employers. Resolution of work-life balance issues create a less stressed and more satisfied individual employee, who then creates and adds value for employers.

Hooda and Singh (2022) analysed “Occupational Stress in Relation to Work-life Balance and Mindfulness: A Study of Banking Sector” and recommended implications for possible programs and policy developments seeking to enhance mindfulness at work and reduce occupational stress at workplace.

Pawar and Deshmukh (2022) conducted a study on “Ayurveda Perspective for the Management of Women’s Lifestyle Disorder”. They suggested that guidelines, awareness and education of all women, beginning from school age to adolescent and till old age is very important. Removing the myths, taboos and stating the facts, helping in improvement of her overall physical, mental and social health, financial status will be great beneficial for her in future. All women should follow the regimen and directions described in Ayurveda for their wellness throughout the life.

Garg and Saini (2023) studied “Workplace spirituality to cultivate innovative work behaviour: the moderating role of perceived working conditions” This study explores the role of workplace spirituality (WPS) in advancing employees' innovative work behaviour (IWB) and found that workplace spirituality (WPS) positively impacts the employee's innovative work behaviour (IWB).

Ratna and Dwarapudi (2023) studied the “Impact of Yoga Practice on Work-life balance of Women Managers - a study in selective organisations” on 30 women managers selected from various organisation under purposive sampling method. Hence, the results from the study revealed that practical difficulties in Yoga practice with reference to women mangers required improvement in practical experiences.

Singe, Cairns and Eason (2023) studied “Perceptions of Self-Care and Work–Life Balance Among Secondary School Athletic Trainers.” They said that self-care practices are designed to create “me time” and are geared toward physical and social self-care activities. In addition, their results address the interchangeable thoughts of self-care practices, stress relief, and work–life balance.

5. ANCIENT INDIAN PRACTICES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance is a holistic concept which embraces food, exercise, thoughts and practice (Aahar, Vihar, Vichar and Aachar). The management of time and stress is another key issue. Ancient Indian practices have long emphasized for achieving a harmonious balance between work and personal life. These practices, rooted in holistic philosophies like Ayurveda and Yoga. We have definitely heard or read that traveller from all over the world, with varying climates and civilizations, have come to India in ancient times. India was a wonderful place to them! Indian culture, wealth, philosophies, religions, art, architecture, and educational practices were well-known around the world. The knowledge, customs, and practises that shaped and uplifted humanity were thought to have originated from the old educational system. The main practices are: -

➤ Meditation and mindfulness



Through meditation (Dhyana), we can instantly break out from this monkey mind-cycle. We can feel the space between our ideas and escape this identification by focusing our attention (Dharana) while we observe all the thoughts that come and go. This could be a step towards Samadhi, the ultimate state of limitless consciousness.

Meditation and other mindfulness exercises foster present-moment awareness, which lowers stress and improves attention. By focusing on the mind, meditation helps to lessen the incessant stream of ideas that can cause overload and burnout. People can approach their work more clearly and productively by practising mindfulness, and they can set out time for personal fulfilment after work.

➤ Physical activity and yoga

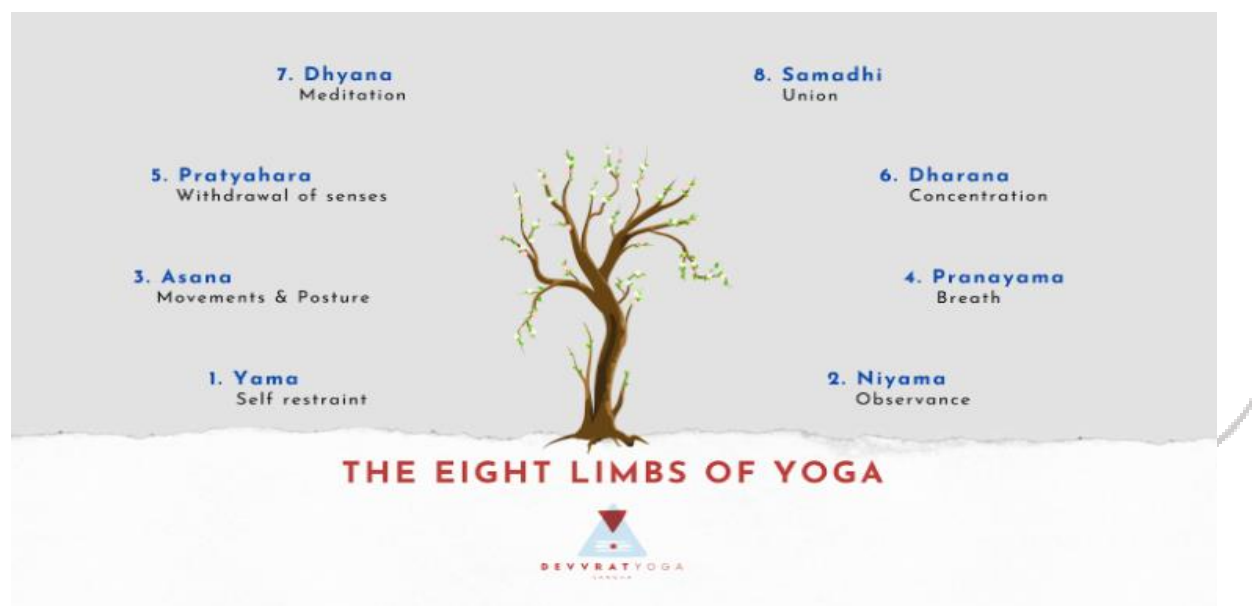
According to Patanjali, yoga is defined as 'Chitta vritti nirodha,' a state of mind free from the states of worry, trouble, anger, or fear. The mind is still. A mind that makes you focus on the present. In Sanskrit the words: -

- Yogas — To yoke, to join, to unite Chitta — Mind, consciousness.
- Vritti — Modifications, fluctuations Nirodha — Controlling, quieting of

Yoga is the ability to direct the mind exclusively toward an object and sustain that direction without any distractions. —T. K. V. Desikachar.

In his interpretation on the Yoga Sutras, B.K.S. Iyengar states, "Yoga is both the means and the end." The goal of practising yoga is to achieve a unitive condition, which is described by Iyengar as "Integration from the outermost layer to the innermost self." We do not ignore memories, feelings, or thoughts; rather, we integrate. Instead, through asana, pranayama, meditation, and other yogic practices, we teach the mind to watch, discern, and detach from the chaos that they generate.

According to Sri Aurobindo The main foundations of the integral yoga are Calm, Peace, Equanimity. These, especially equanimity must be practiced in the everyday events of one's life. For this one can use the daily events and circumstances of one's life as an opportunity. One learns to step back from the whirl of circumstances and our habitual reactions motivated by desires, preferences and the ego-self. One can even ask for these things from the Divine and aspire for them. It takes long but once this foundation is laid then the rest becomes easy.



Regular exercise, especially yoga, is essential to traditional Indian ways of life. Yoga poses, or asanas, improve mental clarity and balance of emotions in addition to strengthening, stretching, and flexibility in the body. Yoga breathing exercises known as pranayama balance the neurological system, reduce tensions and anxiety and fostering a feeling of peace and wellbeing.

➤ Ayurveda and Nutritional Method



The ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda places a strong emphasis on the relationship between general health and nutrition. Ayurvedic principles help people make healthy food choices that support mental and physical well-being, increasing energies and improving general health. A well-balanced diet customised to each person's own constitution can have a big impact on productivity at work and general well-being. Irregular food habits and lack of physical exercise is main cause for many diseases.

Ayurveda encourages certain lifestyle interventions and natural therapies to regain a balance between the body, mind, spirit, and the environment. Goals of treatment aid the person by eliminating impurities, reducing symptoms, increasing resistance to disease, reducing worry, and increasing harmony in life. Herbs and other plants, including oils and common spices, are used extensively in Ayurvedic treatment. Each plant or herb in ayurveda has a specific quality and can be used to treat multitude of ailments and diseases. As a rich source of nutrients, anti-bacterial and antioxidant properties, ayurvedic herbs are non-toxic in nature and so the products or remedies made using them are often recommended for their high therapeutic value.

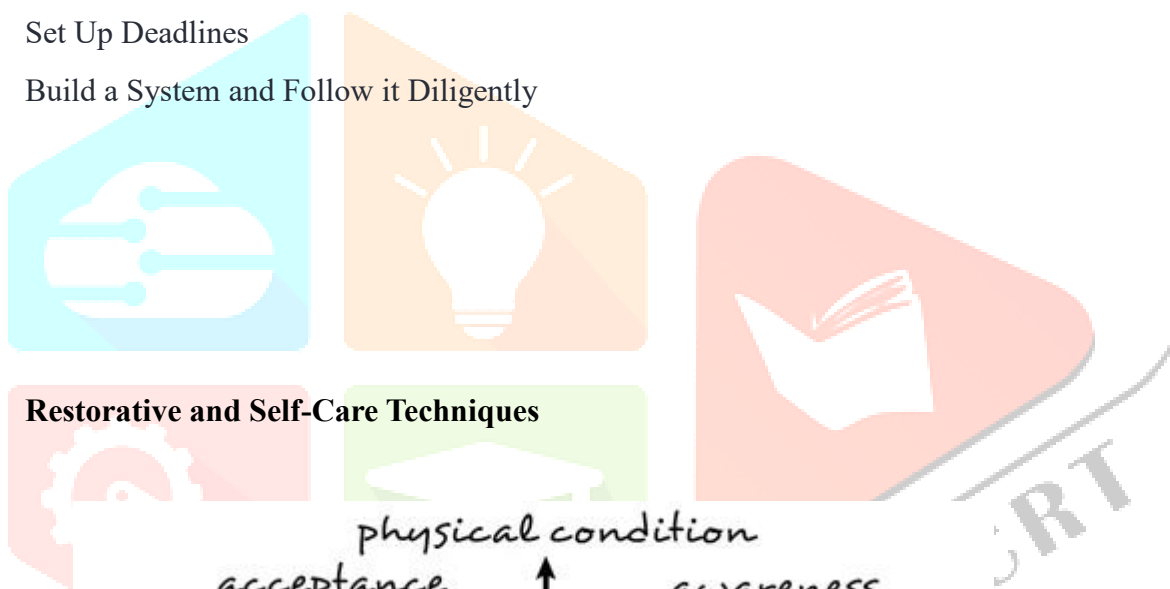
➤ Prioritisation and Time Management



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Efficient time management and prioritisation are key components of traditional Indian practices. People can maintain better control over their time by using strategies including making clear intentions, dividing work into manageable portions, and avoiding distractions. This reduces stress and enables people to lead more balanced lives that balance work and personal obligations. The core time management skills: -

- Make a Plan
- Start Early
- Set SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and secured within a time frame.)
- Create a Priority List rather than a To-Do List
- Breakdown Every Task into Small Chunks
- Practice Decision Making
- Deal with Stress Wisely
- Avoid Multitasking
- Set Up Deadlines
- Build a System and Follow it Diligently



➤ Restorative and Self-Care Techniques



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Regular self-care habits are encouraged by ancient Indian practices to support both physical and mental well-being. Relaxation techniques like abhyanga and self-massage with Ayurvedic oils help people relax, and getting enough sleep is crucial for both physical and mental recovery. People can refuel their energy and approach work and life with renewed vitality by making self-care a priority. Self-care is the practice of taking an active role in one's own well-being and happiness, during periods of stress. It is a proactive approach

psychological wellness, focusing on prevention rather than reaction. Self-care for restoration comes in many forms and can be practiced alone or in community with others. These practices are centred in enhancing resilience, well-being, and liberation through internal practices.

➤ Promoting Emotional resilience



“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”

Nelson Mandela

The ability to gather ourselves after an unpleasant experience is known as emotional resilience. It is internal drive, or intrinsic motivation, which enables us to persevere through challenges in life. In a broad way, emotional resilience means bouncing back from a stressful situation and not letting it affect our internal motivation. It is not a “bend but don’t break” trait, rather resilience is accepting the fact that ‘I am broken’ and continuing to grow with the broken pieces together. We can take care of our emotional needs and ourselves when we have a work-life balance. We develop emotional resilience by investing time in things that make us happy and fulfilled, which makes it simpler to handle stress and failures. It does not eliminate stress or erase life’s difficulties, but allows us to tackle or accept problems, live through adversity and move on with life.

Work-life balance can be greatly improved by incorporating these traditional Indian practices into daily living. This promotes overall health and results in a more contented and productive life. Through the practice of mindfulness, developing proper routines, and placing self-care first, people can deal with the pressures of today's world with more resilience, clarity, and inner peace.

6. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATING ANCIENT INDIAN PRACTICES INTO MODERN WORK ENVIRONMENTS AND LIFESTYLES

CHALLENGES

Perceived Time Commitment: Due to the hectic nature of modern life, many may find it hard to set aside time for regular, focused practices like yoga or meditation.

Lack of Knowledge and Awareness: Many people are unaware of the advantages of traditional Indian practices or are not familiar with them. This ignorance may cause one to be hesitant and unwilling to try them.

Cost and Accessibility: Ayurvedic consultations, yoga courses, and meditation retreats can be costly and out of reach for a large number of individuals. This makes these out of range.

Workplace Culture: Certain workplaces may not allow for the integration of these practises. Establishing routines for well-being might be challenging if there are long work hours, short breaks, and a lack of support from administration or colleagues.

Cultural Misappropriation: Due to industrialization or a lack of cultural sensitivity, there is a risk that traditional Indian customs will be misappropriated or diminished.

Increased Interest in Wellness: People are becoming more and more interested in mindfulness and wellness practises, which makes them a willing audience to learn about ancient Indian techniques.

Technology & Innovation: Learn and practice traditional Indian skills in an accessible and practical way through wearable technology, mobile apps, and internet resources.

Scientific Evidence: Studies are showing that meditation and yoga are beneficial for both physical and mental well-being, which gives them validity and credibility in today's world.

Workplace Initiatives: As organisations realise the advantages of well-being programmes, they are introducing mindfulness and yoga techniques into their employee wellness programmes.

Modernization: An emerging movement tries to make traditional Indian customs easier to understand by focusing them to the requirements and tastes of contemporary people.

OPPORTUNITIES

7. STRATEGIES FOR INCORPORATING ANCIENT INDIAN PRACTICES IN DAILY LIFE

Incorporating ancient practices into your work-life balance can be a rewarding and enriching experience. With a little effort, we can find ways to reduce stress, improve our focus, and create a more harmonious existence.

Here are some tips for incorporating ancient practices into your work-life balance:

❖ Provide Education and Resources

Offer workshops, seminars, and online resources to educate individuals about the benefits and practical applications of ancient Indian practices.

❖ Focus on Short, Accessible Practices

Break down practices into shorter, more manageable sessions that can easily be integrated into daily routines.

❖ Daily Detox

Set aside a day each week for a digital detox. There shouldn't be any meetings, emails, or business calls today. Use it for reading, doing hobbies, or just reflecting. Your mental well-being can be greatly enhanced by this "pause."

❖ The Power of "No"

Learn the skill of saying "no" in the "yes culture" of corporate India. To make sure you have sufficient time for your family, yourself, and personal growth, you must set boundaries.

❖ Cultural Integration

Include Indian customs and traditions into your everyday life. It could be spending time on spiritual development, going for a little walk after dinner, or listening to classical music.

❖ Respect Work Hours

Being at home is not a guarantee of having one available all the time. Keep to your work schedule and be aware of the team's availability.

❖ Reach to true self

Self-discovery is a continuous process that calls for strength, dedication, and patience. As you begin to understand yourself better, you start to see what lies beneath the surface of things, and you become able to recognize when something isn't working right for you anymore. You will gradually uncover layers of habit and conditioning via consistent practise, leading to the essence of your true self.

❖ Be present

Try to be present in the moment, rather than dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. This can help you to appreciate the good things in your life and to reduce stress.

❖ **Be connected**

Connect with nature, with other people, and with your own inner self. This can help you to feel more grounded and supported.

❖ **Have patience**

Developing a regular routine takes time. Please don't give up if you miss a day or two. Simply restart your work where you left off. feel comfortable.

❖ **Be kind to yourself**

Don't expect yourself to be perfect. Everyone makes mistakes. Just focus on doing your best and be kind to yourself.

8. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Ayurveda, yoga, and meditation are examples of ancient Indian practises that provide a comprehensive strategy for achieving a work-life balance. These techniques promote inner calm, mindfulness, and overall wellbeing by addressing the underlying causes of stress, anxiety, and burnout. There is evidence that these practices are beneficial for boosting overall life happiness, improving efficiency and focus, and improving both physical and mental health. Research have shown lower levels of stress, better sleep, and improved cognitive performance.

CONCLUSION

For those looking to improve their overall well-being and maintain a work-life balance, ancient Indian practices provide a powerful tool. Through continual research and adaptation, as well as by adopting the opportunities and challenges that come with integrating these ancient practises into modern life, we can utilise the wisdom of these ancient traditions to make the world a more joyful and balanced place for everyone.

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