



Yoga And Mental Health

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Abstract: Yoga has been used for millennia as a tool for self-improvement, with the ultimate goal of uniting the individual consciousness with the universal whereas mental health is a state of wellbeing in every possible aspect of life. The focus of this paper is to present the yoga as an aid to improve mental health. Yoga has numerous influences on mental health such as improving focus, reducing stress and light up moods and many more and for there are different yoga for different mental health issues listed in this paper. Yoga practices have become immensely popular as an aid to improve health like shavaasana, adho mukha vakraasana, natarajasana are used to prevent anxiety and reduce stress. Yoga-based practices are being extensively used as therapeutic ingredients, alone or as adjuncts to other therapies in a variety of disorders, both physical and mental. There is now strong evidence to suggest that yoga-based interventions are beneficial in several lifestyle disorders. Recent research has also shown significant benefits of yoga in mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and psychosis. This paper discusses the place of yoga not just as an aid but also a tool to prevent mental health problems.

Index Terms - Yoga, mental health, mental disorder, therapeutic.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga

Yoga developed as a collection of physical and philosophical rituals in India, some thousand years ago. Throughout the second century BC it was formalized in the context of the Yoga Sutras, credited to scholar Patanjali. The sense of 'yoga' is 'assembly' or 'yoke' or 'joining.' Yoga was initially a way of linking a normal, flawed human being to the universal concept, or Deity. This succeeds at uniting mind, body and spirit. The mind may be conditioned by the practice of yoga to calm by deep relaxation and become centered whilst keeping the air. This exercise contributes to mind control. Doing yoga will also enhance mental wellbeing, not just the physical part, but even immersing yourself in the emotional element of it. Yogis (those who practice yoga) claim that yoga will the build-up of repressed feelings in the mind, and ultimately eliminate it. The cycle is slow but the results will continue while yoga is already done. "Yoga is a very powerful technique for reducing tension and anxiety.

Yoga is a method of fitness promotion, illness prevention and stress recovery, as well as other mental and physical health imbalances. Like other treatments, yoga still is not a complete cure for behavioral wellbeing and physical fitness issues. Yoga has tremendous promise in tandem with other strategies to drive citizens towards greater mental well-being.

Yoga is more than just a workout—it's actually a combination of four components: postures, breathing practices, deep relaxation, and meditation that can transform your health on many different levels.

The World Health Organization estimates that by 2020, following ischemic heart disease, depression would be the second greatest contributor to the global illness burden. Anxiety is now treated at a greater pace than it has been in the past. Given these test changes, care regimens usually contain prescription treatments that are not appropriate for more infectious control or emotional well-being. Addressing behavioral wellbeing and physical fitness issues successfully requires a holistic strategy that explores the source of the problems.

Yoga is now using in all the holistic based treatment approach and the studies proves it, now a days it's not only uses for treatment but also for self-growth.

Mental Health

Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioral, and emotional well-being. It is all about how people think, feel, and behave. People sometimes use the term “mental health” to mean the absence of a mental disorder. Mental health can affect daily living, relationships, and physical health. However, this link also works in the other direction. Factors in people's lives, interpersonal connections, and physical factors can all contribute to mental health disruptions. Looking after mental health can preserve a person's ability to enjoy life. Doing this involves reaching a balance between life activities, responsibilities, and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

According to WHO mental health is a state of wellbeing in which an individual realizes his / her own abilities can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community.

The WHO stress that mental health is “more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.” Peak mental health is about not only avoiding active conditions but also looking after ongoing wellness and happiness. They also emphasize that preserving and restoring mental health is crucial on an individual basis, as well as throughout different communities and societies the world over.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

Mental health problems are common but help is available. People with mental health problems can get better and many recover completely.

Psychological benefit of yoga

❖ Calms the Mind

One of the main reasons doctors recommend yoga is because the poses incorporate intricate postures and breathing exercises which are known to calm your body and mind. Doing these poses will help prevent **anxiety attacks** or panic attacks which is are common mental health problems.

❖ Improves Mood

Physical exercises release healthy brain chemicals like *endorphins* and *dopamine*. This helps balance your mood and combat common mental health issues like **depression**. Therapists recommend yoga for mental peace and concentration and to improve your mood. This is an effective way to help manage bipolar disorder which pushes your mood to extremes.

❖ Helps Focus

Those who have disorders like ADHD are often asked to try yoga because it helps to relax and centre the body while helping the mind focus. **ADHD** is a disorder that directly affects focus and attention retention, doing poses that incorporate breathing techniques and promote focus can help.

❖ **Helps Build Confidence**

Yoga can help those suffering from self-esteem issues, a loss in confidence or self-esteem is often considered a cause for depression and anxiety. Performing yoga regularly helps centre your body and develop it slowly. It improves your confidence. The breathing in yoga also helps rid your mind of self-doubt.

❖ **Improves Patience**

A common side-effect of disorders like anxiety, depression and bipolar is a lack of patience. This leads to uncontrolled angry outbursts. Yoga incorporates numerous breathing activities known as **pranayama** which help clear body and mind.

Effective Yoga Poses to Improve Mental Health

It is crucial to do the poses that are focused around the mental health issues, here are 10 yoga asanas for mental health. These asanas impact to induce global functioning of an individual.

- **Anjaneyasana:** This pose is also known as “the high lunge”. Doing the crescent variation of this exercise is known to help improve your blood flow, calm your mind.
- **Garudasana:** This pose is known commonly as the eagle pose. This pose requires you to breathe while holding your body in balance. It helps prevent anxiety attacks while improving focus.
- **Natarajasana:** Commonly referred to as “the dancer’s pose”, this *asana* is great for mood balancing. It can be beneficial for those who are fighting depression and anxiety.
- **Virabhadrasana:** Commonly referred to as “the warrior poses”, there are numerous variations to this exercise, all of which require focus and steady breathing. We are covering the basic warrior pose.
- **Adho Mukha Vakrasana:** This is not a pose for beginners, this *asana* is a basic handstand; It calms the mind and relieves headache, fatigue and reduce the symptoms of insomnia.
- **Vajrasana:** This is a meditative pose that is known to improve focus, calmness and digestion.
- **Padmasana:** Another basic yoga pose, possibly the hardest one. This helps your digestion, spinal strength and improves calmness of the mind and also your mood. It helps keep your anxiety and depression at bay.
- **Vrikshasana:** Commonly known as “the tree pose”, this *asana* is very basic and helps improve your sense of self and centres your body and mind.
- **Savasana:** Known as “the dead body pose”, this *asana* is similar to lying down to take a nap. It is extremely easy to do. It calms central nervous system. Helps lower blood pressure. Promotes spiritual awakening and awareness of higher consciousness.
- **Chakrasana:** Known as the circle pose, this is a bit of a tricky *asana* but it helps your calmness and focus. This pose triggers parasympathetic nervous system, reduces stress and soothes the nerves.

EFFECT OF YOGA ON MENTAL HEALTH

Regulates Adrenal Gland

Yoga decreases volumes in the cortisol. If it doesn't seem like anything, think about this. Usually, in reaction to an immediate situation, the adrenal glands secrete the cortisol, briefly improving immune function. If even after the crisis the cortisol rates stay high, they can weaken the immune system. Temporary increases in long-term memory cortisol aid, however consistently elevated rates weaken performance, and can contribute to irreversible brain changes. In fact, toxic cortisol substances have been related to severe depression, osteoporosis (it absorbs calcium and other nutrients from bones and interferes with fresh bone laying), elevated blood pressure, and insulin resistance. High cortisol rates in rats contribute to what researchers term "food seeking activity" (the sort that causes you to eat when you're irritated, frustrated, or stressed out). The body absorbs and distributes such excess calories as fat in the belly, leading to weight gain and risk of diabetes and heart attack.

Increases self-esteem

Most of them have a consistently weak self-esteem. When you treat such negative-taking medications, overeat, work too long, sleep around-you might be emotionally, psychologically, and morally paying the price for the reduced health. When you adopt a constructive stance and pursue meditation, you'll know whether you're worthy or, as yogic theory says, you're a reflection of the Almighty, first in fleeting glimpses then then in more prolonged experiences. If you consistently train with an aim of self-examination and improvement-not only as a replacement for an aerobics class you will reach a new part of yourself. You will feel feelings of appreciation, remorse, and redemption, as well as a feeling of being part of something greater. Although better health is not the goal of spirituality, it is often a by-product, as numerous clinical studies have recorded.

Create peace of mind

According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, meditation quenches the emotional disturbances. To put it another way, it speeds down the inner cycles of disappointment, guilt, rage, anxiety and attraction that can trigger tension. And because depression causes too many health issues — from migraines and anxiety to lupus, MS, eczema, elevated blood pressure, and heart attacks — if you learn to relax your mind, you are likely to live longer and safer.

Build up immune system

Asana and pranayama are known to improve immune function but meditation has the greatest research evidence in this field to date. This tends to have a positive impact on the immune system's functioning, improving it when required (for example, increasing antibody rates in reaction to a vaccine) and reducing it when required (for example, minimizing an overly violent immune function in an autoimmune disorder such as psoriasis).

Releases tension in limbs

Keeping the handset or a steering wheel with a death grip or scrunching your nose as you glance at a computer screen, do you ever see yourself? Such involuntary patterns in the hands, arms, legs, back, and face can contribute to constant discomfort, muscle weakness, and soreness, which can exacerbate stress and deteriorate the mood. You tend to note that you retain stress as you practice yoga: it could be in your mouth, your hair, or your face and neck muscles.

Maintains nervous system

Some experienced yogis can exercise exceptional influence over their bodies, many of which are controlled by the nervous system. Scientists have studied yogis who could trigger irregular heart rhythms, produce unique brain-wave patterns and increase the temperature of their hands by 15 degrees Fahrenheit using a meditation technique. If you can use yoga to do that, you may learn to increase the blood flow to the pelvis if you want to get pregnant or relax when you have difficulty sleeping.

Yoga decreases involuntary reactive behavior by improving sensitivity and improves pro-activity in challenging circumstances that impel frustration or anxiety. If lifestyle changes are paired with yoga practice, anxiety and depression can be minimized in regular teenagers in people with gastrointestinal illness and loneliness and poor body image. Because of its beneficial role in improving endurance and consciousness of the

mind-body, it will help people change their activities according to environmental need and personal feelings. Doing group yoga will improve teamwork and collectivism among participants of the party. This may be seen as a possible solution to pharmacological treatment for patients with depression and anxiety by rising stress responses like blood pressure, stress hormone cortisol levels.

Anxiety, tension and depression sometimes pervade our life. They sometimes view them as small issues, but they may escalate to serious psychiatric conditions if they stay untreated and unmanaged. Research shows that yoga is unique in its positive ability to relieve fear, tension and depression. In view of the positive impact on the feel-good neurotransmitters, alpha-wave function, vagal sound, serum prolactin yet declining oxidative stress, lipid level, serum cortisol, decreased control of the hypothalamic pituitary-adrenal axis and alkalinity, yoga could have enormous utility for soothing the anxiety, distress, depression, feelings of shame, suicidal ideation and a sense of peace, balance; Training of postures may increase the degree of distress-tolerance in tense circumstances and decrease emotional eating habits. None of the leisure practices, like smiling, socializing, playing fun games or shopping, will relax our emotional condition to a larger degree than meditation, as both of these experiences involve a degree of nervous system relaxation. Also walking has not been documented to cause greater effects than yoga on our mental function and degree of anxiety.

Summary

With sufficient evidence of causal association between stress and several chronic diseases (i.e., cardiac disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, etc.), yoga can be effective as a stress management method not just to reduce emotional dissatisfaction, but also to reduce the burden of stressed diseases generated. Irritations that are part of daily life may be minimized by Yoga practice. This can reduce exhaustion and anxiety in patients suffering from life-threatening diseases as well.

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A growing **number of studies** from the 1970s through to today, suggest that yoga can have a positive outcome for people managing symptoms of depression, anxiety or stress, among other benefits. In fact, Harvard Medical School believes there is growing evidence that yoga practice is a relatively low risk, high-benefit approach to improving overall health.

Marked the month of June, the UN International Day of Yoga on June 21 aims to raise awareness of the many benefits, including physical and psychological, of practicing yoga.

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