



YOGA: A BASIC UNDERSTANDING

G. Eswara Rao
Research Scholar
Dept. of Philosophy
Andhra University, Visakhapatnam

Introduction:

Yoga is a healthy way of life, originated in India. Now, it is believed to be a form of science accepted all over the world. The western culture is also accepting it as a healthy form of scientific exercise, Although the origin of yoga is obscure, it has a long tradition. Yoga for a common person contains the practices of yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, and meditation, which are helpful to keep oneself physically fit, mentally alert and emotionally balanced. This ultimately prepares ground for the spiritual development of an individual.

The word 'Yoga' is derived from Sanskrit root 'yuj' which means 'join' or 'unite'. This may be taken as the union of body, mind and soul. As an end, yoga signifies 'integration of personality' at the highest level. As means, yoga includes various practices and techniques which are employed to achieve the development of such integration. These practices and techniques are means in the yogic literature and are also referred collectively as 'Yoga'.

Defination :

According to Bhagavad Gītā "an equal vision on the negative and positive results of an action is called yoga".

*yoga-sthah kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga uchyate*

Bhagavad Gītā – II-48

There are several references of yoga in the Bhagavad Gītā "The ability to keep the flattering mind in the state of Samadhi results in yoga".

Yogabhashya defines yoga as "YOGAH SAMADH" that means when mind is dissolved, that state itself is Samadhi. As per Pathanjali "YOGAHA CHITTA VRUTTI NIRODHANA" "Yoga is the restraint of mental modifications".



The philosophy of yoga is the combination of karma and jnana. Jnana leads to karma, and karma leads to jnana. Action and knowledge both coincide to form life of the human. Aurobindo rightly declared 'ALL LIFE IS YOGA'.

The aim of yoga is to encourage a positive and healthy lifestyle for physical, mental and emotional health. Yoga helps in the development of strength, stamina, endurance and high energy at physical level. It also empowers oneself with increased concentration, calm, peace and contentment at mental level leading to inner and outer harmony. This achievement provides togetherness of individual and universal consciousness. Experience with the beginning stages of the physical personality gradually penetrates into the deeper levels and the prime purpose is to correct the imbalances that erupt out of erratic living life styles. Each system of Yoga we practice would fall within the gamut of one or more of these categories. Every individual is a unique combination of these four factors. "All the ancient commentaries on Yoga have stressed that it is essential to work under the direction of a Guru." The reason being that only a Guru can mix the appropriate combination of the four fundamental paths, as is necessary for each seeker.

Traditional schools of Yoga :

Yoga does not adhere to any particular religion, belief system or community; it has always been approached as a technology for inner wellbeing. Anyone who practices yoga with involvement can reap its benefits, irrespective of one's faith, ethnicity or culture. Traditional Schools of Yoga : These different Philosophies, Traditions, lineages and guru-shishya paramparas of Yoga lead to the emergence of different Traditional Schools of Yoga e.g. Jnana-yoga, Bhakti-yoga, Karma-yoga, Dhyana-yoga, Kundalini-yoga, Hatha-yoga, Mantra-yoga, Laya-yoga, Raja-yoga, Jain-yoga, Bouddha-yoga etc. Each school has its own principles and practices leading to ultimate aim and objectives of Yoga.

Swatma Rama, who had compiled the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, had made explicit the various techniques such as Asana - posture, Prānāyama - breathing exercise, and Shat karma - six purification methods. He has completely eliminated the yama - moral code and niyama - self-restrictions which are the rudiments in Raja Yoga of Patanjali as well as the Buddhist and Jain Yoga systems. According to him, the first things are that the aspirant should purify the stomach, intestines, and nervous system and the other parts of the body. Therefore, Shatkarma - six purification includes Neti - Nasal cleaning, dhouti - cleaning the internal



parts with salt warm water and clothes, basti - yogic anama, Kapalabhati-frontal brain cleaning techniques, trataka - concentrate gazing and Nauli - abdominal massage.

Health :

Good health is the right of every human being. But this right depends on individual, social and environmental factors. Along with environmental or social factors to a large extent, we can develop a better immune system and a better perception of oneself so that other conditions do not affect us adversely and we can achieve good health. Health is a positive concept. Positive health does not mean merely freedom from disease, but it also include a jubilant and energetic feeling of well-being with an amount of general resistance and capacity to easily cultivate immunity against specific offending agents.

Yoga is one of the most powerful drugless system of treatment. It is having its own concept of wellness which has been scientifically understood and presented by many. Yoga can be adopted as lifestyle for promoting our physical and mental health. Yoga, if introduced at the school level, would help to inculcate healthy habits and lifestyle to achieve good health.

Yoga Education:

Traditionally, Yoga Education was imparted by knowledgeable, experienced, Rishis in Ashramas and wise persons in the families. Yoga Education, on the other hand, aims at taking care of the individual, the 'Being'. It is presumed that a good, balanced, integrated, truthful, clean, transparent person will be more useful to oneself, family, society, nation, nature and humanity at large. Yoga education is 'Being oriented'. Details of working with 'being oriented' aspect have been outlined in various living traditions and texts and the method contributing to this important field is known as 'Yoga'.

Different social customs and rituals in India, the land of Yoga, reflect a love for ecological balance, tolerance towards other systems of thought and a compassionate outlook towards all creations. Yoga Sadhana of all aspects are considered solution for a meaningful life and living. Its orientation to a comprehensive health, both individual and social, makes it a worthy practice for the people of all religions, races and nationalities. Now-a-days, millions and millions of people across the globe have benefitted by the practice of Yoga which has been preserved and promoted by the great eminent Yoga Masters from ancient time to this date. The practice of Yoga is blossoming, and growing more vibrant every day.



Present days, Yoga Education is being imparted by many eminent Yoga Institutions, Yoga Colleges, Yoga Universities, Yoga Departments in the Universities, Naturopathy colleges and Private trusts & societies. Many Yoga Clinics, Yoga Therapy and Training Centres, Preventive Health Care Units of Yoga, Yoga Research Centres etc. have been established in Hospitals, Dispensaries, Medical Institutions and Therapeutic setups.

Conclusion:

In today's busy lifestyle with increased number of responsibilities, taking care of own health is getting difficult day by day. Which is causing decrease in the quality of health.

So, Practicing yoga in capsule form, in between the busy schedule during tea breaks or Lunch break for 2 minutes can play important role in maintaining good physical and mental health.

In conclusion, it is evident that the holistic approach of yoga targets total integrated management of an individual at all levels of being. It is therefore, the best way to achieve optimal wellbeing at a multi-dimensional level. In order to achieve the perfect harmonious state of the mind and body, yoga must not only be used as a therapy, rather it must be adopted as a way of life having Multi aspects.

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