

Systematic Analysis and Interpretation of Practice of Yoga for Health in Present Era

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Abstract: *Present health status of India is a major emerging challenge for health systems. It's need of an hour to analyse, interpret and implement methods of ancient systems for increasing the better quality of life in the community. Yoga plays a role in managing the life style related conditions by cost effectiveness, comprehensive and integrated approach. One has to understand the steps or basics to reach the desired outcome systematically. Yoga is not merely an exercise to physical body level, but also linked to emotional, social and spiritual level development, an entire personal development of a person towards positive health and perfection. Understanding different streams of yoga, which ultimately aim for the same goal. There is a need to understand the step for channelizing the willpower in a proper way. Yama and Niyama forming the first two steps in ashtanga yoga which elaborate on the importance of the Do's and Don't s to practices. This report is elaborating the importance of yama and niyama in Present Era in relation to lifestyle management and overall personality development.*

1. Introduction

For thousands of years varied extraordinary phenomenon have been investigated, studied, and generalised, the whole ground of the religious faculty of man has been analysed and the practical result is the science of *Raja Yoga*.

It declares to mankind that each being is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge and power that lies behind. It is easy to observe facts in the external world, and many thousand instruments have been invented to observe every point of nature, but in the internal world we find no instrument to help us. Yet we know we must observe in order to have a real science. Without a proper analysis, any science will be hopeless, mere theorising, and that is why all the psychologists have been quarrelling among themselves since the beginning of time, except those few who found out the means of observation.

Raja Yoga proposes the observation of internal states and the instrument is the mind itself. The power of attention, when properly guided and directed towards the internal world, will analyse the mind and illumine facts for us.

The power of mind are like rays of light being dissipated when they are concentrated they illumine everything. There is only one method by which to attain knowledge, that which is called concentration.

It is easier to concentrate the mind on external things the mind naturally goes outwards, but inward journey difficult.

The goal of *Raja Yoga* is how to concentrate the mind, then how to discover facts in our own mind, then how to generalise those facts and form our own conclusions from

them. *Raja Yoga* requires no faith or belief, believe nothing until you find it yourself. It takes a long time and constant practice. A part of this practice is physical but the main part of it is mental. As we go along we shall find how intimately the mind is connected with the body.

If we believe that the mind is simply a finer part of the body and that the mind acts upon the body, in the same way the body must act upon the mind. If the body is sick, the mind becomes sick also. If the body is healthy, the mind remains healthy and strong. When one is angry, the mind becomes disturbed, at the same time when the mind is disturbed, the body also becomes disturbed. With the majority of mankind the mind is entirely under the control of the body, the mind is very little developed.

We have very little command of our minds. Therefore to bring that command about, to get that control over body and mind, we must take certain physical helps, and when the body is sufficiently controlled, we can attempt the manipulation of the mind. By manipulation of the mind, we shall be able to bring it under our control, make it work as we like, and compel it to concentrate its powers as we desire.

Certain regulations as to food are necessary, we must use that food which brings the purest mind. All the forces that are working in this body have been produced out of food. If you begin to fast, first your body will get weak, the physical force will suffer ;then, after a few days the mental force will suffer also. First memory will fail. Then comes a point when you are not able to think much less to pursue any course of reasoning. We have therefore to take care what sort of food we eat at the beginning and when we have got strength

enough, when our practice is well advanced, we need not be so careful in this respect.

While the plant is growing it must be hedged around, lest it be injured, but when it becomes a tree, the hedges are taken away, it is strong enough to withstand all assaults.

2. Discussion and Method

Astanga Yoga / Raja Yoga is divided into eight steps.

Yama - Social Discipline / Restraints

Ahimsa – Non-violence / Non killing: Practice of Non-Violence by either speech, thought or actions

Satya – Truthfulness: A perfectly Truthful person is he who expresses in his speech exactly what he thinks in his mind and in the end acts according to it.

Asteya – Non-stealing: Abstaining from taking things that are not yours. It does not refer only to material objects but also time, thoughts, energy, emotions and ideas.

Brahmacharya – Celibacy/ continence: Doing anything in excess in our lives - Food, Sex, Work - typically leads to imbalance, leaving us with low energy and high frustration. Moderation can help us, when the mind is freed from domination by sensual pleasures it is slowly replaced by inner joy, turns the mind inward, balances the senses, leads to freedom from dependencies and cravings. Helping us to walk slowly towards god's consciousness and inner mind.

Aparigraha – Non - covetousness / Not-receiving of any gifts: We should take only what we need, keep only what serves us in the moment and not to stack up unnecessary things and let go at the right time.

Niyama - Self discipline /Personnel discipline

Sauca – Cleanliness/Purity: The principle is applied to body, mind, speech and soul. Sage Manu words: Water purifies body, Truthfulness the mind, True Knowledge the Intellect and Soul by knowledge and poise(gracefulness/equilibrium)

Santosha – Contentment: Not desiring more than one's earned by his honest labour. It's easy for the mind to be fooled into thinking that we can attain lasting happiness through the possession of Objects and goods (materialistic)but it is only temporary.

Tapas – Austerity/Persistence/ Mortification

Shareera Tapas - By following *Ahimsa* and *Brahmacharya*

Vacha Tapas - By following speaking sweet

Mana Tapas - *Samatvam* - Being equal to every living creature.

Swadhyaya – Self study/ Study of sacred scripture

Isvara Pranidhana – Surrender to Divine/God

- 1) *Asana* - Posture
- 2) *Pranayama* - Controlling Vital Forces of the Body
- 3) *Pratyahara* - Making the mind introspective
- 4) *Dharana* - Concentration
- 5) *Dhyana* - Meditation
- 6) *Samadhi* - Super- Consciousness

Yama and Niyama are moral trainings without these the practice of Yoga will not succeed.

Practice is absolutely necessary. You may sit down and listen the hours every day but if you don't practice you will not get one step further. It all depends on practice. We will never understand these things until we experience them. We will have to see and feel them for ourselves. Simply listening to explanations and theories will not do. There are several obstacles to practice. The first obstruction is an unhealthy body; if the body is not fit state, the practice will be obstructed. Therefore we have to take care of what we eat and drink and what we do.

We must not forget that health is only a means to an end. If health were the end we would be like animals, animals rarely become unhealthy.

The second obstruction is doubt, we always feel doubtful about things we do not see. Man cannot live upon words, however he may try.

With practice within a few days a little glimpse will come enough to give encouragement and hope. After a few months of training and teaching you will begin to find you can read another's thoughts; they will come to you in picture form. Perhaps you will hear something happening at a long distance, when you concentrate your mind and try to do so. These glimpses will come just a little bit at first but enough to give you faith, strength and hope.

A random survey of people practicing different forms of yoga routinely was done and the results are compiled in the tables below:

Sl No.	Age	Gender	Stream of Yoga	Duration of practicing yoga		Health	
				Routine	Months/Year	Before	After
1	43 years	Female	Astanga Yoga / Vinyasa Yoga	Five days a week three times	10 years+	Back pain Leg pain	More awareness High energy and Happy mind
2	42 years	Female	Patanjali Yoga	1 and ½ hr daily	8 years	Depression, Anxiety, Less active, Food craving	Less craving, calm mind, more active and Flexible
3	43 years	Female	Patanjali Yoga	2hrs	8 years and 6 months	Obesity(weight - 87kg), Asphyxia, Frequent nebulization	Weight - 81 Doesn't experience asphyxia, Never used Nebulisers since 5 years
4	40 years	Female	Patanjali Yoga, Iyengar Yoga and Hatha Yoga	Every day 1 and ½ hr	6 years	Obese (weight - 95kg), Fatty Liver, Breathing problems, Irregular Menstrual Cycle	Weight - 75kg, calm mind, Regularity in Menstrual Cycle
5	39 years	Female	Integrated/ Bihar School of Yoga	Every day 3hours, 2hours practice one hour with	18 years	Over weight, acne, anxiety	Normal BMI, relaxed and came mind, skin quality improved.

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6	35 years	Female	Hatha Yoga	2 hours every day	12 years	Good	Very Good
7	36 years	Male	Hatha Yoga	2hours every day	12 years	Obese(weight-86kg)	Weight reduced to 80 kg
8	33 years	Female	Patanjali - Raja Yoga	20mins per day	6 years	Over weight 69 kg Dysmenorrhoea, Anxiety	Weight 63kg, No dysmenorrhoea, calm and relaxed mind
9	34 years	Female	Astanga Yoga	2 hours daily	3 years	Chronic Digestive problems, Insomnia	Reduced
10	41 years	Male	Astanga Yoga	2 hours daily	9 years	Insulin dependant Diabetes	Diabetes under normal range

S No.	Food Habit		Activities		Habits		Thoughts/Mind Stability (Control by Willpower /Calmness)		Sleep	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
1	3	8	1	8	3	7	2	8	4 - slightly disturbed	Sound sleep
2	3	6	3	8	4	8	3	8	Disturbed	Sound sleep
3	3	6	2	8	3	6	2	8	Deprived	Sound Sleep
4	1	7	1	6	2	7	2	7	Distrubed	Sound sleep
5	2	5	3	6	0	9	3	8	More Dreams	6 hrs sound sleep
6	4	8	5	9	0	8	2	8	Sound sleep	Sound sleep
7	3	7	4	8	1	8	1	7	Sound sleep	Sound sleep
8	2	5	3	6	2	5	3	6	Disturbed	Sound sleep
9	4	8	5	8	5	8	3	7	Insomnia	Reduced
10	1	8	1	9	1	7	2	6	Disturbed sleep	Sound Sleep

*Food Habits, Activities, Habits, Thoughts and mind stability was marked on the scale of 0 to 10.

3. Conclusion

With these references we can analyze and interpret the benefits of daily routine practice of Yoga in Present Era. One has to gain mastery over it by moving towards it or by step by step to be free from disease and pain in body and mind level at a still higher level one gain insight of the hidden powers of being human beings to move towards the positive health and perfection.

References

- [1] YIC - S-vyasa yoga university (syllabus self study material)
- [2] Book of Raja Yoga - Swami Vivekananda