
YOGA FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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"Yoga accepts. Yoga gives." - April Vallei

As the Bhagavad-Gita says, "A person is said to have achieved yoga, the union with the Self, when the perfectly disciplined mind gets freedom from all desires, and becomes absorbed in the Self alone."

Human beings are made up of three components body, mind and soul corresponding these there are three needs health, knowledge and inner peace. Health is physical need, knowledge is our psychological needs and inner peace is spiritual need when all three are present then there is harmony.

Yoga gives us relief from countless ailments at the physical level. The practice of the postures (asans) strengthens the body and creates a feeling of well being. From the psychological view point, yoga sharpens the intellect and aid in concentration; it steadies the emotions and encourages a caring for others.

In today's world of information and inter planetary voyages most of the people find it difficult to devote time towards their health and fitness. This has led to drastic increase in health problems and healths related stress—the number one killer in modern days. Unlike the early part of the century when infectious diseases were the leading killers, today's health problems are mostly related to life style

Some people think it is divine others find it positively addictive and a powerfully effective substitute for negative habits. Whether borne of inspiration or by trial and error, yoga techniques substitute for the kinds of activities our early human ancestors must have done in the course of just living out in their arboreal lives. It is pretty to say that if we still hung around trees all our lives like other primates, then 70% to 90% of us would not end up suffering from chronic back, neck and head pain.

The essence of yoga is to make the process of life as efficient and enjoyable as possible. In the beginning it is essential that we learn not only what the stretches are, but how to stretch, how to relax and how to breathe etc. Then we will be ready to work out safely, yoga does not bring away the qualities of genuinity, wholesomeness, compassion, but rather instils them within us. It teaches us that love heals the giver at least as much as it does the recipient. In addition therein dwells the sacred power of community, union, harmony, yoga and free and fair civilisation. It is our birth right to have access to this information. It is a sign of our wisdom if we use it, our enlightenment if we share it.

Importance of Yoga

Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living that aims towards 'a healthy mind in a healthy body'. The true essence of yoga revolves around elevating the life force or 'Kundalini' at the base of the spine. It aims to achieve this through a series of physical and mental exercises. At the physical level, the methods comprise various yoga postures or 'asanas' that aim to keep the body healthy. The mental techniques include breathing exercises or 'pranayama' and meditation or 'dhyana' to discipline the mind

Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps promote a balanced development of all the three. Other forms of physical exercises, like aerobics, assure only physical well-being. They have little to do with the development of the spiritual or astral body. Yoga exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy and facilitates:

- Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony
- Promotes self- healing.
- Removes negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body.
- Enhances personal power.
- Increases self-awareness.
- Helps in attention, focus and concentration, especially important for children.
- Reduces stress and tension in the physical body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

The aspirant feels rejuvenated and energized. Thus, yoga bestows upon every aspirant the powers to control body and mind. In 2014, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested United Nations to celebrate June 21 as the International Yoga Day as it is the summer solstice; the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. This tradition is 5000 years old. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help in well being .

Benefits of Yoga

The art of practicing yoga helps in controlling an individual's mind, body and soul. It brings together physical and mental disciplines to achieve a peaceful body and mind; it helps manage stress and anxiety and keeps you relaxing. It also helps in increasing flexibility, muscle strength and body tone. It improves respiration, energy and vitality. Practicing yoga might seem like just stretching, but it can do much more for your body from the way you feel, look and move. Yoga asanas build strength, flexibility and confidence. Regular practice of yoga can help lose weight, relieve stress, improve immunity and maintain a healthier lifestyle. Yoga is considered to be one of the most important, effective and valuable tools available for man to overcome various physical and psychological problems. According to Kavalayananda and Vinekar (1968) yoga includes cultivation of correct attitudes and reconditioning of the neuromuscular systems. Yoga helps the whole body to enable it to withstand greater stress and strain. Yoga proposes healthy diet and encourages the natural process of elimination, whenever it is necessary. Yoga aims at an integrated and harmonious development of all the potentialities of man.

So, Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with oneself, the world and nature.”

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