

YOGA: SCIENCE OF RIGHT LIVING

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YOGA

“Yoga is not an ancient myth buried in oblivion. It is the most valuable inheritance of the present. It is the essential need of today and the culture of tomorrow.”

(Swami Satyananda Saraswati)

Yoga is the science of right living and, as such, is intended to be incorporated in daily life. It works on all aspects of the person: the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual.

The word Yoga means ‘unity’ or ‘oneness’ and is derived from the Sanskrit root **Yuj** which means ‘to join’. This unity or joining is described in spiritual terms as the union of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. On a more practical level, Yoga is a means of balancing and harmonizing the body, mind and emotions.

Concept and practice of Yoga originated in India several thousand years ago. Its founders were great saints and sages. The great yogins gave rational interpretation to their experiences of Yoga and brought about a practically and scientifically sound method within every one's reach. Yoga has been held in high esteem by ancient sages as a method by which one can develop one's inherent powers in a balanced manner.

Yoga is one among the six systems of Vedic philosophy. Maharshi Patanjali, rightly called "The father of yoga" compiled and refined various aspects of Yoga systematically in his "Yoga sutras". He advocated "Ashtanga Yoga", the eight-fold path which is believed to have a potential for improvement of physical health by encouraging better circulation of oxygenated blood in the body and inducing serenity of mind.

The science of Yoga begins to work on the outermost aspect of the personality, the physical body. Yoga aims at bringing the different bodily functions into perfect coordination so that they work for the good of the whole body. From the physical body, Yoga moves on to the mental and emotional levels. The practice of Yoga prevents psychosomatic disorders and improves an individual's resistance and ability to endure stressful situations. A number of eminent philosophers have defined Yoga as procedures or technique can help the man to break through the habit patterns of his ordinary consciousness and enables him to realize his own identity to unite with the ultimate reality. Thus, from practical point of view- Yoga can be defined as a systematized set of practices through which one can attain super-natural powers by the process of concentration.

Etymology and Definitions

The word Yoga is derived from sanskrit root ‘yuj’ (युज्) meaning to bind, join, attach and yoke, to direct one's attention on, to use and apply. युज्यते अनेन इति योगः which means, that which unites is Yoga.

According to grammar of **Vacaspatyam** and **Kriya Ratna**, “**Yuj Samadhau**” (युज समाधौ) means equanimity or balanced state of mind and “**Yujir Yoge**” (युजिर योगे) means to unify two different entities.

According to **Yajnavalka**, the conjunction of the individual and the supreme souls is called yoga.

संयोगयोग योग इति युक्तोजीवत्मापरमात्मात्मनोर इति ॥

The basic idea of Yoga is to unite the atma or individual soul with the param atma or the Universal Soul. The term Yoga is used in a variety of senses. It may simply mean method.

Kathopnishad defines Yoga as a state when the senses are stilled, when the mind is at rest, when the intellect wavers not- then, say the wise, and is reached the highest stage. This steady control of senses and mind has been defined as Yoga. He who attains it is free from delusion.

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ॥

The creative power of Yoga has been portrayed in Svetasvatara Upanishad as:

नीहार्धुमाकार्कनिलानलानां स्वद्योतविद्युत्स्फटिकशशीनामा
एतानि रूपाणि पुरःसराणि बृहण्यभिव्यक्तिकराणि योगे ॥

Mist, Smoke, the Sun, Wind, Fire, Firefly, Lightening, Crystal, Moon- these forms become the forerunners when Brahman is being revealed in Yoga.

According to **Maharshi Patanjali**,

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ॥

“Yoga is a methodical effort to attain perfection through the control of different elements of human nature, physical and psychical.”

In **Yoga Vashishtha**, the essence of Yoga has been defined as:

मनः प्रशमनोपायः योग इत्यभिधीयते ॥

Yoga is a skillful and subtle methodological way to calm down the mind.

Bhagwat Gita has defined Yoga as

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

One who is united to cosmic wisdom goes beyond the effects of both virtue and vice, even here in this life. Therefore, devote thyself to Yoga, divine union. Yoga is the art of proper action. Yoga is dexterity in action. Thus, Yoga leads a man to higher states of consciousness and remains in equilibrium.

योगस्थ कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनंजया

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समोभूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

O Dhananjaya! Remaining immersed in yoga, perform all actions, forsaking attachment to their fruits, being indifferent to success and failure. This mental evenness is termed as Yoga.

He further says that

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला

समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥

Even on hearing confusing and conflicting statements, when your mind remain steadfast, unperturbed in a state of Samadhi, then you have reached Yoga.

Sri Krishna also explains Yoga in the sixth chapter of **Bhagwat Gita** as follows:

When his mind, intellect and self (ahamkara) are under control, freed from restless desire, so that they rest in the spirit within, a man becomes a yukta- one in communion with God.

According to **Swami Kuvalyananda**, “The term Yoga is used to indicate both the End as well as Means. In the sense of End, the word yoga signifies ‘Integration’ at its highest level. Yoga is an integral subject man as a whole.”

B.K.S. Iyengar in his book **Light on Yoga** says that Yoga also means union or communion. It is true union of our will with the will of God. He believes that Yoga is a timeless pragmatic science evolved over thousands of years dealing with physical, mental, moral and spiritual well being of man as a whole.

Shri Mahadev Desai in **Gita according to Gandhi** says that Yoga is yoking of all the powers of body, mind and soul to God; it means the disciplining of the intellect, the mind, the emotions, the will, which that Yoga presupposes; it means a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly.

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, “The yoga helps us to reach a higher level of consciousness, through a transformation of the psychic organs, which enables it to get beyond the limits set to ordinary human experience.”

Aurobindo, in his book “**The Synthesis of Yoga**” says that Yoga means union with the Divine- a union either transcendental (above the universe) or cosmic (universal) or individual or all three together or it means getting into a consciousness in which one is no longer limited by the small ego, personal mind, personal vital and body but is in union with the supreme self or with the universal (cosmic) consciousness or with some deeper consciousness in which one is aware of one’s own soul, one’s own inner being and of the real truth of existence. In the yogic consciousness, one is not only aware of things but of forces not only of forces. One is aware of all this not only in oneself but in the universe.

According to Yehudi Menuhin in the book *Light on Yoga*, “Yoga is a technique ideally suited to prevent physical and mental illness and to protect the body generally developing an inevitable sense of self-reliance and assurance.”

According to Sri Aurobindo, “Yoga can be defined as an endeavor of man to turn away from the earth towards Divine, by means of a seeking of the mind or of the lower ignorant consciousness.”

Thus, Yoga is a process of elevating oneself by calming and expanding it to higher and subtle layers of the mind. Yoga proceeds by a change of consciousness, a change from the ordinary mental, vital and physical consciousness, ignorant and separated from its true self and from God, to a greater consciousness in which one finds one’s true being and comes first into direct and living contact and then into an identity or union with that something that lies beyond mind, life and body.

Yoga not only aims at total change of consciousness, but even its method is that of a gradual and increasing change of consciousness. Thus, Yoga is an exploration of consciousness through consciousness.

Swami Vivekananda had said that Yoga is really one of the grandest of sciences.

Yoga is essentially and fundamentally a search of that which transcends the Mind and its outer and inner operations. Yoga is a practical psychology which has been the result of a rigorous and persistent psychological research over thousands of years. Yoga has always been a science of the supra-physical with its own proper methods of observation, experiment and verification.

Yoga is not merely a philosophy or highest state of being but also a practical discipline that makes an individual competent to achieve the highest end of it.

Yehudi Menuhin in *Light on Yoga* says that the practice of yoga induces a primary sense of measure and proportion. Yoga distinguishes between sentimental pleasure and rational happiness. The former is due to gratification of desires while the latter is due to eradication of desires.

According to **Dr. Radhakrishnan**, the Yoga philosophy urges that the necessary inhibition of mental states is brought about by practice and conquest of desire. The ultimate aim of yoga is to bring about a complete transmutation of the substances of our nature. The goal of the yoga discipline is to lift the soul from its temporal, conditioned, changing existence into a simple, eternal and perfect life. Yoga says that the truth can be known by a persistent withdrawal of consciousness from outward acts as well as inward changes.

But on the other hand, Yoga recognizes the importance of body as a medium to attain spiritual progress. Maharshi Patanjali says that the perfection of the body consists in beauty, grace, strength and adamant hardness.

रूपलावण्य बलवज्रसंहननत्वानि कायसंपत् ॥

Graceful form, beauty, strength and super most sturdiness (enduring capacity) comprise the qualities of the perfection of the body.

Hatha yoga, another stream of yoga aims at perfecting the bodily instrument, freeing it from its liability to fatigue and arresting its tendency to decay and age. Yoga realizes that our body has a dignity of its own, as much as the mind. So, it formulates the methods of getting at our deeper functional levels. The yoga discipline is nothing more than the purification of the body, mind and soul.

According to **Aurobindo**, the aim of Yoga is to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world consciousness into the divine consciousness. It also aims to bring the supramental power of that divine consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them, to manifest the divine here and create a divine life in matter. He says that Yoga implies not only the realization of God but an entire consecration and change in the inner and outer life till it is fit to manifest a divine consciousness and become part of a divine work.

Different Schools of Yoga

Although the concept of different means of reaching ultimate goal existed in ancient times, it became popular with the preachings of Swami Vivekananda. *Bhagwat Gita* clearly explains the presence of three schools or streams of yoga i.e. Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. The other schools which are very popular now-a-days are Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga. All these schools can be classified broadly in the following two groups:

- **Bhavana Yoga**, which include the sub streams that deals with the emotional and psychological aspect of personality to reach liberation.
 - **Pranasamyama Yoga**, which include the sub streams that consist of practices to manipulate the vital energy and breathe in order to reach liberation.
- (A) **Bhavana Yoga**

It is that stream of yoga that deals with the emotional and psychological aspect of personality to reach liberation. It includes Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

1. Karma Yoga:

Karma yoga is a system of salvation by work. It is the path of action. It is also called as the Yoga of works. Bhagwat Gita discusses that one cannot abstain from action even if he enters a spiritual life. It says that all action arises from Brahman and the individual shares his actions with Brahman only. Bhagwat Gita teaches that an aspirant should renunciate personal aims while performing actions. When a man acts in this way, he will not accumulate the fruits of actions, his works will not bind him and he will find release from the world of action.

योगस्थ कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनंजया

सिध्यसिध्योः समोभूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते॥

O Dhananjaya! Remaining immersed in yoga, perform all actions, forsaking attachment to their fruits, being indifferent to success and failure. This mental evenness is termed as Yoga.

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥

One who is united to cosmic wisdom goes beyond the effects of both virtue and vice, even here in this life. Therefore, devote thyself to yoga, divine union. Yoga is the art of proper action.

Thus, with Karma Yoga, instruments of action and understanding, Karmendriyas and Jnanendriyas get cleansed.

2. Jnana Yoga: Jnana yoga is the path of knowledge. It speaks of perfection through wisdom which takes the aspirant to a stage where he finally realizes the essential unity of existence. Bhagwat Gita quotes:

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते

तत्स्वयं योगसंनिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विंदति॥

Verily, nothing else in this world is as sanctifying as wisdom. In due course of time, the devotee who is successful in yoga will spontaneously realize this within his self.

According to Sankaracharya, the concept of Jnana Yoga requires the aspirant to acquire certain basic qualifications which are as follows:

- **Viveka** or the ability to discriminate between what is impertinent and temporary in life and what is of lasting value and leading to eternal.
- **Vairagya** or development of dispassionateness against passions arising from sensual satisfactions which lead to raga or attachment.
- **Satsampatti** or six attainments i.e. Sama (cultivation of tranquility of mind), Dama (self-control), Uparati (eradicating the eagerness to possess), Titiksa (patience), Sraddha (confidence and sincerity) and Samadhana (intentness of the mind)
- **Mumukshatva** or intense desire for liberation which is strengthened by the cultivation of previous virtues mainly ability to discriminate between unsatisfactory superficial reality and the bliss providing spiritual dimension of higher experiences leading to attainment of deep and real reality or SAT-CHITTA-ANANDA.

The practices which are required for the training of the aspirant in the path of Jnana Yoga include:

- **Sravana** or a period of extensive and intensive study to guide him in right direction.
- **Manana** or Mentation follows Sravana and includes in depth analysis of what has been studied. This analysis enables the aspirant to acquire the knowledge of absolute truth.
- **Nididhyasana** or constant meditation in order to develop a meditational attitude in every moment of life. As this type of attitude is established in his life, his intuition and spiritual vision grows and he realizes the ultimate reality which is mandatory to attain liberation (moksha).

3. Bhakti Yoga: Bhakti yoga is the path of divine love. It insists on attaining perfection through devotion to God. It is based on belief in a personal God as the highest goal of man's spiritual pilgrimage. In Bhagwat Gita, Lord Krishna appears as one of the divine incarnations or Avatars. He quotes his nature in the following way:

समो अहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्यो अस्ति न प्रियः ।

ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्॥

I am same in all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear. But those who worship Me with devotion are in Me, and I too am in them.

He preaches to Arjuna, a path leading to transcendental, imperishable and unmanifest ultimate reality through development of appropriate attitude, tranquil and balanced mind and a higher wisdom to be able to understand ultimate truth.

In Bhakti yoga, the path towards the ultimate is viewed as the Lord becomes a life of devotional surrender of the worshipper to a particular manifested form of the divine Lord. Every thought, emotion, word and deed becomes an act of sacrifice directed towards him. Bhakti Yoga is a method of controlling and culturing emotions. It is a boon to gain control over emotional stability by properly harnessing the energy involved in it. Emotions are basic instincts which influence and control our behavior and approach towards life. Bhakti Yoga teaches to explore, express and evacuate emotions in a positive way. When dealt in this way, emotions will not be able to create knots in the consciousness and knowledge about self will be released. This knowledge ultimately will bring a state of liberation as the methodological Yoga paths.

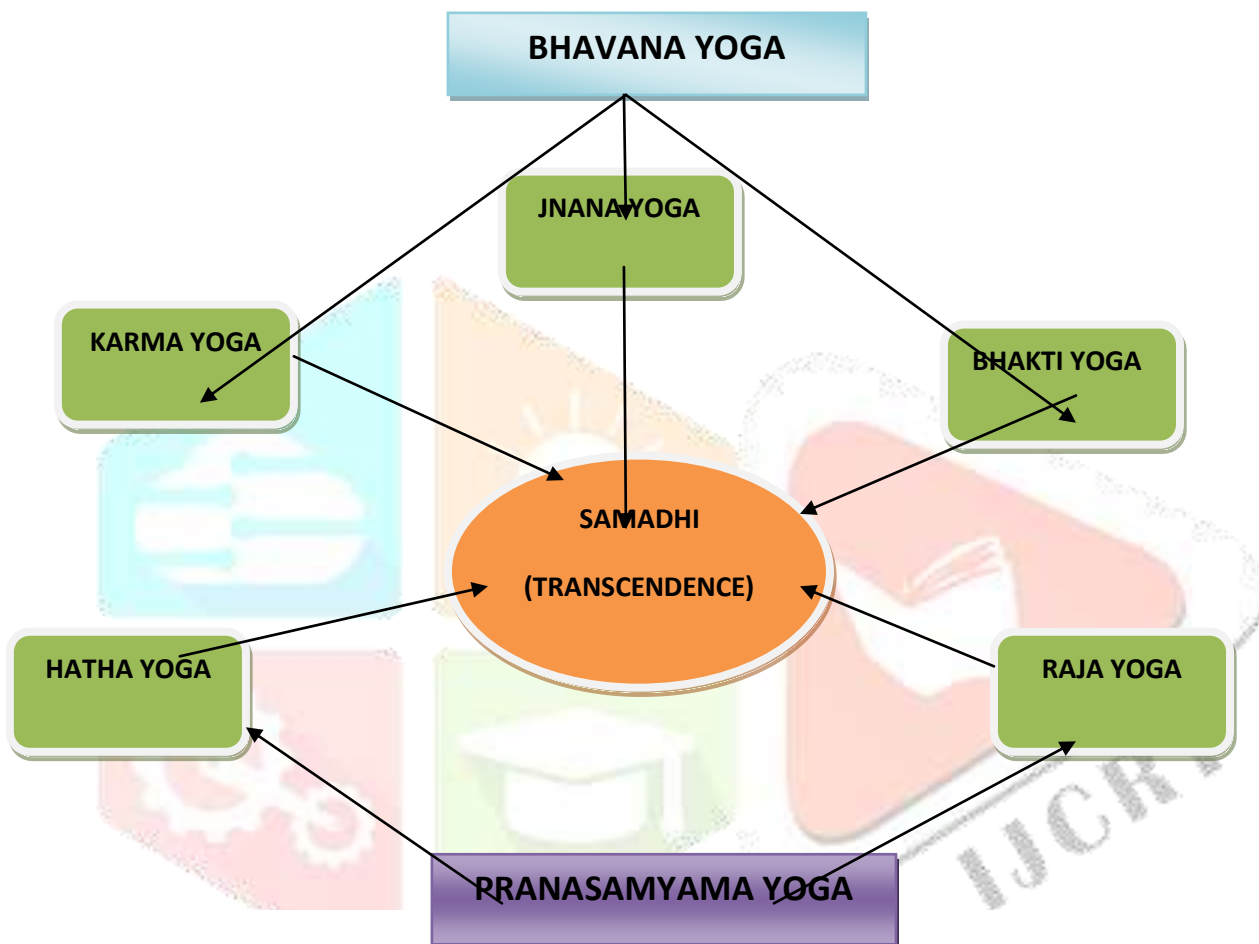


Fig. 12 - Schools of Yoga

(B) Pranasamyama Yoga

1. Hatha Yoga:

Hatha Yoga can be termed as a psycho-physical system. Hatha yoga discusses the methods of bodily control, breath regulation and mantras. Hatha yogis seize upon the body and the life energy. An extreme development of the idea that physical processes can produce spiritual results is found in the Rasesvara darsana (Sarvadarsanasamgraha, ix). It is said that:

हकारः कीर्तितः सूर्याष्टकारञ्चंद्र उच्यते।
सूर्याचंद्रमसोर्योगाद् हठयोगो निगद्यते ॥

Hatha Yoga has been considered as a necessary discipline to reach higher schools of yoga such as Raja Yoga by speeding up the spiritual progress. Hatha Yoga comprises of three main disciplines:

- A sequence of intricate bodily positions or Asanas
- Procedures for purification of the body internally or Kriyas
- A number of breathing exercises or Kumbhakas

Hatha Yoga stresses on practice of postures or asanas by which vital energies are increased in potency and are channelized in appropriate directions and acquire greater efficiency and power. Practice of asanas also help the yogis to become accustomed to longer periods of immobility which is required to attain a state of superconsciousness required to attain highest spiritual aims. This also ensures perfect physiological harmony in the organism which amounts to perfect health and efficiency.

After attaining mastery over asanas (asana siddhi), the Hatha yogi proceeds for the practice of pranayamas. This helps him to regulate his life-force or breath. These breathing techniques activate the subtle vital energy of the body which is the cosmic life force or prana. Prana sustains the man and connects him with the universal or cosmic dimension of life. With the aid of pranayama, the regulation of breath, elongation of breath and control is acquired over the life-force and nervous energies. Thus, in the process of bodily training, the mind is trained as well as the aspirant develops a high degree of self-control and determination and learns the technique of self-observation, which leads to the heightening of the capacity of awareness.

As both the physical energies and life energies are gathered, controlled and regulated, they are directed towards the centre at base of spine or Mooladhara chakra where Kundalini energy is lying dormant. With the concentration of physical energies and life energies, Kundalini awakens and pierces various energy centres or chakras situated along the length of spinal cord until it meets the highest chakra i.e. Sahasrara chakra which is consciousness. This leads to liberation of consciousness and thus freedom from being subjected to repeated births and deaths.

2. Raja yoga:

हठं विना राजयोगो राजयोगं विना हठं

न सिद्ध्यति ततो युग्ममनिष्पत्ते समभ्यसेत् ॥

Neither can Hatha (Yoga) be perfected without Rajayoga nor Rajayoga be attained without practicing Hatha (Yoga). Hence one should practice both until the stage of Nishpatti is reached.

Unlike Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga is a psychological and spiritual system. It is the yoga of mind culture or psychic control. It is because Raja yoga deals with the training of mind and its psychic powers. It concentrates on mind or the mental energy. It first introduces the aspirant into the realm of purification and self discipline in the form of Yamas and Niyamas and then proceeds to practice of asanas and pranayamas to acquire control over life-functions and thereby mental functions. Raja Yoga trains the aspirant to control the breath through which the mind can be brought to a silent status by minimizing the thought activity. Then, by further practices of Dharana (Concentration) and Dhyana (Meditation), the mental energies are released into the quietude of Samadhi or super consciousness, simply called Trance. Maharshi Patanjali has elaborated Samadhi in two broad categories:

(a) **Unification based on the process of conceiving (Samprajnata Samadhi).** This is further subdivided into a stage of intelligible unification or Savitarka Samadhi and a stage of unification beyond intelligibility or Nirvitarka Samadhi. This stage progresses to the subsequent stage of ideational unification (Savicara Samadhi) and ultimately to a stage of unification beyond ideation (Nirvicara Samadhi)

The above stages of unification are accompanied by experiences on a high emotional level. The aspirant is freed of kleshas and reaches a realm of power of all knowledge (Sarvajnatrtva). He thus reaches Dharmamegha Samadhi.

(b) **Unification beyond the process of conceiving (Asamprajnata Samadhi).** In this stage, the yogi's mind is freed of previous samskaras. He discovers the real status of the self (Purusa) and gains total freedom, isolation or autonomy i.e. Kaivalya.

Thus, Raja Yoga gives a practical and easy approach to reach higher states of consciousness.

Different streams of Yoga help man to develop his personality at four different levels- physical, mental, intellectual and emotional and simultaneously bring about spiritual progress. There is basic unity among these streams as all these streams or paths lead to the same goal independently and there is same structural transformation taking place in the mind as delineated through Raja Yoga.

Physiological basis of Yoga as a therapy

Yoga is the science of right living and, as such, is intended to be incorporated in daily life. It works on all aspects of the person: the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual. It is predominantly concerned with maintaining a state of equanimity at all costs. This knowledge about the effects of yoga on health was known to the ancient seers. This is evident by following shlokas from Svetasvatara Upanishad:

तद्युत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं वर्णप्रसादं स्वरसौष्ठवं च

गंधः शुभो मूत्रपुशीषमत्वं योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति ॥

It is said that the first signs of entering Yoga are lightness of body, health, thirtlessness of mind, clearness of complexion, a beautiful voice, an agreeable odour and scantiness of excretion.

वपुः कृशत्वं वदने प्रसन्नता नादस्फुटत्वं नयने सुनिर्मलो

अयोगता विंदुजयो अग्निदीपनं नाडीविशुद्धिर्हठसिद्धिलक्षणं॥

When the body becomes lean, the face glows with delight, Anahata Nada (Divine sound) manifests, eyes are pure, body is healthy, sexual discharge is under control, the digestion process is powerful, then one should understand that the nadis are purified and success in Hatha Yoga is approaching.

It is now established that Yoga is a science and can be taken up as a means of experimentation and verification as Yoga is entirely scientific in its approach and methods.

Integrated Approach of Yoga Therapy

Yoga is a process or system that maintains not only the health but also generates a sense of happiness and fulfillment. It also encourages personal growth and development. Yoga brings the mind and body into a mutual state of well being, balance, ease and vibrant alertness. Thus, it can be said that yoga is a holistic science which works on all aspects of our personality. Human personality has been explained to have a number of facets. It is now being recognized that there is some existence beyond physical body. The scientific study of human aura by Tart, the professor of Psychology at the University of California at Davis, U.S.A., explains that human aura has four aspects:

1. The Physical aura
2. The Psychological aura
3. The Psychical aura
4. The Projected aura.

Kirlian Photography has shown us a glimpse of these auras. However, the concept of auras has been explained by our ancient texts as the concept of Panchakoshas, the five layered existence of human being.

The Concept of Panchakosha (पंचकोष) – The Five Layers of Existence: Panchakosha theory has been explained in Brahmanadvalli chapter of Taittiriya Upanishad. Panchakosa (Sanskrit: पञ्चकोष; "five sheaths") from root Pancha, "five" + Kosha, "body" — is the "five bodies," or discernible "aspects" of man, arranged successively from the grosser to the increasingly more subtle.

The Taittiriya Upanishad explains that Brahman is associated with bliss, buddhi (discriminative faculty), manas (mind), prana (vital force), and the anna (physical body), respectively called from subtler to grosser:

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Anandamaya Kosha: | The Bliss Sheath |
| 2. | Vigyanmaya, Kosha: | The Intellect Sheath |
| 3. | Manomaya Kosha: | The Psychical Sheath |
| 4. | Pranamaya Kosha: | The Vital Sheath |
| 5. | Annamaya Kosha: | The Physical Sheath |

These are called sheaths, because they cover the Self (Brahman) like a shell.

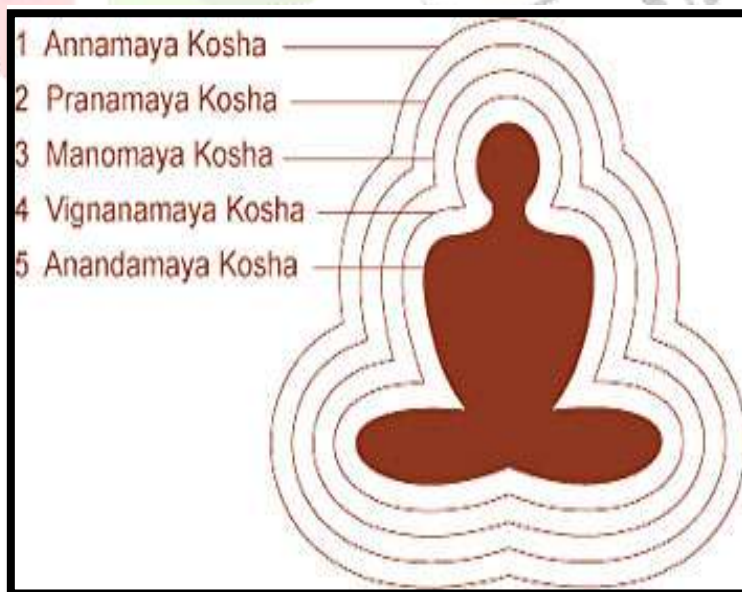


Fig. 13 - Panchakoshas – The Five Sheaths of Existence

The Panchkosha theory provides an overall outlook of the holistic view. According to this theory, the body is an extension of the mind, and the mind is made of pure bliss. It states that our existence or personality is composed of five sheaths or layers of existence. These sheaths are:

1. **Annamaya Kosha (अन्नमयकोष):** The matter (anna, अन्न) based aspect of our physical personality is called Annamaya Kosha. It consists of five elements or Panchamahabhutas namely the earth (पृथ्वी), water (जल / आप), fire (अग्नि), wind (वायु) and space (आकाश). Annamaya Kosha is the grossest sheath and is nourished by the food that we consume.

2. **Pranamaya Kosha (प्राणमयकोष):** This sheath is subtler than the Annamaya Kosha. It is the sheath of vital airs completely filling and enclosing the Annamaya Kosha. The prana in combination with the five organs of action constitute the Pranamaya Kosha. The Annamaya Kosha gets its life by the Prana entering into it. A uniform harmonious flow of Prana to each and every cell of the Annamaya Kosha keeps them alive and healthy. Prana flows through subtle channels called Nadis. Prana has been classified into Mukhya Prana and Upa Pranas.

(i) **Mukhya Pranas or Main Vayus** are five in number. They are:

- Udana (उदान), located in head region is responsible for upward activities like vomiting.
- Prana (प्राण), located in chest region is responsible for breathing movements.
- Samana (समान), located in abdominal region is responsible for proper digestion and balancing prana and apana.
- Apana (अपान), located in pelvic region is responsible for downward activities like defecation, menstruation, parturition etc.
- Vyana (व्यान), pervades the whole body and is responsible for all activities in the periphery like nerve impulses, blood circulation, cellular activity in all cells etc.

(ii) **Upa Pranas or Subsidiary Vayus** are also five in number. They are:

- Naga (नाग), responsible for
- Koorma (कूर्म), responsible for
- Krikara (कृकर), responsible for
- Devadutta (देवदत्त), responsible for
- Dhananjaya (धनंजय), responsible for

A balance between all these five prana is health and imbalance is ill health.

3. **Manomaya Kosha (मनोमयकोष):** Manomaya Kosha is the third layer of existence. It belongs to the Sukshma Sharira. It is the self having Pranamaya Kosha as its body. This sheath is formed by the organs of knowledge and the mind. This sheath is a powerful one because it produces bondages. Manomaya Kosha is our mental and emotional library, the subtler layer of our existence.

4. **Vijnanamaya Kosha (विज्ञानमय कोष):** Vijnanamaya Kosha is the fourth layer of existence and belongs to Sukshma Sharira. This Kosha is endowed with knowledge. It is the conscience within us that guides us continuously to do right things. This Kosha guides the Manomaya Kosha to get mastery over the basic instincts. Thus, Vijnanamaya Kosha is the discriminating faculty.

5. **Anandmaya Kosha (आनंदमय कोष):** According to Taittiriya Upanishad, Ananda is the basic element of the universe from which everything has been created. Anandmaya Kosha is the bliss layer of our existence. This is the most subtle aspect of our existence which is devoid of any form of emotions, a state of total silence – a state of complete harmony, and perfect health.

Concept of Disease based on Panchakosha Theory

The Yogic concept of health is based on a synchronized working of body and mind so that there is a homeostatic mechanism established in both. This mechanism contributes to the balanced, integrated functioning (Samadhi) even in the external and internal stimuli, the klesha.

According to Yoga, disease is considered as a psycho-physiological disturbance or vikshepa (obstacle). Most of the diseases are psychosomatic in origin. The site of origin is mind or Manomaya Kosha and they manifest themselves at the physical or gross level. The imbalance which occurs at the Manomaya Kosha or mental level is called Adhi and its manifestation at the physical level is called Vyadhi. In other words, Adhis (mental/emotional disturbances in the Manomaya Kosha or astral sheath) cause corresponding disturbances or I at the physical level (Annamaya kosha).

Disturbances at Manomaya Kosha level i.e. Adhis are transmitted through the intermediary of the Pranamaya Kosha (or energy body) causing disturbances in the prana. If we can consciously work with the body and/or Pranamaya kosha to effect healing in the Manomaya Kosha and vice versa, we can consciously work in the Manomaya kosha to effect positive healing changes in the Pranamaya and Annamaya koshas.

According to integrated approach of Yoga Therapy, permanent cure in any disease is only possible when the causal disturbance is completely remedied; i.e., the previously unhealthy tensions and conflicts between the bodies or sheaths have been harmonized and resolved.

Adhi (Disturbances at mental level)
(Disease at level of Manomaya kosha)



Subtle changes in pranic flow in the form of disturbed breathing
(Disease at level of Pranamaya kosha)



Vyadhi or manifestation of symptoms of disease
(Disease at level of Annamaya kosha)

Origin of disease on the basis of Panchakosha Theory

Integrated Approach of Yoga Therapy for the management of psychosomatic disorders

The Adhis which originate in the Manomaya kosha are considered causal and primary which in turn cause physical ailments (Vyadhi). These adhis can also occur in the Vijnanamaya kosha and karmic sheath when our belief systems are out of sync with the inner wisdom karmic body and strong unresolved karmic forces are at play. Thus, when the adhis are destroyed in the subtle or causal bodies, then the Vyadhis are no longer generated or manifest. In addition, there exist two kinds of Adhis. One is ordinary or samanya (caused by the mind or emotions) and the other one is called, Sara, which is intrinsic to a more causal spiritual malaise that can be successfully treated only through processes that affect the life style, belief system, self identification process, karma, or in general our energetic relationship that we cling to as "Self" in relationship to "Reality" i.e., through modalities which reach into the Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya Koshas. In either case, physical disease is caused by disturbances, corruption and obstruction of the Nadis (psychic nerves) and energy patterns which have become disrupted, distorted and patterned into corruptive patterns causing degeneration, dissipation, dis-ease, pain, suffering, stasis, and death. Thus effective therapy is aimed at removing the source of the disturbances, opening up these blocked pathways, and rechanneling and re-patterning the energy flow.

As already explained, disturbances in Manomaya Kosha manifest themselves in the Annamayakosha (physical layer) through Pranamaya Kosha. So, to treat these psychosomatic ailments, it becomes necessary to work at all these levels of existence.

The integrated approach is thus not only to treat these at the physical level to get the best temporary relief; but it also includes the practices which involve different sheaths of our existence.

Thus, the complex psychosomatic problems can be tackled by harmonizing the disturbances at different levels, by different yogic techniques.

I. Practices at Annamaya-kosha level: The Physical Layer-

(To remove physical symptoms of the disease.)

1. Yogic diet
2. Kriyas
3. Loosening exercises (Shithilikaran Yogic Practices)
4. Yogasanas

II. Practices at Pranamaya kosha level: the layer of prana-

(Remove random agitation in pranic flow in Pranamaya kosha)

1. Breathing practices

2. Pranayama

III. Practices at Manomaya kosha level: the mental layer-

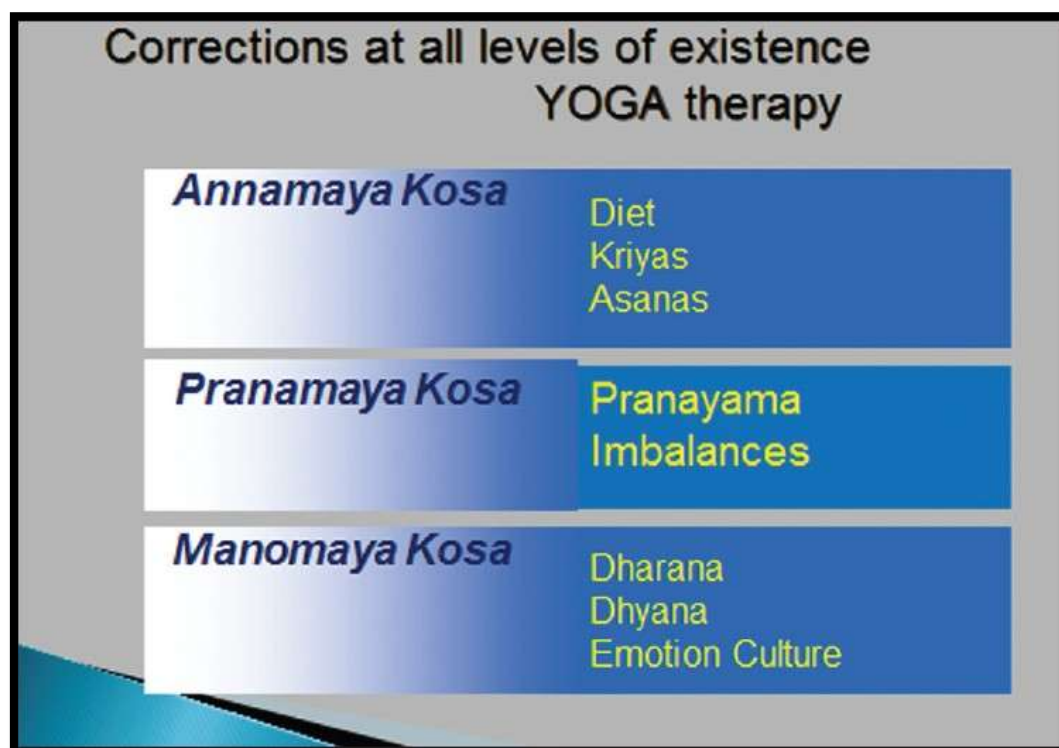
1. Dharana
2. Dhyana
3. Bhakti
4. Emotional culture through devotional songs or Satsang

IV. Practices at Vijnanamaya kosha level: the layer of wisdom-

1. Receiving Jnana through books
2. Attending Lectures of learned
3. Yogic counseling

V. Practices at Anandmaya kosha level: layer of bliss-

1. Working in blissful awareness
2. Karma yoga



Integrated Approach of Yoga Therapy

Thus, Yoga offers a holistic approach and treats the **Body- Mind Complex** as a whole.

Yogic practices like slowly performed static Asanas, Relaxation techniques, Pranayamas, Meditation etc help to reduce Stress by inducing body's inborn power to come back to normal (state of homeostasis). It has been found by researches that 20-30 minutes of Integrated Yoga practice session daily decreases the levels of stress hormones such as Cortisol and leads to release of Endorphins which are known to have mood elevating effect. Endorphins are proteins released from the brain that act as the body's natural pain reliever.

The integrated approach of yoga therapy can be utilized effectively not only to treat the symptoms but also to bring the complete cure. Positive physical health in the form of improved muscle strength, dexterity, stamina and immune stability can be achieved after the integrated approach of yoga for positive physical health. Improved perceptual sharpness, intelligence, memory, emotional stability are some of the indicators of positive mental health. These indicators can be optimally achieved after yoga practices.

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