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YOGA AND MODERN MEDICINE-A BRIEF COMMUNICATION ABOUT NEED OF YOGA IN DAILY LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Humans are always striving to find remedies to become healthy and live more happily. Yoga can be as good as modern medicine because it manages lifestyle related health disorders. It is well known that despite the entire world reaches to technology and artificial intelligence, still people are yet to obtain positive health. The world has made advances in life expectancy and modern medicine but still people's overall well-being is not better? The reason is allopathic medicine does not touch to the deeper layer of mind, emotion, and thought. This paper has brief opinion about how yoga can be better technique than the modern medicine based on certain yogic insights. According to intergovernmental health organization-WHO, health is a state of complete physical, mental, emotional and social well-being not merely an absence of disease. Yoga covers all the dimension of health, removes the root cause of disease i.e., psychosomatic (adhija category of illness) whereas modern medicine does not. The article also describe why people should move on to yoga from modern medicine practice by differentiating modern and traditional yoga.

KEYWORDS: Yoga, Modern Medicine, Health

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INTRODUCTION

Why one should move to yoga from modern medicine practice? The reason is while in modern medical science, the large number of patients suffers from lifestyle related diseases like hypertension, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, cancer. In all these disorders, lifestyle and stress plays a very important role and therefore we can say that modern medicine has certain limitations. To overcome that we thought adding yoga and Indian traditional wisdom to modern medicine will really help the patients even better. In recent year's ancient Indian wisdom, especially yoga has embraced people in the light of modern medicine. Professionals in medical science are prescribing yoga practice to the patients for treatment, therapy, and recovery of various diseases. Scientists, doctors, psychologists, health consultants have shown that yoga practice can improve the brain functioning, improve physical or mental strength; prevent numerous physical and mental illnesses without taking medications.

How yoga is related with medical science which have become central question to the researchers, doctors, patients, and practitioners. To answer this question, we should move to the historical aspect of yoga. In the beginning yoga was strictly a spiritual discipline limited only to a few who would go into Himalayas and do some mystic practices. But now we see in the last two or three decades, the amount of research that has taken place in application of yoga in lifestyle related disorders has brought yoga almost to the mainstream management along with modern medicine (Bhavanani, 2017). Modern medicine takes care of the emergency management and controlling the diseases whereas yoga manages the lifestyle and therefore it helps in preventing the diseases and also preventing the complications of the diseases. Yoga has emerged as very popular mind-body intervention which goes hand in hand with modern medicine. Though modern medicine may not prevent the diseases but there are few similarities for healthy lifestyle. Both the yoga and modern medicine emphasized the concept of positive health. We have tried to explain why yoga would be an important practice compare to modern medicine. In all, this article gives a brief opinion on certain understanding such as 'concept of diseases according to yoga', 'modern and traditional yoga', 'yoga in present lifestyle', 'balancing lifestyle & promoting health through yoga' and 'self-prescription & standard prescription'.

YOGA AND MENTAL HEALTH

Among various disorders where yoga has been found to be useful, one particular domain where its efficacy has been really established in certain

psychiatric conditions (Cramer et al., 2017; Hanson, 2016; Lauche et al., 2016) and yoga as defined by sage Patanjali is “**yogaschittavritti nirodah**”. It means yoga is a technique to calm down the agitations of mind. Fundamentally, yoga was developed as a science/ technology to manage the mind and psychiatry is a discipline where modern medicines are used to manage the mind. Mind being so subtle requires very subtle kind of treatments. Researchers have found through their research that yoga can be as good as the antidepressant drugs in managing depression (Khalsa, 2013). Definitely, severe psychiatric cases may need hospital admission but in mild to moderate cases of depression yoga is as good as modern medicine. Similarly, anxiety disorders are very common conditions which people suffer from and yoga which calms down the sympathetic nervous system. The emergency nervous system that over activated in anxiety patients, yoga can be a very useful treatment for managing anxieties (Uebelacker & Broughton, 2016). Other conditions where yoga has been found very beneficial as an add-on to modern medicine in psychiatry are schizophrenia. People who suffer from schizophrenia though the symptoms of the diseases which are active like they develop misconceptions in the mind or become violent or aggressive. They calm down by the medicines but then the other aspects of this particular disease that the patients do not connect with the societies, they do not show empathy, and they can't express their emotions. In those dimensions, yoga has been found to be very useful along with the medicines in schizophrenia (Varambally et al., 2019). Many people also complain about chronic pains which are not related to any particular diseases but they keep sufferings, they do lot of investigations and the modern science is not able to find the cause of those particular problems. Here also, researchers have developed a yoga module for such chronic pain disorders. Another area in psychiatry where we can apply yoga in substance use disorders. Many people develop addictions to substances like alcohol, tobacco, even to certain medications, opioids, and drugs. In such cases also, yoga can provide them a natural condition that means the patients go and touch a very deep relaxed state of mind which is very peaceful (Kuppili et al., 2018). Research studies have shown that yoga can increase a particular chemical in the brain known as endorphins (Krishnakumar et al., 2015).

YOGIC CONCEPT OF DISEASES

Yoga-vasishtha, a textbook in the form of conversation **Vasishtha and Rama**. Lord Rama was in a state of utter depression and he did not want to become king. During the conversation with sage vasishtha, his questions was “if ultimately the end of this life is old age, disease, and death, why to live?” Then he asked very

fundamental questions to his teacher vasishtha. The question was ‘what is disease and where does it come from’ then vasishtha provides very lucid, clear answers to his questions. He says that any disease that manifest at the level of body is known as vyadhi. This vyadhi is of two types; one is **anadhija vyadhi**-it means illness of the body coming from outside the body or from the environment. The example can be sunburn, infections, poisoning, and injuries. They all come from outside into the body. Second category he says is **adhija vyadhi**- the illness where there is no external cause but which comes from within the individual. He says that it starts from the layer of emotions then comes down into the layer of energy (that is prana) and then manifests on the body (Kumar & Balaram, 2017; Nagendra & Nagarathna, 2013). Sage vasishtha says whichever disease you cannot find any external cause automatically it is understood that the cause is inside. Major problems which we suffer from such as diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases, various kind of cancer, migraine, headache, and asthma. In all these problems, one cannot find out a pin-point external cause. Therefore all these disorders belong to second category according to the Vasishtha (Aiyer, 1896; Venkatesananda, 2010). Rama asked him how one gets freedom from these illnesses. Vasistha says that an illness which comes from outside can be cured by applying tools from outside. He recommends shalya chikitsa that is surgery, ausadhi that is herbs or medicines, and mantra for managing first category of illnesses the anadhija vyadhi which comes from outside. The second category of illnesses which come from inside will not be cured by agents from outside but what we are doing now is the modern medicine which was found very useful in managing external causes such as accidents, injuries, infections. It is not that much effective to managing the illnesses which arises from internal cause but we are putting the external means to cure the second category of illnesses also. Vasistha says that these diseases should be managed by going deeper within through pratipasava technique. Pratipasava means reverse delivery, slowing down, expansion, and balancing the layer of emotions, layer of energy, and the physical body. Slowly these kinds of diseases can be reversed. Thus, yoga plays a very important role these disorders where there is no cause known to the modern medicines.

MODERN AND TRADITIONAL YOGA

Yoga which originated from certain traditional schools through guru-shisya parampara has now become very popular. To with its popularity we also see a lot of modifications in traditional and original yoga styles. With its modifications there is a risk of losing a very essence of yoga. Traditionally, the concept of doing asanas,

pranayamas very fast or in dynamic way was never there in ancient time. The various kind of fast yogic practices such as power yoga, ashtanga vinyasa yoga, and other dynamic practices may not be a true yoga style as far as its traditional understanding is concerned. In the traditional approaches, a proper preparation for yoga is given a lot of values.

YOGA IN CONTEMPORARY LIFESTYLE

Now in present days fast lifestyle everything speeded up and therefore nobody has time to prepare for anything because our mind has become too fast. It is very difficult for us to start yoga slowly and in a traditional way. So we are not saying that the modern modification is wrong but then it is not according to the traditional understanding. Probably we need to speedup yoga also with our speeded lifestyle but then our aim ultimately should be slow down. Person may start doing fast but when the mind has become slow down then we should also make yoga slow and steady because the ultimate aim of yoga is to take you within. Everybody has access to YouTube, facebook, and a lot of information on internet. Authors have found that many patients going to hospital developing complications of doing yoga wrongly because they learnt it from social media websites, they saw it some teacher in YouTube and started practicing without any supervision. Specially, there are many cases that who practiced advanced yoga like kundalini yoga through YouTube and develop mental illnesses. People even develop psychotic episodes by doing yoga wrongly therefore we like to emphasize that any yoga practice a person want to begin with, he or she should contact a trained yoga therapist who has done bachelor, master or post-graduate diploma in yoga therapy from a recognized university. They should learn the yoga practices under the supervision of a trained yoga therapist then start practicing. Also every month, at least once get your practices checked by the trained yoga therapist whether they are doing properly or not. In this regard, an ancient text, Hatha yoga pradipika says that practice of yoga is like controlling a wild elephant. If you do it correctly will give you a lot of strength but you do it wrong it may kill you. Therefore, one should be very-very careful in doing the yoga practices.

SELF-PRESCRIPTION AND STANDARD PRESCRIPTION

Yoga helps patients take their health in their own hands. They learn to try and manage their lifestyle for the better health can improve. Sedentary lifestyle is the major cause for the diseases and here yoga can play an important role in making good lifestyle that leads to the better health. A study has found that yogic

lifestyle can alleviate cardiac diseases and he has also shown that yoga is a technique to achieve positive health. The yoga practice leads to the proper functioning of body organs through enhanced work of neuro-musculo-glandular system

In a survey, a mall intercept approach was adopted; a group of individuals went to different malls in Bengaluru and asked certain questions to people regarding self prescription of modern medications. 717 people were contacted, authors observed that 70 percent of educated people going to mall takes medicines own their own for their problems because they understands that it is completely all right. Medicines were taken by people for their problems such as pain killers, certain opioid, antibiotics, and sleep medicines. 70 percent of the people had taken medicines directly from the pharmacy with any doctor's prescriptions.

These are the medicines which people feel that it is all right to take; we understand our problems and it will reduce by taking medicines. But we would really like to warn that a lot of complications develops when a person start using medications without any standard prescriptions. These medicines have not only a potential to cause addiction but they can severely harms body organs, ability to think, ability to understand, and ability to concentrate. Infact significant number of people visits in the addiction clinic of hospital cannot reduce these kinds of habits of taking medications. We would like to suggest that people have any health related issues either physical or mental should consult a doctor first and try to understand the problems, never use any medicines your own. Because these medicines are very powerful, they have very subtle effects not only on the body but also on the neurons, brain, and some of them are completely irreversible. Therefore, we would like to suggest that whether it understanding of illness, taking modern medicine or practicing yoga it is always better to do it under supervision of trained consultation rather than self prescription. In the light of self prescription for managing own problems there is special comment advised by **Adi Shankara**,

So, what is your understanding of yoga or what is yoga? 99 percent of the people when this question is asked they get images of doing certain kind of difficult postures, being done some kind of model who is having zero figure. These kinds of images comes to the mind people start thinking this is yoga, I want to become like this, and this what yoga means but generally speaking this is not correct understanding of yoga. If we look at our sages, the traditional wisdom that India

has the beautiful definition of yoga that comes from Bhagavadgita is 'Samatvam yoga uchyate'(Tapasyananda, 2011). Yoga is that flexibility which keeps the mind balance in all the situations of life. So it is the strength of the mind that we wish to cultivate through yoga. Definitely body and mind are connected and flexibility of the body helps to the flexibility of the mind but we should not become obsessed by the body alone therefore those who really want to learn yoga they will have to understand yoga as a discipline focusing on the steadiness of the mind, slowness and gentleness of the breath, and relaxation of the body.

CONCLUSION

Many people want to learn yoga to cure their problems themselves, they would have gone to many doctors; they would have taken medications for years together. They expect that some miracle will happen because yoga is a mystic kind of practice to cure the diseases. They start the yoga, they give up all the medicines that they are taking from long time and end up into the greater trouble. We would like to appeal everyone using or tends to use yoga as a therapy. Yoga should be used as an add-on to the modern care that people are taking. Don not leaves the modern medicines suddenly when you start yoga. If your lifestyle gets regulated, if your sleep pattern gets regulated, if your mind becoming calm and relaxed, if your stress levels reduced. You will naturally feel healthier and no doctors in this world would like to give you medicines when you are feeling healthy. To the consultant or doctors those who are providing treatment tell that your symptoms are improving then if they feel like they will slowly, gradually, in a systematic or scientific way reduces your medications if it is indicated. It is completely unreasonable to feel that yoga will completely cure all problems. As per research findings and extant research evidences, yoga is very good in improving quality of life, preventing future problems, and gradually moving you towards better health. Hence, it can be concluded that Start yoga and stop allopathic medicine

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