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ROLE OF YOGA AND MEDITATION IN ENHANCING EFFICIENCY LEVELS

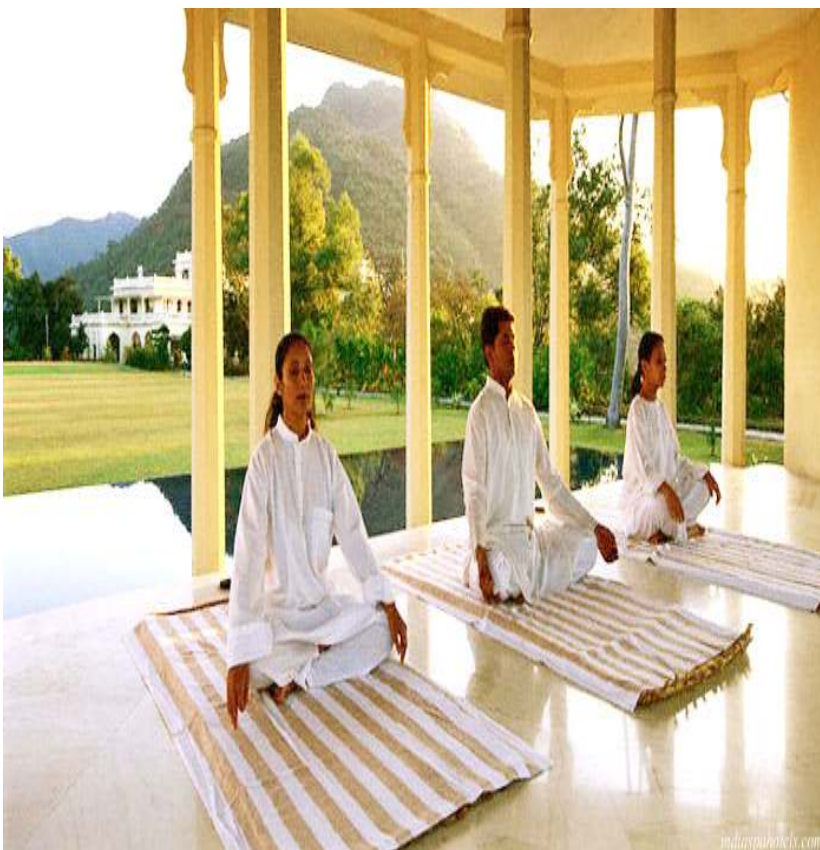


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**ABSTRACT:**

What is the destination of human life? It is fixed by our own vision, Once it is fixed by us it is called mission. Every person faces many difficulties and thousands of problems with great courage for fulfilment of the mission, even at the cost of his life. The highest goal of life is spiritual purification and self-knowledge. Now-a-days life is mostly materialistic. If we think of sense-objects, it will attach you to sense-objects. If you grow attached you become addicted. Thwart your addiction, it turns to anger, be angry and you confuse your mind. Confuse your mind, you forget the lesson of experience, forget experience you lose discrimination, lose discrimination and you miss life's purpose. (Bhagavad Gita II

62,63,65)

**KEYWORDS**

*Yoga, Meditation, Rajayoga, Yama-Niyama, Ahimsa, Sathya, Asteya and Brahmacharya.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The uncontrolled mind does not guess that 'Athma' is present. In such a case, can it meditate? Without meditation, how can it have peace? Without peace, where is happiness? The well-known Gayatri mantra prays that "The intellect of all of us be illumined" The sage in the tenth Mandala says, "You all go together, Speak together and let all your minds know things together" etc., (RV X 191.3-5) The great national anthem of Yajurveda speaks for the whole nation, but not individually for one person.

Yoga shows us a logical pathway that leads to the attainment of physical, ethical, emotional and psycho-spiritual health. It allows the natural state of total health. Yoga does deal with the nature of the soul, God and immortality, which are the main topics of religion in the whole world. In vedic philosophy, there are six systems ( Shat Darshana ) in various ways- Sankya, Tattva, Nyaya, vaisheshika, Purva-mimamsa and Uttara-mimamsa also called Vedanta.

" Yoga " is a Sanskrit word. Yog means "union". Body and soul's correlation is called Yoga. Meditation is a part of Yoga. But now-a-days opinion of meditation is for soul and yoga for body. The foot prints of yogic meditation can be seen back to 1700 BC. Classical yoga is divided into rules of conduct ( yama and niyama ), physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.

Yoga defines itself as part of the Hindu tradition called Sanathana Dharma. It is universal or eternal dharma. Hindu and Buddhist, both traditions have called themselves Aryadharm which means the dharma of noble men. The originator of the yoga system is said to be Hiranyagarbha, who symbolizes the creative and evolutionary force in the universe and is a form of Vedic Sun God. Yoga sutra suggests the practice of asanas and pranayama as preparation for dharana, because these influence mental activities and create space in the crowded schedule of the mind. Once the stage of dharana is attained, Dhyana and Samadhi can be very easily achieved.

Yama- Respect for others (universal morality)

Niyama- Respect for yourself (personal observance, code of conduct)

Asana- Body posture – harmony with your body

Pranayama- Breath control harmony with vital energy.

Pratyahara- Withdrawal of senses- harmony with emotions

Dharana- Concentration- harmony with thoughts

Dhyana- Contemplation- meditation

Samadhi- Enlightenment – union with divine

The yama and niyama give us infinite opportunities to truly transform our life. In yoga sutra, it is said "Transform yourself and let your life become a Sadhana." According to Buddhist eight fold path and in Yoga sutra, Patanjali describes fundamental ethics in the first two chapters. Those are called yama and the niyama. Yama and Niyama are suggestions given on how we should deal with the people around us and develop attitude towards ourselves. The principles of wisdom contained in Yama and Niyama are mostly concerned with how we should use our energy in relation to others and to ourselves. If you transform your life into yama and niyama, they create peace and harmony in you. When Yama and niyama are truly practised, the heart is filled with cosmic love, goodness and light. In Yoga-sutra,

Yama has five constituents- Ahimsa, Sathya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha.

**Ahimsa** – The word “Ahimsa” literally means not to injure or show cruelty to any creature or any person in any way. On the spiritual path, the first step is to eliminate the beastly nature. The wise sages prescribed ahimsa as the first constituent of Yama. We should therefore practise ahimsa in its purest form.

**Satya** : Truthfulness is called satya. The self is truth. It can be realized only by speaking truth and observing truth in thought. Satya should be maintained in manah, vachya and karma. By telling lies, we pollute our conscience and infect our sub-conscious mind. It is nothing but crookedness.

**Asteya** - Non- stealing is called asteya. Trishna or desire is the root cause of stealing. A yogic student must be free from all forms of theft. Asteya means-control your desires and live within your limits. There are lots of things we can steal. We can steal someone's time, if we are late. We can steal someone's happiness, if we are selfish.

**Brahmacharya**- Practising divine conduct is called Brahmacharya. It literally means walking in the way of God. With the help of brahmacharya, we can preserve our Ojash shakthi. Whatever disturbs the mind and body, disturbs our spiritual life too.

**Aparigraha**-Non grasping goods. If we develop an attitude of grasping more and more things (goods), we will be slaves at the feet of the material world. We don't need any more. if we are contented and feel all desires fulfilled with what we have at that moment.

**Niyama also has five constituents.** These are Saucha, Santosha, Tapas, Swadhyaya and Ishvara Pranidhana.

**Saucha**- It involves keeping things clean inside and outside. Saucha means both physical and mental hygiene.

**Santosha**: It is interpreted as the greatest happiness. Contentment lies in accepting life as it is and welcoming what you get. Our temperament and attitude to life will make us feel delighted or sad. If you practise smiling in hard times, you will never feel sad in life.

**Tapas** It is called right effort or self-discipline. Tapas is the willingness to do work. When tapas is in action, the heat it generates burns impurities of body and soul.

**Swadhyaya** -The art of self-study is called swadhyaya. Self-study of looking within and asking the eternal question “Who am I” ? which Ramana Maharshi enlightened makes us better evolved. Swadhyaya is a skilful and systematic investigation of how things exist, act and influence us.

**Ishvara Pranidhana** – It is the dedication to the highest level. It is the true liberation. The highest happiness lies in the love of, communion with, and surrender to God. (Yoga Sutra II.45)

**Asanas** :- Asana is a Sanskrit word, which means “staying”. Asana is the practice of physical postures.

These are improved health, strength and creating balance between our material world and spiritual experience. B.K.S. Iyengar says – “The yogi does not look heaven-ward to find God, for he knows that He is within”.

**Pranayama :-**Pranayama is the measuring , controlling and directing of the breath. Pranayama controls the energy (prana) within the organism. Pranayama and asana are considered to be the highest form of purification and self-discipline for the mind and the body. It is the process of purifying the nervous channels of the body.

**Pratyahara :-** Pratyahara means drawing back. It is to withdraw oneself from that which nourishes the senses. According to yoga sastra, pratyahara is withdrawal of the senses from attachment to external objects. Much of our emotional imbalance is our own creation.

**Dharana :-** Dharana means immovable concentration of the mind. In dharana we create the conditions for the mind to focus its attention in one direction. Our mind is always full of memories, dreams or reflective thoughts. We cannot concentrate on one particular activity, which is spiritual goal.

**Dhyana :-** Dhyana means worship or abstract religious meditation. During dyana, consciousness reaches all the levels of evolution of nature. Meditation becomes our tool to see things clearly and reality beyond the illusion. In this state, mind is clearer, even the fear of death also vanishes.

**Samadhi :-** Samadhi is the final step in the eight fold path of yoga. Samadhi means “to bring together, to merge. In the Samadhi, there is an ending to the separation that is created by the “I and mine”. In the state of Samadhi, the body and senses are at rest, but mind is awake. Liberated soul can enjoy pure awareness.

Today we are entering the global world that requires the development of a global spirituality. This requires honouring all the paths. There are so many types of meditations which are famous –Raja yoga, Hata yoga, Buddhist-meditation(zazen), vipassana meditation (insight), mindfulness meditation, Loving kindness meditation(Metta meditation), Transcendental meditation (Tm), yoga meditation (Third eye meditation which is called ajana chakra), Chakra meditation(seven chakras of the body), Gazing meditation (Trataka), Kundalini meditation, Kriya yoga, Sound meditation (Naada yoga), Self-enquiry meditation, Taoist meditation etc.,

### TYPES OF MEDITATIONS:

Usually we classify all types of meditation into three categories depending on the way they focus attention, – focused attention, open monitoring and effortless presence.

**Focused attention meditation-** It is focusing the attention on a single object during the whole meditation session. This object may be the breath, a mantra, visualization, part of the body, external object, etc., Examples of these are : Vipassana, Zazen, chakra meditation, Kundalini Meditation, Pranayama and Sound Meditation.

**Open monitoring meditation:** Instead of focusing the attention on any one object, we keep it open, monitoring all aspects of experience, without judgement or attachment, all perceptions, be they

internal (thoughts, feeling, memories, etc.) or external (Sound, Smell) are recognised and seen for what they are. Examples of these are Mindfulness meditation and Taoist meditation.

Effortless presence: It is the state where the attention is not focused on anything in particular, but it's quiet empty, steady, and introverted. It is also called choiceless awareness or pure being. In this meditation, we train the mind in this state consciousness which can be discovered. Ramana Maharshi's "I am" meditation and some forms of Rajayoga are in this category.

Pranic healing is the bridge to spirituality which regulates your thinking. If man acts properly, he may become divinity. Regular yoga and meditation practice helps in reducing Stress and tone up Body and Soul. Both yoga and meditation improve mental focus and provide a general feeling of well-being. Meditation provides an emotional boost through deep relaxation and it can be done anywhere. You can give yourself an emotional boost by taking a ten minute meditation. Meditation enriches our soul. Psychological exercises are a powerful way of improving concentration as well as improving mental strength. The whole goal of yoga is Self-realization, which can also be called Liberation. The celebrated shanthy mantras of the Upanishads pray for the community as a whole and never for any one person. Thus unity of truth cuts all boundaries in the world.

'Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu'



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