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YOGA AND HEALTH

Yuktaharviharasya Yukta Cheshtasya Karmasu |
Yuktaswpanavabodhasya Yogobhavati Dukhaha |

Shri Bhagavadgeeta - 6-17

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Price Re 1/-

Prajna - Karuna



The establishment of yoga Dept. is owing your deep faith in yoga . I dedicate this booklet to you because you gave me an opportunity to serve yoga shastra, and through it, the ailing persons.

S.R. Vidwans

Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to offer this booklet to you. Many of our diseases are cured by the nature herself. But the modern life is swiftly moving away from the nature.

The yogic cure is such a wonderful method that it not only cures the disease but it lays a new foundation for your life, gives a new direction.

We have been trying yoga therapy for physical and mental cure for the last five years in our Institute. The present booklet describes how the yogic exercises help rehabilitate our personality and prevent onslaught of diseases. Our objective in presenting this booklet is to acquaint you with our effort and motivate to undergo the training.

I hope our effort will bear fruit. I express my deep, gratitude to Dr. S. Nayar, our president for going through the manuscript giving important suggestions and writing a Foreword

M. Choudhary
Secretary.

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FOREWORD

' Prevention is better than cure ' is the age old slogan in the medical world. Prevention of ill health will not only reduce expenditure on medicines, but it will also enable a person to work more, produce more and add to the wealth of the nation. Healthy persons are mentally alert and full of zest for life.

Our ancient seers were conscious of the importance of preventive measures against disease. They lived upto hundred years or more full of vigour and energy and did a great deal of creative work till the end.

Yoga is one such system which helps keep us physically and mentally fit and healthy and prevents many types of diseases. In fact Patanjali says " Heyam Dukham Anagatam " (the suffering that has not come is to be prevented).

But we must not identify yoga with mere physical postures nor can we say that a particular exercise is good for a particular disease. Life is an integrated whole. It has both physical and mental aspects and there is a third dimension also, which is spiritual.

Man's suffering extends to all these areas. We have to attempt to bring about a balance among the various faculties of man and yoga is the most effective means to achieve this objective.

In our Institute at Sevagram we are trying to harness yoga in all aspects in order to bring peace and health and happiness on the one hand and to promote physical, mental and emotional health on the other. This small pamphlet will explain to the readers how it is being done.

SUSHILA NAYAR

M. GANDHI ON YOGA PRACTICES

" I want to give the Practice of these yogic exercises a full trial only because I regard them of all the methods of Medical treatment to be the Freest from danger "

— April, 1927

" The growing self abuse among the students has attracted me to the yogic asanas, as possible cure of the evil habit. "

— April, 1927

" (With the practice of asanas), I feel fresher and stronger.....my appetite has improved. "

— April 1927

" The pranayam causes no difficulty I take all the deep breath without a break. "

" In shavasana I feel refreshed when I lie flat on my back for nearly fifteen minutes. "

— June 1927

(Extracts from letters addressed to Swami Kuvalagananda of Kaivalyadhama, Lonawala, by M. Gandhi)

YOGA & HEALTH

Real happiness lies in physical and mental health. An ailing body and mind cannot enjoy even material pleasure far from the spiritual one.

Disease may be hereditary or arising from environment. It is true that in emergency like diarrhoea or high fever we have to take medicines. But diseases like indigestion, constipation, piles, asthma, blood pressure etc. arising from disturbed mental condition or irregular life, can be cured by appropriate diet, exercise, mental peace and correct attitudes towards life. Experts say that 70% of diseases are cured without any medicine. The body cells try to fight with the external attack and nature outside the body helps the body cells.

Nature is a combination of earth, water, light or heat, air and sky. These are five basic elements. The nature helps us through these principles and similarly we can also make use of these elements in their gross form. We can regain our lost health with the help of these elements.

The nature cure treatment consists of use of earth in the form of mud packs, mud bath, water in the form of drinking plain water, purification of nose, stomach and bowels with water, tub baths etc.

Sun bath is the form of using fire element and fasting is using the sky element.

The present practice of people is to use nature cure methods only when they are attacked by some disease. But the ancient seers have given us the yoga system which not only cures disease but also prevents diseases. In fact its main objective is preventive. Through yogic exercises we improve the strength, elasticity and tone of internal vital systems like digestion, respiration, circulation, excretion and central nervous system. Not only we regain the Physical health but we

can attain higher levels of consciousness and supreme intellect with the help of these exercises.

Yogabhyas : Yoga consists of eight limbs. They are Yama, Niyam, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

To identify yoga with asana is a misnomer. Yoga also takes care of accumulated dirt or morbidity at different places in our body by removing them by appropriate Shudhi Kriyas.

The Ashtang system can be classified into different kinds of exercises. For instance the Yamas which are five viz Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha and five Niyamas which are Shaucha, Santosha, Tap, Swadhyaya and Ishwarpranidhan are ethical exercises. The first one tells us as to how an individual should behave in a group and the other tells us how one should lead one's individual life left to himself. A strict observance of yamas and niyamas may help us lead a harmonious, balanced and peaceful life.

But so long as we are confined to our body and senses there are likely to be slips. Similarly the environment may also impose some ailments upon us. Hence there is a need of the remaining 6 limbs of yoga viz Asana, Pranayama etc.

Let us now consider as to how our body functions. It is made up of innumerable cells. These cells constitute tissue like the muscles, nerves etc. The cells are made up of protoplasm which is formed from certain basic elements like Oxygen, carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen etc. In order to keep the cells alive there must be continuous supply of these basic principles like Oxygen, Nitrogen etc. which we obtain from food. For instance we get Nitrogen from proteins, Carbon, Hydrogen and Oxygen are released when starch and fats are burnt to give strachis and energy.

There is a continuous process going on in our body laboratory of converting the food into different elements required for the body. This is done through digestion, circulation, respiration and excretion. The mouth, stomach, intestine, liver and colon form part of digestive system and the last two also part of excretory system. These organs are made up of involuntary muscles and they are controlled by the brain and autonomic nervous system. They work continuously in the form of contraction and relaxation of muscle fibers alternately. All muscles work in this way but in case of muscles of abdominal viscera the nature makes them work continuously. There are involuntary muscles also in the chest, heart, urinary system and anal region. So long as they do not lose the rhythm of alternate contraction and relaxation our health is good. But disease comes when they lose the rhythm. If we can rehabilitate the lost rhythm of these muscles we can restore our health.

So far as digestion is concerned the important process takes place in the abdomen. Nature makes the involuntary muscles contract and relax alternately. We can accelerate this process with the help of yogic exercises. The Bhujangasana, Shalabhasana and Dhanurasana bring about contraction of the back muscles, and stretching of abdominal muscles whereas Paschimottasana, Halasana, Yoga Mudra help relaxation of abdominal muscles.

Vakrasana, Ardha Matsyendrasana give relaxation and contraction alternately to side muscles of abdomen. Shalabhasana gives sufficient exercise to diaphragm and Uddiyan gives automatic massage—a soothing effect—to abdominal muscles.

Circulation : Through circulation the nutritive elements are carried to the farthest tissues of the body. These are carried through blood. Heart, arteries and veins are mainly responsible for this movement. The nervous system controls the circulatory system and all other systems.

Heart is an important organ which pumps out blood into the arteries. The heart muscle contracts and relaxes alternately thus increasing and decreasing the pressure in the arteries, This improves the strength and elasticity of heart muscles by improving coronary circulation. Bhujangasana, Shalabhasana and Dhanurasana and Sarvangasana, Viparitarani and Halasana serve the above purpose. Uddiyan and Nauli strengthen the muscles of the heart. The veins carry the impure blood back to the heart and topsy turvy position helps them in this work.

Respiration : Oxygen is an important gas required for sustenance of life. We breathe in fresh air which contains oxygen. The capacity to breathe-in more air depends upon lung capacity, their strength and elasticity. The air passage is also to be kept clean and without obstruction. In Shalabhasana and Mayurasana there is a temporary holding of breath which expands the muscles in the lungs. This activates every cell of the tissue. Matsyasana, Jivabandha and Sihn Mudra keep the passage clean,

Excretion : We have already seen that digestion and excretion go hand in hand. Every time the indigestible residue and waste product from digested food is carried further and further till it reaches the anal region. If the muscles of this region are elastic and active there is no obstruction in finally passing it out of the body. Otherwise there develops constipation and other accompanying troubles.

Internal Secretions : Health also depends upon the kind and quantity of internal secretions. This comes from ductless glands situated at different places in our body. They release hormones which are essential for body activity.

Pituitary glands : They produce hormones controlling activities of other ductless glands and also

hormones for growth, Sheershasana helps correction and maintenance of pituitary.

Thyroid gland : This gland is situated in the neck. This gland regulates growth and a metabolism. If there is no proper Thyroid secretion in early life, there is retarded growth and mental development is also arrested. Thyroid insufficiency in later life causes a disease called myxoedema.

Sarvangasana, Vipareetkarani, Matsyasana, Jivabandha and Sinhamudra all help to improve the Thyroid,

Adrenalin which also influences insulin, is situated in the abdominal cavity. Uddiyan, Bhujangasana, Dhanurasana help improvement of Adrenalin.

Connective Tissues : The farthest cells are in contact with the brain and spinal cord where from sensory and motor activities are controlled. The nerve fibers are covered with connective tissue. Therefore the brain must be supplied with adequate blood supply and the spinal cord must be kept strong and elastic.

Sheershasana and Vipareet Karani improve blood supply to brain while other postures mentioned before help elasticity of spinal cord.

Shudhi Kriya : Shuddhi Kriya is the back-bone of Yogopchar. All the Shuddhikriyas help to remove morbidity from respective parts of the body. The Hathapradipika describes 6 cleansing processes, They are Neti, Basti, Dhauti, Nauli, Tratak and Kapalbhati. The Dand Dhauti and Vastra Dhauti are for stomach, Shankha prakshalan and Agnisar for intestines, Basti and Ganesh Kriya for colon and Kapalbhati for brain.

Pranayama : Pranayama literally means controlling breath. What we try to achieve is a rhythm in our breathing process, the loss of which creates mental

disturbance and subsequently other maladies. Pranayam helps supply Oxygen to the whole body through proper circulation and strengthens lungs.

Dharana—Dhyana : The Dharna and Dhyana are peculiar exercises which bring mental stability and allow the subconscious to have its full play. It is to be done in completely relaxed mental state.

These help us to give vent to all suppressed thoughts and feelings which can show themselves in Physical disorders. These two exercises are very good for mentally ill patients, persons with tendency towards split personality. loss of memory etc

Pranayama, Dharana and Dhyana together form core of the Psychospiritual exercises. They are useful for spiritually inspired persons who are otherwise healthy.

Diet : Although diet is a very important constituent of our life very little attention is being given to its appropriateness. Most dishes are detrimental to our health.

Shri Bhagwat Geeta has said that in order that yoga should become killer of the pain—one must take proper diet—The characteristics of it are that it is pleasing, nutritious, and improves strength intelligence and health. It has been experienced that if we continuously take a particular diet, we develop peace of mind, selfcontrol and extra sensory perception.

To speak in modern scientific terms a balanced diet will contain all the necessary ingredients like proteins, sugars, salts, fats and vitamins.

It should also supply the necessary calories. Looking to our economic conditions it should be cheap so that even poor people can avail of it. It has been found that the best food will be fruits, vegetables, roots and

milk. Such food increases the longevity and gives sufficient physical and mental strength and vigour. It is better to eat food articles as they are produced in nature. In cooking, not only there is loss of time and money, but the food items also lose some of their vital elements like vitamins.

We should eat only when we have natural hunger. We should not be tempted to satisfy the palate, but we should find taste in food which will depend largely on hunger.

Measured quantity gives us life. where as over-eating kills us.

Be calm and quiet as you eat. Do not discuss or unnecessarily chitchat while eating. Silence is better while eating.

The author is taking raw diet once in a day which is not so costly but nutritious. It gives us all the necessary elements to sustain our life. It helps those who are diabetic, hyperactive and weak.

The diet contains the following articles. The weight in grams shows the author's own measure.

<u>Article</u>	<u>Measure (grams)</u>
Wheat	45
Mot	45
White Grams	20
Sesame	5
Pea Nut	5
Fenugreek	7
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The articles are to be kept under water (in a glass) for 12 hours (the period depending upon the climatic conditions) and then for 12 hours to be kept tied in cloth. Some of the grains may sprout well

others may start sprouting. We mix up the articles and add the following Condiments :

Garlic	5 seeds
Tarmeric powder	
Ginger - fresh	
Gumin Powder	
Salt	
Sugar	

Eat this slowly and masticate well.

This should be followed by a seasonal fruit.

This diet should be taken as the first course in the day. If there is appetite in the afternoon at lunch time one can take a salad made of fruity and leafy vegetables mixed with curds. At the night time there should be the usual meal.

Once in a week we should do Shuddhikriyas, The Yogic cultural poses should be done once in a day (either morning or evening) but higher practices like Pranayama and Dhyana twice a day (morning and evening.)

The full course will include following practices, They are listed in the order of sequence. If you are not doing any one of them skip it over, but do not disturb the order. The figures in the bracket opposite the name refer to its number as given in the chart,

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-------------------|
| 1 Shavasana | [18] | one minute before |
| 2 Sheershasana | [1] | starting exercise |
| 3 Sarvangasana | [2] | |
| 4 Matsyasana | [3] | |
| 5 Halasana | [4] | |
| 6 Mayurasana | [5] | |
| 7 Bhujangasana | [6] | |
| 8 Ardha Shalabhasana | [7] | |
| 9 Poorna Shalabhasana | [8] | |
| 10 Dhanurasana | [9] | |
| 11 Paschimttanasana | [10] | |

12	Ardha Matsyendrasana	[11]	
13	Yoga Mudra	[12]	
14	Gomukhasana	[13]	
15	Sinhmudra		
16	Supta Vajrasana	[14]	
17	Garudasana	[15]	
18	Uddiyan	[16]	
19	Nauli	[17]	
20	Agnisara		
21	Kapalbhatt		
22	Pranayama		
23	Aumkar		
24	Dryana		
25	Shavasana	[18]	10 minutes

For physical fitness 20 minutes devoted for postures is sufficient. For mental stability 10 minutes at least shall be devoted to Pranayama. Dhyan can be done according to one's zeal and time. Shavasana may be repeated three times a day.

The important Shudhi Kriyas one can easily do are Dard Dhauti, Jal Neti and Shankha Prakshalana.

A word of caution is that one has to learn all these exercises under strict supervision of an expert and should not be learnt from books.

Patients suffering from following chronic complaints will be benefitted by Yoga practices :

- 1 Gastric troubles
- 2 Asthama
- 3 Wet Dreams
- 4 Constipation
- 5 Diabetes
- 6 Flatulence after meals
- 7 Sluggish Kidneys
- 8 Menstrual difficulties
- 9 Nervousness
- 10 Seminal deficiency

- 11 Thyroid
- 12 Piles
- 13 Acidity
- 14 Insomnia
- 15 Mental Weakness

About yoga—training :—

(1) The yoga classes are conducted daily in the morning and in the evening except on sundays and holidays in the old Kasturba Hospital building sewagegram.

(2) Admission can be taken any day in the month.

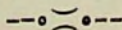
(3) General orientation can be made within 10 days about Asana, Pranayama etc.

(4) Yoga training is available to both Males and Females,

(5) Guidance is also given on different Nature Cure methods in yoga class.

(6) People from outside seeking admission to the yoga class can be given accomodation in the hospital on payment.

(7) Guidance will be given to Organisations holding yoga camps in there respective places.



०० कस्तूरबा हेल्थ सोसायटी, सेवाग्राम
योग-केंद्र



भुजंगासन



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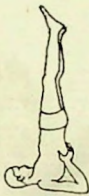
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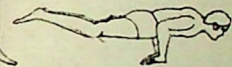
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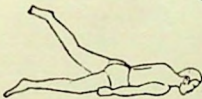
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