

Role of Yoga in the Management of Stress

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Abstract

Stress has emerged as a very critical life style physical disorder. An unprecedented progress in science and technology has brought about a complete revolution in the economic social and political scenario all over the world. Economic upswing and unlimited opportunities have made man highly ambitious, success oriented and pleasure loving. In desperation of achieving a higher standard of living and fulfilling his ever expanding desires he tries to earn more and more by means, fair and foul. Thus, he is subjected to various stressful situations in life. In modern style of living stress has brought under its grip all categories of people whether he is a school or college student, businessman and an executive a film actor or a player. Thus, it is very clear that we can't eliminate stress but we can reduce it.

Keywords: Role of Yoga, Management of Stress, Management, Yoga

It is a response pattern to a given situation in human physiology. It prepares the body to face the situation or in other words provides the means either to fight or flight. If, however, it fails to prepare the body to relieve the stressful situation then the stress degenerates into distress which gives rise to different physical disorders. The issues that create stress are called stressors. There are two kinds of stressors. External Physiological stressors include pain, infections, inflammations, burns, surgery etc. External Physiological stressors include poor work environment, abusive relation. Internal Physiological stressors include anxieties, worries about financial problems, tension, fear etc. It is very necessary to understand the physiology of stress.

In any stressful situation the entire system e.g. the heart and blood vessels, the lungs, the digestive system the immune system, the sensory organs make certain internal adjustments to meet the situation. All these changes take place under the control of two motor systems.

1. The autonomic nervous system.
2. The endocrine system.

Various endocrine glands such as, Adrenal gland, Thyroid gland & Pituitary gland secrete small quantity of chemical called stress hormones in to the blood and prepares the internal system to adapt to stress. A prolonged stressful condition leads to the upsurge of blood pressure, heart rate, blood glucose and ultimately results in serious

physical disorders. Stress reactions may also affect our immunity, cardiovascular and nervous system.

The structure of society and man's present lifestyle had compelled him to reach the summit of material and technological advancement. This has landed him in another dimension of disease and suffering. The unhappy experiences such as fear, anxiety, stress, neurosis, anger, greed, frustration, depression and their various manifestations belong to physical body, mental and psychic bodies by shattering the harmony of his being. Now man's inner quest for peace and harmony has led him to the rediscovery of yoga and its principles.

The causes of stress in the body are environmental and mismanagement of the daily routine. Regarding environmental stress, we can say that we are living in pollution. With each inhalation we are taking polluted air, we are drinking water with full of toxins, we are taking the fruits, vegetables etc being washed with poison. However, we are providing polluted inputs to the body which hampers each and every cell of the body. The muscles, joints, ligaments and tendons of the body become stiff. The organs in the different systems become weak to proper functioning which invites different problems or disease to the body.

There are certain biorhythms in the body which become active during the day and which subside at night. These biorhythms, which represent the optimum performance of different organs at certain times and their relaxation at other times, are definitely misused. This is the worst kind of stress in our life due to the mismanagement of the daily routine which covers the followings:

1. Discipline
2. Diet
3. Sleep
4. Bowel cleansing
5. Intake of water
6. Lack of rest
7. Lack of exercise and Thought process

When we purchase a new vehicle there is a servicing manual for servicing of this vehicle in time for the proper maintenance. Similarly, we need to service bodily car in time. We are never careful regarding this. As a result of which from the time we are born our physical system is continually undergoing stress, wear and tear. When it reaches the acute stage, or the chronic stage, then that wear and tear manifests in the form of disease, whether it is arthritis, asthma, diabetes, digestive or cardiovascular problems. When we become sick we resort to different medication for help. There is no solution and regularly we keep on accumulating stress as follows:

1. Muscular stress
2. Nervous stress
3. Cerebral stress (Due to over activity of the brain)
4. Emotional stress (Due to expectations related to our personal life)

Yoga offers a combination of stimulation and relaxation techniques to cope with stress. Reparation of stimulation and relaxation help to release stress.

Yoga offers the following asanas for this purpose.

1. Tāḍāsana
2. Ardha Kati Cakrāsan
3. Vajrāsana
4. Śaśaṅkāśana
5. Ardha Uṣṭrāsana
6. Śavāsana
7. Yoga Nidrā

By effectively managing the stress we can minimize the harmful effects on health. What is very important is the way we handle, respond and manage in a given situation.

1. We must develop the practice of doing nothing and sitting quietly 10 to 15 minutes every day. It helps in regaining a sense of control.

2. Minimize the negative thoughts. Think about the situation and approach calmly. Talk rationally to yourself.

3. It is not necessary to be overly competitive. Respond to a situation as per the demand.

4. Amid hectic schedules you must be able to balance your family, social and private activities, keep some space for fun and excitement.

5. Try to keep physically healthy by evolving in some physical activity like jogging, walking, swimming, cycling, aerobic etc. It helps in dealing with stress considerably.

6. Positive thinking and focusing on positive things will help in controlling the physiological changes that occur when we are under stress. Under standing those difficulties, setbacks are part of life, hence, dealing with them is more important than chest beating or indulging in self-pity. It will only shoot up the stress level.

With ‘Meditation’ and different relaxation techniques like ‘Yoga Nidrā’ one can have a positive out look towards their life. Śaṭkarmas can be an effective tool to drain out all the toxins they have gathered through faulty eating and drinking habits and then they can rejuvenate in the world of peace, serenity and health.

As the computer has become the whole soul point of focus for hours and hours together the eyes suffer a lot. The degenerative visions particularly myopia (short sight ness) is the common result of this. The bowed shoulders, crooked spines gives the pain in shoulder bled and lower back. The harmful radiation gives different mental problems resulting in to physiological and psychological stress. This can be easily treated by different yogic approaches like the steady asana, proper movement of spines and shoulders and relaxation techniques like

1. Trāṭak
2. Skandhacakra
3. Mārjāri
4. Vyāghrāsana
5. Bhujāṅgāsana

6. Grivāsana
7. Palming
8. Yoga Nidrā.

Since the person working on compute fixes his gaze on the screen throughout his working hours, the data, the geometrical structures (Alphabets), coming and going or rushing every now and then needs to be caught by eyes frequently. Thus the whole apparatus of eye is on constant stress. The eye muscles even get fatigues but still he is compelling to do work. Again each geometrical structure (Colour) appearing on the screen has an associated thought, emotions, sentiments, sensations in the mind. It is this reason that working in computer for one hour creates so much of mental stress as created by one sleepless night. Thus this kind of problem can be saved by different yogic techniques like “Yoga nidra”.

Regular yogic practice increases the physical, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual efficiency. Gradually the blocked physical and mental stress start releasing, proper canalization of vital energy brings absolute wellbeing of the body and mind. One will move into a state of dish-ease. We need to proceed through the daily process of self-reflection and self-analysis with the disciplines of social code of conduct and personal code of conduct. Then regular practice of Yogasana develops flexibility in the muscles, joints, ligaments and tendons of body. Pranayama relaxes the brain cells, Pratyahara practices develop focused attention withdrawing the sense perception from their respective sense objects. Gradually the focused awareness learns concentration. Then one establishes at the state of meditation. Life becomes smooth with optimism and positivism. Because self-discipline and self-control are leading to a complete personality with physical health, mental wellbeing and spiritual development. One will definitely find freedom in discipline.

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