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Yoga in Different Types

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Abstract

The origin of 'yoga' is very ancient. Vedic scriptures and proof from remains of Indus –Saraswati Valley civilization confirm the Indian origin and contribution to the development of yoga. Since then yoga has evolved a lot. Depending upon the modern day need, type, style and time characteristics of yoga have been modified. Some modern yoga schools have synthesized the concept and practices of older systems to make it a new integrated one. The greatest help of yoga to modern man is to keep him free from stress and sickness. Instead of accepting it as an orthodox system, present generation assumes it as a flexible health rejuvenating practice. Blended with spiritualism and ethics somewhere it has rooted the divinity in the individual. In this article, the author has attempted to describe various types or branches of Yoga.

Keywords: Hatha, Iyengar Yoga, Gyana yoga, Bhakti yoga, Karma yoga, Kundalini yoga, Raja yoga, Bikram yoga, Power yoga, Vinyasa yoga, Hot yoga, Ashtanga yoga, Chakra

Introduction

Yoga can not be restricted under particular religion or belief. It can not be categorized under any particular system or community. It is approached as a tool for feeling of wholesome wellbeingness. Anyone who makes practice of yoga with involvement and proper attitude can get its benefits, irrespective of his or her religion, belief, faith, ethnicity or culture.

Depending on different schools of philosophies, Guru-shishya paramparas, lineages, traditions, different Schools of Yoga have emerged. Those are for example. Bhakti-yoga, Jnana-yoga, Dhyana-yoga, Karma-yoga, Patanjala-yoga, Hatha-yoga, Kundalini-yoga, Laya-yoga, Raja-yoga, Bouddhayoga, Jain-yoga etc. Each school has designed its own individual rules, regulations, ethics, principles and practices to achieve the ultimate aim of Yoga. Let us explain those below.

Hatha yoga- Yoga devoted to the discipline of the body and mind by practice of asana, pranayama, mudra and bandha. **Traditional** hatha yoga practices covers postures (*asana*), breathing techniques (*pranayama*), cleansing techniques (*shat karmas*) and energy control techniques (*mudra* and *bandha*). The definition of yoga as per the the Hatha Yoga texts is the union of the upward force and the downward force (prana and apana) at the navel center (*manipura chakra*). Hatha yoga teachings suggest us to control our sensory organs and have mastery over the totality of our life force, called "prana". 'Hatha' is a Sanskrit term which refers to yoga that teaches postures and practices by force.

Big Shakti's definition of yoga:- Yoga is that it is any method which allows us to wake up to who or what we really are and to what life is all about.

Vinyasa yoga:- This is a dynamic practice in a dance like way which links and coordinates movement and breath together. The practitioner need not linger too long in each pose and should make practice in quick pace. He should be prepared for a rise in heart rate. There may be music plays matching the

beats of the music to the sequences of the poses. Those who are Intense exercisers will enjoy Vinyasa since it has a faster movement and pace. Runners and athletes prefer to Vinyasa class because of the continuous movement.

Iyengar Yoga:-Contrary to Vinyasa practice, each posture is made for a longer period of time. It suits best for detail-oriented yogis. Practitioners who like anatomy, movement and form will prefer Iyengar yoga, in which a lot of information is shared by the teacher during class time. This yoga can be practiced at any age and is also suitable for persons having injuries. .

Ashtanga Yoga:-Ashtanga is a challenging yoga having orderly approach. It is a six series of specifically sequenced yoga poses where each pose can be a practice for generating internal heat. One has to perform the same poses in the exactly same order in each class. It is best suitable for: Type-A persons and if a person is a perfectionist, he will like Ashtanga's practical routine, principles and strict guidelines.

Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga:-It is a style of yoga introduced and popularized by K. Pattabhi Jois during the 20th century. Sri K. Pattabhi Jois started yoga study in 1927 at the age of 12. Ashtanga Yoga Research Institute was established by him for teaching the specific yoga practice known as Ashtanga (eight-limbed) Yoga by year 1948. Ashtanga Yoga derives its origin after the eight limbs of yoga as referred in Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

This is often demonstrated as a modern-day form of classical Indian yoga.

Ashtanga yoga has eight limbs or branches. Both Pattabhi Jois and, his grandson, Sharath Jois taught practice of Ashtanga Yoga. First two limbs - Yamas and Niyamas are given priority in this system which need to be practiced with the 3rd and 4th limbs (asana and pranayama). "Power yoga" is a generic term which refers to any type of aerobically vigorous type of yoga exercise derived from Ashtanga yoga.

Sequences and Series of practice

With five repetitions of Surya Namaskara A and five repetitions of Surya Namaskara B, Ashtanga practice begins followed by a standing sequence. Following this, one of six series is practised, which is again followed by the closing sequence. The six series are:

1. The Primary series: Yoga Chikitsa, Yoga for Health or Yoga Therapy
2. The Intermediate series: Nadi Shodhana, The Nerve Purifier (also called the Second series)
3. The Advanced series: Sthira Bhaga, Centering of Strength
 - Advanced A, or Third series
 - Advanced B, or Fourth series
 - Advanced C, or Fifth series
 - Advanced D, or Sixth series

Mysore Style:-The term Mysore style identifies city Mysore, in Karnataka, India. It is the place, where Pattabhi Jois and T. Krishnamcharya were teaching yoga. Students remember a sequence and practice in the same room as others without the guidance of the teacher. The teacher has an active role to guide and provide adjustments or assistance in making postures.

Bikram Yoga:- Bikram Choudhury was the founder of this yoga. In 1970, this yoga was popularized which was a synthesis of traditional hatha yoga techniques. All Bikram Yoga Beginning Series practice

classes run for 90 minutes. Bikram yoga series is a specific series of 26 poses and two breathing exercises which are performed in a room of approximately 105 degrees F and 40 percent humidity. Bikram-certified teachers are assigned the responsibility of conducting Bikrama yoga classes.

Hot Yoga-Hot yoga is similar to Bikram in that it is practiced in a heated room.

While the heat will make the feeling of moving deeper into some poses compared to a non-heated class, it can be easy to overstretch, but one should avoid doing beyond capacity.

Some forms of hot yoga include:

- Bikram Yoga, a style synthesised by Bikram Choudhury from traditional hatha yoga techniques, practised in a room heated to 40 °C (104 °F) and 40% humidity
- Forrest Yoga combines yoga asana with Native American spirituality to create a "yoga sweat lodge" in a heated room.
- Tri Balance Yoga is another variation of hot yoga, conducted in slightly warmer but less humid conditions than Bikram Yoga.

Yin Yoga- Yin yoga started in the Western world in the late 1970s. Martial arts expert and Taoist yoga teacher Paulie Zink was founder of this yoga system.

It is meant for bringing calmness and balance in our body and mind. This a slow practice yoga contrary to faster moving practice like Ashtanga yoga. This meditative practice targets our deeper connective tissues and fascia, restoring their length and elasticity. It is best suitable for persons wanting to stretch and unwind. It should be borne in mind that it is not recommended for super flexible people or anyone having connective tissue disorder.

Moderate stress is applied to the connective tissues of the body—the tendons, fascia, and ligaments—so that circulation in the joints and flexibility are improved. Awareness of inner silence is cultivated by the way. It also brings to light a universal, interconnecting quality.

Paul Grilley and Sarah Powers. Weire instrumental in spreading yin yoga across North America and in Europe. Yin yoga as taught by Paul Grilley and Sarah Powers may not be as a complete practice in itself, rather it should be supposed as a complement to more active forms of yoga and exercise. Taoist yoga, both yin and yang is inbuilt in Paulie Zink's (founder of Yin Yoga) approach which is a complete practice in itself.

Power Yoga:- Beryl Bender Birch was the founder of original Power Yoga. Now-a-days, power yoga is a term used to describe many vigorous vinyasa styles of yoga.

Being an offshoot of Ashtanga Yoga, Power Yoga is a fitness-based vinyasa practice. It consists of many same qualities and benefits, including building internal heat, boosting of stamina, strength, and flexibility, as well reduction of stress. Sequences are designed by teachers while the practice of synchronization of breath with movement is done by students.

Restorative yoga :- Restorative yoga is a form of yoga devised to achieve physical, mental and emotional relaxation for the practitioners. Modern restorative yoga got its origin from a yoga style invented by B.K.S. Iyengar, the world famous yoga master. Instruction for use of props to bring perfection in the poses was characteristic of Iyengar's teachings which became known as Iyengar Yoga, This was the basis for the development of restorative yoga which became popularized later on by Judith Lasater, a student of Iyengar around the world.

The use of props helps in maintaining balance of the body. It also helps in stimulating and relaxing the body. The restorative yoga poses has useful effects for the entire body, while others focus on specific body parts like hearts and lungs.

This yoga consists is a slow-moving practice with longer holds which gives body a chance to tap into the parasympathetic nervous system, This gives the practitioner the experiences of deeper relaxation. The props include blankets, bolsters and yoga blocks for supporting our body completely in each position with their aid.

Restorative yoga helps in healing the body as well as the mind. It reduces stress and fatigue from daily activities. Recovery from illness and injury, Overcoming emotional depression and anxiety are well dealt by restorative yoga. As a result of sincere practice, nervous system and the muscles also will become relaxed. It reduces the frequency of chronic illness due to stress-related factors and helps to achieve optimal health.

Jivanmukti Yoga:- Developed by David Life and Sharon Gannon in 1984, the 'Jivanmukti Yoga' method is a proprietary style of yoga. In this practice, both hatha and vinyasa practices are combined.

One has to adhere to five central tenets: shastra (scripture), bhakti (devotion), ahimsa (nonviolence, non-harming), nada (music), and dhyana (meditation). Social activism, environmentalism and animal rights are also given emphasis. Jivanmukti Yoga has emerged as a reputed system as the chosen yoga style of many celebrities.

Anusara Yoga:- John Friend American-born yoga teacher in 1997, designed the Anusara School of Hatha Yoga, also known as Anusara Yoga. Friend borrowed the elements of his style from the Iyengar style of yoga adding elements of Hindu spirituality into a western approach of yoga which is more health oriented.

The Anusara style adopts a set of Universal Principles of Alignment which underlie all asanas and linked to philosophical aspects of the practice. It is grounded on tantic principles. The term has its origin from the Sanskrit anusāra, meaning "custom, usage, natural state or condition", which means 'flowing with Grace,' 'flowing with Nature' and 'following your heart,' in this context.

Certified instructors are exclusively associated with the Anusara School of Hatha Yoga, to teach Anusara founded in 2013. After John Friend and Anusara Inc. were embroiled in a scandal Friend stepped down from Anusara and transferred all rights to the name "Anusara" to the newly formed school dissolving Anusara, Inc.

Kripalu Yoga:- Kripalu yoga is a three-part practice which teaches us to get to know, accept, and learn from our body. Starting with the knowledge of function of body in different poses, the practitioner moves toward postures for an extended time and meditation. It taps deep into our being to find spontaneous flow in asanas, letting our body to perform the role of the teacher.

Prenatal yoga:- This type of Yoga postures is carefully adapted for expectant mothers. It is tailored to help women in all stages of pregnancy, even to regain the shape in post-birth period.

Integral yoga- This is also known as supramental yoga. It was developed by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother (Mirra Alfassa). Manifestations of spirit in a process of involution forgetting its origin is the theme of this yoga.

Sivananda yoga:- Devised by Swami Sivananda this is an unhurried yoga practice which typically focuses on the same 12 basic asanas or variations thereof every time supported by sun salutations and savasana. The system is grounded on a five-point philosophy that proper breathing, relaxation, diet, exercises, and positive thinking work together to make a healthy yogic lifestyle

Viniyoga :- This is a highly individualized practice in which yogis learn to adapt poses and goals according to their own needs and abilities. *Vini* refers to differentiation, adaptation, and appropriate application. PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation) is the principle on which Viniyoga focuses instead of focusing on stretching for achieving strength and flexibility. PNF simply refers to warming up and contracting a muscle before stretching it which decreases the chance of injury.

Jnana Yoga

- Jnana Yoga is the Yoga committed to knowledge and inquiry.
- Jnana Yoga focuses on converting intellectual knowledge into practical wisdom. It is a traditional path for achieving the highest state of meditation and knowledge.
- Jnana refers to 'knowledge', but in the context of yoga it is a process of meditative awareness leading to wisdom. It is not a method to find answers of eternal queries, rather a part of meditation leading to self-enquiry and realization.

Some components of Jnana Yoga are as follows:

1. Realise ,without believing
2. Developing Self-awareness which leads to self-analysis
3. Experiencing the knowledge
4. Realising the personal nature,developing intuitive wisdom
5. Experiencing inner unity

Mantra Yoga:- Veda is the origin of mantra. All the vedic verses are mantras in one or other form. It is said that any person who can chant or sing Vedas can achieve the ultimate salvation or union with supreme consciousness. The salvation or ultimate union can be achieved only by chanting the mantras, which is the aim Mantra Yoga.

Bhakti Yoga:- Bhakti Yoga is the Yoga devoted to love, surrender and devotion to God.

Bhakti or devotion is Yoga of complete faith. The object of faith may be God or supreme consciousness in any of the forms. We may also keep faith or devotion in Lord Rama, Krishna, Christ, Mohammed, Buddha or own teacher or Guru or his disciples.

The most important requirement in this path is one should have very strong emotional link with the object of faith. That makes the flow of emotional energy targetted naturally to the object of faith. Suppression of emotions often get manifested in the form of physical and mental disorders in a later stage. Such type of emotional disorders originating from suppressed emotions are cured by adopting the path of devotion or Bhakti yoga.

By continuous meditation of God or object of faith the ego of the practitioner is lessened day by day. Attachment to new distractions, sign of fickleness or even feeling of pain are removed creating strong bonds of love. The self identity of the practitioner is lost gradually and the person becomes one with the object of faith which is a state of self realization.

Kundalini yoga :- Kundalini is the dormant potential energy existing in the base of the spine at the muladhara chakra. Kundalini yoga is the science of energizing this dormant potential. In this system

of yoga,yogi unites the mental energy and the pranic energy in the third eye or at the base chakra. This union or connection unifies duality in us by linking body and mind leading to the attainment of spiritual consciousness. Kundalini is a physically and mentally challenging practice which is different from typical yoga practice. This practice is associated with Kriyas —repetitive physical exercises , breathing practices,chanting, singing and meditation The purpose is to release the untapped dormant energy residing within us and bring a higher level of self-awareness by breaking our internal barriers. It is best suitable for people looking for a spiritual practice and development.

This system of Yoga is associated with the awakening of the psychic centers or chakras existing in every individual. There are six main chakras in the human constitution.

Our mind consists of different subtle layers which are progressively associated with the higher levels of consciousness. These levels correspond to the different chakra or psychic center located throughout the psychic body. There are no of other chakras apart from the six main chakras , which are associated with planes below the human level of existence. We can conclude that , chakras connect us to animal levels of mind, to the instinctive realms of being or to the sublime heights of consciousness.

In Kundalini Yoga,chakras and their activities are energized. This can be achieved by the practices involving deep concentration on these chakras and stimulating their arousal. Asanas, pranayama, mudra , bandha and other forms of yoga such as Mantra Yoga practices are also used to stimulate the awakening.

Karma Yoga:-It is the Yoga committed to action, selfless service and Dharma.

Karma Yoga refers to the path of devotion to the work. The true karma yogi loses his identity while he is working. Selfless work is the theme of Karma Yoga. This state of attitude and mind is very difficult to attain in real life.

Generally one expects some rewards or incentives for outcome following the work and gets attached to this reward or incentive. This is not the true Karma Yoga. Non-attachment with the work without expectation of result or rewards and thinking self as the perfect instrument of the super consciousness while doing the work in this universe is the ultimate purpose of Karma Yoga.

At the beginning stage strong sense of ego may emerge and he may get entangled to the results of his efforts either knowingly or unknowingly. One may seek praise or recognition after performing a noble work. By continuous involvement in the work and change in attitude, one can successfully overcome ego and his own personality problems. The work becomes worship to the God, it becomes spiritual, and the individual becomes expert, skilled and Yogi. He achieves mental stability in all conditions, not being disturbed or excited or happy in any of the situations. He becomes purely divine & all his actions represent God's will.

Karma Yoga, According to Bhagavad Gita : Karma Yoga or the Yoga of Action is the most vital in life which emphasizes perfection in action as a means to live a fulfilled life. Man has to perform action for sustaining the physical body, but all work needs to be performed with a selfless attitude.

Kriya Yoga:-‘Kriya’ is an activity of consciousness, a type preliminary practice leading to total union as the final result of practice. Kriya Yoga may not eliminate successfully all mental fluctuations but it purposely creates activity and awakening in consciousness. As a result all faculties are harmonized and bloom into their optimum potential.

Kriya Yoga is very ancient having origin in antiquity. It evolved over time through practice and experience. The complete Kriya Yoga consists of over 70 kriyas ,whereas only 20 or so are

commonly in practice. The kriya practices are mentioned in numerous tantric texts written in Sanskrit languages. Only a few of these works have been translated into other languages. Swami Satyananda Saraswati propagated the kriya yoga collecting from secret teachings described in the Yoga and Tantra Shastras. There are two kriya yoga systems recognized all over the world, one is of Satyananda Yoga School and, the other being that of Paramahansa Yogananda.

Swara Yoga:- Swara is Sanskrit word having the meaning of sound or note. Continuous flow of air through one nostril is characteristic of this yoga. Swara yoga aims at realization of cosmic consciousness by breath control and manipulation.

Pranayama is only linked with breath control in various ways, whereas in swara yoga, one finds association of breath with the activities of sun, moon and various seasons. Complete study, observations, control and manipulation of breath or Swara are the different aspects of Swara yoga. It reflects the various physical and mental conditions of individuals depending on the flow of breath or swara. So Swara Yoga has a more comprehensive theory and practices related to breath.

Raja Yoga :- Raja Yoga is the Yoga committed to introspection, contemplation and meditation. Raja Yoga is a system of yoga described in the Yoga Sutras of Sage Patanjali. Sage Patanjali explains eight stages of yoga known collectively as Raja Yoga. He describes yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana and dhyana and Samadhi as different stages of the sadhana. By this practices personality gets restructured and refined. Yamas means restraint, niyamas -disciplines; Asana- postures which helps in attainment of physical health and vitality, pranayamas -breathing techniques which helps in management of mental and emotional conflicts, pratyahara-sensory withdrawal for development of awareness and concentration, dharana -concentration and dhyana -meditation for development of the creative aspect of consciousness for transcendental awareness and samadhi (absorption in the universal identity)

Japa Yoga:- The Sanskrit word japa has been derived from the verb-root jap, meaning "to repetitively utter in a low voice, to mutter/whisper especially prayers or incantations, to pray in a low voice, to invoke or call upon in a low voice, to whisper repeatedly, to mutter prayers, repeating, in a murmuring tone, passages from a scripture or charma, spells or names of a deity."

Swami Satyananda Saraswati mentions the following requirements for japa yoga. Need for a mala, Understanding the meaning of the mala, Understanding the use of the mala, Proper Position of the right hand, Awareness of the flow of breath, Use of a gomukhi, Knowledge of possible errors in japa and Pronunciation of mantra.

Tantra Yoga:- The word Tantra refers to the meaning "to weave or expand." Similar to some other forms of yoga, Tantra yoga synthesizes Bhakti yoga, Karma yoga, Kundalini yoga and Hatha yoga practices. It includes the dynamics of other mystic rituals like astrology, ayurveda, gemology and crystal etc. It involves breathing practices, meditation and rituals. It has the goal of expansion of consciousness beyond the limitation and some times may include sexual rituals or practice. It may be categorized as left hand and right hand tantra (bamachara and dakhinachara)

Conclusion

Various types of yoga have ben evolved in course of time.Some of them have spiritual benefits, whereas some others have enormous health benefits. Modern yoga styles have emerged by synthesizing different old patterns depending on the need and suitability of man.It seems that yoga has occupied an indispensable place in the life of modern man because of its leading role than other systems.However ethics and virtues blended with yoga practice will help the practitioner a lot.

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