

Easy Yogic Postures and Exercises: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on physical postures and breathing exercises. This paper explores how meditation and yoga can play a pivotal role in enhancing concentration and reducing stress. The paper highlights asanas (body postures), pranayama (breathing exercises) and meditation. Yoga practice stretches the muscles, rising elasticity and reducing the risk of injuries. Yoga is helpful in managing constant situation such as hypertension, diabetes, and arthritis through its calming and balancing effects on the body.

Keywords: physical, postures, breathing, exercises, body, muscles, practice and mind

INTRODUCTION

Posture is that position in which one is perfectly steady and at ease. The poised position of the body is a pre-requisite for quieting the nerves, muscles, and the tissues of the body and for the composure of the mind needed to obtain yogic attainment. In all there are thirteen main Asanas or postures. Any one of these may be adopted according to choice and comfort. The thirteen postures are as follows: (1) Padmasana, (2) Virasana, (3) Bhadrasana, (4) Swastika, (5) Dandasana, (6) Sopashraya (7) Paryanka, (8) Hastinishadana, (9) Ushtranishadana, (10) Kronchnishadana, (11) , Samasansthana ,(12) Sthirsukha and (13) Yathasukha

For our purpose the first one, Padmasana, is more than sufficient to gain the end in view. This posture is a sitting, steady position with the legs crossed. This unagitated and relaxed but upright position, motionless and unmoved by foreign disturbances, is of immense effect. It brings about important tranquility in body and mind, and makes it easy to practice yogic meditation. By mastering regulated posture the result is total absence of the attacks of the pairs of opposites, which have already been mentioned many times. "It is derived from medieval Haṭha yoga, which made use of similar postures, but it is generally simply called "yoga". Academic research has given yoga as exercise a variety of names, including modern postural yoga" (De Michelis 2004: 1-2)

The ability to control posture prevents the student from being over-powered by either the pains or pleasures of the pairs of opposites. Through sustained and insistent practice of this control of the posture, the student becomes immune to the activities of the body and mind. With controlled posture and regulated breath it is easy to attain the sum total of happiness of body and mind. More than this, through persistent practice, the pure nature of the soul and its innate power, will be realized. This, as we have seen, is twenty-four fold, and will enable the student to deal with any problem and to carry success in the palm of his hand in this weird world.

The quest of life is five-fold: This five-sided search, as has been stated before, comprises true religion, acquisition of wealth, fulfillment of legitimate desires, attainment of true knowledge and the realization of God. "It is an ancient spiritual and philosophical goal was to unite the human spirit with the divine" (Monier-Williams 1999: 856). Life's errand is not beyond these all comprehensive achievements. They are within reach if the key of controlled posture and breath is used. "The Sanskrit noun yoga, cognate with English "yoke", is derived from the Proto-Indo-European root yewg- to attach, join, harness, yoke"(White, David Gordon 2011: 3) With slight effort the following exercises will be mastered for meditation position and to maintain equilibrium of the body and mind. Yoga will be attained by overcoming the normal tendency of the mind to react to impressions.

"The branch of yoga that makes use of physical postures is Haṭha yoga. The Sanskrit word haṭha means "force", alluding to its use of physical techniques" (Mallinson, James 2011:770). The condition of mental repose thereby obtained is yoga or meditation. In short, total repose both of the body and of the mind is necessary to maintain meditation position with neither much effort nor attention. Study and practise the following exercises with all care and sincerity.

Exercise No. 1. Watch the Body: This means regulated relaxation of the body for the purpose of accustoming it to the meditation position. Tension in any limb of the body is disadvantageous to meditation. A genuinely healthy body is needed so that the mind shall not be distracted by the ailments therein or any disturbance arising from a feeble body. A strong and

sound body is essential. If it be so the student, relaxing the body and watching it for calmness, succeeds easily and gets his or her body accustomed to poise in all respects, and so enters into meditation. Watch the body to bring it to complete repose. This is done with slight effort at the beginning, but later on poise comes automatically with the advance of acquired mastery over the body.



Exercise No. 2. Watch the Phenomena: In this the student has to strive to watch and calm the disturbances and the intruding elements arising from the surroundings and environment. Notwithstanding noise and other distractions, practice obtaining calm, and gradually they will vanish and cease to distract you. They should, as it were, be non-existing as far as the student is concerned. This is not an easy task, but with determined will-power they can be shut off, if only a little time and effort is given regularly to bring complete calm from out of disturbing circumstances. The poised body of the first exercise makes it definitely easier to rise above the phenomena that distract from the main purpose. This exercise presupposes mastery over the first, and in each that follows the rule of mastery of the ones that have gone before holds good absolutely.



Exercise No. 3. Watch the Breath: As regards regulation of breath and control over it, sufficient instructions have been given in the chapter on Pranayama. Proper breathing, i.e. right expiration and inspiration and restraint over breath for calmness, is achieved by following the rules of Pranayama.



Exercise No. 4. Watch the sensations: To do this the student must become aware of the seat of sensations in the brain. Turn the conscious attention towards that section in the brain, and watch it. Sensations originate from the etheric body; therefore a healthy etheric body is wanted. The chapter on the bodies has dealt with that particular subject. By watching the sensations, Control over a multitude of sensations is of primary the etheric body is both watched and calmed results of meditation. If the senses run riot, need for mental repose and to achieve the beneficial though body and environment are at ease, the objective will be missed. There is need therefore for calmness of all the sensations that is of the senses. With the senses controlled, the vital energy becomes a force to forge out success from any circumstance whatever.



Exercise No. 5. Watch the emotions: Emotions spring up from the astral body. Care of this body is also explained in the chapter on the four bodies. Calmness of emotions is necessary as if sitting down for a portrait-painting. In posing for a portrait one quiets excessive emotions to get a natural likeness. The effort to gain calmness of emotions, to get control of them, is easy if one could only remember that one is posing as a model for a portrait or drawing. There is a proverbial calm likened to the ocean which is all that is needed to keep the emotions in check. Watch them constantly by conscious attention and the result will surely be satisfactory for meditation, the instrument for probing the mysteries of life and of the soul.



Exercise No. 6. Watch the thoughts: Thoughts issue from the mental body. They arise as bubbles on water and are as transient as such. A storm of ideas disturbs mental claim. The velocity of an avalanche of thoughts is beyond measure. In a second, literally, a phantasmagoria of fleeting thoughts traverses the mental field. The mathematical capacities of this psychic functioning are beyond explanation by human intelligence. But the power of the human soul if utilized properly gives wisdom to still and calm the mystic march of thoughts in the mental body. Centralized and concentrated effort, watching the thoughts and stopping them for the preliminary purpose of calming the mental body, is essential for raising the veil from the soul and knowing its nature, and through it, of communing with the Supreme Soul.



Exercise No. 7. Watch the mind: We have dealt with the nature of mind in the chapter on mind and its functions. This exercise hinges on stopping the thoughts and stilling the mind to a sacred silence. Thus, steadied, direct the mind to think only of the soul and its potentialities. Mind is the medium and if stilled and duly controlled it removes all obstacles to progress and unveils by degrees the meaning of life, its origin, whither it is bound and its relation to the universal Heavenly Father, the Great Architect and Geometrician of the entire Universe.



Exercise No. 8. Relax the effort to still the mind. The mastery of the previous exercise makes it possible to master this most difficult task, that of attaining stillness of mind without any effort whatsoever. All the above exercises have to be acquired by diligent effort in the first instance. Then the same should become as automatic as any natural function. Effortless mind-stilling should become as natural a process as that of natural breathing.



So by the constant practice of these exercises servants by the discipline of the mind. The yoga is attained. All qualities become your emphasis of the soul is always right, being of the Decide everything by the aid of the inner self. Obey interior convictions. Never yield to the opinions of others. Never allow your-self to worry and become despondent if the attempt to attain mastery over the mind gains ground slowly. Be assured that mental laws rightly used insure perfect results. Always think of yourself as already possessing the thing desired. A feeling of hurry and impatience impedes matters. Therefore be perfectly patient. Things become apparently worse before they grow better. Hold this in mind and constantly expect the achievement of the object of desire. Act fearlessly, on the basis of the inner judgment, and promptly, in achieving the mastery over the above exercises. Fix a stipulated time each day for concentration. This hour of concentration should be rigidly and continuously observed with all vigilance as it is the price of success in all affairs and adhering to it shows sincerity of purpose.

CONCLUSION

Yoga is a spiritual effort to achieve perfection through the control of sense organs, gross body, subtle mind, intellect, and ego. Thus gaining effortless posture control, begin concentration and meditation with the ease of the body established. State your will lucidly to your soul, defining what you want to achieve and assert with assurance that the soul's orders are carried out. Then listen attentively to the inner voice and expect answers of an affirmative nature, which gradually, after a time, will guide to new thoughts, fresh ideas, and solid success; soul-power hitherto potential will become active. This is the secret of posture control which opens the gate of self-unfold, to live and move in God-Spirit.

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