CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Om Sarve bhavantu sukhinah

Sarve santu niramayyah

Sarve bhadraanni pashyantu

Maacaschit duhkha bhaag bhavet

Om shantih, shantih shantih… (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad)

The great sages of India chanted shantih mantra and its echoes have reverberated through centuries. The quest for happiness and success has been the dynamic factor in the course of evolutionary history. This era of globalization with the opportunity of modern science and technology have placed man in a milieu of hope and success while pushing him into the brim of chaos, frustration and dilemma. In the riddle of this chaotic existence, man confronts with a world of illness and depression wherein his capacities are suppressed without a way of escape and with no way to flare up. The tranquillity and mental satisfaction of the past is lost forever without leaving any traces of return.

But survival and success of man has always depended upon his mental and physical energy. Therefore to develop standard of physical fitness and mental energy, nations of the world give due importance to sports and games. It is obvious that healthy individuals make a healthy nation and nobody can deny that; “Health is wealth”. In this modern age the importance of sports and games cannot be overlooked.

With the growing comforts of life, sports and games provide us the opportunities of physical exercise along with enjoyment. Sports and games bring all classes of people together thereby influencing an integral development of their physical, mental as well as moral dimensions. In all kinds of sports, the muscles of the body are engaged and so the
body is developed but a wholesome growth is attained only when the mind develops along with the body.

As Hippocrates said, “Sport is a preserver of health”. Playing games and sports have important advantages in a way that it socializes our lives in a consumerist world. Sports can enhance human solidarity and personal integrity as in team effort thereby bringing about holistic development. Thus, they decrease the stress, teach us the skills that we need, satisfy us, and socialize our lives. And to get the most of the benefits, they should be practiced daily.

A fit person is capable of living life to its fullest sense. In order to maintain a relaxed state of mind, a person should be physically active. A person who is fit both physically and mentally is strong enough to face the ups and downs of life, and is not affected by circumstances. Becoming physically fit requires a change in our present lifestyle. One has to incorporate regular exercise and routine in life. Spending time outdoors in the sun, fresh air and taking part in more healthy activities like fishing, bicycling, swimming, hiking, and playing with kids should be a part of our physically fit lifestyle. Here yoga plays a vital role in rebuilding one’s physical as well as mental health for the harmonious existence of the human personality. Yogasanas make possible not only physical and mental development but also intellectual and spiritual development. Asanas require the least possible use of the physical energy. Yogasanas are called a ‘non violent activity’ (Sharma, P.D 1984).

1.1. YOGA

Yoga is a combination of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. A broad variety of Yogic schools, practices, and
goals are seen in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Among the most well-known types of yoga are Hatha yoga and Rāja yoga.

Yoga philosophy and practice were first described by Patanjali in the classic text, Yoga Sutras, which is widely acknowledged as the authoritative text on yoga. (Lasater J.1977). Today, many people identify yoga only with asana, the physical practice of yoga, but asana is just one of the many tools used for healing the individual; only three of the 196 sutras mention asana and the remainder of the text discusses the other components of yoga including conscious breathing, meditation, lifestyle and diet changes, visualization and the use of sound, among many others. In Yoga Sutras, Patanjali outlines an eightfold path to awareness and enlightenment called ashtanga, which literally means “eight limbs” (Maehle G.,2006).

The eight limbs are comprised of ethical principles for living a meaningful and purposeful life; serving as a prescription for moral and ethical conduct and self-discipline, they direct attention towards one's health while acknowledging the spiritual aspects of one's nature. Any of the eight limbs may be used separately, but within yoga philosophy the physical postures and breathing exercises prepare the mind and body for meditation and spiritual development. Based on Patanjali's eight limbs, many different yogic disciplines have been developed. Each has its own technique for preventing and treating disease. In the Western world, the most common aspects of yoga practiced are the physical postures and breathing practices of Hatha yoga and meditation (Collins C.Yoga, 1998). Hatha yoga enhances the capacity of the physical body through the use of a series of body postures, movements (asanas), and breathing techniques (pranayama). The breathing techniques of Hatha yoga focus on conscious prolongation of inhalation, breath retention, and exhalation. It is through the unification of the physical body, breath, and concentration, while performing the postures and movements that blockages in the energy
channels of the body are cleared and the body energy system becomes more balanced. Although numerous styles of Hatha yoga exist, the majority of studies included in this manuscript utilized the Iyengar style of yoga. The Iyengar method of Hatha yoga is based on the teachings of the yoga master B.K.S. Iyengar (Williams K, Steinberg L, Petronis J 2003). Iyengar yoga places an emphasis on standing poses to develop strength, stability, stamina, concentration and body alignment. Props are utilized to facilitate learning and to adjust poses and instruction is given on how to use yoga to ease various ailments and stressors.

Yoga is recognized as a form of mind-body medicine that integrates an individual's physical, mental and spiritual components to improve aspects of health, particularly stress related illnesses (Atkinson NL, Permuth-Levine R2009). Evidence shows that stress contributes to the etiology of heart disease, cancer, and stroke as well as other chronic conditions and diseases (Granath J, Ingvarsson S, von Thiele U, Lundberg U.2006). Due to the fact that stress is implicated in numerous diseases, it is a priority to include a focus on stress management and reduction of negative emotional states in order to reduce the burden of disease. Viewed as a holistic stress management technique, yoga is a form of CAM that produces a physiological sequence of events in the body reducing the stress response. The scientific study of yoga has increased substantially in recent years and many clinical trials have been designed to assess its therapeutic effects and benefits.

1.1.1. HISTORY OF YOGA

The origin of yoga has been speculated to date back to pre-Vedic Indian traditions, it is mentioned in the Rigveda, but most likely developed around the fifth and sixth centuries BC, in ancient India's ascetic and śramana movements. The chronology of earliest texts describing the yoga-practices is unclear and is credited to Hindu Upanishads. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali dates back to the first half of the 1st
millennium BC, but only gained prominence in the West in the 20th century. Hatha yoga texts emerged around the 11th century with origins in tantra. Yogic gurus from India introduced the practice of yoga to the West, and it was reiterated through Swami Vivekananda in the late 19th and early 20th century. In the 1980s, yoga became popular as a system of physical exercise across the Western world. Yoga in Indian traditions, however, is more than just physical exercise; it has a meditative and spiritual core.

1.1.2. MEANING OF YOGA

The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word yuj, means the union of the individual consciousness or soul with the Universal consciousness or Spirit. Though many think of yoga as only a physical exercise where people twist, turn, stretch and breath in the most complex ways, these are only the most superficial aspects of this profound science unfolding the infinite potentials of the human mind and soul. The science of Yoga imbibes the complete essence of the Vedic way of life. Yoga has a complete message for humanity. It is a message for the human body, human mind and soul.

1.1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF YOGA

Though the ultimate aim of the Yoga is to attain higher state of consciousness for Self-realisation it has many other objectives. The preliminary objective is to improve body health and physical abilities for all routine activities. It helps for promotion of positive health. Mental powers can be obtained only through the physical discipline. The intermediary objective of yoga is to bring integration and harmony between thoughts, words, and deeds. And such integration is necessary to discover the hidden potential of the mind to realise the inner spirit which helps to transform the ego consciousness into spiritual consciousness. The final objective of the yoga is spiritual growth to realise that there is no substantial difference between the Atman (individual
spirit) and the Brahman (the universal spirit) and that Reality, is a state of silence and highest ‘Bliss’.

1.1.4. KINDS OF YOGA

According to the Dattatreya Yoga Shashtra and Yogaraaj Upanishad, there are four Schools of yoga.

1. Mantra yoga (Holy incantations or Mantras) If the Mantra is ritually chanted for 12 years the aspirant gets the siddhi (powers) like Anima, Garima etc.

2. Laya Yoga: Constant Rememberance of God while completing one’s daily routine is Laya yoga.

3. Hatha Yoga: Wilfully repressing and controlling the natural tendencies of the mind and body through various postures, breath control and physical exercises to ensure that body becomes free of toxicity and the mind, with a single pointed concentration attains supreme enlightenment through Hatha yoga.

4. Raja yoga: Modulating inhalation and exhalation patterns through rigorous control of the natural breathing mechanism to make the mind pure and enlightened with a divine glow so as to experience union of the soul with the Supreme Spirit in the concept of Moksha is called Raja yoga.

1.1.5. BENEFITS OF YOGA

Following are the important benefits of yoga practices.
1) Better Flexibility

Yoga ensures the human body of better flexibility as it tones the human muscles so as to increase its endurance and energy. Overtime the muscles will atrophy and the human joints settle into a limited range of motion. So the initial sessions of yoga will help loosen up the tightened muscular rigidity thereby gradually enhancing person’s physical capability.

2) Better Posture

Poor posture looks bad and brings about a negative impact upon the body. Bad posture has been linked to backaches, neck pain, joint problems, and muscle fatigue. There are a few things that can be implemented so as to improve the posture. Yoga is one of the best ways to fix poor posture since each pose aims to get the body back into proper alignment without forcing the physique into unnatural positions. Yogic postures require the entire body to work together, from the cervices to the shoulders, back, and lower body thus bringing about a wholesome and proper alignment of the human body.

3) Perfect Balance

Yoga is the science of ultimate balance. A human being is governed by the twin entities of proper material or physical entity that has to be substantiated with spiritual or mental ability. A healthy mind in a healthy body completes the healthy Man. From easy beginner movements to more advanced stretches, one needs to concentrate and focus in order to hold yogic postures. Practice of Yoga over a time quickens the ability to concentrate and the span of concentration thereby making these physical postures easier and more comfortable.
4) More Strength

Unlike other types of workouts where exercises involve pump irons or pull ups with resistance bands, yoga only uses the person’s own bodyweight as resistance. Since yoga requires the practitioner to enter into and hold various positions, it helps in naturally strengthening the muscles. As soon as one pose becomes easy there is always another, harder posture to begin working on. While just about every yoga pose helps the body to build strong muscles, some of the best include planks, *bhakaasana*, and various inverted pyramid postures.

5) Better Sleep.

Yoga helps to relax the nervous system, which enhances the human intellect. It focuses the core of all skill development faculties thereby improving the memory retention and intellectual cognitive abilities. In addition to the already stated benefits, yoga’s meditative aspect comes into play to quieten the mind. A quiet and calm mind prunes the mental vibrations thereby enhancing the rejuvenating power within the human body.

There are specific poses that can be practiced to help people sleep more soundly. *Uttanasana*, *haalasana*, or *savaasana* helps lower hypertension and instability as well as rectify bowel movements. These should help put the body into a relaxed state, making it easier to attain restful sleep.

6) More Energy

Yoga does a few things for the body that result in a boost of energy. The practice of yoga helps breathe control, that is, the blood vessels receive fresh waves of oxygen. This is of utmost importance to increase the energy levels of a person. Postures like
*uthitatrikonasana*, *utkatasana*, and *salabhasana* helps beat fatigue. These *Aasanas* or postures also help the person feel more awake, leading to a more productive day.

8) Lower Blood Pressure

It is important to monitor and lower high blood pressure since it can lead to heart attack, stroke, and other unhealthy cardiovascular events. Aside from taking medications, there are natural ways to lower high blood pressure. The focus should be on feeling good and the focus should be on continual growth. In addition to these positive results, lowering of blood pressure can be attained through a focus on meditation while holding postures.

9) Better Circulation

With all the complicated postures, yoga can really get the heart pumping and blood circulating. This means fresh blood and oxygen are delivered to all cells and organs, enhancing their function. Yoga thins the blood which can decrease the risk of heart attack and stroke, since they are often caused by blood clots. In addition to the above mentioned positive results, yoga can also help reduce swelling of the hands and feet. The chair pose, downward dog, and warrior pose are just three poses that can improve circulation.

10) Lower Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a lipid that is found in the bloodstream. While the body needs some cholesterol, too much LDL cholesterol can lead to build-up of plaque in the arteries, blood clots, heart attack, and stroke. Impressively enough, numerous studies have shown yoga lower LDL “bad” cholesterol and boost HDL “good” cholesterol. According to the American Heart Association, HDL cholesterol actually helps to remove LDL cholesterol from the arteries and carries it back to the liver, where it is broken down and passed from the body.
11) Lower Risk of Heart Disease

Between lowering blood pressure, increasing circulation, and lowering bad cholesterol, it is no wonder that yoga helps to lower a person’s risk of heart disease. The various Yogic postures and deep breathing exercises help the heart to function optimally, increasing blood flow throughout the body, and improving the entire circulatory system.

12) Less Pain

Much of the pain we experience today is related to our lack of motion and activity. Yoga is one way of easing the human body of its pain. After a short period of practicing yoga, one may find the body moving into its proper alignment. When that happens, chances are a lot of the body pain will dissolve. According to several studies, both yogic aasanaas and meditation can help reduce arthritis pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, back pain, fibromyalgia, and other painful chronic conditions. It’s important to remain optimistic and realize that it is not likely to be an overnight process. There are specific postures that can alleviate pain through a proper regulation of body mechanism and easier management of ailing limbs, but these will vary depending on the amount of sustaining practice from the part of the yogic practitioner. There are specific routines and postures in yoga for back pain, arthritis pain, as well as other physical malfunctions of the body thereby making it the most holistic system of health care in modern times.

13) Boost Your Metabolism

The term “metabolism” according to the Mayo Clinic, refers to the process of converting food into energy. Each person has his/her own metabolic rate, which is affected by lifestyle. When someone is more active, their metabolism will get a boost. This assists
in weight loss. The locust, bridge, and shoulder postures in yoga help in reviving one’s metabolism.

14) Weight Loss

Yoga can help boost metabolism and build stronger muscles. Incidentally, these are the two things that are essential for weight loss. Conscious food habits that include a vegetarian diet with lots of green leafy vegetables, organic fruits and pulses as well as a healthy lifestyle enhances proper body weight with a rejuvenating metabolism.

15) Better Immunity

A weakened immune system can stem from a variety of things such as lack of sleep, chronic stress, and poor digestion. Since yoga is found to improve all of those things, it may not come as a surprise that yoga can also strengthen the immune system. According to doctors, yoga can stimulate the four main physiological systems that are linked to the immune system. They include the circulatory, digestive, nervous, and endocrine systems. Performing postures that benefit at least one of those systems could have a positive effect on immunity. That means, almost every yogic posture will help improve and stimulate the immune system. However, there are a few postures that are more effective. They include bridge, shoulder stands, and head stands.

16) Better Respiration

The art of good living and great health starts with the power to control one’s own breath. Yoga helps in the self-regulation of the human breath. The effort or effortlessness with which one breathes becomes the benchmark of one’s wellbeing. Yoga initiates the practitioner into this grand science of controlling and regulating the air that we breathe. It pulls the attention inwards calming the central nervous system. In the resultant calmness
the mind and body begins to relax thereby increasing the aura of positivity around oneself. This self-regulating mechanism of human breath through yoga is called Pranayam. i.e., regulating the life giving force of the human being which is air. Pranayam involves the twin processes of inhalation or “inward breathing” and exhalation or outward breath of air. Taking deeper breaths, expanding lung capacity, and being more conscious of the breathing mechanism are all part of the process. Thus yoga attempts a perfect equation of the two processes thereby eliminating possibilities of any respiratory ailments. It can help open up a person’s airways and gets their lungs to function more effectively.

17) Less Stress and Anxiety

The modern man is an epitome of man’s mad rush for survival. Between bills, bosses, family, and the hustle and bustle of everyday life, people are stressed to the maximum. As if the feeling of stress isn’t bad enough, chronic stress wreaks havoc on health in a number of ways. It can lead to poor digestion, weight fluctuations, weakened immune system, cardiovascular conditions, and much more. One way to naturally beat stress is to exercise. According to researchers, when yoga is practiced, the feel-good brain chemicals like serotonin are released, putting you in a better mood. Moreover, yoga helps quieten the mind, and gives the body an outlet to release energy blocks that help eliminate stress.

18) Better Memory

Since yoga improves blood flow to the brain, it is often viewed as a brain-boosting workout. Paadahastasana is the great brain-boosting posture and it involves bending over so that the head is near the knees and the air is expelled from the lungs. This requires enough practice and is considered to increase blood flow to the brain.
19) **Lower Blood Sugar Levels**

This is great news for diabetics and those that have been told they are at risk for developing diabetes. Yoga has the ability to lower blood sugar levels when done on a regular basis. Paired with a well-balanced diet, this can go a long way towards keeping these levels within healthy parameters. Diabetic patients are often advised to exercise and yoga is one exercise that can quickly regulate the function of the pancreas. The most significant advantage of yogic exercise is that it can be practiced with ease at home under all conditions no matter the weather, and without any extra equipment. *Pranayam* helps in lowering blood sugar.

20) **Lowers Sodium Levels**

The average American gets about 3,400 mg of sodium a day, which is much more than recommended. Rather, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting sodium to less than 2,300 mg a day. While sodium is an important nutrient, too much can lead to fluid retention, high blood pressure, stroke, and other heart issues. Along with cutting back on table salt, it is important to get active and sweat out the sodium. Tip: one may want to try hot yoga, which is yoga performed in a room with sauna-like temperatures. This helps in the elimination of toxic waste through sweating.

21) **Improves Digestion**

Yoga helps to tone the outer body muscles thereby keeping the person fit. Inside the intestines, there is also a layer of muscle that is constantly contracting to help food waste pass. If the body is denied enough physical activity, the intestinal muscles may become too relaxed. In yoga, a combination of deep breathing exercises along with muscular exercises are performed that really massage the organs, works the intestinal
muscles, and help release any trapped toxic as stool. It also helps to relieve one of constipation or simply improves the digestive system.

22) Cultivates a positive outlook on life

Getting a better outlook on life can help in nearly every aspect of life. Physical exercises in general and yogic exercises in particular eliminate all unhealthy thoughts from the human mind. Yoga boosts the serotonin levels and can help break free from the clutters of stressful thoughts. To get the maximum benefits of yoga one has to combine the practices of yogasanas, pranayama and meditation. (Iyengar, 2001)

23) Helps cultivate an Inner Calmness

When first starting out with yoga, one may find the postures hard to get into and even harder to hold. The state of one’s inner being might be all chaos and confusion mixed with frustration and exhaustion. But once the practitioner attains stability of postures through practice, it regulates all mental focus inward, which produces the calmness that is typically attributed to yoga.

24) Moves Lymph Fluid

The lymphatic system is interesting because it doesn’t have a pump to move its fluid like the heart pumps blood. Rather, it relies on the body to get enough movement throughout the day to get the lymphatic fluid moving. However, the lack of physical exercise gives rise to a virtual epidemic of lymphatic problems caused by improper drainage of lymphatic fluid. To fix this, all it really takes is some specific yoga postures to rectify the faulty system.
1.2. MEDITATION

Meditation is a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath and movement in order to increase awareness of the present moment, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth.

In the West, the word meditation means a concentrated state of mind in serious reflection. The Latin root of the word meditation, mederi, means "to heal." It is an effort to heal afflictions of the mind, the hurt ego, by trying to understand the cause of the problem and finding a way to solve it, that is, by knowing what counter-measures to take. To meditate thus, is to deepen a state of understanding.

In the East, however, meditation does not mean thinking at all but fixing the mind in a spiritual ideal, to be one with it, or the thought-process dissolving in the consciousness of it. According to Zen, meditation does not involve any concept but is an awareness of inner silence. According to the *Yogasutras* of Patanjali, meditation is a combination of three steps: *pratyahara* or abstraction, or withdrawal of the mind from the sense-objects or attention to their memory; *dharana* or concentration; and *dhyana* or contemplation, which however, is not a thought-process but an absorption of the feeling of oneness with the ideal.

Awareness of an inner silence is not something easy to achieve. It can be confused with a state of dullness or being soporific, which is not the purpose of meditation. To meditate mean does not mean to have a good rest while sitting pretty, and silence is not productive without spiritual aspiration. On the other hand, few have the capacity to think clearly and too much of mental exercise could lead to tension and confusion.
In *Bhakti Yoga*, meditation is visualization of the image of a chosen deity, together with mental repetition of a relevant mantra. For the Vedantin, it is to contemplate on the meaning of selected verses from the Upanishads or similar scriptures. For the Catholics, it is saying the rosary, based on invocations like "Our Father which art in Heaven," or "Hail Mary, full of grace." For them, meditation also consists in feeling close to Jesus after receiving communion and retiring into a quiet place.

St. Albert the Great, the teacher of St. Thomas Aquinas, observed that meditation for philosophers is a process of perfecting a thought, and for the devotees, of their love of God. Prayers said in silence as a dedication of oneself to God can also be called meditation, because it means turning the mind inward to one's spiritual source, leading to peace.

For, the Hindus, repetition of a mantra, with or without a rosary, but with a feeling of spiritual oneness, is meditation. Buddhist meditation consists in repeating the mantras: *Buddham sharanam gachchhami, Sangham sharanam gachchhami* (I precede remembering the Buddha, on the righteous path and the welfare of my community). The Tibetans base their meditation on the mantra *Om manipadme hum* (I am Om, the jewel in the lotus of my heart). For Muslims, meditation is called *dhikr* or repetition of selected names of God from the Quran, generally with a rosary. Feeling the breath, which is a technique in *pratyahara*, is an exercise in Zen meditation (the word Zen is derived from *dhyana* or meditation), as also counting from 1 to 20 or more, over and over again.
1.2.1. TYPES OF MEDITATION

There are thousands of meditation techniques from many different traditions, but all could be classified as belonging to either one of the following or a combination of all five types:

1. Concentration Meditation
2. Mindfulness Meditation
3. Reflective Meditation
4. Creative Meditation
5. Heart-Centred Meditation
6. Mantra – Meditation

1.2.1.1. Concentration Meditation Techniques

Concentration meditation techniques are the foundation for all other kinds of meditation. Through the power of concentration we build our capacity to overcome distraction and to sustain mental focus. The power of a scattered mind is very limited. But like a stream of water that can be channelled to make it more forceful and produce hydroelectric power, we can make the mind a more powerful instrument by developing a small seed of one-pointed mindfulness into "concentration power."

In classical meditation texts, this single-pointedness of the mind which is developed through the energy of concentration is called samadhi, and literally means "to establish or to make firm."

The power of a concentrated mind can be focused effectively to enhance and deepen insight into other meditative themes or goals. To understand how this works,
compare the illuminating capacity of the diffuse and scattered beam of a ten-watt incandescent light bulb to the penetrating, diamond-like precision of a ten-watt laser beam. Such is the difference in the illuminating power of the concentrated mind to the ordinary, scattered, and fragmentary flow of attention that most of us bring to everyday living. The same basic principle, however, always applies, no matter which form of meditation one chooses to practice: whenever the mind wanders, it can be brought back -- again and again -- to the object of its meditation.

1.2.1.2. Mindfulness Meditation Techniques

Mindfulness meditation techniques emphasize upon the cultivation of a receptive, choice less quality of mindful attention toward whatever arises in the sphere of our experience. It aims to use focused attention, often by using a physical sensation such as the breath, to cultivate mental calmness. Mindfulness meditation strengthens our sense of wonder and appreciation, enabling us to effortlessly, precisely, and carefully attend to the totality of our experience unfolding moment to moment. The interplay of concentration and mindfulness meditation allows us to develop the capacity to examine and intuitively understand the deep forces within our ordinary experience. The penetrating insight that develops can then be systematically applied to investigating the very subtle interplay between the phenomena we perceive and the nature of our own mind as the perceiver.

1.2.1.3. Reflective Meditation Techniques

The practice of reflective or analytical meditation is like disciplined thinking: choosing a theme, question, or topic of contemplation we focus our reflection, or analysis, upon it. When our attention wanders to other thoughts, we return to our chosen topic. Traditionally, reflective meditation is employed to gain insight into the meaning of life,
death, interrelationships, and social conscience, or to come to a conclusive insight regarding some key idea in science, philosophy, or scripture. Following our analysis through, we arrive at a conclusion. This, in turn, gives rise to a strong sense of faith or conviction. In our day-to-day life and work, reflective meditation techniques provide us with a powerful and effective tool for focusing our attention upon personal or professional questions in order to discover a creative solution or breakthrough insight. Reflective meditation also helps us to understand the issues or inner conflicts that may arise during the practice of other meditations.

1.2.1.4. Creative Meditation Techniques

Creative meditation techniques enable us to consciously cultivate and strengthen specific qualities of mind. Patience, appreciation, sympathy, joy, gratitude, love, compassion, fearlessness, humility, tenderness, and other such qualities associated with various aspects of nature, Divinity, or the world around us, are among the attributes that are most commonly cultivated. Creative meditation invites us to actively nurture these strengths of character by thinking, speaking, and acting "as though" these qualities are more fully alive within us.

1.2.1.5. Heart-Centred Meditation Techniques

Heart-centred meditation techniques help us to awaken the radiance of our loving-kindness and compassion. They deepen our empathy and forgiveness, and teach us to live in kinder ways. They begin first with ourselves, and then open the circle of our compassion to embrace all living beings. They draw inspiration from each of the other meditations: focus and the power of peace from concentration; deep listening and presence from mindfulness meditation; insight into the nature of suffering and a sense of
interrelatedness from reflective meditation; imaginative resourcefulness and skill from creative meditation.

Properly understood, all of these types of meditation are interrelated and mutually enhancing. Many practices draw inspiration from a variety of meditation types and could be included in several categories. Meditation allows us to go beyond words and mental concepts in order to know the true nature and reality of ourselves and our world directly.

Thus meditation can take us to the depths of our being, and it is in these depths that we first experience peace beyond expression. Over time, we learn to traverse the calm within, which becomes the base for all our movement in the outside world. Man manifests his inner calm through all his mental activities that creates his physical reality.

1.2.1.6. Mantra – Meditation

A mantra is one of the most common objects used for meditation – and one of the most powerful ones too. The practice of mantra meditation is found in many of the world’s contemplative traditions, and also in the practice of meditation in a secular context.

The definition of mantra. Mantra is a Sanskrit word derived from two roots: man (meaning “mind” or “to think”) and tra meaning to “protect”, to “free from”, or “instrument/tool”. Therefore, mantras are tools of the mind, or tools to free the mind. Some mantras have a literal meaning and can be translated, but most of them, according to tradition, derive their value mostly from their sound quality. Some are short, one-syllable mantras; others are long, composed of many words. Sometimes the mantra is recited; at other times it is listened to. Sometimes it is repeated fast; at other times slow. Sometimes it is simply repeated by itself, and at other times in connection to concentration on the breathing, certain feelings, chakras, visualizations or abstract concepts.
Mantra produces sound, Sound is vibration. And all the cells in your body are vibrating. Everything in the universe is vibrating, and each has its own rhythm. Your thoughts and feelings are, indeed, vibrations in your body and your consciousness. Thus the mantra, being an instrument of the mind, can help you create profound changes in your body and psyche, and produce altered states of consciousness. Mantra meditation is a method of rotation of consciousness around a sound, amplifying it for maximum effect. In the Yoga contemplative tradition, mantra meditation is often said to be the easiest and safest method.

1.2.2. Benefits of Meditation

1. Meditation helps to reduce stress.
2. Meditation improves concentration.
3. Meditation provides a healthy lifestyle.
5. Meditation improves happiness.
6. Meditation gives acceptance.
7. Meditation helps to slow aging.
8. Meditation improves cardiovascular and immune health.

1.3. HUMAN BRAIN

The human brain is the central organ of the human nervous system, and with the spinal cord makes up the central nervous system. The brain consists of the cerebrum, the brainstem and the cerebellum. The cerebrum is the largest part of the human brain.

1.3.1. Differences between the Brains of Men and Women.

The followings are the differences between the brain of men and women.
1.3.1.1. Brain Size:

Male brain is typically about ten percent larger than the female brain. Although the extra mass does give males more processing power, this doesn’t make men more intelligent. Rather, science believes the reason for the increased brain mass is to accommodate the bigger body mass and muscle groups of the male (human).

1.3.1.2. Brain Hemispheres:

Many men are sharply left-brain dominant, while women tend to be more evenly balanced between left and right-brain processing. Women are therefore thought to be slightly more intuitive, and sometimes better communicators. Men are often less socially adept, and are more task-oriented thinkers than females.

1.3.1.3. Relationships:

Women are purported to have better communication skills and emotional intelligence than men. Women tend to be group-oriented, and apt to seek solutions by talking through issues. Men can have trouble picking up on emotional cues unless they’re clearly verbalized – making for tricky communications between the sexes.

1.3.1.4. Mathematical Skills:

The inferior-parietal lobule, which controls numerical brain function, is larger in males than in females. On standardized tests, men often score higher on mathematical tests than women.
1.3.1.5. Stress:

When faced with stressful situations, men usually employ ‘fight or flight’ tactics, while women use a ‘tend or befriend’ response that is rooted in their natural instincts for caring for their children and establishing strong group bonds.

1.3.1.6. Language:

Often excel at language-based tasks for two reasons: two brain areas that deal with language are larger in females, and females process language in both hemispheres while males favor a single brain half.

1.3.1.7. Emotions:

Since women tend to have a larger deep limbic system than men, they’re more in touch with their feelings and are better at expressing their emotions. This makes women better at connecting with others, but unfortunately also more prone to different types of depression.

1.3.1.8. Spatial Abilities:

The parietal region is thicker in the female brain, making it harder for them to mentally rotate objects – an important spatial skill. Women often report difficulty with spatial tasks, both on tests and in real life. Want to test this theory with a loved one? Play HAPPY neuron’s visual-spatial game Points of View and test each other’s ability.

1.3.2. BRAIN FITNESS

Brain fitness is the state of having quick, efficient, and flexible cognitive processing. Brain fitness grew out of the study of neuropsychology and neuroscience, and is the science of maintaining and training cognitive abilities through neuroplasticity and stimulating neurogenesis, the creation of new neurons, neural connections, and brain
vascularization. Cognitive abilities like attention, stress and emotional management, memory, visual/spatial processing, auditory processes and language, motor coordination, and executive functions like planning and problem solving diminish over time unless they are used regularly. It is evident in an ability to assimilate information, comprehend relationships, and develop reasonable conclusions and plans.

Brain fitness can be developed by formal education, being actively mentally engaged in life, continuing to learn, and exercises designed to challenge cognitive skills. Healthy lifestyle habits including mental stimulation, physical exercise, good nutrition, stress management, and sleep can improve brain fitness. On the other hand, chronic stress, anxiety, depression, aging, decreasing estragon, excess oxytocin, and prolonged cortisol can decrease brain fitness as well as general health.

Physical exercise is not only important for the body's health- it also helps the brain stay sharp. The brain is no different than rest of the muscles in the human body-we either use it or lose it. We utilize the gym to stimulate the growth of muscle cells, just as we use a brain fitness program to increase our mental capabilities. But one can actually get an additional brain boost by strenuous physical workout. The benefits of physical exercise, especially aerobic exercise, have positive effects on brain function on multiple fronts, ranging from the molecular to behavioural level. According to a study done by the Department of Exercise Science at the University of Georgia, even briefly exercising for 20 minutes facilitates information processing and memory functions.

Exercise affects the brain on multiple fronts. It increases heart rate, which pumps more oxygen to the brain. It also aids the bodily release of a plethora of hormones, all of which participate in aiding and providing a nourishing environment for the growth of brain
cells. Exercise stimulates the brain’s plasticity by stimulating growth of new connections between cells in a wide array of important cortical areas of the brain. Recent research from UCLA demonstrated that exercise increased growth factors in the brain—making it easier for the brain to grow new neuronal connections. This is stated as the ‘Golden Duo of Mental and physical exercise’. The usage of physical exercise in conjunction with brain training increases the chances of increasing cognitive functions within parameters, including time of exercise and style of exercise. Interestingly, differences between exercise styles, such as opting for cycling over running, is associated with an enhanced brain function during and after working out. Ballroom dancing, an activity with both physical and mental demands has had a higher impact on cognitive functioning over exercise or mental tasks alone, indicating that the best brain health workouts involve those that integrate different parts of the brain such as coordination, rhythm, and strategy.

1. Brain fitness is the state of having quick, efficient, and flexible cognitive processing.

2. Brain fitness is likely to be a consequence of increased number of neurons, functional connections between neurons, and processing speed.

3. The term cognitive training also called brain training reflects a hypothesis that cognitive abilities can be maintained or improved by exercising the brain.

1.3.3. IMPORTANCE OF BRAIN FITNESS

The term “Brain Fitness” refers to the idea that one can utilize cognitive training abilities to maintain or improve their neurological state. Exercising the brain to improve memory or daily functionality has been an interesting development in the science of aging. Researchers are finding that brain fitness can be an essential practice to increase seniors’
overall well-being and to combat the neurological deterioration process. The brain is a muscle, and like any other in the body, it must be exercised in order to maintain healthy cognitive function and memory, and to improve vascular health.

1.3.4. BENEFITS OF BRAIN FITNESS EXERCISES

These are some of the benefits of brain fitness exercises.

1.3.4.1. Thinking Faster

As we age, building brain speed becomes even more important. In fact, even the quickest among us can still benefit from an increase in brain speed. Even though our wisdom may grow with each passing year, our brains tend to slow down. Speeding up the brain so to think faster and more efficiently in any situation is the explicit design or objective for several brain exercises. Using brain-exercises to enhance brain activity has been proven through studies to speed up brain activity and processing by an average of 135%. This essentially means that the average 70 year old would achieve the brain speed of a person in their 20s.

1.3.4.2. Improving Memory

Having a strong memory is critical for feeling confident and sharp in everything we do. Memories can come in a variety of different forms and ultimately touch our lives in a variety of different ways. The details of a story in the news that we want to share with a friend; the faces and names of people we meet at a networking event will all depend upon the brain’s ability to retain long term memory as well as reproduce processed information.

1.3.4.3. Getting Things Done

Everyone has a long list of things we need to do, from paying bills to making dinner to running errands and making home. Brain exercises help people to do more and to do it well, by improving the speed and efficiency thereby ultimately allowing them to stay
on top of things. The brain training exercises have helped them to become more effective and error free in all sorts of things including: choir practice, projects at work, and even grocery shopping.

1.3.4.4. Trying New Things

One of the most surprising benefits of brain fitness that we can see is that they have energy and enthusiasm to try new things. Brain training actually motivates people to seize the day and awakens their curiosity by engaging important brain chemicals that speed up thinking and sharpen focus.

1.3.4.5. Finding Words

Certain brain-exercises can help people find words more easily by improving their auditory processing and fluency.

1.3.4.6. Sharper Listening Skills

Sharp listening skills are a necessity for man’s day-to-day interactions. From keeping up with a fast-talking grandchild to understanding a colleague with an accent, to following a conversation in a crowded noisy restaurant – we have easier and more fulfilling interactions when our brains can accurately interpret what others are actually saying. Not only do we have an easier time understanding but we can also remember what is being said much more effectively. Sharp listening skills actually depend on the brain as much as on the ears. It becomes harder to understand speech because the brain’s auditory processing gradually slows down after the age of 30. People’s ability to hear clearly in any situation has been clinically proven to improve through brain-auditory exercises, which enhances the processing of information by an average of 135%. People of all ages have been shown through various studies to achieve brain speeds that match that of the average 20-something when participating in brain-exercises. This increased
processing speed prevents miscommunication and can help promote good conversation skills.

1.3.4.7. Eagle-Eyed Vision

Many activities can be safer, easier, and more satisfying if we have a sharp vision; consider driving a car, playing tennis, bird watching, finding someone in a crowded airport.

While our eyes take in visual information our brain has to process that information. The result is that the brain is an equal partner in our ability to have ‘eagle-eyed’ vision. We then realize that life gets easier and more enjoyable when we are able to take in more visual detail, react to what we see much faster, and recall information better with the visual training exercises.

1.3.4.8. Quicker Reaction Time

How quickly one’s brain registers something determines how quickly he can react to it. Ultimately, a faster brain means a faster body. Brain-exercises can help people enhance brain activities thereby making life more fruitful.

1.3.4.9. Self-Confidence

Our brains tend to slow down a little with age. Even though we may have wisdom on our side, our self-confidence can be affected when we start feeling a little less sharp. It’s amazing what we can accomplish when we are feeling confident. People are inspired to seek out new experiences when they are feeling more self-confident in their daily lives. Brain exercises have proven to be a clinically successful tool to sharpen and speed up the brain, which ultimately leads to a boost-up of self-confidence in the individual.
1.3.4.10. Good Mood

Experiencing a better mood might not be the first thing that comes to mind when we think of brain fitness. We tend to think only in terms of memory, sharpness, and focus. However, Brain - exercises are designed to help the brain produce chemicals like dopamine, which help people feel upbeat, rewarded, and alert. The result of these exercises is that users feel good. They find self-confidence through sharper focus, better memory, and faster thinking which leads to a more positive mood.

The present study regarding the advantages of yoga and meditation in man’s daily life can be better understood in all possible implications through an implementation of the aforesaid practices among a select section of tribal school children, especially boys, in Palakkad district of Kerala. This then calls for our special attention towards the various tribal communities that reside in the different regions of the state of Kerala.

1.4. TRIBALS IN KERALA

Tribals in Kerala (Adivasis of Kerala) are the indigenous population found in the southern Indian state of Kerala. Most of the tribal people of Kerala live in the forests and mountains of Western Ghats, bordering Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The tribes in Kerala occupy the Western Ghats, bordering Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. As a natural border, the mountains spread out through Kerala, sprawling its bulk to Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The tribal communities are mostly food-gatherers (without any habit of agricultural practice), and with a diminishing population index as well as very low literacy rates. These can be called as Primitive Tribes. Cholanaikkans, Kurumbas, Kattunaikans, Kadars and Koragas are the five primitive tribal groups in Kerala. They constitute nearly 5% of the total tribal population in the State. Cholanaikkans can be said as the most primitive of them and are found only in the Malappuram District. Only a handful of families are now
found living in the Mancheri hills of Nilambur forest division. Kattunaikkans, another lower-hill community related to Cholanaikkans, are mainly seen in Wayanad district as well as in some parts of Malappuram and Kozhikode districts. Kadar population is found in Thrissur and Palakkad districts. Kurumbas are living in the Attappady Block of Palakkad district. The Koraga habitat is in the plain areas of Kasaragod district.

It is estimated that there are about 4 lakh tribal people living in Kerala and about half of this population has made the interiors of Wayanad their home. The tribals were the original inhabitants of Wayanad region. But once the British era opened roads to this region and commercial plantations began to sprout, there occurred a migration of settlers to this region and during the 1940s this migration enhanced tremendously displacing the aborigines or adivasis of the area. The tribes lost their land and dwindled in numbers and now they constitute only 20 percent of the total population of the district.

The native Adivasis of the district belong to various sects like Paniyas, Kurumas, Adiyars, Kurichyas, Ooralis, Kattunaikkans and UraaliKurumas. They are mostly physically distinguishable with darker skin and stout built physique. They often live in houses made of thatched roof, mud, bamboo and brick houses set in swampy valleys and plateaus. Though many of them said to be primitive tribes, all of them have a story of migration to the hills. It is likely to believe that these tribes were living there for several centuries! "The story of tribes on the Western Ghats mountainous ranges have is less than 300 years", says Philipose Vaidyar who had visited and stayed with several of these tribal groups. Cholanaikkans said to be the most primitive among them and is a vanishing tribe. "Discussions with them and the history during the British times, the capture of local kings and their fights have much to reveal about their migration from the valley to the hills" he says. The Irular people of Idukki districts complaint about the heavy taxes they had to pay
to the kings which resulted in their exodus from the Kochi kingdom to that of an animal kingdom. History of British period approves this.

Here are a few issues and some suggestions for improvement in addition to the government measure to bring development. The neediest groups and families need to be identified and assisted directly.

1.4.1. Socio-Economic Status

Socio Economic status is an economic and sociological integration of factors of an individual’s work experience and family’s economic and social position in relation to others based on income, education and employment.

1.4.1.1. Poverty and Illiteracy

Poverty and Ignorance continue to keep them poor and less dignified. Education can bring changes and development gradually for the next generation. There are primary schools in several tribal settlements, mostly far away for most of the villages. Moreover, quality education which is available to the majority is not available to the poor tribals. Tribal children can be encouraged to send to towns and cities for better education and higher studies. Distribution of old clothes and some ration is not the solution. Most of the tribal people live for a day and do not plan much for future. Education will bring in change in their world view and give them hopes for a better tomorrow. There are a number of unwed mothers among the poor tribals in Wayanad, especially from the Adiya and Paniya tribe. Assistance to education can change the plight of the poor young girls to find a living think about a family.
1.4.1.2. Ownership of land and Occupation

Most of the tribes were originally food gatherers and all of them made a living from the forest. Tribals are placed in colonies where they are forced to live. Tribals normally do not destroy forest or its resources. Cutting a tree trunk for building a hut has become an offence. Tribals should be protected with the right to labour and resources of the forest. Assistance should be given to develop better infra structure in their settlements. Harassments from government servants especially of the forest department need to be solved state wide. Tribals should have complete ownership of a piece of land they stay.

1.4.1.3. Health and Hygiene

Many tribal people die of malnutrition, ignorance and superstitious beliefs. Accessibility to proper health facilities is very rare. In Wayanad, there are many affected by cancer and most of them, abandoned by their dear ones. The Adiya and Paniya tribe in Wayanad are very poor and victims of these kinds of sicknesses. Though there are primary health centers, its services are very limited and not easily reachable. Advanced checkups and treatments are not available and affordable to the majority of the tribal people. Health education and proper sanitary amenities are far from them. Regular medical clinics or camps, special assistance to diagnose and advance treatments in cities can make their life better.

1.4.1.4. Drop-outs from Schools

The research studied 25 tribal students who are recent drop outs from the district and their class division ranges from 1 to 12. They belong to the traditional tribal community, Paniya. The questions were asked to both the parents of the dropouts and their teachers. They indicate some reasonable issues that lead to the early drop out. Most of the
dropped out children are living with their family. As per the study signifies, majority of their parents do not have proper education and they are early dropouts. The reason for their dropout was subjected to poverty and unemployment. But now the situations changed a lot. The parents of the dropped out assert that poverty and finance are no more the issues for their children’s drop out. Most of the parents are aware that the projects and plans that are being implemented for the benefit of tribal uplift. As far as the parents are concerned, the reasons for the dropping out are purely related to individual attitude on education.

1.5. Reasons for Drop-outs

a. Negative attitude towards schooling
Many of the dropouts are having negative attitude towards education. They consider education as a boring process. They still are not aware of the need of education for their livelihood. They are aware of the allowances from the government for their education. But the negative attitude towards education makes them stay back to their colony surroundings than going to school. Out of 25 respondents 48% Especially in Paniya tribe students are not motivated so they always like be with their parents and engaged with their other activities.

b. Family atmosphere
Surroundings or environment is one of the important factors that influence the development of a person, particularly in educational development. Most of the tribal parents are farmers and labours; they have a little knowledge relating to modern world and modern environment. And most of the tribal parents are addicts to alcoholic and tobacco items that create mental and economic problems in them. This unhealthy family atmosphere affects the children to a great extent and this leads to their poor performance in the class which finally results in their dropouts from school.
c. Alcoholism of parents

The teachers and students unanimously agreed that the alcoholism of parents is convincing reason for the dropout. They agreed that the children are not getting a presence of mind at home in evenings when his father/ brother/ mother/ relatives/ friends come drunk. This will result in the children to move away from education. At home, they are not given an atmosphere to study and sometimes nothing to eat too.

d. Poverty

Most of the tribal people are living in poverty; it is not easy for most of them to send their children to school and still manage their living. Surroundings or environment is one of the important factors that influence the development of a person, particularly in educational development. Most of the tribal parents are farmers and labours; they have a little knowledge relating to modern world and modern environment. And most of the tribal parents are addicts to alcoholic and tobacco items that create mental and economic problems in them. This unhealthy family atmosphere affects the children to a great extent and this leads to their poor performance in the class which finally results in their dropouts from school.

d. Peer influence

In addition to families and schools, communities and peer groups can influence students.’ withdrawal from school. Many of the dropouts and their parents admitted that peer group influence is the reason for their decision to leave schooling. They were influenced by their friends who stopped education. So they also put a full stop.

e. Early responsibility

Anu N.N, 21, a drop out from 10th standard was an example of shouldering the family responsibility at an early stage. He discontinued from education when his father died. His
only brother is paralyzed and his mother is sick. He wanted to continue his education but his family responsibility does not allow him. There are many drop outs having same reasons in the colonies.

1.6. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to find out the effect of yoga, meditation and brain training exercises on selected life skills, cognitive skills and intellectual skills of tribal school students.

1.7. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

a) The first objective of the study was to find out the effect of Yoga, Meditation and brain training exercises on select life skills of Tribal school students.

b) The second objective of the study was to find out the effect of Yoga, Meditation and brain training exercises on select cognitive skills of Tribal school students.

c) The third objective of the study was to find out the effect of Yoga, Meditation and brain training exercises on select intellectual skills of Tribal school students.

1.8. THE HYPOTHESIS

1. It was hypothesised that Yoga practice group may show significant improvement on selected life skills, cognitive skills and intellectual skills of tribal school students.

2. It was hypothesised that Meditation practice group may produce significant improvement on selected life skills, cognitive skills and intellectual skills of tribal school students.

3. It was hypothesised that brain training exercises group may produce significant improvement on selected life skills, cognitive skills and intellectual skills of tribal school students.
4. It was hypothesised that Brain fitness exercises group may produce more significant improvement than Yoga practice group, Meditation practice group and control group on selected life skills, cognitive skills and intellectual skills of tribal school students.

1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Educational level of the Tribes was found to be very poor in Kerala. Their literacy level shows that they lag much behind the mainstream population and among the literates, majority are with low level of educational attainments. The dropout rate of tribal students was found to be much high compared to that of other communities in Kerala. As the level of schooling increases, we can see an enormous increase in the dropout rate of tribal students. The dropout rate at High School section is significantly higher than that of LP and UP levels. Besides, we can see that the dropout rate significantly differs across the regions as it is significantly higher in tribal concentrated districts such as Palakkad, Wayanad, Idukki and Kasaragod compared to that of least tribal concentrated districts. The continuing high dropout at school level will lead to less number of students eligible for higher education. Most of the students going for higher education join conventional courses such as B.A, B.Com and B.Sc. Besides, they have very less representation for research courses such as M.Phil and Ph.D, and professional courses. Overall, the educational position of tribes was found to be pathetic. Reasons for this sudden drop is their low life skills, cognitive skills, and intellectual skills. Tribal students need training programme for the improvement at all levels of their education and their holistic development. For this purpose, we have given Yoga, Meditation and Brain training exercise programme to the tribal school students.
1.10. DELIMITATIONS

The study is delimited as follows:

a) The study was confined to eighty tribal students from Palakkad District of Kerala state.

b) The age of the subjects was 14 to 17 years.

c) The duration of the training intervention was delimited to 5 days per week for a period 16 weeks.

d) The training intervention was delimited to only tribal school boys.

e) Further study was delimited to performance variables as dependent variables.

1.11. LIMITATIONS

1. Certain factors like food habit, life style, daily routine work, climatic conditions and environmental factors, which may have an effect on the result of this study, would not be taken into consideration while interpreting the result.

2. No special motivational technique was used during testing and training. Therefore the difference that occurred in performance due to lack of motivation was recognized as the limitation of this study.

3. The skills of the subjects and their previous experience in this activity were not taken into consideration.

1.12. DEFINITIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL TERMS

a. Life skills

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable us to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.
b. **Cognitive skills**

Cognitive skills are brain-based skills we need to carry out any task from the simplest to the most complex. They have more to do with the mechanisms of how we learn, remember, problem-solve, and pay attention rather than with any actual knowledge.

c. **Intellectual skills**

Intellectual skills are defined as the methods that an individual can use to evaluate or organize information and data.

d. **Decision making**

Decision making is the process of making choices by setting goals, gathering information, and assessing alternative occupations.

e. **Interpersonal relationship**

Interpersonal relationship is a strong, deep, or close association or acquaintance between two or more people that may rang in duration from brief to enduring. This association may be based on influence, love, solidarity, regular business interactions or some other type of social commitment.

f. **Visual memory (short term)**

Visual memory is a form of memory which preserves some characteristics of our senses pertaining to visual experience. We are able to place in memory visual information which resembles objects, places, animals or people in a mental image.

g. **Critical thinking**

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analysing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.
h. Social Intelligence

Social Intelligence (SI) is the ability to get along well with others, and to get them to cooperate with you. A continued pattern of toxic behaviour indicates a low level of social intelligence - the inability to connect with people and influence them effectively.

i. Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, and manage and/or adjust emotions to adapt to environments or achieve one's goal.