CHAPTER -II
THE PRESENT STUDY

PRELIMINARY CONCERNS:

Man today is overwhelmed by achievements of science and technology. Never perhaps in human history there has been a greater imbalance in man’s knowledge of the external world and his knowledge of himself. The dichotomy, in the atomic age, between the external world and the internal world is not only deeply frustrating, but it can be tragic for man’s future and even for his survival. The equations of the universe need to be related to the equations of man. This is a task as difficult as it is important and urgent.

Modern civilization aims at complete transformation of the natural human environment into an artificial environment. It also aims at increasing human needs and in satisfying those needs through the invention of technological devices and products. The advocates of modernization have, therefore, no hesitation in interfering with the natural processes in nature, such as tempering with nuclear energy, breaking the genetics codes for artificially guiding evolution, perfecting transplant surgery for prolongation of the human life, perfection of the contraceptive techniques for unbridled gratification of libidinous impulses, production by synthetic foods and so on.
Some philosophers and scientists are getting deeply concerned about this destructive and harmful tendencies in the modern civilization. When one becomes more resourceful and powerful, one also needs greater wisdom, in addition to knowledge, to be able to exercise control over himself and not be swayed by objects of enjoyment. Science has given us lately a multitude of objects of enjoyment. But it has failed to give us, at the same time the much needed self-control. These two qualities, namely, wisdom and self-control, which are the most essential factors in deciding whether or not there will be health and happiness, do not fall within the per view of science.

Knowledge is not enough for health and - to come into being. One may excel in knowledge of various kinds and may still be very unhappy. Wisdom certainly includes, knowledge of the world as one of the components. But what is important is not so much knowledge of the world as knowledge of the self or self-knowledge. Self-knowledge or atma-Jnana was given the highest place in the religion and philosophy of the past. It involves enlightenment regarding the goals of life. Science does not include the aim or goals of human life in the inquiry. And without the clear idea of it, perfect health and happiness are not possible to achieve. Health and fitness have been recognized as foundation to all sorts of pursuits in life essential for the spiritual progression. No doubt, the development of science and technology has added a lot to the comforts and luxuries of life of modern man, at the
same time, has been robbed of his physical health, emotional stability, mental peace, and ultimately the spiritual growth.

Purpose and Need:

It is indeed true that scientific discoveries have helped tremendously to make our life less hazardous. But science, obviously, is a way of collecting and arranging information, and mere information, however intelligently arranged, does not and can not make for an understanding of pain and suffering, which is a fundamental problem for life. Whether we succeed or fail in various spheres of life, there is one thing we do not wish to lose at any cost and that is health and happiness. The importance of good health in life can hardly be over emphasised.

The problem of pain and sufferings, however, seems to arise largely from our internal environment, that is, our peculiar ways of looking at the world. It is really a problem of understanding ourselves and our behaviour in daily life, our fear and cravings, our beliefs and ambitions, passions and emotions and in fact, what ever we do in our relationship with the surrounding people and environment. Therefore, unless we understand properly the way in which we see things and react to the various happenings in and about us, a mere collection of information regarding outer nature and trying to get mastery over it, will not take us very far. Supposing, for example, that human beings succeed in reaching the moon or even distant bodies in outer space, and live there or that the future developments in the science of human
physiology make it possible for men to live as long as they wish, is this knowledge, as such, going to make human life happier and more peaceful? The belief that we shall be able to overcome pain, suffering and war through becoming more well-informed, scares to have led us up to a blind alley. A shruti from Ishavasyopanishad may be quoted "knowledge is even more dangerous than ignorance, for the ignorant go ultimately to darkness, whereas those who take pride in their knowledge go to greater darkness still" (Ishavasyopanishad. 09).

The problem is really not of obtaining mastery over the outer nature or the surrounding environment, but rather of obtaining mastery over oneself, over one's conflicts. For that, however, something much more profound than what our modern scientific techniques have to offer us, is needed. Only then the present human crisis all over the world can be resolved. To bring about health and peace in the world, one must himself be healthy and peaceful first.

Aim & Objectives:

Health and peace within and about oneself, has perhaps been the greatest mark of Yoga. it is, therefore, that Yoga can be of utmost utility to an individual whose mind torn, as it is, between conflicting desires, seek to attain health, peace and happiness. Thus, the main aim of the present study is to study the classical and modern approaches to yoga with reference to health and fitness. The objectives of the study are:-
3. To study the Patanjali's approach to yoga in relation to health.
4. To study the Tantric approach to yoga in relation to health and fitness.
5. To study the modern approaches to yoga in relation to health & fitness.
6. to suggest and recommend an integrated holistic daily routine out of classical Ayurveda, yoga and Tantra for healthy living in consideration of modern trends.

Significance of the Present Study:

Since the very beginning of the tradition of yoga in the hoary past, there have been emerging newer and newer ideas and concepts and these fresh interpretations with advancement of time as a result of different paths treaded and variety of experiences gained by Indian seers and saints of yore for the realization of the ultimate truth behind the mystery of the existence of universe and their own position in relation to its other aspects. Vedas are the earliest records of ancient Indian culture. These are regarded as uncreated and eternal. The sources of various approaches to the realization of the Reality or truth are found scattered in all of them. Later, the knowledge of these approaches seems to have been consolidated and classified into Samhitas, Brahmanas and Upanishads representing Karma, Upasana and jnana margas (Paths) respectively. It is believed that these were followed by the emergence of vedangas and upvedas, sruti and smarta literature. Next, the authorship of Mahabharat including Bhagwat Gita, Puranas and Brahman sutras is credited to sage Vyas.
followed by the emergence of vedangas and upvedas, sruti and smarta literature. Next, the authorship of Mahabharat including Bhagwat Gita. Puranas and Brahm sutras is credited to sage Vyasa earlier to different systems of philosophy which flourished in justification of their approach to self-realization simultaneously. Thereafter, Ayurveda, Tantrism, Buddhism and Jainism opened a new epoch in the history of Indian thought and civilization. Round about this time 'Patanjali' had the credit of presenting the systematically graded course of the discipline of yoga based on the ideas prevalent and the experimental realization of his own. Last, but not the least important is voluminous literature of commentaries produced by other eminent authors interpreting the original texts.

Yoga is not merely a philosophy or highest 'State of Being'; but also a practical discipline that makes an individual competent to achieve the highest end of itself. It is considered to be universal discipline that has been adopted to some extent or the other by almost all the Indian religious sects and philosophical systems as a graded course based on experimental realization of the spiritual goal.

The vast literature on yoga including original works as well as a number of commentaries on each of them is mostly in Sanskrit. Hence, it is not only out of reach of majority of the common people but also not understandable to the higher strata of intellectuals and scientists unless they are well versed in the ancient language. Today, their translations in many languages, specifically in English which is
considered major international language, are also available. However, it has been noted that there are certain technical terms in Sanskrit which have not exact equivalent in other languages. Secondly, some terms of Sanskrit have been found to have different meanings in different contexts and these are likely to be misinterpreted and may not convey the correct message to the reader as desired. Another difficulty that confronts most of the people interested in yoga is that the traditional concepts and definitions have not been explained in operational language so that they can be grasped and assimilated easily. Again, there are statements here and there in whole of the literature which appear contradictory to each other inspite of the fact that these are made either in different contexts or are some times made in accordance with the level of progress made by sadhakas (practitioners) having divergent constitution and calibre. Last, but not the least important is the fact that different interpretations given by the different commentaries on the same subject have created a sort of confusion among the common people and need explanation in explicit language of the common people by synthesizing these ideas. Hence, in view of the common man's problems mentioned above, the present study will help to know various concepts of health and fitness found in modern as well as the ancient Indian classical texts specially as Ayurveda, Tantras and Patanjali's yoga. Indian classical texts of Ayurveda, Patanjali's sutras, Tantras have indeed looked upon their approaches as panacea for human misery and sorrow. Yoga with reference to health and fitness has rightly been held in very high esteem by all Indian systems and particularly by Ayurveda, yoga and
Tantra. These classical approaches to yoga with reference to health and fitness will certainly help people to know and adopt the ways and means restoring and promoting health in modern era. The present study will also help common man to know the implications of the modern approaches to yoga as well as the claims of classical and modern approaches to bring about transformation in respect of the life of an individual and also the means through which these goals could be realised.

Meaning of the Technical Terms:

Looking deep into the subject of the present dissertation, "A study of the classical and modern approaches to yoga with reference to health and fitness", the technical term 'Yoga' is of crucial significance as all terms, namely 'classical', 'modern', 'health', 'fitness' etc. will be directed cerripetal with their focus on 'Yoga' as the central point.

Yoga:

The word 'Yoga' is perhaps older than the system of philosophy which goes by that name. The oldest use of the word 'yoga', as found in the vedic literature, (e.g. Rigveda X, 114.9; Atharvaveda VI, 91, 1) indicates a union of various things especially the horses or the bullocks. This is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yujir' (Yujir- yoge) meaning 'to unite' or 'connect'. In later times, however, another technical meaning came to be associated with the term, and this is derived from the same Sanskrit root but in 'yuj'
Samadhau's sense indicating Samadhi - an integrated state. Both the meanings seem to be fairly common in the Sanskrit language even today. This does not, of course, mean that while the word 'Yoga' was being used (in the time of the Vedic Aryans) to denote simply a union, the facts about controlling and steadying the mind were themselves unknown. In the Vedas we find clear indications that the Rishis and the Seers were quite familiar with the highest state which is the goal of yoga. They used to achieve this through procedures described as dhyana, diksha, tapas etc. There are other numerous definitions of yoga but a few typical ones have been mentioned here to define the term.

The Kathopanishad (II,3,10-11) defines yoga as 'a state of steadiness and control of the senses, as well as the mind and the intellect, which, when attained, makes an individual completely faultless and unoffending'. Our minds are usually swayed away by the objects of enjoyment. But the mind of a yogi is not taken away by his senses, because it becomes free of the process of desire and hence remains steady in the highest state of yoga. It is customary in religious literature to look upon the world as a stream or an ocean of sorrow. However, beings, since birth till death, are supposed to be drowning in this ocean. It is in this context that yoga is mentioned in the Yogasutras (VI, 13,3) as a device that makes for reaching the other shore of the stream of sorrow. It is indeed true that a yogi is a person who is eternally free of cravings and sorrows. That is because he comes to overcome ignorance once for all.
We find yoga defined at three different places in Gita, which is perhaps the most popular among the authoritative treatise on yoga. According to the first definition (Gita, II, 48) yoga signifies a state of equipoise wherein opposites like success and failure make little difference. In second definition (II, 50-5) it is stated that a yogi, who renounces the concern with the consequences of his deeds (that is, remains concerned only with action and not with the consequences), overcomes bondage for ever. In the third definition yoga is defined as a state of separation from sorrow (VI, 21-23). The Gita declares that when that state of happiness par excellence is achieved, there remains nothing else to be achieved, which may be greater than it, not even the greatest misery can ever disturb that state.

It may be said, however, that in all the definitions mentioned above, Yoga has been defined in such a high manner that it must be admitted that the goal of yoga is something that lies completely beyond the reach of common man. The same difficulty would arise in the case of the definition of yoga as given in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (P.Y.S.I-2) which is supposed to be the most important text of yoga philosophy. Patanjali defines yoga as a state in which there is a complete elimination of the thoughts and modifications of the mind. Here, in the present study, yoga has been taken into consideration as a state as mentioned in the above definition.
Approach/Approaches:

The word 'Approach', when used as transitive verb, means 'coming nearer to' or 'access to' and when used as noun it means 'a track or path leading to' or 'entrance or entry into'. Thus, the term 'approach' ordinarily means a track or path leading to a particular or definite destination. It may likely be that different tracks or paths from different directions may lead to one and the same destination but these would be of different distances, some of short while others of long distance, to be covered in separate timings. Further, different persons may also choose to use different vehicles, slow or fast, to reach the destination. Even these different people may likely have to face different sorts of obstacles on their way. Again, they will have to adopt certain specific measures to remove these obstacles. Therefore, an 'approach' depicting a definite path leading in the direction of a particular destination, also includes modes as vehicles or other tools and techniques to be used to overcome the hindrances on the way in case of any eventuality, if arises.

Here, in the case of present study, the word approach/approaches has been used in the context of 'Yoga'. The term 'Yoga' depicts 'means' (modes, techniques, methods, way etc) as well as 'End' i.e. 'an integrated state', 'highest state of being', as a perfect state of harmony or equilibrium as the final goal. The so-called goal of enlightenment or budhhood has since times immemorial been an attraction for Indian saints and seers. The efforts of the followers of such a spiritual path seem to have surfaced from
the disgust grown out of their 'miserable state of being' existing at the primary stage. They must have been successful in their efforts by eliminating the causes of their disgust and ultimately must have attained a state of eternal bliss state breft of all sorts of worldly miseries whatsoever. Ancient Indian literature is full of the elaborate descriptions of such a 'highest state of being' as well as a number of technologies adopted to achieve this final goal. Nay! many a saints like Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Ramana Maharishi, Adi Sankracharya, Swami Ramtirtha etc of recent past are some of the glorifying examples of spiritual tranformation. It was because of the differences of methods to achieve one and the same goal, a number of systems have come up into being in the form of preparatory disciplines or modes of Sadhana. these have been designated in the present study as "Approaches" in the sense that one whoever treads one of these paths comes nearer to or reaches the final goal of 'Salvation'. To name a few classical approaches, these are Jnana - Yoga, Bhakti- Yoga, Karma - Yoga etc.

Development of Classical Approaches: Yoga like speculations are traceable in the ancient vedic literature followed by development of terminology and systemazatism of ideas during Proto- Yoga classical and later periods including upanisadic notions and even doctrines of Ayurveda, tantricism, Buddhism and Jainism. One finds, rather, a kind of slowly growing distinct organisms which assimilated a variety of traditions over a period of centuries. These organisms reached maturity in what we have called the third or classical period with the
Patanjali's sutras on yoga, and shiavagam literature on tantricism. All the three organisms with the similar ultimate goal of salvation (Moksh) adopted techniques and tools (Yoga) of their own in order to attain highest state of existence (Yoga). They have developed their own technical terminology and offer distinct theories and methods of salvation. They have elaborate descriptions of their distinct and definite preparatory procedures (Sadhana) with emphasis on an individual's health and fitness to tread the path of highest evolution gradually. In the case of present study, only these three classical approaches to Yoga namely Ayurveda, Patanjali's Yoga - Sutras and Tantra were selected for indepth study in consideration of their notions on health and fitness.

The term "classical approaches" is used in this work as of the nature and modalities mentioned or to have been used in the treatise of Ayurveda. Patanjali's sutras on Yoga, and Tantras accredited to the classical period.

In the intellectual history of India (in the areas of technical philosophy, religious speculation and general culture development), classical literature is of highest significance and yet there are few recent books which deal adequately with the subject. Yoga in its original intention is the science of spiritual development aiming at self-realization. the discovery of our true nature beyond time and space. This process is aided by a mind and body free from disease. Yoga as a medical therapy is traditionally a part of Ayurveda which deals with the treatment of both physical and mental diseases,
deals with the treatment of both physical and mental diseases. Ayurveda uses yogic methods like yoga postures and breathing exercises to treat physical diseases. Ayurvedic treatment methods for the mind include yogic practices for spiritual growth like mantras and meditation. Ayurveda and yoga both relate to the system of Tantra which provides various techniques for changing the nature of consciousness. Tantra is a complete system of human development that can aid us in improving all aspects of our lives. Ayurvedic methods for healing the mind includes Tantra. The tantric understanding of the subtle forces of mind and body also relate to Ayurveda. Most deeper yogic approaches also employ such higher Tantric methods.

Modern Approaches:

The modern-day practitioners of yoga may be divided into four groups. First of all, there are those who take it very seriously as a way of life and as a philosophy of renunciation and emancipation. They are the people who have turned their backs on worldly life, its pursuits and achievements. Such persons, are too small in number, live in various ashrams. The second group includes those men and women, especially of the younger generation, who are fed up with the existing conditions and norms of society and the established patterns of social behaviour. Many of them are former drug addicts, disenchanted with the affluence and wealth produced by science and technology. They come to yoga to find a new way of life. They change their dress and food habits, meditate, sing devotional songs, and try to find a new
purpose in life. It is through their patronage that many Indian Gurus have flourished in recent times.

Perhaps the most widespread third group of people taking to yoga is formed by those who are interested not much in deep philosophical implications or in a new way of life, but who want to introduce yoga in their daily life in order to be in a position to enjoy it more. They are by and large satisfied with their lot, but want to get rid of certain health problems like insomnia, strain, nervousness, lack of appetite and so on. Such persons are often advised to take to yoga for health purposes. Their number is growing because many of our present day ailments are more amenable to treatment by yoga than by drugs.

Fourth, category of people is that which includes those who need efficiency in their work and conduct to be more productive. These fields are education, physical education and sports, Administration and managerial areas, industries, social welfare etc.

No doubt each approach to yoga (the highest state of being) aims and leads to salvation as its distant goal, however these have provision of achieving short-term goals as well as their secondary objectives to be achieved on priority basis through some definite procedures to ensure the progressive evolution of consciousness through graded courses. The yogic practices as in vogue today (Mostly asanas and pranayama) both in India and abroad is the product of no distant a past. Most of the cultural asanas, groups of
purificatory processes and different types of pranayamas grew in accordance with doctrines of tantrism (shaivas and saktas), and assumed the form of Hatha-yoga which is supposed to produce wonderful bodily feats of breath control and control of involuntary muscles and organs through constant practice. There are elaborate description of such nervous, muscular and breath exercises which were also associated with the art of healing diseases and supernatural process. These practices today form part of modern approaches to yoga and are being applied in a number of fields to serve utilitarian restricted purposes only. These modern approaches can be put under the category of 'Temporal' yoga in contrast to the classical approaches of spiritual nature to be designated as 'Transcendental 'ones.

Health:

To have adequate understanding of health and fitnesses in right perspective, one needs to turn to fundamental philosophical concepts and the practical side of particular forms of sadhanas imbied in Indian classical approaches. These sadhanas actually deal with the evolutionary process which is process of the development of consciousness. The natural evolution is discernable in the form of minerals, plants, animals and man. Natural or unconscious evolution ends with man. Man is the link between matter (unconscious) and a buddha (totally conscious personality). He has the choice either to evolve to a higher level of consciousness like many of the Indian seers or to regress like those who return to unconsciousness seeking it
through alcohol and drugs, through work, through sex, through sensory stimulation, etc.

In the present study two dimensions of health have been discussed i.e. temporal and transcendental. Only the Indian traditional systems can provide the total or transcendental health to an individual. India has enriched the modern civilizations by offering the well known health care systems like Ayurveda, yoga and Tantras.

**Modern Views on Health:**

Health is perceived as a multidimensional process involving the well-being of the whole person in the context of the environment. The definition of health which confines it to physico- psycho-socio fields (dimensions) is incomplete and inadequate. Health is an integral concept which comprehends the totality of our being. True health must include not only physical fitness but also the simultaneous psychological and spiritual well being. In a broader perspective, the physical body of the human being is not important as emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects. Mind draws its power from the spirit, transmits it to all the body organs, and ensures their rhythmic and coordinated functions. Qualitative (spiritual) values of life like non-attachment etc do possess health enduring capacity in eliminating symptoms of mental and physical stress and strain (stress and coping) The 'perfect functioning' approach to health conceptualizes health:
(i) **Biologically** - As a state in which every cell and every organ functions at optimum capacity and in perfect harmony with the rest of the body;

(ii) **Psychologically** - as a state in which the individual feels a sense of subjective well-being and of mastery over his environment;

(iii) **Socially** - as a state in which the individual's capacities for participation in the social system are optimal and

(iv) **Spiritually** - as a state in which an individual human being has an inherent urge for or is conscious of qualitative values of life which makes him transcend animal instinct behaviour for the realisation of higher truths of life and existence.

**The phenomena of spiritualism - an explanation:**

Spiritualism is today considered to be luxury or non-essential entity in the sense that either it is for the well-to-do who can afford or it is not at all compulsory that everybody should pay attention to it as it seems that it does not serve any substantial purpose because the vast majority of the world's people have literally to scrape with their nails for bare subsistance, spiritual values are hardly likely to attract their attention. Spiritualism is for them irrelevant and insignificant. Hence, it is thought that material well-being is a must for developing spiritual values. However, our inner voice of unconscious minds seems to be occasionally telling us that it is material well-being that is essentially a superstructure on spiritual values.
Most of the misconceptions emanate from a lack of understanding of the basic question: what is spiritualism? Spiritualism is a belief-system that maintains that the duality of spirit and matter ( empirical objects ) is an illusion ( Maya), that they are nondual or one, that spirit is matter and matter is spirit ( intra- convertible), or a manifestation of spirit. Ancient mystics, seers, sages, rishies and prophets arrived at this understanding of the essential unity of spirit and matter through contemplation, meditation and samadhi that lead to increased powers of intuition and in some cases revelation.

These higher processes simply could not be understood except through personal experience. Since so few could have direct personal experience of such phenomena, spiritualism called for "faith" in the non-verifiable conclusions reached through non-verifiable means.

**Spiritual Age Ahead:** Some 2,500 or so years ago humanity gave another direction to the faculty called "Reason". It used another technique for understanding the universe, that of verifiable experiments. This was called science and became a separate branch of knowledge ( Other than the spiritual called Atma- Vidya). Now the wonderful and exciting news for most spiritualists, already fairly known, is that the modern science has finally caught up with mysticism. It has discovered the essentially incorporeal nature of matter. Scientists have found out that, the visible world is the invisible organisation of energy. We all know of Einstein's discovery, \( E = mc^2 \). Mass and energy are simply different manifestations of the same
thing. All the mass (the so-called material things) we see around us is a form of bound (condensed) energy. Release of bound energy under special physical conditions results in catastrophic explosion like that of nuclear bomb.

But science has gone beyond Einstein in the last decades. Extending human consciousness into the farthest reaches of space and time, deep into the structure of matter, scientists have found that beyond the molecule and atom lies a new realm. They have discovered a new set of particles, called hadrons, and these in turn are made out of yet more fundamental particles called quarks and other quantum particles. These are forms of matter never before seen. Having reached the core of the so-called solid corporeal matter, physicists have found that it is no more substantial than units of light (Prakasha). Grasping quantum reality requires changing from a reality that can be seen and felt to an instrumentally detected reality that can only be perceived intellectually. Conversion to spiritualism (Adhyatma) starts from this basic realization.

When one takes to spiritualism whether through personal experience of the invisible forces that run the universe, a not so common happening, or sheer faith in the statements of the sages and prophets (aprabhash), or through knowledge of modern science, it affects over day-to-day living. A change should take place in outlook and gradually in values and one should understand or rather become aware of the primacy of spirit, soul, mind, consciousness, energy,
intelligence, all that is incorporeal, abstract over whatever appears to be solid (Physical body etc) and corporal matter and shart perceiving all solid matter as bundles of enormous energy.

Modern Views on Fitness.

Man, as an individual— an undivisible single unit, cannot be divided or compartmentalised into discrete parts as physical, mental, social or spiritual. Research in different allied fields has highlighted the need for the total development of the personality for the total effectiveness of the individual.

General Fitness:

General fitness implies more than one task and is usually meant to include not only the activities of every day life but also emergencies demanding unusual expenditure of strength, energy and adaptive ability under extremely unfavourable environments.

A more rational goal that would keep the individual prepared to cope to some extent with emergencies and also to enjoy some sort of physical recreation would be at that level represented by an hour of regular exercise programme of moderately heavy nature everyday.

Total Fitness:

Total fitness is viewed as the capacity to function in everyway to one's best. The concept includes the mental, emotional, social as well as the physical aspects. All these components play a significant role in turning a full and happy life. Thus, freedom from disease, organic development, efficient movement, alertness of mind and emotional
maturity and social adjustment provide the framework of fitness which not only adds years to one's life but also life to one's years. It is a state for all the stages of life.

**Physical Fitness:**

Physical fitness refers to the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigour, thereby implying that the degree of fitness one has to develop and maintain would depend upon utility. Not unwanted speed, unwanted strength or unwanted power. The needs of the individual in contexts with the motive or the nature of task in hand are to be taken care of. High performance athletes need much more of physical fitness than a technician, a teacher or an official. All need physical fitness so that the physique may sustain the demands of intellectual job. Whether one is working in a laboratory or office, fighting on the top of Himalayas or in space orbit, he needs physical fitness that is required of the specific activity so that the demands are fully met.

**Psychological fitness:**

If the individual possesses the necessary perceptions, emotional stability, motivation, intelligence and educability to accomplish the task, he is psychologically fit for it. Anxiety can become a barrier to performance by contributing tension, elevated heart rate and blood pressure and endocrine disturbances that add to the stress of the task and therefore contribute
to the unfitness for it. Those who are better able to adapt to the stress of anxiety in their lives are more psychologically fit for arduous work.

Health, Fitness and Performance:

Being physically fit does not necessarily mean being healthy or being able to perform highly skilled event. Health and performance are separate qualities: One can suffer from cancer yet be fit for strenuous activity; one can be unfit for hard work and unhealthy and be superior performer in fine skill events. Fitness relates to a task; it does not describe a state of health. Diabetic persons have been tennis champions. Individuals with heart disease have become successful distance runners. Victims of cancer continue to perform well in early stages of the disease. In such instances the pathological condition has not become a limiting factor in the performance of work. It is not until the disease becomes debilitating that it affects fitness.

Health and fitness are relatively inseparable. They have a part and whole relationship. If we consider health as a state of well being, then fitness (as part) contributes to attain this state.

We can conceive of a 'health and fitness' continuum on which one extreme point towards left could be considered as 'death' or zero point and the other on the right as 'Maximum'. The maximum point is as relative one and not the absolute and one's position at this point at a given moment can be determined by many contributing factors some of which are hereditary and others environmental, and some of the factors are uncontrollable but many of them could be controlled to
some extent. It must be recognized that many factors affect a person’s position on his health and fitness continuum and that one may never know exactly what his position is. An individual’s position on the continuum thus represents relative health and fitness which has always chances of being up and down, increase or decrease, and a part of our temporal existence.

Indian Views on Health and fitness:

The Indian classical approaches have shown the whole course of spiritual discipline and have taken into account even the smallest thing that is of any help in the matter. Knowing fully well that spirituality is a thing of deepest consciousness, they still prescribed certain physical and physiological courses of training, because they never forget that spiritual consciousness and its realization were but the unfolding of the spirit embodied in the human form. The finite (Human form) unfolds its latent infinitude gradually, but as it has assumed a body and is rather imprisoned by the same, its growth and development presupposes a similar development of the body also (Upanisad- apayayantu mamangani...). All sound development of the physical, mental, intellectual, moral and intuitional sides of life has been considered necessary for genuine spiritual realization and therefore, Indians have emphasised all of these aspects. They always prefer to follow the gradual course, the line of nature’s own development and growth, rather than any artificial and abrupt method. The whole object of their disciplinary practices (Sadhana) is to aid
nature rather than to cripple or obstruct her by overstraining or by attempting to go against her.

The body is an instrument for the expression of sakti or energy, and as such, the more perfect the instrument and fitter the organism, the better will it express the sakti which is now hidden or latent in it. All energy is nature's own, and the exercise and development of the instrument or the vehicle can only help to evolve or manifest (but not create) the latent energy. All acquisition and attainment in life presupposes proper equipment, and the first equipment for a thorough development as is involved in spiritual progress and realization should be a health and fit body, so perfectly attuned to the physical and spiritual laws that it is not ruffled by any passing breath of passions or lower emotions, so well regulated and balanced, so well controlled, coordinated and disciplined that it will bear with perfect equanimity the buffets of life's rude shocks which assail the body and the mind at every turn of life. The value of having a disciplined body and mind need not to be either under-estimated or over-estimated by a person who wants self-realization: these are his priceless assets helping him in every situation of life.

The physical and physiological disciplines are necessary in order that the body may be strictly under the control of the mind and may not offer any resistance when the mind wants to meditate. The Acharas- the physical and physiological disciplines, regulation of food and breath etc., - only make the vehicle or the organism fit through
which the experience of the absolute is to be gained. Thus, ancient Indians recommended the joining of kriya(action) with bhavana - (meditation), the supplementing of intellectual process (Meditation) by physical and physiological exercises. Physical and physiological processes are of the preparatory nature helping to make the body and the vital processes, fit for the higher processes and are not possibly meant to be independent methods of realization.

In the tradition of Yoga and the Upanishads, there are five sheaths of existence of man. The first and the grossest - the physical frame, with which we are all so familiar is called Annamaya kosha. The second subtler sheath is the Pranamaya kosha, featured by the predominance of Pranna, the life principle. Through, the invisible channels called the Naadis in this sheaths flow the prana.

The next sheath in the order of subtlety are: 1) Manomaya kosha 2) Vijnaanamaya Kosha. 3) Aanandamaya kosha.

In Aanandamaya kosha, a man is healthiest with a perfect harmony and balance of all his faculties. At Vijnaanamaya kosha, there are movements, but are channelised in the right direction. As such, it is in the Manomaya level that imbalance start, say the Yoga texts. Likes and dislikes have come to play at this level. These imbalances amplify themselves resulting in mental illnesses called 'Aadhis'. At this stage, there are no symptoms at the physical level. Prompted by the perpetual growth of desires, these mental diseases concealed in us, begin to manifest themselves externally. Gradually,
they percolate to the physical frame. Preponderance of Ajnaana (ignorance about one’s real state of bliss) leads one to perform wrong actions as the eating of unwholesome food, living in unhealthy dwellings, doing things at untimely hours, injuries inflicted, association with the wicked, evil thoughts, etc. These breed physical diseases called Vyaadhis or the secondary diseases.

The man (Karma-Purusa):

According to the Samkhya philosophy, which is accepted by Ayurveda, the ancient science of medicine, the human body is the result of the integration of three constituents, namely:

(a) The sthula-sarira (the gross-empirically visible-material body), consisting of the gross states of matter.

(b) The linga or suksma Sarira—the subtle body.

(c) Karana Sarira, the Jivatma—the ultimate reality.

The Jivatma (Individual soul) along with the so-called suksma sarir transmigrates (at the time of death) from one body (gross) to another. This explains the inherited tendencies in the uniqueness of temperaments of individuals and the extra ordinary inherited skill in particular arts possessed by certain individuals (C.S.2-31). These traits are called vasana or mental propensities, which go with the mind from one body to another.
Ayurvedic Concept of Health:

WHO definition falls short of the definition of positive health as given in Ayurveda 2,000 years ago. In addition to physical, mental and social welfare, emphasis is given on moral and spiritual welfare. The treatment is divided into two parts. The first part is to make the healthy man feel vigorous, that is, positively healthy and the other part is to destroy sickness (C.S. -1-1-4).

In Ayurveda, health is defined as that perfect condition of the whole man.

(i) Who has a happy combination of thought, action and speech.
(ii) who has his mind under perfect control of the Atma (Soul).
(iii) who has his intellect clear
(iv) who possess knowledge of the soul
(v) who is devoted to austerities and spiritual practices.
Further, that man is never subjected to any disease (C.S.V.-4).

(i) who has suitable food and habits
(ii) who always acts after proper reflection
(iii) who does not entangle himself in the objects of his senses.
(iv) who behaves equally towards all living creatures.
(v) Who is devoted to truth.
(vi) who is forgiving.
(vii) who serves with humility all those who are wise.
Susret defines a healthy man as follows:-

(I) who has equilibrium of the three doshas, the nutrient elements.

(ii) who has normal digestion and normal condition of the tissues and excretionary organs.

(iii) who has his mind and senses clear and bright.

The condition of positive health should include, in addition to the healthy condition of the body in the material or the physical plane, the normal condition, in the mental and spiritual plane as well.

A person who is physically fit may be blind or deaf (senses), he may be stupid and even insane (mentally). If a man is worried by all sorts of entanglements, he cannot be said to be healthy. The most important of all is the spiritual health which depends upon the attitude of the man in relation to the society and the universe. The importance of this cannot be easily understood by those who do not believe in the existence of soul.

Physiological View of the Ayurvedic concept of Health and Ill-Health:

The normal health of living being is based upon the equilibrium of three in-going nutrients, seven permanent tissues and three out-going types of debris. These are called the 13 Dehdhatus.

The three nutrients charged with specific properties are called Tridhatus, when vitiated they are called the tridosas. They are called vat, pitta, and kapha.
The sapta-dhatu (seven types of tissues) are Rasa (chyle or lymph), Rakta (blood), Mamsa (muscle), Medas (fat), Asthi (bones), Majja (bone marrow, including brain matter), and Sukra (sperm or germ plasm) and the three Malas or types of debris are: faeces, urine and perspiration.

The seven tissues, Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa etc up to Sukra are formed out of the tissues which are lower and grosser in scale, Sukra is the final essence of the tissue metabolism. The Prasad (Healthy) state of these constituents leads to health, the vitiation of them leads to ill-health.

Yogic Approach to Fitness:

While Samkhya and Vedanta seek to control the lower by means of higher, the sense-organs by means of the mind, the mind by means of Buddha and so on, the yoga proceeds from the opposite direction to get hold of the higher with the help of the lower. It emphasises moral and social fitness to achieve through the practice of the rules of social (Yamas) and personal hygiene (Niyamas). Then it takes to the physical and physiological fitness followed by sensorial fitness through (pratyahara—withdrawal of senses from their respective objects). Fitness of mind and intelligence is regulated through last three steps i.e. Dhaarana, Dhyana, and samadhi of Astanga-yoga leading to discrimination and self-realization.
In this way, the progressive fitness programme of yoga runs as follows:

(i) Cultivation of hygienic environment within and without conducive to personal and social peace facilitating spiritual journey.

(ii) Purification and strengthening of the body

(iii) Balancing and strengthening of the vital force (Prana)

(iv) Senses and mind to be controlled and internalized.

(v) Chitta (consciousness) to be calmed and emptied.

(vi) The ego (Ahamkar) must be dissolved

(vii) Intelligence to be reoriented and sharpened.

**Moral Fitness:**

Moral life is the indispensable preliminary disciplinary requisite to the religious (Kathopnisada, I, II, 24) - the spiritual aspirant. This is the central teaching of all forms of Hindu Sadhana. Vidhidharmapalan of Bhaktivadins, satsampathi of Jnanvadins are prescriptions for their followers to become morally fit. This prepares the ground for further progress in their spiritual journey. Similarly, Yama and Niyama of Patanjali's Astanga-yoga (control and regulation) including truthfulness, purity of mind and body, abstinence from actions causing the slightest pain to others, chastity in thought and action, etc. have been prescribed as the very first disciplines that must be undergone by every sadhaka. Moral fitness is indispensable preliminary to spiritual progress which brings about the basic peace, harmony, balance leading to perfect peace (Santi Nirvanam...
paramam), balance and harmony i.e. Samadhi, Paramananda (infinite bliss- sukhamatytantikam) moral fitness is more or less behavioral harmony.

Purificatory discipline begins with regulated and methodical course of actions. The life of control (samyam) begins with the life of regulation (Niyaman). The wayward, lower self, accustomed to submit to the demands of every impulse and passion, cannot be controlled and dominated by the higher self when the later makes it first appearance as a mere foreigner having no authority. The higher self, at this state, merely imposes method and regularity on the usual actions of the lower self. Control, however, is gradually acquired through regulations; the lower self submits itself unconsciously later on.

Harmony is the key to fitness at all levels. Thus, moral fitness is achieved by cultivating positive attitudes towards one’s own self as well as towards the other human beings comprising the society. This is a sort of psychological conditioning.

Psychosomatic Fitness:

The body is an instrument for the expression of human energy, and as such, the more perfect the instrument and the fitter the organism, the better will it express the energy which is latent in it. All acquisition and attainment presuppose proper equipment, and the first equipment for a thorough development as is involved in spiritual progress and realization, should be a fit body, so perfectly attuned to
the spiritual and physical laws that it is not ruffled by any passing breath of passions or lower emotions, so well regulated and balanced, so well controlled and disciplined that it will bear with perfect equanimity the buffets of life's rude socks which assail the body and the mind at every turn of life. Thus, the strength of the body is to be gained by means of Asans and regulation of breath.

Physical and physiological practices are a necessity in order that the body may be strictly under the control of the mind and may not offer any resistance when the mind wants to meditate. The Acharas, the physical and physiological disciplines, regulation of food and breath, etc. only make the vehicle fit or the organism fit through which the experiences is to be gained.

The gross body is thus regulated through postures, and pranayama. Further, Fortitude the power of endurance (Titiksh) an important aspect of psychosomatic fitness manifests itself at the stage of yogic practices like Yogasanas and Pranayama. Endurance has physical as well as mental (in the form of will) aspects. The capacity for physical endurance is gained through definite purificatory processes, the postural patterns and the yogic breathing practices and unless such a constituent of fitness is not acquired, even the best disciplined intellect fails in trying circumstances. The bodily discipline is only a partial preparation for the virtue of fortitude which involves more mental strength than body. This mental strength is all that is implied by Dhiratva meaning both patience and wisdom.
Pranic Fitness:

Prana is the primal vital energy, and so intimately related to the mind that slightest change in one induces change in the other. The breath is regarded as the index of the mind, and the regulation and control of the breath is taken recourse to an order to control and regulate the mind. The healthy regulation of breath produces as harmonious circulation which leads to a healthy working of the nerves and the brain, which again corresponds with the harmonious working of the mind.

The internal vital processes are to be harmonised through regulated breath. The nervous system, with the help of the vital and respiratory systems (Prana and Nada) forms the exact physiological counterpart of the stream of consciousness, and Tantric practices show us innumerable methods of getting hold of and controlling the latter (consciousness) by means of the former.

Mental Fitness:

Mind very often fails to grasp things clearly because ordinarily its powers are limited owing to the constant diffusion of its energy. It has to be made fit by conserving mental energy through concentration. Mind becomes fit for realization becomes transparent (Prasidati), so as to speak, when it is fixed in harmony (Sattva-harmonious state of mind). The higher cerebral centres are to be harmonised through regulated sounds (Nada with susumana and the
mental processes are to be harmonised through meditation ( Bhavana ).

**Fitness of Intelligence:**

Buddhi needs to become a fit instrument for revelation through concentration ( Dhyaana ) and when it is fit enough it merges into the self which alone remains. Buddhi has to be fit to discover or release the truth which lies eternally within. The buddhi has to require microscopic vision ( drsyate tvagryaya buddhya- kathopnishad, I,iii,12.) through repeated acts of concentration if it is to have an intuition of the self. The whole aim of Hindu Sadhana with their innumerable details is to gradually educate the mind towards concentration. Their emphasis has been upon minute and detailed regulation of life.

**From Fitness Over to health:**

The so called fitness elements as mentioned above are divergent manifestations of surface-consciousness. In spiritual experience these elements harmoniously blended in a synthetic whole and united into the original bond ( the universal consciousness ) out of which these seem to have emanated. The sense of well-being ( happiness ) which has a tendency of increase or decrease i.e. health of temporal nature, now takes the form of ‘bliss’ as ultimate experience which is eternal - a state of Absolute health or transcendental health.