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Mental and Physical Disorders - Yogic Solution
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According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) “the state of health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.”¹ WHO also suggests a fourth dimension—spiritual well-being. It is clear from this outcome that health and ill-health are not two discrete entities as commonly understood but health should be conceived as a continuous function indicating the state of well-being.²

Mental and Physical Disorders:

In the modern world of 21st century though science and technology has evolved a lot and we have access to so many means of comfort and medical facilities, still it is difficult to find a person totally free of any sort of mental or physical disorder. Most of the people today have some kind of deep-rooted complex, fear, phobia or conflict. Anyone who thinks that he has no mental problems is only deluding himself. There is however, not much difference between obvious mental patients and everyone else; only that in the former, underlying problems is more intense and have consequently manifested with greater force. It is not impossible to remove the problem. The first step is to admit it exists.

Most of us have very limited and perhaps naive concepts regarding the meaning and scope of mental problems. The most basic mental problem with most people is lack of meaning. Psychiatrists as far back as Jung recognized this basic mental problem. He correctly pointed out that the main motivating force in every one’s life is the
need to find meaning. This is usually covered over, however, by multitudinous activities or other conflicts in life that make people forget this problem exists. Everything seems pointless and futile and the despair results in intense negative emotions, which can result in the breakdown of mental and bodily functions. In fact there is meaning in life, in the life of each and every one of us, but one must find it out for himself. If we forget the present emptiness in our life, then we are escaping; if we try to cloud the question over with dogmatic assertions that there is meaning without really knowing it from the depths of our being, then we are still escaping. We must find out for ourselves, through our own experience. The method is yoga. From this will come knowledge and understanding of our real nature and our incredible relationship with existence. The problem of lack of meaning in life will automatically drop away and dissolve as we experience higher awareness and knowledge. When we attain higher knowledge, then we can bear anything in life. We will be able to swim through the ups and downs of life with perfect ease.

There are many other more obvious mental problems, some of which we are conscious of and others that we are not since they lie in the deeper levels of the subconscious mind. Some people are scared of insects, of certain animals, of open spaces, of closed spaces, of other people, of the opposite sex, of the dark and so on; the list is without end. Some people have sexual complexes, such as impotence; other people have a strong hatred of their mother or father, or both; others have strong feelings of jealousy towards others either specifically or generally; others have had and still feel the shock of death, perhaps of a close friend or relative. Examples can be quoted to completely fill this section. All of these problems
must be rooted out if we want to achieve happiness in life and yoga is of immense help in this regard.

Some people say that inferiority is an integral part of man's nature. But it's not true, for there are many great yogis and sages who certainly don't feel the slightest inferiority; nor at the same time do they go to the other extreme and become superior in their attitude towards others. The feeling of inferiority is an emotional imbalance, which is ultimately caused by lack of understanding of one's real nature. It results in excessive envy and competition in order for the individual to reduce the feeling of inadequacy when compared to others.

Though normally not recognized as a mental problem, 'conditioning' sometimes is also treated as a state of mental problem. People (to a smaller or greater degree) who are attached to dogmas and fixed concepts, have a mental problem. Pride in one's country, skin color, status, religious beliefs and intellectual ability are all mental problems in that people are fixed in their ideas. The mind has ceased to be a reservoir of spontaneous ideas; instead, it is a repository of fixed, rigid and stereotyped thought patterns. This is a major block and an obstacle to higher awareness. In other words, conditioning is a mental problem. Also included in this category is the tendency to accept ideas without reflection and personal experience. Many people believe almost implicitly everything that they read or hear, without ever relating it to their own experience. We should believe nothing until we have tested it for ourselves.

Most problems lie below the level of normal perception, in the subconscious. All we know is that these cause unhappiness, depression, etc. in life but few of us only try to find out the reason
or the source. These must be recognized and then eliminated. One thing we must emphasize, is that all mental problems and blocks can be removed; they need not remain a permanent part of your character. All that is required is the need and effort to remove them.

Causes of Mental Disorders

In fact mind loses its equilibrium when any external or internal problem strains it harshly. Consequently, its functioning gets disturbed and its harmony begins to diminish, slowly or rapidly. The person so affected for a long period, becomes mentally sick. The individual's thought, action, manner, behaviour and outlook become imbalanced. This can involve persons of any age, of any sex, of any socio-economic background. Here we are faced then, - with two types of problems: (i) how to correct and cure the cases of mental sickness, and (ii) how and in what way one can maintain sound mental health. The answer to both curative and preventive problems is found in the system of yoga.

All troubles which affect the mind of an individual spring from three basic source (i) Nature, (ii) Society and (iii) Self. In other words, particular problem which strains and causes mental imbalance in an individual is either nature-oriented, society-oriented or self-oriented which have been termed as Daivik, Bhautik and Daihik by Kapil in his Samkhya philosophy.

The problems arising out of nature could be in the form of some natural calamity, danger from certain animate creatures, and the peculiarity of natural phenomena. The societal problems, likewise, could be religious, ethnic, racial, economic, political, etc., or also they might involve the varied problems of adjustment to certain
customs, manners, ways of life, etc., of a particular community. Similarly, there could be countless problems of individual's own creation, which arise because of certain beliefs, faith, notions, habits, manners and also because of some inner feelings, such as, hatred, jealousy, revenge, love, romance, likes and dislikes.

People of every society, be that industrial, agrarian, tribal or primitive, have been faced with various problems arising out of these three above mentioned causes, more or less, in the same way as we have to face them today. Though the nature and forms of human problems have changed because of changes in social conditions, yet basically, they remain the same.

To successfully bring about mental peace in our life, there must be a three-pronged approach:

First of all, one must try to prevent the occurrence of new problems and disturbances. It is of no use whatsoever to empty the mind of existing complexes etc. and still leave it open and susceptible to new adverse impressions. It is necessary to make the mind stronger and more resilient to the ups and downs of life. Secondly, one must exhaust conscious problems; that is, the problems which we already know and recognize. Thirdly, one must slowly discover and eradicate the subconscious problems. These are problems that cause much pain, unhappiness and anguish in life, but which are buried deep in the unexplored realms of the mind. One feels the result of these problems in the form of depression etc. but one doesn't really know what the cause is. One may attribute the cause to some outside event or person, but the real cause lies deep in his mind. These subconscious problems must be recognized and then thrown out.
The most common manifestation of underlying mental problems is dissatisfaction with the present. This applies to almost everybody. How often do we actually live totally in the NOW? If we are honest with ourselves, then we will admit that most of the time, no matter what is being done, we keep on dreaming. When we walk to work in the morning we wish we were still in bed. When we are working we wish we were still on holidays and having great fun with friends. When we work in the garden we wish we were eating that wonderful tasty meal that we ate last weekend; and when we take our food we are thinking of the time that we went for a walk or worrying about work problems and so on. Very rarely do people live in the present and totally concentrate on the activities in hand. For this reason people perform most actions in life half-heartedly and with very little efficiency and enthusiasm. It is not possible to work properly when the attention of the mind is elsewhere, when the mind is jumping from one thought to another like a wild monkey jumping from one branch to another in a tree.

Yet it is certain that everybody at one time or another has experienced periods, perhaps of short duration, when they were totally concentrated on one activity or something of deep absorbing interest. And if we retrospect, we will perhaps remember that those periods were times of great joy and happiness. This is particularly noticeable when we are mentally balanced and when we perform our duties with intense awareness. These experiences are so overwhelming that it is difficult to forget them. One of the reasons for this feeling of joy and happiness is the mere fact that for a short time we lived in the present and our attention was on the now. It is living in the present that is important. This living in the present is an essential part of yoga. The reason for continual projection, living in the past or future, is
mental disturbances. Therefore, the only really effective way to live more and more in the present is to empty the mind of its hidden problems. Merely being told of the importance of living in the present is not enough, for it can never be practiced until mental problems are eliminated. When this is done then living in the present becomes spontaneous and no effort is required.

Our ability to live in the present and totally absorb ourselves in the activities or work being done without allowing the mind to project vicariously elsewhere, is also a proof of whether or not we have mental problems. If one is continually living elsewhere, with the mind wandering hither and thither, wishing he were doing something else other than what he is actually trying to do, then this is an immediate indication of underlying disturbance.

Why do we continually tend to relive the past, or project into the future with anticipation of events to come? The answer is basically simple—escapism and attachment to intoxicating experiences. Because we are dissatisfied, we try to escape by re-experiencing high points of happiness in the past and by anticipating possible high experiences in the future. Most people are in a continuous dream state. They think that they are awake, but they in fact, sleepwalk. They are not living their life as it really is, but are creating their own hell, heaven or haven of retreat. These are only methods to escape oneself and to avoid facing up to and removing one's mental problems. And until a person begins to face his problems, there will never be any real change in his dream-like existence. He will never really start to find lasting happiness and satisfaction.

Cleaning out the mind is the first step in progressively seeing life as it really is and not as we imagine. Yet this requires courage, for
the subconscious mind is the repository of basic fears, and it can often be quite frightening to see their root face to face. We need to be fearless and determined to face them and eliminate them. But the benefits we will gain in the long run are more than worth the effort, for our life will progressively undergo a miraculous transformation. Slowly but surely we will start to know what joy really means.

Physical Disorders

Most people fully accept that most of the physical disorders are a result of some kind of mental disturbance. The mind and body are really part of one unit but for the sake of definition and explanation, we can say that certain diseases are mainly mental in cause while others are mainly physical. Mental diseases cause derangement in the body and physical diseases cause derangement or loss of efficiency of the mind. They are directly related. I merely want to emphasize this point.

The mind, on a personal level, is in a continual state of activity. Ideally this process should occur spontaneously and naturally, without even slightest hindrance. However, in the mind of most people there is psychological constipation and indigestion caused by mental frustrations. This causes growth of psychological tumors in the mind concerned. If these tumors, blocks, frustrations and mental problems are sufficiently intense they can result in psychosomatic illnesses and/or mental illnesses or breakdowns. If the mental problems are milder, but nevertheless present, they will manifest in the form of unhappiness and depression; in fact general discontent with one's relationship with life and other people.
It is widely accepted that there are many illnesses which manifest physically but which have psychological causes. In modern terminology these are called psychosomatic diseases. Under this heading there are many obvious diseases, such as neuritis. Yoga believes that almost all diseases are caused by mental disturbances. Modern science is also reaching around the same conclusion slowly.

Many people attribute the cause of diabetes to the malfunctioning of the pancreas and to some extent the pituitary gland. No doubt, this is the obvious cause of the lack of insulin. But what is the reason of the malfunction of pancreas in the first place? Common cold, e.g. seem to be caused by germs and nothing else but why the body, which under normal conditions has powerful auto-therapeutic and protective powers to resist the disease, cannot fight it? It is being strongly felt that the actual cause lies in the mind.

Mental disturbance and continual stress interfere with the harmonious working of the physical organs causing them to break down. It seriously interferes with this innate property of the physical body and reduces its effectiveness in fighting or preventing the occurrences of illnesses. With removal of mental problems, incredible changes take place in the body and state of health. A clean mind allows the physical body to perform its duties unimpeded. Many miraculous cures of all types of so-called incurable diseases can be obtained by relaxing the deeper realms of the subconscious mind, by throwing out or coming to terms with one's inner problems. This is proved by the fact that people who have a calm and relaxed attitude to life suffer illness of any type much less frequently than other more tension-ridden people. So
emptying our mind of its negative contents will have far reaching consequences on our health.

The most basic and important thing in life is good health. Without abundant health, it is impossible to aspire towards anything. Illness dulls the whole mind and body. Perceptions, enthusiasm, positivity and so forth are all diminished. It is only with loss of health that a person understands the incapacitating effect of bad health, and profoundly appreciates the meaning of good health. Health only becomes a problem when one does not have it.

Being healthy does not mean just being functionally healthy. A healthy man in the true sense should not only have a healthy body but also a balanced mind free of mental problems.

**Solution of different Mental & Physical Disorders and need of Yoga:**

Illnesses which are purely of physical nature such as contagious diseases caused by warms, virus and parasites etc. require a direct approach through any healing system, that is available and that brings results. However, many diseases, especially modern diseases, do have their main root in the mind for which a more integrated approach or healing system is required. The healing system adopted to any illness should be one that brings mental relaxation, removal of phobias and any other mental imbalance. In this field, yoga is particularly powerful. It brings wonderful results. The important thing to remember is that one should adopt a suitable healing system whether the disease is predominantly physical or mental.

There is a vast spectrum of healing systems such as yoga, allopathy, homeopathy, ayurveda, acupuncture, naturopathy etc.
that can be adopted to bring about removal of an ailment. Each healing system has its place. For specific ailments some systems are better than others. It is important that the practitioner of any of these healing systems knows the limitations of the system that he follows. People who prescribe a method of treatment must know its limitations and its remedial powers. They must know the field in which that particular system is useful and stick to that field. Ailments that cannot be treated should be left to other healing systems that can provide a remedy. There is surely a system available to help treat every disease. Practitioners of every healing system make the mistake of overstepping themselves. They recommend their method for an ailment, which it cannot cure. This causes unnecessary suffering to patients through adopting an inadequate or unsuitable healing system for that particular disease. In this present context we are confined up to yogic system only.

Yoga as a Healing System

Yoga can help improve our immune system to keep us physically as well as mentally fit. It can treat all types of mental disorders, from which stem a large array of ailments. It can be used to treat diabetes, constipation, asthma, high blood pressure, sexual malfunctions, anxiety, arthritis, backache, rheumatism, colds, coughs, epilepsy, varicose veins, piles, flatulence, migraine, sciatica, sinusitis, slipped disc, gastric ulcers, indigestion, insomnia, eczema and a multitude of other diseases. There are many authenticated cases of people who now have perfect health, having once suffered from some disease and removed it through regular yoga practices.
Yoga simultaneously influences both the body and the mind. It is for this reason that yoga is so effective in treating a wide range of diseases. In other words, yoga is good preventative medicine. Yoga aims to bring about total harmony between one's fundamental drives, emotions, feelings, intellect, will and one's interpersonal and social relationships.

Yoga is the key to good health and happiness in today's world. Rapid advancements in medical science over the past century have reduced the incidence of most of the physical diseases that have plagued humanity for centuries. Ever better drugs and surgical techniques have led to the eradication of most infectious diseases and the control of many metabolic disorders. Soon even routine genetic interventions may be possible. But these techniques are less effective against the new and ever more common causes of ill health—chronic stress and psychosomatic ailments.

Conventional medicine, by concentrating on a physical and mechanistic approach to healing, can do little to relieve conditions such as these, since they are caused more by life style and attitudes than by physiological anomalies. The frenetic pace of modern life exposes many people to continuous, unrelieved stress. And if we are largely sedentary in our habits and overindulge in health damaging substances and foods, our well-being and fitness will be further compromised. Eventually stress may manifest itself in the form of physical disease or mental breakdown. Modern medicine has countered with symptom-suppressing treatments, which do little to tackle the root cause of the problem. As a result, health has come to be regarded as a static state in which disease is absent, rather than as a dynamic growth process in which we feel truly well on both the physical and mental levels. But there is
no reason to settle for anything less than a positive sense of well-being.

Yoga has a lot to offer as we approach the 21st century. It gives us the means to complement medical technology with a holistic system of healthcare that addresses the problems of the mind and spirit, as well as those of the body. Patanjali, who wrote the classic text on yoga nearly 3000 years ago, describing yoga as 'a science of the mind.' And it is through teaching us to control our mind, our desires, and our reactions to stress, that yoga can fundamentally help us.5

Mastery of the mind involves two aspects: the ability to concentrate our attention on any given subject or object, and the capacity to quieten our mind at will. Though most people have developed the first aspect to some degree, very few of us can lapse into inner peace even accidentally, let alone at will. Yoga is an intelligent, skilful means for making the mind quiet, rather than a brutal, mechanical technique for stopping it.

All aspects of yoga work toward this in some way, thus bringing us closer to our goal. Yoga develops our ability to maintain inner peace at all times, in all our actions, and thereby achieve physical and mental health. This calmness in action is the secret to attaining the 'skill' referred to in the Bhagavad Gita.

The approach of yoga therapy is based on the holistic concept of human beings: the five 'sheaths' to existence, of which the physical frame is only the first. The second is the vital body that is made up of prana, the life energy that flows through us in invisible channels known as nadiis. The third is the mind (our emotions and thoughts), the fourth is the higher intellect (perfect thought and
knowledge), and the final sheath is the 'abode of bliss.' The bliss sheath is thought to consist of the positive energy that is associated with the divine. It is from this sheath that the inner peace essential to true happiness emanates.6

Disease arises when there is imbalance in any of the three lower sheaths of existence. In the physical, pranic, and mind sheaths, ego consciousness, which is centered around the self, predominates and so harmony in these sheaths can be easily disturbed. The fourth and fifth sheaths are permeated by a wider, universal consciousness and cannot be perturbed. When we are truly healthy, the positive energy in the highest sheath percolates freely through the lower ones and brings total harmony and balance to all our faculties. But though the harmony of the higher sheaths is constant, the free movement of bliss can be blocked by imbalances in the lower sheaths.

According to Yoga Vasistha, a great text on yoga, there are two types of physical illness, and each requires a different approach. The first are the illnesses with a strong physical element, such as contagious diseases and accidental injuries. These are most effectively dealt with conventional medicine, though yoga can play a substantial supporting role. Yoga also helps prevent the occurrence of such ailments by improving our general health and making us less accident-prone.

The other type of illness arises through disturbances in the mind sheath and includes all the psychosomatic and degenerative ailments. In these disorders psychological factors play a much greater role and conventional treatment alone is not usually an effective cure. According to Indian belief such ailments are thought to be caused by mental diseases called 'Adhis'. These arise when
excessively strong feelings of like or dislike become amplified and established, acting to distort personality and to obstruct the flow of positive energy to the lower sheaths. This causes imbalances that result in physical ailments and also make us feel restless and discontented.

The inner peace that is our natural state is generated by the positive energy from the bliss-sheath. When the flow of this energy is interrupted by 'Adhis', our sense of well-being is diminished and in our attempt to regain it, we may be further aggravating the problem by behaving inappropriately. We may, for example, find ourselves eating the wrong foods, living in unhealthy surroundings, lapsing into negative states of mind or driving ourselves too hard. But these methods give only temporary relief and may, in fact, damage our health.

With psychosomatic ailments, yoga provides the vital element that modern therapies lack and act directly on the mental imbalances. While emotion-culturing and meditation make us aware of the tyranny of thoughts and emotions, happiness-analysis teaches us how to look within ourselves to find peace and satisfaction. At the same time other yogic practices facilitate the restoration of health at other levels as well. This effectively complements medical techniques which improve the situation physically but are unable to eradicate the primary cause of the problem.
BRIEF ACCOUNT OF BENEFITS THROUGH YOGA

I. Physiological Benefits through Yoga

- Autonomic nervous system equilibrium stabilizes.
- Pulse rate decreases
- Respiratory rate decreases
- Blood Pressure decreases
- Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) increases
- EEG - alpha waves increase (theta, delta, and beta waves also increase during various stages of meditation)
- EMG activity decreases
- Cardiovascular efficiency increases
- Respiratory efficiency increases
- Gastrointestinal function normalizes
- Endocrine function normalizes
- Excretory functions improve
- Musculoskeletal flexibility and joint range of motion increase
- Breath-holding time increases
- Grip strength increases
- Eye-hand coordination improves
- Dexterity skills improve
- Reaction time improves
- Posture Improves
- Strength and resiliency increase
- Endurance increases
- Energy level increases
- Weight normalizes
- Sleep improves
- Immunity increases
- Pain decreases
- Steadiness improves
• Depth perception improves
• Balance improves
• Integrated functioning of body parts improves

II. Psychological Benefits through Yoga
• Somatic and kinesthetic awareness increase
• Mood improves and subjective well-being increases
• Self-acceptance and self-actualization increase
• Social skills increase
• Anxiety and Depression decrease
• Hostility decreases
• Concentration improves
• Memory improves
• Attention improves
• Learning efficiency improves
• Mood improves
• Well-being increases
• Symbol coding improves

III. Biochemical Benefits through Yoga
• Glucose decreases
• Sodium decreases
• Total cholesterol decreases
• Triglycerides decrease
• HDL cholesterol increases
• LDL cholesterol decreases
• VLDL cholesterol decreases
• Cholinesterase increases
• Catecholamines decrease
• ATPase increases
• Hematocrit increases
• Hemoglobin increases
- Lymphocyte count increases
- Total white blood cell count decreases
- Thyroxin increases
- Vitamin C increases
- Total serum protein increases

In the present era of 21st century when the world population is increasing exponentially and so are the proportion of physical and mental disorders. Yoga is going to be of great help not only to the individuals but also to the nation or world as whole. Out of many benefits of yoga as a healing system one important benefit is that it is least expensive. Thus, suppose if entire population of a country starts practicing yoga regularly, not only that the health expenses of a nation is reduced and the money thus saved, is available for developmental work and for eradication of poverty etc. Also the physically and mentally fit citizens are able to contribute more towards growth of the nation or world as a whole.

Having described the need of yoga in modern living conditions let us now, see how it helps us attain sound health.

The word yoga in Sanskrit means "to unite", and so yoga can be said to connote a unitive discipline. Yoga is aimed to unite the mind, the body, and the spirit. Scientists today ascertain that the intrinsic organic health of a human being is of prime importance along with the outer development of the body. To maintain the purity of blood and elimination of toxins, both outer and inner cleanliness is indispensable. Yoga has a strengthening effect on the nervous system through its non-tiring physiological activities that bring about poise of body and mind. Unlike the normal workouts that concentrate more on the inflation of the muscles, Yoga takes care of every little part of the anatomy. Yoga has an all-pervading
effect on the physical and mental functioning and leads towards spiritual realization.

The practice of yoga has a substantial foundation in science. Yoga provides all-round benefits to a human being. It is a science that affects not only the conscious self but the subconscious and unconscious as well. Yoga if practiced can exalt man to the 'supra mundane level'.

Yoga is an all-embracing way of life, a science of self-culture and mental discipline that ensures the purgation of the ignoble in man and brings forth what is most noble in him. It is pertinent to all people irrespective of his caste, creed, sex, and religion. It can be beneficial to all - the good and the bad, the sick and the healthy, the believer and the non-believer, the literate and the ignorant, the young and the old. A person may begin yoga at any age and can go on reaping its benefits.

Bhagawat Gita asserts 'yogah karmashu kaushalam' means yoga is skill in action. Here the word action should not be taken in its narrow sense of the term i.e. physical movement only because besides exercises for improving the 'skill' of our body, yoga also comprises techniques that transform our intellect, mind and emotions and provides a complete philosophy for living. Yoga is a way of life. It is a science of holistic living.

In order to live holistically, we must develop 'skill' in all aspects of our life. Sri Aurobindo regarded yoga as a methodical effort toward self-perfection through developing our latent potential at the physical, vital, mental, intellectual, and spiritual levels. And the most fundamental step we can take toward expanding the limits of our consciousness is to gain mastery over our mind.
Yoga is the art and science of living in harmony with one's nature. The practices of yoga enable us to achieve optimum physical health and a mind free from stress, anxiety and the negative effects of tension. They enable us to improve the quality of our mind so we have greater clarity, concentration and memory. Yogic practices are designed to awaken the dormant potential within, which leads to a more balanced and harmonious life. First we become more aware of the physical body. This leads to an understanding of how our mind works and how it influences our body and personality. We observe and understand how we think and learn why we have certain attitudes and reactions by discovering the role that emotions play in our life. We also get in touch with the psychic personality lying dormant in the unconscious mind and come into closer contact with our true Self.

Among the forefathers whose contribution became the foundation of yoga system is that of Kapil. The contribution of Kapil (700 B.C.) is called Samkhya philosophy.¹⁰ According to Kapil, the answer to all human problems is in samyak jnana, (proper knowledge). In the absence of samyak jnana, the unfamiliar and peculiar happenings cause dukha (sorrow). When the individual develops and acquires proper knowledge about Purusha (self) and Prakriti (Nature), then the peculiar happenings and causations in any of the three sources (mentioned above) do not cause dukha. This implies acquiring a scientific knowledge about rajas, tamas and sattva gunas, and all the tattvas (elements) of Prakriti together with a knowledge about the composition, function and co-relationship of sense, organs, action organs, mind, intelligence and the totality of the Purusha (self). When the individual becomes so knowledgeable, he attains the power of overcoming pain,
maintains mental equilibrium and obtains pleasure, happiness and excellence in life.\textsuperscript{11}

But this Samkhya philosophy did not show the method and process of obtaining the goal. It needed a comprehensive system in order to help the individual adopt and achieve what had been so rightly stated by Kapil. This system was propounded by Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra.

\textbf{Patanjali Yoga Sutra}

The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali (300 B.C.) is a treatise on methodological process for obtaining the goal laid down by Kapil and adds something more. Whereas Kapil emphasized acquiring of jnana which involves only the mind, Patanjali's system of yoga, on the other hand, involves both mind and body. In this respect, the Purusha of Patanjali has to do two things simultaneously, that is, he must acquire samyak jnana and also he must practise yoga in order to achieve excellence of both body and mind. This way, by combining 'jnana and practices' together the individual would attain not only excellent health but would also be able to maintain a harmonious relationship between the mind and the body.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, we find that Patanjali's yoga provides a better and more thorough answer to our problems of mental health.

\textbf{Yogāsanās as solution:}

Since Patanjali's system involves knowing and doing both, his method includes all those steps which are essential for obtaining the desired goal on both levels- physical and mental. These steps are eight in number. They are mentioned below together with their basic meanings and implications:
(1) Yama (‘control and discipline),
(2) Niṣyama (rules, methods and principles),
(3) Āsanās (making body postures)
(4) Prānāyāma (kriyas with air),
(5) Pratyāhāra (avoidance of undesirables in taking actions, that is, knowing the proper actions),
(6) Dhāranā (concentration),
(7) Dhyāna (meditation), and
(8) Samādhi (contemplation).

These eight steps together are also known as ‘Rāja Yoga’.

There are many other paths of yoga also

**Mantra Yoga** is the yoga of sound. Mantra yoga utilizes the power of sound as a method of inducing introspection and subtle mental changes, and to evoke mental and psychic manifestations. A particular mantra is usually repeated over and over again either verbally or mentally, producing mental tranquility, concentration and awareness of the inner processes of the mind.

**Kudnalini Yoga**, concerned with the awakening of the pranic or psychic centers known as chakras which exist within all of us. These chakras are centers of energy and are directly related to different levels of awareness

**Hatha Yoga**, The word hatha is composed of two words, namely ha and tha. ‘Ha’ means the moon and ‘tha’ means the sun. Thus hatha yoga means the harmony between the sun and moon aspects of our being. The two nostrils have a deeper association with the flow of prāṇa within our being. It is this flow of prāṇa that ultimately influences the mental and physical functions. Throughout the day we tend to operate either more mentally or
more physically. This is a natural process. However, for perfect mental and physical balance the sun flow should predominate for a total of about twelve hours and the moon flow for the other twelve hours in each day. This ensures a balanced personality—neither too much introversion nor too much extroversion. The balance of these two is essential and is the basic aim of hatha yoga. Not only this, but balance leads to perfect physical and mental health. Further, it is the period when the flow in both nadis is exactly the same (manifested by equal flow in both nostrils) that spontaneous states of meditation can arise.

**Karma Yoga:** This is the yoga of action, the system of attaining awareness through activity. It is performance of our daily work with constant awareness and at the same time without any expectation of reward. It is this living in the present which enables far more effective, efficient and powerful actions. By totally absorbing the self in the work at hand we tend to reduce the power of the ego. This is the essence of karma yoga.

**Jnāna Yoga:** This is the path of enquiry towards illuminative knowledge. In this path one enquires about the essence of existence and one's true nature. Effort, concentration and total absorption in the enquiry are prerequisites for success in this path. Without these attributes, illumination will not take place.

**Bhakti Yoga.** This is the yoga of devotion. It is the channeling of emotions into devotion, directed towards a guru, deity or suitable object. In this way the emotions are given an outlet, instead of suppressing them or disintegrating them in different directions. The bhakti absorbs himself completely in his object of devotion, losing his individuality or ego. Emotional and mental problems
disappear, concentration increases and the path to higher awareness and self-realization is opened.

There are many more. These various paths of yoga leads to the same point. At first they have specific characteristics and some times even appear to contradict each other, but as one progresses along any one or number of these paths their separateness disappears. All the paths of yoga incorporates the same aim and towards the same goal Physical Health, Mental Health and Higher Awareness.

Out of the above mentioned paths of yoga, Rāja Yoga is most effective as far as healing of mental and physical disorders are concerned. Regular practice of the steps of Rāja yoga i.e. Yama, Niyama and Āsanās have direct impact on the physical health and thus are very helpful in removing physical ailments. The steps like Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāرانā & Dhyāna are helpful in removing mental blocks. All the steps combined help maintain a balance of healthy body and sound mind.

The steps Āsanās and Prāṇāyāma are described in detail below.

Āsaṇa

The meaning of the Sanskrit word āsana is 'a steady and comfortable posture'. Āsaṇās have a profound influence on the body and aim at influencing three aspects of our whole being i.e. body, mind and consciousness. Correct performance of āsaṇās thus requires participation of one's whole being, with awareness of oneself in relation to the physical position and movement, the breath, relaxation of the muscles and so forth.
Āsanās evolved slowly through regular practice of pioneers, and because of this, it has withstood the test of time. Āsanās are a well-tested system for attaining mental and physical health and are as useful in the present age as they were to the ancient originators. The prime aim of āsanas is to help us maintain a healthy body and mind.

Āsanās loosen up the joints of the body, stretch and tone the muscles and remove poisons which tend to accumulate in various parts of the body. They also harmonize the nervous system and with a gentle massage they improve the functioning of all the internal organs such as the heart, lungs, abdominal organs, endocrinial glands, blood vessels and so on. This slowly but surely leads to the best possible physical health. Improvement in the general health of the body automatically helps to bring about positive mental changes.

Āsanās help the body to resist disease by bringing the mind and body into the best possible condition. A body saturated with poisons and toxins is a breeding ground for germs and is conducive to attack by disease. Āsanās help to purify the body and thereby prevent diseases occurring. Some ailments are caused by malfunctioning of internal organs—blood pressure, heart attack, diabetes and so on. Āsanās prevent this happening by bringing all the relevant organs into good working condition, improving nerve connections and also by reducing chronic mental stress, the latter being the root cause of most of the problems in the first place.

Āsanās greatly influence the functioning of the endocrine system. This system exerts vast control over our lives. It influences our physical appearance, emotional outlook and in fact much of our behavior and attitude towards life. A person who has a healthy
endocrine system is generally optimistic, clear in thought and positive in action. A person with a system that is out of balance will tend to be unhealthy, pessimistic and either excessively active or inactive physically and mentally.\textsuperscript{13}

The endocrine system consists of various glands secreting hormones, which control various body activities. For optimum health the entire system must be in balance and perfectly coordinated, each gland secreting the required hormone in the right quantity at the right time. If there is disharmony in the endocrinal system then there will be a malfunction in one or more of the bodily processes and possibly in the emotional makeup of one's personality. There is such an intricate interrelationship between the various glands that one malfunctioning gland can cause disruption of the whole system. Āsanās rectify overactivity or sluggishness of individual glands as well as harmonize the control center of the system in the brain. This is why even simple asanas can sometimes bring about astonishingly quick benefits.

Āsanās bring about harmony in the various other bodily systems such as blood, nervous, respiratory, as well as the digestive system. Āsanās coordinate these various systems bringing rhythm and balance into the body-mind complex.

Awareness is an essential feature of the practice of āsanās. While performing asanas one should be fully aware of what is being done and not allow the mind to wander here and there. Without awareness āsanās are not really asanas, no matter how well they may be physically performed. This awareness of breath movement while doing asanas draws our attention away from entanglement with superficial worries and problems, at least for a period of time. This includes relaxation of one's personality. It may be temporary,
but it assists in bringing about permanent changes in a person's mental and emotional makeup.

Āsanās make the body relaxed, strong, light, supple, free of aches and pains and this in turn brings about emotional and mental calmness and confidence. Regular practice of āsanās helps to make one master of the mind and body, and not the slave. When the aches and pains and ailments of the body are removed and one is emotionally and mentally relaxed, then one automatically ceases to be aware of the physical body and the superficialities of the mind. In this way the fetters of individuality can be released and one's true nature pure, infinite, all pervasive consciousness can also be realized.

There are different groups of āsanās like Standing Group, Forward, Backward, Balancing, Twisting, Relaxation, Vajrāsana, Inverted & each group having its own benefits and are briefly described below.

**Standing Group of Āsanās:** This group is beneficial for those who spend a lot of time sitting down. These āsanās have a stretching & strengthening effect on the back shoulder & leg muscle and help in developing physical & mental balance by cleaning up congestion in the nerves of spine at the point where they emerge from the spinal column.

Examples:

1. Utthitlōṣana- this āsana helps to remove tiredness and stretch the hamstrings and back muscle, loosen the hip and massage the visceral organs. It stimulates the circulation and toning the spinal nerves. This is an excellent pre-prāṇāyāma practice.
2. Tāḍāsana: This āsana develops physical and mental balance. The entire spine is stretched and loosened. It also stretches the rectus abdominal muscles and intestine.

Balancing Group of Āsanās: This group of asanas induces physical and mental balance by balancing the nervous system thereby bringing balance in the left & right hemisphere of the brain. It helps in improving mental concentration & memory and also helps in controlling anger & anxiety. Ajna chakra is activated through this āsana.

Example:

Natrāj Āsana: This āsana balance the nervous system, develops control of the body and mental concentration and make the legs supple.
Vajrāsana Group of Āsanās: The vajrāsana series are very beneficial for the reproductive as well as digestive organs. As mind is the king of all senses vajra is also a major nadi directly connected with the geneto-urinary system which regulates the sexual energy in the body. Few practices are Vajrāsana, Mārjari āsana, Shashānkāsana, Vyagrāsana etc.

Vajrāsana: This āsana is specially for the digestive and reproductive system. Pressure is exerted on Vajra nāḍī and the energy is channeled into the digestive area in the form of nerve, blood and tissue activation. The manipura chakra is activated and improve digestion. Vajrāsana increases the Para-sympathetic system in the lower body and allows relaxation. So it is good for treatment of digestive complaints, ulcer, sciatica nerve and hip joints.
Vajrāsana

**Backward Group of Āsanās**: The practice of back ward bending āsanās can correct postural defect & neuro-muscular imbalances of the vertebral column. Impure blood has a tendency to accumulate in the back region where circulation tends to be sluggish because of upright position of the body most of the time. These āsanās help to circulate, purify & enrich the blood in this region and massages the entire abdominal part of the body. This group of āsanās is very helpful for nervous system. It makes personality stimulating & extrovert. It is helpful in case of sciatica, slipped disc or any other backward ailment. Backward group of asanas mainly influence Mainpura Chakra which make personality dynamic & charming.

Examples:

**(i) Chakrāsana** (Wheel Pose) - This practice helps in activating Manipura Chakra, the Saman Vayu starts working. It makes spine flexible, control obesity. It influences all the hormonal functions. Even this practice activate pingia Nādi. It develops extrovert
personality. And also in the Yoga Upanishadas, Chakrāsana is used for opening or awakening the chakrās.

![Chakrāsana](image)

(ii) **Gomukhāsana** (Cows' Face Pose) – It helps in activating Ajna and Anahata Chakra. It practice alleviate tiredness, tension and anxiety and controls ire. That is why, this asana is called as relaxation plus meditative asana. It relieves backache, sciatica, rheumatism and general stiffness in shoulders, neck. Even it stimulates the kidneys and cure diabetes.

![Gomukhāsana](image)
Forward Group of Āsanās: Forward bending, associated with chest compression & exhalation induce relaxation. This group of āsanās loosens up the back muscles & helps maintain good health & increased vitality. During forward practice each of the vertebra is separated stimulating the nerves, improving circulation around the spine. Almost all asanas of this group stretches the hamstring muscles & increase flexibility in hip joints. It tones & massages the entire abdominal & pelvic region including liver, pancreas, spleen, kidney & adrenal gland. It reduces anger & use gravity to help release tension & pain.

Examples:
(i) Shashānkāsana (Pose of the moon or hare pose) - Shashānkāsana symbolizes peace and calm. It helps in activating Swadhisthana, Manipura and Ajna Chakra. It cures slip disc problem and encourages the discs to resume their correct position. Regulates the function of adrenal glands, tones pelvic muscles and the sciatic nerves, helps to alleviate disorders of both male and female reproductive organs, relieves constipation and the practice with ujjayi prānāyāma in final position eliminate anger and bring coolness to brain.

(ii) Paschimottānāsana (Back Stretching Pose) - This practice activates Swadhisthana chakra. This āsana stretches the hamstring muscles and increases flexibility in the hip joints.
Removes excess weight and helps alleviate disorders of uro-genital system. It is used in yoga therapy for management of prolapse, menstrual disorders, sluggish liver, diabetes, colitis, kidney complaints, bronchitis and eosinophilia.

**Inverted Group of Āsanās:** Inverted āsanās encourage rich supply of blood to flow to the brain nourishing the nervous & flushing out toxins. Blood & lymph accumulated in the lower limbs & abdomen are drained back to the heart, then circulated to the lungs, purified & re-circulated to all parts of the body. This process nourishes the cells of the whole human body. The enriched blood flow also allows to pituitary gland to operate more efficiently, tuning the entire endocrine system. This has a positive effect on the metabolic processes & even on way of thinking. It gives powerful massage to abdominal organs, liver, spleen etc. It stimulates the entire chakra & open sushumna nādi. This group of asanas is very useful for depression, low blood pressure, thyroid problem & constipation & also useful for skin, eye & hair etc.

Examples:

(i) Halāsana (Plough Post) - This practice increases the blood circulation to the whole body. It regulates the activities of the thyroid gland which balances the body’s metabolic rate and stimulates the thymus gland, boosting the immune system. It massages all the internal organs, activates digestion, cure diabetes, strengthens the abdominal muscles, tones spine nerves. It is used in Yoga Therapy for the management of asthma, bronchitis, hepatitis, urinary tract, constipation, menstrual disorders and eliminate depression.

(ii) Sarvāṅgāsana (Shoulder Stand Pose) - Sarvāṅgāsana practice used in Yoga Therapy for the treatment of thyroid disorders, constipation, asthama, diabetes, colitis, impotence and hydrocele,
prolapse, menopause, menstrual disorders, leucorrhoea, depression, etc. It also relieves mental and emotional stress, fear, tensions and headache and helps clear psychological disturbances. It prevents from ageing and cure the problem of hair.

Twisting Group of Āsanās: This group of āsanās is very useful for spinal health. The twist imposed on the spine & the whole trunk exercises the muscle, makes the spinal column more flexible & stimulates the spinal nerves. It also has a strong influence on the abdominal muscle alternately stretching & compressing them as the body twists from one direction to the other. These groups of asanas activate the saman vayu & give good pranic flow to the nadi & have strong effect on Manipura Chakra.

Examples:
(i) Ardha Matsyendrāsana (Half Spinal Twist) - The practice tones the nerves of the spine, makes the back muscles supple, relieves lumbago and muscular spasms, even beneficial for mild cases of slipped disc. It massages the abdominal organs, alleviating digestive ailments. It is used for the yogic management of
sinusitis, hay fever, bronchitis, constipation, colitis, diabetes, menstrual disorders, urinary tract disorders and cervical spondylitis.

Ardha Matsyendrasana

(ii) Meru Wakrāsana (Spinal Twist) - Activate manipura chakra, stretches the spine, loosening the vertebra and help in toning the nerves. It alleviates tiredness, backache, neck pain, lumbago and mild forms of sciatica, even help to prepare for difficult spinal twist āsana.

Meditative Group of Āsanās: The main purpose of meditation āsanās is to allow the practitioner to sit for extended period of time without any discomfort. This group of āsana makes the body fit for higher stage of meditation, as we know that steady body gives one pointed mind. This group of postures influence all the major chakra.

(i) Padmāsana (Lotus Pose) - Padmāsana gives meditative (spiritual) effect as well as physiological effects too. This practice holds the trunk and head like a pillar with the leg as the firm foundation. As the body is steadied the mind becomes calm and this is the first step towards real meditation.
In higher stages of meditation the practitioner uses control over the muscles of the body. The meditation asana therefore needs to hold the body in a steady posture without conscious effort. This posture applies pressure to the lower spine, which has a relaxing effect on the nervous system. As the body and mind are interconnected, steadiness of body brings steadiness of mind. On psychic level, Padmāsana direct the flow of prāṇa up sushamna from mooladhara to sahasara.

**Relaxation Group of Āsanās:** The group should be performed after the other āsana sessions or any time when the body is tired. This group is very good for spine & related structure. So this group of āsanās relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system.

Examples:
Shavāsana (Corpse Pose) - This āsana relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system. It should be practiced before, during and after āsana practice particularly after dynamic āsana. e.g. - Suṇya Namaskār,
Drut-halasana, etc. or when the practitioner feels physically and mentally tired. This practice helps to develop body awareness.

**Prāṇāyāma**

There are many diseases caused at least aggravated by faulty breathing. These include asthma, bronchitis, pulmonary tuberculosis and large numbers of other ailments indirectly caused by starving our body of oxygen nourishment that it needs as a result of sallow respiration.

The word Prāṇāyāma means to extend and overcome one’s normal limitations. In other words one is able to activate and to regulate the Panch Prāṇa comprising the human framework and thereby make oneself more sensitive to vibrations in the cosmos and within. It brings new levels of awareness by stopping or restraining distraction of the mind. Prāṇāyāma practices reduce thoughts, conflicts, etc. in the mind to a minimum and can even stop the mind processes completely.

Prāṇāyāma is also concerned with removing congestion in the passages (नादिः) so that the prana flows smoothly and without hindrance.
In prānāyāma practices there are three important activities. These are:

(1) Pooraka (Inhalation).
(2) Rechaka (Exhalation).
(3) Kumbhaka
   i. Antar Kumbhaka (Retention of breath after inhalation).
   ii. Bahir Kumbhaka (Retention of breath after exhalation).

But main thing is Kumbhaka. Yoga makes it very clear that Prāna is a form of energy which is generated within the body and it depends a lot on the state of mind, consciousness, emotions and thoughts as well as the positive and negative aspects of the personality. This is known as the awakening of prāna.

According to Maharshi Patanjali there is neither rechaka nor pooraka, there is only Kumbhaka. Prana means breath, ayama is lengthening or widening through control when breathing is controlled so as to retain the breath, it is prānāyāma.

The breathing process is directly connected to the brain and central nervous system and it is one of the most vital processes in the body system. It also has some connection with the hypothalamus, the brain system which controls emotional responses. The hypothalamus is responsible for transforming perception into cognitive experience. Erratic breathing sends erratic impulses to the center and thus creates disturbed responses. 14

By becoming aware of the nature of the breath and by restraining it, the whole system becomes controlled, when we retain the breath we are stopping nervous impulses in different parts of the body and harmonizing the brain wave patterns. In Prānāyāma it is
the duration of breath retention which has to be increased. The longer the breath is held, the greater the gap between nervous impulses and their response in the brain, when retention is held for a prolonged period, mental agitations is curtailed.

The cause of disease is the disturbance of prāṇa in the physical body. If there be a super abundance of prāṇa on one spot and lack on another, there is disturbance. This disturbance can be remedied by bringing harmony or balance by doing prāṇāyāma. When there is balance of prāṇa the disease disappears. By the practice of prāṇāyāma the mind possess the power to supply prana to any deficient part of the body. It is a vast science and this science was studied very carefully in ancient India by great Yogis. It is an old science, of course modern scientists are beginning to recognize this power.

The following points should be carefully carried out before starting to do 'Prāṇāyāma:

- The bladder, stomach and intestines should be empty before doing pranayama, wait for at least four hours after meals.
- Do prāṇāyāma after asanas but before meditational practices.
- While doing prāṇāyāmas the body should be relaxed as much as possible.
- The spine, neck and head should be erect and centred.
- During pranayama there should be no strain. Breath retention must be done up to it is comfortable.
- Practice in a well ventilated, clean and pleasant environment.
- Cover the body with a comfortable sheet so that there is no external disturbances such as insects during the practice.
There are few important Prāṇāyāma which are beneficial to maintain good health.

**Bhastrika:** This Prāṇāmaya generates more heat which is useful in digestion. It increases the flow of air inside and fans the inner heat which burns the impurities. It massages the internal organ. Most of the carbon dioxide in the lungs is eliminated and it prepares the body for long period of breath retention. Awareness of the internal activities ranging from that of diaphragm to the more subtle levels of brain is increased. It balances vatta, pitta and kapha. This is very good practice for patients suffering from diabetes, gastritis, constipation, arthritis, insomnia, skin related problems, depression etc.

**NĀDI SHODHANA:** Nādisodhana is perfect balancing practice. It balances both right and left hemisphere of the brain. Through brain it controls the right and left side of the body and the major thing is that it influences ida and pingala nadi which controls the thinking and behaviour. When ida and pingala nadis are balanced and purified the susumna nādi which is responsible for higher awareness, gives power to control the physical mental imbalance and generates meditative state. Nādisodhana activates the charkas within our body and thus it changes the human personality and gives spiritual upliftment.

Slow deep rhythmic breathing as practiced in Nādi Sodhana has far reaching effects on the entire system. The frequency of respiration automatically decreases. By breathing slowly and rhythmically we can oxygenate the system and spend less muscular energy.
Bhramari: It relieves stress and cerebral tension, alleviate anger and anxiety. So its major effect on lowering the blood pressure & insomnia. It heals up wound and eliminates throat problem.

Sūrya Namaskār: Sūrya Namaskār means salutation to Sun. It is a complete sadhana (spiritual practice) which includes asana, prānāyāma, mantra and meditative techniques. It has direct vitalizing effect on the solar energy of the body. It is composed of three elements form, energy and rhythm, which balance both at mental and physical level.

In Rig Veda it is written:

"Namah Suryaya Shaḥtaya Sarva Roga Vinashane
Ayurarogyamaisarvadehideva Namostute"

(O Sun God ! who gives peace and destroy all diseases I salute you. O Sun God give me good health and fame I salute you.)

In Yajur Veda it is written:

"Chakhyoh Suryarijyat" (Sun is the eye of God.)\(^{15}\)
### Different Steps in Sūryanamaskār:

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<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Posture</th>
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<th>Mantra</th>
<th>Concentration</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Demonstration" /></td>
<td>Pranamāsana</td>
<td>Om Mitrāya namah</td>
<td>Heart Center (Anahata Chakra)</td>
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<td>Om hrām</td>
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<td>Om hrīm</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Demonstration" /></td>
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<td>Om hrūm</td>
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<td>Parvatāsana</td>
<td>Om khagāya namah</td>
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<td>Pāda-hastāsana</td>
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<td>Om bhāskarāya namah</td>
<td>Om hrah</td>
<td>Heart Center (Anahata Chakra)</td>
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So this practice stimulates and balances all the system of the body including endocrine, circulatory respiratory, digestive system. Its influence on the pineal gland and the hypothalamus helps to prevent pineal degeneration and calcification. This balances the transition period between childhood and adolescence in growing children. It influences the major seven charkas and balances five prānas and pancha kosha. So we can say it is a complete sadhana.
Relaxation:

Relaxation means release of tension in both the mind and body for a period of time to allow complete rest and revitalization. When tired, most people do relax but relaxation in its real sense is very difficult. While resting, their minds are in a state of turmoil. We sleep daily to relax our body and mind but because of the tension filled lives that most people now lead, relaxation is not achieved even during sleep. People wake up in the morning still exhausted and this state remains throughout the day. It is a vicious circle—for they again go to sleep that same night with the accumulated tensions of the day as well as the exhaustion that has accumulated from numerous nights of insufficient rest during sleep. It is no wonder that when the weekend holidays arrive many people spend much of their time sleeping—they need it. It is for this reason that modern man needs to know systematic techniques, which specifically induce relaxation. Sleep is still necessary, but it needs to be supplemented with techniques that quickly and efficiently remove worry and stress.

One basic rule of relaxation is to shut off thoughts on a conscious level about things that we have completed. We should not brood over problems. Relaxation techniques start by taking our consciousness away from emotionally-charged thoughts and directing it to activities that are emotionally neutral such as the awareness of our breath or different parts of our body. It is almost impossible for anyone to remain or to become tense and angry when their attention is directed towards their big toe. In this way, relaxation techniques stop the ceaseless and futile cycle of brooding on problems. Simultaneously the muscles are consciously relaxed.
Yoga brings about relaxation and a thorough revitalization of the body and the mind, whether it is by means of asanas, prānāyāma, medi-tational practices or whatever. Yet there are some special techniques which are very simple, which specially bring about relaxation in a short period of time.

**Yoga Nidra**

Yoga is inner communion and nidra is sleep hence yoganidra can be defined as yogic sleep. Yoga nidra is a practice which can be widely applied in the modern world to improve the quality and happiness of human life. It is a simple yet profound technique and has been used in the following fields:

1. Relaxation: yoga nidra is the best, cheapest and most permanent method of inducing deep relaxation of the entire human structure and personality.
2. Meditation: it is a meditative technique.
3. Psychological problems: yoga nidra acts directly in eradicating deep rooted psychological complexes, neuroses, inhibitions, etc. It is an advanced psychiatric tool.
4. Psychosomatic ailments: yoga nidra helps to remove a vast number of ailments that are predominantly mental in cause, such as high blood pressure.
5. Sleep: yoga nidra induces and improves deep sleep. It is a non-chemical tranquilizer that quickly removes insomnia.
6. Physio-psychological rejuvenation of the entire human organism can be brought about by yoga nidra. The physical, pranic and mental levels of man are directly recharged.
7. Mind exploration and awakening: yoga nidra opens up the potential of the mind and also awakens the faculty of intuition.
8. Learning, education and intelligence: yoga nidra is a profound educational tool that is being investigated and tested in various parts of the world. It has been found to bring extraordinary improvements in both the absorption and retention of information from external sources as well as the tapping of knowledge within one's own mind. It heightens intelligence in all meanings of the word.16

Yoga nidra has a vast number of other applications. It is a panacea for the tension-ridden world of today. Everyone, young and old, male or female can practice it. It is thoroughly scientific and tested. It requires no belief or blind acceptance of a dogma. It only requires practice.

**Meditation**

It is a science of mind. It is a system for the reorientation of human personality as a whole; through meditation one can root out the individuals pain, the unseen affliction and tension around us. Our behavior, thinking, action, and reactions are guided by the soul, by the consciousness. This consciousness is not pure, it works in association, with the atmosphere, environment conditions etc. As a result, tension pile up in the different spheres of our personality and we are not aware of it. Therefore we suffer from insomnia, anxiety, restlessness, worry and so on. Then we look for peace and tranquility but peace do not come from outside and tranquility cannot be introduced.

Mediation is a system by which we are able to get rid of the tensions and at the same time analyze the deep-rooted psychological errors. Over thinking, wrong thinking, vicious thinking which we do in our day-to-day life, cause these mental
tensions. To eliminate them, we must practice relaxation where we withdraw our consciousness. When the withdrawal or the negation of consciousness has taken place, the next step is the expansion of consciousness. So the whole process is divided into two stages negation and expansion.

Meditation, therefore, is the process in which we see our own consciousness. Consciousness sees itself through self without any agency. We undergo a process of self-perception, not self-analysis. Through this process one can go into the unconscious and see it, and come back with energy, power, confidence and absolute equilibrium. When once consciousness has become completely free from limitation completely free from sense consciousness, intellectual consciousness and all other modes of empirical consciousness, it is in this state that peace is achieved. It is in this moment that all the tensions, afflictions troubles, shocks and reactions of day-to-day life are completely resolved. When everything in calm and quiet, when the samskara and karmas have been exhausted, and the affliction is no more than one should go for the higher spiritual path not before. The confusions and pandemonium in the personality have been completely calmed down. 17

Particular Yogabhyasas to improve a particular body condition is suggested to be performed under the proper guidance of Guru only. But generally following yogabhyasas are prescribed to improve concerned health condition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Condition</th>
<th>Yogabhyasas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Arm To firm</td>
<td>Arm raised āsanās, especially akarnadhanurāsana, Gomukhāsana, Taḍāsāna, Skandachakrāsana, Simple yoga breath Nādi Shodhana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Arthritis</td>
<td>All āsanās and prānāyāma possible to free the joint and remove constipation, shat karma, Meditative practice to remove mental blockage</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Asthma</td>
<td>All āsanās those open up the chest area, inverted āsana Heating prānāyāma. Meditation to remove emotioned ailments.</td>
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<td>4. Acidity</td>
<td>All āsanās specially Vajragroup of āsana Prānāyāmas, Sheetalī, Sheetkari, Nadi sodhan, kunjal, Neti, Yoga Nidra (To reduce excess secretion of HCL, Kaki Mudra).</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Anxiety, Anger</td>
<td>Āsanās from Vajrasanas group &amp; forward bending group to relax the nervous system, Yogic breathing &amp; balancing prānāyāma, Yoga Nidra &amp; Chidakash Visualization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Backache, Sciatica, Slipped disc</td>
<td>Simple &amp; gentle backward bending āsanās, Vajrāsana &amp; erect spine āsanās, relaxing group of āsanās, all simple breathing prānāyāma &amp; Yoga Nidra (to relax the entire Psycho Physio organs).</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Blood Pressure (High)</td>
<td>All relaxation pose, cooling prānāyāma, Yoga Nidra (for mental relaxation) Antar Mouna (for observation of thought pattern), Neti.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure (Low)</td>
<td>All dynamic &amp; inverted āsanās, heating prānāyāma, spinal meditation, Neti.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Cold &amp; Cough</td>
<td>Dynamic &amp; Backward āsanās, All Prānāyāmas, Shatkarma</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Concentration &amp; Confidence</td>
<td>All āsanās (Specially balancing āsanās) &amp; Prānāyāmas all possible, Concentration practices (ChidaAkash), Neti, Tratak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Diabetes</td>
<td>All āsanās (Specially Twisting &amp; forward bending to stimulate abdominal area), All prānāyāmas, Nauli, Yoga Nidra (To release stress &amp; anxiety), Shatkarama.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Depression</td>
<td>Dynamic, Inverted and Backward āsanās, Sūryanamaskār, Heating prānāyāma (specially Bhastrīka, Sūrya Bhedan), Mool Bandha, Chidakasha Dhārāna</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Epilepsy</td>
<td>All relaxation āsanās, Abdominal breathing, Nādi Shodhan, Bhramari, Yoga Nidra, Meditatiion (Ajapa-Japa), Neti</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Heart Condition</td>
<td>Slow &amp; rhythmic group of āsanās, Prānāyāma (Yogic breathing, Nādi Shodhan) Yoga Nidra, Hridayakāsh Darshan, Mantra Jaap, Neti.</td>
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<td>15. Indigestion</td>
<td>All Important āsanās (Stimulating Manipur Chakra), Vijrāsana, Twice a day, Prānāyāma (Nādi Shodhan for relaxation of mental anxiety &amp; Bhāstrika for activating Manipura Chakra, Agnisaar Kriya, Antarmouna, Shatkarma</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Prolapse</td>
<td>Head stand &amp; all inverted poses, Prānāyāma Kapal Bhati, Nādi Shodhan, Ashwani Mudra, Vipareetkarni Mudra, Full relaxation shatkarma.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Thyroid deficiency</td>
<td>Sūrya Namaskār, Inverted āsanās (for stimulation of Vishudhi Chakra), Ujjval, Bhramari, Bhāstrika with Bandha, Jaladhar bandha, Neti, Kunjal, Ajapa-Japa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Varicose-Veins</td>
<td>All āsanās specially inverted, Kapal bhati, Nādi Shodhan, Yoga-Nidra (for relaxation of entire body), Shatkarma.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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4. e.b.t.
5. Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, New Thoughts on Health, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, Ch 12, Pg. 137.
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