INTRODUCTION

“Yoga: Pranayama is our personal physician”

The human body is like the chariot and the sensory organs are its horses. The mind makes the horses ride the chariot, in other words the sensory organs are the driving force for the mind. They make the mind wander in all directions in heaven and hell. If the wheels of the chariot become weak or lose, if the reigns do not have the strength to drive it then the journey of life becomes difficult. The great poet Kalidas has said, “शरीराणां खलु धर्म साधनम्” this means the first source for duty is a healthy body. If the body is not healthy then the mind can not be healthy and vice versa. If the thoughts are not healthy, how can one fulfill the duties? Therefore it is necessary to keep one self physically, mentally & spiritually fit.

Today everybody is trapped in the worldly affairs. The human being is getting entangled in the bonds of sex, anger and lust and destroying his life.

The Mind is the center of all the worldly activities of the human beings and it enters the internal world from the external world. This needs awareness. Pure mind is its center. The practice of Yoga: Pranayama begins with the process of controlling the mind. Yoga helps in getting back the lost inner strength and life becomes a celebration.

Yoga is considered to be the main basis of Indian life style. Knowing about our identity is yoga.

‘The sixth chapter of Bhagwad Gita’ gives the importance of yoga Darshan. Lord Krishna explains Arjuna that getting relieved from the effect of sorrow and unhappiness is yoga.
The Prevalent meaning of yoga is self-realization or the process of knowing oneself.

The main purpose of Yoga: Pranayama devotion is to remove the dirty layer covering the mind, to clean the layer of dirty thoughts and actions, which obstructs the clear vision of the soul. This process is completed in different stages and the cleaning of different organs of the mind is necessary. This includes improving the behavior, mind, thoughts, body, actions, sense organs, internal conditions and respiration.

Therefore physical, mental and spiritual progress is the best path for progress, there is no other method. This enhances physical & mental health. Human body is a tool, which is the basis of the actions of the soul and spiritualism. It is necessary to utilize them for the bright future and high living.

A healthy mind lives in a healthy body therefore it is necessary to keep the body healthy for a healthy mind. Regular practice of Yoga: Pranayama is necessary to achieve the goals.

Medically speaking, our body is fallen victim to various diseases because of stress hormones and lack of secretion of good hormones. Practice of Pranayama in modern time entails a body mechanism to secrete optimum good hormones and check the secretion of stress hormones which in turn succeed to cure lethal diseases like diabetes, H.B.P., angina, blockages in arteries, obesity, asthma, bronchitis, leucoderma, depression, parkinson, insomnia, migraine, thyroid, arthritis, cervical spondalities, hepatitis, chronic renal failure, cancer, cirrhosis of liver, gas, constipation, acidity etc. (Swami Ramdev, Yog Sandesh, Vol. 8, April 2006).

Spiritually speaking, with the support of respiration that the mind peers into the inner world and enables the Sadhak (practitioner) to experience divinity. Saints and sages of ancient times formulated different methods of Pranayama.
Strength of energy or pranashakti is the real strength, which requires Pranayama and yoga to get aroused. Till this strength remains aroused within us we are alive. Person’s self confidence arouses when he is deeply involved in the devotion of God and he remains stable in life despite facing adverse circumstances. He is able to cross all the hurdles easily. Whether the person is happy or sad, he should definitely practice Pranayama for 15 minutes regularly. The person can develop the resistance power to fight the diseases. Today the whole environment is polluted; the human emotions are also polluted. Pranayama is necessary to remove this poison from people’s heart. Human being can stop the pollution with the help of Pranayama. The mind if free from worries and concentrated then he can attain the stage of deep meditation. *(Yog Sandesh, Vol. 10, June 2006)*

Thus, in the present investigation the researcher is trying to explore the efficacy of Yoga: Pranayama in our life.

Exciting different achievements, electronic miracles and other scientific achievement are affecting the traditional values, beliefs and social systems. The way of living and thinking of human beings has been vastly affected by the changes in the material world. Under such conditions it is becoming increasingly difficult in modern times to satisfy life in a meaningful way.

Everybody wants to live happily but due to ignorance they search for happiness in temporary things. They search for happiness in wealth, fame, respect, name, woman, son, relatives, society etc. but in the end they get sorrows only. This is the reason why people are suffering from mental illness & their mood states are disturbed & they feel themselves in anxiety, stress or depression. *(Yog Sandesh, July 2006, Vol. 11)*

Despite the stress of modern life most people still manage life in a successful manner and solve their problems in a particular way. But for a
large number of individuals stress proves too much and they adopt behaviors patterns to cope with such stressful situations.

**Mood States:**

Mood is defined as the prevailing feeling state over a period of time in a given individual. Affect on the other hand refers to a cross-sectional feeling tone. Disturbances in these can be characterized by a change in their nature, intensity, range, stability, reactivity, congruence to thought etc. The common pathologic states are sadness, elation, anxiety, anger etc. Sometimes people describe flattered affect to mean a state in which the emotional reactivity is reduced to a minimum in an individual. Inappropriate affect is described to mean an expression of emotion not in keeping with the prevailing thinking.

A mood swing is simply a noticeable change in one’s mood or emotional state. Everybody has mood swings and they are a natural part of most people’s lives. We get happy, we get sad. We have a period of feeling on top of the world, and then later in the same day, we feel tired, lethargic and beaten down. Small mood swings are a part of most people’s lives.

However, some people’s mood swings are so extreme, rapid or serious, that they interfere with that individual’s functioning in everyday life. Bipolar disorder is the best example of a disorder that is characterized by mood swings – from manic to depressive. You can, however, have mood swings between any two moods or emotions, sad to angry, happy to contemplative etc.

As one emotion fades away and the next one is generated, so the ideas in the person’s mind automatically change: the fresh emotion brings with it its associated ideas.

A person is always experiencing some emotion at any time, since when the present emotion fades away so another emotion will take its place and be felt by him/her. No single emotional response can be permanent. When any emotion, such
as anger, is experienced the person can stay angry only for sometime, eventually the anger will fade away and a fresh emotion will arise.

**ANXEITY: Definition & Meaning**

**Anxiety** is a mood state characterized by marked negative affect and somatic symptoms of tension in which a person apprehensively anticipates future danger or misfortune (Barlow, 1988). This is also the DSM-IV definition (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

Anxiety is a state of uneasiness and apprehension, as about future uncertainties.

**According to Medical Encyclopedia Anxiety**: Anxiety is a multisystem response to a perceived threat or danger. It reflects a combination of biochemical changes in the body, the patient’s personal history and memory, and the social situation.

Although anxiety is a common place experience that everyone has from time to time, it is difficult to describe concretely because it has so many different potential causes and degrees of intensity. Doctors sometimes categorize anxiety as an emotion or an affect depending on whether it is being described by the person having it [emotion] or by an outside observer (affect). The word emotion is generally used, for the biochemical changes and feeling state that underline a person’s internal sense of anxiety. Affect is used to describe the person’s emotional state from an observer’s perspective.

According to the **U.S. Surgeon general**, 13 percent, or over 6 million children, suffer from anxiety, making it the most common emotional problem in children.

Anxiety is often described as having cognitive, somatic, emotional and behavioral components [Seligman, Walker & Rosenhan, 2001]. The cognitive component entails expectations of a diffuse and uncertain danger somatically the body prepares the organism to deal with threat [known as an emergency reaction]:

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blood pressure and heart rate are increased, sweating is increased, blood flow to the major muscle groups is increased and immune and digestive system functions are inhibited. Externally, somatic signs of anxiety may include pale skin, sweating and trembling. Emotionally, anxiety causes a sense of dread or panic and physically causes nausea, and chills. Behaviorally, both voluntary and involuntary behaviors may arise directed at escaping or avoiding the source of anxiety. These behaviors are frequent and often maladaptive, being most extreme in anxiety disorders. However, anxiety is not always pathological or maladaptive: It is a common emotion along with fear, anger, sadness and happiness and it has a very important function in relation to survival.

We can say that conflict and other types of frustration that block the individual’s progress toward a goal provide one source of anxiety. Threat of physical harm, threats to one’s self-esteem and pressure to perform beyond one’s capabilities also produces anxiety.

**Causes, Symptoms & Effects:**

Anxiety can have a number of different causes. It is a multidimensional response to example, a hypochondriac’s reaction to a stomach rumbling] resulting from a combination of general biological and individual psychological processes.

**Physical:** In some cases, anxiety is produced by physical responses to stress, or by certain disease processes or medications.

**Diseases and Disorders:** - Anxiety can be a symptom of certain medical conditions. Some of these diseases are disorders of the endocrine system, such as Cushing’s syndrome [overproduction of cortisol by the adrenal cortex] and include over or under activity of the thyroid gland. Other medical conditions that can produce anxiety include respiratory distress syndrome, mitral value prolapse, porphyria and chest pain caused by inadequate blood supply to the heart [angina pectoris].
Freud thought that anxiety results from a person’s internal conflicts. According to his theory, people feel anxious when they feel torn between desires or urges toward certain actions, on the one hand, and moral restrictions on the other. In some cases, the person’s anxiety may attach itself to an object that represents the inner conflict.

Social and Environmental stressors:-

Anxiety often has a social dimension because humans are social creatures. People frequently report feelings of high anxiety when they anticipate and therefore fear the loss of social approval or love. Social phobia is a specific anxiety disorder that is marked by high levels of anxiety or fear of embarrassment in social situations.

Some controversial studies indicate that the increase in violent or upsetting pictures and stories in news reports and entertainment may arise the anxiety level of many people. Stress and anxiety management programs often suggest that patients cut down their exposure to upsetting stimuli.

Anxiety may also be caused by environmental or occupational factors. People who live or work around sudden or loud noises, bright or flashing lights, chemicals vapors, or similar nuisances, which they cannot avoid or control, may develop heightened anxiety levels.

In order to understand the diagnosis and treatment of anxiety, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of its symptoms.

The somatic or physical symptoms of anxiety include headaches, dizziness or lightheadedness, nausea and/or vomiting, diarrhea, tingling, pale complexion, sweating, numbness, difficulty in breathing, and sensations of tightness in the chest, neck, shoulders, or hands. These symptoms are produced by the hormonal, muscular, and cardiovascular reactions involved in the fight-or-flight reaction.

Behavioral symptoms of anxiety include pacing, trembling, general restlessness, hyperventilation, pressured speech, hand wringing, or finger tapping.
Cognitive symptoms of anxiety include recurrent or obsessive thoughts, feelings of doom, morbid or fear-inducing thoughts or ideas, and confusion, or inability to concentrate.

Feeling states associated with anxiety include tension or nervousness, feeling “hyper” or “keyed up”, and feelings of unreality, panic, or terror.

The anxiety emerges in the form of physical complaints and illness, such as recurrent headache, stomach upsets, or muscle and joint pain.

**Genetic Contributions to Anxiety**: The heritable component of emotionality has also been observed in humans through family studies and other methods (Eysenck, 1967; Lader & Wing, 1964; McCaffin & Reich, 1984).

**Neurobiological Contributions to Anxiety**: In the context of a genetic vulnerability, anxiety also seems to be associated with specific neurobiological processes (brain functions) that operate on specific related brain circuits. The neurotransmitter system most implicated in anxiety is the GABA-benzodiazepine system. Lower levels of this neurotransmitter are associated with higher levels of anxiety, although the relationship is not quite so direct a variety of other neurotransmitter systems, including the noradrenergic and serotonergic systems, have also been implicated in anxiety.

Anxiety, neuroticism and stress affect the physical and mental health of a person (Selye, 1956; Coleman, 1988; Cohen et al., 1996). Anxiety or stress precipitates into a serious disorder like almost all psychosomatic diseases viz., hypertension, diabetes & even cancer (Nakaya, Subono, Hosokawa, 2003). Anxiety/stress, especially, when it is chronic, leads to a sequence of physiological reactions in the body which, in turn, causes sustained elevation in blood pressure. (Harvey, 1988; Floras, 1992; Ming; Adler, Ronald & Fogg, 2004).

**Psychological contributions to anxiety:-**

A variety of theories exists on the nature of psychological causes of anxiety. For example, Freud saw anxiety as the psychic reaction to danger surrounding the reactivation of an infantile fear situation. Behaviorally oriented theorists view
anxiety as a product of early classical conditioning or other forms of learning such as modeling (Bandura, 1986).

Evidence is accumulating (for example, Mineka, 1985a, 1985b; Barlow, 1988) to support an integrated model of psychological contributions to anxiety that involves a variety of factors.

**Social Contributions of Anxiety:**

The trigger that activates our biological and psychological vulnerabilities to experience anxiety seems to be stressful life events. Most of these are interpersonal in nature—marriage, divorce, difficulties with the boss at work, death of a loved one, and so on. Some might be physical such as an injury or illness. Social pressures to succeed at a given task, such as to achieve straight A’s in all our courses, might also provide sufficient stress to trigger anxiety.

The same stressors seem capable of independently triggering physical reactions such as headaches or hypertension or more emotional reactions such as panic attacks (Barlow, 1988). The particular type of reaction we experience while under stress also seems to run in families. If we get headaches under stress, chances are other people in our family also get headaches. If we get panic attacks when stressed that are probably the way at least some other members of our family react to stress (this finding also suggests a possible genetic contribution to panic). In some individuals, anxiety and panic occur together which makes the development of an anxiety disorder more likely.

**An Integrated model of Anxiety:**

Putting these contributions together, we can see that we might inherit a tendency to be uptight or high strung. This would be a biological vulnerability to experience anxiety but would not be anxiety itself. We might also grow up with a sense that the world is not always a controllable place and that we might not be able to deal with things that go wrong. If this is a strong sense or perception, we have a psychological vulnerability to be anxious. Finally, we might have a lot of actual stress in our life, particularly from interpersonal stressors. A given stressor
would then activate our biological tendencies to become very aroused as well as our psychological tendencies to feel that we might not be able to deal with the situation and control stress. Once this anxiety starts, it tends to feed on itself so that it might not stop even if the particular life stressor has long since passed.

Anxiety can be very general. That is we may focus our anxiety on many aspects of our life. But anxiety is more usually focused on one area such as grades (if we are in college). It is this “focus” of anxiety, when it becomes severe, that determines the nature of a particular anxiety disorder.

**STRESS: MEANING & DEFINITION**

Stress can be defined as a demand placed on our psychological and physical functioning that threatens an individual’s adaptation to a given situation.

The term stress is generally used in two senses: (1) It is used to refer to the negative feeling and emotions that are generated in us 2) The term is also used to refer to the presence of various stressors that is various situations that give rise to stress. The type of the stress experienced depends not only on the situation and events which give rise to it, but also on the individual’s perspective, constitutional make-up and the strategies that he has developed to cope with the stress. Bowers and Kelly [1979] have pointed out some important characteristics of stressful events:

People feel a sense of loss of control of the events in their lives. They feel helpless to change what is going on and to successfully interview in the process.

There is an anticipation or occurrence of physical or psychological pain. For example, the individual fears being injured or killed (as in a disaster) or is threatened with a loss of self-esteem (as in a divorce). There is a loss of social or emotional support.

In other words stress an emotionally disruptive or upsetting condition occurring in response to adverse external influences and capable of affecting
physical health which can be characterized by increased heart rate, a rise in blood pressure, muscular tension, irritability and depression.

Any factor, physical or emotional, that threatens the health of the body or otherwise requires a response or change.

The term ‘Stress’ of Latin derivation, (says Spielberger, 1979) was first used in English during the 17\textsuperscript{th} century to describe distress, oppression, hardship and adversity.

Such terms as “stress” and “stressor” are part of our everyday vocabulary. Unfortunately, however, they mean different things to different people, not only laymen but also researchers. Where one researcher used the term “stress”, another might use “anxiety” still another might use “frustration” and a fourth might use “conflict”. All may be referring to the same phenomenon. [Lazarus, 1966, p.2]

‘The Concise Oxford Dictionary’ defines stress in five different ways. There are of our interest and being discussed here. The first definition offered is that of a constraining or impelling force, and the example used is under the ‘stress of poverty’. The second definition treats it as an effort or demand on energy as in ‘subjected to great stress. The third definition offered talks of a force exerted on a body.

A systematic analysis of various definitions of stress reveals that the term has been used in different ways: as a stimulus, as a response, as an interviewing variable or as an interaction between person and environment.

Stress as an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body [disease conditions, exercise, extremes of temperature, and the like] or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable, or exceeding our resources for coping. The physical, environmental and social causes of the stress state are termed stressors.

Once induced by stressors, the internal stress state can then lead to various responses. On the other hand, psychological responses such as anxiety,
hopelessness, depression, irritability and a general feeling is not being able to cope with the world can result from the stress state.

Stress is a big problem in our Society [Allen 1983]. Some 75 percent of bodily disease is said to be stress related. For example, stress is often a factor in heart disease and cancer, two of the leading causes of dearth. Furthermore, stress related diseases cost American industry billions of dollars a year; several billions of tranquilizer pills are prescribed in the United States each year; and although it can be quantified, stress seems to be involved in much of our unhappiness, irritability and dissatisfaction.

According to Selye [1956] stress is the psychological response of the body to physical and psychological demands. Others have conceptualized it as the condition that results when person environment transaction lead the individual to perceive a discrepancy between the demands of a situation and the resources of the person biological, psychological or social system [Cox, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, Mechanic, 1976; Singer & Davidson, 1986; Trumbull & Appley, 1986]. Though Selye has defined stress in terms of harmful stimuli but at the same time he has admitted that some degree of stress is normal, necessary and unavoidable. In words of Selye “Complete freedom from stress is death”. Keeping in view of positive and negative aspects of stress, Selye categorized stress into two types: unpleasant stress which he called distress and pleasant stress which he called enstress (from the Greek for good stress).

It’s important to know how to respond to stress. Then we will know when it’s affecting us, from there we will be able to do something about it.

How Stress Works:

Whenever we come up against something that upsets us in some way, like it scares us, frustrates us, angers us, makes us nervous, sad or pissed-off, a part of our brain shoots stress hormones into our body. They trigger changes in the way our body is working. They can make our heart beat faster, our palms sweat, and they can put a lump in our throat and knots in our stomach. They can make us “wired”
or they can make us drowsy. But believe it or not, although the sensations they cause are usually unpleasant, they can be very good for us.

The reason humans have stress hormones in the first place are to warn us when we may be in trouble. Our heart starts racing when we are scared because it’s preparing to help us speed away from danger. We would need those extra heart beats to help us get away from something threatening. It is called “Fight or Flight” reaction. The jumpy nerves we may have when a big test, a sports match, or an interview is coming up can motivate you to spend extra time preparing for it. The sinking feeling in our stomach when we are not prepared for class may help us get our homework assignments done. And the discomfort we may feel when we break our parents’ rules may help us obey them and stay out of trouble.

**Stress can be very bad for us:**

Stress can be very bad for our body. Anything that keeps our body from working normally for any length of time isn’t good for it. If our stress responses are brief- just enough to warn us of danger – then they aren’t much of a threat to our health. But when they go on and on, they can do a lot of harm. Too much stress can make us feel lousy, give us a bad attitude and make us a real drug to be around. But worst of all, it can make us very unhappy and keep us from doing all we could do to have the kind of life we really want.

It is hard to keep stress responses under control. The reason is that stress work in a cycle, like this: Something upsets us, so the stress hormones are released from our brain, the hormones our whole system. Our body sends back a message saying that it’s in trouble. The message makes our brain even more upset, and so our brain sends out more stress hormones. Then only upset our body more and so it sends another distress message back to our brain.

**Stress Life Events and Physical Illness:**

Researchers and clinicians have observed that there is a significant relationship between physical illness and certain life events. Many individuals who
have undergone certain stressful life events show definite psycho-physiological disorders.

**Types of Stress:**

There are different types of stress acute stress, episodic acute stress and chronic stress.

**Acute Stress:**

Acute stress is the most common form of stress. It comes from demands and anticipated demands and pressures of near future. Acute stress is thrilling and exciting in small doses, but too much is exhausting.

The most common symptoms of acute stress are:-

- Emotional distress – some combination of anger of irritability anxiety, and depression, the three stress emotions;
  
  Muscular problems including tensions headache, back pain, jaw pain and the muscular tensions that lead to pulled muscles, gut and bowel problems such as heartburn, acid stomach, flatulence, diarrhea, constipation and irritable bowel syndrome.

- Transient over arousal leads to elevation in blood pressures, rapid heartbeat, sweat palms, heart palpitations, dizziness, migraine headaches cold hands or feet, shortness of breath and chest pain.

**Episodic Acute Stress:**

Episodic acute stress comes from ceaseless worry. “Worry wants” see disaster around every corner and pessimistically forecast catastrophe in every situation. The world is a dangerous, unrewarding, punitive place where something awful is always about to happen. These “awfulizers” also tend to be over aroused and tense, but are more anxious and depressed than angry and hostile. The symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended over arousal:
persistent tension headaches, migraines, hypertension, chest pain, and heart disease.

**Chronic Stress:**

Chronic stress destroys bodies, minds and lives. It wreaks havoc through long-term attrition. It’s the stress of poverty, of dysfunctional families, of being trapped in an unhappy marriage or in a despised job or career. Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation. It’s the stress of unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. With no hope, the individual gives up searching for solutions. Some chronic stresses stem from traumatic, early childhood experiences that become internalized and remain forever painful and present. Some experiences profoundly affect personality. A view of the world or a belief system is created that causes unending stress for the individual.

**Stress: Origin, cause and effect:** Stress is the main cause of all diseases. Now greater numbers of people are suffering from stress-related diseases such as:-

* Hypertension * Heart disease  *Diabetes   *Stomach problems

* Obesity    * Irregularities in cholesterol level

**Brain and Stress:-**

Stress is a gift of modern society. The desire to achieve more and enjoy all the material happiness is causing a lot of physical and mental stress and the consequences are evident. Stress has a direct impact on brain, because emotions, thoughts, anxiety and dreams generate from the brain. When the brain has to work beyond its capacity, it leads to mental stress. In their condition hormones and nervous system play a major role and we need to understand it so that we can reduce the stress level and lead a healthy and contented life. When we are under
stress the hormones secrete in excess and irregular manner and we fall into the trap of diseases.

**Reasons and Factors of Stress:** Imbalance between cerebral cortex and emotional cortex leads to stress but following are the main reasons for it:

**External factors:** Daily routine of a person, working style depending on the surroundings to a great extent.

**Internal factors:** It is combined impact of genetic and various factors of environment. Genetic factors are not in our control but it is very necessary for our psychological health. It gives a final shape to our thoughts, desires, behavior and expectations.

**External factors:** - The external factors of stress are in our surroundings and working conditions.

- **Society and family:** Lacking expected cooperation or support from family members, lack of communication or discussion among the family members, difference of opinion etc.
- **Work place:** Various reasons for stress at the work place, for instance lack of clarity in rule of responsibilities, not getting appreciation, dissatisfaction due to some rules etc.
- **Basic beliefs and social changes:** There is generation gap between the young & old on so many issues. Apart from that technological and economic progress has also brought about a lot of changes in the general life-style. In densely populated cities, with a large number of vehicles, fast life is exploiting people and is also one of the major factors for rising crime graph.
- **Economic:** Financial constraints and economic changes like lack of money, government policies etc. cause stress.
Politics: Politics within an institution and in the country has direct impact on the service class and professionals living in that country. This is also one of the biggest reasons for stress in general.

- Environment: Different aspects pertaining to environment like increasing population, pollution temperature deforestation, epidemics etc.

Social expectations: Good position to service or establishing good business. Expecting good status in the society, name and fame, sometimes living in joint families influence our expectations and become the cause of stress.

- Perfection in work and responsibilities: How best can we fulfill our responsibilities towards our family, friends and society; this is also one of the reasons for stress.

Balanced Communication: The way we express ourselves in front of others depends to a great extent on the family circumstances, working style and general surroundings.

- Comforts: We understand the important of money since our childhood and are extremely important in order to fulfill our desires and develop our personality.

Self-respect: It depends on the social and family atmosphere where we are born and brought up.

Internal Factors: - Internal factors define our behavioral pattern and some of the examples are as follows:-

- Parents: Behavior of parents, their experiences and their personal relations, leave a long-lasting impression on children and influences their behavior and nature.

- Family: Other members of the family like grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncle, aunt etc. their mutual relations have a deep impact on our lives.
- **Society:** Social structure, basic beliefs and expectations have a deep impact on our behavior and life-style.

- **Educational institutions:** School, College and teachers play a very important role in overall personality development and grooming.

- **Friends and colleagues:** We live in close proximity with friends and colleagues and the mutual relations have an impact on our interpersonal behavior.

- **Religious and Spiritual environment:** Religious and spiritual environment are the foundation for our discipline and faith. We get inspiration from our religious atmosphere prevailing in our surroundings and perform good duds.

- **Physical constitution:** Our physical looks; body constitution has a deep impact on the sensitivity and feeling of security.

- **Financial resources:** A Person’s financial condition denotes his or her status and feeling of security but at the same time a rich person has to face a lot mental stress in order to main the social status.

- **Personal experiences:** During education period our mental development takes place on the basis of our behavior, thinking, loss, profit, desires, disappointment and achievements. The same experiences become the basis for fulfilling our actions and reactions in future.

- **High Standard of living:** Today the standard of living has improved. People are able to buy consumer durables like television, fridge, computers, cars and whatever they want. People are working for longer hours and beyond their capacity in order to procure these comforts, which ultimately lead to stress.

- **Physical health:** The increasing desires have a negative impact on our health. We tend to get habituated to different kinds of vices for the sake of fulfilling our desires. Today people are having poor health due to irregular routine and changing life-style. People complain of poor eyesight,
headache, diabetes, high blood pressure etc. These diseases can lead to heart diseases and even paralysis in future.

- **Balance routine:** It is necessary to control the stress level before it reaches the saturation point.

  **Finance:** It is said that money is the root cause for all problems. It creates different types of stress. Needs for money arises at every stage in our life, for example daily needs, accommodation, food, entertainment, comforts and sources of luxury, financial mismanagement and imprudent investments give birth to stress.

- **Work and vacation:** For majority of the people, work is the main cause of stress. Many people work for 16-18 hours and are happy while working. The main reason for stress due to work is dissatisfaction with the working conditions. We should always be happy to reduce our stress level and be satisfied with the results. We need to be disciplined to perform well and feel satisfied.

  **Family:** Family plays an important role in deciding the stress level. Some people complain that when they are working they are fine but feel stressed after coming back home. Family should help the person to reduce stress because family is the first social institution which gives security affection to people and think for welfare of the person.

- **Emotional Support:** Lack of emotional support is also one of the reasons for increasing stress level. The person gets inspiration from relatives, wife, children and reliable friends and colleagues. He undergoes stress in the absence of moral support or encouragement. Family is the foundation for belief. We should be selfless and supportive in every sense.

- **Egotism:** Majority of people possess a lot of wealth, good position, good family and are always helpful top others but undergo stress in order to
portray themselves as unique and different from others. A person should avoid this.

- **Spirituality:** Chastity, morality and spiritual life are the main factors for life, which provide stability, humanity and peace to individual, it is the feeling to have faith in almighty God and lead a life as per his directions and rules. A balanced person fulfils his social responsibilities and leads a happy life.

**Recognizing Social Stress:**

Today the world has progressed scientifically but it is very difficult to understand mental stress and probably there would be no unit developed to measure it. A person who is under mental stress is unable to avoid the dangers arising from it and cannot measure the symptoms. They are as follows:-

  - **Behavior:** Stress attracts the person towards wrong habits or vices like tobacco, alcohol and slowly the person gets into the trap. Biting nails and shacking legs are all signs of mental stress.
  - **Sensitivity:** People become restless and lose patience.
  - **Emotional:** Irritable natures, lack of patience or extremely volatile, sleeplessness and bad dreams or depression are symptoms of emotional stress.
  - **Physical Symptoms:** Tension in muscles, back or neck pain, irregular breathing, perspiration and dryness of mouth are symptoms of physical stress.

The above mentioned symptoms are just examples and not actual symptoms. They will give us simple knowledge to recognize mental stress.

**Effect of Stress on our body:**

Stress has a number of negative effects on our body just as:-

* Increasing heart rate
* Increasing blood pressure
* Muscular tension
* Increases blood sugar
* Increased respiration  * lack of Saliva (dries up)
* Increased cortisol  * Increases consumption of oxygen
* Increased acidity  * Increases the chances of getting
* Change in the rate of blood clots
  flow of blood  * Increases adrenaline and catecholamine

Besides, it increases cholesterol and acidity. They both increase the body fuel and also affect the skin coloration. Stress causes perspiration. It is the method to measure different changes taking place in the body due to stress.

**Effects of Stress on Immune System:**

Mental stress arouses the limbic and hypothalamic axis of brain through organs of actions and sensory organs. This anxiety increases the secretion of adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortex. Continuous stress increases the level of these hormones in the blood, which has a negative effect on different parts of the body. The same type of effect is seen on immunity system or resistance power of the body. Immunity system protects us from infections, asthma, allergy and attack of other viral diseases. When this system becomes weak, the body loses the capacity to fight out these diseases and slowly the resistance power reduces. It leads to different types of problems in the body like infections, arthritis, allergy, bronchitis, asthma etc. and the body becomes a bundle of diseases.

Practice of Pranayama, Yoga and meditation controls the limbic hypothalamus axis. This reduces the anxiety and reduces the high level of stress hormones present in the blood. It also increases the level of beneficial hormones like adrenaline and encephalin. These two hormones have positive effect on our body and strengthen the immune system. The body gets the ability to protect itself from diseases and does not allow the entry of infections and other contagious diseases.
DEPRESSION: Meaning and Definition:

Depression is a disorder of mood that has been described from ancient times with continued efforts to clarify the nature of this aspect of the human condition; there are many commonalities between ancient and contemporary descriptions of the phenomenology of depression. In the early part of the twentieth century, a number of psychoanalysts sought to explain depression in the light of the prominent analytic theories of the time, as seen in the work of Karl Abraham, Sigmund Freud, Sandor Rado and somewhat later, Melanie Klein.

Depression is the state of helplessness and hopelessness with a feeling of loneliness and poor self-image. It is an affective disorder characterized by a disturbed mood or feeling. Depression affects physical, mental and emotional well being.

The Depressed person’s thinking becomes negative, often characterized by a cognitive triad, consisting of negative beliefs of information about the self, the world and the future.

Studies have shown that the thinking about self among depressed is more negative (Kendall, Howard & Haysm 1989) and shows less positive automatic self-referential thinking (Ingram, Slater, Atkinson, & Scott, 1990). Kuiper, Derry and Mac Donald (1982) found that the depressed people are highly self-critical and negatively evaluate the stimuli other than the self including imagined activities (Grosscup & Lewinsohn, 1980) and other people (Hockanson, Hummer, & Gulter, 1990). Also there has been growing evidence that emotional states influence memory (Brown & Taylor, 1986; Braddley & Baddeley, 1990). Singh (1995) found that affective state of an individual does influence self-reference effect. (SRE)

Depressed persons typically experience high levels of anxiety and intense anger that is turned inward, resulting in feelings of low self-esteem, hopelessness
and thoughts of death. Persistent depressive can also produce behavioral and physical symptoms such as fatigue, insomnia, frequent crying, chronic aches and pain, and excessive gain or loss of weight. Thus, depression is a complex multi-faceted syndrome that is comprised of a number of underlying dimensions.

Not just temporary or situational sadness, but a persistent and pervasive feeling of sadness or hopelessness that is often associated with weight loss (or gain); sleep disturbances, constipations, disturbances or sexual function, and feelings of guilt of self-blame.

In the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental disorders (DSM-IV), the presence of depressed mood or sadness, or loss of pleasure in life, is an important diagnostic criterion for depression. Daily fatigue, lack of energy, insomnia and hypersomnia are indicators of a depressed mood. Some researchers report that 89% of people with depression feel fatigue. Depression may develop over a period of weeks or months. By Josepha Chong, MD, 2006 depression is associated with an increased frequency of smoking. A survey of 3000 individuals in the St. Louis area confirmed that lifetime frequency of major depression was more common among smokers than nonsmokers (6.6 vs. 2.9 percent).

Depression is a common emotional disorder seen in all age groups of both genders all over the world. It causes considerable suffering among patients. At present out of 10 leading causes of suffering five are psychiatric disorders including depression. By 2020 depression will become the second largest cause of suffering-next only to heart disease. Depression is alarmingly prevalent in Indian population too. Various studies countrywide have estimated its prevalence to be around 30-35 cases per 1000 population. Despite the seriousness of depression as a disease and the availability of effective treatment only 30% cases receive appropriate care. The situation is much worse in the South East Asian Region. Inspite of its common occurrence in the community depression remains unrecognized and poorly treated even by the doctors. It is thus imperative that not
only the general public but also the medical community is better informed about the manifestations of illness, process of diagnosis and proper management of depression.

According to an estimate people born after 1960 are 10 times more prone to become depressed.

Environmental factors may also play a major role. When person lacked social bonds or had relationships disrupted through a sudden change in status such as unemployment. Secondly, family loss and turmoil, such as the death of a family member, separation or divorce of their parents or child abuse or neglect. Also, several negative life events or circumstances that increase risk for depression including economic hardship, serious illness, loss and abuse. Major depressive disorder tends to run in families. Immediate and highly stressful circumstances such as the loss of a spouse or a job, flunking out of school, being unmarried, loneliness & helplessness, can lead people, especially those who are genetically predisposed, more prone to show depressed behavior.

**Symptoms, Causes & Effects of Depression:**

Everyone has success & failure, ups & downs but feeling down for an extended time may be a sign of depressive illness. There are several types of depressive disorders but all depressed person exhibit at least some of these symptoms:

- Persistent sad, anxious or empty moods.
- Feeling of hopelessness or pessimism.
- Feeling of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness.
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities.
- Decreased energy, a feeling of fatigue or of being “Slowed Down”.
- Difficulty in concentrating, remembering or making decisions.
- Restlessness or irritability & sleep disturbances.
- Loss of appetite and weight or weight gain.
• Thoughts of death or suicide, including suicide attempts.

Lack of purpose or meaning in life; feelings of isolations; lack of compassion or a committed loving relationship; lack of family or social connection; feeling disconnected from God/Spirit are some of the spiritual dimensions linked with depression.

**Biological Influences:**

Biological bases of depressive disorders have been extensively examined in adults and to a more limited extent in children and adolescents (Emslie et al. 1994).

**Psychological influences:**

The domain of psychological influence may best be described as the psychological characteristics, both strengths and weaknesses, as well as vulnerabilities that make up the youngster’s emotional and mental health competence.

‘Edward Bibring an Austrian Psychoanalyst (1953) viewed depression as the emotional expression of the ego’s helplessness in maintaining a desired sense of self. He changed the focus from an internal conflict to situations that made a person feel helpless.

Behaviorists view depression from a different perspective, when depressed people find themselves in stressful situations; they tend to cope by delaying and attempting to get emotional support from others. Excessive support seeking may be what makes other people feel uncomfortable and guilty and causes them to try to avoid contact with the depressed person. Depressed people may also make many complaints to sympathy and affection. Some research has suggested that many depressed people are capable of acting differently in different social roles. When they meet people they may be able to conceal their negative behavior and behave in a socially desirable way. Although people who are depressed often seem to take a negative view of their interactions with others, there is considerable evidence that
they also make a negative impression on others because of deficits in their social skills.

**Social Influences:**

The social component represents the social environmental domain and by its nature includes a very wide range of influences. Included here are: stressful events, including major negative life events as well as daily hassles and chronic strains; parental influences, including attachment, nurturance, marital discord, support and parenting style; social support peer and interpersonal relationships; and a host of social and environmental influences such as exposure to violence, victimization maltreatment, social disadvantage, peer and social pressures, and school and work stress among others.

**Depression and Stress:**

Stress is an important factor than can affect depressive tendencies among individuals. In daily life it is observed that depressive adolescents are found to react more to stress or stressful situation. There are many studies regarding the relationships between stress and depression. In this context, many investigators such as Larson, Reed (1996) concluded that comfort in being alone was related to lower depression fewer physical symptoms and greater satisfaction with life. Reported ability to use time alone to deal with stress was not related to well-being. Neither dimension showed the expected interaction with stress. Research evidenced that a person general manner of evaluating of appraising is an important moderator of relation between stress and symptoms and illness. Goldman, Susan Lee (1996).

Harnarat et al. and chang (1998) found an inverse relationship between perceived stress and reported satisfaction with life among American college students. Satisfaction with life is significant component of an overall sense of well-being.

Muris, Peter, Meesters, Cor, Merckelback, Harald (1988) concluded that worry, anxiety and depression seemed to be strongly related. Yoyin Koeske,
Felsten, Gary (2000) found in this study that stress reactivity was more strongly correlated with depressed mood. Elliot, Matra (2001) found relationship between stress and depression.

In the context, some studies related to anxiety and depression can be described, Harve E, Bloomer, Kimbewrly and Kendall Amanda (1994) examined the interrelationships of stress, anxiety, depression and physical illness. They found the relationship between anxiety and depression.

The Relationship of Anxiety and Depression:

One of the mysteries facing psychopathologists over the decades has been the substantial overlap that seems to exist between the emotional states of anxiety and depression. It is important that we understand the reactions of anxiety to depression because some of the latest theories on the causes of depression are based, in part on this research. A number of explanations for this distinction have appeared (for example, Kendell & Waston, 1989) but several theorists have now concluded that anxiety and depression are more alike than they are different. This may seem strange because anxiety and depression certainly sound like different mood states and thinking of our own reactions, we probably feel different when we are anxious compared to when we are depressed. However, we now know that almost everyone who is depressed particularly to the extent that they have a psychological disorder is also anxious (Barlow, 1988; Di Nardo & Barlow, 1990; Sanderson, Di Nardo, Rapee & Barlow, 1990), but not everyone who is anxious is depressed.

The evidence that anxiety and depression are closely related is relatively strong, based on neurobiological studies (Gray, 1985; Breier, Charney & Heninger, 1985) and family studies of people with anxiety and depression (Puig – Antich & Rabinovich, 1986; Leckman, Weissman, Merikangas, Pauls & Prusoff, 1983). If anxiety runs in a given family, depression is likely to run in the
same family. It one has a high score on a questionnaire measuring depression one is likely to have a high score on another measuring anxiety.

Are there any important differences between the symptoms that people experience when they have anxiety and depression? New developments from a number of research centers suggest that there are. As we said, almost all depressed patients are anxious, but not all anxious patients are depressed. This means that there are certain core symptoms of depression that are not found in states of anxiety and therefore reflect what is “pure” about depression. These are best described as the inability to experience pleasure (anhedonia) and a depressive “slowing” where both motor and cognitive functions become extremely labored and effortful (Tellegen, 1985; Watson, Clark, & Carey, 1988; Watson & Kendall, 1989; Clark & Watson, 1991). Cognitive content (what one thinks about) also seems more negative in depressed individuals than in anxious individuals (Greenberg & Beck, 1989).

Recently, ongoing research in our own setting has also identified some symptoms that seem central to the emotions of anxiety and panic. In the case of panic, the symptoms reflect primarily autonomic activation (excessive physiological symptoms such as heart palpitations and dizziness). In more generalized anxiety, feelings of muscle tension and apprehension (excessive worrying about the future) seem to reflect the essence of anxiety [Zinbarg et al., 1994, Zinbarg & Barlow, in press]. Many people with depression also have these anxious or panic symptoms. More important, we have identified a large number of symptoms that make up parts of the definition of both anxiety and depressive disorders. Since these symptoms are not specific to either anxiety or depression they are called symptoms of negative affect (Tellegen, 1985).

Identifying “pure” anxious or depressive symptoms as well as symptoms of negative affect that are common to both mood states was an important step in creating this diagnosis (Zinbarg et al, 1994). Other researchers have reported
finding similar shared and discrete symptoms (for instance, Clark & Watson, 1991).

The symptoms specific to anxiety and to depression as well as symptoms that are shared by both states:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pure Anxiety Symptoms:</th>
<th>Pure Depression symptoms:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension</td>
<td>Helplessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>depressed mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edginess</td>
<td>loss of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trembling</td>
<td>lack of pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive worry</td>
<td>suicidal ideation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night mares</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mixed Anxiety and Depression Symptoms (Negative Affect):

| Anticipating the worst                     |
| Worry                                      |
| Poor concentration                         |
| Irritability                               |
| Hypervigilance                             |
| Unsatisfying sleep                         |
| Crying                                     |
| Guilt                                      |
| Fatigue                                    |
| Poor memory                                |
| Middle/late insomnia                       |
| Sense of worthlessness                     |
| Hopelessness                               |
| Early insomnia (Adapted from Zinbarg et al. 1994). |
The Relationship of stress, anxiety depression and Excitement:-

(David H. Barlow, V. Mark Durand, New York) Can we tell the difference between feeling stressed feeling anxious, feeling depressed, or perhaps, feeling excited? We might say “No Problem” but in fact, these four feeling states have a lot in common. The particular “feeling” that we experience may depend on our sense of control at the moment or how well we think we can cope with the threat or challenge we are facing (Barlow 1988; Barlow & Rapee, 1991). This continuum of feelings extends from excitement to stress to anxiety to depression as shown in Figure. [1.1].

Terry Anderson, one of the political prisoners held in Beirut, may have experienced a variety of emotions from anxiety to depression, dependent on his ability to cope.

![Figure 1.1 Responses to threats and challenges our feelings range along a continuum from depression to anxiety to stress to excitement depending in part on our sense of control and ability to cope [after Barlow & Rapee, 1991].](image)

Figure [1.1] Responses to threats and challenges our feelings range along a continuum from depression to anxiety to stress to excitement depending in part on our sense of control and ability to cope [after Barlow & Rapee, 1991].

However, depression can be discussed along with many varieties of symptoms to explain it but most of the times and to most of the people it is of general nature. Keeping in view the present pressing needs and demands in this fast moving world. It is not at all possible to avoid tension, stress, strain which later on cause’s occurrence of depression. Since life without this (stress, strain and tension) is unthinkable. Therefore, one has to develop /learn the skills to manage it effectively. If we can manage our stress and strain with adequate control we can avoid failure and at the same time the depression. Depression can be taken care of
by helping the individual to develop positive self concept which will surely change the attitude of the person towards life and in turn fill him/her with optimism to vanish hopelessness.

So, we have discussed that some of the mood states: Anxiety, Stress and Depression are very harmful & affect our life structure.

**Therapeutic Aspects:**

But now all these physical & mental problems and changes mood states required at ‘take it easy’ attitude because for preventing & reducing these problems. **Yoga: Pranayama** has a very important role in our life. If we want to avoid these problems, we will have to adopt **YOGA: PRANAYAMA**. So that Government, Psychologists, Social workers, WHO and other agencies take initiations to educate to ‘train and to inform the people to cope properly with these changes.
YOGA: PRANAYAMA

Yoga is one of the greatest gifts of India to the world. It has been practiced in India since ancient times. It is a combination of religion, philosophy, psychology & physical culture into one complete science. Yoga is a movement based form of relaxation and meditation that combines physical postures, exercises and breathing to promote physical, mental & spiritual well-being. The word yoga comes from the Sanskrit root ‘Yuj’ which means ‘to join’ or “union”, is a spiritual practical that uses the body, breath and mind the energize and balance the whole person.

In Jainism, Yoga means psychophysical activities. In other words, the thoughts, the words, and the physical activities of the jiva are called Yogas. If these activities are meritorious, the soul gathers auspicious karmas, and if they are demeritorious, the soul gathers inauspicious karmas. Truthful activities relating to religious principles are auspicious activities. Untruthful activities relating to religious principles are inauspicious. We attain punya (merit) by means of auspicious yogas and papa (demerit or sin) by means of inauspicious yogas.

The word ‘Yog’ has been used in Vedas, Upnishads, Gita and mythological scriptures etc. since ancient times. It is a very important term in the Indian context, be it in devotion, self realization or in the day-to-day work arena.

There are lots of references to Yoga in Hindu scriptures, especially in the Gita, the Upnishads and other puranas. Here’s a selection of quotations from Sanskrit Literature, which try to define or qualify yoga. The Bhagavad Gita –
Yoga is skill in actions”
Yoga is balance (samatva)”

“Yoga is known as the disconnection (viyoga) of the connection (samyoga) with suffering” Yoga Stra – “Yoga is the control of the whirls of the mind”.

“Yoga is ecstasy (Samadhi)”

Maitr-Upnishad—“Yoga is said to be the oneness of breath, mind, and senses, and the abandonment of all states of existence”.

Yoga Yjnavalkya—“Yoga is the union of the individual psyche (jita-tman) with the transcendental self (partmatman) .

“Yoga is the unification of the web of dualities (dvandva-jla)”

Brahmnda – Purna – “Yoga is said to be control”

Rja-Mrtanda – “Yoga is the separation (viyoga) of the self from the earthly (Prakriti)”

Yoga-Shikh-Upnishad – “Yoga is said to be the unity of exhalation and inhalation and of blood and semen, as well as the union of sun and moon and of the individual psyche with the transcendental self.”

Katha-Upnishad – “This they consider Yoga: the steady holding of the senses”

Maharshi Patanjali defines ‘Yog’ as ‘Chittavritti Nirodh’ (eradication of negative moods). With the practice of yog with dedication and devotion one eliminates, these negative moods and the mind finds solace in merging with the soul This is Yog.

According to Vedanta, Yoga means supreme realization or the ultimate reunion of self (jivatma) with the supreme self (parmatma)

Maharshi Vyas described yog as Samadhi.

In short we can say that the controlled practices which result in the meeting of Atma and Param-Atma (Soul and the supreme soul) are Yog.
Yoga means ‘Oneness and constitutes the essence of every possible religion, the gist of every creed and the core of every spiritual path.

In the words of Hewitt (1983), Yoga is an art that enhances the quality of life, a science that studies the body and mind through observation and experiment, and a philosophy that prepares a conceptual platform for the yogi to understand the meaning of his life.

Yoga has also a restricted meaning that is more popular in the East and West. According to this, yoga means a set of techniques designed to discipline the body and mind in such a way as to enable the individual to reach the union within himself and the ultimate. (Iyengar, 1993)

Yoga is a systematic approach to becoming one with life and is a meditational discipline that generates the desires to help humans to achieve their highest potential in life. Yoga devotion arouses the internal powers of the person. Their arousal happens according to a specific rule and method. The person experiences sensuousness of the soul and after that he transforms this consciousness into consciousness of the world and begets salvation. This is his last achievement. The practice of yoga begins with the process of controlling (be mind Pantajali has explained this in one dictum. Yoga is controlling the conditions of the mind. The mind is the center of all the worldly activities of the human being and it enters the internal world from the external world. This needs awareness. Pure mind is its center; this is the main task of meditation. Yoga is a comprehensive and precisely fine-tunes process of uniting the individual consciousness with the omnipresent cosmic consciousness. Understanding the spiritual nature and philosophy of yoga is certainly more important than its gross applications pertaining to the physical exercises, postures and breathing patterns. With their perfection in Yoga, The yogis control the agile activities of the body and the mind by relaxing the body completely and engrossing the mind in a soothing state of peace. Yoga is a study of ourselves, our relationship to one another, and our
relationship to the cosmos. Yoga is method of attaining spiritual riches and superiority.

**Balodhi (1986)** described the different stages involved in traditional raja yoga and suggested that it could be used for modifying afflicted behavior, for promoting mental health, and for achieving higher states of consciousness.

The method which refers to physical and mental health is Raja yoga. Sage Pantanjali gave the ‘Eight fold path of Raja Yoga’ as – ‘**Ashtaang Yoga**’

It is the right to say here that a person cannot become a yogi without following these principles. These principles are not only for a yogi but for any body who wishes to be completely happy, or see other living beings happy. It is only Ashtaang yog that can stop violence in today’s world. Ashtaang yog includes common practices of daily life as well as higher stages of Adhyatma like Dhyan and Samadhi. Any person who is searching for his true identity or wants to find the true meaning of life must follow Ashtaang Yog. Yama and Niyama are the basis of Ashtaang Yoga.

[Swami Ramdev, (2006), Yog its philosophy & practice].

**Eight Stages of Yoga:** - The following are the eight stages in yoga, known as “**Ashtaanga Yoga**” one needs to practice and master each of these eight stages in order to reunite with the divine energy in the universe. These eight steps are:

1. **YAMAS** : Restraints
2. **NIYAMAS** : Observances
3. **ASANAS** : Physical postures
4. **PRANAYAM** : Breathing Control
5. **PRATYAHARA** : Withdrawal of sense organs
6. **DHARANA** : Contemplation
7. **DHYANA**: Meditation

8. **SAMADHI**: Attainment of Super consciousness

(1) **YAMA (Self-restraint)**: The first principle of Ashtang Yoga is resisting passions (YAM). It means following Yama diverts the senses and the mind from violence and other banal feelings and concentrates them on the soul. Non-violence, truth, not cheating, celibacy, and not collecting unwanted things – are the five Yamas defined below:

   a) **Ahinsa (non-violence)**: Non-violence means not to trouble anybody by thoughts, words or deeds, not to wish ill for anybody, not to hurt anybody with words and not to kill any creature in any circumstance, at any place, any day.

   b) **Satya (Truthfulness)**: Satya means ‘to speak the truth’ deals with complete truthfulness – in word, thought and deed. Not only in our communication with others, but in the depth and purity of our thought.

   c) **Asteya (Abstinence from stealing possessions of others)**: Taking over or using other people’s possession without their permission and acquiring things by violating the codes of conduct given in the ancient texts is called stealing. A desire to acquire other’s belonging is also stealing. Therefore a yogi should never steal, rather he should feel satisfied with whatever God has given him and be happy.

   d) **Brahmacharya (Observance of celibacy)**: Abstaining from the food which arouses sexual desires, avoiding situations of sexual temptations, sexually provocative audio and visuals, sexually provocative sights and dresses is called celibacy. A celibate should think of decent, good things and missions of one’s life.

   e) **Aparigraha (Abstinence from possessing unwanted things)**: Collection means attempt to hold on to material. To lead a life which is just the reverse, one should be satisfied with minimum wealth,
garments and items of material comfort. What we collect to live on to achieve the main objective of devotion of God is not holding on for selfish purpose whatever wealth we have, according to God’s grace, do not consider it to be our own.

(2) Niyama – Observances (define our relationship with self):- The second basic factor in Ashtaang Yoga’s principles is rules. This means excretion, contentment, penance, regular study of puranas and deep devotion towards God are the five rules :-

a) Shaucha (Purity):- Excretion is purification and cleansing. Excretion or purification is of two types – one is external and the second is internal. It means the devotee should purify his body with water everyday, purify his mind with good behaviour, purify his soul by learning and devotion and purify his intelligence with knowledge. One has to follow the advices of the saints and sages for the purification of the mind, the brain and the soul.

b) Santosh (Contentment):- One should fulfill ones objectives with the available resources. To be fully satisfied with whatever results are obtained, not to desire unobtainable objects, not to disregard achievements acquired with the grace of God, and not to aspire for what is not available is contentment. Consuming the nectar in the form of satisfaction gives immense happiness to content people.

c) Tapas (Penance):- It means whatever pains, troubles, adversities come in the path of accomplishment of our objects, they should be accepted gracefully and we should march forward towards our goal continuously without deviating. To remain steadfast in all these adversities is penance. Penance is not just standing in fire or standing on one foot and giving pain to our body.

d) Swadhyaya (Self Education and Study):- It has two meanings One is the study of the classics written by the sages i.e. the Puranas. We
get purity, good thoughts and deeds, divinity and determination makes our lives pious. The second meaning of study is knowing ourselves or realizing our internal self, thinking about our existence and introspecting on ‘Who am I? What should I do? What am I doing? What is the aim of my life? Why am I born? If a devotee thinks wisely, he will not be obsessed by luxuries of materialistic world and chanting Pranava (Omkara) and reading scriptures written by sages will lead to proximity with God. Our ultimate goal in this study is to find the Truth and to link with the Divine.

e) **Ishwar Pranidhan (Deep devotion towards God):**- It means, devoting all our actions to the Guru of all Gurus, The supreme Guru, and the Supreme Guru is deep devotion to God. Only pure, auspicious and divine things can be offered to God. Therefore, a devotee will give respect and make whole-hearted efforts in only such things, which he can offer to God and the sole aim of all his actions will be devotion to God.

(3) **Asanas (Postures):**- Sitting in Padmasana, Sidhasana, or Sukhasana or any other comfortable posture is called Asana. Devotee should practice to sit attentively and comfortably for a long time while worshipping and meditating. Posture is extremely important for devotion meditation and worship. Practise of asanas is required to achieve Japa and meditation. Our spine should remain straight while practising any meditative asana. Floor should be even. One can spread thick sheet. A place which is quiet, peaceful, get fresh air and free from insects is ideal for practising asanas. Yogasanas are only part of yoga. A person has to follow the eight yog principles of resistance, of passions, non-violence, truth, cheating, celibacy and other such principles and practice meditation for long duration with complete devotion to become a yogi. As one practices the asanas, the entire body gets activated becomes flexible and healthy.
(4) **Pranayama (Yogic Respiratory exercise, or balanced breathings):**

Pranayama (the process of restraining breath), is a totally scientific method propounded by divine ascetics and saints and sages by which incurable diseases can be cured and mental peace and interments can also be achieved.

Vayu – (Air), is one of the five major elements of which our body is constituted of, which keeps us alive and is one of the tridosh (three humors) of our body, which is our prana (life in the form of breath).

Pitta (Bile), Kapha (Phlegm) the other constituents of the body and the dross elements are all lame, as on their own, they are not capable of going from one place to another or to affect any function of the body. It is the vayu that takes them from one place to another as the clouds in the sky are drifted from one place to another by the force of wind. Therefore, in the above mentioned Dosas (Humors in the body), only Vayu has the capability of moving and of making other Dosas move.

‘Prana’ is present in all the cells of the body. The sense organs of the body, take rest, as if asleep or in slumber. But ‘Prana’ always remains active, it never takes rest. Constant movement is its innate character. So long as the Pranika – (derived from the word ‘Prana’) Energy continues to function, it is till that moment that sentient beings remain alive. In the entire universe, Prana is the most potent and useful life giving element. Life is dependent on prana.

We see people remaining alive without food or water for several days. But it is impossible to maintain life without “Prana” even for a few moments. It is Pranika energy, which provides us with vital energy, which is the basis of our life and provides us immunity from various kinds of diseases. Prana provides energy to all the limbs, organs and important glands of the body including heart, lungs, brain and spinal cord. It is the Pranika energy, which makes our eyes see, our ear hear, or nose smell and
out tongue speak. It is the Pranika energy again which leads luster to our faces, makes our minds think and enables our alimentary system to digest and assimilate the food that we take.

Prana enters the body through nostrils. Respiration maintains life and is the basis of Pranayama.

**According to Yog Darshan** – “When you sit in one of the convenient Asanas and regulate the act of respiration, it is Pranayama. The act of inhaling air in the body so as to reach the lungs, is called inspiration and the act of throwing this air out of the body, is called expiration. There are various stages in Pranayama i.e. to inhale air, i.e. Puraka (to inhale), Kumbhak (to retain the air so inhaled in the body for sometime), Rechak (to exhale the air i.e. to throw the air out of the body) and Bahya Kumbhak (to keep the air out i.e. not to inhale or allow the air to get into the body). By regular practice, this four step-exercise of Pranayama becomes easy to perform. Then, according to (Yog-darsana 2/52) on acquiring proficiency in these four stages of Pranayama, chitta becomes free from ignorance, mind is covered by radiant light of knowledge of ultimate reality and then according to (Yog-darsana 2/53) the Sadhaka acquires fitness to reach the sixth stage of ‘Yog.’

When we inhale, it is not only the air or oxygen that enters our body, but along with the air a divine energy also enters which keeps the body alive. Adopting Pranayama does not mean only taking the air into the body (inhaling) and throwing it out (exhaling), but along with oxygen, we also take in our body the vital energy. This vital energy permeates the entire Universe and what we inhale and exhale is a fragment of it. Mere exhaling or inhaling is not Pranayama but it is a link with supreme power. To properly build a link with it and to maintain it is by way of Pranayama.

(5) **Pratyahara (withdrawal of sense from their subjects):**- When the senses do not have connection with their subjects, they change according to
the condition of the mind (chitta). When one controls ones mind through
detachment and wisdom, the senses get controlled on its own.
The victory over mind deviated from the subjects and diverting the senses
and mind inwards is known as Pratyahara.

The description given from Yama to Pratyahara forms Bahirang Yog. Now
we will give brief description about Dharna, Dhyana and Antarang Yog.

(6) Dharna (Concentration):- Navel center, Heart, center of Eyebrows,
the light glowing on center of our forehead, top of our hand, tip of our nose
are the physical points of our body. Dharna is when we sit in one place and
concentrate our mind on any one of these points.

Thus the act of detaching our mind from the worldly objects and focusing
it on the subtle subjects of soul and supreme soul is called Dharna. Dharna
is the foundation of Dhyaan. As we perfect our practice of Dharna, Dhyaan
will take place on its own.

(7) Dhyana (Meditation):- By performing Dharna on concentrating on
the physical points one experience tremendous rapport with the God. This
concentrated flow of superior knowledge is called Dhyan. When a river
enters the sea it submerges with the seawater. Similarly one should
submerge one’s mind with the supreme divine presence and do not think of
anything else. To lose ourself in this pure joy and divine peace of the God’s
presence is Dhyana.

First, one should do Pranayama before doing Dhyana because pranayama
makes the mind completely calm and concentrated. A calm and peaceful
mind is a pre-requisite for proper dhyana.

(8) Samadhi (Transcendental Meditation):- While chanting Omkar a
yogi gets engrossed, submerges and gets lost in glory of the peaceful
presence of God. One forgets everything else and experiences the divide
form of God.
As a person takes a dip in the water and stays submerged for a while, in the same way the living soul submerges itself in the delight of God and experiences the divine joy of deep meditation. The sages narrate it in a different way. Like the iron when thrown in the fire takes the form of fire, similarly the soul should be enlightened in the divine knowledge of God. We should forget ourselves and our body completely and should be completely engrossed in the divine joyous form of God, thereby accomplishing Samadhi.

This means the stage when the mind is diverted from doubts, concentration is achieved and only the truth is grasped, is the state of Samadhi. In which desires and pleasures don’t arise, even in the mind. This is perfection of Yogan on life. Thus Samadhi is briefly described.

**Psychotherapeutic potential of yoga philosophy:**

Leading one’s life according to the paths of yoga has great therapeutic implication for modern life, which is characterized by materialism, cutthroat competition rivalry and so on. Such behaviour style is an acquired by product of their struggle against a highly competitive and materialistic world. (Sharma, 1976)

A change of consciousness is the whole meaning of the process of yoga. Indian yoga, in its essence a special action or formulation of certain great powers of nature, itself specialized, divided and variously formulated, is potentially one of these dynamic elements of the future life of humanity.

Yoga effects for the individual by a rapid revolution. (Writings by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Psychology and Yoga)

Yoga has many advantages over other methods of maintaining health. Yoga has something very valuable and useful to offer to everyone. It is often described as the best form of health insurance for all. Two main advantages of yoga are (i) prevention disorders and ailments and (ii) maintenance of health and fitness of daily life, yoga gives strength to the
weak and health to the sick. It brings our emotions under control. Other advantages include flexible muscles, supple-joints and tension free mind. Heart, lungs, endocrine glands, liver, pancreas and the brain work efficiently. One enjoys good appetite, good digestion, cheerfulness and a balance between various functions. (Supriya and Vijendra Sahai, Advantages of Yoga, A.N.D. College, Kanpur)

Yoga is well known as a practice that improves mental health and stress tolerance. Accordingly, a large number of research studies on yoga and meditation practice have documented the improvements possible in mood, cognitive function and mental well-being in normal healthy individuals. The last century has seen the recent evolution of what has come to be known as “Yoga therapy” the use of yoga as a clinical treatment for a variety of disorders. It is perhaps not surprising that mental and emotional disorders are among the conditions most amenable to yoga treatment. A recent review of the research the strong proportion of this work documenting the effectiveness of yoga and meditation in the treatment of psychological conditions and psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety and addictive and criminal behaviours. There has also been significant research effort recently in elucidating the basic psychophysiology of the mind-body connection. (Yoga as a Clinical intervention for psychological conditions, Sat Bir Khalsa – Boston)

The concepts and methods of yoga have found prominent place in the ancient medicinal system of Ayurveda, which advocated yoga for cure and prevention of physical and mental diseases. (Kakar, 1982, Kuppuswamy, 1985). As a holistic system, yoga deals with the body, mind and behaviour in a synergistic way. Since yoga is a comprehensive system dealing with the life-styles, and values on the one hand and mind-Body regulation on the other, it may probably be the most important and effective self-help tool available today for personal health and effectiveness.
Psychologists and other professionals in the areas of mental health and hygiene may adopt yoga as a psychotherapeutic system and as a general conceptual framework like other schools of psychotherapy such as psychoanalysis or rational emotive therapy. (Rao, 1998)

Yoga is an ancient Indian Science and way of life which brings about relaxation and also induces a balanced mental state (Taimini, 1986).

Yoga techniques include physical postures (Asanas,) voluntary regulated breathing (Pranayama), meditation and philosophical principles which help to reach a balanced mental state.

Yoga is a Sanskrit term meaning union or communication (Hoare, 1977). It is a multifarious discipline that confers strong body, sound mind and good spirit. It is an Indian system that has been directed to allow the individual to achieve his or her full potential as a human being and then to stretch beyond personal consciousness and merge with cosmic consciousness. Yoga is the most popular ancient system globally for promoting general health (Misra et. al. 2003). Indeed for the practitioners of yoga, it not only provides renewed strength but also reduces stress, calms the mind and promotes a positive attitude towards one’s self, other and universe it also helps them stay healthy in general. There is an immediate need to adopt the ancient practices of yoga for the betterment of human life. It appears that yoga is one of the most effective methods that provide a safe, steady, and sure means to enrich one’s personality and quality of life. Yoga is a pervasive concept in the classical Indian thought. From a historical perspective it appears to be an eschatological and stereological concept, the aim of which is the attainment of Moksha or Kaivalya or transcendental consciousness. Yoga as a system of philosophy and a set of practices aims to do away with normal consciousness in favour of a pure and all encompassing transcendental consciousness. In other words, yoga is corpus of means to attain, spiritual emancipation.
Swami Ramdev (Yog Synergy in Medical Science, 2007) Yog gives an insight to know more about the self. Yog also keeps the veins healthy. The Pancreas becomes active and produces insulin in the right quantity, which helps in curing diabetes and related diseases. Health is directly linked with the digestive system. The improper functioning of the digestive system is the prime cause for most of the diseases. Even some serious problems like heart disease occur due to a faulty digestive system. Yog strengthens the entire digestion process, making every part of the body healthy, and active. Fresh air enters the lungs making them healthier which keeps diseases like asthma, respiratory problems, allergy etc. away. Fresh air also strengthens the heart. Yogic exercises dissolve the fat deposits which make the body light, healthy and attractive.

Thus we can embark on the path of yog and experience the inner happiness of connecting with the Supreme Being and attain physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual progress.

Conclusion: Indian tradition, scientific research and clinical experience all point out that yogic practices are probably the most important and effective self-help tools available to man. We seem to be very close to a behaviour technology and self reliance in the domain of yoga. The doors of yoga have already been knocked and opened up. Only earnest research and therapeutic pursuits by scientists and clinicians may perfect the ages-old yoga and make it more and more refined and suitable to people all over the world.

Anyone in search for self identity and the ultimate truth should practice Ashtaang Yog. Yog can make mind free of prejudices, ego, inflexibility and misconceptions which are the biggest hurdles in the path of individual’s development.

A yogic mind is enlightened with the dutifulness, which directs all retrogressive energies towards creativity. Sense of dutifulness is the starting point of self realization. From the very outset, yog transforms the physical
body. Self-discipline, celibacy, cleanliness and austere devotion, posture and Pranayam have an important role in the transformation of the body. Practising Yog helps in keeping the gross and subtle organs active in its natural state.

**PRANAYAMA: “The Art of Yoga Breathing”**

**Meaning & Definitions of Prana & Pranayama**

“When the Breath wanders, the mind is unsteady, but when the Breath is still, so is the mind still” - *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*.

In Yoga, breath work is known as PRANAYAMA. From the time of inception till the point of death human lives on the breath. This breath is the most important part of the existence of a human being without it a person cannot survive. In our scriptures also it is said that a man can live without water for a week, without food for a month, without air for not more than few seconds. This breath is the Prana, the cosmic divine energy which flows through the veins of the living beings. This energy has a tendency to flow downwards from the universe to the human body. Under normal circumstances this energy flows through the body without any voluntary action.

Pranayama (the process of restraining breath), is a totally scientific method propounded by divine ascetics and saints and sages by which incurable diseases can be cured and mental peace and interment can also be achieved.

“The control or regulation of “Prana” (Breath) is called Pranayama”. All the functions of our body are directly or indirectly related to Prana. Without Prana there would be no life.

‘Manu’ says: As the fire cleans dross elements contained in the gold when heated in the same manner Pranayama clears the body and mind.
Prana and mind are closely related to each other. By controlling breath, mind automatically concentrates.

“Pranayama is a discipline of respiration”.

**According to Yog Darshan (2-49)** after perfecting posture (asana) controlling the in and out breath is called Pranayama.

Pranayama is the process of realizing the identity of the individual with the universe (or of the part with the whole) and vice versa (*Ishopanishad 6*).

Controlling the vital life energy or Pran is Pranayama. Pranayama removes veils of ignorance, untruth and affictions from the mind. (*Hatha Yog Pradipika 2/2*)

**Mr. Gandhar Mandlik (Rishi Dharmachandra)** “Pranayama is control of Breath” “Prana” is Breath or vital energy in the body. On subtle levels prana represents the pranic energy responsible for life or life force, and “ayama” means control. So pranayama is “control of breath”. One can control the rhythms of pranic energy with pranayama and achieve healthy body and mind.

**Yoga Sutras** mentioned Pranayama as means of attaining higher states of awareness.

**Mr. Gandhar Mandlik (i) Breath and Prana:**

Breathing is a vital process which starts at the time of birth and stops at the death. The important oxygen is provided to all the parts, organs and cells of the body. The maximum time a person can survive without oxygen is about 4 minutes. All the metabolic processes require oxygen. Oxygen is life, a vital force. This vital energy is called Prana.

**(ii) What is Pranayama** – The process of controlling the Prana is called Pranayama. So Pranayama is the science related to vital force supplying energy and controlling the body mind complex.
Breathing is the process of taking in this vital energy and removing the waste products out of our body and mind. Generally breathing includes inhalation and exhalation but Pranayama includes retention and exhalation but Pranayama includes retention of breath (known as “Kumbhaka” in Sanskrit) as well. This is a very important process. The air can be retained in the lungs or out of the lungs. The ancient texts says that retention of air, increases the level of prana (energy) is the body, also it regulates the flow of pranic energy through out the body. So Pranayama helps remove all the ailments and also can stop the aging process of the body.

**Pranayam in Hatha Yoga Pradipika**-
“Prana is vital energy, and ayama is control and extension of the Pranic energy”

**Yogacharga Vishwas Mandlik**:- Pranayama is an aspect of yoga, that deals with breathing. Pranayama is a method of controlling prana or life force through the regulation of breathing. It is the breathing process or the control of the motion of inhalation, exhalation and the retention of vital energy.

“Prana is our true nourishment for without Prana there can be no life”.

While practicing Hatha Yoga Techniques, performing Pranayama is essential in order to master on one’s breathing pattern. If someone is able to master breath, the mastery of mind is within reach to that individual. By the virtue of breathing exercises, the essential life force or flow of prana is controlled rigorously.

Prana is a Sanskrit word that has many profound meanings. The word is composed of two parts – Pra= foreword or before, and ana=breath. What is before breath? Life is before breath and is the cause of breath. One synonym of prana in Sanskrit is Ayur. Prana and Ayur also mean responsible to hold the soul into the body. Nothing can exist before prana. *(Swami Venkates Ananda, 1991).*
Prana has many different manifestations, from the most subtle to the gross manifestation of electricity. It is the power which enables us to think, to feel and to hear. It is the first sound: OM. It manifests in the body as the five pranas: Prana, udana, samana, apana and vyana. These five pranic forces govern all types of movement in the body; restrain and impel the mental activity; coordinate all the senses and help in the enjoyment of their objects; hold together different parts of the body; promote speech; enable touch and hearing; they are the cause of joy and courage; they stimulate the digestion; absorb the three humors; expel waste from the body; create the gross and subtle channels in the body; mould the shape of the embryo; and determine the length of the life span.

To sum it up, prana is the prime moving force in our body and in our universe. Prana is not breath; it is the power that enables us to breath. Prana is not “energy”, it is what gives energy the power to be energy. Prana is not seen or unseen, yet it is observable by its actions. Prana is the power behind movement. It is you, prana, alone who endows the power to the senses, everything is perceived through you, for this all creatures bring your gifts. (Prasma Upnishad)

“Prana: The secret of Yogic Healing” 1996 Samuel Weiser” – Prana is neutral; its quality is energy without any quality, just pure energy. This pure energy can take on any quality without losing its pureness; just as by putting on clothes we associate with a style of dress; still we remain the same person.

Prana gives vitality to the physical body and it also gives us the power to think. Prana is both physical and mental energy. “Movement of thought in the mind arises from the movement of prana; and the movement of prana arises because of the movement of thought in consciousness. They thus form a cycle of mutual dependence, like waves and movement of currents in
water” Prana its nature, its influence, and a complete science about the affects have been in existence for thousands of years.

Prana healing is non-violent approach to health that anyone can learn. Non aggressive to the body, mind and emotions. There is no interference with the individual, no system, no classification to be put into.

“Pranayama is the control of Breath to optimize physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health”.

“Prana – Meditation”

Prana enters the body through nostrils. Respiration maintains life and is the basis of Pranayama. It is with the support of respiration that the mind peers in to the inner world and enables the Sadhaka to experience divinity. It is with this objective that the sages of the ancient times formulated different methods of Pranayama.

According to Yog Darshan 2/49 when you sit in one of the convenient Asana and regulate the act of respiration, it is Pranayama. The act of inhaling air in the body so as to reach the lungs is called inspiration and the act of throwing this air out of the body is called expiration. There are various stages in Pranayama i.e. to inhale air, i.e. Puraka (to inhale), Kumbhaka (to retain the air so inhaled into the body for sometime), Rechek (to exhale the air i.e. to throw the air out of the body) and Bahya Kumbhak (to keep the air out i.e. not to inhale or allow the air to get into the body). By regular practice, this four step–exercise of Pranayama becomes easy to perform. Then According to Yog Darshan 2/52 On acquiring proficiency in these four stages of Pranayama chitta become free from ignorance mind is covered by radiant light of knowledge of ultimate reality and then According to Yog Darshan 2/53 the Sadhaka acquires fitness to reach the sixth stage of ‘Yog’ When we inhale it is not only the air or oxygen that enters our body, but along with the air a divine energy also enters our body, but along with the air a divine energy also enters which keeps the body
alive. Doing Pranayama does not mean only taking the air into the body (inhaling) and throwing it out (exhaling) but along with oxygen, we also take in our body the vital energy. Mere exhaling or inhaling is not Pranayama but it is a link with supreme power. To properly build a link with it and to maintain it is by way of Pranayama.

Vayu – (Air) is one of the five major element of which our body is constituted of, which keeps us alive and is one of the tridos (three humors) of our body, which is our Prana (life in the form of breath) (Shargandhar Sanhita 5-25/26).

Pitta (Bile), Kapha (Phlegm), the other constituents of the body and the dross elements are all lame, as on their own, they are not capable of going from one place to another or to affect any function of the body. It is the Vayu that takes them from one place to another as the clouds in the sky are drifted from one place to another by the force of wind. Therefore, in the above mentioned Dosas (Humors in the body), only Vayu has the capability of moving and of making other Dosas move.

**Pran (Vital Life Force) and its role**

The vital life force (Pran) and mind (Mana) are the primary movers for all activities of the physical body. Vital life force has the major responsibility to keep the physical body active round the clock. Development deterioration, protection and nutrition for the body from birth to death are all dependent on it.

The person who recognizes the value of Pran and makes it the very basis of life certainly overcomes all obstacles.

The mind and sensory organs function only because of Pran. The strength of five Pran raises self-confidence to its highest level and strengthens the immune system. The vital energy is the basis of disease-fighting capacity and life. Controlling (Sadhna) of vital life force is at the
base of all successes and accomplishments in life; it plays an important role in ensuring physical well-being, mental strength and concentration of mind. Controlling the vital life force automatically controls the mind and sensory organs. The process of controlling the Pran or vital life force is known as Pranayam in Yog. While the physical or gross body is constituted with food, Pran has been separately recognized as a separate section (Pranmay Kosh) constituted with vital energy or essence of life. (Swami Ramdev, 2006, Pranayama: Its philosophy & practice)

We need to understand that there is only one Pran, which sustains the gross body but based on the different physical processes and actions, Pran has been given different names. On this very basis Pran has been classified into 10 types. Basically it has five main divisions and five sub-divisions. The main divisions are Pran (controlling respiration), Apan (excretory systems), Samana (digestive systems), Vyana (circulatory system) and Udana (reactions and final ejection of Pran). In the sub divisions we have Naga, Kurma, Krunkal, Dhananjay and Devdutt but Kurma and other secondary vital energies did not get much importance. Pran resides in the upper part of the body. It drives our sensory organs and also activates the lungs, heart, food pipe and respiratory system. The continuous process of inhaling and exhaling is actually Pran. The Apana or air that moves upwards resides in the rectum area. It plays the role of a cleaner and control the ejection of faeces and polluted air.

Various processes going on from heart to navel are performed through Samana. It resides in the navel region and controls all the functions related to liver, intestines, spleen, pancreas and other digestive organs. It supplies the juices made from food to different parts of the body, Vyana (circulation) is spread all over the body including the sensory organs, It sends the sensational from all the systems to mind and from there the messages are transmitted to the sensory organs and organs of action. It is circulated all
over the body and gives energy and activated the muscles, glands, nerves etc. Udana or air that moves upward remains active from throat to head. It gives energy and dynamism to organs present in the upper body and initiates the ascent of the mind from lower to higher levels.

Small processes like sneezing, feeling sleepy, thirst, hunger, feeling satisfied, belching, hiccups and swelling are controlled by Sub-Pran like Naga, Kurmadi etc. As long as the natural processes continue properly the gross body remains energetic and the mental activities are driven by hope and enthusiasm. However, with bad conduct, bad food habits and bad thoughts the Pran becomes contaminated and agitated and normal functions of the body like digestion of food, formulation of blood, excretion etc. are disrupted. The process of purification of Pranas is called Pranayam. Pranayam removes all the physical and mental diseases and make life easy, simple and joyful. Pranayam is like a magic wand, which rejuvenates, activates and energizes the inactive body. Pranayam is about igniting the will to live; it is the greatest medicine of all medicines.

The main objective of Pranayam is optimum utilization of vital energy. The better management of Pran both at physical and mental levels shall lead to having better success at achieving one’s goals.

Swami Ramdev, Pranayama rahasya, (2004), Pran controls and initiates different body processes because it pervades the body therefore it is necessary to understand its constitution in order to understand the effect of Pranayama for the purpose of nourishing the pran. Even it we do not understand the entire constitution, one should at least be familiar with the working of the lung and its parts, since Pran and Pranayama are directly related to it. Our body has two lungs, one on each side of the chest. The left slightly wider and heavier than the right lung. The air reaches the throat through the nostrils and then goes into the left and right lungs through the two branches of the throat at its lower end. These tubular branches have
sensors in the form of tiny and fine hair that are so sensitive that they detect fine particles of dust and other contaminants in the breath and prevent them from entering the lungs by inducing cough and sneezing. This natural process protects the lungs from dust and food particles. The constitution of lungs plays an important role in the process of blood circulation. The lungs consist of innumerable minute air pouches and blood cells. The walls of both the lungs are so thin that only gas can pass through them. The blood flowing within these walls takes oxygen from the air pouches and gives carbon dioxide to outside air by exhaling. In this way the blood flowing through the lungs gets purified with continuous flow of oxygen. When oxygen enters in the blood it becomes dark red in color and is known as pure blood, whereas it turns blue and is impure when it mixes with carbon dioxide.

**Fig.1.2**

Lungs keep our breathing cycle going. When we inhale the chest muscle expand along with air pouches and this fills them with pure air. When the air is exhaled these pouches and lungs contract along with the chest muscles the most important point to note in this process, is that during exhaling entire air present in the lungs is not removed and sufficient amount of air always remains. As we live a fast paced life, process of respiration becomes fast and shallow as a result the air left over in the lungs keeps on
increasing. This residual air remains inactive, i.e. does not become part of respiratory cycle giving rise to many diseases. Pranayam, takes care of this problem. While practicing Pranayam we take a long and deep breath and more amount of air goes into the lungs. Generally when we inhale deeply we also exhale deeply.

**Physiology of Yogic Breathing:**

According to an estimate our lungs take in 180-200 cubic inches. When we inhale we take in 30 cubic inches air and exhale the same amount. This is clear that around 150 cubic inches remains in the lungs all the time. If we take a deep long breath then we can inhale exhale up to 100 cubic inches of air. With Pranayam we can make major part of the air present in the lungs active in the breathing cycle. If the residual air in the lungs gets purified, the food is digested properly, the body organs become strong, and the body as a whole in cleaned. Whatever food we eat comes in contact with oxygen that is inhaled in the process of respiration. The oxidation process yields several important compounds that are useful for the body. The carbon present in the food becomes carbon dioxide. It mixes with nitrogen, and other elements present in the food and is thrown out when we exhale. Phosphorous present in the food comes in contact with oxygen and becomes phosphate, which builds bones in our body. In Pranayama, one should utilize the diaphragm efficiently to get more oxygen without making more efforts. The diaphragm is attached to the organs like heart and lungs, also the liver, spleen, pancreas and stomach from the bottom side. Efficient movement of the diaphragm makes the functioning of these organs more efficient. {**Mr. Gandhar Mandlik (Rishi Dharmachandra)**}

Humans take 15 breaths in a minute and by practicing Pranayam they can increase the life span. Controlling the breath gives the ability to control the sensory organs, leads to intellectual and spiritual attainment,
We find basically the same evidence of Pranic science in the Vedas also. For example:

Pran, i.e. oxygen is a medicine. It enters and flows in the body in various ways. It is not just a medicine but complete and universal medicine. It is a holistic treatment and the basis for perfect health. The Emotional changes that come as a result of Yog practice i.e. from regulating Pran by different methods are as authentic and scientific as the bodily changes; our scriptures have authentic and scientific evidence of this.

In Chhandogya Upnishad we find: To a person afflicted by terrible mental diseases like depression and schizophrenia the sages of yog tradition say: Do not panic, do not lose courage, and do not be nervous. Do not live in isolation and insecurity. There is not need to get disheartened. Take refuge in Pran and do Pranayama. Here pran is described in a flowery language using similies. The sages point out to the emotional effects of Pran by using different similies. One who protects is father; one who serves with affection, love, compassion, austerity, sacrifice, patience, and courage is mother; one who provides sustenance is brother; one who refines conduct, speech, disposition and thinking is preceptor.

Pran enters our heart as mother and makes the physical heart healthy. Swami Ramdev has proved this even with scientific evidence; what is more, Pranayam creates in our heart maternal love, affection, compassion, and sensitivity. With the practice of Pranayam we develop feelings of patience, courage, sacrifice and surrender, despondent with the miseries of life a person forgets his despondency and begins to enjoy a happy life again. Pran becomes the brother providing physical and emotional sustenance becoming the perceptor it refines out conduct and life itself.

Pran affects our thoughts directly. When thoughts become pure with pranayam our diets and disposition also become pure. Therefore, a person
practising pranayam forsakes violence, crime, dishonesty, and other evil conducts; he proceeds on the path of self-restraint and morality, and becomes a sensitive individual. This is the most desirable need in today’s conditions.

Pranayam is the remedy for ever increasing dishonesty, distrust immorality, violence, crime and corruption. Making life pure, takes us to God and makes us realize the truth and bliss; removing all maladies it leads us to detachment, stable mental equilibrium and thereby to self-realization.

Pranayama is the bedrock of material growth and spiritual progress. The twenty-first century is one of confluence of science and spirituality, and the great mantra of this century is Pranayama.

There are extensive evidences of the power of Pran in the ancient scriptures:-

Pran is Vasu meaning it is the basis for building life; it is Rudra for getting rid of diseases and is Aditya for preventing life from disintegration.

Role of Pranayama In Yog Practice and Its Effectiveness: -
(Swami Ramdev, Yog Synergy in medical Science, 2007)

Just as ‘Yog’ has a broad meaning, Pran or vital energy can mean several things breath, life, consciousness, air, energy etc. Generally Pran is used in various ways to represent the life – giving air or breath (pranvayu), necessary for life, Pranayam is a compound word combining pran and ayam.

‘Ayam’ also has several meanings but in this context it means control. Thus Pranayama mans controlling the breath. It controls entire breathing cycle that has three stages: - 1) breathing in or Poorak (because it fills the lungs), 2) Kumbhak or the pause between breathing in and breathing out, 3) breathing out or rechek (because it empties the lungs). Kumbhak occurs twice in a breathing cycle once after breathing in and again after breathing
our. In Kumbhak there is no inhaling or exhaling. In ‘Hatha Yog’ the word Kumbhak is used as broader term that includes all the three components of the breathing cycle i.e. breathing in, breathing out and holding.

Kumbha means a plot, or container. It has two ends states, completely full or completely empty; these are end states because the process of filling or emptying can not be continued further. Kumbhak is holding the container in these states. The lungs can be considered a container of air that is filled with air and emptied during breathing in and breathing out. Holding breath after breathing in is called antar Kumbhak and after breathing out it is called bahya – Kumbhak. ‘Antar’ means inside and ‘Bahya’ means outside. In this way breath is held in between inhaling and exhaling for sometime and breathing is thus controlled.

Pranayama is a yogic way of breathing where mechanical breathing acquires psychic powers. Pranayama with inhalation of aromas activates psychic centres or chakras. Awakening of psychic centres or chakras may create qualitative electromagnetic field in the aura of higher mood profiles conducive for teleotic growth which becomes homonomous.

The mind becomes free and relaxed by practicing Kapalbhati and Anulom-vilom pranayama so the meditation takes place on its own. When we perform Kapalbhati for three minutes and Anulom-Vilom pranayama for 5 to 10 minutes, Kuberma’s divine strength situated inside the muladhar chakras start moving upwards. With all the chakras and nerves get energized, the Supreme God starts positioning in the form of Omkar in the heart and divine light flame emerges. Even unstable mind can concentrate with the help of Pranayama & chanting of Omkar is the best way to begin dhyana. {Swami Ramdev, Pranayama-Its philosophy & practice, (2006)}
Chakra are the energy centers of various kinds located in our pranika body, regulating the functioning of the vital organs of the physical body by providing the energy needed by them. These chakra commence from the root of the spinal cord up to the top of the head. In normal condition their appearance is like an undeveloped lotus turned upside-down stem above and petals below. These chakra are awakened and bloom to their fullest capacity by observance of yogic exercises like celibacy, pranayama and dhyana etc., then their divine inner power begins to develop and is exhibited in various ways. Some pictures of these chakra given in this chapter are symbolic and have been incorporated in it to give an idea of their subtle nature. Even their English names such as “Pelvic Plexus” etc. do not represent their real location but give only a hint or rough idea regarding their locations in the body.

**Brief description of the Chakra:**

Let us now describe these chakra briefly.
1. Muladhara Chakra (Pelvic Plexus): This Chakra is situated at a place two fingers above the perineum and two fingers below the Genital organs. From its center emerges the Sushumna Nadi. From its left side originates the Ida Nadi and the Pingala Nadi from its right; therefore it is called Triveni (confluence of three Nadi’s) also. Since it is the root place where the Kundalini has its abode, it is called ‘Muladhara chakra’. Concentration on this Chakra brings to the Sadhaka benefits like health, vigor and capacity to perform even the most difficult tasks. On the awakening of this Chakra the
appearance of the Sadhaka becomes luminous, virile and is elevated to higher dimensions. He also becomes free from all bodily ailments.

2. **Svadhisthana Chakra (Hypogastric Plexus):** About two fingers above the Muladhara Chakra is situated the Svadhisthana Chakra. In the treatise on Tantra this Chakra is shown to have been associated with nature’s activities like creation, maintenance and destruction. It is also endowed with the faculty of instant knowledge. Prodigies who are endowed with the capacity of unfailing memory for several things simultaneously belong to the category of those in whom the Svadhisthana Chakra is very active.

3. **Manipura Chakra (Epigastric Plexus or Solar Plexus):** This Chakra has its location in the navel region. It covers all the organs of the digestive system including vital organs like pancreas. This Chakra energises the digestive system. Its awakening has the effect of curing diseases like diabetes; constipation, indigestion, flatulence etc. and all the other abnormalities relating to digestion are eradicated.

4. **Anahata Chakra (Cardiac Plexus):** This chakra is located near the heart. In religious books on Tantra, this Chakra is shown to be associated with the functions of speech, ability to compose poetry and ability to have control over one’s sense organs. It is believed that if ladies and Sadhakas having faith in their heart, concentrate regularly on this Chakra, they will never ever suffer from any heart disease.
5. Hrdaya Chakra or Nimn-Manas Chakra (Lower Mind Plexus): This chakra is located in the middle of the two breasts. By concentration on this Chakra divine qualities like dispassionate love, compassion, sympathy for the suffering etc. develop in the individual who practices it. ‘Maharishi Vyas’ also recommends the practice of concentration on this Chakra. This is not a physical part of the body but it is emotional. It is very sensitive and is related to the mind of the person. See figure no. 1.4 for its location.
6. Vishuddhi Chakra (Carotid Plexus): This chakra is situated in the region of throat. When awakened by constant concentration, it makes the aspirant poetic, very learned person, calm minded and healthy. He becomes free from the feelings of sorrow and his lifespan is increased. Due to awakening of this Chakra abnormalities of the thyroid glands never occur. In the figure no.1.5 Vishuddhi Chakra has been described, in which the organs shown as ‘A’ are related to the following numbers viz. (1) trachea, (2) & (3) both the lungs, (4) the internal parts of the lungs.

7. Aagya Chakra (Madula Plexus): Swami Ramdev, Pranayama rahasaya (2004)-This Chakra is located between the two eyebrows. It is
related to two very important glands; pituitary and pineal glands. On awakening of this Chakra these two glands become very active and the person in whose case this happens gains considerably intelligence. From the Muladhara Chakra, the Ida Pingala and Sushumna Nadis take an upward-course separately but ultimately meet at the place of Chakra. For this reason this Chakra is also known as Triveni i.e. as place where three Nadi’s meet. This Plexus looks like two balls and is shown in part ‘B’ of figure no.1.5. The light in the upward direction on the forehead is that of Sushumna Nadi.

Ida Nadi is compared to river Ganga, Pingala Nadi is compared to river Yamuna and Sushumna Nadi is compared to river Saraswati. The Triveni three rivers are considered to be most sacred, and Prayaga the place where these three rivers meet is considered to be the most holy place of pilgrimage. It is believed that a bath taken at this place, washes away all the sins of the man who takes the holy dip. But in Yogic terminology this confluence takes place, not anywhere outside, but inside our body. The belief that a dip in Prayaga, at the place of confluence of the three rivers, extricates a person from all the sins committed by him is false and illusory. Since, if it were so, a murderer, after committing the heinous crime of murdering a Brahmin, a Guru or his brother would be able to get rid of his sins, just by bathing at this place, but this does not happen. Sin means crime, which causes harm to others. So each one has to face the consequences for both of his acts separately i.e. for sin and for the good acts he did. That is why it has been said in scriptures that: “Avasyameva bhoktavyam krtam karm shubhashubham”. So when the person concentrates on the Aagya Chakra and the Triveni therein by way of Pranayama and dhyana and concentrates on worship of God, takes a dip in the Ganga of knowledge then, the desires of committing sins vanishes. Then the person does not even think about sin. Therefore, if one wants to attain liberation, then he should daily perform Yogahhyasa while chanting ‘OM’ while concentrating the mind fully on the Aagya Chakra.
8. Sahsrar Chakra (Cerebral Gland): This Chakra is located at crown of the head inside the brain, above the *Bbrahmarandhra* and is the centre for all divine powers.

Prana link them to the transmitting channels/Nadis to effectuate mind’s direct control over physical life. The process itself invokes to the presence of Spirit at higher latent self within.

These Chakra are located at the base of the spinal cord in their germ form as illuminated Sushumna Nadi. Figure no.1.6 is an illustration of the mystic Sushumna Nadi, in which 1 displays that this Nadi is made up of 33 vertebrae and is liked a coiled serpent. In this, there lies the red coloured ‘Sushumna’ which too is present like a coiled serpent. ‘A’ is the head of Sushumna, which is connected to the brain and ‘b’ is its tail, which is connected to the bone at tail end or anal end. 2 is clarifying the internal state of the Sushumna where- ‘a’; is a pair of Nadis.
coming out of the two vertebrae and spreads out in the body. ‘b’ is the view clearly
displaying the actual state of these paired Nadis when the outer protection has been
cut. ‘c’ is the confounded cut of the Sushumna. ‘d’ is the muscular cushion placed
in middle of each of the paires of vertebrae. ‘e’- the paires of Nadis from ‘a’ to ‘e’
come out in this manner and spread out throughout the whole body.
At ‘f’ are the muscles on back, which are attached centrally to all the vertebrae
from top to bottom. In 3 and 4, the lateral cut view of the Sushumna is shown,
where a web of Nadis responsible for ‘flow of knowledge’ and ‘flow of movement’
in the body are displayed. These Nadis are thinner than the threads of a cobweb.
This web of nadis performs its functions continuously without any rest, not even
for a second. In 5 the Sushumna and its two major Nadis ‘Ida and Pingala’ located
on its right and left side, come down by the sides and meet the bone at the anal
end. The Ida-Pingala Nadis tied together by knots appear as the garland.
In the body, the Sushumna is the main medium by which all the activities related to
propagation of life force made up of ‘knowledge’ and action combined together,
take place.

The mood profile of the emotion in the Prana awakens higher states of
mind which activated intuition and bliss state. These states of mood produce
different colors in the aura which can be photographed by Kirlian
photography (Sreelakshmi & Manay, 1997). Therefore, a natural law of
life – force that is magnetic in nature in which one’s thoughts merge with
the inner and outer self and manifest only such thoughts which are positive
in nature begin to acquire this spirit’s magnetic field.

Relaxed mind that promotes Alpha state attracts more energy. In
drawing energies fully means to experience the electromagnetic field or aura
around one’s self. With proper understanding and awareness of Pranas and
its functions, inhalation of aromas cleanses and integrates body and mind
uplifts the moods by activating the subtle energy centres or chakras in a
harmonious manner.
Thus Pranayam is the science of breathing. It is the axis round which the entire life-cycle revolves. Chapter 2, shloka 16 of Hath yog Pradipika says that as a lion, elephant and tiger are tamed/controlled by carefully handling them, in the same way Pran or vital energy can be controlled gradually depending on the capacity and condition of the body. Otherwise it can be harmful. The age of a yogi is not counted in days but in number of breaths. The yogi, therefore adopts rhythmic pattern of deep breathing slowly and properly. This rhythmic breathing calms down the nervous system, strengthens the respiratory system and cures desires. As the desires and ambitions decrease the mind becomes free and a suitable vehicle for concentration. Incorrect practice of Pranayama can lead to all sorts of diseases. It takes time to learn the correct method of rhythmic breathing by taking deep, slow and stable breaths. Before starting the practice of Kumbhak one should have perfected deep and rhythmic breathing. Just as fire turns into flames when the ash covering it is removed by wind, Pranayama removes all sexual desires and the inner divine light shows up in its full glory. Emptying the mind of all illusions is in fact pure Rechek. The realization that ‘I am the soul’ is real Poorsak and steadying the mind with this firm determination is Kumbhak in the real sense.

Therefore the yogi who has mastered the science of respiration controls the mind by regulating breathing and thereby making it steady. During the practice of Pranayam eyes are kept closed. This brings Prana and mind together and one experiences indescribable happiness.

Emotions influence the rate of breathing, and in turn a controlled breathing keeps the emotions in check. The main objective of yog is to control the mind and make it steady. A yogi first learns Pranayam in order to control his breathing, which gives him the ability to subjugate his sense organs. This ability makes it possible for him to get to next stage of yog
pratyahar or abstraction, i.e. withdrawing the mind into itself and only then the mind is ready for meditation.

According to medical science by breathing we fill up lungs with air (which contains oxygen Pran vayu). This oxygen is transferred to all the blood vessels spread over the lungs and the carbon dioxide is expelled from them. With this process going on smoothly the lungs become strong and the blood remains clean. It is oxygen that energizes every cell of the body. It these cells (and all the parts made from them) do not get oxygen, weakness and disorders creep in appearing in the form of diseases.

Most people are not in the habit of taking deep breath and therefore only one-fourth of the lungs is active and rest remains idle. The lungs resemble the honeycomb and have around seventy three million spongy compartments. When we breathe normally Pran or vital energy is circulated only in less than twenty million and the rest are idle without any work. As a result they become stiff and foreign particles get accumulated in them. This leads to tuberculosis, cough, bronchitis and other serious diseases.

The partial functioning of the lungs thus affects the purification of blood. The heart becomes and as a result the person dies prematurely. In this case the importance of Pranayama for long life becomes critical. Controlling the Pran or life energy can cure different diseases. The Person can lead a happy and disease free life with the knowledge of Pranayama and also inspire others to lead a healthy life. This is the reason that every religion, considers Pranayam to be an important aspect of all religious activities and functions.

Pranayama can provide an easy solution for agitation, worries, anger, disappointment, fear and lust, and other mental problems. More than that it increases the mental capacity, memory power, sharpness, understanding foresight, investigating power, grasping, wisdom intelligence and other mental qualities.
One can enjoy a long happy life with regular practice of Pranayam. Regular practice of Pranayam creates the habit of deep breathing automatically.

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**Mind and Breath :-** The mind, consisting of thoughts and emotions is closely related to the breath. When the mind is calm and relaxed, the breathing is smooth and slow. If we are stressed breathing is fast & shallow but mostly through chest. When one gets angry, the breathing becomes fast and forceful, in depressed states sighing, when in pain gasping, in anxiety shallow and rapid. In this way, the mental and emotional states affect breathing.

**Rhythmic breathing is Pranayama:-**

All the processes and organs like heart, brain, digestive organs, and endocrine glands in the body have rhythms. Also the breathing has specific rhythms. Pranayama is Rhythmic breathing, bringing the breath in natural rhythm by controlling the process of inhalation, exhalation and retention.

Breathing is so simple and so obvious we often take it for granted; ignoring the power it has to affect our body, mind and spirit. With each inhalation we bring oxygen into the body and spark the transformation of nutrients into fuel. Each exhalation purges the body of carbon dioxide, a toxic waste. Pranayama is the science of breath control.

Pranayama is the regulation of Prana and its distribution to the various levels of our being.

The first step in Pranayam is to tune into the rhythm of the breath and regulate it. We use the breath to bring the body and mind together. The breath improves our ability to concentrate. “When the breath wanders, the mind is unsteady, but when the breath is still, so is the mind. Therefore the breath should be restrained”.
Types & Methods of Pranayama:-

The seven types of Pranayama are mentioned in different texts but every Pranayama has its own importance. However, it is not possible for most people to do all these exercises daily therefore Swami Ramdevji has formulated a scientific method and spiritual process of all the seven steps of Pranayam with the help of his Guru’s blessings and own personal experience. All these seven types of Pranayama can be done, as a routine and in a time bound programme of about 20 minutes.

First we shall discuss the Right Posture for Pranayam, after that methods and types. (Swami Ramdev, Yog Synergy in Medical Science, 2007)

Right Posture for Pranayama:-

The spine should be absolutely straight for practising Pranayama. Sit in any meditative pose like Padmasana, Sukhasan, and Vajrasana. A chair can be used if it is uncomfortable to sit on floor but the spine should be straight. Now a days people practise Nadi Shodhan and other Pranayama while waking, this is wrong practice and can be very harmful. Pranayama increases the vital life energy and arouses the chakra attached with the spine. Therefore, it is necessary to sit straight. Practising pranayama in correct posture on the floor or chair helps in concentration of the mind.

First Method   Bhastrika Pranayama:-

Sit in any comfortable posture. Breathe in through both the nostrils forcefully, till the diaphragm is full and exhale with full force. This is known as Bhastrika Pranayama and should be done according to individual capacity in three different ways, slow, medium and fast. Those who have a weak heart and lungs should do Rechek and Poorak at slow pace. A healthy person and a trained person should try to increase the speed gradually and
first do it at medium speed and then at fast pace. This Pranayama should be practised for three to five minutes.

While practising Bhashrika Pranayam we should think that the divine strength, energy, purity, calmness and happiness prevailing in the universe is positive and that vital life energy is entering inside our body. In this way, Pranayam done with auspicious and positive thoughts is very effective.

**Special Notes :-**

Patients of high blood pressure and heart disease should practice it slowly.

- While breathing in the abdominal area should not blow up. We have to fill the air in the chest area, i.e. up top diaphragm, so that the part of the chest with its ribs swells.

In summer season this Pranayama should be practiced for lesser duration.

- In case of excess Kapha and sinus problem which results nose being blocked then close the right nostril and do Rechek and Poorak from left nostril. Then close the left nostril and do Rechek and Poorak with right nostril at slow, medium and fast pace. Then finish Rechek and Poorak with both the nostrils are practice Bhashrika Pranayama.

The eyes should be closed and chant OM in mind with each breath.

- One must do this Pranayama for the duration of three to five minutes every day.

**Benefits:-**

Diseases like cold, cough, allergy, asthma, respiratory diseases of all kinds, are cured. Lungs become strong and due to the heart and head getting adequate quantity of pure and fresh air, health is improved. Diseases of the throat like thyroid, tonsils and other ailments of throat are cured. This Pranayama brings about a proper balance of the three Dosas i.e. Vata, Pitta
and Kapha and maintains their balance. Blood is purified and the body gets rid of foreign objects and toxins. This Pranayama helps in brain, depression, migraine, paralysis neural system & increase aabha.

**Second Method – Kapalbhati Pranayam:-**

Kapalbhati is used with a specific purpose of cleaning the skull region and make it to shine with ample supply of oxygen *(Saraswati, 1985)*

According to classical texts on hatha yoga such as Hatha Yog Pradipika *(Saraswati, 1985)*, Hatharatnavali *(Reddy, 1999)* it is a Pranayama technique which cleans the head region. This information that Kapalbhati enhances oxygen supply to the head which is received from classical texts has been subjected to empirical testing and it was reported that during Kapalbhati oxygen consumption has increased as compared to normal breathing *(Bhole, 1982; Karambelkar, Deshpande & Bhole 1982)*.

‘Kapala’ means forehead and ‘Bhati’ means light. Hence, Kapal-bhati refers to that exercise which makes the forehead luminous and lustrous. *Kapal-bhati Pranayama makes its Sadhaka’s head luminous*. This Pranayama is a little different from Bhashrika Pranayama. In Bhashrika Pranayam, Purak and Recheka are done with the same amount of force, where as in Kapal-Bhati more attention is to be given to the act of forceful Rechek. In Kapalbhati, the poorak is to be done with normal, usual force but the rechek has to be done with as much of force as is at your command. In doing so, the abdominal area, also makes inward and outward movements. This Pranayama should easily be done for five minutes. In short breathe in normally and breathe out forcefully, so as to influence the organs of the abdominal area.

While practising this Pranayama we should think that air that we are breathing out is taking away with it all the diseases present in the body. The person suffering with a particular disease should think in this manner and remove the negative feelings present in his mind like anger, lust, greed,
attachment, jealously, hatred, etc. If we think that our body is getting rid of the diseases and positive energy is entering then it has positive impact.

**Special Notes:-**

Heart and high BP patients, and weak people do it slowly. Ramdevji said “dharti ki Sanjivini Hai Kapal-bhati Pranayam” and that it “cures all diseases of world”.

This Pranayama should be practised for at least three minutes and then increased up to 15-20 minutes. In case of tiredness take rest in between after regular practice. It can be done nonstop for five minutes. This is the maximum duration for Kapalbhati. In the beginning the person might experience back and stomach pain but it disappears after sometime. In summer the person predominant with Pitta nature should practice it only for two or three minutes.

**Benefits:-**

- It increases Aabha & Tej means the glow, brightness and beauty of the face.
  - It is beneficial in phlegm related diseases like asthma, allergy, respiratory problems, sinuses etc.
  - It cures diseases related to lungs, heart and brain.
  - It is extremely beneficial in case of obesity, diabetes, gas, constipation, acidity, kidney and prostrates problems.
  - Regular practice of Kapalbhati for five minutes cures constipation, diabetes without any medicines. It reduces extra fat on stomach and back by four to eight Kilos within one month and it also removes the blockage from arteries.
  - The mind remains stable, calm and happy. The negative thoughts are kept at bay and the person is free from depression and other mental diseases.
• It circulates divine strength in all chakras or centers and purifies them.

• This Pranayam is very beneficial and has a positive impact on stomach, pancreas, liver, spleen, intestines, prostrate and kidney. This Pranayama is alone capable of giving all the benefits for stomach, which cannot even be obtained from asana. It strengthens the weak intestines.

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In this process of Kapalbhati, the carbon dioxide is thrown out of the body in large quantity and similarly in the same proportion, the oxygen is absorbed into the body. This increases the oxygen in the blood. The Practitioners should perform the process under the guidance and care of experts.

Useful Bandhs in Pranayam:

The generation of power in our body with the practice of yog, Asana, Pranayama and bandh is controlled and taken in ‘Bandh’ means stopping or trying. The bandhs are extremely important in case of Pranayama and it is incomplete without it. Yog asana, Pranayama and bandh circulate life energy in our body and make us introspective. The bandhs have been mentioned underneath.

**Jalandhar Bandh:** Sit in Padmasana or Sidhasana and inhale. Both the hands should be kept on knees and bend the chin slightly downward so that it touches the upper chest area. This is known as Jalandhar bandh. The eyes should be focused in between the eyebrows. The chest should be straight; this bandh holds the network of nerves in the neck area.

- It makes the voice sweet, melodious and attractive.
- It blocks Ida and Pingala nerves and therefore life energy enters the Sushumna nerve.
• It is beneficial for all the throat related diseases. It should be practised in diseases like tonsillitis, thyroid etc.

**Uddiyan Bandh:**

The action, which helps the Pran to move up and enter the Sushumna nerve, is called Uddiyan bandh. Exhale and relax the stomach area. Then contract the stomach as if we are trying to touch the back (internally). Do Jalandhar Bandh and lift the chest slightly upwards. Let the stomach touch the back.

Do it as much as possible, inhale and repeat as above. Begin with three repetitions and increase gradually.

In the same way stand straight, place both the hands on knees to perform the bandh.

• It cures stomach related problems; it is beneficial in diabetes, gastric trouble, constipation and hernia problems.

**Moolbandh:**

Sit in Padmasana or Sidhasana and do Bahya or Abhyantar Kumbhak, contract the rectum, urinary bladder. In this bandh the lower abdomen gets stiff. It is easy to do this along with Bahya Kumbhak. The experts can easily perform it for several hours. It should be practised for long duration under tan expert’s guidance.

- It cures constipation and piles, increases digestive fire.
- It strengthens the semen and is important for practising celibacy.

**Maha Bandh:**

Sit in Padmasana or any other meditative pose and perform all the three bandhs together, this is called Maha Bandh. The benefits are same as mentioned above. While doing Kumbhaka all the three bandhas are performed.

The Pran moves upwards.

- Purifies and strengthens the semen.
• It helps in the confluence of Ida, Pingla and Sushumna.

Third Method – Bahya Pranayam (with tribandh):

Sit in Padmasana or Sidhasana and exhale all at once completely and with full force. Do Moolbandh, Uddiyan and Jalandhar bandh and control the breath outside for as long as possible. When we feel like breathing in then do it slowly and gradually, unlocking all the bandhas and breathe normally. Inhale and repeat the Pranayam without stopping it. Repeat this 3-21 times according to capacity.

One should always think positive while doing this Pranayama and think that all the diseases and dosha present in the body are going away and the body is being filled with fresh new positive energy. This type of auspicious and positive attitude gives beneficial results.

Benefits:

This is totally harmless Pranayam but method should be correct and this Pranayama is not for high B.P. and heart patients.

It controls the playfulness of the mind, increases the digestive fire, it is beneficial in stomach diseases. It makes the mind sharp and intelligent. It purifies the body, cures early ejaculation and humours related problems. Bahya Pranayama strengthens the stomach organs and in the beginning the practitioner might complain of pain in the diseased or weak part of the stomach. Therefore, give rest in the beginning and do all the three bandhs while doing this Pranayama.

Fourth Method  Anulom – Viloma Pranayama:

Method to close the Nostrils : Mr. Gandhar Mandlik (Rishi Dharmachandra)

Yoga says that left Nostril is IDA Nadi which represent mental energy and mind, and right nostril in Pangala Nadi, which represents physical
energy and body. If there is imbalance between Ida and Pingala then body and mind are imbalanced.

The purpose of the alternate nostril breathing is to balance these 2 forces, the mental energy and physical energy to bring harmony between Body and mind.

**Swami Ramdev** to be done by closing the nostrils one after another, close the right nostril by the right hand thumb and likewise close the left nostril by the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} fingers (Madhyama and Anamika) fingers keep the palm of the hand in front just above the nose.

Prana breathed in through left nostril represents energy of the moon, which symbolizes peace, and has a cooling effect. Hence for purification of Nadis, beginning of this Pranayama has to be made by the left nostril. Close the right side nostril with the right hand thumb. Inhale slowly through the left nostril till the lungs are filled. Then close the left nostril with the second and third fingers. Open the right nostril and exhale through it. Repeat this exercise slowly in the beginning and with practice increase the speed. When we are able to practice this exercise for a long time, inhale with as much force as is possible for us, then exhale also forcefully. This practice of inhalation and exhalation alternatively through the right and left nostril, as indicated above with force, should be done for 3 minutes. If we feel tired, rest for sometimes and resume. Regular practice will enable us to do this Pranayama for 10 minutes. After some practice being established, this Pranayama should be done for 5 to 10 minutes daily, depending upon one’s capacity. However in summer season it should be done for duration starting from 3 minutes up to a maximum of 5 minutes. While doing this Pranayama, mentally repeat the mantra “Om” so the mind becomes fit for meditation.

While practising the Pranayama we should think of “OM” mentally. This increases the concentration and the mind reaches the higher stage.
While practicising this Pranayama one should think mentally that Sushmna nadi is getting aroused. A divine light is glowing in all the chakras. The person should think that the whole body is glowing with a divine light. The divine light, should be experienced both externally and internally. Think that this divine light, strength of God is spreading in all directions. The Almighty God is enlightening the whole world with this divine light. Enjoy the light and increase the knowledge Anulom-Vilom Pranayama practised with the divine knowledge and feelings is beneficial for physical, mental and spiritual strength. A divine light arises from Mooladhar Charka and the mind moves upwards and the person attains the real knowledge.

People who have undergone abdominal surgeries, heart surgeries, brain surgeries should consult the medical expert or consultant. Breath into lungs not to stomach. No organ in stomach absorbs oxygen. Do not hurry. Do it slowly. Rest whenever needed (in any Pranayama)

**Benefits:**

- This Pranayama purifies 72 crore, 72 lakh, 10 thousand and 210 nerves. When the nerves get purified the body becomes healthy, strong and bright. It is beneficial in case of joint pain, dysentery, gout, Parkinson’s disease, nervous weakness, vata urinary problem, humors loss, low sperm count, acidity, pitta, cold, catarrh, sinuses, asthma, cough, tonsils and other diseases. The three Dosas of Vata, Pitta, Kapha regularize themselves and assume proper proportions.

- It opens the blockages in the heart arteries. Regular practice of this Pranayama is capable of opening 30-40 per cent blockages within three to four months. Swami Ramdev has experienced this after testing it on several patients.

- It cures the irregularities in cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL, LDL etc.
• It overcomes negative thinking and increases positive thoughts. It gives happiness, enthusiasm and courage.

• This Pranayam purified mind, body, thoughts and values. It cures all the diseases of the body. The mind is engrossed in Omkar.

**Fifth Method : Bhramari Pranayama:**

Breathe in till your lungs are full of air. Close your ears with both the thumbs and eyes with the middle fingers of your hands on respective sides with little pressure. Press forehead with both the index fingers lightly. Close both the eyes. Then Press eyes and nose bridge from the sides with the remaining fingers. Close our mouth. Begin slowly exhaling, making humming sound of a bee, while reciting “OM” mentally. Repeat the exercise 11 to 21 times according to our capacity.

This Pranayama should be done with full concentration and deep devotion towards God. We should think mentally that God is bestowing his grace, happiness and peace on us. The God appears in the form of a divine light and will take away all the ignorance present in the mind and make me wise. In this way, the Pranayama should be done with pure feelings and the practitioner will be able to meditate automatically.

This stabilizes the playful and wavering mind. It is beneficial in case of mental tension, anxiety, high blood pressure, heart disease etc. and is highly useful in Dhyan.

**Sixth Method – “Omkar Japa” Udgeet Pranayam:**

**(Muttering the Mantra ओ)**

After performance of the six Pranayama mentioned here above concentrate our mind on the respiration and meditate on the sacred mantra “OM”. God has fashioned the shape of our brows like OM. It is not the figure or expression of any individual thing, but it is a divine energy. With
every act of breathing in and breathing out, mentally go on repeating the mantra “OM”. The speed of respiration should be so slow and subtle that we ourselves also may not be aware of its sound, even if a piece of cotton is placed in front of the nostril it should not move by the effect of the air exhaled out. Slowly practice and make the duration of one inhalation and exhalation to one minute. Likewise, try to visualize the breath inside the body. Initially the breath can be felt only in the nostrils but gradually it will be felt deep inside. In this way, visualizing the breath and continuous chanting of “OM” will lead to Dhyana automatically. Our mind will develop a feeling of concentration and our body will be filled with the feeling of OM.

Also if this is practiced at bed time, one will get peaceful sleep without any preverted dreams etc.

**Seventh Method : Pranav Pranayam:**

*(Concentration on respiration with ओ)*

This is the highest stage of Pranayam. It can also be called as the stage of Dhyan. Practically speaking concentration is the result of Pranayam. Practice of this Pranayam controls the mind and sensory organs and the practitioners get into the depth of concentration.

Concentration is the even flow of knowledge of unity in between eyebrows, navel and heart. Do not think of anything else except of Almighty God at the time of practising. Being engrossed in the thought of omnipotent, bright and quite form of God is Pranav Pranayam.

Dhyana (Concentration) is associated with us every moment. According to the Indian culture it completes every process. Therefore, today also whenever our elders or parents advice us, they ask us to do every work with concentration, study with concentration etc. But what is concentration? Nobody bothers to ponder on this issue. We see that this word is associated
with us in every work of life and therefore should understand that concentration is inevitable in life. Human being is incomplete without concentration. Success cannot be guaranteed in attaining any material or spiritual goal in its absence. Concentration leads to happiness and peace of mind.

We can find the importance of meaningful chanting of Omkar for attaining concentration.

In this way the practitioner chants OM and experiences the presence of omnipresent, omnipotent, unending and Almighty God and engrosses in his divine form. Omkar is not an individual or shape, it is a divine light. The followers of different religions, communities, sects call it by different names and worship it. The soul is invisible in this body, but all the tasks inside the body are carried on under its supervision.

The mind is concentrated on respiration and Udgeet is worshipped with Pran. All the sensory organs are full of faults, because our eyes can see both good and bad scenes. The ears listen to both vulgar and decent language. Similarly the nose can smell both fragrance and odour, the tongue can speak both lies and truth. The taste takes in both edible and inedible things; the good and bad thoughts arise in our mind.

Practise Pranav Pranayam with every breath. See that pace of breath should be so soft that the sound should not be heard even to self. Try to make one respiration in one minute. Try to see the respiration from within. Initially we will experience the touch of respiration only in the tip of the nose. Slowly we can experience the breath deep within. Practise meaningful chanting of Omkar along with respiration as it will help in attaining concentration. The practitioner is able to engross in the divine form of Almighty God with regular practice of this Pranayam. He attains priceless divine happiness suitable for meditation. The Practitioner should concentrate in the manner at the time of sleeping.
This will help in enjoying sound sleep. Interval negative power transforms into positive power, diseases get cured and life is filled with positive energy, chastity and good health.

**Some Rules & Precautions for Practicising Pranayam:-**

- Select a clean and peaceful place for doing Pranayam. If possible, choose a place near a clean pond or river. As there is a lot of pollution in the cities, some kind of increase can be lit like Guggulu and purified butter, to create a clean environment at that place, igniting a lamp with purified butter only, can also serve the purpose.

- Sit either in any of the Asanas, viz. Pranayam, Sidhasana or Vajrasana, whichever we find convenient. The sheet or cloth (cotton etc.) on which we sit must be a non-conductor of electricity.

- Breathe only through the nose, because by doing so the air which we take in, is filtered. During day time when we are not sitting for the performance of Pranayama make it a habit to do respire only through nose and not through mouth. Nasal respiration keeps the temperature of the Nadis (Vessels) – ‘IDA’, ‘Pingala’ and ‘Sushumna’ even. It also prevents foreign and harmful objects from getting into lungs.

- Like ‘Yog’, Pranayama should also be performed four or five hours after taking food. In the morning Pranayama should be done after finishing daily routine acts like cleansing mouth, emptying of bowels etc., it should also be done before yogasana. In the beginning Pranayam should be done for five or ten minutes gradually the time may be increased up to about ½ or 1 hour. Maintain a specific number of repetitions and do not
variate. Maintain a specific rhythm. If it is not possible to clean the bowels by morning, at night take some mild laxative like terminalia chebula (Indian Hardaya) or any other mild laxative (a non habit forming medicinal herb having a laxative effect). Kapalbhati Pranayam, if done regularly for a few days will help in curing constipation.

- Keep our mind calm and composed. However, Pranayam can also calm down the disturbed mind and keep us happy.

- Methods of Pranayama may be varied according to the seasons and our own physical make up and mental attitude. Keep this in mind and modulate the method accordingly. Some Pranayama increase the body temperature, whereas, some bring it down. Some Pranayama maintain the temperature at the normal level.

If we feel fatigued in the course of doing Pranayama, rest for sometime and then begin deep breathing, which will remove the fatigue.

- Pregnant women, hungry persons, persons suffering from fever and those who are lustful having no control on their passions should not do Pranayama. If we are sick, keep in mind the instructions to be followed by sick persons while during Pranayama.

- For prolonged exercises of Pranayama, observance of celibacy is necessary. Besides, food should be simple not containing irritating spices. It should be ‘Sattvika’ – (Plain and Simple, non-spicy food). Use of cow’s milk, ghee (clarified butter), fruit and green vegetable can be said to be ideal food. Moderation also is a good rule to observe.

- Don’t stop breathe forcibly while practising Pranayama. Do not strain ourselves while doing ‘Kumbhaka’ i.e. retaining the
breathed air inside or keeping the air out after exhaling (Breathing in is called ‘Puraka’, retaining the breathed air in is called ‘Kumbhak’ and exhaling the air is called ‘Rechek’)

- Pranayama does not mean just breathing in, keeping the breathed air in and exhaling it. It also means establishing control on the entire breathing process, and maintaining mental equilibrium and concentration of mind.

  It is beneficial to chant the Mantra (a group of words that carry vibrations and energy) OM (the first cosmic soundless sound) aloud and repeat the same several times before doing Pranayama. Even recital of sacred songs in the praise of almighty God or recital of some sacred hymns may be beneficial. This will calm our mind and make us fit for Pranayama, because a peaceful mind is very essential while doing Pranayama.

  Keep the eyes, mouth, nose and other organs in their natural state while practising Pranayama. Be calm, tension free and practise it in simple manner. The neck, spine, chest and hips should be absolutely straight while practising Pranayam. This is beneficial and gives good results.

  For some reasons if we are unable to sit on the floor, we can do Pranayam sitting on a chair, couch or bed. Make sure that we sit straight and seat should not be too soft. If we cannot sit at all, we can do (Anulom-Vilom) Pranayam lying down as well.

  Practice of Pranayam should be done slowly without any haste, with confidence and prudence.

  It is said that to tame wild animals like lions, tigers, elephants’ etc. Utmost caution and patience is needed. Any haste in handling them may cause harm to the trainer as a result of their
counter attack. Similarly, Pranayama should also be done gradually and not in haste.

- If possible Pranayama should be done after our usual morning functions like cleansing of mouth, evacuation of bowels, bathing etc. However, if it becomes necessary for us to take bath after Pranayama. We should keep an interval of about 15 to 20 minutes between Pranayama and bathing. For acquiring proficiency in Pranayama we should not depend on books or what is done and preached by others. Seek the guidance of an expert and do Pranayama under his direct supervision.

We should memorize the following verse and chant in mind while practising all types of Pranayam in order to get the complete benefits.


A person whose food habit are not proper, whose daily routine for his day to day work etc. are irregular, that person will not get any benefit out of ‘yog’ also, and he will still be unhappy after doing ‘Yog’. In other words once should have discipline in his life for a peaceful and healthy living.

Some other kinds of Pranayama are also beneficial as:-

1. Ujjayi Pranayam
2. Surya Bhedi Pranayam
3. Chandra Bhedi Pranayam
4. Karna Rogantak Pranayam
5. Shitali & Sitkari Pranayam
6. Nadi Shodhan Pranayam

According to Medical Scientists, Yog and Pranayama therapy is successful because of the balance created in the nervous and endocrine systems which directly influences all the other systems and organs of the body. Yog and Pranayama act both as a curative and preventive therapy.
Individuals under stress often experience fast, shallow breathing. This type of breathing known as chest breathing, can lead to ‘shortness of breath’, increased muscle tension inadequate oxygenation of blood and fatigue. Breathing exercises can both improve respiratory function and relieve stress and fatigue.

The very essence of Yog and Pranayama lies in attaining mental peace, improved concentration powers, a relaxed state of living and harmony in relationship. Through the Practice of Yog and Pranayama, we become aware of the interconnectedness between our emotional, mental and physical levels. Gradually this awareness leads to an understanding of the more subtle areas of existence.

**Benefits of Pranayama:**

The Person who does seven breathing exercises daily and regularly can attain following benefits which are briefly described as under:-

- All the three Dosas (Humors) – Vata, Pitta and Kapha get adjusted in proper proportion and abnormalities in them are removed.
  Digestive system improves and diseases pertaining to digestive organs are cured.

  - Diseases pertaining to lungs, heart and brain are also cured.
  Obesity, Diabetes, Cholesterol, Constipation, Flatulence Acidity, Respiratory troubles, Allergy, Migraine, High Blood Pressure, Diseases pertaining to kidneys, sexual disorders of males and females etc. are also cured.

  - Resistance against diseases is stepped up. Immunity develops.

  - Hereditary diseases like diabetes and heart diseases can be avoided.
Falling of hair or its premature graying, appearances of wrinkles on face or other parts of the body at young age, diminution of eye sight, forgetfulness, etc. are relieved and process of aging is retarded.

Face becomes bright, luminous and calm.

- Mind becomes stable and tranquil. A sense of contentment and enthusiasm or zeal develops. Conditions like depression are relieved.

- Performance of yogic exercises like meditation will be easy.

- All the diseases of the physical and etheric bodies will be cured. Freedom from negative and harmful mental conditions like anger, lasciviousness, greed for money, arrogance etc. will be achieved.

- All the physical and mental disorders and abnormalities are cured and toxins eradicated from the body.

- Freedom from negative thinking is achieved and the mind develops the habit of positive and constructive thinking.

Pranyama improves cognitive functioning through its breath control effects on the ANS directly and indirectly by including relaxation at the physical and mental levels and redistributing blood supply to the cerebral cells.

The Practice of Pranayama leads to greater O$_2$ supply to the bloodstream and CO$_2$ drainage. As a result, greater amount of oxygen is available for cerebral metabolism. Further as Iyengar (1977) observer regular practice of various Pranayama will promote mental calm and concentration, which resembles a state of meditative relaxation. As Jenvinget et. al. (1992) conclude, mental and physical relaxation leads to an integrated physiological response in which blood is redistributed to the effect of
providing greater supply to the cerebral cells. All these physiological effects will have an enhancing effect on cognitive functioning.

**Psychotherapeutic potential of Pranayama:**

Pranayama is such a powerful method that its practice can lead to a healthy mind mainly due to its effects in enhancing emotional balance and inducing stillness of mind. Pranayama’s effect on emotions is based on its influence on the limbic system and the ANS. Strong emotions cause hurried, shallow and interrupted breath, which is directly related to elevated sympathetic reactivity. Practice of Pranayama brings back the disturbed system to balance *(Hewitt, 1983, Sharma, 1976)*

The limbic system is a part of the brain that is responsible for the vegetative functions of the body, such as regulation of arterial pressure, body fluid balance, electrolyte, contents of body fluids, gastrointestinal activity and many internal functions of the endocrine glands. The ANS is directly under the control of the limbic system. The limbic system however is in turn regulated by the cerebral cortex, the ‘highest’ brain center, which is the seat of all intellectual activities. All thoughts, memories and interpretations emanate from the cerebral cortex, and emotions are accompanied by perceptual appraisal. Thus experience of an emotion takes the following course: perceptual appraisal of a value-laden internal or external event by the cerebral cortex, which sends signals to the limbic system, which in turn activates the ANS. This chain of reactions results in the experience of an emotion *(Nurenberger, 1988)*.

Pranayama through its moderating effect on the autonomic tone induce both physical and mental relaxation and reduction in emotional arousal. The intensity and frequency of negative emotions, such as anger, hostility, hopelessness, etc., can thus be controlled through the practice of Pranayama.

Yet another effect of Pranayama on the psychological level is in inducing stillness of mind. Mind is a chatterbox with streams of thoughts
about the present, past and future. Yoga likens this nature of the mind to a horse without reins. The fixations of attention on the breathing process during Pranayama help the practitioner stop this chatter immediately. The cessation of thoughts is a preliminary step towards meditation.

Pranayama increases blood circulation and reduces oxygen consumption, which brings more oxygen to the brain and improves the efficiency of oxygen use in the body. Also as lung tissue becomes more elastic and the surrounding muscle more flexible, the practice of Pranayama can also increase lung capacity. Getting ample air into our lungs helps us to feel alert and focused. However, one of the most important benefit of yoga and Pranayama is its application in relieving stress, fatigue, invigoration and vitality and its ant-aging properties and its application for relaxation therapy.

Pranayama has the capacity of freeing the mind from untruthfulness, ignorance and all other painful and unpleasant experiences of the body and mind; and when the mind becomes clean it becomes easy for the Sadhaka to concentrate on the desired object and it becomes possible for him to progress further in the direction of Dhyana.

By Yogasana, we remove the distortions and disabilities of the physical body and bring it into discipline. However Pranayama influences the subtle and the physical bodies in a greater measure than yogasana do and that too in a perceptible manner. In the human body, lungs, heart and brain hold very important positions and they depend on each other heavily for their health.

Physically, Pranayama appears to be a systematic exercise of respiration, which makes the lungs stronger, improves blood circulation, makes the man healthier and bestows upon him the boon of a long life. Physiology teaches us that the air (Prana) we breathe in fills our lungs, spreads in the entire body, providing it with essential from the body, take
them to the heart and then to the lungs, which throws the useless material like carbon dioxide out of the body through the act of exhalation. If this action of the respiratory system is done regularly and efficiently, lungs become stronger and blood becomes pure.

However, most of the people do not have the habit of breathing deeply with the result that only one-fourth part of the lungs is brought into action and 75 percent remains idle. Like the honeycomb, lungs are made of about 73 million cells, comparable to a sponge in their making. On normal breathing, to which we all are accustomed, only about 20 million pores in the lungs get oxygen, whereas remaining 53 million pores remain deprived of the benefit, with the result that they get contaminated by several diseases like tuberculosis, respiratory disease and several ailments like coughing, bronchitis etc.

In this way, the inefficiently functioning of the lungs affect the process of blood purification. Heart weakens because of this with a constant possibility of untimely death. It is for this reason that the importance of Pranayama has come to be recognized, for a healthy long life. Several diseases can be averted by regular practice of Pranayama. Hence, it is obvious that the knowledge of the science of Pranayama and its regular practice enables a man to lead a healthy and long life.

Mental disturbances like excitement, anxiety, fear, anger, disappointment, lust for sex (lasciviousness) and other mental preversions can be calmed down by regular practice of Pranayama. Besides, Pranayama practice improves the functions of the brain cells with the result that memory and the faculty of discrimination and observation improves, making it easy for the Sadhaka to perform concentration and meditation.

Another benefit of Pranayama is that by its regular practice, habit of deep breathing is developed which results in several health benefits.
Today, the serious conflicts occurring in the body because of lack of exercise, stress, improper diet, irregular routine and unrestrained life give rise to imbalance of the three humours (vata – wind, Pitta – bile, and cough) which is called metabolic syndrome in medical terms and occurs because of improper functioning of anabolism. Vata is anabolism, Pitta is metabolism and cough the result of these two is catabolism. This imbalance causes depression which leads to high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, heart ailments, indigestion, insomnia and even cancer.

The inequity of the humours, improper functioning of the digestive process, imbalance of the basic body elements (Panchdhatu), accumulation of excrement, and unhappiness of the mind because the cause of our unhealthiness. This has caused the imbalance of hormones and chemicals that makes us dependent on various medicines.

Experiments with Pranayama on millions of people done so far lead to the conclusion that it is possible to be disease free by providing an optimum amount of oxygen to the body parts ranging from the cells to organs through these exercises accompanies by positive thinking. Pranayama is oxygenating blood, internal exercise, and positive life-style. Pranayama provide optimum oxygen to the blood cells through bhashrika and anulom-vilom Pranayamas, Kapalbhati is a scientific way of giving mobility and energy flow to the internal parts of the body; with Bhramari and Udgeeth we begin to have a healthy and worry free life by awakening feelings of reverential faith, surrender, trust and an urge for positive thinking.

Pranayama is self-medicine and self-treatment that do away with the need for surgical intervention for joints and spine problems, and even for heart diseases. We then realize that Pranayama is a unique science. It keeps the level of anabolism high and that of catabolism low in the body; this retards the aging process preventing untimely old age and giving a prolonged life. *(Swami Balkrishan, Yog Synergy in Medical Science,*
On the basis of the scientific results of Pranayama experiments we can say that when Pran, i.e. oxygen element is fed into the body by certain methods at a definite time in a definite amount with proper thinking, positive changes occur automatically and Pran starts acting like a complete medicine. This is the essence of yog science and of perfect health; this is the basis of a healthy, prosperous and sensitive life of an individual and even of a nation.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

“Yoga is a complete medical science”

---- Swami Ramdevji,

Patanjali Yog Peeth, Divya Yoga Mandir Trust, Haridwar

It is a well known fact that the strength of a nation rests upon the health of its people. Healthy people constitute of a healthy nation. So, for being a good citizen in the world, our physical & mental health & our mood states which depend on our behavior should be very strong & positive.

In today’s hectic environment mostly people don’t have time to listen to what’s going on in their minds and make sense of why they are angry, upset or depressed. Almost everybody will or has experienced depression at some stage of their life. We are not able to overcome this depression, anxiety, stress etc. that leads to deeper depression and once we are caught in a state of deep clinical depression. It may seem difficult to get out. We can only begin on the path of Yoga: Pranayama to get rid of depressed state.

All normal people wish to live in peace and happiness. The feeling of happiness and satisfaction subjectively experienced by individual has been termed as psychological well-being. Yoga: Pranayama provides us perfect physical, social & psychological well-being even under stressful conditions.

The main purpose of education is to find truth in life and to learn the art of living so any person who is trying to find his or her identity and wants to know the truth of life should adopt Yoga: Pranayama in life.

Yoga is an inseparable part of our life. Yoga has a strong relation with our personal, social, family, spiritual, commercial, national and global issues. It has a positive effect on our personality. If we are healthy, yoga has a positive effect and improves our mental and physical health along with the ability to work and raises
the level of self confidence. This positive side in turn develops kindness, compassion, love affection, respect, harmony, faith, purity, self-confidence, courage, wisdom and truth. If a person is unhealthy, yoga cures the curable and incurable diseases permanently.

Thus we develop harmony, simplicity and deep bonds with our family and society. At this stage, we get rid of jealousy and hatred and increase happiness, love and satisfaction in our family and society. There are several examples in the world, which prove that only those people have been able to reach great heights who are full of self-confidence and possess strong will power. They understand the ground realities and nurture their dreams through perseverance. We become progressive by following the path of yoga, as it has been said, “Yoga karmasu koushalam” this means yoga improves our efficiency and wisdom. We lead a tension free life and are capable of taking the right decisions at the right time. We get rid of laziness, lethargy, disappointment, dissatisfaction and negative attitude and lead a creative and progressive life. The person associated with yoga leads a clean life in the society, state, nation and world. A yogi can never betray the nation. Yoga is the only and ultimate solution for uprooting the casteism, communalism, narrowmindedness, corruption and uncontrollable terrorism. The person who is able to control himself with the practice of yoga will not indulge into cheap sexual acts and thereby maintain good health. Saints believe that a God loving person can never fall ill or be afraid of anything; he is always dedicated to God. When he goes into the shelter of God he is free of all the sins. The main reason for all the diseases is mental stress and negative thinking. Bhakti or worship of God is necessary to make the person stress-free. So Yoga: Pranayama is the only mantra for world peace. (Yog sandesh, vol.12, August, 2006)

Yoga is the basis of Indian culture. It means awareness. Pranayama is a scientific technique. It is a part of complete process discovered by our ancestors. It is a new experience of life. It removes of all kinds of troubles and problems and brings back lost powers. It arouses the internal strengths, and thereby strengthens
the mind of practitioner. Mind is deeply related to body and keeps the body healthy. Practice it and get instant results, yoga doesn’t require any kind of evidences or proofs. So “do and achieve.”

Yoga: Pranayama is a magical science. It is capable of curing almost all the disease found on this earth and rejuvenates the body in miraculous way yoga and Pranayama are the health building systems that arouse divine strength within the body.

Yoga: Pranayama is an important subject not only from the point of view of spiritualism but it is also important to maintain physical and mental health. If we look from spiritual angle then we can enter our inner self only with the help of respiration and reach a stage where the mind is free of any kind of conditions. In this process the stress hormone level reduces and beneficial hormone level increases. A person practicing Yoga: Pranayama with devotion and dedication does not fall into the grip of diseases; he possesses immense power all the time.

Several diseases such as depression, stress, migraine pain, anxiety, arousal, headache, physical and mental problems which can’t be cured by medicine, may be cured by Yoga: Pranayama because when we exhale with force the diseases are thrown out of the body. When we control the breathe and peep inside our soul we experience the presence of God, the person who adopts Yoga and Pranayama in life with totality, becomes devoted towards nation, duty, work, nature. (Yog sandesh, vol.11, July, 2007)

It will be helpful in attaining social equality, physical health, well-being, mental peace and spiritual happiness.

On the basis of the present investigation we can test the efficacy of Yoga: Pranayama in the management of different mood states. It can prove to be beneficial in the intervention of different mental & physical health problems. A programme for adopting yogic therapy (Pranayama) may be suggested for the teachers, clinical psychologists and the psychiatric social workers etc.