CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCLUSIONS

Man is gifted with capacities of the mind and intellect and it is mainly due to this that he rules over the rest of the animal world. Among the capacities of the intellect which man has come to possess exclusively, the capacity to ‘think’ stands out as the foremost. It is, however, a strange thing to observe that this capacity of thinking which has made man the ruler of his world, has at the same time, been responsible for much of misery in human life. Human beings are given the capacity to think, but that does not mean that they always think in the right direction. On the contrary, most of human thinking emerges from false or incorrect beliefs. This is the conclusion drawn by the greatest of our thinkers and philosophers. Thus, the supreme ruler of the animal kingdom is not the happiest at all. Human life is full of conflicts, frustrations, war and miseries. It is, indeed, a great contradiction in human life, that inspite of all the necessary ingredients of happiness at his command, man has, through all the ages, remained thwartingly devoid of happiness. This contradiction has assumed new dimensions in recent years.

In the pre-advance technological days, man lived in a rather compact world. Religious beliefs had a profound influence on his way of life. He was far more helpless in the face of natural calamities and
epidemics than we are today. With the advent of science, a new factor came into existence, namely the machine. With its use man acquired better control over the external world. Scientific knowledge has been progressing rapidly in all fields of life through physics, chemistry, engineering, biology, medicine and agriculture. But, it is doubtful whether these wonders of science have made us happier than our less knowledgeable and slow moving ancestors. Science while bringing about vast changes in our immediate external world has been able to do practically nothing to improve our inner world of desires, emotions and conflicts. The balance between our inner and outer being is lost. And it is this balance which is the most crucial factor in deciding whether or not one can have happiness in life. All our thoughts and activities are, in the ultimate analysis, directed to this goal of happiness. Human happiness is not merely a product of how things are handled in daily life. Our relationship with the things we use, is of course, important, but more important is our interaction with the people and with ideas. And it is in this field that science has had no influence so far. Teaching man how to behave in life by training his mind to have the right attitude and right goals has, since the beginning of civilised life, been the task of religion. Religion taught man to pray to God, to love his neighbour, to help the needy and to control his passions. This task of religion was supported by
philosophy in every country. In India, religion held charge of the ritual part of a man's life while philosophy took care of his rational thinking. Although there have been many religions and philosophies in different parts of the world and there have been wars between the followers of different religions, the basic goals proclaimed in them are almost the same. And it seems that everywhere throughout the many centuries of history of religion, there has been a kind of adjustment between the beliefs of religion and philosophy, on the one hand, and man's knowledge of the actual world of daily life, on the other.

The Soul and God are believed to be eternal entities, this type of beliefs controlled the behaviour of religious people, keeping it with in well-defined limits and norms for the good of all. Until the beginning of the age of science, religion with its universally held beliefs provided the necessary checks on human behaviour stopping the animal instincts in man from going out of hand.

As the scientific knowledge increased, many religious beliefs were brought into question. The superiority of the scientific method was established beyond doubt and the influence of religion began to wane. This gave rise to a new situation. With many of earlier religious beliefs shattered, the power of religion to act as break on the human mind was
also gone. Unfortunately, science did not take the task of training the human mind which religion had all along performed. It only removed the authority of religion from many fields in the name of secularism. The checks and balances which religion exercised on the human mind were no longer available easily. This situation has aggravated in recent years by technological advances which bestowed upon man a tremendous power not only of creation but also of destruction, together with an ever-increasing speed and hitherto for unknown richness and variety of objects of enjoyment.

When one becomes more resourceful and powerful, one also needs greater wisdom in addition to knowledge, to be able to exercise control over himself and not be swayed by objects of enjoyment. Science has given us lately a multitude of objects of enjoyment. But it has failed to give us at the same time, the much needed self control.

These two qualities, namely, wisdom and self-control, which are the most essential factors in deciding whether or not there will be happiness, do not fall within the purview of science. Knowledge is not enough for happiness to come into being. One may excel in knowledge of various kinds and may still be very unhappy. Wisdom certainly includes knowledge of the world as one of its components. But what is important is not so much knowledge of the world as is of self-
knowledge. Self-knowledge or atama-jnana was given the highest place in the religion and philosophy of the past. It involves enlightenment regarding the goals of life. Science does not include the aim or goals of human life in its inquiry. And without a clear idea of it, happiness is not possible to achieve.

To remove the imbalance created by science by destroying, on the one hand, the authority of religion and philosophy and with it their power to give rise to self-knowledge and self-control, and by making human life so speedy and complex, on the other hand, it would be necessary to establish a sort of harmony among science, religion and philosophy.

Such keen observations of the present investigation made into the problems of the modern society lead to the conclusion that, despite the comforts and luxuries provided by the new inventions of science and technology, the man is still at cross-roads and is not at all happy. The general status of his physical health and fitness is decreasing day by day. There is no more love lost for aesthetic sensibility, his mental health has been eroded a lot because of anxieties, worries, tensions and conflicts arising out from too much of competitive life, and he is almost bankrupt in case of spiritual awareness. He needs exposure to a new life style to face the challenges of changing circumstances.
Modern age is an age of pollution of water, air and food due to rapid industrialization, consequent to the development of science and technology. Pollution leads to various disorders. Nature has its own various remarkable and valuable ways of curing diseases. The common vegetables, which form part of daily food, have various medicinal properties. The proper utilization of food, water and air pose a greater challenge to the present world. Some of the present conditions of the world with civil wars, star wars and space sickness etc. are increasing the rate of mental tension among people (Rakesh Sharma, 1984).

Some of the present systems of medicine including allopathy are inadequate to fulfil the demands of the time. Humanity is at cross roads, not knowing, which way to turn.

Despite the advancement of science, technology and medicine, there has been a spurt in diseases. It appears that there is no single school of medicine which can completely help the ailing humanity. There are certain simple yet outstandingly beneficial techniques in Hatha Yogic practices, which can be integrated for the rescue. On the other hand, there has been reduction in mortality rate, increase in average age, better physical growth and higher mental and intellectual fervor because of the speedy development of science and technology. The rationale behind this is not far to seek, as it is clear from the fact that one
generation after the other, is in a position to leave behind the advanced scientific knowledge through literature and audio-vedio aids, for the next generation to begin with, from where the previous generation had reached. Thus, there is established a sort of discourse between the two generations. As far as spiritual growth is concerned, there is still a status quo. It is because of the fact that modern science and technology has not paid its due attention to its integration with spiritual growth and well being.

It is required that all these branches of indigenous systems get together. Mankind has to take advantage of all these systems. There does not appear to be an alternative but to seek remedy is holistic technology of these systems.

**Holistic Yoga:**

The word holistic is derived from the Greek word 'holos' which means entirety or completeness of a substance. In most medical and psychological treatments, the spiritual dimension of life is discounted. Yoga applies the process of purification to all aspects of the human being. The ecological situation in which consciousness finds itself manifested includes the human being, his environment, his body and all its functions, the air he breaths and the food he eats, his relationship with others and his manner of relating himself to others, his
emotional states and habits, desires and thoughts. Yoga is truly a holistic science.

In the more orthodox western therapies, the mind, body and spirit are separated into three distinct areas, with specialists to deal with each of them independently. However, in the yogic model, medical, psychological and spiritual needs are dealt with synergistically. The yoga therapist treats the human being as a whole and seeks to understand how the various aspects of a person function together. A fundamental tenet of yoga therapy is that there is body-mind-spirit integration. Tantra and Ayurveda have certainly influenced and consequently contributed a good deal to yoga. For instance, in the case of physical imbalance and disease, Yoga has fully accepted the Ayurvedic theory of tridosha in principle and practice (Giridhar Yogeswar, 1983). Yogendra has emphasised that Ayurveda accepted yoga as the superior system and even exhorted that wherever Ayurveda failed to give results, recourse should be made to yoga (Yogendra, 1980).

Yoga as a holistic system does not consist of mere kriyas and treatment but lays great stress on control of diet, social attitudes and personal habits so as to bring about beneficial changes in whole of the metabolic process. It is truly an integrated approach, treating man as a whole (Kuvalyananda & Vinekar, 1971). It is recommended that the
practitioner of other systems of medicine may use yoga for prevention and cure of diseases.

The fundamental postulates of Tantra are more or less identical to those of the post-Freudian psycho-therapy, it is further substantiated by the fact that according to both these systems, the mental disturbances are primarily of emotional character and therefore, irrational and eccentric. They require a principle of rationality for their amelioration. In psychology, Freud called it 'nirvana principle' because the unification of personality brings a positive relief from the intense neurotic anxiety and from deranged excitability. It is a state of liberation from the shares of our instinctual nature, the casual stress (Psa) and genetic impurities (mala) or the assimilation of the foundation of our own being. Freud’s use of the term 'nirvana' in purely ameliorative connotation and discipline can be called ‘spiritual’ which prescribes a path leading the sufferer out of the internal chaos (taptraya) and releasing him from the stress of frustrating and neurogenic environment. Tantra yoga, like all other branches of yoga lays stress on the introspective analysis of self which was misunderstood as a religious practice by the westerners.

It was earlier believed that the holistic approach of yoga is a secret subject and its study and practice should be undertaken by those selected few, who would like to attain moksha. Now a good number of
experiments have established the utility of yoga as a means of improving physical, emotional and mental health of an individual. Even some of the extra ordinary feats of advanced yogins as signs of spiritual growth have been verified in scientific laboratories not only in India but abroad also (Giri, 1976).

While East is very much influenced by the Western culture, the people of West are overwhelmingly attracted by the ancient culture of the east and they are actually engaged now in adopting the Indian system of medicine Ayurveda and Yoga, Chinese system of acupuncture and accupressure, Zen system of meditation and Indian life style etc. including dietary habits etc. for the treatment of chronic and psychosomatic disorders. We will have to stop blindly following the western culture and augment all our efforts to revive our ancient systems which suit in all aspects and develop them further into a holistic life style in accordance to our needs and the changing set up of the times. It is not at all impossible because of their similarity in philosophy, nature of modalities, and the final goal.

**Hatha Yoga in relation to human health:**

Yoga practices which are in vogue today grew in accordance with the doctrines of the Saivas and Saktas and assumed a peculiar form as the Mantra-yoga; they grew in another direction as the Hatha-yoga
which was supposed to produce wonderful bodily feats of breath control and control of involuntary muscles and organs through constant practices of elaborate nervous, muscular and breathing exercises, which were also associated with the art of healing diseases, keeping the body free from all kinds of diseases and supernatural powers.

**Modern approaches to Yoga:**

These practices today form part of modern approach to Yoga and are being applied in a number of fields like education, physical education and sports, medicine, family and social welfare etc.

An examination of such minor Yoga Upanishads which are the product of later medieval period, as Shandilya, Yogatattva, Dhyanabindu, Hamsa, Amritnada, Varaha, Mandal Brahamana, Nad-bindu and Yogakundali shows that yogic practices had undergone diverse changes in diverse schools. The Yogatattva Upanishad says that there are four kinds of yoga, the Mantra Yoga, Laya-Yoga, Hatha-Yoga and Raja-Yoga. In some cases it is found that there was a great attempt to associate even vedantism with these mystic practices. The influence of these practices on further development of Tantra and other modes of worship was also very great.
To summarise, preparatory disciplines (Sadhanas) including their patterns of living, behavior, diet, and yogic practices as proposed by Ayurveda, Patanjali’s Yoga-sutras and Tantras in pursuance of the goal of self-realization (Atma-jnana) and emancipation (Moksha), have been reviewed extensively as well as intensively in context with human health and fitness. The holistic programme of Yoga which emerged from in-depth study from three disciplines plus the modern relevant trends of application of yogic techniques in different spheres of life, has been recommended and is given stepwise separately as appendices to constitute a sort of compact life-style to be adopted by any one who-so-ever desires to lead a happy and peaceful life.

The recommended holistic yoga for healthy living includes:-

(i) Hygienic practices, pattern of general conduct, dietary principles and regimen.

(ii) Yogic purification Process, Yogasanas, pranayam, and Relaxation techniques.

(iii) Japa, Dharna and Meditation.

(iv) Performing hawan, attending devotional recitation (Bhakti Keertan) at least once a week.
(v) Annual pilgrimages to the holy places.

Such a routine life-style, if adopted would definitely fulfill expectations of our World Health Organisation as far as its definition of health which strives to cover all dimensions of individual health, i.e. physical, mental, social and spiritual, is concerned. This has been formulated keeping in view the three important and fundamental aspects of energy i.e. the Prana, Tejas and Ojas, the balanced development, which contributes to an individual’s health and fitness. Good results can be achieved if the integral practice is undertaken for example, ojas increasing dietary and devotional regimen is followed (for ojas), practice of asanas and pranayama (for Prana) and mantra and meditation (for tejas) as combined in each session.