



RAJYOGA MEDITATION - A Vaccine for Stress and Depression

CH. Shiva Durga Nageswara Rao

Assistant Professor(C), Dept of Commerce & Management Studies
Dr BR Ambedkar University, Srikakulam . Etcherla

Abstract: *Meditation is the journey inwards, a journey of self-discovery or, in fact, re-discovery. Raja Yoga meditation is a form of meditation that is accessible to people of all backgrounds. It is a meditation without rituals or mantras and can be practised anywhere at any time. Raja Yoga meditation is practised with 'open eyes', which makes this method of meditation versatile, simple and easy to practice. Meditation is a state of being in that place just beyond every day consciousness, which is where spiritual empowerment begins. Spiritual awareness gives us the power to choose good and positive thoughts over those which are negative and wasteful. Numerous scientific investigations have undoubtedly proved that psychosomatic diseases are increasing day by day in developing country like India especially hypertension and heart diseases. It has been now universally accepted that meditation have effective role in lowering the stress. Rajyoga meditation is a behavioral intervention, which is simple to practice. It was hypothesized that Rajyoga meditation will improve I.Q in ADHD child, improve concentration, and bring about a lasting change in brain and cognitive function.*

A technique of meditation is Rajayoga meditation. Rajayoga meditation does involve concentration but no physical object is involved. The object of concentration is the inner self. Instead of repeating one word or a phrase as in a mantra, a flow of thoughts is encouraged thus using the mind in a natural way. The positive flow of thoughts is based on an accurate understanding of the self and so acts as a key to unlock the treasure trove of peaceful experiences lying within. According to Raja yoga, if the mind becomes peaceful, there will be peace within and the world will become a better place. Rajyoga Meditation is a very appealing way to better manage symptoms of depression and anxiety. Yoga may serve as an effective substitute or accompaniment to biological treatments in anxiety and depression. Rajyoga meditation is found more effective and long lasting than the expensive drugs.

Keywords : Rajyoga; Intelligence Quotient, Brahmakumaris, Meditation, Stress free living, art of living , tensionless management.

Introduction

In the world of today, where life has become a very complicated affair and where man's daily dealing with man often cause him mental tension, nervous strain, emotional disturbances, sleep-lessness and peacelessness, more and more people feel inclined to take to yoga-the path of real peace and enlightenment, but one is generally scared away from this divine gift of God because of two wrong

impressions. One of these is that yoga is meant for the selected few who are hermits and recluses as it is something mysterious and time-consuming and is one that requires an atmosphere of solitude and seclusion. Secondly, it is thought that Yoga involves a rigorous discipline of the body as it requires a man to regulate his breath or to perform some other penanceful acts and to keep the body in a fixed posture for a considerable time at a stretch.



The meaning of Yoga

The word ‘yoga’ means ‘connection’, ‘link’ or ‘union’. Used in spiritual sense, the word means “connection or relationship between the soul and supreme soul”. In simple words, yoga is the link established by single-minded, passionate, loveful and purposeful intellectual remembrance of God which brings about the divinisation of man, i.e., the purification of his self, the conquest of vices and the attainment of sublime peace and heavenly happiness.

Place of MIND in the system of Yoga

Scholars and savants during the last two epochs have said that mind is material entity; it is an adjunct of the soul. Regarding it as an instrument made of subtle matter and considering it as a hindrance or a big hurdle in the path of Yoga because of its sportiveness and waywardness, they have advocated to stop its functioning some how or the other .

Cleansing and RESTORATIVE

Through consistent practice of Rajyoga , the practitioner clearly sees the many illusions and delusions that have been assimilated overtime and now form many layers of false beliefs within consciousness. Practice gives rise to ‘realisation’ of what is true for oneself, which has the effect of cleansing the consciousness. i.e cleansing the self of illusion. This also has the effect of gradually and gently restoring the self to its true and original state of being.

Mastering and AFFIRMATIVE

When the realisations that occur through the practice of Rajyoga are ‘applied’ daily in the context of action and interaction, the practitioners gradually regain mastery of their mind, intellect and personality. Old mental habits and emotional tendencies, which previously contributed towards the sabotaging of the self, disappear. The ‘sovereignty of the self’ is gradually reaffirmed.

Freeing and UNITIVE

Implicit in the practice of Rajyoga is the recognition that the self has lost its freedom. It is realised that where there is any kind of attachment there is no true inner freedom. Attachments is recognised as the root cause of all stress, suffering, and sorrow. As the self-cleans out and frees itself from old beliefs and habits, old perceptions and attitudes, there is a gradual increase in contentment and joy. When non-attachment is realised to be the most ‘natural’ state of consciousness it allows the practitioner to ‘connect transparently’ with others without any personal agenda or desire.

Elevating and INTUITIVE

One of the hallmarks of the Brahmakumaris Rajyoga is the practitioner’s pure intention to restore and maintain a personal connection and relationship with Supreme Power. The effort to be in a state of union with the Source is actually the process by which human consciousness is ‘elevated’. It is lifted out of the habits through which the self has kept itself in a state of suffering

and darkness. Those habits are often referred to as 'vices'. As the practice of Rajyoga becomes natural, the soul 'casts off' the veils of illusion accumulated over time. Vices are replaced by virtues. As a result, the soul is able to access and re-emerge its own knowledge and wisdom intuitively.

It is well known that stress, anger, hostility, anxiety and depression are the components of the personality of patients suffering with Coronary Artery Disease (CAD). Presences of these factors also affect the outcome of CABG, psychological distress and uncertainty about future is more disturbing than the chest pain. Preoperative anxiety is a predictor of poor recovery from cardiac surgery. There is a growing body of empiric evidence that mind-body interventions resulting in personality modification and lifestyle change effectively reduce, anxiety and hostile nature.

Rajyoga Meditation

The Raj Yoga meditation as per the teachings of Raj Yoga Education and Research Foundation of Brahma Kumaris is offered to patients and their caregivers or relations. It is considered as a holistic approach for preparing patients for surgery. Anxiety and fear alleviation by practical training of Raj Yoga meditation reduced the incidence of major depression in the postoperative period. This spiritual based Raj Yoga has been shown to be associated with increased well being, meaning in life and confidence on handling problems and adopting a positive smiling nature, just with small 3 lesson condensed course given during the hospital stay.

Intervention: autogenic relaxation: the rajyoga meditation

Subjects were taught Rajyoga Meditation by Rajyoga teachers. Relaxation was achieved by giving training in Rajyoga Meditation according to teachings of Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation to subjects by the experts from Brahma Kumaris Spiritual University. Meditation training was given with the help of pictures, diagrams and audio CD. A total of 8 lessons each of 45 minutes were given, of which last 20 minutes were devoted to a guided commentary. Subjects were instructed to practice Rajyoga at starting of school for 10minutes per day for 3 months.

In 1989 Uma K et al. observed highly significant improvement in Intelligent Quotient of mentally retarded children after one year of yoga intervention. In 2001 Shah et al. reported significant improvement in Intelligent Quotient after practicing meditation for one and half year. Yoga is a conscious process of gaining control over the mind, and thus the concentration and attention-span improve, and hence both IQ and memory power will enhance by improving skills and coordination.

RAJYOGA MEDITATION A MINDFUL PROGRAMME

This scientifico-spiritual programme is based on the three step Rajyoga Meditation. The two powerful empowerment techniques in Psychoatry-Self-hypnosis or auto-suggestions and guided imagery or Visualisation, are used in different stage of Rajyoga Meditation Mindfulness programme.

STEP 1- FOCUS

Sit comfortably in a straight back position as this facilitates the free flow of cosmic energy-Chakras of the body from sahasara to muladhar. Modern medical science has not been able to demonstrate these chakras till today. Russian Kirlian body Aura photography shows the aura of energy but not the chakras.

Watch your thoughts running like a super fast train. Now visualise your consciousness which is scattered like sunlight, is gradually getting focused in the centre of the forehead, in between the two eyebrows where a star-shaped conscient point of light is present. Repeat an auto-suggestion a few times telling your mind-"I am not this body but I am a soul". Peace, bliss, love, happiness, power, purity and knowledge are the original qualities of the soul. As the focus increases, the speed of thoughts and your breathing shall reduce. At one particular point of time, the consciousness internalises and the next phase begins.



Fig : cycle of spirituality and meditation

STEP 2- INTERNALISATION

The practitioner achieves a totally relaxed body and a totally relaxed, focusses mind (Ekagra-chitta) in this phase. Dr.Herbert Benson termed Bilological Relaxation Response (BRR) for the physical state and the Zone for the mental state. Patanjali called them shavasana and supra-conscious state. There is an experience of bliss (sat-chit-anand). This phase is very important for two reasons. Firstly, Reward centre in brain and recently discovered **Ultradean rhythms** used to pranik healing mechanisms, get activated releasing the rejuvenating and recharging hormones- encephalin, endorphins, melatonin, recently discovered, BDNF (Brain Derived Neuro-tropic Factor) and possibly a Stem Cell Activation Factor(conceptual). All of the these harmones give powerful potential of immunity. Natural killer Lymphocyte activity is potentiated. EEG shows low amplitude, slower alpha brain waves with synchrony between the waves of left and right hemisphere. Secondly, auto suggestions, visualisation and a technique called Neuro-Linguistic Programme(NLP) for generating a passion Quotient about a set goal becomes very effective in BRR and zone. This is because the 'dominant scientist mind' is full of doubts, questions and tensions is completely silenced and the powerful subconscious "spiritualist Mind" comes to the force. Ancient sages called this phase as Internal Silence(Antar-Mauna).

STEP 3- COSMIC COMMUNION

Visualise inner energy move out of your body and travel to the Supreme abode of all energy cells standing right along with Supreme Power. Different rays of all qualities of soul can be obtained from supreme soul. The rays of energy from the supreme soul are getting infused practitioner very powerful and peaceful. Now undergo a return journey back to your seat in the centre of the forehead.

Post Meditation suggestion (PMS)

Remind your mind that the spiritual equipoise obtained shall remain undisturbed throughout the day regardless of the circumstances. Also program your mind that the next day, when the mindfulness programme starts,it shall begin form the elevated state.

Studies on Rajyoga Meditation and their impact

Numerous scientific investigations have undoubtedly proved that psychosomatic diseases are increasing day by day in developing country like India especially hypertension and heart diseases. It has been now universally accepted that meditation have effective role in lowering the stress. H.T. is one of the life style disease. So meditation techniques are ideal for improving one's ability to withstand stressful stimuli. Rajyoga Meditation is one of the effective tool for prevention as well as management of stress in

hypertensive patients and in cure of essential hypertension. Rajyoga Meditation is the science and art of harmonizing spiritual mental and physical energy through connection with the ultimate source of spiritual energy called the supreme soul. It is the state of soul consciousness and positive life style.

The study was done by Dr. Neeta A. Patel revealed that sustained high blood pressure in essential Hypertensive Patients is basically due to increasing stress day by day and negative life style. Rajyoga help to built up physical resistance, emotional harmony and balance in life through eradication of root cause in mind. Scientific study has shown that the blood lactate level comes down 3 times less after Rajyoga Meditation which helps in lowering down the H.B.P. it is scientifically proved that after Rajyoga meditation person gets deeply relaxed so that nor epinephrine level comes down. Which ahs important role over blood pressure and heart attack.

Maini kush studied rajyoga meditation impact on heart disease patients and revealed that. Coronary heart disease remains the major cause of mortality and morbidity in India. A number of risk factors have been identified as strongly associated with coronary heart disease. Obesity, hypercholesterolemia and hypertension in addition to physical inactivity, stress and behaviour pattern, male sex hormones and untreated menopausal status are the risk factor for coronary heart disease. In the developing countries, where people are adopting western lifestyle the mortality due to coronary heart disease is increasing. Behavioural interventions specifically the transcendental meditation technique, reduces levels of major coronary risk factors including hypercholesterolemia and also blood pressure. These findings are also supported by several other studies on meditation.

Conclusion

Rajyoga Meditation is a very appealing way to better manage symptoms of depression and anxiety. Yoga may serve as an effective substitute or accompaniment to biological treatments in anxiety and depression. Rajyoga meditation is found more effective and long lasting than the expensive drugs. Rajyoga is a cheap and cost effective way to increase attention span in ADHD cases.

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