

THE ROLE OF RAJYOGA MEDITATION IN REDUCING STRESS - A SCIENCE OF PEACE AND PURITY

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Abstract: *The word 'Meditation' has become more than one meaning. This has resulted in much vagueness about the world. Often the word 'Yoga' or 'Meditation' conjures up, in a layman's mind, the picture of an individual, seated upright in the lotus posture, with his eyes closed, in an incense-filled room or at the bank of a river, absorbed silently in a spiritual thought or chanting Sanskrit incantation. This, however, is not a true picture of Raj-Yoga or Meditation. This paper will incorporate useful techniques for transforming stress that include meditation, creative visualization and thinking positively. Rajyoga deals with the spiritual dimension of your inner life. It includes all the above techniques but interprets them in a more symbolic way. Meditation practice is a process of shifting again and again from body-consciousness to soul-consciousness. There is one thing that has become a truly globalised human experience-tension. Stress is created in response to situations and other people's behavior. It is a chain of negative thoughts that trigger negative emotions such as frustration, irritation, resentment and sadness. When we lose clarity of thought, our judgment is poor and our behavior is reactive and negative. We become addicted to negative thoughts and feelings that affect our mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health. The truth is that we are spiritual beings, eternal and immortal. Nothing can finish us or diminish our true worth. We are already complete and filled with all that we desire-peace, joy and love. When we focus our attention within and discover the real self, we become enlightened and free. Then we realize that nothing our thought there can threaten or hurt us. We understand that by being centred within we can experience peace and happiness even in challenging situations.*

Keywords: *Meditation, Employee stress, Yoga, Life style and happy living.*

Like many other words, the word 'Meditation' has become more than one meaning. This has resulted in much vagueness about the world. Often the word 'Yoga' or 'Meditation' conjures up, in a layman's mind, the picture of an individual, seated upright in the lotus posture, with his eyes closed, in an incense-filled room or at the bank of a river, absorbed silently in a spiritual thought or chanting Sanskrit incantation. This, however, is not a true picture of Raj-Yoga or Meditation.

Stress Management

Stress happens most in the context of our day to day interactions and relationships. Stress is both a sign of damage and it does damage. Before managing and preventing stress, a new understanding is required - the what, why and how of stress. This paper will incorporate useful techniques for transforming stress that include meditation, creative visualization and thinking positively.

One will learn how to:

- Identify the type and level of stress that a person is experiencing today.
- Relaxing and refreshing mind and body anywhere, anytime.
- Turning negative, energy draining, thoughts into positive, empowering ones.
- Developing a constantly positive attitude and protect the self from negative and stressful influences.
- Strengthen the ability to respond and thereby build confidence in dealing with difficult people and challenging situations.
- Turning resistance into acceptance & release creative energy.

What is RajYoga Meditation and how it differs from prayer and other forms of Meditation

RajYoga Meditation is different from all others. Though contemplation, reflection, imagination, attention, concentration etc are played in its practice yet it is practice apart from all the rest.

RAJYOGA MEDITATION

This is the meditation recommended in the Shrimad Bhagawad Gita. Raj Yoga means the king of all yoga. It involves purposeful thoughts about spiritual concepts. Meditation is very personal. It takes place deep within your heart and your being. Meditation is sometimes referred to as a pilgrimage as there are different internal terrains to cross on a journey of continuous discovery where there are no short cuts.

Rajyoga :

Rajyoga deals with the spiritual dimension of your inner life. It includes all the above techniques but interprets them in a more symbolic way. Meditation practice is a process of shifting again and again from body-consciousness to soul-consciousness. Maintaining soul-consciousness is the awareness of the soul, the life force and divine light that animates your physical form and makes breathing possible. It is a continuous and progressively subtle effort to stay in that state of being and from there to move your consciousness or thoughts beyond into the non-material realm of purity and silence, where you can connect and commune with Supreme Being or Supreme Soul.

Your soul-conscious contact with the Divine, Supreme Soul, the ocean of all qualities, is the sacred of attention. Your dhyana, attention or concentration is upon that Divine Source. Once we orient your attention on Supreme Soul in this way, we can cultivate a relationship and absorb divine qualities, virtues and powers. The practice of RajYoga also keeps us alert and aware of the different traps and illusions of material consciousness. RajYoga enables us to accumulate the inner powers to perform pure activity(Karma).

ACADEMIC PURPOSE OF RAJYOGA MEDITATION

Meditation fulfils many purpose. Some people meditate for health reasons, some for gaining greater concentration to improve their performance in their fields like arts, studies, business and sports. Some meditate specifically for overcoming character defects and developing their personalities. Some meditate simply to become calm and peaceful. Whatever the apparent reason, the underlying purpose is spiritual.

The spiritual purpose:

Meditation restores spiritual self-awareness and power to the human soul. Every soul to a greater or lesser extent is spiritually depleted at this time. Loss of spiritual energy and purity has caused character defects, damage to the moral consciousness and a crisis in values. The discipline of meditation trains the mind to become stable and elevated.

Character development :

From a spiritual perspective we can see that all human problems political, economical, social, health, educational, cultural, psychological etc. are rooted from character defects. Character defects arise from spiritual depletion and spiritual depletion originates from the separation of the true self and Supreme Soul.

Health benefits:



Source: Meditation & Values in the Society., Brahmakumaris, and Annamalai University

Meditation is said to extend your lifespan, according to ancient wisdom. It is also said that your mind can be your greatest friend or your worst enemy because everything depends on the quality of your thoughts. **Medical Researches conducted by Ken Pelletier of the USA,** and others have

shown unequivocally that almost all diseases including cancer, heart disease etc are psychosomatic. That means they occur largely as a result of our thinking which in turn affect our lifestyles. Negative thoughts create tension, anxiety and antagonism and have a very harmful effect on the body, inhibiting the immune system and your ability to regenerate cells. Waste thoughts have a tendency to escalate into obsessive, compulsive thinking which degenerates into negative thoughts. All sort of addictions begin with this problem.

We can prevent yourself from going that track with a single powerful thought and re-set the your attitude towards yourself as a pure and peaceful soul. Meditation also helps us to resolve any outstanding debt from past negative action (Karmic account) which would otherwise manifest as physical illness or a shortened life span. The overall effect creates ideal conditions for a healthy body and an extended lifespan.

Resentment Management & Self analysis:



Source: www.brahmakumaris.com

Many of the obstacles within the human mind are due to resentment. Thoughts quickly become obsessive and compulsive when fuelled by resentment about a dysfunctional behavior.

Dysfunctional behavior arises from anti-values such as greed,aggression,cruelty,coercion, jealousy, arrogance, oppression, exploitation etc which polarize people into victims and perpetrators.

Meditation is necessary to interrupt this cycle because it can bring the mind to inner stillness and steer the direction of the vicious cycle to a new direction where we choose to generate thoughts that benefit yourself and others.

Obsessive of negative thinking:

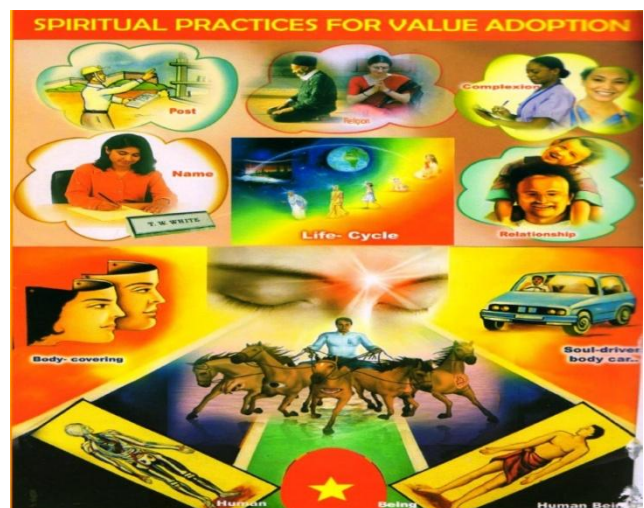
The natural response is to struggle. The negative side always seems to get the better of you and we feel defeated. This sense of defeat often inspires a person to stop trying, to give up and enter a state of denial. What can we be done ?

First of all we need to recognize and accept that we are not strong enough to resist it alone. We can only overcome the power of obsessive negative thinking, when we draw additional spiritual strength through meditation on the Supreme Being.

Learning to pay attempts to hurt us:

Resentment develops when we are impacted by someone else’s anti-values, for example, betrayal, being taken advantage of, being deceived and or exploited. Families, institutions, organizations, political parties and social groups are all essentially hierarchical systems.

Positive Thinking:



Source: Meditation & Values in the Society., Brahmakumaris, and Annamalai University

Thinking is the most subtle form of action. Thinking is the activity of the mind which is the organ of consciousness that creates mental pictures, self-talk, feelings and states of being. It includes imagination, fantasy, reactions, and responses to sense impression as well as association, sensitivity to sound, pictures, fragrance, touch and taste.

The Sixth sense:

The mind is externally driven by sensory input and internally driven by memories, association and sanskars(resolves). A refined mind is also intuitive and sensitive to vibrations, unspoken thoughts, intentions and attitudes in the environment, even at great distances. This is called “the **Sixth Sense**”.

Positive thinking demands that we create positive thoughts. It means consciously to resist negative thoughts, to notice when something triggers negative feelings and to just say ‘no’ to it. Cultivating positive thinking together with a regular practices of meditation generates an accumulation of internal power or determination.

Most people today are in a state of spiritual depletion. It means that we have to keep up a practice of meditation in order to get filled and remain filled. Psychologists have calculated that every day we produce about 30,000 thoughts. That means one thought every two seconds. Such an inner experience is derived from the significance of the thought. If the thought is positive, then we create a positive inner experience. If the thought is negative then our experience within is correspondence negative.

Principles of Positive Thinking:

The following principles of positive thinking can help us determine whether our thoughts are indeed positive. They are reminders that our self-respect is the key to our approach to all situations. We are not deterred by negative appearances or falsehood but maintain an attitude of self-confidence and willingness to find benefits.

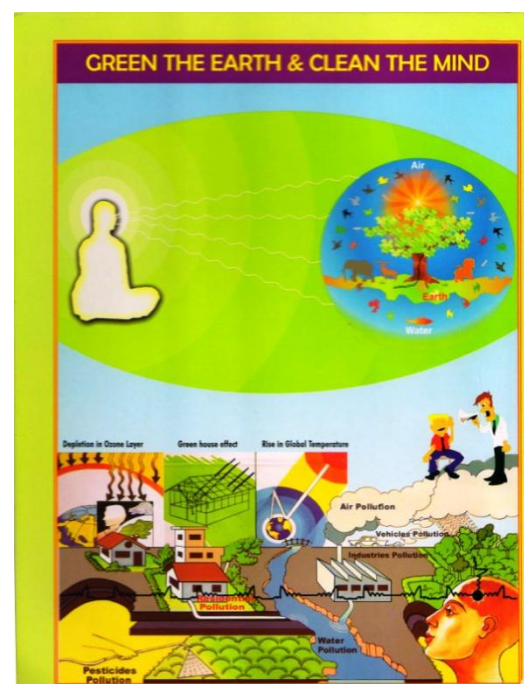
- ✚ The foundation of positive thinking is to self-respect and to be contented.
- ✚ Self-respect means to be assertive and to set boundaries about what is acceptable and what is not.

- ✚ The aim is to reach a stage of neutrality where our mind is purely positive because our thoughts are completely free from the opposition or resistance of negativity.
- ✚ Positive thinking is about seeing the negative for what it is and thereby neutralizing its power over us. If we don't identify it clearly, then we are influenced by it.

Clear Thinking

It is only when we realize and acknowledge that we are each 100% responsible for our happiness that we start to ‘notice’ the things that we do that creates our unhappiness. Only when we fully accept responsibility for our own happiness will we start to eliminate the habits that sabotage our contentment and joy. They are habits that many of us have learned to justify as we often don't want to see and accept that they are the cause of our unhappiness. They are also habits that we sometimes want to see as ‘natural’ as they ‘seem’ to form the very fabric of our day-to-day relationships. They are the 7 habits of highly unhappy people.

JUDGING



Source: Meditation & Values in the Society.,Brahmakumaris,and Annamalai University

Have you noticed when you judge another person you lose your inner peace? And inner peace is the

primary ingredient of authentic happiness. Not only do we learn to judge but close on the mental heels of our judgments often comes the sentence and the punishment. All together (judgment, sentence and punishment) they make up the package called 'condemnation which is guaranteed happiness killer.

Criticizing:

When we criticize it means we are attacking and somewhere in there is usually anger albeit in a milder form. And when you are angry you cannot be happy. Yes some of us do attempt to justify our attack by calling it 'constructive criticism' but if there is any anger present its more often revenge or punishment in disguise. Definitely not a happy habit but a common one all the same.

Complaining:

It seems to be endemic in some cultures to complain. Complaining signals the presence ofr upsetness and therefore the absence of happiness. Whereas in 'giving feedback' and 'making a request' ensures there is no discontentment. Easy theory especially if we have been playing that old 'complaining record' all our life.

Blaming:

Projecting blame onto someone else is not only a happiness killer but usually a strategy to avoid responsibility. It is driven by the perfect combination of anger and fear and is therefore a painful cry that sounds like, "it is all your fault", but which, when decoded, really means, "I have just made myself very unhappy"

Arguing :

Trying to prove we are right, or attempting to make the other as right as us, is usually both a tense and grumpy affair. Neither side is happy in the process. And even if it seems on side has own, any happiness is short lived until the next opportunity to 'be right' is craved for and invoked. To argue is to tell world that we prefer misery to merriment.

Competing :

It is not so easy to see why the habit of competing is an unhappy pastime. Most of us have assimilated the belief that competition is good, fun and even joyful.

But all we have to do is to glance at the faces of long distances runners, tennis players and even snooker players and we will see 99% of the game is played in a state of abject suffering. Occasionally, in the middle of the game or the match, someone will let a little joy slip out, but it does not last long.

Controlling:

Attempting to make others dance to our tune is always an impossible task. Expecting the world to be and do as we would wish is an expectation too far. Both are demonstrations that we still believe that others are responsible for our happiness. It is a belief by which the world runs. If the truth were realized and lived that we are each responsible for our own happiness, the world would be a very different planet on which to live. One day perhaps.

So there you have it. Only seven of the many habits that we activate sometimes or several times a day. In so doing we block the light of the sun of happiness from shining through our life. Each habit embedded in a culture in which it has become socially acceptable to think and act in such ways.

Conclusion:

There is one thing that has become a truly globalised human experience-tension. Stress or tension has become a part and parcel of human life so much so that we now believe that to live with tension is normal. Like a shadow tension has become our constant companion. People say that without tension one cannot get things done or accomplish one's goals.

Stress is created in response to situations and other people's behavior. It is a chain of negative thoughts that trigger negative emotions such as frustration, irritation, resentment and sadness. When we are lose clarity of thought, our judgment is poor and our behavior is reactive and negative. We become addicted to negative thoughts and feelings that affect our mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health.

Tension arises when others don't behave the way we want or when they behave the way we do not want. This expectation comes from the belief that we can control people and situations. So we always point the finger of blame at something or someone for making us feel angry, hurt, sad or resentful. We believe it is THEM who need to change not ME.

Tension is not caused by people, events, pressures or environment, it is created by how we respond to all these.

The truth is that we are spiritual beings, eternal and immortal. Nothing can finish us or diminish our true worth. We are already complete and filled with all that we desire-peace, joy and love. When we focus our attention within and discover the real self, we become enlightened and free. Then we realize that nothing out there can threaten or hurt us. We understand that by being centred within we can experience peace and happiness even in challenging situations.

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