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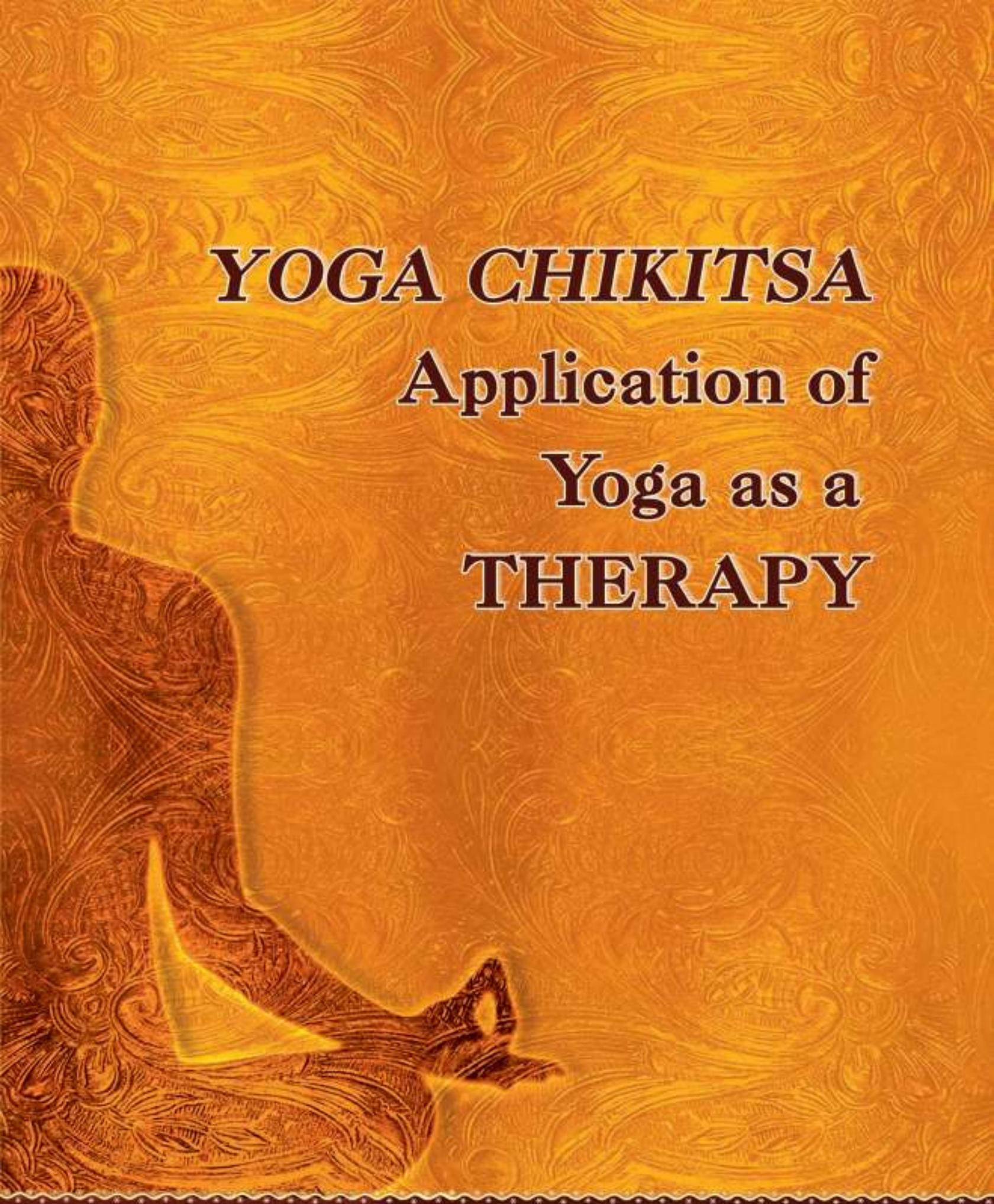
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YOGA CHIKITSA

Application of

Yoga as a

THERAPY

Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

YOGA CHIKITSA:
APPLICATION OF YOGA
AS A THERAPY

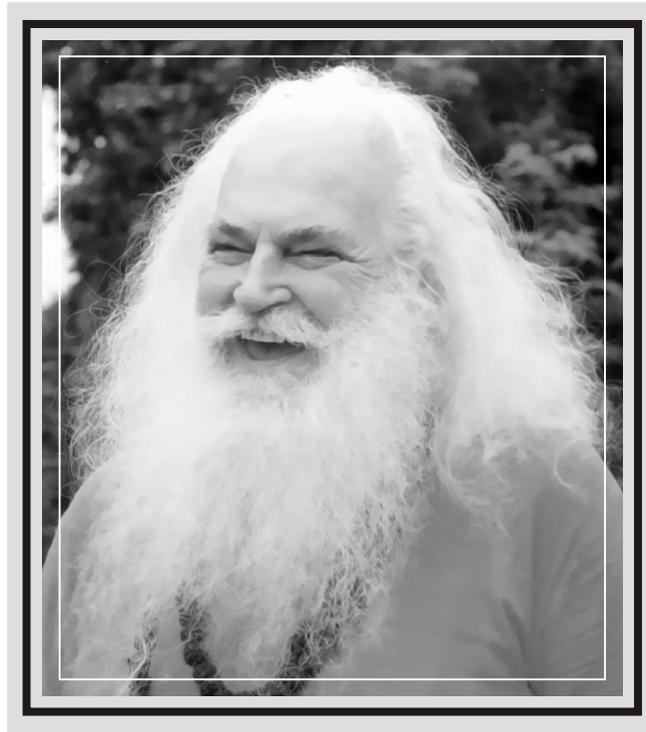
Yogacharya

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Chairman : ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry, India.

Dedicated
to
The Greatest Guru in My Universe



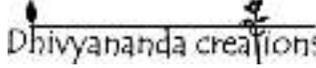
The Lion of Puducherry
Yogamaharishi
Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj
(24.07.1907 - 29.12.1993)

Who protected the Purity of Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga
with his Mighty Roar of Truth

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CONTENTS

Preface	ix
Foreword and blessings <i>Swami Anandakapila Saraswati</i> <i>(Dr. Jonn Mumford)</i>	xv
Foreword and blessings <i>Prof. Dr. Madanmohan</i>	xviii
Section : I	
YOGA AS A THERAPY	
1. A Yogic Perspective on Health and Disease <i>Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani</i>	3
2. Understanding the Science of Yoga <i>Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani</i>	10
3. Effect of Yogic Practices on Different Systems of Human Body <i>Prof. Dr. Madanmohan</i>	26
4. Yoga Chikitsa: Yoga as a Therapy <i>Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani</i>	46
5. Yoga Chikitsa - Yoga Therapy Origin, Scope and Practical Application <i>Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj</i>	75

Section : II

YOGA IN CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONS

1. Role of Yoga in Prevention and Management of Cardiovascular Disease: The JIPMER Experience 93
Prof. Dr. Madanmohan
2. Hypertension and Its Yogic Management 98
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
3. Yoga Practices for Prevention and Management of Hypertension 104
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

Section : III

YOGA IN METABOLIC CONDITIONS

1. Burden of Diabetes and Role of Diet in its Prevention and Management 119
Prof. Dr. Madanmohan
2. Importance of Body Mass Index and Waist Circumference in Preempting Possible Complications of Obesity 123
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
3. Yoga Practices for the Prevention and Management of Diabetes Mellitus 131
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

Section : IV

YOGA AND RESPIRATORY DISORDERS

1. Swarodaya Vigjan:
A Scientific Study of the Nasal Cycle 137
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
2. Yoga for Breathing Disorders 146
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

4. Scientific Basis for
Some Yoga Practices in Sinusitis
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani 157

Section : V

YOGA FOR MUSCULOSKELETAL CONDITIONS

1. Yoga for a Healthy Back 181
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
2. Yoga and Cervical Spondylosis 189
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
3. Rheumatological and Immunological Aspects of
Aging and the Importance of Integrated Approach
of Yoga in Senior Citizens 193
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

Section : VI

YOGA IN PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY

1. Integral Psychology of Yoga 205
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
2. Culturing One's Self Through Yoga 211
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
3. The Yoga of Interpersonal Relationships 218
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
4. Yoga and Stress 227
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
5. Yogic Perspectives on Depression and
Mental Health 241
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
6. Role of Yoga in Geriatric Psychiatric Disorders 249
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

Section : VII

APPLICATION OF YOGA IN SPECIAL TARGET GROUPS

1. Yoga for Health in Children 259
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
2. Yoga for Differently-abled Children 268
Yogachemmal Smt. Meena Ramanathan
3. Yoga: A Boon for Maternal and Child Health 278
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
4. Yoga Practices during Pregnancy 285
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
5. Teaching Yoga to Senior Citizens 299
Yogachemmal Smt. Meena Ramanathan
6. A Basic Yoga Therapy Programme for Patients of Multiple Sclerosis 303
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

Section : VIII

IN CONCLUSION

1. Yoga : The Ideal Way of Life 313
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani
2. Yoga Therapy in Modern Times 319
Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

A Closing Word cccxxv

The World Blesses Dr. Ananda cccxxviii
*Blessings from elders, teachers, colleagues,
students and others from all over the world*

**Ananda Ashram at the International Centre for
Yoga Education and Research (ICYER)** ccclvii

Index ccclv

PREFACE

Yoga may be justifiably considered to be the original mind-body medicine due to its antiquity and a unique blend of practical spirituality that is pan-universal in nature. It deals in depth with the body, mind and spirit inducing wholistic and harmonious integration at all levels of being. This empowers and enables us to grow from our limited, finite sense of individuality towards an expanded and unlimited state of universality. Yoga is in its essence a way of life, to be lived in tune with the universal laws of nature and is steeped in spiritual growth in awareness and consciousness. Undoubtedly the ultimate goal of Yoga is the attainment of *kaivalya*, the final self realized, liberated state of being where we are ultimately “All One”.

In the midst of this eternal evolutionary process of spiritual growth and expansion, the *sadhaka* is concurrently blessed with many positive side benefits and one of them is the attainment and maintenance of *sukha sthanam*, a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. If we understand that the basis of dis-ease at the psychic level is an unnatural dichotomous disharmony of our being, we can then very well understand how Yoga through its unified concepts of *dharmic* living enables us to regain our birthrights of health and happiness while attaining the goal of *moksha*. Indeed, *kaivalya* the state of ‘ultimate universal unification’ may be regarded as the ultimate state of perfect health when viewed from this perspective.

The *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* defines Yoga as *samatvam* meaning thereby a ‘state of being’ where equanimity manifests through physiological and biochemical homeostasis, psychological equanimity and intra-inter-trans-personal spiritual awareness, all integrated in a healthy and harmonious wholistic balance. If we are to achieve this, it is imperative that we take into consideration

the all encompassing multi-dimensional aspects of Yoga that include the following: a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural external-internal environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through *asana*, *mudra* and *kriya*, invigorating breath work through the use of *pranayama* and the cultivation of a healthy thought process through the higher practices of *Jnana Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*.

This book is primarily an anthology of articles on Yoga, Yoga research and Yoga therapy (*Yoga Chikitsa*) penned by me and those close to me that have appeared in various Yoga journals worldwide in recent years. The aim of this collection is to stimulate and motivate Yoga enthusiasts and medical professionals alike to make an effort towards understanding the great depth and wide scope of *Yoga Chikitsa*, the application of Yoga as an integrative mode of therapy. I am indeed blessed to include articles penned by my *Guru-Father*, Swamiji Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj and *Guru-Mother*, Ammaji Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani. They are the light onto Yoga for me and are the causative energies enlightening anything I have of worth in this lifetime. It is also a great pleasure to be able to share some excellent articles by my respected mentor and inspiration in Yoga research, Dr. Madanmohan as well as excellent articles by my most dear and illustrious student and friend, Yogachemmal Smt. Meena Ramanathan.

I wish to place on record my deep heartfelt appreciation to the following journals in which many of these articles have appeared. They are indeed doing an amazing *seva* in taking the unparalleled wisdom of Yoga to the world and I salute their untiring efforts in this field of endeavor.

- YOGA LIFE published by ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry, India. www.icyer.com
- YOGA MIMAMSA published by Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Maharashtra, India. www.kdham.com

- INTEGRAL YOGA MAGAZINE published by the Satchidananda Ashram, Yogaville, USA. www.iymagazine.org
- INTERNATIONAL LIGHT published by the International Yoga Teachers Association (IYTA), Australia. www.iyta.org.au
- YOGA NEWS, e-newsletter published by the International Yogalayam. www.yogamagazine.theyogatutor.com
- INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF YOGA THERAPY published by the International Association of Yoga therapists, USA. www.iayt.org
- YOGA THERAPY TODAY published by the International Association of Yoga therapists, USA. www.iayt.org
- YOGA SADHANA published by the Lotus Yoga Retreat, New Zealand. www.lotusyogacentre.org.nz
- NISARGOPACHAR VARTA published by the National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, Maharashtra, India. www.punenin.org
- YOGA VIJNANA published by the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi, India. www.yogamdniy.nic.in

I count my blessings with every passing breath and every passing moment, for it is only through the Divine *ashirwad* that I have had the good fortune to be born into a family who lives, loves and shares Yoga as eternal and conscious awareness. It is only the potent blessings of my beloved Guru Father, Swamiji, Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj and my beloved Guru Mother, Ammaji, Kalaimamani Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, that enable me to do my best at all times. It is truly a God given opportunity to have been born to such illustrious and yet “down to earth” loving parents and the more I realize this, the more I am inspired to strive every moment to continue their legacy through my “life of Yoga”.

I wish to place on record my heartfelt and deepest appreciation for Dr. Madanmohan, former Director-Professor and Head, Department of Physiology and Programme Director, ACYTER, at JIPMER, Pondicherry who has been my mentor in the field of Yoga research for more than 2 decades and an inspiration since my early childhood itself. He is a man of his word and has such a large and loving heart that has blessed so many of his students during his illustrious career spanning nearly four decades in the field of medical education and research. He has been one of the great minds and brave hearts who have been instrumental in bringing Yoga into mainstream conventional medicine and may be considered to be the main driving force behind the introduction of Yoga in the medical curriculum.

A major illuminatory influence in my personal growth has been Swamiji's *Yantra* teachings that have been further passed on to me through the loving guidance of Dr. Jonn Mumford (Swami Anandakapila Saraswathi) based in Sydney, Australia. Dr Jonn is an excellent teacher who brings out the best from everyone through his teachings and I have personally benefited tremendously from these wonderful teachings over the past many years. He has enabled me to understand the intrinsic link between Swamiji's *Yantric* and *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* teachings, and this has spurred me on to the creation of many works. I must also thank him profusely for his wonderfully blessed forward to this book, which is "typically him" in all ways. May he continue to guide us all with his magnificent teachings for many more years to come, and may we be worthy of such inspiration.

During my visit to the USA in 2008 I had the opportunity to personally interact with one of the most important American Yoga masters of our times, my dear Dr. Larry Payne. He embodies the spirit of Yoga in his very being and though it was our first meeting, it felt as if we had known each other for ages. The first panel presentation at the International Yoga therapy conference where we met was an astonishing experience as Larry Payne who was to speak got up from the panel and invited me to come and take his place on stage to share my views. I was blown off my feet with that magnanimous gesture that I would

have never expected anywhere in the world and it was happening right there in the USA! Larry set the stage for a successful conference with that heartfelt gesture that I will treasure for my whole life. I hope that I will be able to do the same for others in the future as it propelled me to do my best in all ways possible. It is only the blessing of the almighty that enables me to meet and receive so much love from so many who love and live Yoga and Larry to me embodies this multifold. His blessings for this book are the icing on the cake indeed.

I thank all of my elders, well wishers, colleagues and students who have sent in their heartfelt blessings and good wishes for this book. These have been compiled into the section, “*The World Blesses Ananda*” as each and every one of these true human beings is an inspiration for me. They motivate me to do my best at all times through their constant feedback and encouragement and are perfect examples of the qualities extolled by *Maharishi Patanjali*. (Being friendly towards those at ease with themselves and being cheerful towards the virtuous: *maitri - sukha, mudita - punya*).

I offer my sincere gratitude to Sri M. Sridharan of Brushline Graphtech for the excellent line drawings of various *asanas* created from photographs of various ICYER graduates and senior teachers including Yogacharini Asami, Yogacharini Dr. Nalini Devi, Yogacharini Latha, Yogacharini Vijaya, Yogacharini Aishwariya, Yogacharini Shobana, Dr. Padma Prashanthini, Samiksha Kapoor and Yogacharini Smt. Devasena Bhavanani. Yoga Chemmal G. Dayanidy was the constant force behind getting all the images ready and also redid many of the medical illustrations that have uplifted this book’s scientific content. I thank Smt Mangala Gowri and Dr. Zeena Sanjay who have assisted in the proof reading and correction of the manuscript in a thorough and qualitative manner. Sri Selvakumar of Sarguru Printographs deserves special appreciation for typesetting and printing this book in a truly appreciable manner. His dedication and sincerity to his profession and the reverence he has for the Sri Kambaliswamy *parampara* touch my heart deeply.

I thank my beloved Ammaji, Yogacharini Kalaimamani Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani for being the “*beacon of my life*”. To paraphrase Einstein, “Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a woman ever walked the face of the earth”. She is the inspiration and motivation of my life and never fails to constantly remind me of the purpose of my incarnation. Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* tells us he will place into the wombs of *yoginis* those who have not fulfilled their purpose in the present incarnation, thus enabling them to do so in the next (*praapya punyakritaam lokaanushitwaa shaashwateeh samaah shucheenaam shreemataam gehe yogabhrashto’bhijaayate- 6:41*). Ammaji, if I must be born again, all that I can pray for is that I am once again blessed to be your son and student in all those lifetimes.

I thank my *dharmapatni*, Yogacharini Smt. Devasena Bhavanani for being with me every day and in every way. Her constant support, encouragement and stimulation motivate me to do my best always and grow in the process. She has indeed enriched my life through the manifestation of our darling children Dhivya Priya Bhavanani and Anandraj Bhavanani. They are surely the hope of the future and with the loving guidance of Ammaji, I am sure they will surpass all of us in times to come.

The need of the hour is the development of a symbiotic relationship between the life giving art and science of Yoga and the life sustaining science of modern medicine. To satisfy this need, living, human bridges combining the best of both worlds need to be cultivated. It is important that more dedicated scientists take up Yoga with sincerity and understanding and that more Yogis study science with an open mind, so that we can build a healthy and dynamic bridge between these two great evolutionary aspects of our human civilization.

Yogacharya

Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

June 21, 2013 Pondicherry, India

FOREWORD AND BLESSINGS

**by SWAMI ANANDAKAPILA SARASWATI
(Dr. JONN MUMFORD)**

It is with great pleasure that I write the foreword to “*Yoga Chikitsa*” by Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani. He has authored a unique encyclopedic opus spanning East and West, and with this publication, he has filled a gap for Yoga students, therapists, historians, and researchers alike.

Dr. Ananda is both a valued friend and mentor: he inherits the lineage of his illustrious father, Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj and his beloved brilliant mother, Ammaji Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani.

He is well qualified as a medical doctor, born in Pondicherry, conversant with both Western Science and fluent in English, Tamil, Hindi and Sanskrit, and additionally is a talented carnatic musician, dancer, choreographer and percussionist. He is indeed a prodigious polymath, a true “Renaissance Man” uniting the science of the West with the art, science and wisdom of Yoga.

He understands, imbued with the culture of his country, that: *“Science is facts; just as houses are made of stones, so is science made of facts; but a pile of stones is not a house and a collection of facts is not necessarily science.”* - Henri Poincare (1854-1912)
French Mathematician, Physicist

This is a remarkable work in that it is the most complete delineation of Yoga as therapeutic intervention, in all its varied modalities, yet revealed. The book is a treasure trove of information; much of it supported by Western Medical Science and reveals to the reader the philosophical and metaphysical underpinnings of the subject.

Most noteworthy is that the author makes a distinction between Yoga therapy as mere remedial intervention and Yoga as a holistic science from the standpoint of one who lives the subject and understands it from the inside rather than as mere technique.

“...However unless we aim to treat the individual’s underlying psycho-somatic disassociation and ignorant, jaundiced perception of reality, we are not practicing real Yoga Chikitsa. Managing and suppressing manifest symptoms using Yoga techniques without trying to find and correct the “underlying” cause is better described as YOGOPATHY! I am not against Yogopathy as it may be useful no doubt, but we need to understand that is very different than real Yoga Chikitsa.”

The above statement, clearly and brilliantly forces us to realize that technique is the superficial part; *understanding* is the real depth and context– something many of us in the West may only hope to tentatively and occasionally glimpse.

Jala neti (more properly *siddhi neti*) rinsing of the nasal passages with warm saline solution, is an example of Yoga/Ayurvedic wisdom suddenly being adapted in the West and it is now a ubiquitous practice globally. *Siddhi neti* indeed is very useful as a “remedial action” gentle nasal douche for ENT woes but misunderstood by most. I was initiated into *siddhi neti* as actually a preliminary for the deeper stages of meditation and more specifically, that it arouses the parasympathetic system, and facilitates synchronization of the cerebral hemispheres, when carefully practiced. This, to me, is a splendid example of "Yogopathy" versus *Yoga Chikitsa*.

The deepest truth that shines through Dr. Ananda’s “*Yoga Chikitsa*” is that “Yoga” is known only through “Yoga” *i.e experientially!*

“*Yoga Chikitsa*” is well illustrated with many original physiological flow diagrams and superbly referenced and indexed in great detail. The volume is lucidly and intelligently written for both layman and professional.

The tone is established with an introductory essay by Ammaji, Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani who, with her usual wisdom and profound astuteness, establishes the parameters of the text. Dr. Ananda’s Yoga research mentor Dr. Madanmohan, student Smt. Meena Ramanathan and his illustrious father, the “Lion of Pondicherry” have also contributed specialized chapters. Ample citations, references and recommended reading are provided for further study.

This is a truly remarkable accomplishment by a young genius whose rising star will continue to shine ever brighter with each year.

Dr Jonn Mumford

Swami Anandakapila Saraswati

Sydney, Australia, 2013

FOREWORD AND BLESSINGS

by Prof. Dr. MADANMOHAN

The scientific-spiritual discipline of Yoga is an integral component and the most precious gem of *Vedic* thought and Indian culture. *Rigved*, the first book of humankind asks us to meditate on the Divine (*yunjate man ut yunjate dhiyo vipraa viprasya brihato vipashchitah. Rigved, 5:81:1*). *Yajurved* exhorts us to practice Yoga (*yoge yoge tavastaram vaaje vaaje havaamahe. Sakhaaya Indramootaye. Yajurved, 11:14*). *Upanishads*, which are part of *Vedic* lore, are replete with description of various aspects of Yoga. *Bhagavad Gita* (~3000 BC), the essence of *Upanishads* is called as *Yoga-Shastra* and the term Yoga occurs 105 times in its 700 verses. *Ayurved* has imbibed Yoga thousands of years ago. Yoga is the best “health care system” whereas conventional medicine emphasizes the treatment of diseases. If Yoga is promoted as a holistic lifestyle, people will have better health, robust immunity and freedom from stress and stress disorders.

We are made of body, mind and soul, each interdependent on the other. All the three aspects of our personality should be strengthened. Body should be strengthened and purified because it is the means to perform all righteous deeds (*shareermadyam khalu dharmasadhanam*) and is the temple of the Divine (*deho devalayah, Maitreyi Upanishad, 2:1*). *Atma* is never attained by the weak (*nayamatma balaheenen labhyah. Mundak Upanishad, 3:2:4*). Strong body needs to be controlled by strong mind and strong soul as we do not want to produce brutes. The holistic science of Yoga is the best means for the integrated development of all the three facets of our personality.

In spite of spectacular advances in modern medicine, chronic non-communicable lifestyle disorders are increasing at an alarming rate. It is estimated that they will impose ~70% of health care cost in near future. Conventional medicine is ill-equipped to deal with this huge burden. These diseases are basically lifestyle disorders and lifestyle modification is the best way for their prevention as well as management. Yoga is the best lifestyle ever designed because its approach is holistic. It is holistic as it has promotive, preventive as well as curative potential. It is holistic because it is for body, mind and soul and this is why no other physical culture can match Yoga.

The beauty of Yoga is that it can make a healthy person healthier, prevent disease from occurring and help control the disease once it has affected a person. It is obvious that “Yoga as therapy” rather than “Yoga for *samadhi*” is the main objective of a patient and his physician. Even for achieving *samadhi*, perfect health and freedom from disease is a basic requirement and this includes health of body, mind as well as soul. Yoga therapy is not just prescribing some postures or breathing techniques as a “Pill for an ill”. It is a holistic approach that includes postures, breathing techniques, meditation, relaxation, diet and attitude. Healing power is invoked when movement, breathing and awareness are in perfect harmony. Such a practice of Yoga strengthens and relaxes our body and mind, counters stress, improves immunity and promotes health and healing. It needs to be emphasized that the holistic science of Yoga is the best means to improve psychosomatic health, and prevent and cure chronic disorders which are bane of the modern society.

Dr. Ananda, the compiler of this anthology is an accomplished physician and Yoga therapist. He is the worthy son of the illustrious Yoga couple Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri and Kalaimamani Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani. Having grown up in a traditional Yogic milieu, he has imbibed Yoga, classical music and Bharatanatyam, the beautiful gems of our cultural heritage. He has worked closely with me in my Yoga

research projects at JIPMER and I find him to be a multidimensional and charming personality who has a spark that sets him apart from others. He is fluent in English, Hindi and Tamil and proficient in use of computers. Author of many papers, compilations, books, CDs and DVDs, Dr. Ananda is ever busy in sharing his knowledge with others worldwide. In the words of Yogeshwar Krishna, the hallmark of a spiritual person is that he/she is always engaged in the welfare of others (*sarvabhoot hite ratah. Bhagavad Gita, 5:25*).

Ananda is a youthful and efficient professional committed to the development of Yoga and Yoga therapy. He has many decades of work ahead. I wish him Divine Grace and all the best in service of Yoga , the science and philosophy of future – *AUM*.

Prof. Dr. Madanmohan

Pondicherry, India. 2013

SECTION I
YOGA AS A THERAPY



A YOGIC PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH AND DISEASE

Kalaimamani, Yogacharini
Smt. MEENAKSHI DEVI BHAVANANI

“Health and happiness are your birth right! Claim them!” thundered the “Lion of Modern Yoga” Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj. “You are born to be healthy and happy. But, the goal of life is *moksha* – freedom!”

We live in “topsy-turvy times”, when ancient values have been flipped onto their heads. One rarely meets a truly healthy or happy person. In fact, for the vast majority of the human race, health and happiness are distant dreams. Illness, depression, conflict, sorrow, stress, tension and frustration are the “birthright” even of young children in modern times. Billions of dollars are expended by the health industry. Medical science can put pig valves into human hearts and transplant vital organs. Super specialty hospitals abound. The pharmaceutical industry produces a huge amount of life-saving drugs. Why, then, is a truly healthy, happy person such a rarity? Modern man, like the Biblical Essau, has sold his birthright for a “mess of porridge”. Like Judas, he has betrayed his Christ consciousness, his cosmic consciousness, for less than “30 pieces of silver”.

*Ashram Acharya and Director,
ICYER and Yoganjali Natyalayam, Pondicherry,
www.icyer.com and www.rishiculture.org*

Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri has put before us a simple reason for this sad state of affairs. He advised. “If you want to be healthy, do healthy things. If you want to be happy, do happy things.” People cry, “I want to be healthy.” Then, they indulge in bad habits like tobacco and alcohol, spend late-hours watching television, do not exercise properly, do not drink enough water. Others moan, “I want to be happy!” but they fight, they gossip, they quarrel, they criticize, they delight in conflict, in violence, in defeating others, and crushing competition under their feet. It is irrational to expect that by doing unhealthy things, one can be healthy. It is irrational to believe that by doing unhappy things, one can be happy. Yes, man is an irrational animal indeed!

Yoga is the ancient science of India which shows man not only how to claim his birthright of health and happiness, but also to obtain the goal of life – *moksha*. Any scientist worth his salt begins his career by studying the laws of nature and the basic theorems and tenets of his science. The Yogic scientist is no exception to this rule. The physicist studies the physical laws of nature - gravity, momentum, etc. The chemist studies the chemical properties of matter. The biologist studies life forms, the doctors, anatomy and physiology of the human body.

This is the field within which they will work, observing the laws of action and reaction, the laws of cause-effect relationship, within that limited spectrum. For the Yogi, the entire universe and everything in it is his field of research. He studies the Universal laws which operate within this field. The law of *karma*, the law of cause-effect, is an important Law for him. The Yogi knows that the laws which govern the microcosm also govern the macrocosm, and so, he understands that by studying himself, his small self, his own self, his own body, mind and emotions, he can understand the big self, the *Atman*, *Brahman*. This process in Yoga is called *swadhyaya* or self study and it is the fourth *niyama* of Patanjali's *Ashtanga Yoga*. The *Rishis*, cosmic scientists, have taught, "Without moving out of one's own cave, one can comprehend the universe." They realized that universal truths lay within one's very own heart. "Man, know Thyself" is the admonition which was written on the entrance to the Greek temple at Delphi. This is the starting point of all endeavors. This is the starting point in the long journey to claim one's birth right. Alexander Pope, the great 18th century English poet, wrote, "Man, know thy self / presume not God to scan / the proper study of mankind / is man."

Through this self study the Yogi discovers that human nature is governed by an inexorable law - and the very law which governs his nature - is the very law which governs the universe. This law is called "*Sanatana Dharma*" or the eternal law and is unbreakable. One has no choice but

to discover it, and then, live in harmony with that eternal law. Only then will one be entitled to enjoy one's birthright - health and happiness. The Christian Bible teaches, "The wages of sin is death." Sin is nothing more than defiance, rebellion and disobedience to the eternal law. Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri taught his students: "You cannot break the law. You can only break yourself over the law." How do we know if we are "breaking the law"? The results are there for all to see: sickness, suffering, unhappiness, conflict, stress, and tension.

One might retort: "But I am unhealthy! I am unhappy! I am not breaking law! I am not an outlaw!" Look again! Indeed, such a person must be breaking the law, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Remember, even in human jurisprudence, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." No court on earth will excuse a law-breaker who pleads ignorance of the law. All citizens are expected to not only know the law, but also, to abide by it, so that the society may flourish in a harmonious manner. But, who wants to be unhealthy? Who wants to be unhappy? If these are the result of breaking natural law, then why do people do it? The answer is pure and simple: ignorance. The Sanskrit word for ignorance is *avidya*. Patanjali, the sage who codified the principles of Yoga 2500 years ago in 196 magnificently concise *sutras*, calls *avidya* or ignorance as the Mother *klesha*. A *klesha* is a hindrance, an obstacle to spiritual growth. Basically, *klesha* is the root cause of all human problems. There

are *pancha klesha* or five hindrances. Sometimes *klesha* is translated as a knot of the heart. It prevents the human being from further spiritual advancement and drags the human into the mire of misery. The other four *kleshas* are: *asmita* (egoism), the sense of separation, the sense of I, *raga* (attraction due to pleasure), *dwesha* (aversion due to pain) and *abinivesha* (clinging to life, the survival instinct). These are the obstacles which stand between man and his desire to claim his birthright of health and happiness. But the root of all obstacles is *avidya*, ignorance of the law, and hence, the constant attempt to break the law.

What is ignorance? Look at the word. It is composed mostly of the word “ignore”. “Ignore” implies “a refusal to see”. If we ignore someone, it implies a deliberate attempt to cut this person out of the field of our awareness. If we attend a gathering and find someone we have aversion towards (*dwesha*) present, we usually ignore that person, literally, turning our back on them so that we do not have to see or acknowledge them. But, if ignorance of the universal law causes us to break the law, and hence, results in disease and unhappiness, why do we as humans continue on this path to death and destruction? Because we are taught, and we willingly accept this falsehood, that we are not responsible for our own health and happiness. We have given over the responsibility for our own health to the doctor, and have asked him to find us a pill, or cut something out of our body, or stick something into it, and make us healthy again. We have

given the responsibility of our happiness to the government, the society, to the media, to the entertainment industry, to anti-depressant medicines, and asked them to “please us, to give us everything we want, to make us happy.”

We have sold the most precious quality we possess as humans, *manas* or conscious awareness, and its twin virtues, independence and self-initiative, to the various powerful lobbies which govern our lives. And they in turn, most benevolently put us to sleep, sedate us, put us under anesthesia, so we no longer feel the pain inherent in breaking the law. We are hypnotized into a fitful sleep from our childhood to our old age, and into the funeral pyre itself. We are lulled into a somnolent state in order to make our life’s journey bearable, with a minimum of pain – we are neither healthy nor happy, but blissfully numb and anesthetized.

Why should our entire social, political, educational, business, commercial, media and entertainment structure be geared to keeping us numb and dumb? For a simple reason: there’s plenty of money and power in unhappiness and disease. But, there’s no money in health and happiness. How would doctors and the huge drug industry support themselves if all were healthy? Would we watch mindless violence and sex and vulgarity in cinemas and television if we were truly happy? Would the manufacturers of weapons of mass destruction flourish financially if all were happy and healthy? It is beneficial to all the world’s commercial

interests that the seven billion people on the planet are kept sick and unhappy, in a state of unfulfilled desire and thus, in constant frustration.

As an example close to home, look at the field of dentistry. When I came to Pondicherry in 1968 there was one dentist in town. I did not know anyone who had problems with their teeth. Cavities were rare. On the contrary, I was struck by the beautiful, white healthy teeth of our Indian people. Even villagers had dazzling smiles! Life was simple. Processed foods were a luxury. Natural food was the norm. Cut to the present scenario. The number of dentists in Pondicherry numbers more than 500! Children as young as four years of age have cavities and dental problems. I don't have to tell you where the problem lies. It is obvious! The abundance of refined foods, sugars, sweets, soft drinks, ice creams, lack of oral hygiene has destroyed the nation's teeth! The good old neem stick has been discarded as old fashioned and we now spend Rs.20 on a toothbrush and Rs.50 on toothpaste which is not one-hundredth as effective as the old neem twig! Is this progress? Is this the obedience to natural law? Is this health? The villager cannot afford to buy toothbrush and toothpaste – this would cost him one day's wages. This progress has not only taken his health, but also his happiness. He will become unhappy because he does not have the money to buy such items! Should not the emphasis in social dentistry be on spreading awareness of the horrendous damage caused to the teeth by these modern junk foods and drink? But, emphasis seems to be more focused

on cure, rather than prevention. Lip service is given to these ideas but the powerful commercial lobbies are quick to squelch any effective activism on these subjects. This is not only in the field of dentistry. It is the fact in every single aspect of life. There is no money or glory or power in prevention, but plenty of it in cure! Instead of educating people to obey natural law, the modern trend is to repair people who have broken themselves over that law.

Avidya, ignorance! It is a disease, which is more deadly than an atomic bomb. It has already burst upon the earth and is enveloping all mankind in its black, poisonous mushroom cloud. It is the root cause of all unhappiness and disease. *Vidya* – wisdom, knowledge – is the opposite of *avidya* or ignorance. It basically means “to see”. The *Rishis* were “Men who saw Reality As It Is.” If we wish to claim our birthright of health and happiness, we must “Arise and Awake.” We must open our eyes to see and our ears to hear. When this “Awakening” occurs, one will be drawn to the Yogic science. It is the start of the long spiritual journey.

The “Core Concept” in accepting Yoga as a way of life is embedded in the word “responsibility”. One must be prepared to accept total responsibility for one's own life, total responsibility for one's thoughts, words and deeds, total responsibility for one's own health and happiness. This is, in essence, obedience to the eternal law which states, “all *karma* – all action – has its reaction and that

re-action will always rebound on the one who committed the action.” Just as the *Sudarshan Chakra* (celestial discus) of Lord Vishnu followed the sage Durvasa wherever he ran as he tried to hide until he made amends to King Ambarish for harming him, so also the “reaction” of our “action” will follow us wherever we go, until we “pay out” the *karma* in consciousness. In short, if we do unhappy things, we will be unhappy. If we do unhealthy things, we will be unhealthy. There is no “breaking” this law and even the best doctor, the best dentist or the best entertainer cannot keep our *karma* forever at bay. The sign on the Yogi’s door (whether the door leads to his palace or the door leads to his cave) reads. “The buck stops here.” That is, the Yogi takes total and complete responsibility for himself and everything which happens to him and makes a conscious choice to “live within the law”, rather than choosing to be an “outlaw.”

The word responsibility also has another aspect. Broken into two parts it reads respond-ability, or the ability to respond. The Yogic way of life cultivates and values consciousness and awareness. Hence the Yogi develops the “ability to respond” correctly to any given situation. The correct response will produce a positive effect and the result of such a positive action-choice is overall health, harmony and happiness.

Yoga is the science of consciousness, becoming aware of universal laws and obeying those laws in thought, word and deed. Obedience to the

law produces health and happiness. Disobedience produces disease and suffering. As a scientist, the Yogi employs all the tools of any great science: he possesses an elaborate terminology which helps him define and understand the problem; he possesses equipment and tools for his search – *asanas*, *pranayama*, concentration practices, *mantras*, cleansing techniques, etc. He/she enjoys access to a great body of theoretical concepts, accumulated through hundreds of generations of spiritual experiments conducted by the great *Rishis* who have preceded him. This theory is recorded in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Yoga Sutras*, the *Gheranda Samhita*, the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* and other ancient scriptures. His laboratory, his field of research, is his own body, emotions and mind and his relationship and correspondence to the Universe. The Yogi is a detached observer who carefully records his data and comes to his own conclusions based on his own direct observation and experiences.

He begins with this primary hypothesis – the universe is cosmos, it is not chaos. Cosmos implies “order”, and “order” implies “laws”. He sets out to discover those laws and to observe the working of those laws in his own life and in the lives of others. The Yogi then attempts to apply his findings in a practical manner – in his own life, coming to the same realizations as those enjoyed by the *Rishis* of old. Health and happiness manifest automatically in such a life, which attunes itself to cosmic law. Health and happiness are

automatic by-products when *avidya* or ignorance is dispelled. The Yogi follows the great law of virtue which is elaborated in the Yogic tradition as the *pancha yamas* or moral restraints and the *pancha niyamas*, the ethical observances. These *maha vratas*, the mighty vows of virtue, reflect the *Sanatana Dharma* or the eternal law. The Yogi develops a love for virtue, a love for the law. He realizes “virtue is its own reward.” He attunes his own microcosm to the rhythm of the macrocosm. He moves with Nature, not against it. Nature is his friend, with whom he lives in harmony, and not an enemy to be conquered or exploited.

Sanatana Dharma is difficult to translate. It can be called “the eternal law”, “the cosmic law”, even “the structure of the universe as it is”. *Sanatana* means “eternal” – that which was, which is, and which shall always be – unchanging, self-created, unborn, undying. *Dharma* takes its root meaning from *dhar* which means stability, even-ness, balance. The English word durable has come from *dhar* – that which endures. *Dharma* is hence that which gives stability. Stability is an essential component of health. As any good doctor knows, the best news he can give anxious relatives is that the patient has stabilized. Stability is also an essential component of happiness. Nothing creates more misery than an unstable family, unstable romantic relationships, unstable work or unstable social environments. *Sanatana Dharma* sometimes is more loosely defined as the law of virtue. Virtue creates stability. Clean, pure, restrained,

controlled, conscious aware living is the basis of all virtue. Such qualities create personal, interpersonal and intrapersonal stability. Hence, one becomes aware of the necessity of obeying the law of virtue, if one wishes to be qualified to claim one’s birthright as health and happiness. As Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda put it so succinctly: “Following *yama–niyama*, obeying the cosmic law is “No-Option Yoga” for those who wish to spiritually evolve themselves in health and happiness”.

Our ancients linked particular diseases to certain lapses in character. These linkages can be found in many *Puranas*. Arthritis is linked to greed, refusal to let go, or to share. Digestive problems were linked to hoarding, excessive, selfish accumulation. The old idea that diseases were caused by a moral lapse had much truth. Interestingly enough, modern medicine is also coming to a similar conclusion, though by a different route. Research findings have enabled medical men to draw up personality profiles for cancer patients, heart attack patients, diabetics, AIDS patients and so on. Character creates circumstances. Character is composed mostly of the word “act”. The manner in which we habitually “act” forms our character. Our actions determine whether we are healthy or unhealthy, happy or unhappy. This is the essence of *Sanatana Dharma*. We create our own destiny by our thoughts, our words and our actions. There is no such thing as an innocent victim in the universal scheme of things. The Yogi grows in consciousness and spirit till he becomes an *adhikarin* a “fit person”

for realizing reality. He becomes competent to “claim his birthright of health and happiness.” But, that is only the beginning of his journey. He has arisen! He has been awakened! And now it is his duty to “stop not till the goal of *moksha*” is reached. But, though the pilgrimage is long and arduous, the universe herself/himself/itself grants him his birthright – health and happiness as the reward for obeying natural law. He has the health, strength and good cheer to make his cosmic journey and he has the happiness to

enjoy his travels in space and consciousness. Buoyed by this spiritual legacy, the Yogi now has a raft to cross the ocean of *samskara*. *Avidya* or ignorance of universal law is banished by *vidya*, the light of conscious awareness. His eyes are opened. He sees! Happily and healthily he realizes that he lives not on a small planet, in a small galaxy, tiny as a grain of sand. He is a universal being, a universal citizen obeying the laws of the cosmos. And the Universe is his own, his native land!

UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE OF YOGA

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION :

Yoga is a way of life, an experiential science of human nature that enables us to realise our real selves. Swami Vivekananda said, “Yoga is really one of the grandest sciences...take up the study of this science as you would any other science of material nature and remember there is no mystery and no danger in it.” Yes, Yoga is the original, timeless, science of the “Self”. Yoga could be rightly termed the science of infinite human possibilities as it enables us to manifest in totality, our inherent potentiality. It is an in-depth, wholistic, science of man and indeed the only science that deals simultaneously with all aspects of the philosophy, psychology and practicality of conscious evolution. Yoga not only has the concepts but also the tools and technology needed for us to find out and realise “Our Self”. While modern science tends to look outward through an experimental model, Yoga enables us to search the depths of our own self thus realising the ultimate truth of reality through an experiential model.

According to Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, one of the foremost authorities on *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* in the last century, Yoga is not only a science but is also the mother of all Science. He extolled Yoga as the “Mother of All Sciences” because it contains within its vast ambit of ancient wisdom, amazing knowledge that has been subsequently pursued by all major branches of modern science.

This includes astronomy and cosmology (the nature of the universe), physics (the fundamental science of matter), the world of chemistry, biology (the science of life) and the science of man including the science of health (mental, emotional and physical).

No wonder that Dr. Dean Ornish, the eminent American doctor who has shown that Yogic lifestyle can reverse heart disease says, “Yoga is a system of perfect tools for achieving union as well as healing” while Dr. IK Taimni, known for his great analytical works on Yoga, goes to the extent of calling Yoga the “Science of Sciences”.

YOGA AS A SCIENCE :

Yoga can be understood as a body of knowledge (*vidya*) handed down through millennia from *Guru* to *chela*. This has been

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EFFECT OF YOGIC PRACTICES ON DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF HUMAN BODY

Prof. Dr. MADANMOHAN

INTRODUCTION :

The term “Yoga” and the English word “yoke” are derived from Samskrit root “*yuḥ*” which means union. Yoga is a psycho-somatic-spiritual discipline for achieving union and harmony between our mind, body and soul and the ultimate union of our individual consciousness with the Universal consciousness (Madanmohan, 2008). Yoga is mind-body technique which involves relaxation, meditation and a set of physical exercises performed in sync with breathing. Being holistic, it is the best means for achieving physical, mental, social and spiritual well being of the practitioners. This can be achieved by systematic and disciplined practice of *Ashtanga Yoga* described by sage Patanjali. The first two limbs of *Ashtanga Yoga* are *yama* and *niyama* which are ethical code and personal discipline for the development of our moral, spiritual and social aspects. 3rd and 4th limbs are *asana* and *pranayama* which help in our physical development and improvement of physiological functions. 5th and 6th limbs are *pratyahara* and *dharna* for controlling our

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senses and making our mind one-pointed, calm and alert. The final two limbs of *dhyana* and *samadhi* result in inner peace, ecstasy, higher level of consciousness and the ultimate union of our individual consciousness with the Universal Consciousness, resulting in God Realization. The result is unfoldment of a unique spiritual personality that is a blessing for the whole humanity. Yoga helps in developing our total personality in an integrated and holistic manner.

RELEVANCE TO MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

Healthy life can be considered as a by-product of practicing Yogic techniques since it has been observed that Yoga practitioners are physically and mentally healthier and have better coping skills to stressors than the normal population. Yoga is widely practiced and globally accepted. Hence, it can be very well integrated as a health promoting tool in our society. Healthy people as well as patients may inquisitively approach medical professionals to take consultation about Yoga. Yoga is an experiential science. If this knowledge about Yoga invokes interest in the medical professionals and they practice it themselves, it might open up new avenue in bringing together our traditional heritage of

YOGA CHIKITSA: YOGA AS A THERAPY

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

The art and science of Yoga is first and foremost a *Moksha Shastra* meant to facilitate the attainment of the final freedom, liberation or emancipation of *Kaivalya*. However one of the important by-products of the Yogic way of living is attainment of health and wellbeing. This is brought about by right-use-ness of the body, emotions and mind with awareness and consciousness. This must be understood to be as healthy a dynamic state that may be attained in spite of the individual's *sabija karma* that manifests as their inherent genetic predispositions and the environment into which they are born. Yoga also helps us to maintain and sustain this dynamic state of health after it has been attained through disciplined self effort and conscious awareness of life itself.

Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, the visionary founder of Ananda Ashram at the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) in Pondicherry and one of the foremost authorities on Yoga in the past century, has explained the concept of *Yoga Chikitsa* in the following lucid manner.

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“*Yoga Chikitsa* is virtually as old as Yoga itself, indeed, the ‘return of mind that feels separated from the Universe in which it exists’ represents the first Yoga therapy. *Yoga Chikitsa* could be termed as “man’s first attempt at unitive understanding of mind-emotions-physical distress and is the oldest wholistic concept and therapy in the world.”

To achieve this Yogic integration at all levels of our being, it is essential that we take into consideration the all encompassing multi dimensional aspects of Yoga that include the following: a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through *asanas*, *mudras* and *kriyas*, invigorating breath work through the use of *pranayama* and the production of a healthy thought process through the higher practices of *Jnana Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*.

Yogi Swatmarama in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, one of the classical Yoga texts gives us the assurance, “One who tirelessly practises Yoga attains success irrespective of whether they are young, old decrepit, diseased or weak”. He gives us the guarantee that Yoga improves health of all alike and wards off disease, provided we properly abide by the rules and regulations (*yuva vrdhho ativriddho vaa vyaadhito durbalo pi vaa abhyaasaat siddhi-maapnoti sarvayogeshvatandritah-Hatha Yoga Pradipika I:64*).

YOGIC PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH:

Yoga aims to enable the individual to attain and maintain a dynamic *sukha sthanam* that may be defined as a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual well being. The *Bhagavad Gita* defines Yoga as *samatvam* meaning thereby that Yoga is equanimity at all levels (*yogasthah kurukarmani sangam tyaktva dhananjaya siddiyasidhyoh samobutva samatvam yoga uchyate – Bhagavad Gita II: 48*). This may be also understood as a perfect state of health wherein physical homeostasis and mental equanimity occur in a balanced and healthy harmony.

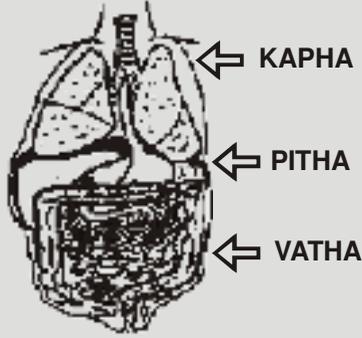
Yoga understands health and well being as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not a mere 'state' to be attained and maintained. The lowest point on the continuum with the lowest speed of vibration is that of death whereas the highest point with the highest vibration is that of immortality. In between these two extremes lie the states of normal health and disease. For many, their state of health is defined as a 'state' in which they are able to function without hindrance whereas in reality, health is part of our evolutionary process towards Divinity. The lowest point on the dynamic health continuum with lowest speed of vibration may be equated with lowest forms of life and mineral matter while the highest point with highest speed of vibration may be equated with Divinity.

STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF THE HUMAN BEING:

Yoga considers that we are not just the physical body but are of a multifold universal nature. Concepts of *pancha kosha* (fivefold aspects of our existence) and *trisharira* (threefold aspect of our bodily nature) help us understand our multi-dimensional real nature where health and well being result from a dynamic interaction at all levels of existence. At the level of the gross body, Yoga and Ayurveda consider that the human body is made up of seven substances. These *sapta dhatus* are *rasa* (chyle), *rakta* (blood), *maamsa* (flesh), *medas* (adipose), *asthi* (bone), *majjaa* (marrow) and *sukra* (semen). Both these ancient health sciences understand importance of *tridosha* (three humors) whose balance is vital for good health. Health is further also understood as harmony of *prana vayus* (major energies of physiological function), *upa prana vayus* (minor energies of physiological function) and stability of *nadis* (subtle energy channels) with proper function of all *chakras* (major energy centres that may be correlated to the psycho-neuro-immuno-endocrine axis).

QUALITIES OF PHYSICAL HEALTH ACCORDING TO YOGA:

The Yogic view of health is exemplified in the *Shvetasvatara Upanishad* where it is said that the first signs of entering Yoga are lightness of body, health, thirstlessness of mind, clearness of complexion, a beautiful voice, an agreeable odour and scantiness of excretions (*laghutvam*



TRIDOSHAS AND HEALTH:

The *tridosha* theory of health and disease that developed during the late *Vedic* period (circa 1500-800 BC) is common to virtually all Indian systems of medicine. *Tridosha* concept has correlation with *pancha mahabhutas* (elements of the manifest universe) as well as *triguna* (inherent qualities of nature). Health is understood to be the balanced harmony of the three humours in accordance with individual predisposition while disease results from an imbalanced disharmony.

arogyam alolupatvam varnaprasadam svara sausthavam ca ganghas subho mootra pureesam yoga pravrittim prathamam vadanti-Shvetasvatara Upanishad: II-13).

The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* echoes these qualities when Yogi Svatmarama says, “Slimness of body, lustre on face, clarity of voice, brightness of eyes, freedom from disease, control over seminal ejaculation, stimulation of gastric heat and purification of subtle energy channels are marks of success in *Hatha Yoga*” (*vapuh krsatvam vadane prasannataa naadasputatvam nayane*

sunirmale arogataa bindujayogni diipanam naadiivi-shuddhir hatha siddhi lakshanam-Hatha Yoga Pradipika II-78).

In the *Patanjala Yoga Darshan* we find an excellent description of the attributes of bodily perfection (*kaya sampat*). It is said in *Vibhuti Pada* that perfection of body includes beauty, gracefulness, strength, and adamant hardness (*rupa lavanya bala vajra samhananatvani kaya sampat-Yoga Darshan III: 47*). The effulgence that is characteristic of good health is also mentioned when it is said that deep concentration on *samana* (energy of digestion) leads to radiant effulgence (*samana jayat jvalanam -Yoga Darshan III: 41*).

QUALITIES OF MENTAL HEALTH ACCORDING TO YOGA:

Yoga not only considers physical health but also more importantly mental health. Qualities of a mentally healthy person (*stitha prajna*) are enumerated in the *Bhagavad Gita* as follows:

- Beyond passion, fear and anger (*veeta raga bhaya krodhah-BG II.56*)
- Devoid of possessiveness and any sense of egoism (*nirmamo nirahamkarah- BG -II.7*)
- Firm in steady understanding and unbewildered (*sthira buddhir asammudhah-BG - V.20*)
- Engaged in doing good for all living creatures (*sarva bhutahiteratah- BG V.25*)
- Friendly and compassionate to all beings (*maitrah karuna eva ca- BG XII.13*)

- Pure hearted and skillful and without any expectations (*anapekshah sucir daksah- BG XII.16*)

The central theme of Yoga is the golden mean, finding the middle path, a constant search for moderation and a harmonious homoeostatic balance. Yoga is the “unitive impulse” of life, which always seeks to unite diverse streams into a single powerful force. Proper practice produces an inner balance of mind that remains stable and serene even in the midst of chaos. This ancient science shows its adherents a clear path to the “eye of the storm” and ensures a stability that endures within, even as the cyclone rages externally.

QUALITIES OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH ACCORDING TO YOGA:

The *Bhagavad Gita* delineates qualities of a spiritually healthy person in verses 1, 2 and 3 of chapter XVI. These include: fearlessness (*abhayam*), purity of inner being (*sattva samshuddhih*), steadfastness in the path of spiritual knowledge (*jnanayoga vyavasthitih*), charity (*danam*), self control (*dama*), spirit of sacrifice (*yajna*), self analysis (*svadhyaya*), disciplined life (*tapa*), uprightness (*arjavam*), non violence (*ahimsa*), truthfulness (*satyam*), freedom from unrighteous anger (*akrodhah*), spirit of renunciation (*tyagah*), tranquility (*shanti*), aversion to any defamation (*apaishunam*), compassion for all living creatures (*daya bhutesv*), non covetedness (*aloluptvam*), gentleness (*maardavam*), noble modesty (*hrir acaapalam*), dynamic vigour (*tejah*), forgiveness (*kshama*), fortitude

(*dhritih*), cleanliness of body, mind and spirit (*saucam*), freedom from malice (*adroho*), and absence of any sense of false pride (*naa timaanita*).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD AND HEALTH:

Yoga emphasizes the importance of not only eating the right type of food but also the right amount and with the right attitude. Importance of not eating alone, as well as preparation and serving of food with love are brought out in the Yogic scheme of right living. *Guna* (inherent nature) of food is taken into consideration to attain and maintain good health. Modern science of diet can learn a lot from this ancient concept of classification of food according to inherent nature as it is a totally neglected aspect of modern diet. The great Tamil poet-saint Tiruvalluvar offers sane advice on right eating when he says, “He who eats after the previous meal has been digested, needs not any medicine.” (*marunthue-na vaendaavaam yaakkaikku arundi-yathu atrathu poatri unnin-Tirukkural 942*). He also says that life in the body becomes a pleasure if we eat food to digestive measure (*attraal alavuarinthu unga aghduudambu pettraan nedithu uikkum aaru-Tirukkural 943*).

He also invokes the Yogic concept of *mitahara* by advising that “eating medium quantity of agreeable foods produces health and wellbeing” (*maarupaaduillaatha undi marutthu-unnin oorupaadu illai uyirkku - Tirukkural 945*).

YOGA CHIKITSA – YOGA THERAPY ORIGIN, SCOPE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Yogamaharishi
Dr. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI GURU MAHARAJ

Yoga Chikitsa is virtually as old as Yoga itself, indeed, the “return of mind that feels separated from the Universe in which it exists” represents the first Yoga therapy. *Yoga Chikitsa* could be termed man’s first attempt at unitive understanding of mind-emotions-physical distress and is the oldest wholistic concept and therapy in the world. Western therapists are now approaching Unitive Understanding (Yoga) and wholistic therapies (*Yoga Chikitsa*) with “Yoga like practices.” Many of these Western practices are being absorbed into Indian therapies because our own Indian Therapists are not aware of the scope of *Yoga Chikitsa* and quickly take up these modern and often less practical but more costly therapies. Yoga is the loser when this happens, as all Western therapies are directed to the Western hedonistic concepts and vulgar materialistic ends or goals, rather than the spiritual concepts to be achieved through Yoga.

In this presentation I am trying to open up a wider view of Yoga and its application as a therapy by introducing some fifty-two sections

of Yoga treatment that are acceptable within the overall concept of the *Yoga Darshan*. By expanding some of the sub-headings, I could have elaborated on the fifty-two major sections presented so that a total of 108 major and minor applications of Yoga therapy and treatment are considered. Many of the present divisions or sections contain one or more distinct therapies but for sake of brevity, only 52 sections are considered. Many interested in *Yoga Chikitsa* will belabor or disagree with many of the general sections I have described. Others will state that there is no classical authority for *Yoga Chikitsa*, while still others will elaborate how difficult it is to use such an ancient science in practical application as a modern therapy. Indeed, it is difficult for three reasons: firstly, there is little information available to the seeking Yoga therapist on *Yoga Chikitsa* itself. Secondly, many therapists wishing to use *Yoga Chikitsa* are not personally involved in Yoga, and therefore, miss the real scope for *Yoga Chikitsa* in dealing with the problems of modern man. Finally, the patient of *Yoga Chikitsa* is a distinct problem. He wants to be healthy instantly...have an instant cure. That has been promised to him by popular, aggressive and all too misleading

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pharmaceutical advertisements, and the bias of modern physicians East and West to anything as “offbeat” as *Yoga Chikitsa*. Yet, there is no other hope for real cure of the diseases of man except with the wholistic method employed in *Yoga Chikitsa*.

Modern medical science enumerates some 4,000 diseases and disorders of the body and mind in modern medicine and psychology. Yoga views this vast proliferation of diseases as a natural outcome of the stress and strain created by desire fostered by modern propaganda and the abuse of the body condoned on all sides even by religion, science and philosophy. Add to this the synthetic junk food diet of modern society and you have the possibility of endless disorders developing... even the extinction of man by his own ignorance and misdeeds. Yoga, a wholistic, unified concept of Oneness, is termed in Sanskrit *adwaitam* or non-dual in nature. It suggests happiness, harmony and ease. Disease is created when duality or *dwaitam* arises in the human mind. This false concept of duality has produced all of the conflicts of human mind and the vast list of human disorders afflicting man. Duality-disease-is the cause of man’s downfall. *Adwaita* Vedanta, Yoga, and other wholistic concepts return man to his pristine, whole nature. Anything other than this leads only to human disorders.

All diseases, maladies, tensions, are manifestations of divisions of what should be man’s complete nature, the *Atman* or Self. This

Self is “Ease”. A loss of “Ease” creates “Disease”. Duality is the first insanity, the first disease, the unreasonable thought that “*I am different from the whole.... I am unique. I am me.*” The ego is a manifestation of disease. Only a distorted ego could feel alone, suffer from “the lonely disease”, in a Universe, a Cosmos totally filled with the Self.

Because man has failed to maintain a unified view of himself in respect to Ultimate Reality, a harmonious blend of his personality in relationship to his hidden universality, he is anything but a Yogi. He can be described as a *rogi* suffering from *roga*, disease; a *bhogi*, a seeker of *bhoga*, hedonistic pleasure, and if he survives this role as either or both he can be considered little more than an “old *phogi*” in his latter years. Good health, the absence of disease, involves a universal philosophy of life, an appropriate Unified Style of Living, and where necessary, proper, wholistic treatment for disorders which may arise as the result of past *karma*. Indeed, it may be necessary to understand the role that one’s personal *karma* plays in the onset of human disorders and the ultimate alleviation or cure of these disorders.

Modern science has failed to meet the demands of the needy of the world, whatever that need may be. Indeed, there is every evidence that man is much more ill than at any time in the past and this is especially true with chronic disorders, which have plagued us with crippling, refractory conditions that seem to defy the wisdom of science and modern

discoveries. Perhaps it is time to look to the East, especially India, who already has proved to the world to be the mother of religions and philosophies and re-discovers the use of our *Vedic Sciences* of *Ayurveda* and *Yoga Chikitsa*. *Ayurveda* once employed *Yoga*-like technique as a part of its method of treatment. *Yoga Chikitsa* has drawn heavily from the science of *Ayurveda*. *Ayuryoga*, a coined term, would indicate a re-blending of the two, into *Ayur Chikitsa* or *Yoga Chikitsa*. In recent times, *Ayurveda* has been recognized by the World Health Organization as a practical medical system and *Yoga Chikitsa* has been accepted by the Government of India, Ministry of Health, as an indigenous Medical System. Together these two ancient Indian Sciences could alter the course of human suffering and more so, human evolution. While man suffers in mind and body, he distorts the Universe in which he lives through his view. Happy, healthy man would create a heaven here on Earth.

Fragmentary knowledge of this vast system of medicine exists throughout various parts of India and many *Yoga* experts already employ some form of *Yoga Chikitsa* in their centres. It will be necessary to gather existing information and knowledge together, or under a number of classifications for analysis and evaluation and certain diagnostic and treatment methods adopted. Treatment of physical, emotional and mental disorders should be kept within *Yogic* parameters. It is not wise to employ non-*Yogic* concepts or methods in *Yoga Chikitsa*. Existing centres, which include some well-established

Ashrams, should be prevailed upon to sponsor *Yoga* therapy courses of a degree and non-degree category. During the period of training, the *Yoga* therapist or *Yoga* physician should undergo strict *Yoga* discipline for greater understanding of basic *Yoga* concepts and precepts. Courses in *Yoga Chikitsa* should be broad-based and admit all categories of therapists regardless of caste, colour, or financial condition. The main criteria should be that the candidate has a deep desire for spiritual un-foldment along the path of *Yoga* and to serve suffering humanity through the science of *Yoga Chikitsa*.

Diploma graduates should be employed by *Ashrams*, *Yoga* Centres and Centres that could make use of a *Yoga* therapy specialist. Ample funds should be made available to institutions training therapists on a professional basis. *Yoga Chikitsa* centres should be independent of and free from a-*Yogic* influences, a-*Yogic* environment, and any a-*Yogic* manipulations from any source religious, political, or personal. *Yoga Chikitsa* training should be encouraged in India's widely advertised "barefoot doctor" medical system. Thereby, any of the objections made by concerned scientific groups would be overcome by the employment of *Yoga Chikitsa* on a National basis and to ensure that we bring about a vast change on the Indian scene. The slogan "Health for All by the Year 2,000" was an empty slogan, a mockery of possibility, an intellectual absurdity because *Yoga Chikitsa* was not part to play in the scheme of things.

The need for an indigenous, wholistic therapy in India alone would justify that *Yoga Chikitsa* be developed and taught in special institutions, Ashrams and Yoga Centres. That wholistic therapy is now popular in Western countries and particularly, North America is an extra impetus for those interested in *Yoga Chikitsa* to make valuable contacts with the West. The Government of India should be interested in allotting funds for Yoga centres already in existence for study and training in *Yoga Chikitsa*, but there need be no delay while awaiting Government sponsorship and assistance.

There are a number of Ashrams and Yoga Institutions in India now employing some form of *Yoga Chikitsa* and others investigating Yoga phenomena on a scientific basis for application as therapy. Most of the scientific research in India today is on the use of *Hatha Yoga asanas*, *pranayama*, and some form of meditation for the alleviation of distress conditions. Scientific appraisal has shown the wonderful possibilities of the practical application of many Yoga techniques as Yoga therapy. Excellent facilities exist for study, therapy training, research in *Yoga Chikitsa*, and practical application of techniques at *Yoga Chikitsa* Clinics helping many patients back to health and happiness through the practical application of Yoga training and Yoga therapy. Ananda Ashram, the headquarters of Yoga Jivana Satsanga (International) has been conducting such training courses since 1968 onwards and most of the therapies that follow are taught in the

Six-Month International *Yoga Sadhana* Course.

YOGA CHIKITSA – YOGA THERAPY:

1. Yoga Anatomy:

While Western medical anatomy deals with the concept of only one physical body, *Yoga Chikitsa* involves a study and consideration, if only conceptual, of the *pancha kosha*, five bodies of man. *Yoga Chikitsa* must be deeply concerned with the study and knowledge of the psychic *chakras*, *prana nadis* and *bindus*, as well as an application of *Yoga Chikitsa* that takes in the consideration of many concepts not found in Western terminology. The study of Yoga Anatomy would borrow heavily from terms and concepts used in Ayurveda, Siddha Vaidya, Samkhya and Yoga.

2. Yoga Physiology:

In *Yoga Chikitsa*, a wider knowledge of the physiology or function of the five bodies would be a necessary study and application of the workings of the various *koshas* in harmony or symbiosis. A knowledge of the *trigunic* nature, *vasanas*, and *doshas*, would be a necessity and most important, the effect of the various *pranas* and the shutdown of body organs when one or more of the major or minor *pranas* is not functioning. Yoga anatomy and physiology should be a compulsory study for anyone practising *Yoga Chikitsa* professionally.

3. Yoga Philosophy:

Yoga has a wholistic, universal concept of life and a very positive outlook on the spiritual

SECTION II
YOGA IN
CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONS



ROLE OF YOGA IN PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE : THE JIPMER EXPERIENCE

Prof. Dr. MADANMOHAN

Non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular diseases comprise more than 60% of health problems and are a major burden on our health care delivery system. In developed countries, cardiovascular disease accounts for 30% of all cause mortality and the incidence is more among the elderly.

India is catching up fast with an alarming increase in the incidence of hypertension and coronary artery disease. It is a matter of great concern that young Indian professionals who are at the peak of their life and career are becoming victims of cardiovascular diseases. In spite of awesome advances in modern medicine, globally millions die of cardiovascular diseases every year. Allopathy depends on powerful drugs that have many undesirable side effects, especially when administered over a period of time. Many hypertensives and heart patients have to take prolonged drug treatment with the consequent financial burden and undesirable side effects.

It needs to be emphasized that Allopathy does not have all the answers for chronic, degenerative disorders whose incidence is rising by the day. Being high-tech and expensive, modern medicine has not been able to deliver health care to large sections of our population. State of-the-art technology and expensive medicine automatically limits the reach of modern medicine. Allopathy has not been able to prevent and cure lifestyle-based chronic degenerative disorders that are the bane of modern society and impose significant morbidity and mortality.

It is clear that there is a pressing need for introducing Yoga as an add-on, complimentary system to augment modern medicare. Modern medicine as well as Yoga have sound scientific basis and are, therefore, natural allies. Their merger will give us an enlightened, holistic and highly effective health care delivery system that will be a boon to our society.

Cardiovascular disease is basically a lifestyle disorder. Hence, lifestyle modification along with usual medicare should be adopted as the strategy for its prevention and management. The goal of lifestyle modification should be to modify risk factors and improve quality of life so that the need for drugs and interventional

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HYPERTENSION AND ITS YOGIC MANAGEMENT

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

One of the most common health disorders prevalent today is hypertension or high blood pressure. This occurs when pressure inside the blood vessels is higher than the normal expected values for age and gender. Yoga when adopted as a way of life, has a lot to offer for those suffering from this stress-induced psychosomatic lifestyle disorder that is a silent killer. Various studies have shown the potential of Yoga as an effective preventive measure as well as adjunct therapy for hypertension.

DIAGNOSIS:

Hypertension should be diagnosed only after taking several readings. The blood pressure needs to be taken at least two times, and each reading must be from a different day. If the average of these blood pressure readings is more than 140/90, hypertension can be diagnosed. A single reading that is more than 140/90 doesn't necessarily confirm hypertension but requires further monitoring.

ETIO-PATHOGENESIS:

The primary cause of the hypertension is not identifiable in 90% of patients, hence known

as “primary” or “essential” hypertension. Most of these patients have no clue to their condition as there may not be any symptoms, giving it the name “the silent killer.” Even when symptoms are noticeable they are vague like blurred vision, dizziness, headache, and nausea. Unfortunately, by that time, serious damage may have already occurred in blood vessels, heart, eyes, brain, or kidneys.

In less than 10%, the cause of the hypertension is known and so therefore, is called secondary hypertension. Conditions that can cause secondary hypertension include pre-eclampsia, endocrine disorders, coarctation of the aorta, kidney disease, sleep apnea and medication such as birth control pills. Risk factors for hypertension include being overweight, having diabetes, being a male over the age of 45 (or a female over 55), being of African American descent and eating a lot of salty foods. Hypertension is worsened by smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, prolonged and poorly managed stress, a diet high in fat and / or salt and lack of exercise.

Shockingly, this author has found that many doctors start their patients on antihypertensive medication after taking just a single isolated reading. This is quite disheartening, for once you start someone on anti-hypertensives it is

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then usually a lifelong affair. The baseline understanding to be developed is that you need to be checked at least on two or more different occasions before starting medication and first line of treatment should be lifestyle modification and not drugs.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HYPERTENSION:

Health problems in the hypertensive don't occur over days, weeks, or even months but are rather found to occur over many years and affects nearly every part of the human body. By adding strain to walls of the blood vessels, hypertension makes them more likely to develop atherosclerosis with a buildup of fat and cholesterol and "hardening" of arteries that in turn puts extra strain on the heart as it pumps blood through the narrowed arteries. Over a period of time, this increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, heart attack as well as eye and kidney damage.

MANAGING HYPERTENSION:

The initial strategy in managing hypertension should always include a dynamic advocacy of lifestyle changes. However in patients whose BP is high, medications will need to be taken along with lifestyle modifications until the condition stabilizes.

The aim should be to lower the blood pressure as close to the normal range as possible. Many therapists seem to forget that lifestyle changes are the first step in hypertension treatment. These changes can also improve quality of the patient's life as well.

We shouldn't be impatient as it may take three to six months before full benefits of lifestyle modifications begin to manifest. These lifestyle modifications include exercising regularly, losing weight, reducing salt consumption, changing over to a heart healthy diet and drinking less alcohol. We must always

- Lose weight, if possible
- Limit alcohol intake or never start !
- Increase aerobic physical activity
- Reduce sodium intake to no more than 100mmol/d
- Maintain adequate dietary calcium, potassium and magnesium
- Stop smoking and reduce dietary saturated fat and cholesterol

remember that the control of hypertension requires a lifelong commitment irrespective of whether medications are used or not.

Major lifestyle modifications needed to treat hypertension defined in the Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (JNC 7) and the World Health Organization - International Society Hypertension (WHO/ISH) guidelines are given in the table above.

Yoga however takes a more detailed view of hypertension and hence the prevention as well as management of hypertension from the Yogic point of view will be discussed below.

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YOGA PRACTICES FOR PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

BASIC WARMING UP PRACTICES

Jathis are basic movements of the body parts that help to release pent up tensions in those parts. They increase circulation to the part and also the flow of *pranic* energy is increased due to the movements. A few of these practices will be described below.

Take up a comfortable standing position such as the *samasthiti asana*. Stand on one leg and shake the other leg. Repeat on the other side and then alternate a few times between right and left. Stand on both legs and start to shake your hands one at a time. Alternate between the right and left a few times and then start to shake both hands at the same time. Shake your hands and move them up, down, to the left and to the right. Shake your hands all around you in a circular movement. This helps to energize the *pranamaya kosha*, our energy sheath or subtle body. Come back to the standing position.

Open the legs two feet apart and keep the hands on the hip. Move the torso in all four directions clock-wise and anti clock-wise in a grinding action. Then do it in a continuous manner. Bend forward and perform some toe touching with a bouncing action. Bounce to the front, and then move to your left. Move to your right and then come back to the front and then back to the standing position.

Spread your feet a bit and lift both your arms to the side. Start to twist your torso from side to side a few times. Feel the stretch in your hip region and back. Come back to the standing position and relax with deep breathing for some time.

Sit down with both legs stretched out in front of you. Draw your right knee up to your chest and then kick out with a whooshing sound. Perform the same action on the left side. Continue to alternate legs for some time. Draw up both your knees and do the same action with a whooshing sound as you release the feet. Relax with your feet stretched out in front.

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YOGA ASANAS :

TALA KRIYA:

The term, “*tala*” refers to a palmyra tree and you should try to stretch yourself as tall as that tree while performing this practice. Take up a comfortable and stable *samasthiti asana*.



Tala kriya

Breathe in and lift both arms up over your head until they are parallel to each other. Let the palms of both hands face inward and then go up onto your toes and stretch up as high as possible. Hold the breath and feel the healthy stretch along your whole body from toes to finger tips.

Breathe out and relax your arms back to your sides while coming back to the flat foot posture. Repeat the practice two more times at each session for maximum benefit. With practice the posture can be held for a longer time and normal breathing done while holding the posture for 30 to 45 seconds.

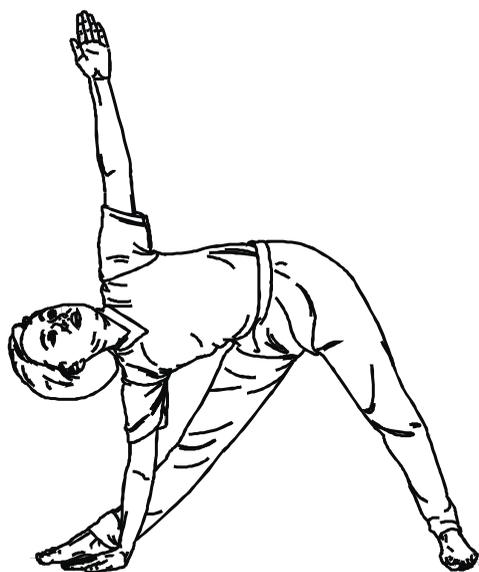
HASTHA KONA KRIYA:

Stand in a steady *samasthiti asana* with your arms by your side. Breathe in and lift your right arm over your head. Try to extend the arm over your head towards the left as far as possible without bending it. This gives a good stretch to the entire right side of the body. Slowly start to breathe out and lower your arm slowly back to the side. Repeat the practice a few more times.



Hastha kona kriya

Make sure that you lift your arm on the in breath and lower it on the out breath. Perform the practice on the opposite side by lifting your left arm over your head while breathing in. Extend it as far towards the right as possible without bending it. Feel the excellent stretch on the entire left side of your body. Lower your arm back to your side while breathing out. Repeat the practice a few more times.



Trikona asana

Hastha kona kriya helps to stretch and tone up the musculature of the arms, shoulders and the para-spinal area in a way not done in day-to-day life. This helps trigger the relaxation response in these tissues that are normally tensed due to disuse, misuse and abuse. A sense of profound relaxation is obtained after the practice of this activity that is also known as the *ardha kati chakra asana*.

TRIKONA ASANA:

Stand in *samasthiti asana*. Place your feet two to three feet apart facing forwards. Stretch your arms to the sides so that they are pulling the chest in opposite directions. Turn your head and right foot to the right side and slowly bring your right hand down to the right foot and place the palm of the right hand on the ground in front of the right foot. Look up at the middle finger of the left hand. Let the entire torso get a good twist and stretch.

Hold the position for 30 seconds while performing deep breathing. Release and come back up to the open arm position and then do the opposite side by placing your left hand down in front of the left foot. Hold the position for 30 seconds while performing deep breathing. When ready come back up to the *samasthiti asana* and relax with a few rounds of deep breathing.

MERU ASANA:

This head below the heart posture may help reset the baroreceptor sensitivity as well as re-orient the flow of energy in the psycho-neuro-immuno-endocrine axis.



Meru asana

From *samasthiti* bend forward and perform the mountain posture. Straighten your knees and raise your buttocks up with soles of both your feet are flat the ground. Keep your hands and feet in parallel so that the right hand and right leg as well as the left hand and leg are in a single line. Try to push your head in towards your abdomen and look at

IMPORTANCE OF BODY MASS INDEX AND WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE IN PREEMPTING POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF OBESITY

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

“*Heyam dukkam anagatham*” says Maharishi Patanjali, warning us to identify and prevent those miseries, yet to manifest. This is a very sane approach to Yoga therapy and is true in the case of the modern pandemic of obesity that is threatening the health and subsequently even the wealth of the entire world. Early identification and classification of obesity is vital for management and effective prevention of the progressive complications.

The natural progression of the disorder is from a state of being overweight to being obese and ultimately ending up being morbidly obese. If this is not controlled in the early stage with right management then complications begin to appear on the symptomatic horizon with a potential to cause death and disability for millions around the globe.

The Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist Circumference (waist circumference) are objective measures that are normally used to detect and classify the state and level of obesity.

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These are simple and can be measured in any out patient setting to evaluate obesity.

BODY MASS INDEX:

The BMI has been recognized worldwide as an effective method of quantifying obesity by the World Health Organization, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA. It is a simple and cost effective method of assessment that can be used with great benefit everywhere and is derived from a formula that uses the weight and height to estimate body fat and health risks.

Normal range of the BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9 units. Those between 25 and 29.9 are considered overweight and if it is 30 or greater, the person is considered to obese. BMI above 40 is considered extremely or morbidly obese and usually requires surgical intervention.

WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE:

Guidelines from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, USA suggest that in addition to BMI measurements, waist circumference should also be assessed. The guidelines specify that the presence of excess fat in the abdomen that is out of proportion to an individual's total body fat is an independent predictor of risk factors and morbidity.

YOGA PRACTICES FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF DIABETES MELLITUS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is an integrated way of life in which awareness and consciousness play a great part in guiding our spiritual evolution through life in the social system itself by understanding that “Yoga is the science and art of right-use-ness of body, emotions and mind”.

Yoga can play a major role in prevention and control of diabetes mellitus that is turning out to be one of the major killers of the modern world. Yoga is of special value to those suffering from type-2 or non insulin dependent diabetes as it helps to sensitize the body cells to the insulin and helps the body fight the hyperglycemic state in an effective manner.

The healthy exercise and weight loss produced by Yoga as well as the dietary aspects when followed religiously and regularly can help prevent and control this disorder to a great extent.

YOGA THERAPY PROGRAMME:

General exercise: It is important to use up the excess blood sugar by regular exercise. Walk whenever possible and skipping or swimming are good adjuvants to the Yoga therapy programme.

Diet:

- Regular small meals with complex carbohydrates.
- Avoid refined foodstuffs and junk food.
- Take lots of green vegetable salads, bitter gourd and neem.
- Maintain good hydration.

Suryanamaskar: Performance of three to six rounds of *suryanamaskar* helps utilize excess glucose and speed up the metabolism and induce weight loss in obese patients. *Jathis* and other loosening techniques are a good way to prepare oneself for other more challenging practices and may be used as warming up practices too.

Asanas: Various *asanas* help in the resetting and remodelling of neuro-endocrine and muscular systems with healthy compression of inner organs.

● Twisting poses:

From standing position: *Trikona and parshva kona asana, ardhakati chakra asana.*

From sitting position: *Vakra asana, ardha matsyendra asana, bharadwaja asana, shashanga asana.*

From reclining position: *Jataraparivartan asana* and its variations.

- **Abdominal pressure poses:**

From the sitting position: *Utkata asana, janu shirasa asana, pashchimottana asana, nava asana, yogamudra asana, stambham asana* and *mayura asana* are useful to give a healthy self-massage to internal organs of the abdomino-pelvic and thoracic regions.

From the reclining position: *Eka* and *dwi pada pavanamukta asana, eka and dwi pada dhanura asana, bhujanga asana, eka and dwi pada shalabha asana, nouka asana* are all excellent for improving the altered metabolism.

- **Topsy turvy positions:**

Sarvanga asana, janusirasa sarvanga asana, karnapida asana and hala asana

Pranayamas: *Vibhaga* and *pranava pranayamas* with special emphasis on *adam pranayama* and *aaa* sound. *Bhastrika pranayama* may help to utilize the excess blood glucose while *savitri pranayama, chandra nadi*

pranayama, nadi shuddhi pranayama (aloma viloma in the Gitananda tradition) may be used for stress reduction that will enable homeostatic balance to occur in a natural manner.

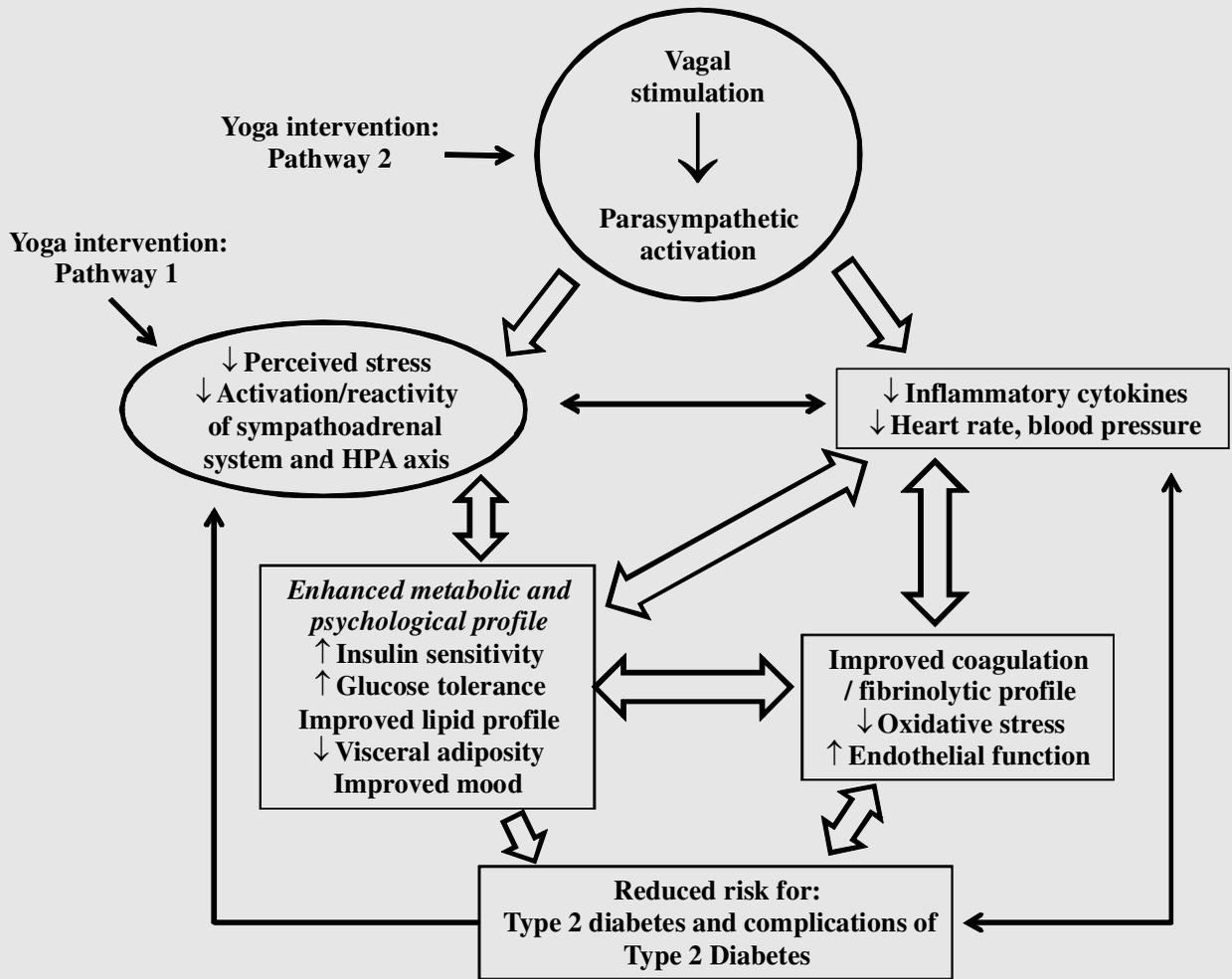
Kriyas: *Kunjla, nauli, kapalabhati, agnisara, shankha prakshalana* are useful to aid the natural processes of elimination (*mala shuddhi*).

Mudras and Bandhas: *Viparita karani* and *maha mudra* as well as the *uddiyana, moola* and *jalandhara bandhas* work on the neuro-endocrine axis and restore normalcy.

Relaxation: *Shava asana, makara asana* and *kaya kriya* for psycho-somatic relaxation.

Dharana: *Mandala dharana* on all *chakras* with emphasis on *manipura chakra* and the sound of *ram (rung)* to activate the endocrine pancreas. When the mind is calmed and focused inwardly with positive intent, healing energies will flow seamlessly throughout the body systems creating an opportunity for health and wellbeing to manifest naturally.

POSTULATED MECHANISMS BY WHICH YOGA CAN HELP REDUCE RISK FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS AND ITS COMPLICATIONS



Innes KE, Vincent HK. The Influence of Yoga-based programs on risk profiles in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus: A systematic review eCAM 2007; 4: 469-86.

**SECTION IV
YOGA AND
RESPIRATORY DISORDERS**



SWARODAYA VIGJANAN: A SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF THE NASAL CYCLE

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

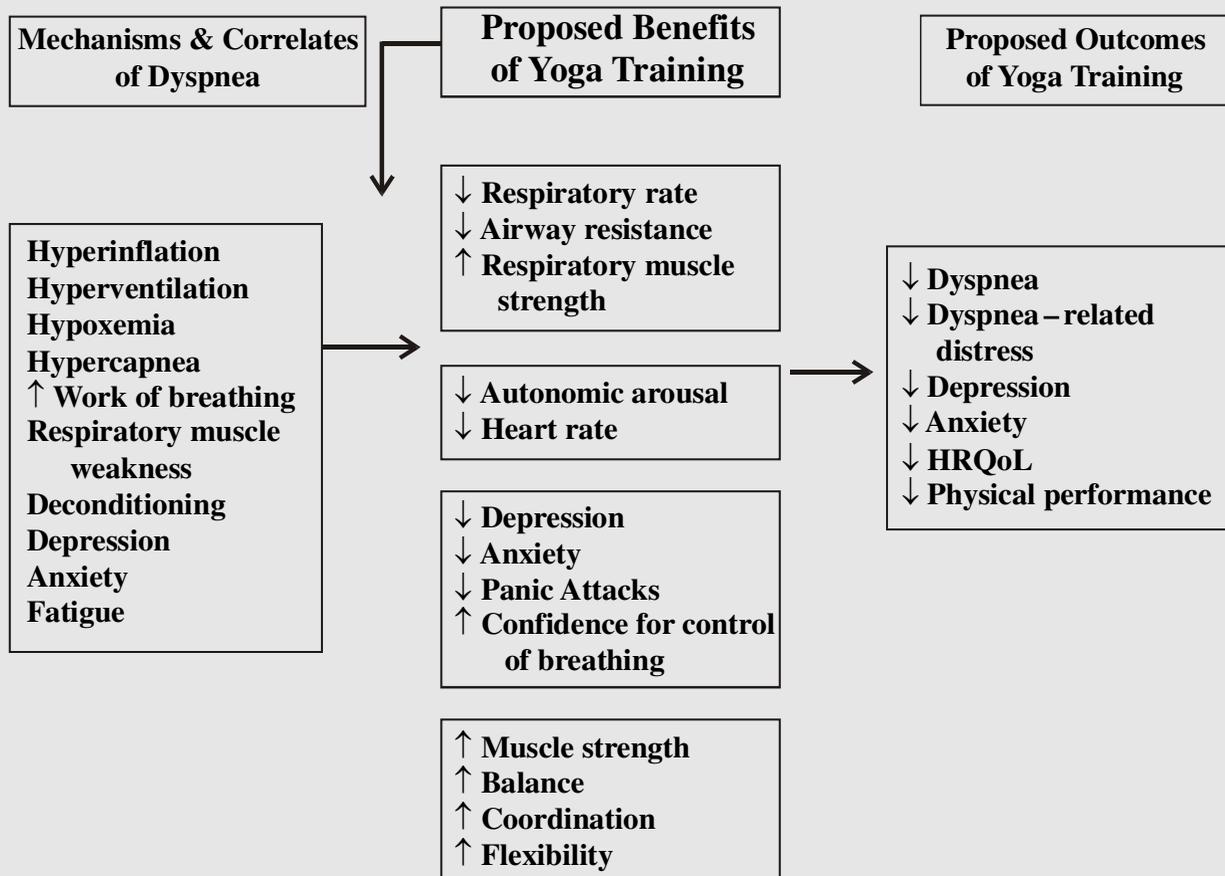
Yoga is the evolutionary process of integration (*yuj* = union). In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord Krishna says “*samatvam yoga uchyate*” (Yoga is harmonious balance). The Yogic concept of *loma viloma* (balancing the *dwandwas*) encompasses the wide variety of processes in our body, emotions and mind and thus brings about this equanimity of the mind. Yoga and *Tantra* emphasize the balance between the two halves of the body in terms of *loma* and *viloma*. The right side of the body is considered to be of masculine nature, endowed with warm, golden, positive, *pranic* energy and represented by the *pingala nadi* (energy channel on the right of the *sushumna*). The left side of the body is considered feminine and endowed with cool, silvery, negative, *apanic* energy and represented by the *ida nadi* (energy channel on the left of the *sushumna*). The *sushumna nadi* is the energy channel that runs down the middle of the central canal of the spinal cord. (Note: All these energy channels are in the *pranamaya kosha* and above, though they do have correlating structures in physical body). The Yogi attempts to understand, harness and bring about a balance between the energies of

the two halves of the body. The best practical example of this concept is found in the study of the nasal cycle.

The nasal cycle is an ultradian rhythm of nasal congestion and decongestion with a quasi-periodicity of 60 to 240 minutes. Keyser made the first formal description and the use of the term nasal cycle in 1895. However the concept of the nasal cycle and an understanding of its role in our life had existed for long before that in Indian thought. The *Vedic* science of understanding the function of the nasal cycle was known as *swarodaya vigjanan* (*swara* = sonorous sound produced by the airflow through the nostrils in the nasal cycle, *udaya* = functioning state, and *vigjanan* = knowledge). The *Shivaswarodaya*, an ancient treatise in Sanskrit literature advises the Yogi to undertake quieter, passive activities (*soumya karya*) when the left nostril flow is dominant (*ida* or *chandra swara*), to engage in challenging and exertional activities (*roudra karya*) when right nostril is dominant (*pingala* or *surya swara*) and to relax or meditate when the bilateral nasal flow is operational (*sushumna swara*) as it was considered to be unsuitable for performance of worldly activities. *Ida swara* (left nostril dominance) is described as feminine, *shakti* and moon-like (*chandra*) while *pingala swara*

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PROPOSED RELATIONSHIPS AMONG DYSPNEA, BENEFITS OF YOGA AND OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATION IN A YOGA PROGRAM



Donesky-Cuenco D, Nguyen HQ, Paul S, Carrieri-Kohlman V. Yoga Therapy Decreases Dyspnea-Related Distress and Improves Functional Performance in People with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease: A Pilot Study. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* 2009; 15: 225–234.

YOGA FOR BREATHING DISORDERS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Dyspnea, difficult breathing, is a condition as old as the medical history of man, and some of the problems of breathing begin as early as the “first breath of life” for many a human. Not only is it a serious affliction robbing man of his health, wealth and happiness, but a major challenge to doctors and medical researchers. It has presented the greatest challenge to those doctors who use medication alone as their form of treatment. This is not to say that medication and drug treatment may not play a valuable part in acute, life threatening, crisis conditions. Thousands are alive today because of the discovery of life saving drugs administered during a crisis as well as the life saving critical care units in modern hospitals.

However, medication is not the answer and the condition usually returns, sometimes with greater intensity than in the original instance. Drug therapy alone cannot work because it does not deal with the cause of the problem, the faulty breathing. Suppression of symptoms alone should not be dignified by the name “cure” in any system of medicine. We must not forget that it is only by eliminating the root

cause, can we bring back for the patient the basic good health so necessary for man.

This article is an attempt to present some methods to attain to a new state of health through the use of *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* techniques. These techniques are equally valuable for a new student to Yoga, as they develop strong, healthy, and robust lungs. Any Yoga enthusiast who has not used these particular techniques earlier will find a new dimension added to their present practice of Yoga when they use these practices.

AGGRAVATING FACTORS:

For anyone who has breathing difficulties, the use of these techniques will soon correct such conditions, but we should remember that most breathing difficulties may be aggravated by a number of other factors such as:

Environmental circumstances: Air pollution and working in areas where noxious, gaseous substances are discharged into the air from factories and heavy industries or discharged from the exhausts of automobiles, buses, or lorries may cause serious lung damage.

Destructive personal habits: Smoking of cigarettes, chewing of pan, inhalation of snuff and the misuse of certain drugs destroy the ciliary lining as well as dampen the body's

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SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR SOME YOGA PRACTICES IN SINUSITIS

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INTRODUCTION:

Yoga, the ancient cultural heritage of India has recently become popular as a therapeutic adjuvant to modern scientific medicine. A lot of research has been done on various aspects of Yoga in relation to health and disease and the physiological and psychological benefits of Yoga have given rise to various potentialities as an adjuvant therapy for numerous psychosomatic disorders. We must not forget however that Yoga is primarily focused on prevention and can be said to be the original preventive medicine. This article focuses on the scientific basis of some Yoga practices that may help in the prevention and management of sinusitis. A bird's eye view of recent studies in this regard, published in international and indexed journals of modern medicine helps us to understand better the mechanisms by which these Yoga practices can help as an adjuvant therapy in preventing and managing sinusitis.

SINUSITIS:

Sinusitis is an inflammation of the membrane lining of any sinus, especially one of the

paranasal sinuses of the skull that include the maxillary, frontal, ethmoidal and sphenoidal sinuses. Rhinosinusitis is a common clinical problem with considerable morbidity and often, refractory symptoms, accounting for millions of patient visits to medical practitioners. It is estimated that more than 120 million Indians suffer from at least one episode of acute sinusitis each year. It is also one of the top five conditions for which antibiotics are frequently prescribed and a major cause of antibiotic resistance due to the difficulty in differentiating infections of viral and bacterial etiology at primary level health care. The prevalence of sinusitis worldwide has soared in the last decade due to increased pollution, urban sprawl, and increased resistance to antibiotics. We should never underestimate the negative impact on the quality of life as sinusitis may not have ever killed anyone, but it sure has made many feel like killing themselves.

Acute sinusitis is a short-term condition that responds well to antibiotics and decongestants whereas chronic sinusitis is defined as four or more recurrences of acute sinusitis that may require prolonged therapy and even surgery. The major symptoms of acute sinusitis include facial pain or pressure, nasal obstruction, nasal

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discharge, diminished sense of smell while other symptoms like fever, bad breath, fatigue, dental pain, and cough may be present

In chronic sinusitis, the following symptoms may be present for 12 weeks or more. These symptoms include facial pain or pressure, facial congestion, nasal blockage, thick nasal discharge, discolored post-nasal drainage, pus in the nasal cavity, and fever. The patient may also complain of headache, bad breath, and fatigue. Chronic sinusitis is a common disease in children, especially those with allergies. The inflammation from an allergy causes membrane

swelling and the sinus openings to narrow, thereby blocking mucus movement. The poor sinus ventilation increases the risk for sinusitis.

New evidence points to a pathophysiologic link between sinusitis, allergic rhinitis and asthma. This makes it more important for us to prevent and manage sinusitis in order to prevent the further complications from occurring. Smoking plays a role in the causation and worsening of symptoms and any therapy programme would be incomplete without a smoking cessation element in it.

SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR THE USE OF JALA NETI

One of the most important Yoga practices for the prevention and management of sinusitis is the *neti kriya* that is one of the *shat karmas* of *Hatha Yoga*. *Neti* is the practice of cleaning the nasopharyngeal tract with liquids or thread. Types of *neti* include *jala neti* (nasal irrigation with lukewarm saline water) and *sutra neti* (nasal cleaning with a thread or catheter). Others are *dugdha neti* (with milk), *ghrta neti* (with ghee) and *jala kapalabhati* that includes *vyutkrama* and *seetkrama kapalabhati* where water is taken in mouth and pushed out through nostrils or vice versa.



Jala neti

Hypertonic nasal irrigation is a therapy that flushes the nasal cavity with saline solution, facilitating a wash of the structures within. Originally part of the Yogic tradition as *neti*, this technique is anecdotally regarded as safe and effective. It has been suggested as adjunctive therapy for sinusitis and sinus symptoms. Potential efficacy is supported by the observation that hypertonic saline improves mucociliary clearance, thins mucus, and may decrease inflammation.

SECTION V
YOGA FOR MUSCULO-
SKELETAL CONDITIONS



YOGA FOR A HEALTHY BACK

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION :

In the past decade or so, the number of people suffering from musculo skeletal conditions has increased by nearly 25 percent all over the world. Musculo skeletal conditions are currently the most common cause of chronic disability.

Yoga has a great potential in prevention and management of these conditions and also has an effective role in the rehabilitation of these conditions that are a negative side-effect of the modern computer age.

The primary musculoskeletal dysfunctions include osteo arthritis, inflammatory arthritis (principally, rheumatoid arthritis), back pain, musculoskeletal injuries (such as sports injuries), crystal arthritis (such as gout) and metabolic bone disease (principally osteoporosis).

Back pain is one of the most common medical problems and it is said in general that an estimated 8 out of 10 people suffer from it. Acute, or short-term, low back pain generally

lasts from a few days to a few weeks and is usually the result of trauma to the lower back or a disorder such as arthritis. Chronic back pain is pain that persists for more than three months; it is often progressive, and the cause can be difficult to determine. Symptoms of back pain can include muscle aches, shooting pain, limited range of motion, and an inability to stand up straight.

NATURE AND CAUSES :

Osteo arthritis is the most common problem affecting human joints, causing pain, stiffness, weakness, joint instability, and reduced range of motion. The more the use and misuse, the earlier the condition seems to occur and the worse the effects manifest. Sedentary lifestyle with emotional 'binge' eating leads to obesity that is one of the primary aggravating factors leading to the early manifestation of joint troubles.

Rheumatoid arthritis has a prevalence of 1 to 3 % in most countries. Although the exact cause is unknown, evidence suggests that an immune reaction causes inflammation of the joints and other tissues. This then may result in tiredness, fatigue, weight loss, fever, pain, and disability and deformity of the joints. Stress has a role in RA and modern technostress is a precipitating factor in many a person.

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YOGA AND CERVICAL SPONDYLOSIS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION :

Cervical spondylosis is a general term for age related wear and tear affecting fragile joints of the neck. This is also known as cervical osteo arthritis and usually appears in men and women older than 40 and progresses with age. Although cervical spondylosis affects both sexes equally, men usually develop it at an earlier age than women.

As we age, the bones and cartilage that make up the backbone and neck gradually deteriorate, sometimes forming irregular bony outgrowths called spurs. These changes, which are characteristic of cervical spondylosis, occur in everyone's spine. Still, many people with signs of cervical spondylosis on X-rays manage to escape the associated symptoms, which include pain, stiffness and muscle spasms.

At the other extreme, cervical spondylosis may compress one or more of the spinal nerves branching out of the cervical vertebrae — a condition called cervical radiculopathy. Bone spurs and other irregularities caused by cervical spondylosis also may reduce the diameter of the canal that houses the spinal cord, resulting

in cervical myelopathy. Cervical radiculopathy and cervical myelopathy can lead to permanent disability. Fortunately, most adults with cervical spondylosis — nearly 90 percent — will not lose nerve function, even temporarily.

SYMPTOMS :

The usual signs and symptoms of cervical spondylosis are:

- A stiff, painful neck;
- Shoulder, arm or chest pain;
- Tingling and pinprick sensations in the arms, hands, legs or feet;
- Numbness and weakness in the arms, hands, legs or feet;
- Lack of coordination;
- Difficulty in walking;
- Abnormal reflexes;
- Loss of bladder or bowel control, or urinary or bowel retention.

CAUSES:

Age-related wear and tear is the main cause of cervical spondylosis. By 30, many people show signs of vertebral and disk degeneration on X-ray, although symptoms don't appear until later in life. Aging as well as wear and tear on the

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RHEUMATOLOGICAL AND IMMUNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF AGING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED APPROACH OF YOGA IN SENIOR CITIZENS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Thanks to recent advances in medical technology and better nutrition, people are living longer than ever, especially in developed countries where life expectancy has nearly doubled from ~45 in 1900 to ~80 in 2000.

The aging process depends on a combination of both genetic and environmental factors. Overall, genetic factors seem to be more powerful than environmental factors in determining the large differences among people in aging and lifespan. However, many environmental conditions, such as the quality of health care have a substantial effect on aging.

CELLULAR CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH AGING:

With age the cells tend to undergo functional changes and even the rate of cells multiplication slows down. Important cells of the immune system such as the T - lymphocytes decrease with age and the response to environmental stresses is hampered. Apoptosis or programmed

cell death is hampered leading to the emergence of many health problems. This process is necessary for tissue health and to slow down immune responses once an infection has been cleared from the body. As a result we find that cancer cells continue to multiply and invade or take over surrounding tissue, instead of dying as originally programmed. Other diseases may cause cells to die too early as in Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

A healthy lifestyle is an especially important factor in healthy aging and longevity. This includes:

- Not smoking and drinking alcohol
- Adoption of a proper exercise routine
- Getting adequate rest and relaxation
- Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables
- Coping with stress in a healthy manner and
- Having a positive outlook towards the later half of life

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SECTION VI
YOGA IN
PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY



INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY OF YOGA

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

The art and science of Yoga is one of the greatest treasures of our unique Indian cultural heritage. It has a lot to offer us in understanding the human mind. Yoga treats man as a multi layered, conscious being, possessing three bodies (*sthula, sukshma and kaarana sharira*) and being enveloped in a five layered (*pancha kosha*) existence. This ancient science of mind control as codified by Maharishi Patanjali more than 2500 years ago helps us understand our mental processes and 'cause-effect' relationships for a multitude of problems facing modern humans.

Modern humans are the victim of stress and stress related disorders that threaten to disrupt life totally. Yoga offers a way out of this 'whirlpool of stress' and is a holistic solution to stress. Yogic lifestyle, Yogic diet, Yogic attitudes and various Yogic practices help us strengthen ourselves and develop positive health; enabling us to withstand stress better. This Yogic "health insurance" is achieved by normalizing the perception of stress, optimizing the reaction to it and by releasing the pent up stress effectively through various

Yogic practices. Yoga is a holistic and integral science of life dealing with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health of the individual and society.

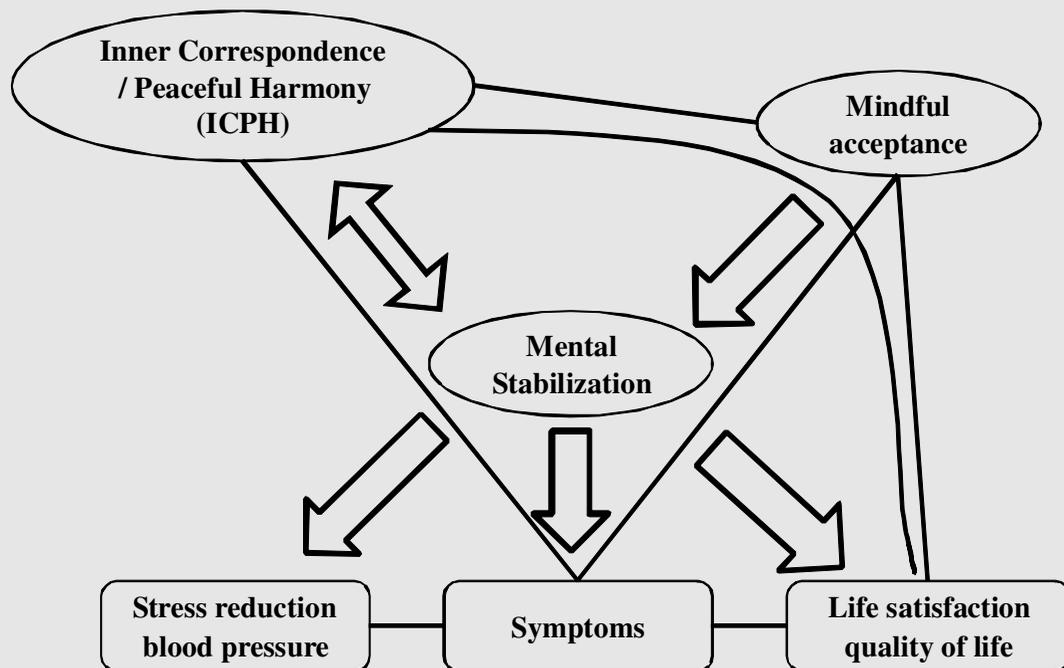
Yoga may be defined as a process (journey) as well as a state (goal) in many ways. Yoga is the science and art of quieting the subconscious mind, a way of life, skill in action, union of thought-word-deed, integration at all levels, the science of conscious evolution and the method to attain as well as the state of emotional and mental equanimity. The *yogarudda* or one who has attained to the state of Yoga is described in the *Bhagavad Gita* as "The supreme Yogi who has renounced every desire and is unaffected by sensory experiences and is unattached to the fruits of action".

YOGIC VIEW OF THE MIND :

Yoga views the mind as having four internal processes or *antahkarana*. These processes are the *chitta* (memory bank or the subconscious), the *manas* (conscious mind), the *buddhi* (discriminating intellect) and the *ahamkara* or ego principle (consisting of the impure ego that feels all is ME and MINE as well as the pure ego which understands that all is mine as a manifestation of the Divine). The *buddhi* is further said to possess three powers: the power of will (*iccha shakti*), the power of action,

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INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN INNER CORRESPONDENCE / PEACEFUL HARMONY (ICPH), MINDFUL ACCEPTANCE AND MENTAL /EMOTIONAL STABILIZATION IN RESPONSE TO MIND-BODY INTERVENTIONS.



Arndt Büssing et al. Inner Correspondence and peacefulness with practices among participants in Eurythmy Therapy and Yoga: A Validation Study. Evidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine 2011; 2011: 329023.

CULTURING ONE'S SELF THROUGH YOGA

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION :

Yoga is the mother of all religions, cultures and sciences. It is an evolutionary path of cultural synthesis through which we may ultimately become the Divine itself. Indian culture is the fertile soil from which this great art and science has sprung millennia ago, and an understanding of the Indian cultural ethos is essential to experience "Real Yoga". Yoga may be understood as union or re-union, integration or re-integration, synthesis or re-synthesis. It is both the process as well as the goal of holistically integrating all aspects of our being, thus becoming ALL ONE.

The *kleshas* (built in, psychological afflictions that warp our vision) and *karma bandha* (being caught in the action-reaction spiral) prevent us from realizing that we are the Divine Self who is beyond these imperfections (*klesha karma vipaka ashayaih aparamrushta purusha vishesha ishwara – Patanjala Yoga Darshan I-24*). Yoga gives us a clear road map for our evolutionary journey towards re-synthesizing ourselves to ultimately reach that unlimited,

unparalleled, unified state of ONENESS (*kaivalya*).

NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL HUMAN CULTURE:

The evolutionary Yogic process of culturing ourselves in order to attain the highest state of "universal perfection" deals with both the external as well the internal aspects of our individuality that are cultured in a step-by-step manner to integrate all levels thus producing completeness of our whole being. In the *Gheranda Samhita*, a classical treatise on *Hatha Yoga*, the human body is likened to an unbaked clay pot that is incapable of holding the contents and dissolves when faced with the challenge of water. It is only through the intense heat generated by practice of Yoga that the human body gets baked, making it fit to hold the Divine Spirit (*aama kumbha ivaambhastho jeeryamanah sada gatah yoganalena samdahya ghata shuddhim samacaret- Gheranda Samhita I: 8*)

The regular practice of Yoga as a 'Way of Life' helps reduce our physical, mental and emotional stresses that are destabilizing us as it lays emphasis on right thought, right action, right reaction and right attitude. No wonder Pujya Swamiji, defined Yogic living as the

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THE YOGA OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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INTRODUCTION:

All aspects of our human personality are cultured through the process of Yoga helping us evolve towards perfection until we are “One” with the Divine Self. Yoga helps destroy the *kleshas*, the psychological afflictions that warp our vision, as well as eradicates *karma bandha* that prevents us from realizing our potential Divinity. Our great *Rishis* like Maharishi Veda Vyasa and Maharishi Patanjali have given us a clear road map for this evolutionary journey with vital clues towards understanding both the internal and external culturing processes of Yoga. The cultural teachings of Yoga help us become “All One” by losing our sense of individuality to gain an unparalleled sense of universality.

In our day-to-day personal and inter-personal social life, Yoga has given us multitudes of tools, concepts, attitudes and techniques through which we can attain inner contentment leading to happiness and spiritual realization while simultaneously creating harmony in all relationships. Every one of the psycho-social qualities essential for healthy inter-personal relationships, is cultivated when we live a life

of Yoga in tune with the eternal *dharma*. These humane qualities include loving understanding, innate sensibility that sees other’s perspectives, compassion, empathy, respect, gratitude, fidelity and responsibility. In fact the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* delineates very similar qualities of a spiritually healthy person in Chapter XVI. One who is blessed with these qualities is indeed a divine blessing to the social life of their immediate family, friends, relatives and their society itself.

FOUR PRONGED APPROACH:

Our ancient Indian culture, a vibrant living culture till even today, has a lot to offer in every sphere of life. The elevated spiritual, psychological and metaphysical concepts of our great *Maharishis* hold true even today and it is up to us to delve into them and reap benefits of psycho-physiological health, happiness as well as intra-personal and inter-personal social harmony. Our *Rishis*, the visionary seers, codified innumerable concepts that produce physically, emotionally and mentally healthy individuals who are valuable for betterment of society.

Our ancients in their infinite wisdom realised that we need to deal with different people differently. Some people can be held close whereas with others an arm’s length or often a

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YOGA AND STRESS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Modern man faces stress everywhere and caught in its claws in a vicious spiral knows not how to extricate himself. His life has become a 'rat-race' and his body, emotions and mind are all jangled by the physiological and psychological responses of his 'self' to the stress he faces in his life at every stage of existence. None are spared the whirlpool-like pull of this web. From tiny tots facing innumerable 'tests', in school, corporate businessmen struggling to balance their accounts at work, farmers toiling for their daily bread, soldiers guarding the frontiers, news-reporters breaking themselves in order to make their 'dead-line's - none is spared this whirlpool of stress and no one knows how to escape.

The words tension, pressure and stress are virtually synonymous terms that are used to describe the huge expenditure of nerve energy that modern conditions or situations of life demand from all of us. This can easily be seen when a busy doctor, lawyer, businessman or politician has to meet a large number of persons, face differing problems and find out

immediate solutions. The human body is made to operate without a break, with the result that our nervous system is perpetually under high tension and our muscular system becomes habitually tense. All of this then ultimately leads to mental, emotional and physical fatigue. One of the most common statements heard nowadays is "I am too tired to even think"!

Stress is the natural ability that the human system has developed over millennia in order to withstand strain. The ability to withstand stress differs from one individual to another. Every individual has a threshold of stress up to which, they can bear stress and cope with the demands of their external environment. Type of personality, individual temperament and emotional stability determine this stress threshold. When external stress exceeds the threshold of the individual, then they succumb to overstress. In such a scenario, the body and mind of that person try to reduce, avoid or withdraw from that stress-creating situation. However if the excessive stress persists and/or increases, the body and mind suffer and this leads to physical maladies and mental pathologies. Insomnia, asthma, coronary troubles, hypertension, cancer, sexual inadequacies, diabetes, mental break-down and neurotic behaviour are only a few of the

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YOGIC PERSPECTIVES ON DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

PROLOGUE:

I was dumbstruck when Sumathi (name changed) walked into my office one day and said, “Doctor, Yoga is the best antidepressant ever created”! A truly wonderful and sincere ‘from-the-heart’ statement from a lady, who had suffered depression for more than a decade, and had been driven to despair, by her condition. I still remember her coming to my office a few years ago with her husband and son. She was in terrible emotional and mental agony. Her husband a school headmaster had reached his limits too. She broke down numerous times during the hour long consultation and I cannot forget her prayer that, “All I want is, to be able to worship my God without pain and suffering”. Her condition was so bad that she could not even motivate herself to do her daily *puja* and had lost all interest in daily activities. And, here today, she was right in front of me making this lovely statement about the reality of Yoga being a boon for psycho-somatic health. She has become an advocate of Yoga for womanhood. So many others who found themselves in the

same boat as her have today come out of their despair through her example of Yoga being the best antidepressant and mood elevator .

INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is a spiritual science for the integrated and holistic development of our physical, emotional, mental and moral-spiritual aspects of being. The philosophy of Yoga is practical and applicable in our day-to-day living. Yoga has been documented to normalise psycho-physiological function and recent advances in the field of research have shown that it has sound scientific basis.

Yoga is first and foremost a *moksha shastra* meant to facilitate the individual to attain the final freedom, liberation or emancipation. One of the important by-products of the Yogic way of living is attainment of health and well being. This is brought about by right-use-ness of the body, emotions and mind with awareness and consciousness. This must be understood to be as healthy a dynamic state that may be attained in spite of the individual’s *sabija karma* that manifests as their genetic pre-dispositions and the environment into which they are born. Yoga also helps maintain and sustain this dynamic positive state of health after it has been attained by disciplined self effort.

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ROLE OF YOGA IN GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is a practical spiritual science that empowers an individual to attain a state of integrated and holistic development at all levels. Many studies have now documented the scientific basis of its potential to normalise psycho-physiological function. The central theme of Yoga is the golden mean, finding the middle path, a constant search for moderation and a harmonious homeostatic balance. Yoga is the “unitive impulse” of life, which always seeks to unite diverse streams into a single powerful force. Proper practice produces an inner balance of mind that remains stable and serene even in the midst of chaos. This ancient science shows its adherents a clear path to the “eye of the storm” and ensures a stability that endures within, even as the cyclone rages externally.

GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY:

Geriatric psychiatry is the branch of clinical medicine dedicated to the study and the care of mental disorders in older adults. Such disorders include dementia, depression, delirium, other forms of cognitive impairment

and behavioural disturbances, psychosis, anxiety, substance abuse, and sleep disorders. The most common psychiatric syndrome in the elderly is dementia of varying degrees. Psychotic ideation (usually paranoid) may coexist with dementia. Frequently, in milder cases, the individual is aware of the deficiency in cognition and becomes depressed about actual or threatened loss of function. Depression may then amplify the apparent cognitive decline.

Some of these problems may have come on only in the later years; others may have begun in middle age or even have been life long. Their causes can range from brain diseases, to diseases or conditions of other parts of the body, to adjustment problems or other emotional or psychological problems.

The treatment of these problems begins with the proper diagnosis, and requires not just expertise in geriatric psychiatry but also knowledge of geriatric medicine, neurology, gerontology, abnormal psychology, and psycho-pharmacology. Often a multi-disciplinary approach is needed, involving coordination and teamwork among the primary care physician, psychiatrists, and other specialists.

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SECTION VII
APPLICATION OF YOGA IN
SPECIAL TARGET GROUPS



YOGA FOR HEALTH IN CHILDREN

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

The health of children has become a matter of great concern all over the world and the WHO, UNO as well as UNESCO have been stressing the importance of developing the potential that is there in our greatest resource-the children of the world. The art and science of Yoga has a lot to offer for the children in terms of their health as well as complete well being. Yoga offers us a tool by which we can provide a safe and healthy future for our beloved children. Yoga is both preventive as well as therapeutic for health problems that face children and is also rehabilitative in many situations. It is also important to understand the special needs of the children when teaching them Yoga and methods to create interest in them for this great jewel of our cultural heritage.

Yoga helps children cultivate conscious awareness and increases self-awareness and self-confidence. It teaches children to be gentle with themselves and others and develops focus and concentration. It also develops balance and mental equilibrium along with discipline and a love of learning. It improves performance in all areas of life, including schoolwork and

relieves stress while providing a greater sense of general well-being. Regular practice of Yoga increases flexibility, coordination, and strength of the children and enhances performance of sports activities

HEALTH NEEDS OF CHILDREN:

Children are a unique segment of our population and have very specific health needs. It is pitiable that more than 40% of deaths are seen in the child population under the age of 5 years. Childhood is the age of both physical and mental growth and also has stressful periods such as puberty and adolescence that affect the health of the growing child and youth. The challenge for parents as well as health care providers is to enable growth in a healthy and harmonious manner.

Some of the important health problems facing the child population are:

1. Growth and endocrine disorders
2. Infectious diseases
3. Handicaps
 - a. Physical handicaps
 - b. Neurological handicaps
 - c. Sensory handicaps
 - d. Social handicaps

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YOGA FOR THE DIFFERENTLY - ABLED CHILDREN

Yogachemmal Smt. MEENA RAMANATHAN

INTRODUCTION:

The twentieth century has witnessed an evolutionary explosion. Progress in technology and medicine has been very rapid making life easier and more comfortable. Surgery has advanced to such an extent that replacement of all essential organs is possible. All these advances suggest that humans should be very happy today. Is it true? The present chaotic conditions of living are playing havoc on minds. Instead of feeling and looking happy most people today look defeated, tired, morose or anxious, needing pills to go to sleep, to move their bowels and to keep them calm. All these artificial methods provide no solution to existing problems as they can only give temporary relief at most.

Yoga is a way of life, says Swamiji. One which can make a person rediscover their best in life. It is a great boon to humankind as it is calming and provides a rare opportunity in our chaotic lives to leave the outside world behind and be at peace by helping us focus inwards. Yoga is a spiritual science for integrated and holistic development of physical, mental and spiritual aspects of our being. Recent research has proved that it normalizes physiological and psychological functioning, controlling disturbances before they become powerful

enough to cause breakdown. World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as, “*The state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity*” and Yoga is the vital tool that helps attain that state. The important aspect is that of “being” healthy as well as “feeling” healthy. The qualitative aspect of health is considered important in Yoga and other Indian systems of medicine.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika, states that “Yoga improves the health of all alike and wards off diseases of one who tirelessly practices Yoga whether they are young, old, decrepit, diseased or weak, provided they abide to the rules and regulations properly”. Yoga practices can be done by those with acute, chronic and painful disabilities, as well as those who suffer from chronic illnesses and even those with missing limbs.

WHAT IS DISABILITY?

Disability is any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal. A handicap is a disadvantage, resulting from impairment or a disability that prevents fulfillment of a role considered normal (depending on age, sex and social and cultural factors) for that individual’.

YOGA: A BOON FOR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Having been a medical practitioner for more than a decade now, and having been exposed to the benefits of Yoga as a way of life since the past 30 years, it amazes me that Yoga hasn't yet become an integral part in the preparation of this "life changing experience" of pregnancy and childbirth. It is deeply concerning to witness the lack of support an expectant mother receives towards preparing herself for childbirth leading to a feeling of stressful dread and debilitating exasperation.

It is often said that the knowledge of how to give birth without outside interventions lies deep within each woman and that successful childbirth depends on an acceptance of the process. Yoga as a way of life is an excellent tool to help the expectant mother dwell deep within herself and develop this spiritual awareness of her strengths with the realization of her blessings.

We must always remember that pregnancy and childbirth are a period of great change for the mother as well as for the entire family. It provides the opportunity to take another look

at our life, bring about the necessary changes, and finally become a better human being as the result of this entire process that engenders a great sense of joy and confidence in the individual.

We must never forget that Yoga is not merely a preparation for pregnancy and child birth, but is a continuous preparation for the experience of one's whole life. Yoga is a boon that enables us to realise our blessings and manifest our potential. Pujya Swamiji, used to often say, "*Yoga is not all about changing the world but is all about changing oneself*".

PREPARING ONE'S SELF :

Many stories from our Indian tradition educate us about the maternal-child bonding that begins with conception and warn us against underestimating the power of this psychic bond. The great Rishi Ashtavakara, Bhakta Prahalada and Abimanyu are just a few examples of so many incidents where the child in the womb was able to fully comprehend for itself the external environment and be born with amazing abilities.

Modern medicine has finally come to realize the importance of the maternal mental and emotional status in smoothening the entire process of pregnancy and childbirth. This has

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YOGA PRACTICES DURING PREGNANCY

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1ST TRIMESTER

ardha kati chakra asana

chatush pada asana and *kriya*

trikona asana

vyagraha pranayama and *chiri kriya*

nikunja or *bala asana*

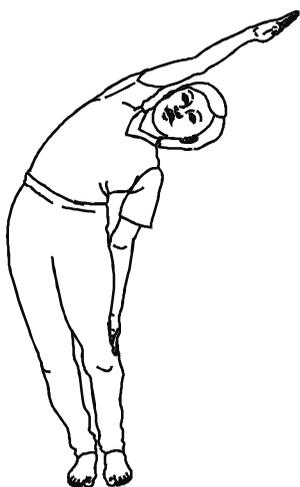
eka and *dwi pada uttana asana*

ashwini mudra

baddhakona asana and *kriya*

pranava pranayama

moola bandha



Ardhakati chakra asana

ARDHAKATI CHAKRA ASANA:

Stand in a steady *samasthiti asana* with your arms by your side. Breathe in and lift your right arm over your head. Try to extend the arm over your head towards the left as far as possible without bending it. This gives a good stretch to the entire right side of the body. Slowly start to breathe out and lower your arm slowly back to the side. Repeat the practice a few more times.

Make sure that you lift your arm on the in breath and lower it on the out breath. Perform the practice on the opposite side and then repeat the entire practice a few more times.



Trikona asana

TRIKONA ASANA:

Stand in *samasthiti asana*. Place your feet two to three feet apart facing forwards. Turn your head and right foot to the right side and slowly bring your right hand down to the right foot and place the palm of the right hand on the ground in front of the right foot. Look up at the middle finger of the left hand. Let the entire torso get a good twist and stretch. Hold the position for 30 seconds while performing deep breathing. Perform the practice on the opposite side and then repeat the entire practice a few more times.



Nikunja asana

NIKUNJA OR BALA ASANA:

The baby posture is helpful to relieve tensions in the pelvic region and restore the uterus to a healthy position. From a position on all fours relax the elbows to the floor, placing the chest flat down between the elbows. Turn the head to the right side to rest like a baby. Breathe deeply in and out three to six times. Then turn the head to the left side and repeat three to six times more before returning to a heel sitting position in *vajra asana*. This position also helps in postural drainage of the lungs and relieves congestion.

CHATUSH PADA ASANA:

Chatush pada asana is an excellent practice for women especially during pregnancy as it relaxes the spine and helps in improving the pelvic circulation. To perform this pose, sit in an erect *vajra asana* and then place both your palms on the ground in front of you. Lift your buttocks off your heels and adjust your hands and feet in such a way that you are in a four footed pose. Your weight should be balanced on your hands and knees thus giving this *asana* its name. Keep your body parallel to the ground and perform deep and rhythmic breathing.

After performing the posture for a comfortable period of time, slowly relax back to the *vajra asana* and enjoy the feeling of relief that is produced by this simple yet effective posture.



Chatush pada asana

CHATUSH PADA KRIYA:

This action is performed by moving around your area in the four footed *chatush pada asana*. Take up a comfortable *chatush pada asana* and then slowly move forward on all fours. Then start to move backward a few steps. Take a few steps to your right and then take a few steps to your left. Start to move in a circle around

TEACHING YOGA TO SENIOR CITIZENS

Yogachemmal Smt. MEENA RAMANATHAN

I have been fortunate and privileged to have opportunities to conduct Yoga classes for senior citizens through Pondicherry University Community College and ACYTER, JIPMER. Teaching various Yogic techniques to them has always been an unique experience. I have always respected as well as wondered at their sense of commitment, dedication and enthusiasm in learning this grand art/science. Their determination and sense of timing has often left me speechless and flabbergasted.

As one grows older, the transformation back into the childhood begins. They are sometimes self-centered and childish, craving to gain attention. They love to be praised and pampered (*who doesn't for that matter?*). Feeling sad, worried or bored may be more common for older people who are facing retirement or coping with the death of a spouse, relative or friend. Adapting to these changes leaves them feeling lonely. They carry a notion that they are of no use anymore to the family or the society and hence start feeling inferior and depressed. Their mobility, range of movement,

flexibility and the ability to turn (I used to call it turnability- a standard joke in the senior citizen class) is less than before. The physical stiffness radiates to their mind too. Hence, before starting the practice sessions for them, it is essential to talk to them on a personal basis and counseling is the first and foremost step before starting the Yogic curriculum. We need to understand their health conditions thoroughly before deciding on the practices that could be given so that they gain the maximum benefit.

Yoga is commonly understood as a practice that is physically beneficial, whereas it is concerned and related more with the mind than the body. Any sign of disease manifested in the body is a result of a mental imbalance or an unhealthy attitude. Promoting healthy lifestyles of elderly people is vital in helping them maintain good health and lead happy and independent lives.

In general, our life-span has increased and we live longer than we used to. But as we grow older, we typically become more susceptible to ailments that are linked to aging and as a result, we tend to move less. The less we move, the more susceptible we become to a variety of ailments, and so it becomes a truly vicious cycle. Yoga has been proven to help alleviate or reduce many of these health challenges, making it an increasingly popular choice for the adult

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A BASIC YOGA THERAPY PROGRAMME FOR PATIENTS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a disease in which the nerves of the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) degenerate. Myelin, which provides a covering or insulation for nerves, improves the conduction of impulses along the nerves and also is important for maintaining the health of the nerves. In MS, inflammation causes the myelin to disappear consequently slowing down the electrical impulses along the nerves and also nerves themselves are damaged. As more and more nerves are affected, a person experiences a progressive interference with functions such as vision, speech, walking, writing, and memory.

The cause of multiple sclerosis is still unknown though the recent research has focused on the immune system and genetics for explanations. In MS, researchers suspect that a foreign agent such as a virus alters the immune system so that the immune system perceives myelin as an intruder and attacks it. The attack by the immune system on the tissues that it is supposed

to protect is called autoimmunity, and MS is believed to be a disease of autoimmunity. While some of the myelin may be repaired after the assault, some of the nerves are stripped of their myelin covering (become demyelinated). Scarring also occurs, and material is deposited into the scars and forms plaques.

Although its role is unclear, genetics may play a role in multiple sclerosis. European gypsies, Eskimos and African Bantu essentially do not develop multiple sclerosis, while native Indians of North and South America, Japanese and other Asian groups have a low incidence. The general population has less than a one-percent chance of developing multiple sclerosis. The chance increases in families where a first-degree relative has the disease. Thus, a brother, sister, parent, or child of a person with multiple sclerosis stands a one-percent to three percent chance of developing multiple sclerosis. Similarly, an identical twin runs a nearly 30% chance of acquiring multiple sclerosis whereas a non-identical twin has only a 4% chance if the other twin has the disease. These statistics suggest that genetic factors play a major role in multiple sclerosis. However, other data suggest that environmental factors also play an important role.

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**SECTION VIII
IN CONCLUSION**



YOGA: THE IDEAL WAY OF LIFE

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is gradually being welcomed into modern health care systems as an understanding of its multifarious benefits is gaining ground worldwide. In our haste to have it accepted into the mainstream medicare, we must not however forget that Yoga is first and foremost a spiritual science for the integrated, holistic development of the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of our being.

Though the recent advancements in the field of research have given evidence that Yoga helps normalize human physiological and psychological functioning more importantly the practice of Yoga as a way of life is calming and provides a rare opportunity in our chaotic lives to leave the madness of the outside world behind and attain an inner peace by helping us to focus inwards.

The World Health Organisation defines health as “The state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity”. The Yogic way of living is a vital tool that helps attain that ‘state’ of

health. We must not forget that it is more important to have both a sense of “being” healthy as well as “feeling” healthy. Hence, the qualitative aspect of health, the spiritual nature of the human life is rightly considered more important in Yoga and other Indian systems of traditional medicine.

The *Bhagavad Gita* defines Yoga as equanimity at all levels which may also be taken as the perfect state of health where there is physical homeostasis and mental equanimity giving rise to a healthy harmony between the body and mind. The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, also states that “Yoga improves the health of all alike and wards off diseases of one who tirelessly practices Yoga whether they are young, old, decrepit, diseased or weak, provided they abide to the rules and regulations properly”.

YOGA, THE ORIGINAL MIND-BODY MEDICINE:

Yoga is the original mind body medicine and is one of the greatest treasures of the unique Indian cultural heritage. As both an art and science it has a lot to offer humankind in terms of an understanding of both the human mind as well as all aspects of our multilayered existence. This ancient science of mind control as codified by Maharishi Patanjali more than

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2500 years ago helps us to understand our mental processes as well as the cause - effect relations of a multitude of problems facing modern man.

Modern man is the victim of stress and stress related disorders that threaten to disrupt his life totally. Yoga offers a way out of this 'whirlpool of stress' and is a wholistic solution to stress. Yogic lifestyle, diet, attitudes and various practices help man to strengthen himself and develop positive health thus enabling him to withstand stress better. This Yogic "health insurance" is achieved by normalizing the perception of stress, optimizing the reaction to it and by releasing the pent up stress effectively through various Yogic practices.

Yoga is a wholistic and integral science of life dealing with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health of the individual and society.

A PERSONAL EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY:

Yoga is a continuous process. The whole problem with something being goal-oriented is that people think that the goal is something to be reached at the end of the journey, but it is the journey itself that is important. This entire Yogic process is not what you learn and not what you achieve. Yoga is something that you "live" until your last breath, and even that last breath should be completed with awareness. You should go with the satisfaction of knowing that you have done your best. Yoga is a continuous process. It is a journey and the goal is the journey itself.

Yoga is getting to know what your body can and cannot do. Yoga is watching the breath, slowing down the breath and discovering that you can have a wonderful control over your emotions when slowing down the breath, because breath is the seat of our emotions. Yoga is not about the number of Yoga practices we do nor is it about how many times or how long we do them. It is all about how we live our life in tune with *dharma*.

This is all about our evolutionary journey from the lower animal states of being to the highest divine states of being that has been beautifully described by the Sufi Saint Rumi hundreds of years ago. He declared in ecstasy, "*I died as a mineral to become a plant, I died as a plant to become an animal, I died as an animal to become a man, I died as a man to become an angel, I died as an angel to become a God. When was I ever the less by dying*"?

Yoga is life and everything we do is Yoga. Yoga is in every second of life, Yoga is in every action you do and in every thought you have and in every emotion that you feel. For modern man in a modern setting, I feel more than anything else that Yoga is skill in action. Whatever you do, you should do with the attitude that it is to be done to the best of your ability and with total effort. I think that to have action that is skilful and yet not motivated by any desire is a model concept for modern man. I see Yoga, in its modern context, as skilful action without desire or concern about the fruits of our actions.

YOGA AND HEALTH:

Yoga understands health and well being as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not a mere 'state' to be attained and maintained. The lowest point on the continuum with the lowest speed of vibration is that of death whereas the highest point with the highest vibration is that of immortality. In between these two extremes lie the states of normal health and disease. For many, their state of health is defined as that 'state' in which they are able to function without hindrance whereas in reality, health is part of our evolutionary process towards Divinity.

The lowest point on the dynamic health continuum with lowest speed of vibration may be equated with lowest forms of life and mineral matter while the highest point with highest speed of vibration may be equated with Divinity.

The Yogic concept of health and disease enables us to understand that the cause of physical disorder sprouts from the higher levels of the mind and beyond. *Adhi* – the disturbed mind is the cause and *vyadhi* - the disease is the effect manifested in the physical body. Maharishi Patanjali mentions “*vyadhi*” as a hindrance to the complete integration of the individual personality. He doesn't directly refer to the treatment of particular diseases as his approach is more holistic and expanded rather than analytical and limited. Patanjali prefers to 'integrate' rather than deal exclusively with individual symptoms of dis-integration.

The diseases are merely gross symptoms that accompany disturbances of the mind called *vikshepa* which appear as *duhkha* (misery or pain), *daurmanasya* (dejection), *angame-jayatva* (tremors) and *svasaprasvasa*, (disturbances in breathing). Through the Yoga life, one can control these disturbances before they become powerful enough to cause breakdown. The two-pronged attack advised by Patanjali is holistic: *yama-niyama* on the psychological side and *asana-pranayama* on the physiological.

YOGA AND SOCIAL LIFE:

The science and art of Yoga, has for millennia guided man in his search for truth. Even in his personal and social life, Yoga has given him the tools and techniques with which he can find happiness, spiritual realization and social harmony. Various Yogic concepts have guided man towards shaping his life and the interpersonal relationships in his social life. The Yogic concepts of *samatvam* (mental and emotional equanimity) and *stitha prajna* (the even minded, balanced human being) give us role models to emulate.

An understanding of the *pancha klesha* (five psycho-physiological afflictions) and their role in the creation of stress and the stress response help us to know ourselves better and understand the how's and why's of what we do. The concept of the *pancha kosha* (the five layered existence of man as elucidated in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*) helps us to understand that we have more than only the physical existence. This

gives us an insight into the role of mind in causation of our physical problems and psychosomatic disorders. All these concepts help us to look at life with a different perspective (*yoga drishti*) and evolve consciously towards becoming Humane Beings. The concept of *vairagya* (dispassion or detachment) when cultivated enables us to be dispassionate to the *dwandwa* (the pairs of opposites) such as praise-blame, hot-cold and the pleasant-unpleasant situations; that are part and parcel of our existence in this life.

The regular practice of Yoga as a ‘Way of Life’ (as defined by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj) helps us reduce levels of physical, mental and emotional stress. This Yogic ‘way of life’ lays emphasis on right thought, right action, right reaction and right attitude. In short Pujya Swamiji defined Yogic living as “right-use-ness of body, emotions and mind”. This is in tune with *svadharma*.

The *pancha yama* and *pancha niyama* provide a strong moral and ethical foundation for our personal and social life. The *yama-niyama* provide a strong moral and ethical foundation for our personal and social life. They guide our attitudes with regard to the right and wrong in our life and in relation to our self, our family unit and the entire social system. These changes in our attitude and behaviour will go a long way in helping to prevent the very causes of stress in our life.

Living a happy and healthy life on all planes is possible through the unified practice of *Hatha*

Yoga especially when performed consciously and with awareness. *Asanas* help to develop strength, flexibility, will power, good health, and stability and thus when practiced as a whole give a person a ‘stable and unified strong personality’. *Pranayamas* helps control our emotions which are linked to breathing and the *pranamaya kosha* (the vital energy sheath or body). Slow, deep and rhythmic breathing helps to control stress and overcome emotional hang-ups. The inner aspects of Yoga such as *dharana* and *dhyana* help us to focus our mind and dwell in it and thus help us to channel our creative energy in a wholistic manner towards the right type of evolutionary activities. They help us to understand our self better and in the process become better humans in this social world.

The adoption of *Bhakti Yoga* enables us to realise the greatness of the Divine and understand our puniness as compared to the power of the Divine or the Universal Mother Nature. We then can realize that we are, but puppets on a string following its commands on the stage of the world. Once we do so, we will then perform our activities with the sole intention of them being an offering to the Divine and thus gratefully receive blessings.

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD HUMAN BEING:

The Universe is the Divine, Mother Nature is Divine and "Every Being" is the Divine. You are the Divine and the Divine is you. Of course we must be careful that we don't go on an ego trip by misunderstanding this reality. The Divine is ‘that’ which is beyond name and form

yet manifests to us through every name and form dear to us. He, She, It manifests to me personally through my father, my mother, my wife, my children, my students, my patients, my teachers, anyone and anything I choose to hold dear to my heart. Yoga is the dearest thing I hold to my heart and so for me the Divine is Yoga and Yoga is the Divine.

Patanjali says that the Divine, or *ishwara*, is beyond the impurities of *klesha* (affliction or poison) and fructifications of the *karma*. He also implies in the *Yoga Darshan* that we can become 'that' divinity itself when we rid ourselves of the impurities that prevent that awareness. Every *yoganga*, every component of Yoga, every part of life itself is a state of being, a state wherein we are a pure vehicle for the universal nature to manifest in its totality. The Divine is therefore for me a 'state of being'. If you are in that state, everything is Divine. On the other hand if we are not in it, then everything seems to be non-Divine.

CONCLUSION:

Love for Yoga is the key component of a Yoga life. Of course, joy and fun are part of Yogic living at all times. Develop an ardent desire to evolve on the path towards oneness and keep working on it non stop. Compassion, empathy and love are important dynamics that are to be worked on while petty egocentric stuff needs to be kept at the bottom of the pile. The ability to sublimate one's individuality for the sake of the group is an important part of the Yoga life.

Constant growth through *satsanga* is very useful, and being open to correction and change at all times is a must. The *Guru* is not just the physical manifestation but is a spirit of guidance that can manifest through so many vehicles. One must be constant on the lookout for its manifestation as such a spirit may manifest through our partner, our children, our neighbours, our students, our friends and often through our worst enemies too. I have found that people who consider me their worst enemy have actually helped my growth more than some who have always been caring and considerate. The ones always looking for chances to degrade me keep me on my toes, and make me do the best I can without fail. They are the stimulant that enables the best to flower through me. When they play such a great role in my life, is not it right that I thank them for being a manifestation of the *Guru* spirit too?

The Yogi wishes peace and happiness not only for himself, but also for all beings on all the different planes of existence. He is not an "individualist" seeking salvation for only himself but on the contrary is an "universalist" seeking to live life in the proper evolutionary manner to the best of his ability and with care and concern for his human brethren as well as all beings on all planes of existence.

*"Om, loka samasta sukhino bhavanthu sarve
janaha sukhino bhavanthu"*

"Om shanti, shanti, shanti Om"

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YOGA THERAPY IN MODERN TIMES

Yogacharya Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

Yoga as a mode of therapy (*Yoga Chikitsa*) has become extremely popular, and a great number of studies and systematic reviews offer scientific evidence of its potential in treating a wide range of psychosomatic conditions. Yoga understands health and wellbeing as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not merely a 'state' to be reached and maintained. Yoga helps the individual to establish *sukha sthanam*, which may be defined as a dynamic sense of physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, the visionary founder of Ananda Ashram at the ICYER and one of the foremost authorities on Yoga in the past century exclaimed lucidly, "*Yoga Chikitsa* is virtually as old as Yoga itself, indeed, the 'return of mind that feels separated from the Universe in which it exists' represents the first Yoga therapy. *Yoga Chikitsa* could be termed as "man's first attempt at unitive understanding of mind-emotions-physical distress and is the oldest wholistic concept and therapy in the world". To achieve this Yogic integration at all levels of our being, it is essential that we take into consideration the all encompassing multi dimensional aspects

of Yoga that include the following: a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through *asana*, *mudra-bandha* and *kriya*, invigorating breath work through *pranayama* and the cultivation of a healthy thought process through the processes of *Jnana Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*.

The ultimate responsibility for health, wellbeing, and healing lies, of course, in the hands of each individual. What we can do as therapists is to empower our clients, to strengthen and support them in their efforts towards self-healing. Indeed *Purananuru*, one of the oldest available collections of *Dravidian (Tamil)* poems of *Sangam* literature (200 BCE – 100 CE) says, "*Life's good comes not from others, nor its gifts, nor ills. Man's pains and its relief are both found within*".

The International Association of Yoga Therapists (IAYT), USA has taken this idea into account in defining Yoga therapy as follows: "Yoga therapy is the process of empowering individuals to progress toward improved health and well-being through the application of the philosophy and practice of Yoga". This has been further elaborated by the IAYT in its "Recommended Educational Standards for the Training of Yoga Therapists", published on 1

Chairman, ICYER at Ananda Ashram,
Pondicherry, India.
www.icyer.com and www.rishiculture.org

July, 2012. This, in my opinion, is the best document on standards in Yoga therapy and is a path breaking effort covering comprehensively all aspects of Yoga as a holistic therapy.

Despite all this, however, modern Yoga therapy seems to have lost touch with the essence of Yoga. We therapists seem to have misplaced the unitive spirit of Yoga somewhere in the blinding maze of modern marketing and dry, academic qualifications. Instead of seeking to understand the real cause behind the *duhkha* experienced by our patients, we are often content to simply manage the manifest symptoms. However, unless we aim to treat the individual's underlying psychosomatic disassociation and ignorant, jaundiced perception of reality, we are really not practicing real *Yoga chikitsa*. Managing and suppressing manifest symptoms using Yoga techniques without trying to find and correct the 'underlying' cause is better described as YOGOPATHY! I am not against Yogopathy as it may be useful no doubt, but we need to understand that is very different than real *Yoga Chikitsa*.

The vital and living, experiential link in the chain of Yoga seems to be missing in today's Yoga therapy. This link is the therapist's own personal *sadhana*. By this I do not just mean the external practice of some techniques, but the internalization of Yogic principles as a 24/7/12 lifestyle. The strength of any chain depends on its weakest link. So too, the strength

of *Yoga Chikitsa* depends on the therapist's personal *sadhana* and conscious Yogic living and on how clearly this '*Spirit of Yoga*' is passed on to his or her clients. "An ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory" is a well-known proverb, and very true when it comes to the practice of Yoga in any form. Unless we ourselves know what to do, how to do it, why we do it, and what it feels like when it's done, how can we intelligently "prescribe" it to others? Indeed, isn't it against the very spirit of the universal laws of the *yama-niyama* to recommend a practice to someone without a personal experience of the nature of the practice itself?

The above caveat also holds true for researchers studying the effects of Yoga techniques. If they haven't a clue about the actual 'Yoga' involved in their investigations, then what are they studying? Unless one has an experiential understanding of the technique, one cannot know the 'point' at which one enters and becomes one with the practice. This being true, how can we know where the benefits of the practice manifest physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually? If we don't have the 'experience' of the technique and its 'state of being', what are we going to research, and what is the effect we are going to report?

When we acknowledge that Yoga demands full awareness and consciousness in every moment of our life, this conundrum becomes even thicker, deeper, and more difficult to sort out. Unless we live a life of Yoga, or at least attempt

to do so, how can we understand the inherent spirit of 'wholeness' that joins all things together? Unless we lead by the example of our lives, how can we convince others to follow us? A good teacher teaches more by example than words, and so does a good therapist, who heals more by 'being' the therapy than by just prescribing techniques galore. In case you think my rant is all about qualifications and titles, I must disappoint you. Simply because someone is a qualified physiotherapist, medical or paramedical professional, or counselor, or has acquired a degree in Yoga, there is no guarantee that he or she will be a 'good' Yoga therapist. Conversely, someone's lack of an academic qualification doesn't mean that he or she will be a bad Yoga therapist. In my humble opinion, intelligence, empathy, compassion, and understanding are not necessarily by-products of an academic career or institutional status.

Lately, I have actually begun to question the very scientific research itself that makes up the foundation of "evidence based" Yoga therapy. Many excellent scientists are researching Yoga and its effects on different populations and in different conditions, yet their understanding of Yoga is so limited that they end up missing the boat completely. This is because they try to fit the grand design of Yoga into the limited box of their methodology and end up not studying "Yoga" at all. Papers are published that are excellent from a scientific perspective, but truly very limited from a Yogic perspective. One example of this is a paper on community-based

Yoga classes for type 2 diabetes published in 2009. In my opinion, the researchers didn't really study Yoga at all, and yet they have published an acceptable paper that will be quoted in future publications and become a part of the decision-making criteria on Yoga therapy for type 2 diabetes. In their study, the researchers report that, "Despite broad inclusion criteria, around two-thirds of the patients on GP diabetic registers proved ineligible, and 90% of the remainder declined to participate". *In other words, only 10% of 33% of potential candidates participated, which is just 3.3%!* The authors report further that "Attendance at Yoga classes was around 50%. Nobody did the exercises regularly at home. Yoga teachers felt that most participants were unsuitable for 'standard' Yoga exercises because of limited flexibility, lack of basic fitness, co-morbidity, and lack of confidence". If no one felt like doing the exercises at home and if indeed no one did them, then my question is, What Yoga were they really doing and what type of teachers did they have? Would any other field of human endeavor accept such slipshod work? If not, why should we in Yoga do so?

The need of the hour is for a symbiotic relationship between Yoga and modern science. To satisfy this need, living, human bridges combining the best of both worlds need to be cultivated. It is important that more dedicated scientists take up Yoga and that more Yogis study science, so that we build bridges between these great evolutionary aspects of our civilization. Yoga is all about becoming "one"

with an integrated state of being. Yogopathy, in contrast, is more about “doing” than “being”. As I have written recently, when viewed from this wholistic perspective, Yoga can never really ever be an intervention. This role must be left to Yogopathy.

We, as Yoga practitioners, teachers, researchers, and therapists, must make a sincere and determined attempt to strengthen that one important link in the chain of Yoga—the link of our personal, ‘every moment *sadhana*’. This is imperative, for the very strength of the ‘*Chain of Yoga*’ depends on it. We owe it not only to ourselves as evolving human beings; we owe it to Yoga as well.

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A CLOSING WORD

The best ever definition of health may be attributed to the father of surgery, Acharya Sushrut (~600 BC) who defined health as “a dynamic balance of the elements and humors, normal metabolic activity and efficient elimination coupled with a tranquil mind, senses and contented soul” (*samadoshah samaagnishcha samadhaatu malakriyah, prasanna atmendriya manah swasthyabhidheeyate. Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthanam, 15:41*). Yoga to me is undoubtedly and truly the best means to achieve such a dynamic state of wholistic health.

As *Yoga Chikitsa* starts to be introduced into mainstream health care, we must not fall into the dangerous trap of claiming that Yoga is a miracle that can cure everything under the sun for that “puts off” the modern medical community more than anything. They then develop a stiff resistance to Yoga instead of becoming more open to this life giving and health restoring science. As the use of *Yoga Chikitsa* in medical centers is still in its infancy we must be cautious about the after-effects we may produce by our conscious and unconscious thoughts, words and actions. Better to err on the side of caution than be true to the adage, “fools rush in where angels fear to tread”. We must remember that, it is only when we begin to consciously understand our limitations that we can then grow and evolve multiplying our inherent strengths manifold.

I am not downplaying the potentiality of Yoga for it DOES have a role in virtually each and every condition affecting humankind. As stress is the main causative, precipitating and aggravating factor in every known disorder and disease, Yoga as the potent

antidote to stress can for sure improve things for the better. However, though Yoga can improve the condition of nearly every patient, it doesn't necessarily translate into words such as cure. Modern medicine doesn't have a cure for most conditions and hence when Yoga therapists use such words, it creates a negative image and consequent reaction that does more harm than good. We must remember that the wise "know" that they "know nothing", the arrogant and ignorant fools "think" they "know everything".

I would like to reiterate at this point the need of the modern age which is to have an integrated approach towards all forms of therapy. Integrative medicine is the future and we must try to integrate concepts of Yoga in coordination and collaboration with other systems of medicine such as Allopathy, Ayurveda, Siddha, Homeopathy and Naturopathy. Physiotherapy, osteopathy and chiropractic practices may be also used with the *Yoga Chikitsa* as required. Lifestyle modification is the keyword and we must not forget that advice on diet and adoption of a healthy natural lifestyle is very important irrespective of the mode of therapy employed for the patient.

I feel that it is apt to end with a *Subhashita*, one of many witty and epigrammatic verses in Sanskrit literature that taunts those doctors and therapists who do not treat their patients in a proper way and who are more interested in making money, name and fame than in curing them.

*vaidyaraaja namastubhyam yamaraaja sahodarah
yamastu harati praanaan vaidyah praanaan dhanaani cha*

This may be translated as follows. "Salutations to you O doctor, for you are the brother of Yamaraja, the Lord of death. Whereas Lord Yama takes away only our life, you take both our life as well as our money too"!

May we not become such inhospitable humans and may we do our best for all those who come into contact with us. May we improve their life by the best of our efforts and may we always strive to have a balance between heart and head, between empathy and intelligence thus living Yoga as skill in action (*karmasu koushalam*) at all times. May we all be true therapists, ones who care for our human brethren who are in the throes of suffering (*duhkha*). May we enable them to attain as best as possible a state of health and wellbeing (*sukha*) through the living giving and life transforming art and science of Yoga.

Yogacharya

Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

June 21, 2013 Pondicherry, India

THE WORLD BLESSES Dr. ANANDA

*Blessings from elders, teachers, colleagues,
students and others from all over the world*

“**A**uthentic, comprehensive, and well researched by a brilliant doctor and world leader in the field of Yoga and health. Highly recommended for Yoga teachers, and students worldwide.”

- Larry Payne Ph.D. E-RYT500 YTRX,

Founding director Yoga Therapy Rx™ & Prime of Life Yoga™, LMU Extension Program, Co-Author, Yoga for Dummies, Yoga Rx & The Business of Teaching Yoga, Founding Director Samata International Yoga & Health Institute, Los Angeles, California, USA

“Ananda may not be a Vayo Vriddha (one who is senior in age) but he is indeed a Jnana Vriddha (senior in wisdom)”.

**- Padmabhushan Dr. B. Ramamurthy,
Eminent Indian Neurosurgeon**

“Dr. Ananda is a true Yogi in every sense of the word”.

**- Wendy Brabazon,
Brisbane, Australia**

“A many sided genius and a multifaceted personality, Dr. Ananda is a Yoga Guru par excellence carrying on the legacy of his great father, the revered Yogamaharishi Dr. Gitananda Giri Swamiji. He is a much respected Doctor of Medicine, a talented Bharatanatyam exponent, a forceful and able speaker, a consummate composer and choreographer, a prolific author of valuable books, commendable producer of DVDs pertaining to Yoga and a skilful organizer of cultural and spiritual events. Dr. Ananda is a perfect gentleman of sterling qualities and has done yeoman service for the cause of cultural and spiritual growth of Pondicherry.”.

**- Padma Bhushan, Sangita Kalanidhi Sri
T.V. Sankaranarayanan, Eminent Carnatic Maestro,
Chennai, India.**

“Dr. Ananda is a role model of integration at so many levels”.

**- Dr. Ranjit Rao,
Melbourne,
Australia**

“Dr. Ananda is a unique being. Not only is he the son of one of the most significant Yogis of our times, but also has to his credit, a modern education through his degree as a doctor. He is also a truly gifted musician, bringing delightful melodies to the crowds. Such a person who has a spiritual heritage, modern education and an artistic flair is rare in today’s contemporary times. His devotion to promote the Yoga lineage of his father is unquestioned, and is visible through his work both in Pondicherry, and outside. Both my colleagues and I have had numerous opportunities to meet and interact with him. Each time Ananda’s warm heart extends out so warmly, and it shows me a sign that he has indeed embraced the real meaning

“Ananda’s beautiful way of teaching and speaking throughout sessions is an inspiration and fills in many gaps that perhaps have been left open in the real “objective” of Yoga”.

Yogacharini Cathy Davis, Cornwall, UK

of Yoga into his heart. I bless Ananda to have a long and purposeful life. And I look forward to many more of his creative endeavors”.

- Yogacharya Yogashri T.K.V. Desikachar, Founder Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai, India.

“This new book on Yoga therapy is from a well known Yoga teacher, medical doctor, Bharatanatyam artiste, musician and an acclaimed teacher in all these branches. It is a welcome book with many interesting ideas on Yoga Philosophy and Yoga Therapy both of which are of great importance in this age of quick knowledge and fast applications in therapy of an ancient wisdom whose authenticity in application is always under a scanner. Dr. Ananda belongs to a great tradition of Yogis and has impeccable credentials to write this book. This outstanding book is a handy reference to the above aspects of a great science that is contributing worldwide to health promoting activities”.

- Prof T.M. Srinivasan, Dean, Division of Yoga and Physical Sciences, S VYASA Yoga University, Bangalore, India.

“Dr. Ananda, born to Yogins, belongs to a great Yoga tradition and has excelled in the modern medical field too. His contribution to the field of Yoga therapy is unique as he has given the due respect to the science of Yoga as founded by our ancient Rishis and the science of modern medicine as expounded by modern scientists. He has

“ Dr. Ananda represents the union of the worlds of spirituality and art, devotion to the Master and love for the family, science and philosophy, the spiritual doctrine and the modernity of insights. He is really a super special person who lives what he talks! The mood he creates around him is Sattvic! I thank God for enabling us to know him and to make us a part of his Yoga family”!

***-Yogacharini
Sabrina,
Milan, Italy***

rightly pointed out the shortcoming of prescribing Yogasanas and Pranayamas for specific illness and called such an approach as “Yogopathy”. His approach to Yoga therapy has been a holistic one. He has been open to the work of other Yoga institutions, displaying the true quality of a Yogi. Genetically a talented artist, he has been promoting the classical carnatic music and dance by composing and singing classical carnatic songs and playing mridungam. It just not only brings out his special talent but acts as a threshold of his evolved mind. May the Almighty shower His choicest blessings on Dr. Ananda for a long and healthy life and fulfill his ambitions in carrying on the Yoga tradition and bringing to the fore the importance of Yoga to the new generation”.

***- Yogacharya S. Sridharan, Managing Trustee,
Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai, India.***

“Dr. Ananda, whom I have a good fortune of knowing for more than 15 years, is an extremely professional Yoga, cultural and spiritual teacher to many in India and abroad. I am sure that he inherited these traits naturally from his illustrious parents. When I was starting a Study in India Programme at Pondicherry University I wanted to give the students a flavor of Bharatanatyam and Yoga. I found an extraordinary Guru in him and our association still continues. All of the students were having a very high opinion about him and some of them were inculcated to continue it even after their leaving India. He, being a medical graduate, has a very scientific approach and does

“It is rare to find a person whose happiness is genuinely derived largely from their profound ability to make others happy. Dr. Ananda is undoubtedly one of those rare people, successfully merging facets of modern medicine and ancient Yogic principles to help others reclaim health and happiness. His infectious laughter and joy brings new meaning to the saying, ‘Smile, and the whole world smiles with you’. With a healthy dose of wit to match his warmth and wisdom, Dr. Ananda has a captivating presence that shines with colour, creativity, and compassion”.

*- Diana Timmins,
Sydney, Australia*

research on various aspects of Yoga therapy. I am sure that with his vast experience he will be able to contribute a very good, authentic book of Yoga therapy”.

*- Dr. P.P. Mathur, Vice Chancellor, KIIT University,
Bhubaneswar*

“Dr. Ananda is one of the rare individuals on the planet who has successfully combined a deep personal practice of a comprehensive Yoga lifestyle, with a high level of scholarly medical and academic activity in both Yoga and Yoga therapy. Aside from his considerable expertise, he is a humble man with a very pleasing personality who has the consistent ability to espouse a rational and common sense view on essential issues in the fields of Yoga and Yoga therapy. It is always a pleasure to interact with him and to share his passion for Yoga and spiritual development”.

*- Dr. Sat Bir Singh Khalsa, Director of Research,
Kundalini Research Institute and Kripalu Center for Yoga
and Health; and Assistant Professor of Medicine at
Harvard Medical School, USA.*

“One never tires of listening to Dr. Ananda. His charming way of captivating an audience along with his ability to reinforce even the most abstract of concepts in a concrete way with analogies, metaphors and imagery, must surely rank him amongst the most talented of speakers. Dr. Ananda shares of himself so freely and showers all of us with an abundance of joy, love and pearls of wisdom”.

- Cathryn Doornekamp, Lotus Yoga Retreat, New Zealand.

It's an amazing experience to be in the presence of such a master...to be uplifted and have one's life enhanced by such people is an absolute privilege".

**- Julia Ballinger,
Toowoomba,
Australia.**

“While I understand that much of Dr. Ananda’s teaching has been beautifully underpinned by the wisdom of his beloved parents, I believe that he brings his own special wisdom to the teaching of the Yoga Darshana and his humility in acknowledging the source, is another indicator of his worthiness to be regarded as a leader in Yoga in his own right”.

- Leigh Blashki , President, Yoga Australia, Australia.

“Dr. Ananda has simply swept us all off our feet with his charisma, fascinating talks, instructive workshops and soul inspiring cultural performances. He has given a new face to Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga. His affable nature and his delivery in simple language, with lot of anecdotes of the healing inherent in our practices were very impressive. In my many years I’m yet to meet a more accomplished man than Dr. Ananda. His enthusiasm and dedication to service through Yoga is infectious and his humility touches everyone. He is a brilliant speaker and his mastery of the scriptures, the sciences of Yoga and Medicine is profound and yet he conveys them to us in a language understandable to us. It is an unforgettable experience

“Dr. Ananda once again gave his all and then some having people mesmerized by his workshops. This is an explanation that Niraimathi gave me that I share when people come to me in admiration of Dr. Ananda’s workshops.

She says: When Dr. Ananda speaks it's like he is baking a cake. First of all the idea; which cake shall I bake, next the ingredients; placing them all in a bowl, blending all of this together to form a solid batter, then giving you still more he places it in the oven and bakes it for you. When you can see it in its complete form, he then puts on the frosting and delivers it to you, so that all you need to do is take a bite and allow yourself to digest all that has been given”.

- Bernadette Hearn, Vibrational Breath Therapy, Melbourne, Australia

“My dear ‘Brother in Yoga’ Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani is someone who not only possesses a profound knowledge of Yoga, but is also a Medical Doctor. His knowledge is vast and wide, always bringing the purest wisdom of Yoga to the table and reminding us to keep it in Yoga Therapy, moving away from practicing ‘Yogopathy’, one of his terms that relate to the reductionist intention of finding a perfect asana for a certain condition. True to the holistic approach to life and the Universe, Yoga must acknowledge the importance of the whole being and not just the symptom to be treated, so healing is profound and lasting”.

- Antonio Sausys, International Yoga Therapy Conference, USA.

“I must say, Dr. Ananda can certainly disarm any stranger with his sincere smile, and joyous laughter! I wish to sing like him some day for he truly gives so much of himself through his music and teachings”!

**-Yogacharini
Shantha,
Melbourne,
Australia**

being with him. He has endeared himself to our hearts and his sublime accomplishments coupled with humility humbles us all. He sure is the new voice in Yoga. ”

**- Yoga Bhismacharya Sri Bala Ratnam, Founder
Vibrational Breath therapy, Melbourne, Australia**

“As a history teacher in BGV, Kodaikanal I had the pleasure to observe the young Dr. Ananda who could easily be discerned as someone with special characteristics. Even at that time I felt that such a boy, already immersed in pursuit of higher values would become a natural leader and true guide of many. Today when I read his own incursions into his past, I better understand his equipoise and extra-ordinary perception and perspective of life. Though prematurely fully grown-up at that time, exhibiting great maturity, he moved with others, more so in a residential school, without any pretensions whatsoever. I feel even now that he has great heights to reach effortlessly and be a source of inspiration to many. Here is one example of what total dedication and hard work could and did achieve. I never cease admiring the zeal, zest and alacrity he shows in so many aspects of Yoga while integrating it with life itself! May God bless him with abundant energy to carry on with his noble and monumental work”!

- Sri Ramana Prasad, Chennai, India.

“Dr. Ananda combines an incredibly in-depth knowledge of Yoga and Yoga therapy with a beautiful warmth of personality. This makes his work wonderfully accessible and a joy to experience. His dedication to the development of Yoga therapy as a professional and effective health and wellbeing modality is an inspiration and a perfect example of Dharma”.

*- Jennifer Schrader,
President, Australian
Association of Yoga
Therapists, 2013*

“Dr. Ananda is “One of a Kind” like his illustrious parents Ammaji and Swamiji. His output continues to be wonderful and amazing and he is truly a credit to the lineage. Though he has a long list of awards and accomplishments, academic, medical, and in the area of music yet, for me, these awards give no indication of the wonderful human being, multitalented as he is, that I have experienced. As with his father, my life has been much enriched through all my contacts with Dr. Ananda. He has always demonstrated a fantastically sharp intellect, balanced with an equally sharp wit and enjoyment of life. Born as the blend of two great Yogins, he demonstrates what I would term truly Sattvik qualities. His teaching skills are exquisitely gentle reflecting his inner nature and it goes without saying that his knowledge is a boundless ocean so those who experience his presence are privileged. His creative output in the last decade has been staggering and it is wonderful to see his integration of the Yantric principles, so beloved to his father and myself, taken to new heights. A truly magnificent man, Yogacharya, medical doctor and Carnatic musician, the progeny of two 'one of a kind' parents, he is the future of Gitananda Yoga”.

*- Dr. Swami Anandakapila Saraswati (Dr. Jonn Mumford),
Sydney, Australia.*

Ananda ‘bhai’ (elder brother) as I affectionately call him is more than a brother to me. When I imagine a perfect soul in today’s world and I always think of him. He is an extremely simple, hard working, always pleasant, energetic person who is highly knowledgeable not only in Yoga but also the cultural heritage of India through classical music and dance. Having the background knowledge of medicine, he is a perfect person to explore the therapeutic aspects of Yoga.

*- Dr. Kaviraja Udupa,
Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, University of Toronto, Canada*

“A man of the Gitananda tradition who speaks with eloquence, who embodies wisdom, who radiates intelligence and integrity, who leans into humor, who soars into realms of knowledge and can weave all these qualities together into threads of delight and wonder. A man whose eyes sparkle with the light of true teachings and whose very heart and mind dance before us with all honesty and openness. Dr. Ananda has an amazing ability to spin stories of fact and ideas, culture and wisdom, teaching and truth into our hearts and souls at the same time as capturing our minds. Swamiji said, ‘Love is profound interest’ and yes indeed, this truly makes Dr. Ananda a man who inspires Love”.

- Yogacharini Niraimathi, UK and Australia

“Dr. Ananda is only getting better and better. Each time I have an honour to spend time with him, I see more Divinity than ever. Is he always like that? Is Dr. Ananda always so happy? His happiness is very contagious. But how does he manage to keep it and always have it in such abundance that others can experience it too”?

- Yogacharini Sharadha, UK.

“I always feel proud to see that level of pure, untainted tradition expressed and received so well here. I think Ananda Anna did a most remarkable job of showing the strength and deep Yogic insight of the many layers of existence, with great gentleness and humility. His devotion to both Swamiji and Ammaji is as moving as his commitment to Yoga itself”.

- Yogacharini Kanchana Rao, Melbourne, Australia.

Dr. Ananda is the living example of a Yogacharya, “One who lives Yoga”. A son, husband, father, a skillful and expert practitioner of Rishiculture Yoga, allopathic medicine, Carnatic musician, composer, choreo-grapher of Bharatanatyam dance dramas, prolific writer and inspiring teacher, he is a truly integrated being. It is with joy and gratitude that I have been his student for the last four years, during my lengthy residencies in ICYER at Ananda Ashram. His combination of knowledge, experience and devotion to Yoga are inspiring and uplifting. As a musician, I have received from him the gift of the Darshan (vision) of the artist as an instrument for the Divine to manifest on Earth.”

- Yogacharini Sangeeta Laura Biagi, PhD, Senior Yoga Teacher, Ananda Ashram.

“A vibrant, bundle of energy radiates from Dr. Ananda as he is so real, so natural and full of joy. It is always an inspirational experience to be with this joyous, uncomplicated man. He obviously has a huge workload but is able to keep giving, drawing strength from an endless source of energy”.

**- Helen,
Barwon Heads,
Australia.**

“Dr. Ananda speaks with amazing energy, fluency, humour, clarity and persuasion, holding everybody’s rapt attention for hours at a time– without using a single prop or note! Here, we could all see, was a real master in complete command of his field. In addition to his warm and energetic presence, it is the breadth, depth and sheer generosity of his teaching that provide inspiration and food for thought and practice, long after the event”.

- Philip Liney, Sydney, Australia.

“When I think of Dr. Sir, the word Master or Guru comes to mind. He’s already conquered so many feats, both in the external world as well as the internal one. His sole motivating factors in worldly accomplishments are internal. That is, his Ego plays no role. Having mastered the internal environment, he is a free man, a liberated soul who has gained the space to do for others what is right, when it is right. Isn’t that a real Master? Isn’t that real Chikitsa? How can you help others when you yourself need help? Dr. Ananda is self-reliant. He has the knowledge, the skill and the heart. He is his father’s and mother’s son. Puducherry has seen the birth of another Lion”.

- Yogacharini Aishwariya, Canada.

“Dr. Ananda belongs to the Yoga family and has versatile talent. He has grown into a very clear, articulate and compassionate human being. I have high appreciation for the knowledge he possesses, but I have even more

“In Dr. Ananda I see an all-rounder, a living expression of both Yoga being ‘four-fold awareness’ and Yoga being ‘skill in action’. Dr. Ananda has the advantage of being an allopathically trained doctor who has won several medical awards as well as being a fully trained Yogi by his illustrious father and mother. As a consequence of this marvellous training, his portrayal of health is perfectly (w) holistic and scientific. What I see in Dr. Ananda is a talented and gentle soul, a gentle reflection of what I had been told his father was, a lion, the Lion of Pondicherry”.

- Yogacharya Devidasan Giri, Adelaide, Australia

appreciation for the humility with which he shares it. He has done commendable work in field of Yoga research and training, and I am sure he will achieve great heights”.

- Sri Subodh Tiwari, Joint Director-Administration, Kaivalyadhama Yoga Institute, Lonavla, India.

“Dr. Ananda is indeed a true Renaissance Man. Having grown up in the Ananda Ashram, he has absorbed the teachings of his illustrious parents at the deepest level and never ceases to amaze with his profound knowledge. It is impossible to ask him a question and not have an intelligent and fascinating reply! Add to this his medical knowledge as a practicing medical doctor, and his research work in Yoga therapy, and you have a man who would seem at first meeting to be deeply scientific. But wait – this is also someone who can play the mridungam with verve and energy, who composes and sings his own Carnatic songs and can move you to tears of joy at the beauty of his compositions! Listening to Dr. Ananda discourse on almost any topic always captures the attention. His lectures are always informative and his personal style of teaching helps one to retain and understand the material. Not content with all this he is also a prolific writer and maker of videos on Yoga. His articles and books are always succinct, and his videos are lovely to watch, just as his music is wonderful to listen to. It is not an exaggeration to say that Dr. Ananda embodies the principle of *Satyam, Shivam Sundaram* – truth, goodness and beauty”!

-Yogacharini Janita Stenhouse, France.

Doctor Ananda is a gift to the world. He takes the best from his legendary parents and spreads the knowledge in his own, very generous, contemporary and sincere way. I feel blessed to be his true friend in this lifetime.

- Larry Payne, USA

“I met Ananda when he was two years old, when he was imbibing Yoga along with mother’s milk. I watched him grow up as a Tamil in his heart and his imagination. The Tamil people, language, culture, and Yoga provided him with everything he needed, so he never felt a requirement to travel abroad or become something else. He is ever curious, conscientious, and tireless, and now in his middle age it is almost spooky how much he resembles Swamiji”.

- Dr. Kenneth Liberman, Professor Emeritus, University of Oregon, USA

Dr. Ananda is the Guru who brings out the best in and from every student by enabling them to identify their own strengths and limitations, in a gentle yet determined manner. A role-model, who paves, leads and guides students in the tough path towards evolution. He is a humane being who receives respect, as he reverently values and respects all. He is a gem of a teacher, who gives the whole, in totality, with utmost clarity so that even the most complicated, intricate concepts are understood effortlessly by one and all. As his name signifies, Dr. Ananda is “Bliss Personified” and practices what he preaches. I am truly blessed to be his student”.

- Yogachemmal Smt. Meena Ramanathan, Coordinator and Yoga Therapist, CYTER, MGMCRI, Pondicherry

“Dr. Ananda is what Malcolm Gladwell may call a “connector”, which in some ways is perfectly fitting, as the cornerstone of his life’s work is the propagation of Yoga - the quintessential art of connecting. A riveting speaker, an indefatigable researcher, and an exemplary civic leader, he has explored metaphysical complexities of Eastern thought with the intellectual and scientific rigour of Western methodology, and has made ancient concepts palatable to the modern mindset. Ultimately, his body of work allows us to better understand ourselves and our connection to the world around us”.

- Yogacharya Radu Falcon, Canada.

“Having been his student since my childhood, I have witnessed him managing a multitude of responsibilities seamlessly and skillfully. His extraordinary energy levels, in-depth and wide knowledge, phenomenal memory and the ability to sing or talk incessantly definitely make a mark. It is quite something to see him weave fine threads of rhythm of different colors and make a fine fabric, creating fine clothing for the dance to flow through. Above all, one cannot miss the warmth that flows from him as a teacher and a sensitive human”.

- Yogacharini Lakshmi Dhanaraj, Chennai, India.

“Dr ji”, as I lovingly call Dr. Ananda is like a brother to me. He is a remarkable human being, a true Yogi embodied as a medical doctor. He unites the abilities and practicalities of modern medicine, with the ancient and sacred wisdom of Yoga, received in a beautiful lineage from his illustrious parents. When I met him in Pondicherry I was happy to learn from him, and experience his extreme knowledge and clear concepts of Yoga applied as a therapy that was presented by a truly humble and simple man”.

- Ilan Segre, Psychologist, Author of the book Integrative Therapy, São Paulo, Brazil.

“This book by Dr. Ananda will be an important guide for all those who are seeking physical, emotional and mental health with balance in life. These are essential for our holistic spiritual development as these personal experiences in Yoga are a real source of inspiration for all of us. With love and prayers that this book fulfills the purpose for which it is born”.

- Yogacharini Shobana, Gitananda Yoga, Czech Republic.

“I have had the privilege to sit at Dr. Ananda’s feet and absorb the wisdom of his spoken words and to share in his Yogic energy. He is passionate about the Yogic life and is an excellent example of honoring and living by the Yama and the Niyama. He gladly shares his knowledge and is always willing to shine the Yogic Light upon the path of the sincere seeker and it is in this sharing that he is abundantly blessed in return. We are truly blessed by his being and to me he is a true Yogi”.

- Sophie le Roux, South Africa.

Ananda is a shining star in the world of Yoga; teaching this great art / science and inspiring all with his musical and artistic talents.

His life is full of joy and it is contagious!

*- Mary Lou Austin,
USA*

“Being human and being authentic are qualities that Dr. Ananda has very naturally, and they give ‘real’ meaning and substance to the wise words he shares. I think a real teacher leads by example and that information *per se* is not what people are after, or what ‘speaks’ to people who are consciously searching. Humanity and authenticity form the binding ingredients that give all the enlightened facts and wisdom he shares a structure, representing integration of ideas with true life experience. We are all trying to navigate our lives after all. Perhaps this is where the ‘true’ power comes”.

- Maxine Levy, Yoga Teacher, London, UK

“Although Dr. Ananda is a modest and self-effacing man who doesn’t go in much for titles and other typical vanities of our civilization, I venture to assign him to the category of spiritually mature human beings. He is, for me, someone who demonstrates beautifully and unmistakably what our potential truly is, and how Yoga can help us discover this potential. Although his ability as a teacher is indisputable, it is not his Yogic message *per se* that inspires me whenever I see him, as much as it is the fullness of his humanity and the manifest joy he takes in being alive”.

- Yogacharya Billy Uber, Germany.

Dr. Ananda is a blessing: as a human being, a medical doctor and a wanderer on the Yoga path. I am happy and grateful to be part of his Yoga-family and his student. His way of uniting modern science and Yoga is truly illuminating and his gift to explain even complex matters in the most vivid manner has amazed me more than once. It is good to believe in the teachings of a great Guru. It is much better when this great Guru has a deep and scientific understanding. It is best when he obviously perceives the greatest joy in sharing his wisdom. Thanks to the great Guru that Dr. Ananda is, true bliss!

- Yoga Sadhaki Claudia Hemashri Conrad, Germany

“Not only does Ananda have tremendous knowledge and an unbelievable capability to speak, but he has humour and his smile enters the heart of everybody who comes into contact with him. I find in him a symbiosis of the knowledge, wisdom, love and efficiency of our so dearest Ammaji and our revered Swamiji, topped with his own unique sweet humorous personality of humbleness, incredible knowledge and wisdom - a wisdom which comes directly from the Universal Divine Source. He is a very precious gift to the Yoga World and to the World in general”.

- Yogacharini Hanna Machia, Bengaluru, India.

“A lot of books on Yoga therapy offer a limited view of the subject, looking only at the physical approach to health. The holistic approach is missing. Dr. Ananda presents the physical, mental, spiritual dimensions of therapy in the Yoga way. He deals with the patient, rather than the illness. Yet cause and effect are inseparable for Yoga is union at all levels. I wholly endorse Dr. Ananda’s presentation of Yoga therapy”.

- Yogacharya Eric Doornekamp, Founder, Lotus Yoga Centre and Retreat, New Zealand

“Dr. Sir dedicates himself wholly for the cause of Yoga, nothing but Yoga and only Yoga. Being our incessant source of inspiration, he is a role model to us and many others. Dr. Sir is simplicity and humility personified and he is a gem of humanity. Every one of his lectures is like the flood pouring out of an open dam as he is a polymath of amazing proportions. We are proud that he is our Godfather as his amazing capacity for affection, love and his heart brimms with goodwill towards all. He is the epitome of the Bharathiya Samskrithi tradition of 'Guruship'.

- R. Varalakshmi and Dr. R. Balaji, Pondicherry.

“Ananda is nothing but a source of inspiration to me and all those around him. He constantly strives to better himself and this is reflected in his work and Yoga life. He is always thinking of others and doing the best he can, and this means that he positively affects everyone he is in contact with. Little research is done into Yoga and its invaluable health benefits and Ananda is filling this gap in an honest and practical way that will benefit society greatly, especially since

it is done through the respected field of medicine. Even though he is walking in his father's footsteps, he is moving in his own way as well, with his own persona and unique energy. The more he moves in the world the more he is unfolding and the more he unfolds the more enigmatic he is becoming. I have experienced many sides of him, and each one I must say is dignified, humble and always honest. I think that is what makes him so special. He talks of his experiences and obviously learns from them. His experiences are also quite human, as he is human, and so we can all relate to them. To know that he also undergoes many of the same challenges and circumstances that everyone else does, and to hear him talk of them through a Yogic perspective, attracts people and make it easier for them to understand the deeper concepts of Yoga. One finds it impossible to avoid his jovial nature and his youthful and modern sense of humour, which not only radiates from his being, but also permeates throughout his teachings. This seemingly effortless quality enables his students to get a more manageable grasp of these ancient Yogic concepts. Yoga is, "Skill in Action," and Dr. Ananda demonstrates that skill in marvelous ways".

- Yogacharini Kalavathi Devi, Yoga Wales, UK.

"Dr. Ananda is one of the foremost experts on Yoga therapy in the world. His expertise taps into timeless wisdom and expresses the essence of Yoga as a healing modality for the modern mind. While modern in his application, his wisdom and understanding proves him to be one of the greatest experts on Yoga therapy in human history! I am privileged to name him as one of my mentors as is everyone who studies with him. To be in his presence is to experience the deeply profound truth of Yoga's providence as a powerful healing force. Dr. Ananda emanates the consciousness that Yoga endows while simultaneously delivering profound teachings in a concise and systematic method that while being deeply scientific, makes good practical sense. As a living embodiment of Dharma he exudes the joy and energy that physical, mental, and emotional health imparts; he not only practices what he preaches, he is what he teaches"!

- Yogacharya Gowrishankarananda, Atmalaya® Institute, Canada.

“For me the link with Ananda Ashram, with my beloved Ammaji and Dr. Ananda is a divine gift - the source of Light, the treasure of Knowledge and the sweet spiritual Home. Dr. Ananda has a divine blessing of being endowed with a generous heart, sharp mind and skilful hands. One could hardly imagine how one person is able to manage the job of hundreds! It is a great miracle. In every aspects of the life he demonstrates perfection, the Yoga principle of “skill in action”.

- Yogacharini Natalia Aronov (Tasha), Russia and Germany.

“Dr. Ananda is sincere and passionate about Yoga and its beneficial effects with a practical and analytical view of Yoga therapy. He recognizes its limitations in certain conditions and that, if it is to be effective, each person needs to be properly assessed and specific therapy plans worked out according to the needs of the individual, rather than using the same therapy model for all. He is absolutely “a very precious soul” and a blessing to all who come in contact with him; they cannot help but love him because he embodies his mother’s grace and great love. He is such an unpretentious person, with a natural, happy, loving nature which captivates everyone who meets him and it was clearly evident to those of us who have heard him previously, that his presentations have reached a new level and are now much more powerful and authoritative than ever before. He speaks of difficult concepts with such clarity, in a way which is easy for everyone to understand; and for those of us who already understand, he has the ability to take us to a new level of understanding; a new “Aha” moment where we suddenly ‘get it’ in a new way. It sounds to me as if he is now tapping a direct line to the Akash as his famous father was able to do and as we would all love to be able to do”.

- Yogacharini Margo Hutchison, Brisbane, Australia.

“It is a joy to be a student of Dr. Ananda. His Yogic teachings are based on deep understanding and experiences as well as on his medical background. His case studies are nicely wrapped into humorous stories for easy learning. He does not get tired of stressing the importance of getting an overall picture of each human in its whole context. Thank you, Dr. Ananda, for sharing all your knowledge and wisdom with us”.

- Yogacharini Sri Devi, Yoga teacher and Naturopath, Switzerland.

“I knew from the very first day I met Dr. Ananda that I had met a truly inspiring person – one who could not only speak in profound ways about Yoga, but one who demonstrated the humble and heartfelt Yogic qualities that I myself aspired to attain. I knew I had finally found a “real” Yoga teacher. In all my years as a health practitioner and Yoga teacher, I’ve met few people who truly understand the Yogic approach to health and wellbeing. Dr. Ananda is one of them. Raised in a traditional Gurukul and inculcated in Yoga since birth, then later trained in western allopathic medicine, he has a unique and intimate understanding of Yoga’s role in human health and healing. Dr. Ananda is among the few today whose research and teachings are helping to expose Yoga’s vast potential, and to also open wider the myopic and one-dimensional views of Yoga that have become commonplace nowadays”.

- Yogacharya Michael Deslippe, Director, International Yogalayam

The term Yoga implies union of soul and Supreme Soul. I have known Dr. Ananda ever since he was my most sincere and disciplined student during his medical education at JNMC. Yoga has been his life and he has in fact inherited this Art of Living. His immense contribution to Yoga in its many manifestations shall benefit mankind and the world as a whole".

- Dr. Dalia Biswas, Professor & Head, Department of Physiology, JNMC, Wardha, Maharashtra, India.

It is very difficult to put into words something or someone that you simply must experience! We have had the honour to be taught directly by Dr. Ananda at his home in Ananda Ashram and it is abundantly clear that he has so much knowledge about Yoga and its relationship to the body on all levels due to his medical training and growing up in a purely Yogic environment, with astounding parents responsible for the Yogic evolution of countless souls!! We always found him to be honest, thoughtful and egoless. He has an energy that permeates your being when you are in his presence, and to have his blessings on your own Yogic journey can feel like a lifeline”!

- Yogacharya Jnandev and Yogacharini Deepika, Yoga Satsanga Ashram, UK.

“Yoga therapy implies empathy or understanding at a wholistic level (including diet, lifestyle, as well as body and breath work) in an attempt to achieve physical and mental harmony or balance. A person in search of a Yoga therapist is usually attracted to efficient, knowledgeable and effective instruction. Dr. Ananda truly gives such instruction”.

- Yogacharya Muralidharan, Sydney, Australia.

“Sir is one of those people who utilizes all of his 24 hours, just because it is not a crime to do so. He does a myriad of things, that leaves me wondering is there really anything as not having enough time? I could just say I’m proud to be his student and wrap it up, but proud seems like such an inadequate word to describe the feeling. I am one of those limited edition hand-picked-by-god-himself people on earth who has the great fortune of being his student. I am truly gifted to be one of those people who has watched, with reverence, him compose soul-touching stunning songs, choreograph master piece dance items and most of all extremely blessed to have had the opportunity of presenting his compositions to the world. In short he is a man of million words and zillion emotions, filled with passion for his work, love, affection and care for everybody, having a word of appreciation for everything you do and not to forget a great sense of humor.”

- I. Krishnaveni, Student Co-ordinator, Yoganjali Natyalayam, Pondicherry

“A truly worthy son of worthy parents, Dr. Ananda provides new insights and a deeper understanding about the essential components of Yoga therapy. It is my belief that this book is a milestone as it is thought provoking, while being insightful and will hopefully lead the Yoga Therapist to find the missing link between the understanding of traditional Yoga and the essential healing aspects which form a part of Yoga’s collective future. The 'Maker of All', has designed his life to serve the whole of humanity for which I wish to thank God and his parents for giving us a gem in the form of Dr. Ananda. Indeed, he is justifying his life and living by way of evolving himself to make people happy, healthy and peaceful all over the globe through his discourses and writings about Yoga”.

- Dr. BR Sharma, Assistant Director Research, Head, Department of Philosophico – Literary Research, Kaivalyadhama, India.



Ananda Ashram at the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER)

This world famous Yoga Institute has been offering intensive **Six Month International Yoga Teachers Training Courses** from October 2nd through March 25th since 1968, without any break. Thousands of students from all over India and the world have been thoroughly trained in an intensive Yoga programme which starts at 4.30 am each morning and concludes only by 9.00 pm each evening. **CLASSICAL RISHICULTURE ASHTANGA YOGA (GITANANDA YOGA)** as expounded by the world famous *Guru, Yoga Maharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj* is taught in carefully graded steps. Swami Gitananda, a Medical Doctor born in India but who spent forty years in the West, taught *Classical Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga (Gitananda Yoga)* with a scientific, medical basis. The revered Swamiji, considered one of the five leading world experts in *Classical Ashtanga Yoga*, attained *maha Samadhi* on December 29, 1993.

Yogic cleansing practices and fasting, diet and nutrition are basic to the course. More than 108 *asana*, 44 *pranayama* and 56 *kriya* are taught in the six months. Thorough study of the *Yoga Sutra*, *Upanishads*, *Yoga Vasishtha*, *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, *Gheranda Samhita*, *Bhagavad Gita* and other important Yogic texts is made. Training is also given in Carnatic Music, with emphasis on devotional *bhajan*. Those interested may also study *Bharatanatyam* and Classical Instrumental Music. Training in

Raja Yoga and *Jnana Yoga* techniques are given, including elaborate work with Yogic relaxation, concentration and visualization practices. Seats in the course are limited to ten persons annually, who are accepted only after going through preliminary instruction with the Institute's trained teachers as well as participation in the 52 Lesson Correspondence Course, **Yoga: Step by Step**, which is the basic syllabus of the Six Month Course. The Institute has a traditional *Gurukula* setting, in an ideal garden atmosphere, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal. Students are also introduced to the Indian way of life, festivals, cultural programmes, community activities and Hindu rites and rituals, to cultivate an awareness of the culture from which Yoga has sprung.

From October 2001, this course has been extended to an additional six months training, for those considered suitable, giving "hands on" training in Yoga teaching and class organization as well as undertaking senior *yoga* practices. Those eligible for this advanced Yoga work will at the end of the one year training receive a *One Year International Diploma in Yoga Education*. ICYER has more than one hundred affiliated Yoga centres in twenty two countries of the world. Thirty books have been published, as well as a monthly magazine, **Yoga Life**, which has completed more than 45 years of publication for a worldwide audience. The **International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER)** is also headquarters for several worldwide organizations, including **Vishwa Yoga Samaj**, **Yoga Jivana Satsangha** (International) and the **Society for the Preservation of Rishiculture Yoga (SPARC)**. The **International Centre for Yoga Education and Research** is also the office headquarters for **Sri Kambaliswamy Madam**, a 140 year old *Samadhi* site of the great Ashtanga Yoga *Guru* Srila Sri Kambaliswamigal at Thattanchavady, Pondicherry. The *Samadhi* of its founder, Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, is also located at Sri Kambaliswamy Madam and has become a world famous pilgrimage place. Swami Gitananda left his body in *Maha Samadhi* at 2.20 am on December 29, 1993, *Arudhra Darshan*

Day and the full moon in the Tamil month of *Margazhi*. Daily *puja* are conducted at Sri Kambaliswamy Madam, with elaborate *puja* every Sunday morning. Sunday *puja* are open to public who wish to experience a traditional Hindu *puja*. Grand *puja* for the *Samadhi* of the eight *Gurus* of the lineage are conducted throughout the year, as well as many Carnatic Music Festivals at the **Sri Kambaliswamy Madam**.

The **City Centre** of ICYER, **Yoganjali Natyalayam** was established on March 29, 1993. This flourishing Centre of *Yoga*, *Bharatanatyam* and *Carnatic Music* with more than 400 actively enrolled students and 15,000 alumni is located in central Pondicherry, behind the New Bus Stand. It caters to the needs of the local populace as well as providing special individual and personally tailored lessons for passing tourists and those visiting Pondicherry on a short term basis. **Yoganjali Natyalayam** has developed a very popular *Bharatanatyam* troupe, which specializes in performance of the difficult acrobatic **Natya Karanas**, which are essentially a form of *asana*. The Centre presents full length *Bharatanatyam* dance dramas every year in to celebrate the birthday of its visionary founder, while its spectacular Annual Day held every year is a feast of spectacular music, dance and Yoga demonstrations.

THE FOUNDER: A Master Yogi and great Spiritual Teacher, **Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri** had the unique talent of infusing the mystic insights of the *Rishi* into practical life. The exponent of a Bengali *Tantric* tradition, which stretches back hundreds of years, Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri, a medical doctor and scientist, was able to express the abstract ancient insights in practical modern terms. One of the greatest Masters of *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* in the twentieth century, Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj of Pondicherry, India, was a brilliant and dynamic *Guru* known as THE LION OF PONDICHERRY. He taught hundreds of thousands of persons worldwide, the intricate and demanding art and science of *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga*, through his books, his magazine articles, his monthly magazine *YOGA LIFE*, and his

thousands of seeking spirits worldwide. His influence on the modern world of Yoga is immense. He was named *Madathiapathi* of Sri Kambaliswamy Madam in 1975 and carried out his religious duties scrupulously. He founded **Ananda Ashram** (1968) and later, the **International Centre for Yoga Education and Research** (1989) on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, eight kilometers north of Pondicherry. He also founded in March 1993 **Yoganjali Natyalayam**, to teach the Indian cultural arts of *Bharatanatyam* and *Carnatic Music*, as well as *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* to the local populace. Throughout, his approach was scientific, rational and systematic. In 1987 he was awarded the title, “*The Father of Modern Scientific Yoga*” by *Vishwa Unnyanan Samsad* of Calcutta. He was also one of the pioneers in bringing the concepts of traditional *yoga* to the Western mind. On December 20, 1986, Swami Gitananda Giri was awarded the title “*YOGA SHIROMANI*” by the then President of India Shri Zail Singh Ji, at the *World Yoga Conference* held in New Delhi. He personally taught an intensive Six Month International Yoga Teachers Training Course in his Pondicherry *Ashram* for twenty five years from 1968. On March 10, 1986, Swami Gitananda was appointed to **Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi**. Swami Gitananda cooperated and served as advisor to Government in organizing the *First International Yoga Festival* in Pondicherry sponsored by Department of Tourism, in January 1993. Since then, the Festival has been held yearly from January 4th to 7th, and Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani continues to act as advisor for this grand event. Her services and that of Swami Gitananda are regularly and publicly appreciated by the Pondicherry Government at this festival. Swami Gitananda was given so many other honors, including the honour of being the First Vice President of the *All India Association of Mutts and Ashrams* based in Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu to which he was elected in 1983. The organization was headed by the Presidentship of the Shankaracharya of Kancheepuram. To name Swamiji’s

accomplishments would take volumes and indeed, volumes have been written on him. No history of Yoga in modern times is complete without reference to his name. He is the author of twenty two books on Yoga, and conducted five *World Conferences on Yoga*. More than 135 centres of *Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga* are established worldwide, with thousands of *Ashtanga Yoga* teachers trained by him now actively propagating not only Yoga, but also various aspects of Indian culture. He was part of the intellectual community of Yoga practitioners, and was the Chief Patron of the prestigious *Indian Academy of Yoga*, centered at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

THE DIRECTOR: Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani was born in the United States in 1943 but came to India to study Yoga at the age of 25 and fell in love with the country and its culture. She has lived in India ever since, and received Indian citizenship on November 30, 1992, in her own words “the proudest day of my life”. She met her *Guru* in Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj in 1968, and since that time has devoted her life to his teachings and to institutions founded by him. She has been instrumental in training more than 20,000 village children in the art and science of Yoga and *Bharatanatyam* since 1975 through the **Sri Kambaliswamy Yoga and Fine Arts Programme**. Hundreds of those children have taken up Yoga and *Bharatanatyam* teaching as full time careers. She is a journalist by profession and her articles and essays appear in national and international magazines and newspapers. She has been editor of the international magazine **Yoga Life** since 1970 and is Managing Editor of the *Ashram’s* publishing unit Satya Press. She is **Director of Studies (Ashram Acharya)** for the *Six Month International Yoga Teachers Training Course* offered annually at ICYER from October 2nd to March 25th, as well as for the year long *International Diploma in Yoga Education* offered from October, 2001 at ICYER. She is a popular Conference and Seminar speaker. She has been Organizing Secretary for **five** major *International Yoga Conferences* in Pondicherry. She is a prolific author and has

written a dozen books, including two books of poetry. She has been recipient of many National Awards and was awarded the title “*YOGAMANI*” by the President of India Shri Zail Singh Ji in 1986 at an *International Yoga Conference* held at the Asian Village, New Delhi. In 1998 she was awarded the National Award, **Bhaskar Award** by Bharat Nirman and Indian Trade Promotion Organization, New Delhi. In 1999, Pondicherry Government recognized her service for Indian Classical Dance and gave her the **Puduvai Kalaimamani Award**. She was awarded a **Gold Medal** by Government of Pondicherry for her work in *Bharatanatyam* in 2001. She has received numerous awards such as *Outstanding Senior Citizen, Achiever Award, Best Educationist Award, Puduvaikku Pugazh Sertha Pennamani, Sigaram Thotta Magalir, Sri Aurobindo Award* and *Puduvai Shakti* in recent times. She is an honored patron and advisor to *Gitananda Yoga Associations* of USA, UK, Italy, Germany, Australia, Czech Republic, Spain, Canada and Switzerland. She has served as an eminent *Yoga Expert* on the **Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy, under the Health Ministry, Government of India, New Delhi** as well as the **Finance Committee** of this Council. She has also been a member of the **Academic Council of Pondicherry University** and is presently an eminent *Yoga Expert* on numerous committees in the Health, Education and Human Resources ministries of the Central Government of India. She is Director of **Yoganjali Natyalayam**, a popular City Centre for the propagation of *Yoga, Bharatanatyam* and Carnatic Music and has developed its famous *Bharatanatyam* troupe. **Yoganjali Natyalayam** was founded in 1993 as a continuation of the **Sri Kambaliswamy Yoga and Fine Arts Programme** that was begun in 1975. She has worked tirelessly to reinstate the ancient acrobatic *Natya Karanas* into the *Bharatanatyam* repertoire and has presented lecture demonstrations on this topic at the ABHAI dance festivals in Chennai. She has also composed, choreographed and directed more than fifty Dance Dramas in the last twenty five years, the majority of which are in Tamil, a language she greatly admires.

Perhaps one of her greatest claims to fame is the authorship of the monumental work **History of Yoga from Ancient to Modern Times**. The work is more than 2000 pages in two volumes and traces the development of Yoga from Vedic times up through the Yoga exponents of the seventeenth century through to the twenty - first century. She has also authored a book **Rishi and the Rakshashas** which details her impressions and experiences with personal observations on the changes in India and its culture over her life experience of nearly five decades in the country.

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INDEX

A

- Aahaara 80
Abhyasa
 12-13, 57, 69, 138, 141, 206, 212-215
Abinivesha 5, 207, 208, 213, 223, 232
Achar 22, 57
Acupuncture 84
Adham pranayama 113, 150, 152, 170, 187
Adhi mudra 113-114, 171
Adhija 55, 207
Adhikara Yoga 222
Adhikarin 8
Adhyam pranayama 113, 150, 153, 171, 192
Adhyatma vidya 12
Adjustable memory quirk 221
Adwaita 52, 56, 76, 88, 242
Aging
 15, 21, 27, 30, 38, 51, 100, 189, 193-194,
 197,200-201, 228, 255-256, 299-300, 305
Agnisara 132, 155
Ahamkara 205, 233
Ahar 22, 57,70
Ahimsa 49, 215, 237
Ajapa japa 102, 116, 187, 192, 200, 252, 298
Ajgeranatvam 19
Ajna chakra 200, 252
Alarm reaction 231
Alasya 213
Allopathy 93, 156
Amaroli chikitsa 83
Ammaji 11-12, 59, 102, 216, 219, 283, 300
Anaahaara 80-81
Anadhija 207
Anahatha chakra 199-200, 251-252
Ananda Ashram
 10, 23, 46, 51, 56, 69, 73, 74-75, 78, 98,
 104, 123, 137, 146, 157, 177, 181, 189,
 193, 199, 205, 211, 216-218,226-227,
 239-241, 248-249, 259, 278, 284, 303,
 309, 312, 317-318, 321
Anandamaya kosha 58, 233, 235
Anantharaman TR 222
Anatomy 3, 16, 37, 78
Anga mardanam 82
Angamejayatva 52, 213, 243, 300
Annamaya kosha
 53, 58, 66, 207, 208, 212, 233, 236
Antaraaya 213
Antaranga 50, 215, 244
Anubuthi shastra 276
Anuloma viloma 20, 102, 200, 266, 281, 309
Anumana 12
Anxiety
 18, 34-37, 39-42, 62-63, 81, 87, 96, 115,
 182, 232, 236-237, 249, 252-256, 260-
 262, 269, 275, 280-281
Apana 60, 69
Apanic energy 137
Aparigraha 237
Apunya 51, 209, 224
Arthritis 18, 23, 181, 183, 194-197, 199, 237
Asana
 7, 12-13, 16, 18, 22, 30-31, 38-39, 46, 58,
 62,67, 78-83, 86-88, 101, 105, 112, 131,
 149, 150-151, 155, 164, 187, 192, 224,
 237, 260-261, 264-265, 273, 279, 300,
 308, 315
Ashtanga Yoga
 4, 10, 13, 24, 26, 86, 88, 113, 146, 170,
 206, 215, 222, 226, 239, 317, 321
Ashwini mudra
 187, 245, 279, 281, 285, 289-290,
 292-293, 298, 308
Asmita 5, 52, 103, 207-208, 213, 223, 232
Asteya 237
Asthi 47
Asthma
 18, 22-3, 63, 72, 112, 141, 147, 156, 158,
 160, 207, 227, 236-237, 260, 270
Atherosclerosis 42, 63, 99, 124, 127
Atijeeranatvam 19

- Atman 4, 56, 76, 238
Autonomic nervous system
17, 29, 61, 74, 139, 144, 289
Avidya 4-9, 52, 69, 207, 208, 213, 223, 232
Ayurveda 15, 18, 47, 55, 77, 78, 82, 84, 88, 156
Ayuryoga 77
- B**
- Back pain
18, 34, 74, 181-184, 186, 188,
197, 199, 251, 281
Bahiranga 50, 215, 244
Bandha
12, 55, 67, 80, 132, 169, 170, 187, 199,
208, 211-212, 218, 245, 279, 281-282,
285, 289-294, 298, 309, 318
Baroreflex sensitivity 29-30, 140
Basic rest activity cycle 139
Bhagavad Gita
7, 12, 17, 24, 47-49, 71-74, 85, 100, 103,
121, 137, 205, 207, 209, 212-218, 224,
226, 240, 243, 248, 250, 263, 300, 312,
317
Bhajan 21, 58, 67-68, 85, 159, 239
Bhakti Yoga
58, 85, 100, 198, 225, 239, 250, 315
Bhastrika
35, 40, 97, 114, 132, 147, 164-165, 169,
244, 261, 265, 274, 277, 307
Bhavanani Ananda Balayogi
24, 73, 156, 177, 188, 201, 209, 217, 226,
239, 248, 284, 309, 317, 321
Bhavanani Devasena 317
Bhavanani Meenakshi Devi
201, 226, 256, 284, 317
Bhramari Pranayama
101, 115, 159-160, 172, 187, 192, 200,
239, 245, 252, 265, 281, 292-293, 308
Bhujanga asana
101, 108, 111, 132, 163, 166-167, 187,
192, 199, 265, 273, 297
Bijlani RL 321
Bindu 16, 82, 84, 113, 116, 235, 298
Biochemical effects 62, 63
Blood pressure
27-30, 40, 43, 61, 65, 71, 74, 95-99, 101,
103, 119, 124-127, 129, 140-141, 150,
194, 196, 200, 231, 252, 296, 301
Blue bloater 148
Body Mass Index (BMI) 30, 44, 123-129
Brahma mudra
102, 113-114, 171, 187, 192, 199, 251,
266, 274, 308
Brahmacharya 237
Brahmacharya mudras 83
Brain metabolism 36
Breath holding time 27-28, 96
Breath-body coordination 186, 191
Breathing disorders 155-156, 164, 177, 265
Brena F Steven 18
Bronchial airflow 147
Bronchial asthma
18, 23, 63, 147, 156, 207, 236-237
Buddhi 12, 70, 205, 207, 216, 233
- C**
- Cancer
8, 15, 20, 24, 38, 81, 87, 121, 125, 193,
227
Cardio-respiratory function 96
Cardiovascular disease
38, 74, 93, 94, 97, 129, 321
Cervical spondylosis 189-190
Chain of yoga 73, 319, 321
Chakra dhyana 102, 187, 192, 200, 252
Chakras
15, 16, 21, 47, 78, 82, 102, 132, 187,
192, 309
Chandra
24, 71, 101, 115, 132, 137, 140, 143,
200, 217, 252, 308, 317
Chandra nadi pranayama 20
Charaka Samhita 55
Chaturvidha purushartha 223, 237, 266
Chatushpada asana 111, 281, 298
Chela 10, 85
Chetana 70
Children
3, 30-31, 95, 119, 126, 129, 141,
150-151, 158-160, 219, 223, 230,
259-267, 270-277, 284, 301, 316
Chin mudra 113, 170-171
Chinmaya 113, 171, 266
Chintaa chikitsa 87
Chitta bhumi 206, 213
Chitta prasadanam 67, 100, 306
Chitta vikshepa 52, 213

Chittavritti 13, 206, 213
 Cholesterol 30, 62, 95, 99, 121, 124-125, 198
 Chronic obstructive airway diseases 147
 Cognitive functions 35, 36, 62
 Complementary medicine 145, 322
 Consciousness
 3, 7-9, 13, 26, 36, 41-42, 46, 85, 87, 94,
 131, 206, 220-222, 225, 239, 241, 261,
 271, 279, 319
 Constipation
 18, 55, 121, 186, 191, 198, 228, 235,
 305, 307
 Coping skills 20, 26
 Coronary artery disease
 30-32, 93-97, 121-126, 236

D

Daurmanasya 52, 243, 301, 315
 Dean Ornish 10
 Depression
 3, 23, 34, 37, 41, 42, 44, 45, 62, 63, 74,
 128, 182, 213, 225, 236, 241, 243, 245,
 248, 249, 250, 252, 253, 254, 256, 269,
 274, 281, 295, 305
 Developmental disabilities 269
 Dhananjaya 17, 47, 100
 Dharana
 13, 21, 50, 52, 58, 67, 68, 87, 102, 113,
 116, 132, 187, 192, 200, 208, 212, 215,
 216, 238, 244, 252, 269, 306, 310
 Daurmanasya 52, 243, 300, 314
 Dean Ornish 10
 Depression
 3, 23, 34, 37, 41-45, 62-63, 74, 128, 182,
 213, 225, 236, 241-245, 248-256, 269,
 274, 281, 294, 304
 Developmental disabilities 269
 Dhananjaya 17, 47, 100
 Dharana
 13, 21, 50, 52, 58, 67-68, 87, 102, 113,
 116, 132, 187, 192, 200, 208, 212,
 215-216, 238, 244, 252, 269, 305,
 309, 315
 Dharma
 4, 8, 11, 59, 85, 102, 218, 223,
 254, 266, 313
 Dhatus 47
 Dhauti kriya 149
 Dhyana

13, 16, 21, 26, 35, 50, 52, 58, 67-68, 87,
 102, 113, 171-172, 187, 192, 200, 208,
 212, 215-216, 238, 244, 252, 274, 305,
 309, 315
 Diabetes mellitus
 18, 32, 63, 74, 96, 119-124, 131-133, 236-
 237, 261, 321
 Diagnostic methods 69
 Diet
 19-22, 30, 46, 49, 51-52, 56-57, 59, 62,
 65, 70, 76, 80, 83, 98-100, 103, 120-122,
 128-129, 147-148, 151, 154, 156,
 182-184, 188, 193, 197-200, 205, 214,
 229, 242-246, 256, 263-266, 279, 282,
 313, 318
 Dietary habits Dietary habits
 59, 70, 186, 191, 246, 306
 Diseases
 8, 15-18, 20, 27-30, 32, 38, 40,
 55-56, 62-64, 68, 76, 93-96, 101, 119, 121,
 129, 147-149, 155, 193, 206-207, 228,
 230, 236-237, 242, 249, 253, 259-260,
 268-269, 300, 312, 314, 322
 Dravidian 55, 70, 72, 212, 223, 225, 272, 318
 Duhkha 51-53, 213, 243, 300, 314, 319
 Dwadasha rogalakshna anukrama 69
 Dwaitam 56, 76
 Dwandwa 73, 137, 207, 208, 243, 315
 Dwesha 5, 52, 208, 213, 223, 232
 Dysglycemia 119
 Dyslipidemia 124
 Dyspepsia 18, 237
 Dyspnea 73, 145, 146, 147, 148

E

EEG 30, 33, 44, 62, 141, 144
 Ekagrata 13, 206, 213, 272
 Ekapada pawanamukta asana 109
 Emotional therapies 21, 67
 Endurance
 19, 27, 28-31, 40, 42, 62, 96-97,
 183, 197, 261, 292
 Epilepsy 18, 74, 260
 Exercise tolerance 28, 96, 149
 Expenditure 20, 66, 74, 128, 227

F

Fast 81, 93, 97, 114, 119, 154, 177, 230
 Fasting diet 154

Feuerstein Georg 14

Forced nostril breathing 29, 35, 44, 143- 144

Fruit fast 154

G

GABA 37, 44, 63, 253-256

Gall bladder disease 125

Geriatric 201, 249

Geronto rheumatology 195, 201

Gestational diabetes 119, 125

Gheranda Samhita 7, 24, 50, 94, 211, 217, 317

Gitananda Giri Swami

3, 4, 10, 15, 19-20, 24-25, 46, 56, 65, 67, 69, 74-75, 89, 113, 156, 177, 199, 201, 206, 226, 239-240, 245, 300, 309, 315-318, 321

Glucose

36, 38, 41, 62, 119, 126, 129, 131-132, 140, 143

Gout 181, 196

Guna 19, 49

Guru

3, 10, 15, 46, 55, 75, 85, 89, 113, 170, 266, 283-284, 315-318

Guru Stotra 55

H

Hamsa soham 116, 298

Hand grip strength 27, 31- 32, 96

Hastha mudra 199, 251

Hatha Yoga

17, 20, 32, 39, 41, 46, 48, 50, 66, 74, 78-81, 84, 86, 87-88, 102, 149, 158, 188, 199, 211, 214, 237, 244, 300, 307, 312, 315, 322

Hatha Yoga Pradipika 7, 17, 214, 268

Hathenas 79, 149-153, 156, 265

Heart rate

27-30, 40, 43, 61, 95-97, 124, 140, 253, 284

Herbal teas 155, 186, 191, 198, 307

Humming 160, 172

Hypertension

18, 22-23, 27, 30, 32, 40, 43-44, 53, 63, 71, 93-100, 103-104, 112, 115, 124-127, 139, 141, 207, 227, 236-237, 280-281

I

IAYT 62, 72, 73, 217, 248, 309, 318, 322

Ichha shakti 205

Ida nadi 137

Immunogerontology 194

Impaired glucose tolerance 119, 126, 129

Innes KE 40, 65, 74, 133, 321

Insomnia 18, 112, 115, 227, 253

Insulin 38, 40, 124, 127, 129, 131

Insulin resistance 74, 124-127, 321

Intellectual disabilities 269

Irritable bowel syndrome 18, 63, 207, 236-237

Itihasa 12

IUGR 39, 280

Iyengar BKS 201

Iyengar Yoga 34

J

Jalandhara bandha 169, 170

Japa

58, 102, 116, 159, 187, 192, 200, 239, 252, 298, 309

Jathis

58, 65, 80, 100, 104, 131, 160, 186, 191, 199, 212, 251, 273, 279, 300, 307

JIPMER 23, 26, 42, 93, 119, 240, 299, 321

Jiva karma 70

Jiva vritti 70

Jivatma 13

Jnana

46, 55, 58, 62, 68-69, 79, 81, 85-87, 102, 207, 215, 244, 318

Jnana shakti 206

Jnana Yoga 20, 237

K

Kaivalya 46, 211, 213, 215

Kaivalyadhama

23, 51-52, 73, 214, 217, 248, 309

Kama 94, 207, 223, 266

Kapalabhati 132, 149, 158, 265, 274, 282

Kapha 55, 57, 69, 83, 155

Karma

4, 6, 7, 12, 46, 55-59, 70, 76, 85, 211, 218, 224, 237-238, 241, 250, 254, 263-264, 267, 316

Karma Yoga 58, 100, 198, 224

- Karuna
21, 48, 51, 67, 100, 209, 224, 254, 272, 306
- Katha Upanishad 12
- Kaya kalpa 83
- Kaya kriya 20, 175, 301
- Ken Keyes Jr 219
- Khalsa SBS 322
- Klesha
4-5, 52, 83, 207, 211, 213, 223, 232, 237, 266, 314, 316
- Krishnamacharya 23, 201, 277
- Kriya
20, 41, 79, 81, 87, 102, 105-106, 111-112, 132, 149, 151, 153, 155, 158, 160, 174-176, 186-187, 191-192, 198-201, 206, 208, 251-252, 263-266, 274, 281-282, 285-289, 292-293, 298, 301, 307-309, 318
- Kriya shakti 206
- Kriya Yoga
38, 44, 198, 201, 208, 216, 223, 232, 250, 254, 256
- Krodha 207
- Kshipta 13, 206, 213, 272
- Kujeeranatvam 19
- Kukkriya pranayama 173, 265, 281, 292
- Kumbhaka 80
- Kunjal kriya 155, 274
- Kuvalayananda Swami 51, 214
- L**
- Laghu Yoga Vashishta 206
- Lifestyle
10, 15, 16, 21-23, 27, 30-32, 35, 38, 41-46, 52, 55, 57, 59, 62-65, 68, 70, 72, 89, 93, 94-99, 102-103, 120, 122, 126, 128, 156, 181, 183, 193-198, 201, 205, 246, 250, 253, 255-256, 313, 318-319, 321
- Lifestyle disorder 59, 93, 98, 102, 246
- Lipoproteins 124
- Loma viloma 137, 265
- M**
- Maamsa 47
- Madanmohan
26-28, 40, 42, 45, 93, 95-97, 103, 119, 143, 177, 277, 321
- Madhyam pranayama 101, 113, 150, 152, 171
- Maharishis 218
- Maitri 21, 51, 67, 100, 208, 224, 272, 306
- Majjaa 47
- Mala shuddhi 51, 132, 214
- Malashoddhana karmas 81-82, 86
- Manas 5, 205, 233
- Manastaapa chikitsa 87
- Mandala dharana
58, 102, 132, 187, 192, 200, 252, 309
- Manipura chakra 132
- Manomaya kosha
58, 66, 207-208, 212, 233, 236
- Mantras 7, 101, 159, 160, 239, 274
- Marmanasthanam 20, 102, 112, 266, 301, 309
- Mauna 80, 81, 86
- Mechanisms, psychosomatic 62
- Meda 47
- Meditation
13, 15, 26-45, 52, 58, 60, 62, 78, 80, 85, 94, 96, 102, 107, 113, 116, 141, 216, 225, 247, 254, 255-256, 275, 297, 309
- Mental disabilities 260, 269
- Mental health
15, 43, 48, 50, 94, 121, 214, 244, 246, 251
- Mental therapies 68
- Metabolic disorders 63
- Metabolic syndrome 63, 125
- Mindfulness 24, 36, 40, 41, 116, 284, 297, 309
- Mitahara 20, 49, 80
- Moha 207
- Moksha
3, 9, 11, 15, 24, 46, 61, 89, 223, 241, 248, 266
- Moola bandha 169, 279-282, 285, 289-293, 298, 309
- Mudha 13, 206, 213, 272
- Mudita 21, 51, 67, 79, 100, 102, 209, 224, 306
- Mudra
12, 22, 31-32, 79-81, 102, 107-109, 113-115, 132, 150, 153, 161, 163, 170-173, 187, 192, 199, 245, 251, 266, 274, 279-282, 285, 289, 290-293, 296, 298, 308-309, 318, 266, 308
- Multiple sclerosis 194, 303-305
- Muscle strength 28, 42, 97, 183, 197
- Musculoskeletal
19, 62-63, 67-68, 112, 175, 181-182, 188, 195, 197, 260, 266, 274, 287, 322

N

- Nada pranayamas 159, 160, 239
 Nadi
 15-6, 20, 47, 51, 56, 71-72, 78, 82, 101, 115-116, 132, 137, 140, 143, 187, 200, 207, 214, 245, 252, 265, 282, 293, 296, 298, 308
 Nadi shuddhi 51, 101, 132, 187, 200, 214
 Nagarathna R 25, 40, 43-45, 144, 156, 277, 284
 Nagendra HR 25, 40, 43-45, 144, 156, 277, 284
 Nara 233-235
 Nasal cycle 70, 137-143
 Nasarga mudra 170, 173, 296
 Nasarga mukha bhastrika 114, 164-165, 307
 Naturopathy 88, 156
 Nauli 132, 155, 265
 Nava antaraya 243
 Nephropathy 120
 Neti
 61, 102, 149, 158-160, 192, 247, 265-266, 274
 Neuropathy 120, 237
 Nidra 13, 20, 36, 37, 206, 213
 NIMHANS 23, 254
 Niruddha 13, 206, 213, 272
 Nishpanda
 81, 87, 102, 111-112, 174-176, 200, 245, 252, 262, 274, 281, 301
 Nitric oxide 129, 160
 Niyama
 4, 8, 13, 16, 26, 50-51, 57, 70, 82, 86, 206, 215-216, 222-223, 226, 237, 244, 260, 262, 267, 314-315, 319
 Nostril dominance 137-139, 141-144

O

- Obesity
 30, 63, 119-121, 123-30, 181-182, 197, 237
 Ojas 83, 266
 Oli mudras 22, 83, 266, 274
 Om japa
 102, 116, 187, 192, 200, 252, 298, 309
 Omkar 39, 41
 Organic phase 53
 Osteoarthritis 181-183, 189, 195, 197
 Osteoporosis 15, 31, 181-184, 195-197
 Oxidative stress 38, 129

P

- Pain relief therapies 68
 Pancha klesha
 5, 52, 207, 213, 223, 232, 237, 266, 314
 Pancha kosha
 13, 16, 47, 53, 78, 205, 232-237, 266, 314
 Pancha mahabhuta 55
 Parampara 11
 Parasympathetic 17, 29, 61-64, 95, 139
 Pasha 222
 Pashu 222
 Patanjali
 4, 12-13, 17-18, 24-26, 52, 67, 70, 100, 113, 123, 125, 170, 198, 201, 205-208, 212-218, 222, 224-226, 232, 239, 242-243, 248, 250, 272, 300, 306, 309, 312-317, 321-322
 Physical disabilities 269
 Physical strength 94, 96
 Physical therapies 19, 68, 306
 Physiological benefits of yoga 61
 Physiology 3, 16, 26, 39, 78, 93, 119, 240
 PIH 39, 281
 Pingala nadi 137
 Pink puffer 148
 Pitta 55, 57, 83, 115
 Plato 18
 Play yoga 263
 Post-natal practices 282
 Prakriyas 20, 309
 Pramana 12, 13, 206, 213
 Prana
 47, 56, 58, 60, 66, 69, 78, 80, 84, 102, 148, 200, 207, 233, 247, 251-252
 Prana vayu 47, 58, 60, 69, 102, 247
 Pranava dhyana 171, 172
 Pranava pranayama
 101, 113, 160, 170, 201, 281-282, 285, 293, 298
 Pranayama
 7, 12-13, 20-21, 26-29, 32, 35, 38-42, 46, 50-51, 57, 60, 62, 66-72, 78-81, 87-88, 95-97, 101, 103, 107-116, 132, 140, 143, 148-155, 160, 166, 169-173, 186-187, 191-192, 199-200, 215-216, 224-225, 235, 238, 244-247, 251-252, 260, 265, 267, 274-277, 279-282, 285, 287, 290-293, 296-302, 305, 308-309, 314, 318

- Pranamaya kosha 66, 233
 Pranic energy
 51, 58, 104, 108, 137, 160, 199, 216, 281
 Prasadnam, chitta 21
 Pratipaksha bhavanam 16, 100, 216, 224
 Pratyahara
 13, 18, 21, 26, 50-51, 60, 67-68, 87, 208, 212, 215-216, 244, 247, 305
 Pratyaksha 12
 Pregnancy
 22, 39-40, 43, 125, 139, 230, 271, 278-284, 286, 289, 292, 296
 Preventive and rehabilitative therapies 68
 Psychiatry 203, 249, 252, 256
 Psychic phase 53
 Psychological attitudes 21, 51, 67
 Psychological benefits of yoga 62, 157, 276
 Psychosomatic phase 53
 Psychotherapy 21, 24, 86
 Pulmonary disease 73, 145
 Punya 51, 209, 224
 Purananuru 72, 318
 Puranas 8, 12
 Purusha 211, 216
- Q**
- Quirks 220, 221
- R**
- Raga 5, 48, 52, 207-208, 213, 223, 232
 Raja Yoga
 46, 58, 62, 68, 81, 85-88, 100, 198, 250, 318
 Rakta 47
 Ramamurthy B 14
 Rasa 47
 Relationship
 4, 7, 18, 34, 38, 53, 56, 73, 76, 79, 89, 127, 129, 138, 242, 276, 300, 320
 Relaxation
 18, 20, 22, 26-29, 33-35, 38, 45, 57-61, 68, 80-83, 87, 95-96, 101-107, 111-112, 129, 132, 148-149, 156, 165, 174-176, 186, 192-193, 200, 228, 245-246, 252-253, 262-263, 266, 274-275, 279, 281, 287, 297, 301-302, 306
 Research
 4, 7, 19, 22-24, 61-63, 71, 78, 80, 84, 139, 141, 143, 155, 157, 159, 160, 194, 197, 228, 241, 254, 256, 268, 281, 284, 301-303, 312, 319-322
 Respiratory disorders 135, 173, 265
 Respiratory pressures 27, 42, 96, 177
 Restless legs syndrome 65, 74
 Retinopathy 120
 Rheumatoid arthritis 181, 194, 196, 237
 Rishi 4, 6, 7, 11-12, 150, 218-219, 278
 Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga
 10, 113, 146, 170, 222
 Roudra karya 137
 Rupa 48, 214
- S**
- Sadhana
 12, 21, 57, 87, 89, 213, 215-216, 224, 243-244, 248, 264, 283-284, 319
 Safe lifting 185
 Sahaj Yoga 29, 33-34, 44, 253
 Sama 219, 224, 238
 Samadhi
 13, 26, 42, 52, 87, 94, 198, 208, 212, 215-216, 224, 232, 250, 283
 Samana 48, 60, 69, 214
 Samanya adhija vyadhi 55, 207
 Samasthiti asana 104-106, 161-164, 285
 Samatvam
 16-17, 47, 62, 66, 72, 100, 207-208, 224, 229, 233, 237, 267, 314
 Samatvam yoga uchyate 137
 Samshya 213
 Samskara 9
 Sanatana dharma 4, 8, 11
 Sangam 17, 47, 72, 100, 271, 318
 Sankalpa 71, 212
 Santhosha 206, 238
 Sapta dhatus 47
 Sara adhija vyadhi 55, 207
 Sarvanga asana 101, 132, 187, 273, 281
 Sashanga asana 187, 192, 308
 Satsanga 21, 58, 68, 78, 85, 306, 316
 Sattva 49, 215
 Sattvik 69, 120-121, 245, 279
 Satya 25, 74, 177, 226, 237-240, 309, 317, 321
 Satyananda Saraswathi Swami
 25, 74, 248, 309, 317, 322
 Saucha 16, 82

- Savitri pranayama
27, 42, 96, 97, 103, 110-112, 116, 132,
200, 252, 281-282, 290-293, 297-298, 309
- Self traction 186, 191, 200, 307
- Selvamuthy W 103
- Sengupta 64, 74
- Senior citizens 198, 199, 251-252, 299
- Shanka prakshalana 81
- Shanmuki mudra 115, 172, 293
- Shannahoff-Khalsa 29, 44, 139-140, 143-144
- Sharira 205
- Shastras 12, 85
- Shat karma 12, 155, 274
- Shat mudras 83
- Shava asana
35, 71, 81, 102, 109-111, 116, 155,
167-169, 174-175, 192, 266, 281-282,
288, 291-297, 301, 308
- Sherman 74, 188, 256
- Shithilikarana vyayama 100
- Shiva Swarodaya 55, 137
- Shiva Samhita 12
- Shvasaprasvasa 243, 244
- Shvetaasvatara Upanishad 47, 214
- Siddha 42, 84, 88, 156
- Siddha vaidya 78, 82, 84, 88
- Sinusitis 18, 157-160, 171-172, 177
- Sitkari 101, 274, 308
- Sleep
5, 13, 20, 33-34, 43, 53, 62, 83, 125,
138-139, 185, 195, 200, 206, 213, 232,
238, 249, 251, 252, 268, 274-275, 296,
301
- Sleep apnea 98, 125
- Smriti 13, 206-207, 212-213
- Social life
218, 222-223, 237, 266-267, 314-315
- Somatic phase 53
- Soucha 238
- Soumya karya 137
- Spanda
87, 102, 111-112, 174-175, 200, 245, 252,
262, 274, 301
- Spanda nishpanda 102, 111, 174
- Spiritual therapies 21, 68
- Sthita Prajna
48, 207-209, 214, 224, 229, 238, 314
- Streeter 37, 44, 63, 74, 253-256
- Stress
18, 51-56, 60-63, 67-68, 74, 76, 80-83, 87,
94, 96, 98, 100-103, 108-109, 112, 114,
119-120, 122, 128-129, 132, 140, 164,
175, 182-187, 192-193, 197, 200, 205,
208, 214, 227-229
- Stress response 63, 207, 208, 231, 237, 314
- Stroke 29, 38, 99, 124-127, 129, 140
- Sudarshan Kriya 7, 41, 254, 256
- Sukha
17, 40, 47, 51, 100, 107, 155, 167-168,
208, 214, 224-225, 273, 301, 318
- Sukha asana 107, 167-168
- Sukha sthanam 17, 47, 62, 100, 318
- Sukra 47
- Sukshma vyayama 100, 186, 191
- Sunbaths 154- 155
- Surya
72, 101, 137-138, 160, 163, 170, 244, 264,
273, 275, 282, 293, 296, 298
- Surya bhedana pranayama 170
- Surya nadi 72, 245, 265, 282, 293, 296, 298
- Surya namaskar
100, 131, 161-163, 244, 264, 273, 275
- Sushruta Samhita 55, 271
- Sushumna 137- 138, 141
- Sushumna swara 137-138, 141
- Sutra 158, 215, 224, 243
- SVYASA 23, 63, 256, 275
- Swadhyaya
4, 21, 58, 69, 141, 208, 216, 221, 232,
250, 305
- Swara Yoga 22, 50, 56, 138, 143, 144
- Swarodaya vigjan 137, 143
- Swatmarama 17, 46
- Sympathoadrenal system 64
- Syndrome X 125
- T**
- Taimni IK 10, 13
- Tamasic 69, 121
- Tantra 84, 86, 137, 239
- Tapa 49, 208, 215-216, 223, 232, 250
- Tejas 83, 266
- Telles S 41-44, 45, 144, 277
- Therapeutic modalities of yoga 67
- Thyagaraja 70, 219
- Tirukkural 20, 49, 55, 70, 100, 223, 272
- Tirumandiram
50-51, 55, 57, 212, 217, 225-226, 272

Tiruvalluvar
20, 49, 55, 70, 74, 100, 223- 226, 272
Trataka 58, 68, 102, 200, 252, 265-266, 274
Tridosha 15, 19, 47, 48, 55, 57, 69
Trigranthis 80
Triguna 15, 19, 48, 69
Trisharira 47, 53
Trivasana 69

U

Uddiyana bandha 169, 282, 293-294
Ujjayi 245
Unchanging entity quirk 220-221
UNESCO 259
Unsafe stranger quirk 220-221
Upa prana vayus 47, 58, 69, 85, 247
Upanishad 7,11-14, 47-48, 208, 214, 314
Upekshanam 21, 51, 68, 100, 224, 306
Ushtra asana 101, 150-152, 192, 265, 273
Uttana asana
107, 108, 165-168, 285, 288-293, 295, 298

V

Vacha 70
Vairagya
12-13, 16, 21, 67, 206, 208, 212-215, 224,
237-238, 267, 306, 315
Vajra asana
108, 114-116, 165-173, 273, 286-287,
292-293, 296-297
Vasudeiva kudumbakam 223, 237, 266
Vata 55, 57, 170
Vayu 60, 69, 102, 247, 272
Veda 7,11-12, 86, 218
Vedanta 76, 79, 86
Vegetable juices 81, 154
Vibhaga pranayama 265
Vichar 22, 57
Vidya 6, 9-14, 23-24, 85
Vihar 22, 57
Vijnanamaya kosha 58, 233
Vikalpa 13, 206, 213
Vikshepasahabhuvah 243
Vikshipta 13, 206, 213, 272
Viparita buddhi 70
Viparyaya 13, 206, 213
Vipassana 36
Viveka 12-13, 219
Vivekananda Swami 10, 25
Vyadhi 52-55, 64, 70, 207, 213, 228, 235, 238, 314

Vyagraha pranayama
153, 166, 199, 251, 274, 281, 285,
292-293, 298
Vyayama 65, 80, 100, 186, 191, 199, 251, 275

W

Waist circumference 38, 123-129
Warming up practices 131, 160
World Health Organization 15, 77, 99, 123, 268

Y

Yagna 85
Yama
8, 13, 16, 26, 50-51, 57, 70, 81, 86,
215-216, 222-223, 226, 237, 244, 260,
262, 267, 314-315, 319
Yang K 322
Yantra 84-85
Yatra 85
Yoga anatomy 78
Yoga Chikitsa
46, 57-60, 67-72, 75-89, 102, 235,
305-306, 318-319
Yoga Darshan
12-13, 17, 48, 52, 72-75, 94, 102, 170,
209, 211-217, 225-226, 242-243, 272, 316
Yoga hygiene 82
Yoga Life
56, 73, 143, 148, 217, 248, 309, 317, 321
Yoga Mimamsa 73, 143, 217, 226, 248, 309
Yoga mudra 107, 274
Yoga nidra 20, 36, 37
Yoga nidraa 102, 187, 200, 266, 281, 309
Yoga philosophy 78-79
Yoga psychology 21, 79
Yoga relaxation 20, 58, 81, 95, 102, 174, 252
Yoga research 22, 274
Yoga sanitation 83
Yoga shastra 12
Yoga sport 264
Yoga Sutras
7, 12-13, 206, 226, 248, 309, 317, 322
Yoga Vashista 55-56, 74, 209, 217, 317
Yoga-Bhashya 14
Yoga-vidhi 12, 13
Yoga-vidya 12, 14, 23
Yogeshwar Krishna 12, 94, 120-121, 207
Yogic counseling 21, 58-59, 68, 102, 305
Yogic relaxation 38, 102, 200, 279, 301
Yogin 13, 57, 137
Yogopathy 68, 71, 73, 102, 306, 319, 321



"This new book on Yoga Therapy is from a well known Yoga teacher, medical doctor, Bharata Natyam artiste, musician and an acclaimed teacher in all of these. It is a welcome book with many interesting ideas on Yoga Philosophy and Yoga Therapy both of which are of great importance in this age of quick knowledge and fast applications in therapy of an ancient wisdom whose authenticity in application is always under a scanner. Dr. Ananda belongs to a great tradition of Yogis and has impeccable credentials to write this book. This outstanding book is a handy reference to the above aspects of a great science that is contributing worldwide to health promoting activities." -Prof.TM Srinivasan, Dean, Division of Yoga and Physical Sciences, S-VYASA Yoga University, Bangalore, India.

Yoga as a mode of therapy (Yoga Chikitsa) has become extremely popular and a great number of studies and systematic reviews offer scientific evidence of its potential in treating a wide range of psychosomatic conditions. Yoga understands health and well-being as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not merely a 'state' to be reached and maintained. Yoga helps the individual to establish sukha sthanam which may be defined as a dynamic sense of physical mental and spiritual well-being.

This book is primarily an anthology of articles on Yoga and Yoga Therapy penned by Dr.Ananda and others close to him that have appeared in various Yoga Journals worldwide in recent years. The aim of this collection is to stimulate and motivate Yoga enthusiasts and medical professionals alike to make an effort towards understanding the great depth and wide scope of Yoga Chikitsa the application of Yoga as an integrative mode of therapy.

The need of the hour is for a symbiotic relationship between Yoga and modern science. To satisfy this need living human bridges combining the best of both worlds need to be cultivated. It is important that more dedicated scientists take up Yoga and that more Yogis study science so that we can build a bridge between these two great evolutionary aspects of our civilization. This book reiterates the concept that Yoga is all about becoming "one" with an integrated state of being and that the modern tendency of Yogopathy in contrast, is more about "doing" than "being".

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