

# Yoga and Stress Management

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**Abstract**—*We all live with lots of stresses, which are often visible in our activities, and we become violent. But practicing Yoga makes it silent, and this destructive characteristic becomes constructive.*

**Keywords:** *Discipline, Yogi, Yoga, Chitta-vritti, Siddhis, Supernatural Powers, Sufferings, Offerings, Happiness, Stress*

**Objective:**

*The main objectives of the study are as following:*

- 1. To differentiate between disciplined and undisciplined lifestyle.*
- 2. To differentiate between a common man and Yogi.*
- 3. To study Yoga as an art of life.*
- 4. To study Yoga as a part of life.*
- 5. To critically examine Life as Sufferings and Offerings.*
- 6. To examine Yoga as a path towards happiness.*
- 7. To examine Yoga as a good practice for Stress Management.*

**Methodology:**

*The Primary Data has been collected from our day, to day, impact and general discussion with people around. Factors causing Stress are collected and examined by observing general condition of Public Transport System, Shopping Outlets, establishments, public & private enterprises etc.*

*Secondary Data has been collected from different articles and research papers on Yoga including web and other reliable sources.*

**Key Findings:** *Key findings of the paper are as following:*

- 1. Yoga is a practice of discipline of Body, Mind and Soul, which leads to Health, Harmony and Happiness.*
- 2. Practicing Yoga makes a man different in performance, not in appearance.*
- 3. A normal human being can develop some special powers called Siddhis in himself by regular practice of Yoga in his life.*
- 4. Without Yoga Life may be suffering, but with Yoga it is definitely an Offering.*

- 5. Stress is a positive factor, and by Practicing Yoga we can gain a lot with it as well.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Once in a TV show Baba Ramdev was asked, that being a Yogi how he is managing the business of Ayurvedic Medicines. He answered, "There are different types of Yoga, like *Bhakti Yoga, Karm Yoga, Gyana Yoga, Hasya Yoga* etc. Similarly the Udyoga of Ayurvedic Medicines is also a type of Yoga for the people involved in this business.

Cambridge dictionary has defined Yoga as a set of physical and mental exercise, originally from India, intended to give control over the body and mind.

*Patañjall's* famous definition of Yoga is "*Yogas Chitta-vrittinirodhah*", means, "yoga is the removal of the fluctuations of the mind". *Chitta* is mind, *vrittis* are fluctuations and *nirodhah* is removal. In fact Yoga is in the coordination of the body, mind and soul. It's a route to perfection, and perfection definitely scores the perfect.

If a common man removes his fluctuations of mind, and concentrates himself towards anything with all his effort, he becomes a special man in whatever field he has selected. Lord Gautama Buddha has stressed on achieving freedom from bondage, because these bondages are key constituents causing fluctuations in mind and sufferings.

## 2. LIFESTYLE

In nineties when on the way to somewhere by walk, bus or train, we used to look at the different people, different things and natural beauties all around. Our world and thoughts were natural and real. But now during long journeys too people devote their whole time in watching some status updates, selfies including online virtual chats

and meetings on Mobiles, Tabs and Laptops. They raise their heads only, when their destination comes. The reality has been disappeared, and it has been overpowered by virtual world. Till the year 2000 people didn't know, who is Kuldeep Mishra, but now every morning I receive more than hundred new E-Mails from new unknown contacts, people and agencies from India and abroad suggesting me for some good investment, prize money or sometimes asking help to release a big amount of blocked money, because my name is found to be matching with some of their family members.

Every next Mail increases our excitement, and a few Mails may make you jump and dance with lots of joy and pleasure. But when we open the Mail, which follows to some external link further, after a long procedure we find ourselves ineligible, just because we either lack in annual income, or in investment. While if we follow their investment criteria strictly, their pre business assurance can't be guaranteed.

### 3. DISCIPLINE

Cambridge Dictionary has defined the Discipline as training, that makes people more willing to obey or more able to control themselves, often in the form of rules, and punishments if these rules are broken, or the behaviour produced by this training. It is the ability to control yourself or other people, even in difficult situations.

If we lack in behavioural discipline, and easily get motivated by anything we get in touch with, which fluctuates our mind, we shift from normal state to stressed one. In this state our *Chitta-vrittis* overpower our normal disciplined behaviour, and we suffer from miseries. All this happens due to our extreme desires of pleasure, money etc.

Normally we think that if we have lots of money, we can fulfil all our desires. This misjudgement deviates our mental state from normal living towards financial living, and converts our *Chitta-vrittis* into *Vittavrittis*, which is the root cause behind all our extreme sufferings.

### 4. A COMMON MAN AND YOGI

A common man is a man like most of us, who may be considered as weakly disciplined or just undisciplined. Such people rush towards anything they like. They lack in Ethical Judgement. But a yogi never loses its mental discipline, and keeps himself detached with all worldly

pleasures and traps. These traps fluctuate our mind differently, and it loses its normal state. We want to continue with what we have, but these promotional traps are so attractive, that we deviate from our normal state, and get involved in the non-material virtual world. Here three types of powers play very important role.

1. Power of mind
2. Power of body
3. Power of external forces in the form of fluctuations

If Power of Mind + Power of Body > Power of external forces in the form of fluctuations, we are in safe zone. But if sign > equals or turns rightward, it defines the mental state of a common man.

This difference is clearly described in the following table.

S. No.	Quality	Yogi	Common Man
1.	Easily approachable	Yes	Yes
2.	Easily Motivated	Never	Often
3.	Money Oriented	Never	Mostly
4.	Confused	Never	Often
5.	Stressed	Never	Often
6.	Biased	Never	Often
7.	Excited	Never	Often
8.	Fluctuated	Never	Often
9.	Depressed	Never	Often
10.	Frustrated	Never	Often

### 5. YOGA IN LIFE

It is clear in the table above, that a Yogi is detached of all sufferings and pains due to his healthy habits, while a Common Man is obsessed with Confusion, Stress, Excitement, Fluctuations, Depression and Frustration. I am sure, that nobody would like to choose to follow a life full of sufferings.

What different does a yogi do? They actually practice to discipline their mind, body and soul together. In *Patañjall's* Eight Fold Path of Yoga he lays stress on five *Yama: Satya, Ahimsa, Asteya, Brahmacharya & Aparigraha*. These five *Yamas* shape our behavioural habits into a definite discipline, which lead us to live a healthy life forward.

The practice of five *Niyams: Shauch, Santosh, Tapas, Swadhyaya and Ishwar Pranidhana* help us to maintain a

positive environment developing self-discipline and inner strength.

Next stages of *Ashtanga Yoga* are *Aasana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dhyana*, *Dharana* and *Samadhi*. In the stage of *Samadhi* we find ourselves at the peak of Meditation and Concentration. Our mind becomes still and silent towards all material interferences, while still we are in a stage extreme consciousness.

These practices of Yoga are really important. If we follow these eight limbs of *Ashtang Yoga* of Maharshi *Patañjali*, we will see that it is an art, and eligible to be an important part of our life. We watch a movie or a serial or join a chat online continuously sitting on a single posture, which results into different physical issues and body pains, and we often need a doctor to consult. But just a ten to fifteen minute long regular *Dhyana* or Meditation can lead us to different heights. We will forget to meet a doctor within a few weeks.

## 6. IS LIFE REALLY SUFFERING?

Life is really suffering, because we all shape and see it likewise. We think that we are suffering, that's why we are suffering. If we just change our mind, and only follow to smile towards the things around, which can be suffering in our opinion, our mindset will change completely. We can add them with some offering also, which will lead us definitely towards better results.

A simple sweet smile has great powers. It heals our pains. It is a great offering from heaven, which when offered to others, others feel it like blessings directly from God. They forget all their miseries and injuries too. Medicines start working later, while a healthy smile from the Doctor may let you feel better immediately. A smile can remove all your fears and tears.

Words may be hurting, but a smile always heals. It can cool your angry boss immediately. Only smile can make our life so beautiful, that we forget all our sufferings. So do sufferings really exist?

I am sure, that life is really beautiful. It is our consideration, how do we look at it. It is a world of offerings, but we often neglect them, because either we don't have proper eyesight to find them, or we think otherwise.

## 7. YOGA AND HAPPINESS

What is happiness? Greek concept of Happiness i.e. *Eudaimonia* refers the good life, or flourishing, rather than simply an emotion. When I queried on Google, it replied.

*"Most of us probably don't believe we need a formal definition of happiness; we know it when we feel it, and we often use the term to describe a range of positive emotions, including joy, pride, contentment, and gratitude." [1]*

Happiness is probably still undefined. It is a wide term, when lots of good things and emotions unite together. Perfect happiness is the state of things, when all possible goods come together, and as a result lots of pleasure and satisfaction is produced.

Yoga since its first to final stage follows all good virtues and habits, which develop positive powers including basic constituents of happiness. Yoga leads us to follow all and only good habits, and assists us in avoiding unhealthy negative things and habits. It helps us in detaching ourselves from outside world, and empowers to choose material things with moral judgment, not with material judgment.

If we want to enjoy our life perfectly, good health is the basic requirement. Yoga covers physical health too with the practice of *Aasana* and *Pranayama*. It leads to a united perfection of body and mind, by strengthening both to get armed against sufferings and miseries.

## 8. YOGA AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

According to a review article "The Effects of Yoga on Anxiety and Stress" by Amber W. Li "While a direct relationship between Yogic practices and declines in stress and anxiety is not yet supported by statistically sound randomized controlled trials, the studies described suggest, the Yoga as supplement to Pharmacologic Therapy may improve stress and anxiety symptoms. Because the data are conflicting, and many experiments thus far have not been well designed, Yoga should not replace conventional medical practice until further work has been conducted, and strong statistical evidence of its benefit exists." [2]

It states, that the data are conflicting, but still in favour of Yoga for further research. Here I differ a bit in the theory of stress. Stress is nothing like something to be cured. It is our power to stand against harmful things

and thoughts. Actually against which we don't want to follow, and still we do.

Stress in a natural favour we need anytime and anywhere against worldly conflicts. We only need to recognize it as a better supporting and positive side of our life.

### 9. **SIDDHI AND SIDDHA**

Achievement, perfection or completion of any discipline is called *Siddhi*, and the person with such achievements is called *Siddha*. *Siddhi* is not in performing any magic or miracle. It is a title for perfection in some art. To follow all the practices of Yoga perfectly and achieving perfection in this art makes a man *Siddha* in Yoga. A *Siddha* overpowers all fluctuations, emotions and temptations; still he can do a lot by collaboration of the powers of mind, body and soul, which often appear to be miraculous.

In Indian Philosophy too eight *Siddhis* are assumed ie. *Anima, Laghima, Mahima, Prapti, Prakamya, Vasitva, Ishatwa and Yatrakamavasiyatwa*. These *Siddhis* especially depict good control on our body and thoughts.

### 10. CONCLUSION

We all live with lots of stress, which is often visible in our activities, and we become violent. But practicing Yoga makes it silent, and this destructive characteristic becomes constructive. The violent and destructive output converts into Offerings, *Siddhis* and Supernatural Powers. Yoga aims to unite things together. Our Body, Mind and Soul become disciplined and united, and unity is strength. For such strength we need not to keep ourselves away from the situations. We have to unite with them, and discipline to make them special.

### REFERENCES

- [1] <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/happiness/definition>
- [2] Alternative Medicine Review, Volume-17, Number-1, Page-33