

Yoga Philosophy and Inner Peace: Its Significance in Modern Context

Mrs. Anu Kandhari

Assistant Professor

Head, Deptt. Of Philosophy

Hindu College

Amritsar

Abstract

Yoga is the practical philosophy that involves every aspects of a human being: physical, psychological, spiritual and it is also a science of mental discipline for attaining the highest state in human life. The word 'Yoga' originated from the Sanskrit word *yuj* means to unite with Supreme Being and this also implies joining all aspects of the individual - body with mind and soul - to achieve a balanced life. It means cessation of mental functions or modifications (*chittavrittinirodha*). The main aim of yoga philosophy is not the only ascertainment of spiritual theories but to give knowledge with practical practices of it. In yoga philosophy, the vrittis of the mind can be controlled by the implementation of two means (a) constant practice (*abhyasa*) and (b) detachment (*vairagya*). It also helps to maintain the inner peace and in treating a wide variety of emotional and mental disorders, including acute anxiety, depression and mood swings, better breath control, all round fitness of the body which includes mental, social, emotional, spiritual etc. This research paper studied about self-realization in yoga philosophy and its significance in modern context which analyzed as well as offer solutions to maintain mental peace by adopting the yoga in practical life.

Yoga is the practical philosophy that involves every aspects of a human being: physical, psychological, spiritual and it is also a science of mental discipline for attaining the highest state in human life. The word 'Yoga' originated from the Sanskrit word *yuj* means to unite with Supreme Being and this also implies joining all aspects of the individual - body with mind and soul - to achieve a balanced life. It means cessation of mental functions or modifications (*chittavrittinirodha*). The main aim of yoga philosophy is not the only ascertainment of spiritual theories but to give knowledge with practical practices of it. The aim of yoga is to help the individual to realize the self and attain enlightenment; complete freedom from the mind and its modifications. It is the union of

the individual self with the universal self and an expansion of the narrow constricted egoistic personality to an all pervasive, eternal and blissful state of reality. Its main purpose is get health and happiness by getting rid of the physical and mental diseases and to get self-realization with disciplined activities.

In yoga philosophy, the study of mind is scientific and has developed so that human beings can gain knowledge of the phenomenal world. The mind is working along with the senses, reaches out to the object and modifies itself to the shape of that particular object knowledge and thus attains knowledge of that object. Therefore perception is the primary source of knowledge. Along with perception, inference and testimony are also the sources of knowledge. All mental modifications leave their impressions (*samskaras*) on the *citta* and they can be revived and recollection and memory depend upon them. Perception, inference and testimony also leave the impressions in the subconscious mind and mind attains the knowledge of the world, but the highest knowledge is of the *purusha* and that cannot be obtained by the mind. The mind, as evolutes of *prakriti* is impure and thus it cannot reach out to the *purusha*. Patanjali explains the actions, which will remove the afflictions and purify the mind and these afflictions are the causes of bondage between the *purusha* and *prakriti*. The highest knowledge is obtained when the mind has been completely overwhelmed.

In yoga philosophy, five dispositions of mind are described: i.e. *pramana* (true cognition), *vipraya* (false cognition), *vikalpa* (inference), *nidra* (sleep) and *smriti* (memory). *Pramana* apprehends an object as it is in reality and *Viprayaya* does not correspond to the object which one wants to apprehend. *Vikalpa* is only a mere name and has no real object corresponding to it. *Nidra* is the mental modification based on the cognition of absence or void where as *Smriti* reproduces a past apprehension of an object. When the *cittas* modified into any kind of *vritti*, the self is reflected in it and it identifies itself with these *vrittris* and suffers five kinds of afflictions (*klesas*) i.e. *avidya* (ignorance), *asmita* (wrong identification), *raga* (desire for pleasure), *dvesa* (aversion to pain) and *abhivivesa* (fear of death). *Avidya* is primarily responsible for the other four *klesas* also. These afflictions exist in the form of various degree and they are burnt only by discriminative knowledge, which leads to a state of self-realization.

In yoga philosophy, the *vrittis* of the mind can be controlled by the implementation of two means (a) constant practice (*abhyasa*) and (b) detachment (*vairagya*). While one proceeds to practice and detachment, many obstacles can come on the way to achieve the

control of mind. These obstacles cause distractions in the way of achieving the purpose i.e. control of mind. Another method to control mind is also achieved by following the eight-fold path of yoga in life. These are *yama* (restraint), *niyama* (observance), *asana* (posture), *pranayama* (breathe-control), *pratyahara* (withdrawal), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (absorption). *Yama* consists of five principles; *ahimsa* (non-violence), *satya* (truthfulness), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (celibacy) and *aprigraha* (non-hoarding). *Niyama* consists of five principles; *saucha* (cleanliness), *santosha* (contentment), *tapas* (austerity), *svadhyaya* (self-study), *isvara-pranidhana* (devotion to God). The third is *asana* (posture) and there are different types of *asanas* in yoga philosophy and gives the man a way for living good life for a healthy mind and a healthy body and its exercises recharge the body and unite with cosmic energy and promote self-healing. It enhances personal power; boosts the immunity and increases the blood flow and helps in attention, focus and concentration. It reduces stress and tension in the physical body by activating the nervous system; balances the blood pressure and improves the blood circulation of the body. The main emphasis in Yoga is on the all-round fitness of the body which includes mental, social, emotional, spiritual etc. which are helpful in stabilizing the body. It makes a strong and elastic physique and keeps the body free from disease but the real importance lies in the way to train and discipline the mind. Through the mastery of these postures, duality like gain and loss, victory and defeat, fame and shame disappears and then one can pass on to the fourth part of yoga which is called *pranayama* which means to have control over the mental perturbations (*vruttis*) by practicing breathing controls. The first four parts of yoga i.e. *yama*, *niyam*, *asana* and *pranayama* are preparatory to the next four i.e. *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*. *Pratyahara* means withdrawal of the senses and consists of distracting the sense organs from their natural sensuality. The sixth part of yoga is *dharana* which means fixing of the (*citta*) mind at one place. The seventh part is *dhyana* in which the entire consciousness of the self starts flowing into that object or idea. When so happens, it is *dhyana*. The eighth part is *samadhi* in which the thinker gets absorbed in the thought and the activity of the mind as if it has become one with the object of meditation. The meditation (*dhyana*), the meditated (*dhyeya*) and the meditator (*dhyata*), all three become one and thus, it is a state of complete absorption. When man eradicates all negative emotions by following yoga, the detachment to momentary emotions and moods follows and control of one's life is achieved. In the yoga philosophy, there are various types of *samadhis* mentioned of which there are two main types: *samaprajnata Samadhi* and *asniaprajnata Samadhi*. In the former, *samaprajnata samadhi* is of subordinate status, since in this *Samadhi*, the *samskaras*

are not altogether eliminated and it has seedlings of *samskaras*, it is also called *sabija samadhi*. *Asniaprajnata samadhi* is called seedless *Samadhi* or *nirbija Samadhi* in which all the *samskaras* are destroyed. There is nothing higher than this *samadhi*.

For attaining this state of *samadhi*, man has to practice yoga in daily routine-life. But in this age of development of science and technology, competition for getting maximum wealth, disputes in families and lack of love in life, most people are facing the state of unbalanced state of mind and undergoing through the various problems of adjustment in life. This type of disintegration of personality is known in psychology as mental disease, namely 'neurosis'. The life style of human beings with the passage of time has gradually changed and people are becoming the slave of intoxicated drinks and drugs. The cause of modern crisis lies in the disharmony of man who is running after the materialistic things being fascinated by the advancement of science and technology. The scientific advancement has proved to be a boon for man in many ways and it is not a hindrance in the way of spiritual progress. The solution lies in inner harmony to be cultivated by living moderate life in accordance with yogic practices that can promote good physical health as well as can maintain mental health. Human beings are busy with their personal lives so they have forgotten the right way to breathe. Yoga gives the man a way of life for good living which is beneficial for the human body. Yoga teaches the way of living that aims towards a healthy mind and a healthy body. Yogic exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy and facilitate attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony, promote self-healing, remove negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body, enhance personal power, boost the immunity and increase the blood flow, help in attention, focus and concentration. It also reduces stress and tension in the physical body by activating the nervous system, balances the blood pressure and glucose levels of the body and improves the blood circulation of the body, creates a sense of well-being and calm and also cures insomnia, as regular postures of yoga lead to get better and deeper sleep. It also helps to maintain inner peace and in treating a wide variety of emotional and mental disorders, including acute anxiety, depression and mood swings, better breath control, all-round fitness of the body which includes mental, social, emotional, spiritual etc.

There are many benefits of yoga, studies have shown that yoga can relieve many common and life-threatening illnesses such as arthritis, chronic fatigue, high blood pressure, back pain, weight reduction, obesity, common cold, skin problems and respiration problems. Regular yoga practice builds mental coolness, relieves stress

patterns, relaxes the minds and sharpens concentration. It also provides practices which one can manage pain and helps to remove the feelings of helplessness and depression. It gives an deep insight about the true self and man can get the state of beatitude.

This research paper studied about self-realization in yoga philosophy and its significance in modern context which analyzed as well as offer solutions to maintain mental peace by adopting the yoga in practical life. In reality, there is need to understand about the yoga and yoga practices for self-realization and to seek guidance for over all personality of the individuals and it is also a way of living to remove mental illness in life.

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Pratyāhāra and Stress Management: A Practical Approach

Pramod Kumar Dash

Head, Department of Philosophy

Nayagarh Autonomous College, Odisha

pkdashphilosophy@gmail.com

Mobile - 9090817629

Introduction:

Stress is the feeling of being under too much emotional and mental pressure. This emotional and mental pressure leads to a moral dilemma. The mind becomes stressful when it is found unstable losing its proper balance. Almost all inter-human conflicts are to be traced to their intra-human roots or what we call human nature. We all have a peace instinct, *ahimsa* in us, despite our occasional aggressive temper and action. What we can achieve in the realm of peace depends on what we are. Our inner peace is lost due to our inner conflicts and confusion. Life is compared with a battlefield and the art of living is the skill of battle. The warrior is compared with a karma yogi endowed with wisdom and devotion. The enemies are compared with the sense organs and *vāsanās* of past habits. The commander of the army is compared with the mind of equanimity (*Sthitaprajna*). The success in the battle is liberation and the defeat is bondage. Any action which is antithetical to the ultimate end is a veritable evil or an instance of *Vikarma*. When action is performed with the right ideation, it becomes an instance of *Akarma*. *Nishkāmakarma* shows the method of transferring ordinary *karma* into the case of *Akarma* and prevents one from doing *Vikarma*. War is neither *karma* nor *vikarma*. War is given the status of *Nishkāmakarma*. Hence, there is no fear of the consequences. By suspending the sense of doership the agent not only disowns the action but also the consequences of the action. In the *Bhagavat Gita*, Lord Krishna says that the objects of sense move away from a person of spiritual discipline, but not the relish for them. It is the center of relish the focal point of experience and the root of all attachment. The attachment for *vastu* may be relinquished but the attachment for its *visaya* (mind objects) remains active. *Arjuna* was detached from his relatives but he was attached to thoughts (*visaya*) of his relations. That made *Arjuna* confused on the battlefield and reluctant to fight. Next to confusion,