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#### YOGA THERAPY AND MENTAL HEALTH

#### **Anagha Chikte**

Director of Physical Education & Sports, Shree Siddhivinayak College, Karvenagar, Pune

**Abstract:** Yoga is the activity that increases your flexibility, strengthens your muscles, centers your thoughts, and relaxes and calms you. Yoga is an ancient physical and spiritual discipline and branch of philosophy that originated in India reportedly more than 5,000 years ago.

Psychological/Mental Benefits: Improved Mental health, Improved Concentration, Improved Attention, Reduced Stress & tension, Improved Overall Attitude, Improved Mood & Increased Subjective well-being (self), Decreased Anxiety & Depression, Improved Learning efficiency, Improved Memory, Improved Self-acceptance & self confidence, Decreased Hostility, Increased Social adjustment/skill, Increased Somatic & kinesthetic awareness.

Yoga therapy is a big deal and can improve your mental health and beneficial is so many ways.

Keyword: Yoga, Pranayam, Spiritual.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Yoga is the activity that increases your flexibility, strengthens your muscles, centers your thoughts, and relaxes and calms you. Yoga is an ancient physical and spiritual discipline and branch of philosophy that originated in India reportedly more than 5,000 years ago. The word yoga comes from the Sanskrit word yuj, which means to yoke, join, or unite. The Iyengar School of yoga defines yuj as the "joining or integrating of all aspects of the individual—body with mind and mind with soul—to achieve a happy, balanced and useful life." The ultimate aim of yoga, they claim, is to reach kaivalya (emancipation or ultimate freedom) (Raub, 2000). There is no written record of who invented yoga because it was practiced by yogis (yoga practitioners) long before humans knew how to write. Yogis over the millennia passed down the discipline to their students, and many different schools of yoga developed as it spread. The earliest written record of yoga, and one of the oldest texts in existence, is generally believed to be written by Patanjali, an Indian yogic sage who lived somewhere between 2,000 and 2,500 years ago. Patanjali is credited with writing the Yoga Sutras (sutra means "thread" in Sanskrit), which are the principles, philosophy, and practices of yoga that are still followed today. Although many schools of yoga have evolved over the centuries, they all follow the fundamental principles described by Patanjali more than 2,000 years ago. Buddhism and other Eastern spiritual traditions use many of the yoga techniques or derivations of those techniques. Yoga uses asanas (postures), focused concentration on specific body parts, and pranayama (breathing techniques) to integrate the body with mind and mind with soul. Yoga asanas (postures or poses) help condition your body. There are thousands of yoga poses, and in Sanskrit, these poses are called kriyas (actions), mudras (seals), and bandhas (locks). A kriya focuses on the effort necessary to move energy up and down the spine; yoga

mudra is a gesture or movement to hold energy or concentrate awareness; and a bandha uses the technique of holding muscular contractions to focus awareness. Yoga focuses on the mind by teaching you to concentrate on specific parts of the body.

For instance, you may be asked by the instructor to focus deeply on your spine, or let your mind go and have your body sink into the floor. This awareness keeps the mind-body connection sharp and doesn't allow a lot of time for external chatter (like worrying about what you're going to have for dinner or the presentation at the office that you're preparing for). Instead, the focus is internal, between your head and your body. An example is savasana (the corpse pose), which is practiced by virtually all schools of yoga. During savasana, you lie on your back with your eyes closed and just let your entire body sink into the floor. The idea is to not fight any thoughts you have, but to let them come and go while the instructor leads you through visual imagery to help you focus on how your muscles feel. The result is to drift into a peaceful, calm, and relaxing state. Savasana is generally the final pose of a yoga session before final chanting and/or breathing exercises. Yoga uses controlled breathing as a way to merge the mind, body, and spirit. The breathing techniques are called pranayamas; prana means energy or life force, and yama means social ethics. It is believed that the controlled breathing of pranayamas will control the energy flow in your body. It is my experience that controlled breathing helps me focus on muscles that are working, and during savasana, it slows down my heart rate, calms my mind, and leads to a deep, inner calm and sense of relaxation.

#### WORKING OF YOGA CLASS:

A typical yoga class lasts 75 minutes. There is a 15-20 minute period of breathing, chanting, and warming up (it varies by type of yoga and instructor), followed by the asanas

Anagha Chikte, "YOGA THERAPY AND MENTAL HEALTH" Indian Streams Research Journal Vol-3, Issue-7 (Aug 2013): Online & Print

and then 15-20 minutes of relaxation (savasana) at the end.

#### RESEARCH METHOD

Survey was conducted with the help of the questionnaire prepared by the researcher. Five Yoga Clubs out of fifteen, form western area of Pune City were selected randomly. There were 928 registered members out of which 100 were selected randomly from the randomly selected clubs. Out of these 100 members 81 members answered fully questionnaire were consider for data analysis. Data collection was done after they finished their daily routine of the club. One hour daily routine of the clubs was as follows;

#### **DAILY ROUTINE:**

- 1. Prayer: Vaidic Mantra (Gayatri Mantra) 5-21 Times also.
- 2.Omkar: 3-5 Times (21 Times also).
- 3.General Exercise: Starting with some warm up exe. Neck to Toe joint movements, slow clock and anti clock rotation ten counts (Avoid Neck full rotation).
- 4. According to spot jogging or marching for one minutes.
- 5. Suryanamskar with names: 6-12.
- 6. Yogasane: Standing, sitting, lying on stomach, lying on back postures.
- 7. Shavasna: for 3-5 minutes.
- 8. Pranayam: Anulom-Vilom, Kapalbhati, Bhramari (Shuddhi Kriya).
- 9.Meditation: 2 minutes. 10.Omkar: 3-5 Times 11. Closing Prayer.

#### **FINDINGS:**

#### Psychological/Mental Benefits-

- 1) It was found that total 97.5 (N-79) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves mental health.
- 2) It was found that total 96.3 % (N-78) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Concentration.
- 3)It was found that total 96.3 %( N-78) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Attention.
- 4)It was observed that total 96.3 %( N-78) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity reduces Stress & tension.
- 5) It was found that total 96.3 %( N-78) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Overall attitude.
- 6) It was found that total 95.1 %( N-77) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Mood & Subjective well-being increases (self).
- 7) It was found that total 95.1 % (N-77) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity decreases Anxiety & depression.
- 8) It was found that total 93.8 %( N-76) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Learning efficiency.
- 9) It was found that total 92.6 %( N-75) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Memory.
- 10) It was found that total 92.6 %( N-75) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity improves Selfacceptance & self-confidence.
- 11) It was found that total 88.9 %( N-72) members admitted

that participating Yoga Club activity decreases Hostility.

- 12) It was found that total 85.2 %( N-69) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity increases Social adjustment/skill.
- 13) It was found that total 82.7 %( N-67) members admitted that participating Yoga Club activity increases Somatic & Kinesthetic awareness.

Table
Yoga Participants perception about
Psychological/Mental Benefits of doing yoga

Benefits	Yes	No	Don't No
Improve mental health	97.5	0.0	2.5
Concentration improves	96.3	1.2	2.5
Attention improves	96.3	0.0	3.7
Reduce stress & tension	96.3	0.0	3.7
Improve overall attitude	96.3	0.0	3.7
Mood improves & subjective well-being increase(self)	95.1	0.0	4.9
Anxiety & Depression decreases	95.1	0.0	4.9
Learning efficiency improves	93.8	1.2	4.9
Self-acceptance & self confidence improves	92.6	1.2	6.2
Memory improves	92.6	0.0	7.4
Hostility decreases	88.9	1.2	9.9
Social adjustment/skill increases	85.2	0.0	14.8
Somatic & Kinesthetic awareness increase	82.7	0.0	17.3

#### **CONCLUSION-**

1.Psychological/Mental Benefits: Improved Mental health, Improved Concentration, Improved Attention, Reduced Stress & tension, Improved Overall Attitude, Improved Mood & Increased Subjective well-being(self), Decreased Anxiety & Depression, Improved Learning efficiency, Improved Memory, Improved Self-acceptance & self confidence, Decreased Hostility, Increased Social adjustment/skill, Increased Somatic & kinesthetic awareness.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:-

- 1. Each Yoga Club should appoint a well trained coach.
- 2.A proper shelter should be provided by each club, so that these clubs get the cover space in rainy seasons.
- 3. The number of yoga clubs must increase.
- 4. Yearly physical fitness check-up is necessary.

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#### **DECLARATION:**

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