



Importance of Yoga & Meditation in Education

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1. Introduction

Yoga has great importance in present education system. The modern education system emphasizes on science and technology in which the material progress is being achieved, but the inculcation of ethical, moral and spiritual values and promotion of healthy life-style are totally neglected. In this context, it is an urgent need to integrate Yoga in modern education system in order to make all-round development relating to body, mind and spirit symphonically and thereby prevent the erosion of human values. The integration of Yoga education in the present system of education can endorse human values to reform attitude and behavior, relieve from stress and strain, build up healthy life-style, shape high moral character and develop refined personality of the students so as to make them a complete well-being. Hence, we have to understand the importance of Yoga in education and introduce it as a discipline and thereby focus on the process of integration in the curriculum. However, Yoga practices can lead students to the attainment of the highest goal of life-the self- realization of the potentialities inherent in them.

2. History of Yoga

Yoga can be traced back to the R̥gveda itself, the oldest Hindu text which speaks about yoking our mind and insight to the Light of Truth or Reality. Great teachers of early Yoga include the names of many famous Vedic sages like Vāsiṣṭha, Yajñavalkya, and Jaigīśavya. The greatest of the Yogis is always said to be Yogeśvara Kṛṣṇa himself, the propounder of Bhagavadgītā which is called as Yoga Śāstra an authoritative work on Yoga. Lord Śiva is also the greatest of the Yogis or Ādinātha.

Yoga has been part of man's activities directed towards higher spiritual achievements in India. The history of Yoga is divided into five categories:

- Vedic period
- Pre-classical period
- Classical period
- Yoga in Medieval Times
- Yoga in Modern Times

3. Objectives of Yoga education

The main objectives of Yoga education are as follows:

1. To enable the student to have good health.
2. To practice mental hygiene.
3. To possess emotional stability.
4. To integrate moral values.
5. To attain higher level of consciousness.

Yoga education could help to equip oneself with basic knowledge about one's personality, to learn to handle oneself well in all life situations, to learn techniques of gaining good health, to develop a discriminative mind capable of knowing the real from the unreal and to face the dualities of life with equanimity. Yoga education can enhance all the activities of the students, be it academic or sport or social. Yoga techniques provide improved attention in studies, better stamina and co-ordination for sports and a heightened awareness and balanced attitude for social activity.

4. Types of Yoga

The aim of Yoga is the attainment of the physical, mental and spiritual health. Patanjali has recommended eight stages of Yoga discipline. They are:

- Yamas- (internal purification through moral training preparatory to Yoga)
- Niyamas- (cleanliness, contentment, mortification, study and worship of God)
- Asanas- Physical postures or exercises
- Pranayama- (Control of vital energy/ Breath control)
- Pratyahara- (Withdrawal of the senses/ making the mind introspective)
- Dharana- (Concentration of the mind)
- Dhyana- Meditation
- Samadhi- Attainment of the super conscious state

5. Importance of Yoga Education

The importance of Yoga in Education is too enormous to ignore. Today's education is mostly information concerned with and it needs to qualitative changes in physical, mental, spiritual development of the students in a balanced way. The education with Yoga would improve mental faculties, develop positive health, inculcate higher values, provide peace and tranquility and build up moral character which can lead us to attain highest goal of life as well as education.

The main benefits of Yoga in Education are discussed below:

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| 1. Physical health | 6. Sharpen memory |
| 2. Balancing both hemisphere of the brain | 7. Healthy living |
| 3. Develop values | 8. Develop cognitive and affective domain |
| 4. Healthy emotional development | 9. Improve senses |
| 5. Academic performance | 10. Integrated personality development |

6. Misconceptions about Yoga

To summarize, there are varieties of misconception as associated with Yoga. Many persons who are laymen or not acquainted with the Indian culture and traditions think Yoga as associated with:

- Religion – dogma, belief, cult or -ism
- Magic, trick, mysticism
- Physical culture – aerobics and anaerobics
- Mental concentration
- Self mortification, self torture

7. Importance of meditation

The word 'health' in Sanskrit means to be established in one's self. The body, mind and spirit have to be in harmony. We have seven layers to our existence, that is body, breath, mind, intellect, memory, ego and the self. So, we need to learn about all these and the techniques to keep them healthy and in harmony, and that's what Yoga and Sudarshan Kriya is all about. With a few minutes of meditation, our whole system gets rejuvenated.

There are four sources of energy. The first is food, second is good sleep, and third is breathing, fourth is meditation. By attending to these four important sources of energy, we can restore our health. There are many benefits of breathing exercises:

- Violence-free society
- Disease-free body
- Confusion-free mind
- Inhibition-free intellect
- Trauma-free memory
- Sorrow-free soul

The Study of Meditation and its impact on human lifestyle have been studied for years. The scientific studies and researches have also proved that Meditation has the Power of Healing and it is a secret to remain healthy and peaceful life. Meditation not only benefits adult or elderly people, but it is very helpful to students as well.

Students mean the learning period of any individual. At this stage of life, they are able to grasp and capture things quite easily than an adult. But most of the students don't really appreciate the idea of meditation. They find it hard to include it as the part of their daily routine. But if students regularly practice meditating under proper guidance, they will be benefited in numerous ways. Some of the benefits of meditation for students are enlisted below:

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| 1. Increase in IQ level | 6. Personal transformation |
| 2. Lower stress | 7. Increase efficiency of brain functioning |
| 3. Get over depression | 8. Appreciate life |
| 4. Helps to get over from bad addiction | 9. Keep away from diseases |
| 5. Developing confidence | 10. Keeps students happy |

There are numerous benefits of meditation in student life. If students make it as a part of daily routine, they will surely remain healthy, fit and lively.

8. Conclusion

Yoga offers new learning possibilities to a wider group of students than traditional sports or fitness curriculum, making it a valuable addition to any educational program. Additionally, adding yoga to a school's curriculum will help provide a quality physical education program as modification of traditional physical education yoga in sports as important as other think it helps us in different ways and different levels in a sports men life. Yoga can play a key role in cultivating mind control and concentration which helps a sportsperson to perform at their game. It offers children and adults an opportunity to experience success in physical activity, which can help build a foundation of strong of life. However, curriculum specialists, teachers, trainers and students should know and analyze seriously the real challenges of yoga education in classroom settings and real life as well.

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