

Yoga and Meditation: Harmonising Mind and Body

Dr Neeru Kapoor* & Dr Kamalpreet Sandhu**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce., Khalsa College for Women

**Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce., Khalsa College for Women

Abstract

Yoga and meditation, ancient practices rooted in Indian philosophy, have gained global popularity for their profound effects on physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Meditation, with its rich historical roots and diverse practices, offers comprehensive approaches to achieving holistic well-being. Their widespread acceptance and integration into modern life underscore their timeless relevance and transformative potential. Yoga and meditation have been integrated into various therapeutic settings, including healthcare, education, and corporate environments. They are used as complementary therapies in treating conditions such as PTSD, substance abuse, and chronic illnesses. Additionally, these practices are embraced by individuals seeking personal growth, stress management, and enhanced quality of life.

Keywords: *Yoga, Meditation, Yoga, Stress-management, Physical and Mental Well-being*

Introduction

Yoga is an ancient spiritual practice from India that uses breath control, physical exercise, and meditative postures. The practice of yoga uses “asanas”, or various physical poses, to achieve a divine connection with the universe. The word yoga means “union” in Sanskrit. Some people refer to yoga as moving meditation, where you calm your mind and create awareness through doing the poses (Mohammad, 2019). Meditation, or “dhyana”, is also a part of yoga. Like the physical practice of yoga, dhyana also forms a profound connection with the universe by doing mental exercises to bring you to a higher state of consciousness. This connection happens in savasana when you are in a meditative, peaceful state (Mohammad, 2019). More than 36 million Americans practice yoga regularly (Yoga Alliance, 2016). Yoga was the number one mind and body health practice in the U.S. in 2017, with meditation squeaking behind in second place (Clark, 2018).

The significant difference between other meditation and yoga meditation is that, depending on the yoga practice, you typically do a yoga meditation after a yoga sequence. It is the final step in yoga: first, you exercise the body, then let go to help relax and focus the mind. This meditative practice helps stabilise your body

post-exercise and provides mental clarity and physical, emotional, and spiritual energy.

How to do yoga meditation

Yoga and mindfulness meditation are similar in that they both require concentration and focus. The ultimate goal of both of these practices is to feel peaceful, relaxed, in a state of self-awareness, and connected to the universe. This is done through pranayama or by regulating and focusing on your breathing (Mohammad, 2019). People often do yoga and meditation for the many health benefits they provide. Together, they can work synergistically to help the body in complementary ways. Because yoga meditation is typically done after a yoga session, you receive the benefits of yoga and meditation simultaneously.

Yoga meditation is done without moving the body. When you do this mindful practice, you will get into position, either sitting or lying down peacefully, letting thoughts and feelings pass without judging them. You keep your eyes closed and your palms facing upward to the sky.

Yoga meditation is often done in a class or with someone instructing you during the meditation, though you may find you can practice it on your own once you have experience with it. Some people use YouTube or online videos for guided yoga meditation. You may feel your body tingle

or shake, especially if you have done a more vigorous style of yoga. Some people may fall asleep during yoga meditation. A typical yoga meditation takes about five minutes, though some may last longer.

Yoga meditation techniques

You should feel comfortable while doing yoga and yoga meditation. There are different types of yoga, and some may feel better to you than others. Here are some of the more common yoga styles:

- Hatha yoga is a generic term for “basic” yoga.
- Restorative yoga uses gentle asanas (postures) with supportive blocks, blankets, and pillows.
- Bikram or hot yoga involves doing poses in an artificially heated room.
- Vinyasa yoga uses fluid, intense yoga movements that flow from one pose to another.

You may choose to do a yoga meditation in the morning to start the day off or at night to calm you down for sleep.

Whichever yoga style you choose, your instructor will guide you in noticing your breathing and how your body moves during the poses. You may feel stronger on one side of your body or hold your balance better on one leg. When you notice these differences, this is a form of mindful self-awareness. This self-awareness lays the foundation for yoga meditation. You can try some basic yoga moves to get the blood flowing and then lie down for a 5-minute yoga meditation (Outside, 2021).

Impact of yoga on the mind, body, and soul

Yoga improves self-awareness, self-management, and self-efficacy in a manner that team sports may not, allowing kids to develop critical life skills and make links to their daily lives. In other words, yoga teaches kids actual skills that enable them to control their health rather than merely thrive on the field. Their needs and surroundings are essential, so they learn to pay more attention to how they eat, move, and treat their bodies. Yoga gives kids much control and helps them learn essential social, emotional, cognitive, and scholastic skills, like paying attention and focusing, making

decisions, working with others, managing stress, and being kind. In yoga, students can be more introspective and quieter inside their bodies. They also have to ask big questions and take more responsibility for their ideas, emotions, and actions, which is why yoga is good for them. As a result, pupils are healthier and better equipped to confront future problems with confidence and resilience. Yoga is reported to provide a variety of health advantages, including – reducing tension, – restoring flexibility, – and liberating the mind from mental problems, which are all benefits of this treatment. – Reduces uneasiness, irritation, and confusion; – prevents depression and mental tiredness; – restores alertness, focus, and readiness to solve problems; – increases self-awareness; achieves and – maintains physical and mental health and relaxation.

Impact of Yoga on the human Mind

Students experience stress due to a demanding curriculum, intense rivalry for admission to prestigious institutions and universities, and unemployment. They have high expectations from their parents. Stress may have a beneficial or destructive impact. Positive stress boosts your working capacity and performance, while negative stress can make you depressed. By medical research, stress is a killer that many people do not even know is killing them. Yoga can help with stress management in school by improving physical and psychological resilience, emotional balance, and pranic balance by removing the main problems in the mind. Asanas, Pranayama, Meditation, and other types of yoga may help students self-heal and reduce mental stress. Those who do yoga are going to be healed by it in all of its forms. Modern lifestyle engagements have disrupted mental and bodily serenity. Several ailments have developed from this way of living. Yoga is an effort to address such issues and may help with various severity levels. Technical systems are embedded in yogic practices, which aid in maintaining tranquillity and resilience. In addition, in-depth yoga helps you integrate your personality. Yoga may enhance one's lifestyle, resulting in more positive attitudes.

Conclusion

Yoga should be considered a complementary therapy or alternative method for medical therapy in the treatment of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders. It has been shown to create a greater sense of well-

being, increase feelings of relaxation, improve self-confidence and body image, improve efficiency, improve interpersonal relationships, increase attentiveness, lower irritability, and encourage an optimistic outlook on life.

References

- Chang, D. G., & Kertesz, S. G. (2017). Yoga and low back pain: No fool's tool. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 167 (2), 129-130. doi: 10.7326/M17-1263. Retrieved from <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/M17-1263>
- Chung, S. C., Brooks, M. M., Rai, M., Balk, J. L., & Rai, S. (2012). Effect of Sahaja yoga meditation on quality of life, anxiety, and blood pressure control. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 18 (6), 589–596. doi: 10.1089/acm.2011.0038. Retrieved from <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/acm.2011.0038>
- Clarke, T. C., Barnes, P. M., Black, L. I., Stussman, B. J., & Nahin, R. L. (2018). *Use of yoga, meditation, and chiropractors among US adults aged 18 and over*. US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db325.htm>
- Djalilova, D. M., Schulz, P. S., Berger, A. M., Case, A. J., Kupzyk, K. A., & Ross, A. C. (2019). Impact of yoga on inflammatory biomarkers: A systematic review. *Biological Research for Nursing*, 21 (2), 198–209. doi: 10.1177/1099800418820162. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30572710/>
- Froeliger, B., Garland, E. L., & McClernon, F. J. (2012). Yoga meditation practitioners exhibit greater grey matter volume and fewer reported cognitive failures: results of a preliminary voxel-based morphometric analysis. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine: eCAM*, 2012,
- Gaiswinkler, L., & Unterrainer, H. F. (2016). The relationship between yoga involvement, mindfulness and psychological well-being. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 26, 123-127. doi: 10.1016/j.ctim.2016.03.011. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27261992/>
- Juriscic, P., Salm, D. C., Vieira, C., Cidral-Filho, F. J., Mazzardo-Martins, L., & Martins, D. F. (2018). Pain-related encephalic regions influenced by yoga meditation: An integrative review. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, 31, 320-324. doi: 10.1016/j.ctcp.2018.04.001. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29705476/>
- Kora, P., Meenakshi, K., Swaraja, K., Rajani, A., & Raju, M. S. (2021). EEG based interpretation of human brain activity during yoga and meditation using machine learning: A systematic review. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*.