

YOGA FOR HOLISTIC GROWTH

- PONMANI AVINASHILINGAM



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SLOGAN

YOGA IS NOT FOR THE ONLY ONE, BUT IT IS FOR EVERYONE.

YOGA IS NOT FOR A DAY, BUT FOR EVERY DAY.

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY

United Nations General Assembly has declared June 21 as INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY. This was done after the address of Indian Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi to United Nations General Assembly on Sep 27, 2014. In that address he requested United Nations to declare June 21 as International Yoga Day. Mr. Modi's request was accepted by United Nations General Assembly.

India created a history on June 21, 2015 during the first International Yoga Day. On that day millions of Yoga Practitioners across the globe participated. The second International Yoga Day on June 21, 2016 was also equally successful.

POPULARITY OF YOGA

Yoga originated in India before 5,000 years. It has become popular all over the world now. 10% of US adults and 3% of US children participate in yoga. Fitness professionals, Games and Sports Coaches universally teach the physical exercise part of yoga.

Yoga starts with physical exercise and ends with uniting the individual Jiva to the infinite consciousness Isvara. Asanas, pranayama and dhyana should be practiced together to give more effective results.

Yoga is popular because of celebrity endorsements. It gets some previously sedentary people off their couches to practice yoga.

Yoga is the science for improving physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health of all individuals.

UNIVERSALITY OF YOGA

People of all age, caste, creed and religion can practice and enjoy the benefits.

“Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy- by one or more or all of these and be free. This is the whole of the religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or templates or forms are but secondary details.” – **Swami Vivekananda**

Swami Vivekananda says that the ultimate goal of everyone is to manifest the potential divinity of the soul.

In spite of material success, we have yet to learn to live with each other in peace, amity and tolerance. What we like is either illegal, immoral or fattening.

We were taught to see the external world. We were not taught to look at the depth of the mind. There is no limit to the power of human mind. If we concentrate more, the mind will become more powerful. This is the secret of the mind.

“Think of all the three- your body, mind and your soul. For the body- exercise, recreation, healthy food and cheerfulness. For the mind- reading and thinking. For the soul- inward purity. And for cultivating these, early rising, absorption in prayers with one pointed attending and reading of the Gita.” – **Mahatma Gandhi**

MEDITATION

Meditation is a yogic process of providing deep rest to the system by allowing the

FEATURES OF MEDITATION

1. Mind dwells on a single thought by choice
2. Deep relaxation of all parts of the body
3. Reduced metabolic rate by slowing of breath
4. Freshness, lightness and a feeling of expansion at mental level
5. Calmness, peace and serene bliss
6. Continuous awareness

BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

Improved concentration, memory, emotional equipoise, higher creativity

BENEFITS OF YOGA

1. Improved quality of life
2. Reduced stress
3. Lower heart rate and blood pressure
4. Help relieve anxiety, depression and insomnia
5. Improved overall strength, physical fitness and flexibility
6. Increases our lung capacity and respiration
7. Improve our ability to resist stress, reduce body weight, decrease cholesterol and blood sugar levels
8. Stabilise, restore and vitalize the body's natural systems
9. Helps to treat psychosomatic and stress induced disorders
10. Helps in treatment of bronchial asthma, nasal allergy and other respiratory disorders
11. Eye sight improvement
12. Ease lower back pain
13. Helps to control diabetes
14. Relaxes muscles
15. Equal distribution of energy throughout the body
16. Mindfulness helps us to concentrate on our studies or work
17. We can maintain our inner balance, even if things are not favourable in work
18. Gives inner strength, sharpens our intellect
19. Helps in our emotional growth
20. Sharpens decision making skills
21. Improves multi tasking ability
22. Prepares us to react calmly in tough situations
23. Develops physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects of an individual

Father of Yoga Philosophy

Pathanjali Maharishi is considered as the father of Yoga Philosophy.

The most authentic book on Yoga

Patanjali Maharishi's "Yoga Sutra" is the most authentic book on Yoga.

He gives eight steps in Yoga.

8 steps in Yoga

The eight steps (limbs) of Yoga are:

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yama

YAMA consists of 5 aspects. (1) Ahimsa- Non-violence (2) Satya- Truth (3) Brahmacharya- Celibacy (4) Asteya- Non-stealing and (5) Aparigraha – Non-covetousness.

Niyama

NIYAMA consists of 5 aspects. (1) Saucha– Cleanliness (2) Santosha- Contentment (3) Tapas – Penance (4) Svadhyaya- Regular study of Sastra (5) Isvara Pranidhana- Remembering Isvara.

Asana

ASANA is physical postures, physical exercises done with concentration of the mind.

Pranayama

PRANAYAMA is control of breath. It consists of inhaling, retaining the breath and exhaling.

Pratyahara

PRATYAHARA is control of sense organs. One voluntarily abstains from sense objects to attain mastery over sense organs.

Dharana

DHARANA is trying to concentrate the mind (meditate) on a pre-determined object.

Dhyana

DHYANA is achieving reasonable success in concentrating the mind (meditation) on a pre-determined object.

Samadhi

SAMADHI is achieving absolute success in concentrating the mind (meditation) on a pre-determined object. There is no difference between the Subject and Object.

To attain success, in yoga, one should practice that continuously for a length of time with sincere efforts.

TIPS DURING YOGA CLASS:

1. The most common asana is Surya Namaskara. Most of the benefits of all the asanas can be gained by doing Surya Namaskara.
2. The common pranayama practices are Bastrika and Naddi Sudhi. These two practices are very effective.
3. Join only a beginners class even if you are fit
4. If you have health problems like knee pain, back pain, etc tell the Instructor
5. If you are not comfortable during any posture during the class, tell the Instructor
6. Never force the body. Do asanas, pranayama and dhyana in a sequence. When there is pain, stop the exercise.
7. If you feel tired, rest for some time. Then continue the exercise.
8. Result of the yoga practice should be a refreshed, relaxed feeling.
9. More benefits can be gained by regular practice for a length of time .

When we are more healthy, we are more capable to deal with challenges with utmost efficiency.

Let us pledge to practice yoga regularly and make it an integral part of our lives.

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