



## Role of Yoga in Management of Stress

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All of us have limitless potentials to develop, grow & gain health & happiness which are precious. However, our life is made of stresses of various kinds. In order to remain happy & gain health coping with stress & anxiety is an every day requirement. Since stress is inevitable but a necessary ingredient of life, the question is not 'Do I experience stress?' or 'Am I under stress?' but rather 'How am I coping with stress and 'How can I make stress work for me rather than against me?' The answers to these questions involve all facets of our life & developing strategies for dealing with stressors that are really 'Getting to us' Stress is a common experience in meeting with the demands of life and a natural fabric of life. It is a transaction between the person & the environment in which stressors are linked to anxiety reactions by the perception of threat. Stress is not always harmful, it can give motivation to overcome difficulties. While stress may have positive effects as well as negative effects, the negative effects often get most attention. Negative stress mainly leads to discomfort, anxiety, irritation & emotional instability.

Coping is the ability to reduce the mismatch between resources & demand Most of us just assume that all the stressfulness of life is natural & is the only way to react, but there is another way which is learning to cope with stress.

Stress reaction is a natural response to fear or uncertainty. Chronic stress is a major challenge of technological era. Stresses can pile up without your noticing each tension feeding others, until you become chronically over stimulated, eventually; this is expressed as physical disease or mental disorders.



Yoga helps to break this vicious cycle by teaching one to slow down & diffuse stress. One's way of life itself will become more holistic, characterized by calmness, peace, poise & efficiency.

Yoga has been with us since time immemorial but it is in recent times that it has gained utmost significance probably because of the increase in psychosomatic disorders. Yoga is a system of concrete steps to attain what Patanjali refers to as an 'Inhibition of fluctuations of mind' This is possible through asanas, breathing practices, relaxation and meditation.

**Self Management of Excessive Tension (SMET)** is a simple & easy practice based on Yogic principles for developing ability to cope with stress. It is specially designed to suit modern day Executives, Professional, Management experts etc

**SMET programme includes :**

- Easy postures with slow rhythmic breathing
- Cyclic meditation , which is based on alternate stimulation through asanas & relaxation leading to release of stress
- Deep relaxation

**SMET benefits :**

- Promotion of positive health at physical mental emotional & social levels
- Improved efficiency
- Prevention & self management of stress ailments like hypertension, angina, insomnia etc
- Emergence of effective team spirit
- Happy homes & neighborhood with peaceful living

**Causes of stress :**

1. Going too fast,
  2. Trying to control everything
  3. Poor physical health habits
  4. Harboring chronic pessimism
  5. Holding on to the past
  6. Believing in conflicting values.
- Fortunately all are modifiable with practice and efforts.

### **NOT POSSIBLE TO ELIMINATE STRESS**

Some coping skills include

1. Restrain the mind particularly the psychic centers (anxiety).
2. Improve coping resources -Cognitive, behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate or reduce external demands and conflicts.
3. Strengthen individual personality & perception of stress.



## GENESIS OF STRESS RELATED DISORDERS

STAGES	CHANGES	TREATMENT
1. Psychic phase	: Psychological changes	psychotherapy
2. Psychosomatic	: Increase in blood pr	psychotherapy & relaxation
3. Somatic	: e.g hyperacidity	psychotherapy, relaxation & medical
4. Organic	: Inflammatory changes medical & surgery etc.	psychotherapy, relaxation, medical

## ROLE OF YOGA

The subjective & physical benefits of yoga modulate the Physiology & Psychology of the individual so as to maintain a constant internal environment within the body (called Homeostasis) This in turn helps to combat stress & regain a normal stable state from the altered state.

**Yoga has dual role** : Primary i.e. Preventive and Secondary i.e. therapeutic

**Primary:** yoga advocates life style changes such as regular asanas, cessation of smoking, avoiding over eating, vegetarian diet and relaxation.

## Learn breathing... The yoga way

With the ever-increasing incidence of lifestyle diseases like cardio-vascular and nervous system disorders, the time has come for us to address this ourselves, fair and square WITHOUT external dependence.

Did you know that reprogramming your natural breathing technique would not only help in preventing these problems but also help in the 'reversal' of several such harmful conditions? Yes, it's not only possible but proven too. In fact leading cardiac experts are advocating the benefits of 'correct' breathing to their patients.

Surprising as it is, almost none of us use the full capacity of our respiratory organs. This is aggravated by our sedentary lifestyles and leads to several complications popularly called - lifestyle disorders.

The first question that comes to mind is - 'How can I alter my natural breathing process?' Well, astonishing as it may seem, it's true. By training our body to breathe in a particular fashion, we re-program our involuntary system to adopt this new way of breathing.

This breathing technique is called the 'Full Yogic breath' or simply Yoga breathing. The full yogic breath is the basic building block of the powerful yoga breathing techniques, also called 'Pranayama' in Sanskrit, which are known for their multifarious benefits.



But the tangible benefits of the full yogic breath are that it :

- Releases acute and chronic muscular tensions around the heart and digestive organs.
- Helps sufferers of respiratory illnesses such as asthma and emphysema to overcome the fear of shortness of breath. It actually increases lung capacity.
- Encourages proper nervous stimulus to the cardio-vascular system
- Dramatically reduces emotional and nervous anxiety
- Improves detoxification through increased exchange of carbon dioxide and oxygen
- Amplifies the auto immune system by increased distribution of energy to the endocrine system
- Calms the mind and integrates the mental/ physical balance.

And the real icing is that it contributes to both vitality and relaxation through this single practice.

Yoga provides organized mental & physical training stimulation inputs to the nervous system (meditative practices), sensory system, respiratory system (breathing), cardiovascular system, autonomic nervous system. There is movement towards homeostasis with shift towards activation of parasympathetic nervous system and stress reduction.

Thus, can yoga be the answer to stress induces ailments? How does yoga achieve the object of promotive & preventive health? Practice of yogic asanas and pranayama leads to reduces sympathetic activity shifting autonomic balance to parasympathetic preponderance.

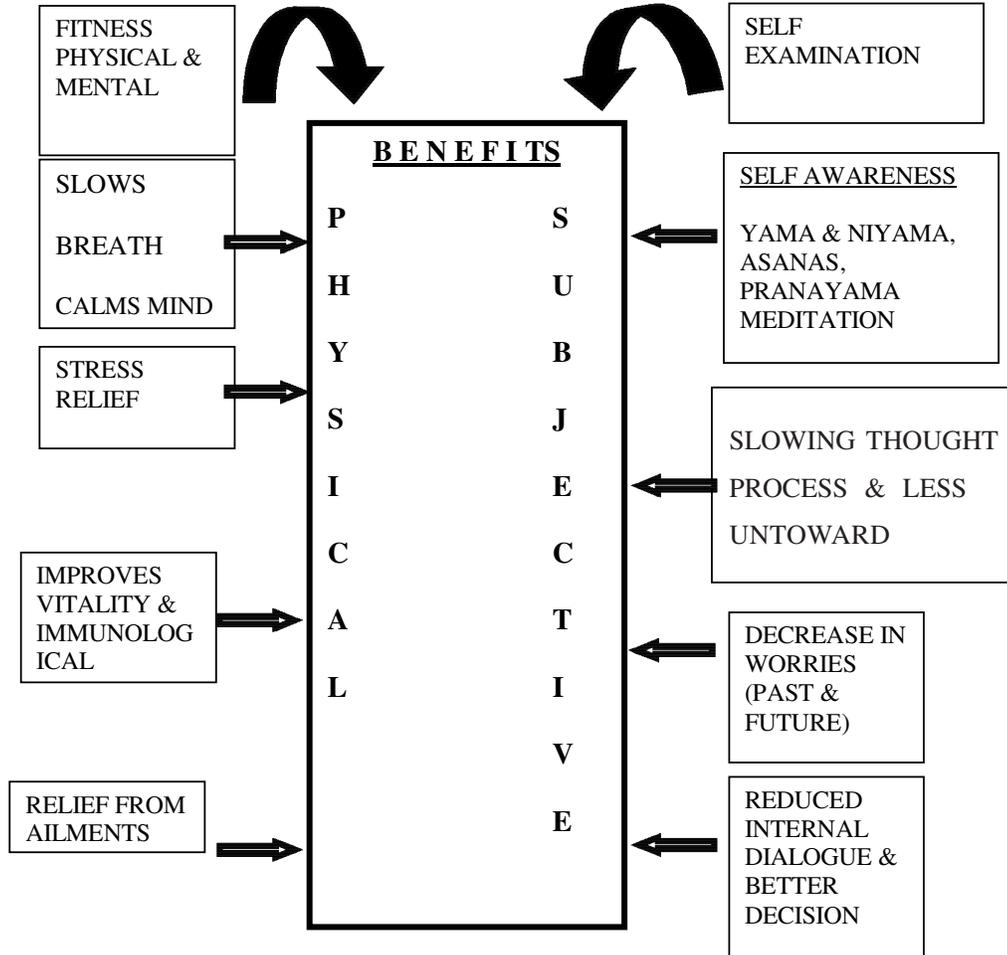
Yoga bestows a state of mental tranquility to its practitioner. This is revealed in alpha index of EEG. Stress hormones show a gradual decline. While practicing yoga emphasis is always to be fully conscious of movement and concentrate on performance. This eventually leads to better harmony of mind and body.

The cause of present psychosomatic illnesses due to stress can be attributed to lack of exercise, stress and strain to professional and social demands etc. Yoga forms a pattern of complete exercise for all systems of the body; brings harmony to mind and body; modulating stress response and one's attitude to stress. Hence, it is a effective preventive tool.

## COMPONENTS OF SELF MANAGEMENT OF EXCESSIVE TENSION

### 1. Yogic Postures :

- Releases stiffness of joints and muscles
- Improves flexibility
- Slow, non jerky, smooth
- Normal breathing
- Final position as per capacity





**Deep Breathing**

Sit or stand with your hands on your stomach. Inhale slowly through your nose, feeling your stomach expand. Exhale slowly through pursed lips; repeat several times.

**Muscle Relaxation**

Tighten, then relax, one group of muscles at a time, working up from your feet to your face. Notice how much 'lighter' your muscles feel.

**Visualization**

Enjoy a 'mental vacation'. First, reduce nearby noise and disturbances. Then, while sitting comfortably, close your eyes and picture yourself in a relaxed setting.

**COPING SKILLS**

- Perform community service
- Make contact with nature
- Get a pet
- Make time for just you
- Talk to someone
- Practice yoga and relaxation techniques
- Exercise
- Pick up an outside interest or hobby laugh
- Develop a mantra that works for you
- Practice acting like a relaxed person
- 'Slow down'
- Manage your time better
- Learn to say 'no'
- Plan a day just to do nothing
- Stop judging others by your values

