

# The Magic and Science of Asana: Let's Practice Asana This Way Using Novel Approach

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**Abstract**— In a world that demands substantive clinical research evidence to support different approaches to health care, yoga is gaining attention. Yoga is an ancient practice; it has been associated with cultural, religious and physical activity for more than 2,000 years.<sup>2</sup> Its practitioners have asserted its effect on balancing emotional, physical and spiritual health for decades, but only recently has there been a move to substantiate these claims through research. So far, the result has been definitive, significant evidence of the broad-ranging benefits of yoga, both as a treatment and a preventative form of medicine and health care. This is what a yoga asana means – you are taking charge of your life. You are transforming your body and mind into a possibility in your life. This survey paper describes how to practice asana in proper way. Basically approach of this research work is to execute the step by step entered through breathing from one asana to next asana. The objective of this study is to assess the findings of selected articles regarding the therapeutic effects of yoga and to provide a comprehensive review of the benefits of regular yoga asana practice.<sup>4</sup>

**Keywords**— yoga, asana, divine and reveals, Alternative therapy, depression, pain, quality of life, therapeutic asana practice.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this technological age, health care paradoxes abound. Computerization, designed to facilitate daily life, carries with it a demand to be externally connected to events at all times. In doing so, paradoxically, we become alienated from reflecting personally upon body, mind and spirit. Use of pharmacological medication can assuage some of our symptoms, but this approach can also mean that we can carry on as normal with our busy lives, reducing our ability to monitor and focus on our personal health and wellbeing. Organized. Asana practice is the most visible and therefore most photographed practice in yoga. For modern times, it is also one of the most accessible and practical aspects. It makes good replacement for those people who cannot or do not want to get into impact exercise, like weight training and calisthenics, or running or playing sport.<sup>5</sup>

Yoga Asana gives excellent all round exercise, both cardiovascular and aerobic, and provides flexibility, strength, stamina, endurance and most importantly, agility. Asana practice is a way out of aging, and a way back, a return as it were to youth, eternal youth, until we pass on.<sup>8</sup>

Yoga Asana reduces anxiety and worry; gives excellent rest and deep sleep; reduces cravings; makes you feel happy, secure and content; makes the body and the mind

strong and flexible, youthful and agile; you become confident, light and simple; you reconnect with your own inherent sense of hum our and laughter and a habit of being fresh and bright; Asana drives away gloominess, despair and desperation and it generates hope, and wonder, and joy for life.

Asana connects you back to yourself. It is a practice of the rediscovery of the lost kingdom, that infinite realm of peace and happiness.<sup>9</sup>

## II. COME, LET US PRACTICE A FEW ASANA. LET US FALL IN LOVE WITH ASANA.

Sadhguru: An asana is a posture. There are innumerable postures your body can take. Among these, certain postures have been identified as “yoga asanas” or yogasanas. “**Yoga**” means that which takes you on to a higher dimension or higher perception of life. So, that kind of posture which leads you to a higher possibility is called a “yogasana.”<sup>7</sup>

Yoga is a way of bringing positive changes in our life. Positive change requires opposing past habits. But asana can also become habits. If we practice asana like riding a bicycle, we lose a large part of its transformative potential. Movement becomes mechanical because our brain learns movement patterns. If we do a movement

some hundreds of times, we can then repeat it easily with little awareness. But awareness is the key to sustaining transformation; awareness helps us recognize what we need to change and prevents us from slipping back after we change.<sup>3</sup>

Asana to be a powerful agent of transformation, we must do them not purely from the force of habit but with a stream of awareness. Even for the health of the body — to improve posture and alignment, to increase strength and flexibility effectively, and to explore our limits safely<sup>6</sup> — awareness is necessary in asana practice. Injuries and imbalances in alignment often arise in asana practice because of practicing from habit instead of practicing in awareness.

### III. LET'S PRACTICE ASANA THIS WAY

The best pathway to awareness in asana practice is the connection between the body and the breath. Focusing the mind on the breath, and noticing how the body and breath influence each other, is a profoundly healthful method of developing and maintaining awareness in asana practice<sup>9</sup>.

Asana practice should be a harmonious experience. The manner of breathing into a wind instrument, a flute for instance, can create either a grating screech or a melodious song. The body too is an instrument. If used skilfully, as in the union of movement and breath, the resulting posture is a useful and harmonious experience. When performed with the graceful orchestration of all its parts, asana can become a music of the body, breath and mind.

The pathway of yoga is about commitment to positive transformation, not commitment to placing the body and mind in discomfort and harm for no clear reason.

### IV. BENEFITS OF ASANA PRACTICE

**“Yoga is the science of using the body to prepare oneself for the ultimate possibility”-Sad guru”.**

Yoga works on five principles to find the ultimate possibility in your life.

- Proper Exercise
- Proper Breathing
- Proper Relaxation
- Proper Diet
- Positive Thinking and Meditation

The given basic asana have more meaning than just the postures or stretching your body. It activates the chakras which are the pranic energy channels along with increasing the flexibility of the spine, stimulating the immune system and strengthening each body parts. Moreover, it also helps to alleviate diabetes, arthritis, stress-related diseases and sexual disorders. Regular practice of these 12 poses ensures to bring a physical, mental and spiritual equilibrium in your body<sup>12</sup>.

**Let's practice the unique basic asana to live with a sense of divinity, spirituality and stress-free life.**

1. **Prarthna asana (standing)** Hands in Namaskar sthithi (5 sec concentrate on physical body , 5 sec calm breath awareness)
2. **Tadasana** Stretch hands up in to Tadasana (5 sec concentrate on physical body , 5 sec calm breath awareness)
3. **Parvatasana:** Keep gap between the legs, lift heels and stretch hands up. Hands will come up besides the ears, keep the eyes open to maintain balance
4. **Griva uttanasana:** Get the heels down, hands will remain up, drop head and neck back, leave it free(5 sec concentrate on physical body , 5 sec calm breath awareness)
5. **Ardhachakra asana:** Hands stretched backward and continue backward bending from lower back. Hold for 3 sec only.
6. **Ardhapadhasana:** Stretch hands at shoulder height parallel to the floor, stretch upper body and bend from the waist, look in front (5 sec concentrate on physical body , 5 sec calm breath awareness)
7. **Padahasthasana:** Relax upper body completely, let hands fall loose (5 sec concentrate on physical body , 5 sec calm breath awareness)
8. **Katichakrasana L:** Stretch hands at shoulder height parallel to the floor, complete twist at the lower back to the left side, right hand on left shoulder into Katichakrasana L
9. **Katichakrasana R:** Again, stretch hands at shoulder height parallel to the floor, complete twist at the lower back to the right side, left hand on right shoulder into Katichakrasana R

Come back to **Prarthanasana** and take **Shvasana** for 5 minutes.

Flow of asanas has to be effortless from step 1 to step 9. Each posture can be stretched up to 30 to 40 seconds.

The above asana series is beneficial especially for people with long hours of desk jobs that involve more mental activity than physical (*for example: Aviation industry*)

Your yoga practice can do much more than lend muscle power and reduce stress. A lot depends on the kind of asana you perform – some of them are energizing like back bends while forward bends have a calming effect. Standing asanas build stamina and balancing asanas cultivate concentration. Twists will help you detoxify the body and release tension. If you're new to yoga, start with these basic asanas.<sup>10</sup>

## V. BALANCING OF YOGA BENEFITS: TOWARDS LIFE

Yoga is about creating a union between these two dimensions – inner and outer, you and the rest, you and the other. When there is no “you” and “the other,” when there is just “you” and “you,” that is yoga. Asanas are a physical form of approaching this ultimate union, because the physical body is the easiest thing to work with. If you try to come to this union with your mind, it will play too many tricks. With the body, at least you know whether it is doing it right or not, whether it is cooperating or not. If you push the mind too hard, it will make you believe all kinds of things and dump you the next day. The body is a more reliable factor.

If you work with it sensibly, the yogasanas can definitely lead to ultimate union. In the meantime, before this alignment with the ultimate happens, by getting into the postures, inner alignment happens, which will naturally create a chemistry of healthfulness, joyfulness, and blissfulness – and above all balance. Balance is something that modern societies have ignored, and they are paying a huge price for it. Whatever your intelligence, whatever your competence, education, and qualifications – if you do not have the necessary balance, you will not succeed.<sup>14</sup>

You won't go extremely far in your life. The main thing for individuals who are looking to be fruitful – regardless of whether in the corporate area, in governmental issues, in the military, or some other field – is balance. Just in the event that you have an equilibrium that isn't upset by outside circumstances, are you fit for utilizing the skill and knowledge inside you. Something else, even the most magnificent characteristics that one may have will go squander, just in view of absence of equilibrium. Hatha yoga brings this equilibrium.

## VI. ASANA SIDDHI: NOVEL APPROACH

Some parts of the body are rigid, some are semi-rigid, some are flexible – it is done in an intelligent manner. It should be kept the way the Creator intended it to be. A three-year-old child will be flexible enough to do any asana. You lost this flexibility because of disuse, because you are trying to save your body for the grave.<sup>16</sup>

You want to be in a good shape when you go, but you are not in a good shape when you are here. Increased acidity creates rigid muscles. If there is no injury or damage of any kind to the muscles and they still are tense and rigid, you are probably generating acids in your body. You can notice this – if on a particular day, you are in a mentally tense state, the next day you will find it much harder to bend. If the acid level increases, the muscular structure tends to become rigid. Emotions and acidity rigid muscles and rigid brains are no good. Only when your brain and muscles are flexible, they are useful.<sup>18</sup>

If you sit here joyfully, the body will not generate acids. But if you are angry even for five minutes, the acid level in your blood will increase dramatically, to the extent that it is actually poisoning you, and it is this poison that makes the muscular structure rigid. Other than that, lack of flexibility may be cultural, because you are simply not used to sitting on the floor or using your body much. In any case, we cannot judge human beings by their flexibility in the sense, “Tell me which asana you cannot do and I will tell you who you are.”<sup>20</sup>

## VII. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to assess the findings of selected articles regarding the therapeutic effects of yoga and to provide a comprehensive review of the benefits of regular yoga practice. As participation rates in mind-body fitness programs such as yoga continue to increase, it is important for health care professionals to be informed about the nature of yoga and the evidence of its many therapeutic effects. Thus, this manuscript provides information regarding the therapeutic effects of yoga as it has been studied in various populations concerning a multitude of different ailments and conditions. Therapeutic yoga is defined as the application of yoga postures and practice to the treatment of health conditions and involves instruction in yogic practices and teachings to prevent, reduce or alleviate structural, physiological, emotional and spiritual pain, suffering or limitations. Results from this study show that yogic practices enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, promote and improve respiratory and cardiovascular function, promote recovery from and treatment of addiction, reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, improve sleep patterns, and enhance overall well-being and quality of life.<sup>23</sup>

## VIII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE, ROL

Yoga is a form of mind-body fitness that involves a combination of muscular activity and an internally directed mindful focus on awareness of the self, the breath, and energy.<sup>[4]</sup> Four basic principles underlie the teachings and practices of yoga's healing system.<sup>[6]</sup> The first principle is the human body is a holistic entity comprised of various interrelated dimensions inseparable from one another and the health or illness of any one dimension affects the other dimensions. The second principle is individuals and their needs are unique and therefore must be approached in a way that acknowledges this individuality and their practice must be tailored accordingly. The third principle is yoga is self-empowering; the student is his or her own healer. Yoga engages the student in the healing process; by playing an active role in their journey toward health, the healing comes from within, instead of from an outside source and a greater sense of autonomy is achieved. The fourth principle is that the quality and state of an individual's mind is crucial to healing. When the individual has a positive mind-state healing happens more quickly,

whereas if the mind-state is negative, healing may be prolonged.

A 3,000 year old tradition, yoga, is now regarded in the Western world as a holistic approach to health and is classified by the National Institutes of Health as a form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM).[1] The word “yoga” comes from a Sanskrit root “yuj” which means union, or yoke, to join, and to direct and concentrate one's attention.[2,3] Regular practice of yoga promotes strength, endurance, flexibility and facilitates characteristics of friendliness, compassion, and greater self-control, while cultivating a sense of calmness and well-being.[4,5] Sustained practice also leads to important outcomes such as changes in life perspective, self-awareness and an improved sense of energy to live life fully and with genuine enjoyment.[6–8] The practice of yoga produces a physiological state opposite to that of the flight-or-fight stress response and with that interruption in the stress response, a sense of balance and union between the mind and body can be achieved.[

Currently, treatment for anxiety and depression involves mostly psychological and pharmacological interventions; however, mind-body interventions are becoming increasingly popular as a means to reduce stress in individuals. Yoga, a form of mind-body exercise, has become an increasingly widespread therapy used to maintain wellness, and alleviate a range of health problems and ailments. Yoga should be considered as a complementary therapy or alternative method for medical therapy in the treatment of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders as it has been shown to create a greater sense of well-being, increase feelings of relaxation, improve self-confidence and body image, improve efficiency, better interpersonal relationships, increase attentiveness, lower irritability, and encourage an optimistic outlook on life.<sup>24</sup>

While no concrete guidelines exist regarding the frequency of practice, the more you practice the more you benefit. Yoga is a personalized practice and as such, frequency and duration are personal questions with individual answers. Practice should happen with wisdom and should be modified to meet individual needs and goals. Individuals should practice as often as possible, especially in the beginning. The length of the induction phase will vary depending on an individual's initial level of fitness and health status; the more difficult yoga is for someone in the beginning the more their body needs it.

While modern medicine has the ability in many cases to heal physical diseases and alleviate psychological disorders, it is argued that a purely medical approach is far less effective in healing the emotional, intellectual, and personality layers of the human entity. The discipline of yoga offers individuals a timeless and holistic model of health and healing and although it may not result in the complete elimination of physical diseases and/ or adverse conditions from the body it offers a holistic path of

healing. There exists an indisputable connection between a person's overall physical and mental health and the inner peace and well-being yoga is designed to achieve. Yoga suspends the fluctuations of the mind and by acting consciously, we live better and suffer less.<sup>18</sup>

As mentioned in the introduction, meditation (Dhyana) is the seventh limb of Ashtanga Yoga, and it exists in many forms. Meditation is more than just sitting in a cross-legged position, eyes closed and hands on either knee with a closed forefinger and thumb. Much occurs internally while in a meditative state, beginning with focusing the mind on the third eye (ajna chakra)--the space between the eyes. Notably, a practitioner can strive to be engaged in meditation throughout all daily activities; truly, this is much more the aim of yoga.

### IX. PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**PROPOSED:** The purpose of the study was to find out the impact of asana pranayama and combined effect on body fitness body composition and emotional intelligence among data set records.

**HYPOTHESIS** It was hypothesized that there would be significant changes in the selected BODY fitness related body compositions and emotional intelligence of the subject, who were sedentary in nature, after the training of session of asanas.

**METHODOLOGY** The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of asana pranayama and combined effect on body fitness body composition and emotional intelligence. The investigator was more interested to find the effect of asana pranayama particularly on the young person, children who had not been taking part in any other physical activity.

**EXPERIMENTALTREATMENT** The training schedule was prepared for prescribed weeks. The practice schedule included given asana for group initiated and ended with combined asana pranayama were selected who plays direct role on the speed, agility, flexibility, biceps circumference, hip circumference, waist circumference, waist hip ratio circumference, emotional intelligence. The experimental treatments were data set for 60 minutes a day in five days a week for the period of few weeks. The fourth group served as control groups.

### X. YOGA ASANA PRACTICE FOR UNITING YOUR BODY: DEVINE APPROACH

Yoga practice is a continuous evolution. You grow and change as a practitioner of yoga. Here are some tips to help improve your evolving practice.<sup>20</sup>

- 1. Start with gentle warm-ups.** Once your body is sufficiently warmed up, start with asanas. Transition slowly, with ease and fluid motion.

2. ***Learn to do asanas systematically.*** Each asana can be done in four important steps - the starting position, moving into the posture, holding the posture, and then releasing the posture. Move gently and gracefully from one step to the other. Give priority to learning each pose without straight away going into the sequences.
3. ***Allow your body to talk: on the off chance that you tune in, it will disclose to you the distinction among torment and a decent stretch. Introductory muscle hurts are a decent sign: they imply that your body is evolving. Don't compare yourself with others, and stay with your own experience.*** Once you are comfortable, you may practice your asanas with your eyes closed. This will allow you to go deeper into your asana.
4. **Have patience.** It takes time to improve flexibility, build strength, and to correct imbalances and misalignments.
5. **Flexibility is not the ultimate goal.** Pay more importance to the correctness of asanas, rather than whether you can touch your toes.
6. **Do asanas gracefully, like you're moving in** a slow, rhythmic, sequential dance. Let your body, breath, and mind move in unison.
7. **Coordinate your movements with your breath.** This will increase your awareness, calm your mind, and improve your asana practice. Most often, we inhale when expanding or stretching, and exhale when contracting or folding. While holding the posture, breathe easily, slowly, and deeply with your abdomen, either using normal breath or **Ujjayi breath**. When inhaling, let the abdomen effortlessly push out; when exhaling, let it return gently. Make your awareness and your breathing your companion.
8. When in a posture, stay consistent and intellectually unwind. Notice your breath just as your facial expression, as the two of them will change when you are propelling yourself past your breaking point. In the event that you end up doing as such, tenderly change. Let your breath loosen up your body and calm your psyche. At last, be still so that the experience of vastness day breaks in you.

## XI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

This phenomenological study examined the lived experience of yoga practitioners, and their search for the true self. This study offers insights into the lives of Asana practitioners and how they make sense of the concept of the true self. The practitioners offered a thick description of the true self, which was similar to the modern view of a coherent, stable, and unchanging self. While the concept of the self is itself debatable, the positive health benefits of a yoga practice are irrefutable. The participants describe the concept of the true self in terms of positive affect or emotions, for example love, patience, clarity, and truth. Similarly, they described negative affect or emotions, such as hate, greed, anger, as not being components of the true self. All of the participants believe

that yoga them connect to their true self. They all identify that they practice yoga to discover, or come closer to their true self, and they use their true self a connection to God. Although they can access places of their true self, this requires being present, which is almost impossible to maintain at all times. Therefore, they could not ever fully know their true self and they understand they may never find their true self. However, connecting to their self becomes easier through a committed yoga and meditation practice. The participant's yoga practice brings them closer to their true self and to God.

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