

EPC3 – Yoga and Health Education

Unit – 1 :

Basics/ Basis of Yoga :

The basis of Yoga is search for happiness. But we search for happiness out there in the objects of senses. The happiness is right within us. It is in silencing the mind. It is the state devoid of thoughts. It is a state of *Bliss, Freedom, Knowledge and Creativity*. The Upaniṣads also propound that this original state of *Silence* is also the causal state of the entire creation. All those who are in search of greater and permanent happiness and bliss, those who seek knowledge, those who want to be totally free and who aspire to become more and more creative will have one single aim to reach, that is *Silence*, a state with no thoughts! This happens when we tune ourselves to that blissful inner awareness.

The word "yoga" comes from the Sanskrit root "yuj", which means "to yoke" the spirit and physical body together. Yoga has evolved over thousands of years to embrace a wide range of styles and disciplines. Pre-vedic period- The excavation of Mohenjodaro & Harrapa civilization in Indus valley reveals yoga was popular in those period. Vedic period, Upanisad period, Epic period, Sutra period, Smriti period, Mediaval period, And Modern period.

Origin and history of development of Yoga

Yoga means the classical Yoga system as set forth by Patañjali in the Yoga Sūtras. Patañjali taught an eightfold (aṣṭāṅga) system of Yoga emphasizing an integral spiritual development including ethical disciplines (*Yama* and *Niyama*), postures (*Āsana*), controlling and harmonizing the breath (*Prāṇāyāma*), control of the senses (*Pratyāhāra*), concentration (*Dhāraṇā*), meditation (*Dhyāna*) and absorption (*Samādhi*). This constitutes a complete and integral system of spiritual training.

However, classical Yoga was part of the Vedic tradition. Patañjali was only a compiler of the teachings at a later period. Yogic teachings covering all aspects of Patañjali Yoga are common in literature prior to Patañjali like in the Purāṇas, the Mahābhārata and the

Yoga can be traced back to the Rgveda itself, the oldest vedik 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 Vasiṣṭha, Yajñavalkya, and Jaigīśavya. The greatest of the Yogis is always said to be Yogeśvara Krishna himself, the propounder of Bhagavadgītā, which is called as Yoga Śāstra – an authoritative work on Yoga.

Origin of Yoga and the Indus Valley Civilization

The stone seals excavated from the sites of the Indus Valley Civilization (3000 B.C.) depicting figures in yogic postures indicate that Yoga was being practiced even during 3000 B.C.

The first indication of body-culture in Yoga is to be traced through the word *Āsana* (posture) and *Prāṇāyāma* (the regulation, conservation and control of bio-energy). But since, we are concerned primarily with postures, let us go to its origin. This involves not only how posture training came to be regarded as a physical requisite for Yoga but also how its later development aided the most comprehensive evolution of namely physical training, hygiene, social medicine, and therapeutics.

In the evolution of *Āsana* and its synthesis, besides the original prayer and meditative poses, certain other postures have also been included which have been found to be definitely useful in the development of the physical and meditative aspects of the individual's personality. A series of dynamic variations has been added to the static

Āsanas to enlarge the scope of application and meet the varied requirements.

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

1. Vedic period
2. Pre-classical period
3. Classical period
4. Yoga in Medieval Times
5. Yoga in Modern Times

Vedic period

The ancient texts of Vedas are the oldest scriptures in the world. The Sanskrit word Veda means “knowledge” and *rk* means “praise”. Thus the R̥gveda is a collection of hymns that are in praise of a higher power. Other three Vedas are Yajur Veda (knowledge of Yajña), Sāma Veda (Knowledge of chants), and Atharva Veda (knowledge of Atharva). In Vedic period the means to higher attainment were through Knowledge or revelation from the Universe through meditation. It comprises three Yogas – Mantra Yoga, where the power of mantra, through which the mantra becomes active as a tool of transformation in the mind, Prāṇa Yoga – through Prāṇāyāma which energizes the vital force. Dhyāna Yoga – The word *dhī*’, which means Buddhi or intellect is the root for the term ‘dhyāna’ or meditation. Dhī is the higher and interior portion of the mind (manas), which enables us to perceive the eternal truth. This cultivation of dhī or buddhi, the main faculty of discrimination, is the main characteristic of Yoga, Vedanta and Buddhism.

Pre-classical period

One of the most outstanding Yoga scriptures is the Bhagavad-Gītā. According to the Bhagavadgītā, there are three important paths which lead to establishing relationship with the Supreme. These have been designated as the Yoga of perfect actions (*Karma Yoga*), the Yoga of perfect devotion (*Bhakti Yoga*) the Yoga of perfect knowledge (*Jñāna Yoga*). The Bhagavadgītā consists of 18 chapters. Each chapter is called a Yoga. Each chapter is a highly specialized Yoga revealing the path of attaining realization of the Ultimate Truth. Bhagavadgītā gives specific knowledge regarding the purpose of human existence, the immortality of the soul and our eternal relationship with the Supreme. This knowledge applies to each and every one of us without exception.

Classical period

During the classical period which is around 2nd century BCE Patañjali, wrote Yoga Sūtra which comprised 196 aphorisms which describes the eight limbs (*Aṣṭāṅga*) to reach the goal of human life which is freedom from miseries of death and birth. This is known as the Yoga of will power or Rāja Yoga or Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

Buddha was also contemporary to this period who taught us eight-fold path *ārya-aṣṭāṅga-mārga* emphasising on meditation.

Vipāsanā is one of India's most ancient meditation techniques. Long lost to humanity, it was revived by Gautama, the Buddha more than 2500 years ago. The word *Vipāsanā* means seeing things as they really are. It is the process of self-purification by self-observation. One begins by monitoring the natural breath to concentrate the mind. With a sharpened attentiveness one proceeds to observe the changing nature of body and mind and experiences the universal truths of mortal and miserable life. *Ahimsā*, *Pratyāhāra* and contemplation are important wings of Yoga in Jainism.

Yoga in medieval times

Buddha (around 6th century A.D.) had popularized meditation on the entire sub-continent. However, there was a point of disagreement that one cannot start the spiritual practices with meditation immediately. One has to prepare oneself for meditation. During 6th century AD when the influence of Buddhism had declined, some great

yogis like Matseyendranātha and Gorakṣanātha set out to purify the system. There were many treatises on *Haṭha Yoga* written during this time.

The main texts written during this period are *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* by Svātmarāma, *Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā* a conversational treatise, *Haṭharatnāvalī* by Śrinivāasa yogi which also discusses Āyurveda along with Yoga, *Śiva Saṁhita*, *Siddha siddhānta Paddhati* by Nityanātha etc.

Guru Gorakṣanātha is believed to be the founder of the Nātha Sampradāya and it is stated that the nine Nathas and 84 Siddhas are all human forms created as Yogic manifestations to spread the message of Yoga and meditation in the world. They were Yogis, who reveal samādhi to mankind. Guru Gorakṣanātha is thought to have authored several books including: *Gorakṣa Saṁhitā*, *Gorakṣa Gītā* and *Yoga Cintāmaṇi*.

Yoga in modern times

Integral Yoga or Pūrṇa Yoga by Śri Aurobindo emphasised surrendering to the Divine and an opening to the Divine Force so that it may work to transform one's being.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, records for the path of Bhakti Yoga and Divine love. To Ramakrishna all religions are revelations of God in His diverse aspects to satisfy the manifold demands of the human mind. One of the greatest contributions of Śri Ramakrishna to the modern world is his message of harmony of all religions.

Meaning, definition and Scope of Yoga:

Meaning of Yoga: Yoga is derived from Sanskrit word 'Yuj' which means union or to join. It means the unification of atma with Parmatma. Yoga is a true union of our will with the will of God. It is a method by which one obtains control of one's latent powers. It makes the organs of our body active in their functioning and has good effect on internal functioning of the body.

Definitions of Yoga : Yoga – mastery over the mind

The following definitions can be beneficial to understand the meaning of yoga :

❖ **Patanjali** – 'Yogaścittavṛtti nirodh'.

“Checking the impulses of mind is Yoga.”

Yoga is a conscious process of gaining mastery over the mind field (The Citta).

❖ **Mahrishi Ved Vyas** -“Yoga is attaining the pose.”

❖ **Swami Sampurnanand** - “Yoga is spiritual Kamdhenu”.

❖ **In Bhagwad Gita Lord Krishna** said, 'Skill in actions or efficiency alone is Yoga'.

('*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*')

❖ **As Swami Vivekananda** puts it "It is a means of compressing one's evolution into a single life or a few months or even a few hours of one's bodily existence".

❖ **Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha** - one of the best texts on Yoga, the essence of Yoga is beautifully portrayed thus, '*manah praśamanopāyaḥ Yoga ityabhidhīyate*' – Yoga is called a skilful technique to calm down the mind.

Yoga is:

- a process for elevating oneself through calming of mind,
- also the very states of higher, subtler layers of mind, and
- Conceived as a creative power in man and that of the reality itself.

Benefits and Importance of Yoga

1. Physical benefits, 2. Mental benefits, 3. Emotional benefits, 4. Spiritual benefits

Physical benefits: To improve flexibility. To improve strength. To improve endurance. To maintain stability. Neuromuscular co – ordination. To improve good posture and alignment. To avoid injuries.

To improves physiological functions. Reduces Obesity & improve Beautification of Body. Cures and Prevention from Disease.

Mental benefits: To expands concept and creativity. To improve more mindful thoughts. To help knowledge. To bring calms and clears the mind. To relives tension and stress. To increases of concentration and attention.

Emotional benefits: Yoga's non-competitive nature encourages positive thoughts and self-acceptance. There's a saying, "Yoga is a practice, not a perfect." When you fall in a pose, you simply try again. There is no "good" or "bad" in yoga — there is only what is. Accepting the present moment allows inner peace to flourish. Holding poses for long periods of time can help to boost self-esteem and grace even off the mat. It can also bring about an inner stillness in which your creativity can thrive. Becoming aware of your body and mind helps you become more in tune with the world around you — and of your relationships with others. As you learn to relax, breathe, and take care of yourself, you become more able to care for those you love. Yoga philosophy emphasizes compassion for others as well as for yourself, which can help to reduce melodrama and pretense in your interactions.

Spiritual benefits: A regular yoga practice creates a new awareness of one's place in the world. Many practitioners feel the connection between their body, mind, and spirit after practicing for a while. This unity often develops into a feeling of "oneness" within yourself, as well as with the world around you. Through movement, meditation, and *pranayama* you'll become more able to reconnect with your true essence. As you learn to calm the fluctuations of your thoughts, you begin to peel away layers of false beliefs, revealing your natural state of peace. Enhanced awareness leads many practitioners to feel a greater sense of purpose in the world, and ultimately, to spiritual fulfillment.

Unit – 2 :

Elementary Knowledge of surya namaskara:

Sun Salutation - Surya Namaskar:

If you are pressed for time and looking for a single mantra to stay fit, here's the answer: a sequence of 12 powerful yoga asanas (postures) that provide a good cardiovascular workout in the form of **Surya Namaskar**. Literally translating as “Sun Salutation”, Surya Namaskars are a good way to keep the body in shape and the mind calm and healthy.

Surya Namaskar is best done early morning on an empty stomach. Let's begin with these simple yet effective Sun Salutation steps on our way to good health.

Each round of Sun Salutation consists of two sets, and each set is composed of **12 yoga poses**. You might find several versions on how to practice Sun Salutation. However, it is best to stick to one particular version and practice it regularly for best results.

The Twelve Postures :

1. Pranamasana (Salutation posture) ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)
2. Hastauttanasana (Raised arm posture) ಉದ್ಧ್ವ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ)
3. Padahastanasana (Hand to foot posture) ಹಸ್ತಪಾದಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

4. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture) ಏಕ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ)

5. Dandasana (Stick pose) ದ್ವಿ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ)

6. Ashtanga Namaskara (Salutation with eight limbs) ಸಾಷ್ಟಾಂಗ ಪ್ರಣಿ ಪತಾಸನ (ಬಾಹ್ಯ ಕುಂಭಕ)

7. Bhujangasana (Cobra posture) ಭುಜಂಗಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ)

8. Parvatasana (Mountain posture) ಬೂಧರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

9. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture) ಏಕ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ)

10. Padahastanasana (Hand to foot posture) ಹಸ್ತಪಾದಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

11. Hastauttanasana (Raised arm posture) ಊರ್ಧ್ವ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ)

12. Pranamasana (Salutation posture) ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

1. Pranamasana (Salutation posture) ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ): Stand at the edge of your mat, keep your feet together and balance your weight equally on both the feet. Expand your chest and relax your shoulders. As you breathe in, lift both arms up from the sides and as you exhale, bring your palms together in front of the chest in prayer position. (ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಒಳಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ, ಎದೆಯನ್ನು ನೆಟಿಸಿ ಕೈಗಳನ್ನು ಮಡಿಸಿ ಎದೆಯ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಎರಡು ಅಂಗೈಗಳನ್ನು ನಮಸ್ಕಾರ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಕೂಡಿಸಬೇಕು.. ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮುಂದೆ ನೇರವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು.)

2. Hastauttanasana (Raised arm posture) ಊರ್ಧ್ವ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ) : Breathing in lift the arms up and back, keeping the biceps close to the ears. In this pose, the effort is to stretch the whole body up from the heels to the tips of the fingers. You may push the pelvis forward a little bit. Ensure you're reaching up with the fingers rather than trying to bend backwards. To bend backwards. (ಒಳಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಹಾಗೆ ಹಿಡಿದು, ಎರಡು ಕೈಗಳನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ (ಮೋಣಕ್ಕೆ ನೇರವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು) ಒಯ್ದು ಸೊಂಟವನ್ನು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದಷ್ಟು ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಭಾಗಿಸಿರಬೇಕು.)

3. Padahastanasana (Hand to foot posture) ಹಸ್ತಪಾದಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ) : Breathing out, bend forward from the waist, keeping the spine erect. As you exhale completely, bring the hands down to the floor beside the feet. You may bend the knees, if necessary, to bring the palms down to the floor. Now make a gentle effort to straighten the knees. (ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಹೊರಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟು, ಮೋಣಕಾಲುಗಳನ್ನು ಮಣಿಸದೇ, ಬಾಗಿ ಎರಡು ಕೈಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆಳಗೆ, ಪಾದಗಳ ಬದಿಗೆ ತಂದು ಅಂಗೈಗಳನ್ನು ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಊರಬೇಕು. ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯನ್ನು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದಷ್ಟು ಒಳಗೆ ಎಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಮುಖವನ್ನು ಮೋಣಕಾಲುಗಳಿಗೆ ತಾಗಿಸಬೇಕು.)

4. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture) ಏಕ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ) : Breathing in, push your right leg back, as far back as possible. Bring the right knee to the floor and look up. Ensure that the left foot is exactly in between the palms. (ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಒಳಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಕೈಗಳನ್ನು ಮಣಿಸದೇ ಬಲಗಾಲನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಜರುಗಿಸಬೇಕು. ಹಾಗೂ ಬಲಗಾಲಿನ ಮೋಣಕಾಲು ನೆಲವನ್ನು ತಾಗಬಹುದು. ಎಡಗಾಲಿನ ಮೋಣಕಾಲು ಮಣಿಸಿರಬೇಕು. ದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮುಂದೆ ನೇರವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು.)

5. Dandasana (Stick pose) ದ್ವಿ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ) : As you breathe in, take the left leg back and bring the whole body in a straight line. Keep your arms perpendicular to the floor. (ಒಳಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಹಾಗೆ ಹಿಡಿದು, ಎಡಗಾಲನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಜರುಗಿಸಿ ಬಲಗಾಲಿನ ಹಿಮ್ಮಡ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೆರಳುಗಳಿಗೆ ಎಡಗಾಲಿನ ಹಿಮ್ಮಡ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೆರಳುಗಳು ತಾಗುವಂತಿರಬೇಕು. ಮೋಣಕಾಲುಗಳು ಮಣಿಸದೇ ನೇರವಾಗಿರಬೇಕು, ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ತಾಗಬಾರದು. ಶರೀರದ ಭಾರ ಅಂಗೈ ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಲಿನ ಬೆರಳುಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಮನಾಗಿರಬೇಕು.)

6. Ashtanga Namaskara (Salutation with eight limbs) ಸಾಷ್ಟಾಂಗ ಪ್ರಣಿ ಪತಾಸನ (ಬಾಹ್ಯ ಕುಂಭಕ) : Gently bring your knees down to the floor and exhale. Take the hips back slightly, slide forward, rest your chest and chin on the floor. Raise your posterior a little bit. The two hands, two feet, two knees, chest and chin (eight parts of the body touch the floor). (ಹೊರಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟ ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದು, ಶರೀರವನ್ನು ನಿಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಕೆಳಗೆ ತಂದು (ಮೋಣಕ್ಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಣಿಸಿ) ಎರಡು ಮೋಣ ಕಾಲುಗಳು, ಎದೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮುಖ ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ತಾಗುವಂತೆ ತರಬೇಕು.)

7. Bhujangasana (Cobra posture) ಭುಜಂಗಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ) : Slide forward and raise the chest up into the Cobra posture. You may keep your elbows bent in this pose, the shoulders away from the ears. Look up. As you inhale,

make a gentle effort to push the chest forward; as you exhale, make a gentle effort to push the navel down. Tuck the toes under. Ensure you're stretching just as much as you can; do not force. (ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಒಳಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ, ಕುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ಎದೆಯನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಕ್ಕೆ (ಹಾವಿನ ತರ) ಬಾಗಿಸಬೇಕು).

8. **Parvatasana (Mountain posture)** ಬೂಧರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ) : Breathing out, lift the hips and the tail bone up, chest downwards in an 'inverted V' (^) posture. If possible, try and keep the heels on the ground and make a gentle effort to lift the tailbone up, going deeper into the stretch. (ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ತಿಯಾಗಿ ಹೊರಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟು, ಬೆನ್ನನ್ನು ಬಿಲ್ಲಿನಂತೆ ಮಣಿಸಿ, ಕತ್ತನ್ನು ಒಳಗೆ ತರಬೇಕು. ಪಾದಗಳನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ತಿಯಾಗಿ ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಊರಬೇಕು.)

9. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian posture) ಏಕ ಪಾದ ಪ್ರಸರಣಾಸನ (ಪೂರಕ)

10. Padahastanasana (Hand to foot posture) ಹಸ್ತಪಾದಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

11. Hastauttanasana (Raised arm posture) ಊರ್ಧ್ವ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ಕುಂಭಕ)

12. Pranamasana (Salutation posture) ನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾಸನ (ರೇಚಕ)

Benefits of Suryanamaskara :

1. Tones up the digestive system by the alternate stretching and compression of abdominal organs. It activates digestion and gets rid of constipation and dyspepsia.
2. Strengthens abdominal muscles.
3. Thoroughly ventilates the lungs, and oxygenates the blood.
4. Acts as detoxifying agent, by getting rid of enormous quantity of carbon dioxide and other toxic gases.
5. Promotes sleep and calms anxiety.
6. Tones up the nervous system and improves memory.
7. Normalizes the activity of the endocrine glands - especially the thyroid gland.
8. Refreshes the skin. Prevents Skin disorders.
9. Improves muscle flexibility.
10. In women, stimulates the breasts to help firmness normally. Restores any lost elasticity, through stimulation of glands and the strengthening of pectoral muscles.
11. Menstrual irregularity and assists in easy childbirth.
12. Suppresses
13. Prevents loss of hair and graying.
14. Helps reduce fat.
15. Reduces abnormal prominence of the Adam's apple.
16. Eliminates unpleasant smells from the body.
17. Lends grace and ease of movements to the body.
18. Revives and maintains the spirit of youthfulness.
19. Broadens chest and beautifies arms.
20. Makes the spine and waist flexible.
21. Produces health, strength, efficiency and longevity

Role of Yoga for quality of School Education :

Yoga is a way of leading life. The main aim of yoga is the Purity of physical, intellectual and Mind. 'SMATHVAHA YOGA UCHATHA' it means harmonious , is the main soul yoga. Now a days a yoga become the past parcel of our life and School Education also. For the all round development of child is 'Yoga' is basic necessity. Keeping the view of Physical, Mental, Emotional and Spiritual development of the child. Yoga becomes need of hour in model world. By Yoga students are able to inculcate the hygienic value, health, life value, moral values and through this. The become the civilized and Spiritually and Physically Healthy Person. Yoga has been an integral part of health and physical education. Health and physical education the heart of school

life. Both yoga and health and physical education contribute to Physical development, Mental development, Emotional development and spiritual development of the school students. Yoga practice contributes to the overall development of the student. Shown that some examples are flexibility, muscular strength, stress relief, lack of concentration, peace of mind, good posture and other components among school students. Yoga is related to number of factors that affect the quality of school education

Yoga in School :

- School Students will develop a sense of well-being, and will increase their capacity of mental concentration – will find harmony between the mind and the body.
- School Students will develop proper breathing habits.
- Yoga can be adapted for all children, including the physically impaired and the overweight.
- A 20-minute yoga session per day is adequate. There is no need for any equipment. Any open class room is sufficient for holding a yoga class.
- Yoga is not presented as a religious practice, nor does it conflict with any religion.
- Yoga makes a significant difference in the sense of well-being of school students of all ages and from all backgrounds.
- Yoga generates positive emotions and compassion. Yoga teaches school students to be gentle with themselves and others.
- Regular practice of yogic postures enhances the ability of school students to concentrate, to deal with impulsive behavior, and to think more clearly.
- Yoga helps mental equilibrium and self-control. Yoga reduces stress and helps school students to relax and release tension.
- Yoga helps school students develop lifelong health habits (mental and physical), i.e. acquaints them with the option of healthy daily exercises for the brain and the body.
- Yoga offers School students a safe and balanced way for them to relate to themselves and to their surroundings, inner & outer awareness.
- Practicing yoga increases self-confidence as the school students measure their own individual success and improvement.
- Yoga creates a group cooperation & vocabulary in a playful manner.
- Yoga has an exhilarating and calming effect, and could lead in later life to a marked reduction of stress, postural and blood pressure problems and nervous disorders.
- School students enjoy associating the name of a pose with the characteristics of the animal it represents.
- A unique aspect of Yoga is the mental focus and attention that they exercise while doing the postures. The result is a toning up of both the mind and the body.
- In adopting and maintaining a posture there is a co-ordination between the nervous system and the muscular system, that influences the physical and mental behaviours.
- Yogic postures invigorate the body and keep the mind healthy and calm bringing a feeling of refreshment.
- Yogic postures greatly improve flexibility. They keep the body limber by stretching the muscles and the tissues that hold the body's structure in place giving more freedom of movement.
- Flexibility helps prevent joint pain and injury. Yoga stretches the body to relieve stiff joints and lengthen muscles.
- The postures also benefit the other systems, such as the circulation system, digestion system, nervous system & endocrine system. Some postures massage the internal organs and the glands.
- To concentrate and focus upon one thing at a time, either counting their breaths or maintaining a stretch. To learn to breathe properly and to count their breaths, inhaling and exhaling. This will teach them self-control and concentration.
- To develop an awareness of their movement, an awareness of themselves. To develop self-confidence and respect/awareness of individual differences and abilities.
- To learn to observe and correct their body position in each posture, self assessment.

- To coordinate movements (becoming aware of position of limbs and trunk – arms, head, back, etc. in relation to each other) To learn the importance of physical and mental relaxation, as preparation for meditation.
- To develop self-confidence as he/she develops the ability to stretch the mind and the body further, as he/she is aware and observant of his/her own progress.
- To learn to use yoga as a means for relaxation, dream-time (Introduction to meditation) and to understand the importance of resting the mind in order to prepare it for new tasks. To learn to value the beauty of silence, to try to maintain a quiet, calm attitude while striving to reach and maintain each stretch, each posture.
- will be pleased to conduct a workshop with the teachers as well as with the students. The cost of such a workshop and/or of holding yoga classes on a regular basis can be discussed.

Yoga, as it is most often practiced in the School Education, is a system of mind-body techniques that includes physical postures, conscious breathing, and deep relaxation. The core aims of yoga are increased strength, flexibility and balance for the body and the mind. Aside from using the practice for physical fitness, Students use yoga stretching, breathing and meditation to prevent or combat poor self-esteem, depression, attention problems, anger, anxiety, and stress. Yoga has also been used to increase focus, awareness, happiness, connectedness, confidence, and School academic achievement

Kindas of Yoga – Astanga Yoga:

Streams/ Kindas of Yoga : 1) Janana Yoga, 2) Bhakthi Yoga, 3) Karma Yoga, 5) Raja yoga/ Astanga Yoga

Jñāna Yoga : Jñāna Yoga is the path of intellect and the path of analysis. This is also the Yoga of wisdom and has its own methodology. The methodology centers around hearing called as śravaṇa, recalling & analyzing called as manana, dwelling & meditating is nididhyāsana. The age of science has made man a rational being. Intellectual sharpness is imminent. Analysis forms the tool. The path of philosophy (Jñāna Yoga) is apt for the keen intellectuals and is centered around the analysis of ‘happiness’, the vital contribution of the Upaniṣads. The contemplation start dwelling on those truths which has been enunciated and which is logically accepted, this is sādhanā or deep meditation. This is also the deep contemplation of the Jñāna Yoga. As we go deeper and deeper into the meditation, we start unravelling higher and higher dimensions and we come to that conclusion that ‘I am that blissful awareness’ or infinite consciousnesses. This is Jñāna or realization.

Bhakti Yoga : Bhakti signifies both devotion and loving attachment to the Divine. Strictly the word denotes ‘participation’ (from the verbal root bhaj “to participate, to partake”). The yogi on the devotional path literally participates in the Divine through surrender, devotion, service, worship and finally is drawn into mystical union with the Divine. Bhakti has been an all-pervasive concept in the philosophical and religious traditions of India. Nārada Bhakti Sūtra (NBS) is a premier treatise on the nature of bhakti that emphasizes the connection between bhakti and prema and treats the age-old enigma about the nature of love in an original fashion. Bhakti softens the heart and removes jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, egoism, pride and arrogance. It infuses joy, divine ecstasy, bliss, peace and knowledge. All cares, worries and anxieties, fears, mental torments and tribulations entirely vanish. The devotee is freed from the wheel of births and deaths. He attains the immortal abode of everlasting peace, bliss and knowledge. The path of bhakti is prevalent in this entire universe and it is for all the souls of this universe. It remains the same in all times and it is directly related to the Soul and the Super Soul, it is above caste, creed, sect and nationality. Bhakti is the pure love of your heart that longs to meet the Divine beloved of your Soul in this very lifetime.

Karma Yoga : The 4 major laws of Karma Yoga are described in Bhagavadgītā so that you can enjoy every moment of your work totally free from all stresses.

- a) work with a sense of duty;
- b) work without getting intensely attached (focussed attention) to the work;
- c) never allow the anxieties about the results interfere with your mind during the currency of the job;
- d) accept failure and success with equanimity.

Using these techniques of Karma Yoga we learn the art of ‘working in relaxation’ with total ‘Awareness in Action’. Not losing sight of the innate bliss and poise, the path of work teaches us to interact in society judiciously and effectively. To retain this objectivity and attunement to a clearer and more subtle state of mind, as a judge does while hearing the powerful arguments of both the parties, is the trick of karma Yoga. The regular release of stress & tension helps us to spread the insight throughout the action phase. Application of the Karma Yoga techniques helps to reduce the accumulation of tension and stress and thus makes the possibility of a tension free life, a reality.

Rāja Yoga : We all possess that “will” power as a manifestation of that freedom at the mind level. ‘Man is the maker of his own destiny’. In today’s time if we are suffering from various problems, suffering from ill health, tensions and stresses; these are of our own making. Therefore, it is for us to change ourselves; to overcome these miseries and grow to reach higher states of bliss, creativity and freedom. When we recognize this freedom within us and make a resolve to develop ourselves towards higher levels of consciousness, the journey begins. As we journey further difficulties and hurdles crop up at every step. Techniques needed to systematically channelize our will-power to solve these problems form the core of Rāja Yoga. The steps are discussed in detail under Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

Astanga Yoga :

Astanga Yoga or Raja Yoga :

The Yoga of Patañjali is also called Aṣṭāṅga which comprises 8 limbs. These are:

1.Yama, 2. Niyama, 3.Āsana, 4.Prāṇāyāma, 5.Pratyāhāra, 6.Dharṇā, 7.Dhyāna, and 8.Samāḍhi.

Yamas : The *yamas* as described in Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtra are only five, which are also known as the great universal vows or the *sārvabhauma mahā vratas*, because they are not limited by either class, creed, time or circumstances. They are the guidelines for how we interact with the outer world, the social disciplines to guide us in our relationships with others. These five *yamas* are:

1. **Ahimsā** (non-violence),
2. **Satya** (truthfulness),
3. **Asteya** (non-stealing),
4. **Brahmacarya** (celibacy), and
5. **Aparigraha** (non-covetousness)

According to the Yajñavalkya Saṁhitā, ahimsā or non-violence is the awareness and practice of non-violence in thought, speech and action. It advocates the practices of compassion, love, understanding, patience, and worthiness.

Patañjali describes truthfulness as: "To be in harmony with mind, word and action, to conduct speech and mind according to truth, to express through speech and to retain it in the intellect what has been seen, understood or heard." A perfectly truthful person is the one who expresses in his speech exactly what he thinks in his mind, and in the end acts according to it.

Non-stealing or *asteya* is the third constituent of the *yamas* of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. It upholds forgoing the unauthorized possession of thought, speech and action. *Asteya* stands against covetousness and envy. It advocates the cultivation of a sense of completeness and self-sufficiency in order to progress beyond base cravings.

The Vedas, Smṛtis and Purāṇas all glorify the fourth constituent of celibacy. It is believed to be a behaviour, which brings man nearer to the Divine. This *yama* believes in avoiding indulgence in all sensual pleasures, whether mental, verbal or physical.

The literal meaning of *aparigraha*, the fifth *yama*, is the non-accumulation of worldly objects, caused by covetousness and attachment. The commentator Vyāsa says that this last state of *yama* is attained when one

remains totally detached from sensual pleasures of all kinds and so effectively refrains from committing himsā or violence of any sort.

Niyamas : The niyamas are the second constituents of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. It tells how we should interact with ourselves, our internal world. The niyamas are about self-regulation— helping us maintain a positive environment in which to grow. Their practice harnesses the energy generated from the cultivation of the earlier yamas. Patañjali names five *niyamas*:

1. Śauca or purity,
2. Santoṣa or contentment,
3. Tapa or austerity,
4. Svādhyāya or self-education, and
5. Īśvara-praṇidhāna or meditation

On the divine/surrendering to His Will *Śauca* implies both external as well as internal purity. In the words of sage Manu, water purifies the body; truthfulness the mind; true knowledge the intellect and the soul is purified by knowledge and austerity. It advocates the practices of intellectual purity, purity of speech and of the body.

The second *niyama* is that of contentment, which is described as not desiring more than what one has earned by his honest labour. This state of mind is about maintaining equanimity through all that life offers. Santoṣa involves the practice of gratitude and joyfulness—maintaining calm at all costs. This state of mind does not depend on any external causes.

Austerity, the third *niyama*, is described in Yoga philosophy as power to withstand thirst and hunger, cold and heat, discomforts of place and postures, silent meditation and ritual fasts. It also maintains that the perfect man is he who practices both mental as well as physical austerity.

According to the commentator Vyāsa, self-education or *svādhyāya* consists of scriptural studies. The scripture being, the Vedas and Upaniṣads together with the recitation of the Gāyatri Mantra and the Om mantra

Commentators describe *Īśvara-praṇidhāna*, the last of the *niyamas*, as the dedication of all our actions, performed either by intellect, speech or body to the Divine. The results of all such actions are by definition, therefore, dependent upon Divine decision. The mortal mind can simply aspire to realize the Divine through dedication, purification, tranquility and concentration of the mind. This Divine contemplation spills over to all aspects of the yogi's life.

The benefits of practicing yamas and niyamas

The *yamas* and *niyamas* help in managing our energy in an integrative manner, complementing our outer life to our inner development. They help us view ourselves with compassion and awareness. They help in respecting the values of this life, in balancing our inner growth with outer restraint. In short they help us to lead a conscientious life.

Yamas and *niyamas* are not about right and wrong. *They are about being honest with the true Self.* Living according to these principles are about living our lives in a better way, about moving towards an understanding, about making it possible to `connect` with the Divine.

Asana:

Asana is to stay in a position firmly with ease.

That's how Patañjali defines it. The purpose of *āsanas* or *Yogāsanas* or physical postures is to use the body to gain health and the mastery over the mind.

Yogāsanas are practised slowly and the positions are maintained for longer durations. By doing so there is a reduction in the muscle's tone. The main characteristic of this type of practice is **deep relaxation**. There is conservation of energy, reduction of rājasika (active) temperament, and reduction of excessive speed of the mind and it leads to stress release. **This is the key feature of āsanas.** *Āsanas* make the mind tranquil – *Manah Praśamana* takes place, which in turn brings harmony in the brain. All the cells in the brain start working in cohesion and the alpha rhythm is induced. It brings a balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system. It also brings a balance in the autonomic nervous system and in the endocrine system, which in turn is responsible for the reduction of stress. **Āsanas can also lead us to a meditative state.** By doing *Yogāsanas* one can gain mastery over one's own desires and this can lead us to overcome worries, anxieties and tensions. It works at the deeper and subtle levels. Physical exercises merely burn out the calories but do not make you feel hungry all the time and makes you gain weight in no time. But *Yogāsanas* **reduce this craving of food and hunger** by gaining mastery over mind. **There is physical personality development and leads towards selflessness and promotion of positive health and bliss.**

There are three stages in *Yogāsanas*: *Sthira*, *Cira*, and *Sukha*. *Sthira*, the first step, is to make the *āsanas* more stable. There is a lot of effort involved and it should be done with full concentration and will-power. Once the desired and right position is achieved, the position is maintained without undesirable movements and bending of the body for certain duration of time. Slowly and steadily, the duration is increased for a longer period of time. This is the second stage known as *Cira* which is featured by relaxation. Patañjali has given the trick as how to be steady with relaxation in the form of a sūtra, '*Prayatna Śaithilya*' to withdraw oneself from the effort. That is the reason why the Yoga instructor keeps telling repeatedly to relax the whole body and enjoy the pain with a smile on the face. One should keep telling to oneself, "Let me relax, let me relax, let me not become tensed up, let me not get anxious", while doing the *āsanas* i.e. to relax by withdrawing the effort. The next stage or *Sukha* is a stage of bliss. Once one starts maintaining the *āsanas* effortlessly with relaxation for longer duration, the general tendency is that the mind starts wandering which is against the whole objective of *āsanas*. So, how does one overcome that? Patañjali gives yet another trick: '*Prayatna śaithilyānantasamāpattibhyām*' . to imagine the vast beautiful blue sky or infinite ocean and allow the mind to stay to resonate, and to tune with the total infinite object. It keeps the mind above dualities, '*Tato dvandvānabhighātaḥ*' .

So, Yoga starts working from the physical level and moves towards subtler level – the mind. It starts from the body level and moves towards muscular level, then the breathing level, the mind or emotional level to maintain the balance and calmness of mind. By so doing, one achieves the ideal state of body and mind.

Let us now try to understand the various sequencing of *āsanas*. How do we sequence *āsanas*? Generally, they are sequenced as Standing postures, Sitting postures, Prone postures and Supine postures, apart from the topsy-turvy postures. All those *Yogāsanas* which are done while standing come under the standing postures and similarly the *āsanas* which are done in the sitting posture fall under the category of sitting postures and *āsanas* done by lying down on the abdomen are the prone postures. The *āsanas* done by lying down on the back are the supine postures. For example, the standing postures include: *Ardhakaṭi cakrāsana*, *Pādahastāsana*, *Ardha cakrāsana*, *Parivṛatta Trikoṇāsana* etc. In this standing posture, one does the side bending, backward and forward bending, etc. And the sitting postures include:

Vajrāsana, *Paścimottānāsana*, *Ardhamatsyendrāsana* etc. In the prone postures we have *Śalabhāsana*, *Bhujāṅgāsana*, *Dhanurāsana* etc.

Classification of āsanas

Āsanas can be classified as Cultural, Relaxational and Meditative postures. The *Śavāsana*, the *Makarāsana* (the crocodile postures), *Śītala Tāḍāsana* and *Śītala Dhanurāsana* are called Relaxation postures. While the *Padmāsana*, *Siddhāsana*, the *Vajrāsana* and the *Sukhāsana* are known as the meditative postures. All the remaining postures are called cultural postures. These postures are meant essentially to culture our personality. For example, there are people (B-type) who are very shy and their shoulders droop forward and they have shrunken faces. To bring confidence, to shatter the shyness and to become bold and dynamic, the best

prescription is to practise the Cultural *Āsanas* the back bending postures or the *Cakrāsana*, *Bhujāṅgāsana* (the cobra postures), the *Ardhacakrāsana* (standing bending backward) and *Suptavajrāsana*. On the other hand, there are people who are born A-type – very egoistic and go-getters. And these people always have their shoulders back and heads up and for such people, humility has to be brought in and the front bending postures like *Paścimottānāsana*, *Śaśāṅkāsana*, front bending *Pādahastāsana* are prescribed to overcome the egotistic characters and to develop the pleasing and blossoming personality. Therefore, every cultural *Āsana* has been designed to build the personality.

These are some of the basic classification of the *Āsanas* or Yogic postures.

Pranayama

According to Patañjali: ‘*Tasmin sati śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāma ḥ.*

i.e., to cut the speed of inhalation and exhalation is Prāṇāyāma. Prāṇa is related to breathing and when one starts controlling the breathing rate, one starts Prāṇāyāma. The respiratory system acts voluntarily and as well as involuntarily. When it is voluntary in nature, the breathing is done according to one’s wish. But, when one is not conscious of it, breathing goes on automatically at a particular speed. The normal speed is 15 to 18 breaths (inhalation together with exhalation) per minute. What one does in Prāṇāyāma is to use the voluntary mode to reduce the breathing rate and also to balance the breath between the two nostrils.

Cleansing is the pre-requisite for Prāṇāyāma. There are six cleansing processes mentioned in Haṭha Yoga and recommended to practise before Prāṇāyāma, if there is disharmony in *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. These practices help to purify the *nāḍīs*, channels carrying *prāṇa*, the vital energy. It is very necessary to see that our respiratory system comes under our control.

The next step is **normalizing the breath**. It is done with the practice of sectional breathing. **The process of inhalation and exhalation makes one cycle of breathing**. The normal breathing rate is 15 to 18 per minute. But certain people have shallow breath due to wrong habits and in most of the people suffering from respiratory problems; it is found that the breathing **rate is very fast**.

The simplest Prāṇāyāma is to sit relaxed in any meditative position and breathe in and out slowly. This is *Sulabha Prāṇāyāma*. To progress, feel the cool air entering in and the warm air coming out. Feeling the whole body getting energised while we breathe in and relaxation of the whole body while we exhale slowly helps in further progress. This Prāṇāyāma can be done in standing, sitting or lying down positions and at any time of the day.

Different types of Prāṇāyāma can be classified into four main categories:

1. Balancing Prāṇāyāma 2. Sensitizing Prāṇāyāma 3. Cooling and awareness developing Prāṇāyāma 4. Resonance and laya Prāṇāyāma

In *Nāḍīsuddhi Prāṇāyāma*, inhalation is done slowly through left nostril and exhalation through the right nostril; the next inhalation is done through the right nostril and exhalation now through the left nostril. This makes one cycle. This practice brings balance in the *prāṇa* and cleanses the *prāṇic* channels. The Upaniṣads indicate that there are 7.2 million *nāḍīs* in the body through which the *prāṇa* flows. One of the five major *prāṇas* called *Vyāna* goes through all the 7.2 million *nāḍīs*. Any imbalance in the *prāṇic* flow is shown as imbalance between *Iḍā* (left nostril) and *Piṅgalā* (right nostril). *Nāḍīsuddhi Prāṇāyāma* brings balance between these two. Therefore, it is also called as the

Balancing Prāṇāyāma.

The next practice is the *Ujjāyī Prāṇāyāma*. It is a sensitizing practice. It consists of partially closing the epiglottis and allowing the air to scrub through the trachea and the wind pipe producing a hissing, frictional sound of scrubbing (as opposed to any vocal sound). It *sensitizes* the region around throat.

The next category of **Cooling Prāṇāyāma** consists of three classical procedures: Śitalī, Sitakārī and Sadanta. In Śitalī Prāṇāyāma, the tongue is folded and protrudes out of the mouth like a beak of a crow. The inhalation is through this beak and exhalation is through the nostrils. One can easily feel the cool air going in and the warm air flowing out. Under the Sitakārī Prāṇāyāma, the tongue is folded backwards into the mouth so that the tip touches the upper palate. Inhalation is done through both sides of the tongue and exhalation is through the nostrils. In Sadanta, the teeth are gently clenched with the tip of the tongue touching the back of the teeth. The inhalation is done through the crevices of the teeth and exhalation through the nostrils.

The next category of **Resonance Prāṇāyāma** starts with Bhrāmarī Prāṇāyāma. Here, inhalation is normal through the nostrils but the sound of a female honey bee is produced while exhaling. It produces a resonance throughout the body bringing a soothing effect and calming the mind. It can be practised by all and in any position: even severe cancer patients can do this while lying down.

Pratyāhāra

The essence of *Pratyāhāra* is to use the senses to gain mastery over the mind. *Pratyāhāra* consists of two words prati and āhāra meaning denying the senses of their food viz., controlling senses from rushing towards their objects and thereby control the mind.

Dhāraṇā

Initially there were several subjects with indefinitely many thoughts floating in the mind. With concentration it is reduced to one subject with several thoughts and then it is brought to one subject and to a single thought. This is the stage of Dhāraṇā. Patañjali says, *Deśabandhaścittasya dhāraṇā* which is binding the mind on a single thought. In this connection we can profitably see the procedure of Trāṭaka. Keeping a burning candle at eye level and concentrating by focussing on the single thought of the tip of the wick of the candle. This is dhāraṇā.

Dhyāna

The next step to Dhāraṇā is Dhyāna or meditation. If Dhāraṇā is focussing, then Dhyāna is de-focussing. Patañjali gives us the concept of Dhyāna as an effortless Dhāraṇā. As opposed to the focussing under Dhāraṇā, there is total de-focussing under Dhyāna effortlessly. This is the seventh limb of Patañjali's aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

Samādhi

The mind in grossest form with a host of random thoughts is brought into a state of *Dhyāna*, first by concentration and then by *Dhāraṇā* (focussing) and then by *Dhyāna* (de-focussing). From here, one goes to the eighth limb called the *Samādhi*: *Samyak ādhīyate iti samādhiḥ* i.e., deep absorption or super-consciousness.

Unit – 3

Meditation :

Meditation is the process of quieting the mind in order to spend time in thought for relaxation or religious/spiritual purposes. The goal is to attain an inner state of awareness and intensify personal and spiritual growth. In practice, meditation involves concentrated focus on something such as a sound, image or feeling.

The word meditation, is derived from two Latin words : meditari(to think, to dwell upon, to exercise the mind) and mederi (to heal). Its Sanskrit derivation 'medha' means wisdom. Many years ago meditation was considered something just not meant for modern people, but now it has become very popular with all types of people. Published scientific and medical evidence has proved its benefits, but it still needs to be much understood.

Meditation involves concentration and relaxation – both of which are enhanced by yoga. Just as there are many styles of yoga, so too are there a variety of ways to meditate. The first stage of meditation is to find a focal point or method of focusing in order to free oneself from distractions. Some methods of focusing include:

- **Sound:** Repeating a mantra, phrase or other sound.
- **Visualizing:** Picturing an object with eyes closed, such as a lotus flower or the energy points in the body (chakras).
- **Gazing:** Looking at an actual object with eyes open. Candles, flowers or pictures are common objects used in gazing.
- **Breathing:** Observing the breath and what it feels like – the sensations – as it travels in and out of the body.

Research has confirmed that physiological and psychological changes take place in the body during meditation. For example, studies show that people who are meditating perspire less, have a slower rate of respiration and demonstrate lower blood pressure than normal.

Benefits of meditation:

- (1) It helps to increase concentration and focusing of thoughts or goals.
- (2) Eliminates stress and anxiety.
- (3) Gives relaxation to body and mind.
- (4) Helps in controlling our thoughts and behaviour.
- (5) Helps in stabilizing cardio - respiratory and autonomic activity of individuals.
- (6) Constant practice of meditation helps one to control anger/aggression.
- (7) Eliminates unwanted, undesirable and destructive thoughts appearing in mind so that a calm and healthy state of mind is achieved

Pranayama

Prana means ‘life force’ and ayama means ‘to control’. Pranayama helps in controlling all the functions of breathing namely-inspiration, exhalation and retention. These are breathing practices to breath in, to breath out and to be relaxed. It means these breathing exercises promote energy, awaken the mind and clean the body

Benefits of Pranayama:

Breathing is a normal part of our life, and we pay little attention to it. We do it automatically without concentrating on it. Why then do we have to learn yoga breathing? Here are some reasons why Pranayama is important:

- Pranayama teaches us the proper way to breathe -slowly and deeply.
- It increases the capacity of our lungs, bringing more oxygen supply to the body.
- Pranayama reduces the toxins and body wastes from within our body.
- It prevents diseases.
- Pranayama helps with digestion.
- Pranayama develops our concentration and focus.
- It fights stress and relaxes the body.
- Pranayama offers a better self-control.
- Pranayama leads to a relaxed body and mind.

Hatha:

- Ha – Pingala nadi or sun principle
- Tha – Ida nadi or moon principle
- Hatha is balance between Pingala and Ida
- Nadi is Pranic Energy channel or passage

Right Nostril:

- Pingala

- Right nostril
- Sun / Male principle
- Physical Energy
- Represents Body

Left Nostril:

- Ida
- Left nostril
- Moon / female
- Mental Energy
- Represents Mind

Types of Pranayama:

- Surya Bhedan – right nostril breath
- Ujjayi – Victorious breath / psychic breath
- Sitkari – Cooling breath
- Shitali – Cooling breath
- Bhramari – Humming bee breath
- Bhastrika – Bellows breath
- Murchha – Swooning or fainting breath
- Plavini – Gulping breath

1. Full Yoga Breath (three part breathing): belly – rib – chest
2. Alternate Nostril (Anuloma Viloma): breathing sequence through each nostril separately.
3. Abdominal pumping (Kapalabhati): A rapid pulsing of the diaphragm in and out with the breath.

KAPĀLABHĀTI

Sthiti: Any meditative posture eg *Sukāsana/Padmāsana/Vajrāsana*

Technique

1. Sit in any meditative posture.
2. Close the eyes and relax the whole body.
3. Inhale deeply through both nostrils, expand the chest.
4. Expel the breath with forceful contractions of the abdominal muscles and relax.
4. Ocean Breath (Ujjayi breath): a vocal breath that is done in the back of the throat creating an ocean sound.

BHRĀMARĪ PRĀNĀYĀMA (BHRĀMARĪ RECAKA)

Bhrāmarī is derived from *bhramara* which means a black bee. During the practice of this *prānāyāma*, the sound produced resembles the buzzing of a black bee.

Sthiti: Any meditative posture.

Techniques: Type – I

1. Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee. This is one round of *Bhrāmarī*.
4. Repeat 5 rounds.

Type – II

1. Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Close the eyes with index fingers, mouth with ring and small fingers and ears from respective thumbs as shown in the figure. This is also called Śanmukhi Mudra.

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i.e., to cut the speed of inhalation and exhalation is Prāṇāyāma. Prāṇa is related to breathing and when one starts controlling the breathing rate, one starts Prāṇāyāma. The respiratory system acts voluntarily and as well as involuntarily. When it is voluntary in nature, the breathing is done according to one's wish. But, when one is not conscious of it, breathing goes on automatically at a particular speed. The normal speed is 15 to 18 breaths (inhalation together with exhalation) per minute. What one does in Prāṇāyāma is to use the voluntary mode to reduce the breathing rate and also to balance the breath between the two nostrils.

Cleansing is the pre-requisite for Prāṇāyāma. There are six cleansing processes mentioned in Haṭha Yoga and recommended to practise before Prāṇāyāma, if there is disharmony in *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. These practices help to purify the nāḍīs, channels carrying *prāna*, the vital energy. It is very necessary to see that our respiratory system comes under our control.

The next step is **normalizing the breath**. It is done with the practice of sectional breathing. **The process of inhalation and exhalation makes one cycle of breathing**. The normal breathing rate is 15 to 18 per minute. But certain people have shallow breath due to wrong habits and in most of the people suffering from respiratory problems; it is found that the breathing **rate is very fast**. The simplest Prāṇāyāma is to sit relaxed in any meditative position and breathe in and out slowly. This is *Sulabha Prāṇāyāma*. To progress, feel the cool air entering in and the warm air coming out.

Feeling the whole body getting energised while we breathe in and relaxation of the whole body while we exhale slowly helps in further progress. This Prāṇāyāma can be done in standing, sitting or lying down positions and at any time of the day.

Asana- Meaning and Rules / Hints

In *yoga*, **asana** refers both to the place in which a practitioner (*yogi* if male, *yogini* if female) sits and the posture in which he or she sits.^[1] In the *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali defines "asana" as "to be seated in a position that is firm, but relaxed".^[2] Patanjali mentions the ability to sit for extended periods as one of the eight limbs of his system, known as ashtanga yoga.^[3]

Asanas are also performed as physical exercise where they are sometimes referred to as "yoga postures" or "yoga positions".^[4] Some asanas are arguably performed by many practitioners just for health purposes. Asanas do promote good health, although in different ways compared to physical exercises, "placing the physical body in positions that cultivate also awareness, relaxation and concentration"

Asana Practice Rules/Hints :

A Yoga practitioner should follow the guiding principles given below while performing Yogic practices:

BEFORE THE PRACTICE

1. *Śauca* means cleanliness - an important prerequisite for Yogic practice. It includes cleanliness of surroundings, body and mind.
2. Yogic practice should be performed in a calm and quiet atmosphere with a relaxed body and mind.
3. Yogic practice should be done on an empty stomach or light stomach. Consume small amount of honey in lukewarm water if you feel weak.
4. Bladder and bowels should be empty before starting Yogic practices.
5. A mattress, Yoga mat, *durrie* or folded blanket should be used for the practice.

6. Light and comfortable cotton clothes are preferred to facilitate easy movement of the body.
7. Yoga should not be performed in state of exhaustion, illness, in a hurry or in acute stress conditions.
8. In case of chronic disease/ pain/ cardiac problems, a physician or a Yoga therapist should be consulted prior to performing Yogic practices.
9. Yoga experts should be consulted before doing Yogic practices during pregnancy and menstruation.

DURING THE PRACTICE

1. Practice sessions should start with a prayer or invocation as it creates a conducive environment to relax the mind.
2. Yogic practices shall be performed slowly, in a relaxed manner, with awareness of the body and breath.
3. Do not hold the breath unless it is specially mentioned to do so during the practice.
4. Breathing should be always through the nostrils unless instructed otherwise.
5. Do not hold body tightly, or jerk the body at any point of time.
6. Perform the practices according to your own capacity.
7. It takes some time to get good results, so persistent and regular practice is very essential.
8. There are contra-indications/ limitations for each Yoga practice and such contra-indications should always be kept in mind.
9. Yoga session should end with meditation/ deep silence /*Śhānti paṭha*.

AFTER PRACTICE

1. Bath may be taken only after 20-30 minutes of practice.
2. Food may be consumed only after 20-30 minutes of practice.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A few dietary guidelines can ensure that the body and mind are flexible and well-prepared for practice. A vegetarian diet is usually recommended, and for a person over 30 years, two meals a day should suffice, except in cases of illness or very high physical activity or labour.

Asana/yogic exercise and cure of diseases:

Yogic Exercises Asanas, Pranayama and meditation techniques when performed in a planned manner with a specific purpose prove to be much more effective. Yoga therapy teaches us how to properly make use of infinite energy available in the universe and channelise it properly in the body. For perfect health follow the eight fold path of yoga ie ashtanga yoga as enunciated by sage Patanjali in his Yoga Sutras. Once your mind and body is rejuvenated by practice of asanas and pranayama, it is time to move further on your spiritual journey and move towards concentration, meditation and sadhana. Progress in this realm requires faith and determination.

Yoga involves a variety of postures, which affect the entire body. Asanas recharge the body and help in even distribution of energy throughout the body. It helps in curing many diseases related to circulatory and respiratory system, muscular system, skeletal system, nervous and digestive system. This results in improved health of mind and body

This ancient quintessence of India offers cure for every kind of ailment. Yoga, through its Yogic exercises or Yoga Asanas deals with the root of the disease and provides the much needed mental and physical balance. Here are some ailments which can be cured by Yoga. The practice of curing ailments through Yogic exercises dated back to Vedic age. Vedas are the sacred books of India. It was Maharshi Patanjali gave a detailed ways of treating and curing the ailments in first century B.C. Maharshi means a wise person or seer, “Yoga” is the term derived from the Sanskrit root “Yug” and the meaning of Yug is to join this means Yoga joins body, heart and soul.

Arterial hypertension

The most effective yogic pose to cure hypertension is Shavasana or the corpse posture. When the practitioner is in this posture he looks like a corpse. Hence, the posture has become popular as corpse posture or Shavasana.

Technique- Lie flat on the back. Your hands with the palms up should be kept a little away from your body. Keep the heels together and toes apart. Close the eyes and breathe very slowly. While breathing effortlessly, gradually you should feel all your limbs are lifeless. By doing this, you feel a sense of serenity and tranquility. You will be completely relaxed. Direct your attention on breathing while exhalation.

Benefits – Both body and mind are kept together by the Shavasana (Corpse posture). After a hard day's work performing Shavasana soothes and relaxes the practitioner. After a prolonged illness it becomes necessary for the body to recoup the lost energy and vigor. Shavasana is a sure cure for tired and weak body. Shavasana cures effectively insomnia, high or low blood pressure and indigestion. The blood circulation regular and all the organs of the body receive adequate blood in order to keep the hale and healthy. Those are afflicted by heart related problems get an immense relief. This asana helps in controlling the anger.

Asthma and Tuberculosis

Sheershasana or head stand pose (Sheersha means head) This head stand pose is also known as 'King of Asanas. There are four stages involved in this asana.

Technique- The first stage of this asana is kneeling and interlocking the fingers of the hand. The second stage is placing the head on the interlocked hands and between the elbows. Remember to exercise utmost importance to perform any yogic posture in a slow manner without any jerks. Here too while performing Sheersana, after placing the head between the elbows, the legs should be raised slowly. The heels of the raised legs should be kept pointed towards the ceiling or towards the sky. During this time the breathing should be normal and easy.

Then the next part of the asana is to lowering of the legs. This time the heels should be kept parallel with the elbows. Then bend the legs backward and slowly raise legs and gradually straight like a pillar. If it is necessary, one can take the help of someone to keep the legs straight in the initial stages. Or there is an option to take the support of a wall in order to keep the legs straight and steady.

Caution- During summer, Sheersasana should not be done for a longer duration. Sheershasana should be followed by Shavasana.

Benefits- Sheersasana boosts the mental power and memory. It activates gastric fire. Besides curing ailments like Tuberculosis and asthma.

Diabetes

Diabetes can be cured by Siddhasana, Sheersasana, Sarvangasana and other asanas. For the technique involved in Sheershasana, refer above. Siddhasana is an excellent cure for Diabetes. Semi divine beings used to perform this asana. Which is why it has become popular by the name Siddhasana.

Technique- The legs should be bent in such a way, while sitting on the floor in a comfortable position that the left leg is held and placed near the perineum, the region between the anus and the scrotum. Further, the sole of the left foot should be placed against the right thigh. After this, the right leg should be bent and placed on the left ankle.

And also the right foot should be placed at the root of the genitals. The back of the hands should be placed on the knees. The palms should face upwards. Then the tip of the thumb and the index finger of both left and right hands should be joined.

Keep the spine straight and erect. Neck and the spine should be in a straight line. After this head should be bent so that the chin touches the lower part of the throat. Siddhasana has the potential to cure indigestion besides diabetes, chronic fever, dysentery, heart diseases, tuberculosis to name a few. Siddhasana is an effective cure for stiffness in the joints of the loins.

Indigestion- The ailment indigestion and its related gas formation can be cured effectively by performing Vajrasana or diamond posture.

Technique- The technique in Diamond posture or Vajrasana involves, bending at the knees and placing the heels at the sides of anus. The thighs should rest on the heels and the buttocks on the heels. Breathing should be normal. There is a possibility of pain in the knees and the ankles. Over a period of consistent practice of this asana, the pain disappears. Care should be taken not to try to stay in this posture from the very beginning. In the beginning stage, when the knees and the ankles pain, the asana should not be prolonged by force. Stretch the hands and place them on the knees. The trunk should be erect. The neck and the head should be in a straight line. Then start breathing in a normal manner.

Benefits- Ailments like indigestion and its related wind formation in the stomach are effectively cured by practicing Vajrasana or Diamond posture. Pain in the knees, the legs, the feet and the thighs are eliminated if this posture is consistently practiced. There will be an increase in the white blood corpuscles produced in the spleen, the tonsils, the marrow and the other parts of the body. This is the only asana or posture that can be performed immediately after meals.

Enlargement of the liver and the spleen

Halasana derives its name from the word plough. Because the posture when assumed looks like a plough. This asana is an effective cure for preventing enlargement of the liver and the spleen.

Technique- The technique involved in performing the Plough or Halasana is explained in the ensuing lines. The practitioner should lie flat on the back. The arms should be stretched by the side of the body. The palms should be flat. The legs should be kept together and straight. Then the next step is the legs should be raised slowly while inhaling. Without bending the knees the legs should be lowered over the head till toes touch the ground. Breathing should be normal until the asana or the posture is completed.

Breathing must be through the nose. Avoid breathing through the mouth. See that the chin touches the throat. After holding this position for eight to ten seconds the body should come back to the original position slowly and gradually without any jerky movements.

Benefits- The main and important benefit of this asana is reduction in the contraction and expansion of liver and the spleen. Plough asana tones up the sexual ability. Strengthens the abdominal muscles makes the spine flexible. Muscular rheumatism and lumbar pain are eliminated. Above all the body becomes agile.

Elephantiasis

Elephantiasis is a parasitic infection. This infection leads to extreme swelling in the arms and the legs. The disease is caused by filarial worm. Utkatasana or the Chair posture effectively cures elephantiasis. This posture's final shape looks like a chair. Which is why, it has become popular by the name Utkatasana or Chair posture. It's a standing posture.

Technique- There are two techniques involved in performing the asana

Technique 1- Stand with the legs together. Then raise the body on the heels slowly and gradually. Bring the arms over the head and join the palms. After attaining this posture lower the trunk cautiously and slowly.

Technique 2- First of all stand erect, keeping the arms by the sides. By lifting the body just about a few centimeters must rest on the soles. The entire body will balance on the front part of the feet, while the hips touch the heels. Remain in this posture for about 10 seconds in the beginning. And the duration of staying in this posture should be increased to more time. However the maximum limit is three minutes.

Benefits- Those who are afflicted with elephantiasis are the main beneficiaries of this asana. The other benefits include strengthening of the muscles of the wrists and the feet. All the joints and the muscles of the legs are strengthened. Ailments like fistula, Dropsy, constipation, abdominal diseases, impurification of blood, skin diseases, flatulence, heart problems and arthritis to name a few.

Piles

Piles is an inflamed condition of the inside or outside the rectum. The afflicted experiences pain at passing the stools. This condition can be effectively cured by performing Cow face posture or Gowmukhasana. 'Gow' means cow. 'Mukha means face. When the person performs this asana, the posture looks like a cow head.

Technique- The first thing to be done is to keep the left heel on the left side of the anus. Then the right leg should be bent in a way the right knee rests on the left knee and the sole of the right foot touches the lower part of the left thigh. Take the left arm to the back. Bend the elbow and bring it upward. After this, raise the right arm, bend the elbow and take to the back. The next step is to interlock the hands behind your back. This stance has to be reversed. The posture has to be held for 30 seconds and gradually increase the duration.

Benefits- By practicing Gowmukhasana, the muscles of the upper arm, shoulders back and waist are strengthened. The foremost benefit is piles are cured very effectively. Other benefits are tumors in the axilla are dissolved. Rheumatic arthritis of the lower legs and fissure are cured effectively. Additionally Gowmukhasana cures constipation, dyspepsia, backache and sprain in the arms. Joints become flexible and the bones strong. This asana strengthens the chest, lungs and the heart.