

# AYUSCRIPT

International Journal for Empirical Research in Ayurveda

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॥ १ ॥ विश्वकर्मो माहूयपुरीहाटकनि  
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राः ॥ १३ ॥ यत्किं विविधुलोकैश्च सुंदरं न वदयते ॥ सवाजिनप्रज्ञेनाप्यो पु  
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नः प्रसन्नो भगवान्मनाजितपुरं स्थिता ॥ १६ ॥ सत्तात्रितोषिगुहावदृष्टादि वेद  
ाकरय ॥ निजोराजनमस्तैस्तनमस्तैसर्वतोमुखः ॥ १७ ॥ विश्वव्यापिन्नमस्तै  
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स्तैस्तनमस्तैव हरिचिवा ॥ वेदत्रयनमस्तैस्तु सर्वदेवनमोस्तुते ॥ १९ ॥ प्रसीद  
ादिदेवैश्च सुदृष्टो मादिवाकरः ॥ २० ॥ यस्तैस्तु यमानोस्तैव देवो दिवाकरः ॥ २१ ॥  
विष्णो भीरमभर्यसकाजितमवावे ॥ २२ ॥ अरुहं हि प्रसन्नो जितमवावे





## Role of Yoga and Meditation in Mental Health Disorders

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### Abstract:

Mental diseases contribute significantly to the global disease burden and impact people in all communities across the world. Mental illnesses frequently begin in childhood. Because every third person in India's cities is a youth, mental and behavioral disorders are becoming a growing element of the country's health concerns. Mental health is more than just the absence of sickness; it is a whole condition of well-being. Physical and emotional stress are caused by rapidly changing social and technical factors such as violent media graphics, drug usage, family mobility, and tiny family structures. If we look at Ayurveda, mental wellness is really important for a good personality. Ayurveda consider Prassana atma, Indriya and mana beside the equilibrium of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala as Swastha. Ayurveda deals with four aspects of lifestyle which can ensure good health in us. These include proper nutrition (Ahara), proper recreation (vihara), proper routine (achara), and proper thinking (Vichara) in one's life. Certain practices promote a healthy and happy existence. All of these are beneficial in maintaining good mental health and combating mental disease. Yoga is becoming increasingly popular as an accessible, acceptable, and cost-effective mind-body practice across the world. People are turning to yoga and meditation to enhance their mental health since they are thought to be more beneficial than medication, have less side effects, and do not respond to medication. This brief article discusses the evidence for yoga and meditation as a means of mental health promotion, disease prevention, and therapy.

**Key-words** - Mental health, Pranayam, Asanas, Yoga, Meditation

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**How to cite article:** Nakade A. V, Kalwane D.B. Role of Yoga and Meditation in Mental Health Disorders. AYUSCRIPT 2022;1(3):19-27

**Introduction:**

The mind is treated as the sixth sense organ with a control over the other five sense organs taking a place higher than them (Sarvendriya Param). Besides controlling and coordinating the sense impressions from the external world, the mind functions as a motor organ - enabling activities through speech and other actions. Thus mind is both a sensory as well as a motor organ. In Ayurveda the body is the realm of molecules while the mind is the field of thoughts. The senses act only when the mind exists or directs the other. Mental well-being is defined as optimal psychological functioning and experience. The absence of psychiatric disease has been often characterized as mental wellness. The mind's effect on health and illness was previously thought to be a crucial component of medicine, but over the last few centuries, mind and medicine have gradually drifted apart. For most of the last century, the focus of psychology on the treatment of psychopathology has eclipsed the promotion of well-being and human progress. However, beginning in the late 1960s with a shift in emphasis toward prevention and continuing to the present, a few scholars have studied growth, well-being, and the promotion of well-

beingness. Prevention studies have revealed that by reducing destructive states of mind and increasing constructive states of mind, mental well-being may be improved. Negative emotions, envy, a lack of compassion, and an inability to maintain deep interpersonal relationships are all damaging states of mind. Self-respect, self-esteem, and other positive mental states are examples of constructive mental states.<sup>1-3</sup>

There are several studies that indicate that different asanas or mediation have a good impact. The global need for treating depression and other mental health issues is increasing. Mental health is the state of preserving harmony or balance between an individual's needs, wants, goals, and attitudes in relation to the external environment. As a result of these factors, depression is the largest cause of disability globally. Ayurveda is a psychological as well as a physical method of treatment. Its practice area encompasses both physical (Sharirika) and mental (Manasika) illnesses. Ayu (life) is the mixture of the body, sense organs, intellect, and soul, according to Charaka Samhita. The Yoga and yogic practices are relevant and effective today not only to treat physical and mental disorders of various sorts but

also to maintain, preserve and promote a healthy, happy and successful life. This is even more useful in the wake of increasing physical and mental health problems as a consequence of adopting and practicing of material values, stiff competition, restructuring of family, social and community relations and information overload caused by recent advances in computer technology and mass media.<sup>4</sup>

### **Mental Health**

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected.<sup>5</sup>

### **Mental disorders**

A mental illness or mental disease is a psychological or behavioral pattern associated with subjective distress or incapacity that occurs in an individual and is not part of normal growth or culture. A state of cognitive or emotional well-being, or the absence of a mental disorder, can be characterized as mental health. Mental health themes include subjective well-being,

perceived self-efficacy, competence, and recognition of one's ability to attain one's intellectual and emotional potential. Individual and personal mental health are issues that must be addressed.

Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry, life experiences, such as trauma or abuse; family history of mental health problems.<sup>6</sup>

### **Signs of Metal Illness**

Eating or sleeping excessively or insufficiently; withdrawing from others and routine tasks; having little or no energy; smoking, drinking, or taking drugs; feeling abnormally confused, forgetful, furious, agitated, concerned, or terrified, screaming or fighting, and so on.

When the mind is trained to focus on an external or internal object for long enough to eliminate all distractions, and when the stream of thought progresses in a single route without interruption towards a certain subject, meditation is achieved. Significant and perhaps beneficial changes occur in basic biological systems during meditation. During meditation, oxygen consumption decreases, heart rate lowers, and alpha brain waves rise. In other words, there are many signs of

relaxation and stress reduction. Many people have used meditation to help them overcome drug or alcohol addiction. Meditation induces a shift toward self-observation, which may be useful in encouraging behavioral changes. Meditation includes self-observation and desensitization to thoughts, fears, and worries, as well as relaxation and attention redirection. Meditation can promote behavioral self-control by teaching people to relax and empty their minds of ideas and images, as well as increase their attention to stressful situations.<sup>7-8</sup>

### **Yoga for mental health problems<sup>9-18</sup>**

Yoga is a discipline that consists of physical exercises (Asana), breath control (Pranayama), and meditation (Dhyana). Yoga is progressively becoming recognized as beneficial in terms of health outcomes, sickness prevention and management, and anxiety issues. Asanas, pranayama, and dhyana have all been linked to activation of the central nervous system, resulting in the creation of endorphins, monoamines, and brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) in the hippocampus, among other things. Dhyana, which comprises of controlled breathing, relaxation, and meditation techniques, has been linked to anxiety

reduction. Yoga practitioners can achieve great psychosomatic relaxation by practicing pranayama (slow, rhythmic, and deep breathing) for 5 minutes. Yoga meditation has been linked to higher melatonin levels and lower cortisol levels in studies. Low HRV and respiratory sinus arrhythmia (RSA) levels have been linked to anxiety, panic disorder, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, early Alzheimer's, and obesity. Yoga's increased heart rate variability implies a better capacity to deal with stress. Yoga meditation may also improve executive function. Yoga meditation practitioners' brains show neuroplastic alterations. Melatonin levels rise as a result of yoga meditation. Melatonin increases sleep, strengthens the immune system (a potent antioxidant), and lowers blood pressure.

Meditation is thought to restrict blood supply to the liver, resulting in delayed melatonin metabolism. Second, yoga raises serotonin levels, which are then converted to melatonin in the pineal gland. They also observed that healthy people' cardiorespiratory performance and psychological characteristics were improved. Yoga meditation has been linked to lower cortisol levels. Cortisol levels are positively connected to negative mood

and depression, as well as physiological symptoms such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease. Vagal or parasympathetic activity calms the body's stress response systems and is associated with lower cortisol levels.

➤ **Yoga for depression**

According to the Patanjali yoga sutras, chanting and meditating on the sound "Om" can be a beneficial technique for calming the mind. The vibratory component of the humming sound "mmm" at the conclusion of "Om" chanting may have comparable effects as stimulation of the vagus nerve's auricular branch (which is a known treatment modality for depression). Thus, reciting the sound "Om" aloud may be a beneficial exercise for depression. Other hatha yoga books state that practicing bellows breath (bhastrika) for three sets of 20 strokes each has revitalizing benefits and avoids ailments. The yogic postures which focus on backbends and chest opening e.g., tree pose (vrikshasana), half wheel pose (ardha chakrasana), half-camel pose (ardha ustrasana), fish pose (matsyasana), warrior pose (veerbhadrāsana) etc., may thus be useful. The practice should be modified dynamically, with short times of rest in between. In the beginning, it is preferable to concentrate on physical

postures, rapid breathing methods, and loud mantra chanting. As the patient's yoga practice progresses, the postures can be held for longer periods of time, and slower breathing techniques can be employed. It is recommended to avoid extremely introspective meditation techniques that emphasize sensory detachment, at least in the early stages of therapy.

➤ **Yoga for Anxiety**

Anxiety patients exhibit indications of sympathetic overactivity; hence, yoga should focus on bringing about a state of profound relaxation. According to yoga philosophy, there are five layers of consciousness (physical layer, energy layer, emotional layer, intellectual layer, and bliss layer) that can be used to explain how yoga connects and harmonizes different layers using yoga techniques, and how it uses physical postures to bring relaxation at the body level, breathing techniques to slow down and regularise the breath, and meditation to calm the mind. In contrast to the techniques recommended for depression, treatments for anxiety should be mild, slow and rhythmic.

Difficult and dangerous postures, rapid breathing routines, and loud chanting can all cause anxiety. The postures should be pleasant and stable. Forward

bending and gravity-based movements are regarded more soothing in yogic literature, therefore postures such as moon position (shashankasana), wind releasing stance (pavanmuktasana), hand to feet pose (padhastasana), and crocodile pose (makrasana) may be more beneficial. Meditative methods with more open monitoring than concentrated attention might be effective here, as can mild, soothing mantras such as "Om" or simple, gently humming "mmm."

➤ **Yoga for Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders**

Patients with psychotic illnesses lose touch with reality. Though patients on drugs may be taught yoga techniques with ease, individuals in the early stages of sickness and experiencing acute exacerbations of psychotic episodes require additional understanding and care from the therapist. Patients should always be urged to take their drugs on a regular basis. Yoga therapy can only be done in conjunction with pharmaceuticals and will mostly assist with the negative symptoms of psychotic diseases such as lack of desire, lack of socializing, emotional withdrawal, and so on. Caregivers have an important role in psychotic diseases. Jogging, twisting, forward-backward bending, followed by eight rounds of

suryanamaskar (sun salutations) (first four rounds fast; next four rounds slow) and then brief relaxation in shavasana with abdominal breathing; then ardha-usturasana, vakrasana, bhujangasana, dhanurasana and sarvangasana, matsyasana. This is followed by two sets of quick breathing (bhastrika 20 counts) and calm breathing (alternate nostril breathing). Antipsychotic medications can cause stiffness, tremors, weight gain, and insulin resistance; thus, suryanamaskar (sun salutations) and fast breathing practices (e.g., bhastrika or bellows breath) can help reduce weight, while right nostril breathing can improve metabolic rate and cognitive functions.

**Asanas for Mental health**

Hatha Yoga describes Shatkarmas (six processes) in details for body purification and mind purification. It comprises of:

- Asanas
- Six shatkarmas,
- Mudras
- Bandhas (psychic knots or psycho-physiological energy release techniques)
- Pranayama.

They work at the Chitta (subtle aspect of consciousness) level that eliminates the physical and mental tensions. Shavasana and Vijrasana,

Bhujangasana, Trikonasana, Halasana, Sarvangasana etc. are important relaxative asanas.

### **Importance of Yoga**

Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of life aimed at achieving a healthy mind in a healthy body. Man is a physical, mental, and spiritual creature, and yoga promotes the development of all three. Other types of physical exercise, such as aerobics, merely provide bodily well-being. They have little to do with the spiritual or astral body's growth. Yoga activities provide cosmic energy and capabilities to the body such as

- Attainment of complete equilibrium and harmony
- Promotes self-healing
- Removes negative barriers from the mind and toxins from the body
- Increases personal power
- Increases self awareness
- Aids in attention, focus, and concentration, which is especially crucial for children

### **Conclusion:**

Various mental diseases had arisen throughout life, posing a financial and societal hardship. Ayurvedic writings prescribe a regimen for practically everything, either thoroughly or simply. The mental aspect is a crucial idea in Ayurveda. The Samhita discusses

several causes, traits, and remedies, notably under the name "Unmada." Yoga appears to have the potential to improve population mental health. It is acceptable, accessible, affordable, and encourages self-sufficiency. Yoga is a community-supported, health-promoting solo practice that may also be done in groups. Yoga has been shown to promote population mental health in workplaces, schools, and other group settings. Deep quiet breathing, in conjunction with movement and other aspects of yoga, appears to be at the root of yoga's ability to provide individuals with a greater feeling of calmness. Asanas, in particular, promote fitness and physical flexibility, with a secondary effect on mental state, whilst pranayama and relaxation/meditation approaches may result in more awareness, reduced stress, and greater well-being and quality of life.

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