

STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH YOGA: STEP BY STEP

MADHU GAUR

Assistant Professor, Physical Education, J.D.V.M. P.G. College, Kanpur (U.P.) India.

Abstract:

If you do aerobics, which has no direct breathing or mindfulness component, the physical challenge can trigger a full-fledged stress response in the body. But when physical demands are met with mindfulness and steady breathing, as they are in yoga, the nervous system responds differently: It maintains activation while keeping an underlying sense of calm. It remains skillfully engaged but without going into full-fledged fight-or-flight mode. The great sage and codifier of yoga, Patanjali, must have been aware of the power of asana when he wrote sutra 2:46, Sthira sukham asanam: Postures should embody steadiness and ease. If you can find both elements in the midst of a stressful arm balance, you're not just training your mind. You're enabling your autonomic nervous system to imprint that response and therefore allow you to return to it during everyday stress. At first, you will need to very consciously tap into this response during your yoga practice by focusing on your breathing and thoughts. But with enough conscious practice, the rehearsed challenge response can become an ingrained automatic response—on and off the mat. Yoga also trains the nervous system to return to balance quickly after a challenge response. By alternating strenuous poses with gentler ones, yoga conditions you to move easily between states of challenge and rest.

KEYWORDS:

Stress Management, Yoga, and Autonomic Nervous System.

INTRODUCTION

Yoga's emphasis on breathing and the mind/body/spirit connection also yields strong emotional benefits. People who practice yoga frequently report that they sleep better and feel less stressed. "It helps you learn not to concentrate on things you can't control, to live in the present," says Mindy Arbuckle, yoga teacher and owner of Green Mountain Yoga in Arvada, Colo. "It seeps into the rest your life. You'll notice you're handling a stressful event more easily, whether it's family or work." Everyone suffers from mild anxiety from time to time, but chronic anxiety takes a tremendous toll on the body, draining energy resources and keeping the body in a constant state of stress. The effects of anxiety are magnified when the body is not exercised: tension in the muscles builds, breathing remains constricted most of the time, and the mind has no rest from the whirling thoughts and feelings that feed the anxiety.

Yoga helps you to access an inner strength that allows you to face the sometimes-overwhelming fears, frustrations, and challenges of everyday life. A few Yoga exercises practiced daily (especially if they are done just prior to meditation) help to regulate the breath and relax the body by gently releasing tension from the large muscle groups, flushing all parts of the body and brain with fresh blood, flushing all parts of the body and brain with fresh blood, oxygen, and other nutrients, and increasing feelings of well-being. "Whole body" exercises such as the Sun Poses are particularly helpful because they encourage you to

Please cite this Article as : MADHU GAUR , STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH YOGA: STEP BY STEP :
Academic Sports Scholar (March ; 2014)

STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH YOGA: STEP BY STEP

breathe deeply and rhythmically.

The Complete Breath technique is a must for anyone who often feels "stressed out." Once learned, the Complete Breath can be used anywhere, anytime, to reduce the severity of a panic attack, to calm the mind, or to cope with a difficult situation. "The benefits of yoga include decreased stress and tension, increased strength and balance, increased flexibility, lowered blood pressure and reduced cortisol levels," says Beth Shaw, Founder/President of Yoga fit Training Systems, Worldwide, Inc., in Torrance, Calif.

If you're finally ready to give it a try, here's how to get started.

METHODOLOGY

Step One -- Move Past the Myths

The first step is to give up all the preconceptions that are holding you back. First big myth: you have to be flexible to do yoga. "People who aren't flexible will actually see results faster," says Shaw. Because yoga is a practice geared to helping you become aware of your own highly individual mind/body connection, it's perfectly suited to all levels. "Anyone will get the benefits".

Don't Worry About whether you're Doing It 'Right

Don't worry that you are coming to yoga late and you'll be way behind. "It's not about doing it better or worse than someone else, it's about how you feel each stretch in your own body," says Arbuckle. The names of poses -- and chants of om -- are beside the point. The only test, according to lifelong yoga practitioners, is how relaxed you can allow yourself to feel.

Listen to Your Body

Yoga is a deeply personal practice and no two people can or should hold a pose in exactly the same way. It's important to work at your own level of flexibility, one that makes you feel challenged but not overwhelmed. "If a teacher is telling you to do something that doesn't feel good for your body, then don't do it". "Your body will warn you if you are about to get hurt." The key is to listen to your body, push the limits gently, but don't let yourself be overcome by ego. "Allow your body to guide you and be your friend."

Concentrate on Your Breath

The goal of yoga is to marry the breath to movement. Most teachers will tell you when to inhale and exhale as you work through poses. "Breathe through your nose only," Shaw advises. "This keeps heat in the body and keeps the mind focused." Concentrating on your breath is the key to yoga for stress management, as it helps you let go of external thoughts and anxiety. "The easiest way to bring yourself into the present moment is to focus on your breath," Arbuckle says. "Feel how it goes down your nose and into your body. It helps you let go of the worrying thoughts."

Play Dead

Every yoga class ends with 'corpse pose, a pose designed for deep relaxation. Simply lie on your back with your arms at your side and your eyes closed, breathing deeply. See how easy it is -- you've learned.

Let Go of Competitiveness

It's important to remember that yoga truly is about you. "The biggest mistake beginners make is having expectations. Yoga is a process and it can be slow. Let go of competition and judgment". "Yoga is supposed to bring us into the present moment.

Daily practice of complete relaxation and meditation is also essential - even a few minutes of meditation during your work day can make a difference. This daily training in focusing the mind on stillness will teach you how to consciously quiet your mind whenever you feel overwhelmed. Meditation puts you in touch with your inner resources; this means less dependence on medications, greater self-awareness, and a fuller, happier life.

CONCLUSION

There are many different ways to cope with stress. Talking with friends, exercising, and seeing school counsellors are just a few. Yoga can help reduce stress because it promotes relaxation, which is the natural opposite of stress. Yoga can benefit three aspects of ourselves that are often affected by stress: our body, mind, and breathing. . Practicing yoga builds your ability to calm, focus, balance, and relax yourself. The best part about yoga is that it helps you discover more about your mind, body, and emotions. Yoga can help you become more balanced, calm, focused, and relaxed as you go through life's usual ups and downs. Of course, you won't instantly feel more positive, calm, or energetic after doing a few yoga poses. As with all good things, the effects of yoga need to build up over time. But if you give yourself a half hour each day to do few yoga poses, after a couple of weeks you should start noticing a subtle change. Keep going longer and yoga will become a natural part of your daily routine, ready to help you manage life's stresses well into the future.

REFERENCES

1. Aleyra B, L., The Philosophy of the yoga Vasistha Madras. The Theosophical, 1936.
2. Ganguli S.K. and Gharote M.L. "Cardio Vascular efficiency before and after Yogic training" Yoga Mimamsa, 1974, 17:1, 89-97.
3. Iyengar BKS. Light on Yoga. 2nd ed. New York: Schocken Books, 1976.
4. Madanmohan (2008). Introducing Yoga to Medical Students-The JIPMER Experience: Advanced Centre for Yoga Therapy, Education and Research.
5. Sharma R, Gupta N, Bijlani RL. (2008) Effect of yoga based lifestyle intervention on subjective well-being. Indian J Physiol Pharmacol. 52: 123-31.