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### **Yogic Exercise and Stress Management**

#### **ABSTRACT ::**

*Stress has become such an inseparable part of our lives that most people often fail to realize that they have been living under stress. At one point or the other everybody suffers from stress. Relationship demands, physical as well as mental health problems, pressure at workplaces, traffic snarls, meeting deadlines, growing-up tension-all of these conditions and situations are convincing causes of stress. People have their own methods of stress management. In some people, stress-induced inimical feelings and distress tend to persist and intensify. Learning to understand and master stress management techniques can help prevent the adverse effects of this urban debility.*

#### **Stress :-**

What is stress? Stress is a part of day to day living. As a college student experience stress meeting academic demands, adjusting to a different schedule every week, or developing relationships with others. The stress I or anyone else experience is not necessarily harmful; in fact, stress is a normal part of life. Although we tend to think of stress as caused by external events, events in themselves are not stressful. Rather, it is the way in which we interpret and react to those events that make them stressful, and will either make us peak performers or not. People differ greatly in the type of events they interpret as stressful and the way in which they respond to such stress. For example, speaking in front of a large crowd can be stressful for some people and relaxing for others. There are several symptoms that you may notice when you are experiencing stress. These symptoms basically fall into three categories. They are feelings, thoughts, and behaviour. When a person is under stress, they will normally show symptoms from each category.

#### **Yoga and Stress :-**

The practice of Yoga is well demonstrated to reduce the physical effects of stress on the body, and has even been found to lower cortisol levels. This effect is noticeable, and it is one of the primary reasons why people often take up Yoga. People find that they feel more relaxed after practicing Yoga. The asana, or physical postures of Yoga, are helpful for reducing muscular tension, which reduces stress. Yoga includes not only the asana or physical postures, but most Yoga classes end with savasana, or a pose of relaxation. Yoga also includes meditation and breathing practices (pranayama) as well as a set of ethical precepts and observances (yamas and niyamas). Meditation, the ethical precepts and observances, focused relaxation techniques, and working with the breath all have beneficial stress reducing qualities, through improving our relationships with the various aspects of our inner nature as well as affecting our psychology and physical body.

#### **Yoga, the Breath and Stress :-**

Working with the breath can be a particularly effective method for treating a negative response to stress. When we are experiencing stress, our breathing tends to become shallow and rapid. Shallow and rapid breath further stimulates the body's stress response, and we can become caught up in an ineffective breathing pattern that only causes more stress. Many yoga techniques emphasize slowing and deepening the breath, which activates the body's parasympathetic system, or relaxation response. Just by changing our pattern of breathing, we can significantly affect our body's experience of and response to stress.

## **Stress Management :-**

Stress, by definition, is any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person. It is anything that can unbalance the person's equilibrium. Stress is something that everyone has experienced at one time or another. Most people have had bouts with minor stress here and there in their lives and some people have had to deal with intensely stressful situations that alter their mental and physical state. Most people are able to deal with the stress that comes as a part of life, but when the stress gets out of hand, there needs to be ways to reduce it in order to ensure good health and happiness.

Psychological is known to be a contributor to many emotional disorders and somatic illnesses. Some of these include coronary heart disease, cancer, and insomnia. The dangers of this type of stress have led to an industry made out of stress management technology. Courses and books on stress and how to cope have made a huge industry, yoga and meditation have become very popular techniques, and the media has been full of articles and advice on reducing stress. A lot of research has been done about many of the relaxation methods, the advice in articles, the meditation, and all other types of stress reducing methods. Most of the methods have been proven to be effective in the treatment of a variety of stress - related symptoms and disorders.

One of the most effective methods of reducing stress is using yoga and yogic principles. Yogic methods, including relaxation postures and various types of meditation have been found to be beneficial in preventing or alleviating several health problems caused by stress. Yoga has been shown to improve exercise tolerance and decrease premature ventricular contradictions. Other areas in which yogic meditation techniques have shown encouraging results are insomnia, drug abuse, cigarette smoking, and headaches. The main things that are involved in yoga are steady breathing, holding the body in certain positions for long periods of time, and clearing and resting the mind.

Meditation is another popular technique of stress reduction. Meditation is a mental device that limits stimulus in put by directing attention to a single unchanging or repetitive stimulus. Normally it is practiced while seated in a quiet environment. The object of the person meditating may be a mentally repeated sound, the breath, or any number of focal points. Simple forms of meditation have been used for stress management with excellent results. During meditation, the mind and body have been found to enter a state of profound rest. The usefulness of meditation has been shown to improve all of the following; reduction in tension-anxiety, increased productivity, lessening of self-blame, anti-addictive effects, mood elevation, increase in available affect, increased sense of identity, and lowered irritability.

Another approach to stress control is bio-feedback, visceral learning, in which signals such as clicking tones, or flashing lights teach people to control their own irregular heartbeats, high blood pressure, chronic headaches or hyperactive stomachs. The method involves giving a reward for progress toward the intended goal. This method actually trains the patients into different rhythms that are able to control their heartbeat or whatever other problem they are experiencing.

Most people, however, who only experience minor stress pertaining to everyday life are told just to increase physical activity and to eat a diet lower in sugars, starches, and fats. Sometimes a simple vacation is a temporary but effective relief of stress. An unnatural amount of stress is extremely dangerous to a person but exposure to stress increases resistance to stress. Stress is always something that people do not want in their lives, but the main reason it is important to reduce stress is because it causes so many problems to your physical and mental health.

Stress in the business world can be elevated a great deal due to many factors such as, the type of job, the hours worked, the co-workers around you, and the amount of responsibility placed on the worker. It is especially important for people who are out in the fast paced business world to remember to take a moment to relax. It is detrimental to their physical, mental, and emotional health. By practicing some of the stress relieving techniques that have been researched and are now being taught and practiced, many of these professional people will live longer, healthier, and happier lives.

## **Some stress management techniques :-**

The following techniques can help reduce stress in your life and help you live the more balanced life that you were meant to live:

- Exercise regularly :-  
Exercise has so many stress management and health benefits, and for many of us, nighttime is when it best fits our schedules. Light exercise like yoga or walking at night can also help sleep as it releases tension without over-stimulating the body. Exercise in water can reduce stress even more. When you are in water, you are more buoyant; gravity takes a much gentler toll on your body, so the tension created in your muscles just by holding you up gets released. To inspire yourself, just think about the great personalities and what they do to avoid getting stressed out. Do you know what Anil Ambani does to relieve his stress? He goes for a jog in the Morning!!!
- Breathing :-  
The amazing stress-reducer that you have with you right now is your breathing. That's right. The method in which you take air into your body is an essential part of you releasing stress and becoming more relaxed.
- Yoga, meditation :-  
Some powerful practices like yoga, meditation or tai chi are the best herb for being stress free. Yoga is a wonderful practice for reducing stress. It gives complete relaxation to body as well as mind. It helps you to concentrate and focus on some particular things. It's the best relief for stress. Same is the case with meditation. The perfect antidote to stress is relaxation and meditation...and the perfect form of meditation is hypnosis. When you are stressed it's as though your brain is preparing your body to fight or run away...and it is! Stress causes strain on the body...and the strain can lead to illness...unless we do something about it....like practice relaxation and meditation with hypnosis.
- Laugh :-  
Laughter therapy is gaining grounds firmly in India. Medical research has shown that laughter decreases blood pressure and heart rate, increases oxygen in the blood, creates an enzyme that protects your stomach from stress, and strengthens the immune system.
- Eat a good breakfast :-  
Studies show that eating breakfast is one of the healthiest habits we can adopt. Yet, most people do not pay attention to their breakfast and some don't even bother having it. Having a good breakfast is very healthy! Remember unless you put fuel to your car, it does not run. Same is the case with human body...
- Cultivate a hobby :-  
Start something you always wanted, it can be working in the garden (amazing) or learning how to make pots (even more amazing), working out is good, running or swimming, in fact almost any kind of regular physical activity is good.
- Listen to music :-  
Music can soothe your mind and body to the point that it's now being used as a therapeutic tool by many practitioners. You can use music to your benefit by playing relaxing tunes before bed, and throughout the evening to help you unwind and release tension as bedtime approaches.
- Journaling :-  
Journaling has many stress and health benefits, making it a great way to end the day. Writing in a journal before bed can clear your mind, help you process emotions, solve problems, mentally prepare for the next day, make plans, and get your thoughts out of your head and on the page, where they can be picked up the next morning.

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