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ROLE OF YOGA IN MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is combination of posture and learned breathing techniques. Now a day's anxiety & stress are part of daily life, successfully alleviating stress & anxiety has the potential to promote mental wellbeing and prevent mental illness. Yoga therapy is playing a key role to alleviating stress and anxiety. In India and worldwide yoga is getting popularity as cost effective practice for maintain balance between body mind and environment. Population is turning towards yoga due to perceived greater efficacy than other treatment, low side effects than other pharmacological treatments or any other psychotherapy. Yoga improves physical wellbeing as well as mental wellbeing and increase self-esteem and self-reliance.

INTRODUCTION

Now anxiety is going to be diagnosed at a greater rate & increasing global burden. Where anxiety is increasing in diagnosis, but available therapies are not sufficient to promote mental well-being and prevent further mental illness. World Health Organization predicts by 2020, depression will be the second largest after ischemic disease contributor to the global disease burden. Effectively and efficiently addressing the mental health concerns entails a comprehensive approach including alternative medicine that will address the root of the problem [1-3]. Yoga alone is not a complete solution to mental health concern but in combination with other approaches, yoga has great potential to lead people towards greater mental well-being and physical fitness.

What is Yoga

Yoga includes eight limbed path:

1. Yama (moral codes),
2. Niyama (self-discipline),
3. Asana (body postures),

5. Pratyahara (sensory transcendence),
6. Dharana (attention & concentration),
7. Dhyana (meditation, sleep like state),
8. Samadhi (state of bliss).

The word yoga is originated from Sanskrit which means "to join" body and mind or we can say ultimate aim of yoga is to integrate body and mind with each other. Yoga's greatest aim is to create compassion within and a deep sense of unity and oneness with all forms of life [4].

Mechanism of yoga

The mechanism of yoga is not entirely understood. Various hypotheses are yet to be tested which states that yoga works through stimulation of vagus nerve results in increased parasympathetic activity of the autonomic nervous system and also increases GABA activity in the brain which leads to calmer effect in brain [5]. Stimulation of the vagus nerve has a positive impact on cardiovascular health. Studies comparing gene expression in long term exercises of yoga with controls suggest that yoga positively affects gene expression profiles in immune cells and hence improve immunity [6]. According to yoga breath is a bridge between mind and body. Daily practice of yoga helps to maintain mental stability & calmness. Yogic believes that by flexible body

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4. Pranyama (breathing techniques),

Review Article



one can get flexible mind which helps people to become more polite, able to forgive, control over unnecessary anger and sadness. Many of the asanas imitate animals and plants such as tree pose, dog pose, cat pose, snake pose, and others [7].

CONCLUSION

Yoga alone is not a complete solution to mental health concern but in combination with other approaches, yoga has great potential to lead people towards greater mental well-being and physical fitness. Practicing yoga

together, in workplaces, schools and other group settings have shown to promote population mental health [8]. While yoga does not address the social determinants of mental illness it does promote a greater sense of inner peace for those who take participation. Combination of posture and breathing techniques stimulate vagus nerve and lays calmer effect over brain, through a disciplined approach most people with or without mental health imbalances may feel more mental ease and relaxation through the practice of yoga [9].

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