

## VALUE OF BRAIN YOGA AND PRANAYAMA

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### ABSTRACT

The state of mind and that of the body are intimately related. If the mind is relaxed, the muscles in the body will also be relaxed. Stress produces a state of physical and mental tension. Brain Yoga developed thousands of years ago is recognized as a form of mind –body medicine.

### INTRODUCTION

Brain Yoga is an old discipline from India. It is both spiritual and physical. Brain Yoga uses breathing, techniques, exercise and meditation. It helps to improve health and happiness. The word is linked to meditative practices in both Buddhism and Hinduism. Brain Gym and Yoga are interrelated terms:

Yoga has many branches like

- Raja yoga
- Karma yoga
- Jnana yoga
- Bhakti yoga
- Hatha yoga

But when most people talk of yoga in India or abroad, they usually mean Hatha yoga, which consists of certain exercise called **asanas**.It can also include **pranayama** a set of breathing exercises. Yoga is an important system of complementary of alternative therapy. Yoga teacher prescribe specific asana and breathing exercise for specific diseases. Yoga has beneficial results in treating many diseases like

- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Asthma
- ◆ Hypertension
- ◆ Obesity
- ◆ Low blood pressure
- ◆ Liver diseases
- ◆ Gastric Trouble
- ◆ Piles
- ◆ Constipation

Yoga also maintains one's youth and vitality. Yoga exercise helps to control, purify and coordinate the nervous system. Doing yoga regularly rids the body of toxins, thereby improving general health.

### YOGA AND MEDITATION

Meditation is a relaxation. It's not about the concentration. It is actually about the de-

concentration. It is not focusing on one's thoughts at one thing, instead of on becoming totally thoughtless. Yoga and Meditation typically go hand-in-hand and have been around for thousands of years. They have been used as an alternative form of exercise to keep the mind and body healthy and happy. Practicing yoga improves flexibility, while meditation keep the mind Sharpe, relieves stress and anxiety, and can strengthen your immune system. Meditation may be used for different purpose.

### HEALTH BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

On a physical level, meditation:

- ❖ Decrease tension-related pain like tension, headache, ulcers, muscle and joint problem
- ❖ Increasing energy level
- ❖ Reducing the anxiety attacks

On a mental level, meditation:

- ❖ Emotional stability improves
- ❖ Happiness increases
- ❖ Creativity increases
- ❖ Problems become smaller

On a spiritual level, meditation:

- ❖ More focus and clarity
- ❖ Greater confidence
- ❖ Mental strength and energy
- ❖ Greater dynamics

### PRANAYAMA

Pranayama are breathing exercises which clear the physical and emotional obstacles in our body to free breath. Pranayama techniques are best practiced while sitting on the floor on a folded blanket. This form of practice is applicable to padmasana also. One must empty the bladder and bowels before starting pranayama yoga.

### WHEN TO PERFORM PRANAYAMA

Pranayama yoga must be performed in empty stomach. The best time for practice is the early morning. However, if morning is unsuitable, pranayama may be practiced after sunset, when the air is cool and pleasant. The place suitable for all kinds of Yoga must be clean and calm.

### TYPES OF PRANAYAMA

- Surya Bhedan-Right nostril breath
- Ujjayi-Victorious breath
- Sitkari-Cooling breath
- Shitali-Cooling breath
- Bhramari-Humming bee breath
- Murchha-Fainting breath
- Plavini-Gulping breath

## STEPS TO DO PRANAYAMA



- Close your eyes and inhale through your nostrils
- Exhale through both nostrils
- Repeat the process for 15 minutes

### IMPORTANT ARTICLES ON PRANAYAMA

Pranayama - A Science of Breathing

Pranayama - Deep Breathing and Fast Breathing (Physiology & Techniques.)

Pranayama - Nadi shodhan, Anuloma - Viloma or Alternate Nostril Breathing

In Patanjali's "Ashtanga yoga", Pranayama appears at the fourth stage. This means unless one observes Yama-Niyama and does Asanas well, he cannot reach this fourth stage. Even the Asanas discussed here are presented in their preliminary form. Therefore, for doing Pranayama, it is not enough to have done the Asanas as mentioned here. Even after learning these Asanas and having practiced them, one needs some preparation before actually taking up Pranayama. And an attempt is made to discuss that preparation. Actual Pranayama means the holding up of the process of exhaling and inhaling. And it is not possible to discuss or guide this serious aspect of Yogabhyasa in preliminary discussion. Therefore, as the preliminary exercises are discussed and which are to be done before the actual beginning of the Asanas: similarly, for Pranayama too, the preliminary exercises of breathing are designed and only this part is going to be discussed here.

Before examining the exercises of breathing it is necessary to understand the process of breathing. The breathing process chiefly involves two activities, viz., inhaling and exhaling. Of these the former is called "Puraka" and the latter "Rechaka" in Yogashastra. These two activities continue non-stop right from the birth to the death of a person. The state when these two activities are made to halt is given the name "Kumbhaka" in Yoga Studies. The halt after inhaling, i.e., Puraka is called "Abhyantara Kumbhaka" and after exhaling, i.e. rechaka. It is called "Bahya Kumbhaka". Two more types of Kumbhaka are mentioned. But instead of talking of them in detail, let us turn to the process of breathing.

According to the speed of breathing, it is divided into three parts:

- The smooth breathing that continues naturally without any effort (Quiet Breathing)

- The protracted breathing which is caused by deliberate slowing down of the breathing (Deep Breathing)
- The quick breathing which is caused by deliberate increase in the speed of breathing (Fast Breathing)

### **CONCLUSION**

Brain Yoga is mind fullness practice can help correct basic limitations of the mind by improving self-awareness, self-control and self-esteem. Brain yoga is very useful and easy to do and get rid of health problems.

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