

Three Days Workshops on Yoga & Psychotherapy for Holistic Health

By

GANESH SHANKAR (Ph.D., D.Litt. –Yoga)

Professor & Head of the department of Yoga Studies, Dr.H.S.Gour University, Sagar-470003 M.P. INDIA

Dean-School of Educational Studies (SES) Dr.H.S.Gour University, Sagar-470003 M.P. INDIA

Vice President-World Council for Psychotherapy-Asian Chapter, VIENA

President-Yoga & Psychotherapy Association of India, SAGAR INDIA

Former Director-CCRYN, Govt. of India, New Delhi, INDIA

Vice President-World Council for Psychotherapy, IRAN

1-CLINICAL APPLICATION OF YOGA POSTURAL PATTERNS FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

12-05-2018 from 07-10 AM

INTRODUCTION:

- 1) **Tension, stress, strain and disease** – present world scenario at large is that of immeasurable distress and suffering.
- 2) **Prevention and cure of mental illness:** prevention and cure of all sorts of mental disorders and also of raising the status of mental health lies in the gradual expansion of awareness and consciousness to their fullness and in the removal of impurities that veil the pure consciousness imbedded in all human beings.
- 3) **Combination of modern science and ancient spirituality** : urgent need of joining hands by modern science and ancient spirituality in the interest of survival of humanity and its further evolution.

THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS:

- 1) **Realisation of the “pure consciousness”:** The evolution at the highest level lies in our recognition and realisation of the “pure consciousness”, which is imbedded in all and is the source of all knowledge and bliss.
- 2) **States of evolution:** Awareness and consciousness are two different states of evolution of self “sense” in the human being.
 - a) The former indicates a dualistic interaction between the self and the worldly objects from which the brain receives vibrations. It is dominated by “I” sense and its cause is known.
 - b) In the case of consciousness, its cause remains unknown, it is thermodynamically open and it dominates the “I” sense.
- 3) **Level of human consciousness:** Yoga recognises five levels of human consciousness along with corresponding vehicles in order to express and manifest itself. These are physical body, energy body, mental body, higher intelligence and blissful body.
- 4) **The cause of tension, pain and suffering:** Wrong identification with the worldly names and forms is the main cause of human sufferings. The truth and reality is that consciousness only exists while all other things apparently seem to exist.
- 5) **Recognition and realisation of the Reality/Truth:** During the long process of personal evolution, consciousness, gradually, step by step, becomes aware of itself and effects separation through yogic practices from its identification with its different vehicles.

DEVELOPMENT OF YOGA TECHNOLOGY

- 1) **Philosophy of evolution:** The science of yoga is a radical one. Its whole scheme of management of human life's potentialities is rooted in the philosophy of evolution which is considered unitary one.
- 2) **Development of experiential technology:** A number of biological and psychological concepts were evolved to fit in the overall unitary process. Simultaneously, it developed its own experiential technology along with elaborate details of applied procedures with an eye on their outcome i.e expansion of consciousness to a certain scale.
- 3) **Patanjali's eight-phased scheme of yoga:** Patanjali is considered to be the rare enlightened person who evolved eight-phased scientific approach to the expansion of consciousness for an ordinary person.
- 4) **Overcoming social and personal encumbrances:** Yamas and Niyamas- rules of social and personal conduct were prescribed to be observed so as to prevent and overcome social and personal encumbrances likely to hamper the progress in expanding the consciousness.
- 5) **Meditative Pose:** Next comes the requirement of non-moving bodily erect sitting postural pattern to provide stability to the body and mind along with a sense of well being (most probably it points out towards meditative poses only)
- 6) **Cultural Yoga Posture vs. Meditation:** Many people mistakenly associate "Yoga" with bodywork through Asana alone conversely, an equally large group of people think of Yoga as a means of reaching a state of consciousness through meditation whereby one transcends awareness of body but actually Yoga leads neither to preoccupation with nor disregard for physical level of being.
- 7) **Significance of cultural poses:** However, cultural asanas of Hathayoga seek to optimise functioning in order to free one from identification with physical well being and to bring the physical into harmony with more subtle levels of existence after having resolved the tensions at gross body level.

SEQUENCE IN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS OF AWARENESS DURING THE PRACTICE OF ASANA:

- 1) **Level of consciousness- a related phenomena:** the evolution of potentialities-physical, mental and higher consciousness are related phenomena and form part of one single process.
- 2) **Hierarchy in evolutionary process:** The process of evolution in progress is explainable in terms of neutral observation, control, co-ordination and synthesis.
- 3) **Detached observation:** Awareness grows by inculcating the detached observation, which disentangles from attachments.
- 4) **Ability to control:** Growth of awareness helps discovery of ability to control. Increased capacity for observation leads to increased capacity to control. Thus, body becomes under conscious control.
- 5) **Co-ordination :** Working with the parts of the body, the senses and the mind together within ones awareness and under conscious control gradually come to be more co-ordinated.
- 6) **Harmony:** Not only the agnostic and antagonistic muscles lose the tendency to work in opposition to each other but the body, senses and the mind are controlled from the point of a consistent unitary consciousness and there is no conflict as they are all brought together to make harmonious whole.
- 7) **Discovery of new levels of awareness:** Such repetitions of the process of the observation, control, co-ordination and synthesis carries one to a new level of awareness and new way of being and ultimately helps one to attain higher state of consciousness.
- 8) **Control from external to internal states:** Thus, asanas form one of the techniques of yoga which offer an approach at a lower level which allows one to be external to internal states. Hence

each level i.e. physical , mental, sensual etc. offers advantage point from which one below can be observed.

MODEL INSTRUCTIONS CORRESPONDING TO THE ACTUAL PERFORMANCE OF ASANA:

- 1) **Demonstration in whole and parts:** Before the students begin the actual execution of a particular posture, the instructor should give its model demonstration, first of the final position from all sides, then its slow and steady execution of different stages explaining precisely how one passes through each stage and progressively reaches the final position and retain the same for the limited period according to one's capacity.
- 2) **Smooth execution:** Jerks and irregularities are to be avoided in the execution allowing it to become smooth and even. The beginner should initially execute the capacitated and should gradually go to the next stages and final position, only when he is confident of his ability to hold it without much strain.
- 3) **Focusing attention:** Attention should be focussed in order to accomplish the stretch of one muscle group and the required tension of antagonist. Mind should not be allowed to wander rather it is held firmly but gently on the area of the body involved.
- 4) **Absent-mindedness and injury :** Absent-mindedly attempting a posture can lead to injury. Such lack of attention on muscles and supporting structures can result in carrying the stretch beyond that precise point where it is beneficial, which may result in a tear, dislocation or milder, less obvious damage that leaves those muscles stiff or sensitive.
- 5) **Slow and sweet commentary:** While teaching a group, the instructor can proceed with prolonging counts 1-2-3-4..... giving pause at each stage and should in between draw attention to the points to be kept in mind by the students. The instructor is counselled to follow the pattern that follows.

PATTERN OF VERBAL STATEMENTS DURING ACTUAL PERFORMANCE:

- 1) Bring your awareness to the area of tension.
- 2) If your mind wanders, allow it to wander but watch it , and immediately and gently return it to the task at hand.
- 3) Carry the posture far enough to feel a good stretch but not pain.
- 4) Now turn your attention to the ingoing and outgoing breath. Continue observing your breath and gradually eliminate its jerks and irregularities and allow it to become smooth and even.
- 5) Now return to the area of stretch. Search it out and pinpoint its location in the body. Use your mind to create an image of this area and mentally outline the tension.
- 6) Now tell the part to relax. If the tension fades, extend the posture a bit further.
- 7) Now once again attend to breath. Bring it to an even flow. Let its rhythm be regular.
- 8) Now go to the area of stretch again.
- 9) Instructions in the beginning and during each posture “to pause”, “close the eyes” and “go inside”..... encourages the awareness to develop. Through such process of introspection, it becomes obvious that each position affects bodily sensation and also the state of mind. This is “tuning in” to the internal situation of the body.

The above sort of correct exercise is not only an effective physical discipline, but it is also preliminary training in mental discipline. By first learning concrete easily understood physical tasks, the student is able to begin that mastery of attention and concentration which will later be necessary in the introspective work to the study and regulation of mind. Having learnt this technique of detached observation in the practice of yoga postures, it will be easy to apply the same with less difficulty to the mental realm.

2-YOGA AND MEDITATION

13-05-2018 from 07-10 AM

YOGA:

The word signifies:

- The state of highest level of consciousness, equilibrium, integration, absolute transcendental health etc.
- Technology: the means, techniques, substances and phenomenon etc. that are used to attain the aforesaid highest state of spiritual transformation.

Patanjali's eight phased programme:

1) External yoga for psychophysical preparation:

a) Preparatory stage for psychophysical preparation:

- i) **Yama (Abstinence):** Maintenance of external or social ecology to establish a peaceful, harmonious, and congenial social environment ; Falsehood, violence or injury to others, dependence on other's earning, violation of inner law of being, attachment to material possession.
- ii) **Niyamas (Observances or self applications):** Maintenance of internal or personal ecology- health, balance, harmony and happiness in one's own body-mind-intellect complex : inner and outer purity, an optimistic approach to life's problems, self discipline in life, studious habits, reverence for the divine or spiritual.

b) Intermediate stage- Conscious and systematic development and application of prana:

- i) Asana: Practices to achieve stability and comfort in body postures.
- ii) Pranayama: Practices to bring about regulation, control and rhythm in breathing.
- iii) Pratyahara: Withdrawal of senses and control over them.

c) Final stage – Internal Yoga:

- i) **Dharna :** Concentration-holding on to one object, spot or idea.
 - Immediate feeling of internal region of the body i.e. central part of naval, the heart, tip of nose, tip of the tongue and light within the head.
 - Fixation of mind through a particular sense.
 - Withdrawal of other senses.
 - Characteristic of the process: interruption caused by the intrusion of any other function, similar drops of water.
- ii) **Dhyana:** Intent observation, continuation of attention and contemplation. To seize hold of and identifying itself with the object not only of "mine" but final degree of "mine" i.e "Me".
- iii) **Samadhi:** State of collected absorption rapport or rupture.
Characteristic of process: Flow of the consciousness continuous like flow of the oil or honey.

Special Note:

Dharna , Dhyana and Samadhi are three phases of one single process. This is disciplining process of transforming and mastery over Chitt- the mind for spiritual progress; awakening and advancement with an eye on the benefits of experiencing original nature of the self.

MEDITATION

Meaning: Intentional self regulation of attention.

Aim: Discovery of ultimate truth i.e. realisation of the purity of self.

Objectives:

- 1) Maintenance of self-observing attitude to allow relaxation to occur, concentration to improve and altered states to take place.
- 2) Suspension of logical thought processes.

Components of Meditation:

- 1) Comfortable and stable physical posture
- 2) Attention focus
- 3) Style and rhythmic breathing

Basic requirements:

- 1) To maintain alertness
- 2) To have patience
- 3) Non judgmental attitude to be comfortable with ambiguity, ignorance and uncertainty
- 4) To learn to recognise and trust one's inner nature and wisdom
- 5) To recognise personal responsibility
- 6) To feel expansion of self awareness
- 7) Sensitivity to integration and cohesiveness.

Types:

- 1) Mindfulness meditation
- 2) Concentrative meditation

Benefits:

- 1) Greater happiness and joy
- 2) Enhanced positive thinking
- 3) Increase in self confidence
- 4) Increase in effectiveness (to get things done)
- 5) Better problems solving skill
- 6) Enhanced acceptance
- 7) Development of compassion, tolerance, relaxing attitude, resilience in behaviour and control over feelings
- 8) Personal aid for professional development

3.YOGA RELAXATION TECHNIQUES FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

14-05-2018 from 07-10 AM

INTRODUCTION

- 1) **Man's choice to evolve:** We exist, all that we know because of our being self-conscious (of our existence- Sat). Plants and animals belong to conscious world but are not self-conscious and hence have no idea of purposeful living, eating, sleeping, indulging in sex activity and experiencing fear being equal in man and animal, the former is exceptionally gifted with intelligence to make choice of the level of his growth. Some would choose to live at physical level alone, some at emotional and mental level as well and a few very rarely aspire for high spiritual level as per the status of evolution of their consciousness(chitt).
- 2) **The tensions of seven human bodies:** The unfolding or evolution of human consciousness takes place at different levels (layers/sheaths/bodies-physical. Etheric, astral, mental, spiritual, cosmic and nirvanic). The process of evolution is , generally, obscured by a number and variety of pollutants and contaminants as impurities arising out from within and without (an individuals environment) which give birth to many sorts of tensions at respective levels and make the process of growth difficult.
- 3) **Yoga – the system of purification:** The Indian seers, on the basis of their keen observations and experiences, could know about all such blockades and having experimented repeatedly with a large number of purificatory processes ultimately succeeded in equipping themselves with armamentarium of relaxation techniques in order to let lose the hold of all such tensional impurities and mitigate them gradually at all levels so as to enable the (self) consciousness unfold(manifest) itself in its purity realizing not only its totality but making the way to its original source (i.e. non existence) to take the full circle of evolution (i.e inside out inside).

The effort, herein the present paper, has been made to explain the different levels of our existence, the cause, kind and nature of tensions at each level and the integrated yogic procedures propounded in the ancient Indian disciplines of Ayurveda, Yoga and Tantra to tackle them step by step.

4) **Objectives of Relaxation:**

- a) Relief from tensions- stress and strains, the major cause of pain and disease.
- b) Preservation and promotion of health for optimum growth (i.e. spiritual)
 - i) Concept of:
 - Disease- the positive illness.
 - Health – when absence of disease is called “Health”. It denotes negative well being
 - When Health is defined as positive well-being, it means that one exists as pure consciousness and experiences bliss.
 - ii) Level of human existence:
 - Physical
 - Etheric
 - Astral
 - Mental
 - Spiritual
 - Cosmic
 - Nirvanic (dissolution of conscious existence into conscious non-existence)
 - iii) Corresponding Yoga Relaxation Techniques:
 - iv) Social and personal hygiene at conscious behavioural level for the prevention of tensions (swasth-vritta and sada-vritta of Ayurveda, Yama-Niyama of Yoga and Acharas of Tantra)
- **Tensions at gross body (physical/physiological) level:**
- a) **Cause of tension:**

A gap between

 - i) That which you are, your being and

ii) That which you long to become, your aspiration

Here, basic source of tension is past and future oriented conditioning. Greater the gap between the existing status and the aspiration, the more is the tension. Exerting more and more against non existential possibilities brings about frustration, anxiety, anger, jealousy etc. such wishes may be concerned with either

i) Wealth, fame, power or

ii) Freedom, liberation or divinity.

- b) **Treatment :** Lies in orientation in living moment to moment as it leads to non tenseness and creativity. When any activity like running, eating and even sex activity become totality of your being (existence) then one becomes conscious of sensations that are coming to you, not something apart from them, but one with them. It is a de-conditioning process of our past and future orientation. Do not deny you “being” and do not take anything else to be an ideal “to become”. It keeps one into one's natural state, his wellbeing.

Attaining the stages in postural patterns with full consciousness, regulating the movement, concentrating upon the stretching and contracting aspects and experiencing effortlessness is concrete example of moment to moment living. Similarly, by attending to breath (exhalation and inhalation), one learns the process not only of neuro-muscular relaxation but also of mental one at the same time. One also learns differential relaxation when he is simultaneously aware of tension in agonistic muscles and that of relaxation in antagonistic muscles.

➤ **Tensions at Etheric body level:**

a) **Cause of tension:**

i) Etheric body is concerned with heart-felt desirable feelings of love (which sex is not)

ii) Expectations: Beauty, kindness, compassion, benevolence, devotion and dedication, reverential regards etc.

- b) **Treatment:** Give, it will come. Every body has dreams of such attributes and when not fulfilled tension in etheric body manifests. Such attributes are devoid of the limits of time, place, relationships, expectations, demands or conditions. For example, when love comes to you as constant state of mind (i.e. heart) irrespective of individual/thing, gender, place, time etc., the etheric body becomes at ease (its well being)

To love and be loving is not the function of Ego because ego needs power and power is violent. Such magnetic attributes are spontaneous without any condition or demand.

When you can love in the moment (present), then a nonsense situation is created in the etheric body. There is no question of imagination of how and with whom which is concerned with either the past or future. Love spreads like perfume and has its own sweet echoes.

➤ **The Astral Body:**

a) **The cause of tension:**

i) Herein, the tension is concerned with previous lives total longings.

ii) As this body is store house of longings, hence is considered to be the most tense.

iii) Creating desire against desires is absurdity, hence, even to desire to be desireless is also dangerous.

b) **Treatment:**

i) Accept desires as they are only constant vigil that you are full of desires, is enough. When total acceptance is there, the crowd of desires disappears. Be at ease with them, cultivate indifference.

ii) Conscious purposeful daily living to them helps in self regulation and control over oneself inculcating self-mastery.

iii) Adaptation/observation of social-hygienic conduct, more particularly, not unlawfully using other's objects (dependence upon others), and non-covetousness (Asteya and Aprigraha) and self contentment (Santosh) belonging to personal hygiene category i.e Niyama.

iv) Start meditation: Watch as witness to the chain of desires.

➤ **Mental Body:**

a) **Cause of tension:** When the contradictory thoughts of the past lingers on in the mind, sort of confusion is the result. The experience of such confusion creates tension.

b) **Treatment:**

- i) The mind is simply a mechanical barrier. Watch the thoughts one by one as these are projected just like a film on the screen. This is non-identification of the mind. Recognise the self as consciousness and not the mind as it becomes an object to the consciousness. Thus, the awareness is cultivated and gradually the whole process of thoughts is to be discarded.
- ii) The initial practice of Postural patterns and breathing exercise in which moment to moment attention is regulated in the execution of the task at hand i.e. stretching and contracting phases of postural patterns and neutral observation of inhalation and exhalation. Neutral observation in the practice of “Dead body Pose” or “Crocodile Pose” or Yoga nidra is also emphasised. Develop awareness of choicelessness- and do not pass any judgements about them.

➤ **Spiritual body:**

a) **Cause of tension:** We generally identify with our mind and do not know anything beyond it. When such identification is done away with, we recognise the consciousness as self i.e. existence. Yet “being ignorant of the self” is experienced one feels that he does not know the self. Hence, the emphasis on “know thyself” by Delphi and Socrates. Thus, the tension is between “Ignorance and knowing (experiencing).”

b) **Treatment:**

At this stage two things are known:

- i) You are awareness one’s existence.
- ii) There is someone who knows, your consciousness- the Chitta.
- iii) When the sense of “I” ness and that of objectivity dissolves, the self establishes in its own pureness. Then, there is extraordinary feeling of joy i.e. ecstasy, Ananda the bliss as all orientations come to an end.

➤ **Cosmic body:**

a) **Cause of tension:** In the 5th state one is still embodied in the spiritual body. The sense of individuality still limits the self as one is still a person and the concept of God (the greater self) is yet to be materialised. Hence, tension continue to exist.

b) **Treatment:**

- i) One has to realise that one is part and parcel of the total as one is still exists as one of the links like the earth, the sun etc. and everything exists in a chain of existence.
- ii) When one drops individuality transcending into universal consciousness, the concepts like – “I am Brahma” (Aham Barahmashmi) or the “Whole universe is Brhma” are materialised and the tension because of individuality is vanished.

➤ **Nirvanic body:**

a) **The Cause of tension:** On losing the individuality or the self sense, the tension still persists as one has not yet reached source from which the self at first emerged i.e. non existence and hence the circles is not yet complete. Till now, only Godhood has been achieved.

b) **Treatment:** Inorder to realize Brahm- the totality, of which God is also a part. One has to drop existence of even Godhood and to attain totality (Purnatva) by returning to the non existence- the original source of existence and attaining the state of Nothingness or Shunya where there is no tension at all.

Thus , at –easiness in preceding body becomes stepping stone to the next successive embodiment. Such had been the progressive technology of the Ancient seers of India that could enable them to reach their destined goal.