

Ghantali Mitra Mandal, Thane

Yoga Department



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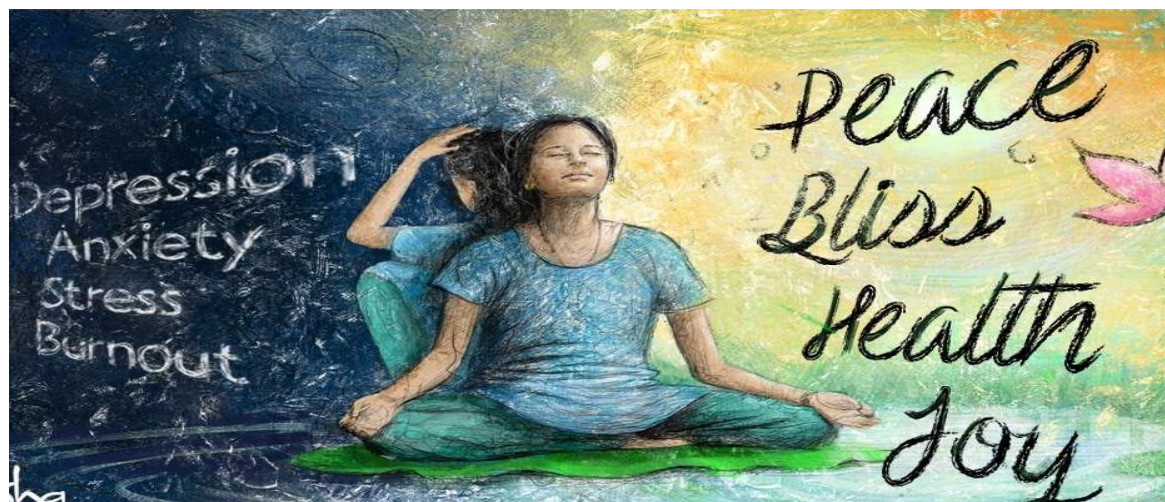
**Project Topic: Mental Health and Yoga
(A case study of 10th Standard Students)**

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Mental Health and Yoga (A Case Study of 10th Standard Students)



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1. Acknowledgement

This Project has been an attempt to make the analysis on Mental Health and Yoga. And I honestly hope that it provides useful and workable information and knowledge to any person reading it.

During this period I had got the opportunity to work closely with School Students who shared their experience and helped a lot in completion of this project.

I express my gratitude to the almighty and then to my sincere thanks to my teacher Ms. Sulekha, Ms. Sonali and Ms. Pallavi for providing their precious time in guiding. Supporting gesture of entire Ghantali Mitra Mandal's Team, and specially Anand Sir and Mhaskar Sir's motivation is worth mentioning.

Also, I am very much grateful to my parents, who have been my motivators and great support always. I am very much thankful to my daughters, who were directly or indirectly involved in successful completion of this Project.

Lastly but most importantly, my husband Mr. Yogesh Arya, who is always been there in all my success and each and every happiness of my life.



2. Project Background

As we all are aware that -“Today’s Children are Tomorrow’s Future”. But the question is how safe and secured is our Children’s future in today’s busy schedule where family does not have time to spend together. Due to modern lifestyle – wherein there is a very thin line between necessities and luxuries and increasing expenditures, both the parents have to take up jobs, work for long hours by keeping children either at home with their grand-parents or with child minders. Hectic travelling can drain their energy by the end of the day with no enthusiasm left to spend quality time with children when they return home. In addition, Multimedia, harmful gadgets like smart phones, television, video games etc. have taken place of parents / human being.

Even if the mother is a home maker, most of the time she is busy with the household chores, taking care of all the family members and children’s study etc. Due to this hectic lifestyle of parents, they become more tired, frustrated and violent at times which affects their children’s life knowingly or unknowingly. Kids sense - being ignored, becomes more prone to loneliness, lethargic, eat junk food, hardly take part in any outdoor activity. Most of the time, they are interested and busy playing with their phones, video games or watching TV as they are habituated. This all causes lots of mental health issues in children.

Worldwide research also shows that 12% of children in their secondary school years (11 to 15 years) meet the criteria for diagnosis of any type of mental health condition. The most common of these mental health conditions are Eating disorder, Self-harm, Suicide, Substance abuse, Depression, Bullying etc

In the vast majority of the countries worldwide, a system of services for child and adolescent mental health does not exist. And from whatever few services which are available, most of them are based in hospitals or other custodial settings. School-based programs or consultation services for Children’s mental health are not employed in either the developing or the developed world to the degree possible (WHO, 2005).

The most prevalent other disorders are found to be specific phobia; non-organic sleep disorders like sleep talking; tension headache, sleep terror, hyperkinetic disorder, pica and enuresis, highly competitive examination system.

The adolescents are found to be spending one-third/ major time of their waking time in school-related activities. Around one in eight adolescent in this study is at risk of developing mental health Issues.

There is one survey named The Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) collected data from early adolescents who are approx. 13 to 15 years old and studying in middle schools. Amongst 7904 middle level school students in India, 25.5% having symptoms of depression, 8.6% reported loneliness, and 7.8% reported anxiety-related insomnia. This is all about the statistics and the current scenario of mental health in children. Now let’s discuss about the coping strategies for the issues above mentioned.

There are many different yogic method which can be adopted, as a coping mechanism for sound mental Health:



Theoretical and philosophical aspects of Yoga are responsible for imbuing in the **mind** of the yoga **sadhaka** (yoga practitioners) an objective and impartial outlook towards his own life and the world at large through different ways:

Four Purushartha

Pancha Kosh

Karma Phal Theory

Sankhya Triguna Theory

To be always in touch with **Yogic philosophy** and **Yoga Practice**. For Example staying in a yoga ashram for a long time.

Asan and **Pranayam** can correct our psycho-physiological forming and helps in sound adjustments to our whole personality and mental health.

By **Trataka** , a psychological cleansing can be done.

Practice of **Yama** for sound interpersonal adjustments for better mental health.

Self-development through Yoga:

Observance of Niyamas

Dhyan

Kriya Yoga

Collective prayers

Prati paksha bhavanam

Pranav or Omkar Sadhana

Ashtanga Yoga: Ashtanga is made up of two Sanskrit words that are “Ashta” and “Anga.”

“Ashta” means number eight, and “Anga” means limb. Hence, Ashtanga is a union of the eight limbs of yoga, into a complete, holistic approach. It include: Yamas (moral codes), Niyama (self-discipline), Asanas (posture),

Pranayama (breath control), Pratyahara (complete sense withdrawal), Dharana (complete concentration), Dhyana (complete meditation), and Samadhi (oneness with the inner self).

Shudhi Kriya

Yog Nidra

Diet

Meditation

Positive Thoughts/Mindset etc.

Since, the goal of this project was to evaluate potential mental health benefits of yoga for adolescents in secondary school. Therefore, for Students we have emphasized on mainly on Ashtanga Yoga as coping mechanism for this study.

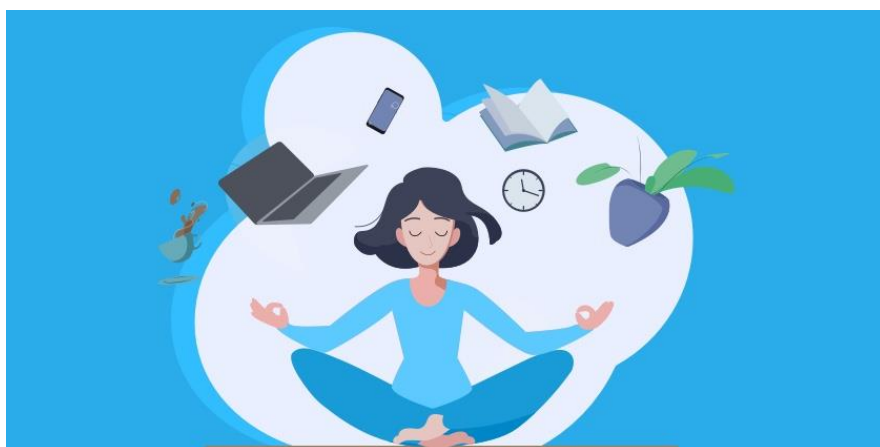
Students who perform Yoga regularly is found dealing better and self-measured the mood, anxiety, perceived stress, resilience, and many other mental health variables at a greater extent.

Usually, students begin their Yoga practice having moral codes and self-discipline in their life style and then practice Shudhikriya, Pranav Sadhana, Sukshma Vyayams, Sun Salutations, Asana in different poses and postures, then Pranayama and Dhyana etc. on regular basis.

Independent evaluation of individual's outcome measures showed that yoga participants showed statistically significant differences over time , to controls on measures of anger control and fatigue/inertia., depression and conflict management etc.

These preliminary results shows that implementation of yoga and has the potential of playing a protective or preventive role in maintaining mental health among school children also.

Hence, this can be said that a clear need to synthesize the present literature, and further also adopt a program that would implement awareness about mental health and its coping ways like Yoga among school students, is utmost important in today's time.



3. Introduction and Conceptual Framework

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

In one of the recent studies It is estimated that soon, depression will become the second leading cause of disease burden (Murray & Lopez, 1996).

Also, Among the prevalence rate of many mental disorders, about half of them begin before the age of 14. 20% of children and adolescents in the world are suffering from mental illnesses.

Therefore, to decrease the impact of mental disorders on the individual as well as school levels, effective preventive and promotional measures are needed, starting in the early years of life itself.

Current Scenario of India:

India, being a developing nation, having even more serious and deteriorating phase. According to one report by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, 1 out of every 10 people in India are fighting from a mental illness and this is expected to double by end of the year 2023.

One of the root causes of the problem is the stigma attached to mental conditions, also mental health is not given importance as compared to with the physical health.

The WHO also states that “there is no health without mental health.” This clearly means that diminished physical health can lead to an increased risk of developing mental health problems. Also poor mental health condition can also impact the physical health .

Importance of Mental Health amongst children and adolescents and every individual

Mental health is an important part of the overall health of children as well as adults.

In case of adults who have mental disorders, symptoms were present in childhood and adolescence but often were not recognized or addressed.

If the earlier treatment is started, the more effective it can be as once can think of. It can help prevent more severe and long lasting problems as child grows up.

Hence we can say that, it is more important to introduce the concept of mental health at a very young age. Many of factors determine the mental health of a child and adolescent at one given point of time, including academic or career-related pressures, a desire for autonomy, media influence, peer pressure, quality of family life, chronic illnesses, poor living conditions and lack of access to quality services and support.

The phase of 10-19 years of age is a period for developing social and emotional habits that are important for good mental health .These include developing healthy sleep patterns, developing healthy lifestyle through Yoga , regular exercise or Asana and Pranayama practices, developing problem-solving and interpersonal skills, and learning to understand and manage emotions.

Effective coping strategies for children and adolescents:

Many Things like not getting enough likes on the post on social media or getting low marks in a class test can give them stress and can turn into huge problems as when they are also dealing with the important phase of adolescence, where self-perception and self-esteem are majorly dependent on other people's views and perceptions. Schools greatly effect the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and adolescents and also gives a lot to the foundation of several behavioral habits and traits.

In conclusion, schools are primary cultural environment which seeks to affect student's health in a number of way. Many adolescents start having mental health issues during their time of secondary school years, from emotional health, substance abuse, risky sexual activities to academic pressures that produce lots of stress and can negatively affect their mental health.

Yoga:



The word “yoga” comes from a Sanskrit root “Yuj” which means union, or yoke, to join, and to direct and concentrate one's attention.

Yoga philosophy and practice were first described by Patanjali in the classic text, *Yoga Sutras*, which is widely acknowledged as the authoritative text on yoga.

Yoga is known as a form of mind-body remedy that assimilates an individual's physical, mental and spiritual components to improve different aspects of health, like stress related illnesses.

Therapeutic yoga is defined as the application of Yoga's different postures and practice for treatment of health conditions.

Yoga therapy also involves specific guidelines and instruction in yogic practices and teachings to prevent or reduce or lessen structural, physiological, emotional and spiritual pains, suffering or any other limitations.

Yogic practices also enhance muscular strength and body flexibility at a greater extents, promote and improve respiratory and cardiovascular function, promote recovery from and treatment of addictions, reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pains, improves sleep patterns, and enhance overall well-being of an individual and quality of life.

Omkar Sadhna:



Method to calm the mind and to gain ability to concentrate

There are different types of meditation and ways to focus and concentrate the mind. One of the most effective ways to do so is to recite OM, which means God of Sound.

Everything is energy. The sound of OM converts the vibrations in your whole body and mind into energy. It is the sound of the soul.

Chant OM from your heart and not from the mouth. Say it with intensity and feeling. Lose yourself and your ego in the sound. OM is also beneficial for states of depression or stress. There are even personal benefits from chanting OM for 30 minutes each day, which can cures physical and mental discomfort.

The proper way to pronounce OM is to chant for 2 seconds AA, 3 seconds OO and 5 seconds the MM. Just as meditation on an object entails concentration on it, it also entails identification with it. By using tools of meditation, we are able to transcend duality. Habitual distinctions between subject and object disappear. One who concentrates on OM becomes OM. One who meditates on a divine being becomes the divine being.

OM is the symbolic sound of the Cosmic Being. OM is the universal mantra and can be used by everyone, any time, without restriction

Chanting OM An excellent method to calm the mind, to tame its wandering tendency, and to gain the ability to concentrate and also can be beneficial for stress reliving in Children.

Yog Nidra – Practice Surrender for Children



Yoga nidra is an ancient but little-known yogic practice that's becoming increasingly popular as both a form of meditation and a mind-body therapy. It is a systematic form of guided relaxation and unique combination of alert awareness and deep relaxation. The literal translation of nidra is sleep. However, yoga nidra is a state, not the unconscious sleep of nighttime. It is a practice that is simple and available to anyone. It doesn't involve physical expertise of any kind, so even if you have a health condition, you can practice yoga nidra. In this meditative practice, we are practicing letting go, surrendering, and simply being here—in this moment—in our own skin.

The traditional practice of yoga nidra is divided into the following stages:

Preparation: In this stage, initial relaxation of the body and mind is induced by the awareness of stillness, comfort, posture, position, breath, and listening to the external sounds.

Sankalpa: When the body and mind are relaxed, then the practitioner is instructed to create a short, clear and positive intention for the practice.

Rotation of consciousness: In the third stage, the awareness is rotated around the different body parts in a systematic and organized manner passing through 61-points. The practitioner is instructed to remain aware, to listen to the instructions and to move the mind according to the instructions without making any physical movements, resting on each space for 2-5 seconds.

Breath awareness: In this stage, the practitioner becomes aware of the natural breath without making an attempt to change the flow of the breath, watching it in the nostrils, chest, and abdomen.

Ending the practice: Before ending the session of yoga nidra, slowly the awareness is externalized by asking the practitioner to become aware of the external sounds, objects and persons, slowly moving and stretching the body.

Kids of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, athletes and the physically impaired alike can all benefit from the anxiety-reducing practice of yoga, and especially Yoga Nidra. When kids are less stressed, they learn better. Many kids have difficulty “sitting still” as you might see in “classic” meditation. But Yoga Nidra is done while you are lying down ... so it's very comfortable.

What is HEALTH

“We must not forget that health is only a means to an end” By Swami Vivekananda

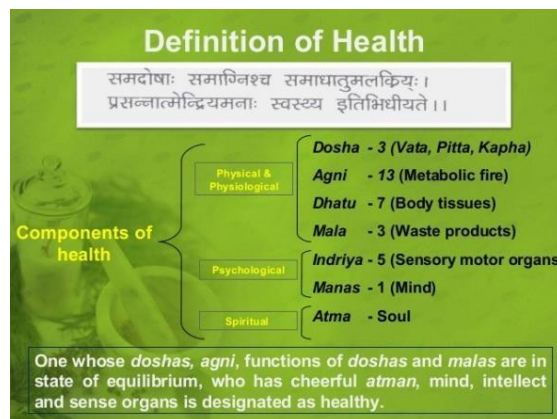
World Health Organization/Medical Concept of Health:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or



infirmity, with an ability to lead a socially and economically productive life.

Ayurvedic Concept of a Health:



A balanced state of tridoshas i.e. vata, pitta and kapha; of digestive enzymes, of saptadhatu, of excretory system along with a cheerful state of mind, sense organs and atma – is called Health.

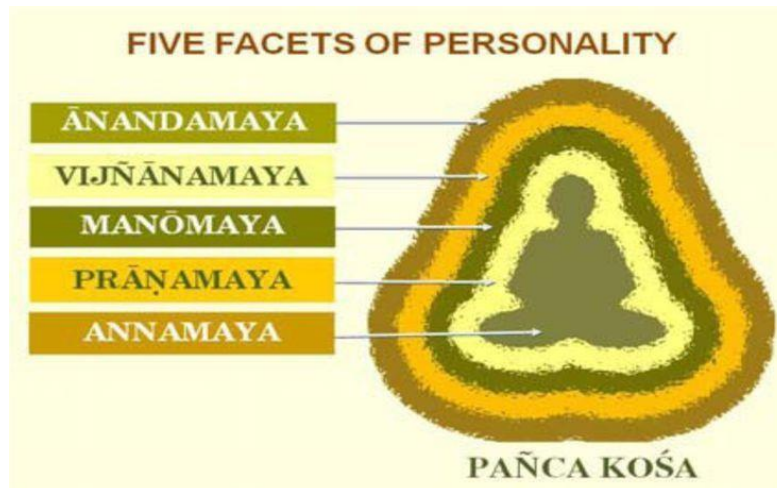
Upanishadic Concept of HEALTH (Taittiriya Upanishad):

A balanced state of all the Koshas (Annamaya kosha, Pranamaya kosha, Manomaya kosha, Vidnyanmaya kosha and Anandmay kosha) is called total Health.

Annamaya Kosha – Gross Human Body

Pranamaya Kosha – Breath/Energy of Human Beings Manomaya Kosha – Mind of Human Beings

Vidnyanmaya Kosha – Intellectual level of Human Beings Anandmay Kosha – Pure blissful state of Human Beings



Yogic Concept of Health:

The word HEALTH in yogic language is used as SWASTHA. SWA means Self & STHA means To Stabilise.

Thus, anyone who is stable at self-level is SWASTHA.

Self includes physical, mental, emotional, intellectual & Spiritual components.

The stability means lack of diseases & positive approach towards the overall quality of life. SWASTHA has two major factors,

PHYSICAL – AAHAR (Diet), VIHAR (Exercise), VISHRANTI (Rest)

MENTAL – VICHAR (Thoughts), VIKAR (Mental Diseases), VIVEK (Con-science) Here, the emphasis is on VIKAR (Mental Diseases, Psychosomatic Diseases).

What is DISEASES

Disease means 'lack of ease' (uneasiness), which is just opposite of health. It is a pathological condition of a part, organ or system resulting from various causes such as infection, generic defect, environmental stress, etc. & is characterised by identifiable group of symptoms or signs.

Concept of Disease according to Modern Medicine:

Whenever we describe any disease in modern medicine, some terminologies like casual factors, mechanisms, signs, symptoms or pathological changes in tissue or organs are used. They indicate the 'How' of the disease, 'Why' of the disease, functional implications as seen by doctors and as described by patients.

Types of Diseases:

1. Physical Diseases/Disorders

Physical stress causes physical diseases. Examples of physical health disorders include, but are not limited to: Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, Lyme disease, or rheumatoid arthritis.

Coronary heart disease – the build up of plaques in the main arteries of the heart
Stroke – the blockage of blood flow to the brain

Gall bladder disease – can cause nausea and fever, caused by gallstones
Sleep apnoea – problems breathing during sleep

Hernia, High blood pressure, Low blood pressure

Deficiency diseases like anaemia, osteoporosis – lack of iron & calcium, vitamin D
Hormonal disorders – PCOD, breast Cancer, thyroid,

Slip disk, back pain, Migraines etc.

2. Mental Diseases/Disorders

A mental disorder is characterized by a clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behaviour. It is usually associated with distress or impairment in important areas of functioning. There are many different types of mental disorders. Mental disorders may also be referred to as mental health conditions.



Mental & emotional stress causes mental disorders such as:

Psycho-somatic diseases such as Asthma, Hypertension, Diabetes, Menstrual Disorders, Insomnia, Ulcers, Hypertension, Headache, Depression, Hysteria, Epilepsy, Hypochondria etc.

The diseases can be further classified as per their intensity –

Acute

Chronic

Acute on Chronic

Recurrent

They are categorised as infectious or non-infectious etc..

Ayurvedic Concept of a Disease:

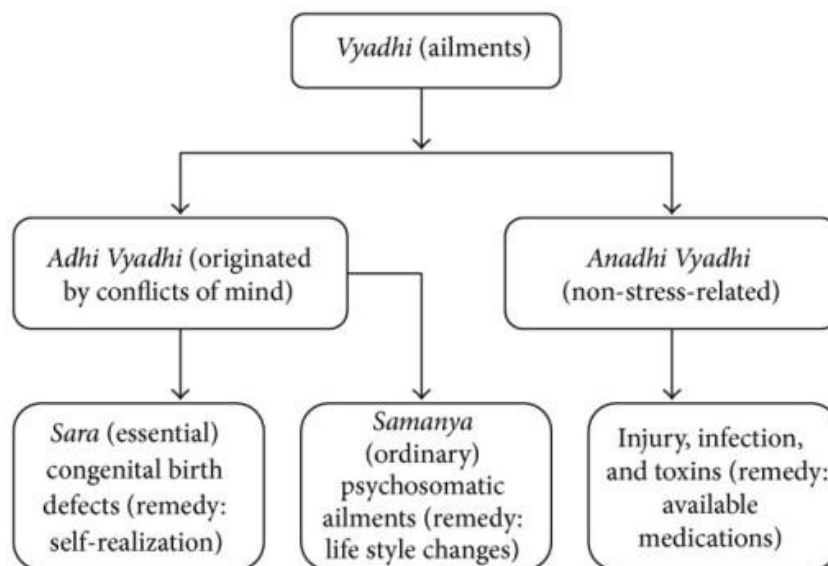
According to ayurveda, whenever there is excessive indulgence (Ati-yoga), disuse (hina-yoga) or perverted use (Mithya Yoga) of the organs of cognition, the 'Disease' sets in.

i.e. Imbalance in Tridoshas (Kapha, Vatta, Pitta), imbalance in Pradnya, Dhruti, Smruti.

Falling pray to Shatripus (Kama, Krodha, Moha, Mada, Mastara, and Lobha) can lead to imbalance in discriminative intelligence, result in disease.

The beauty of Ayurveda is that the origin of disease is traced back up to even the subtler level of intellect.

Yoga Vasishtha Concept of a Disease:



Yogic Concept of a disease:

Sage Patanjali describe disease under four headings as: Heya – One which is to be avoided. i.e. sufferings

Heya Hetu – The cause of sufferings Hana – Relief from sufferings Hanopaya – Treatment for sufferings

Causes of Sufferings (Dukha):-

Lack of Knowledge (Wrong Knowledge), Pure I-consciousness, Attachment, Delusion & Fear of Death are Pancha Kleshas, five afflictions of the mind. And these afflictions are responsible for diseases. The root cause of the diseases is Avidya. And Avidya is the breeding ground of all other afflictions as per Sage Patanjali.

One deals with problems of pain & sufferings. He describes various obstacles in the path of Yoga.

They are -

And Pain, Mental depression, lack of control over the body and uneven inhalation- exhalation, are the four symptoms accompanying the above nine obstacles in the path of Yoga.

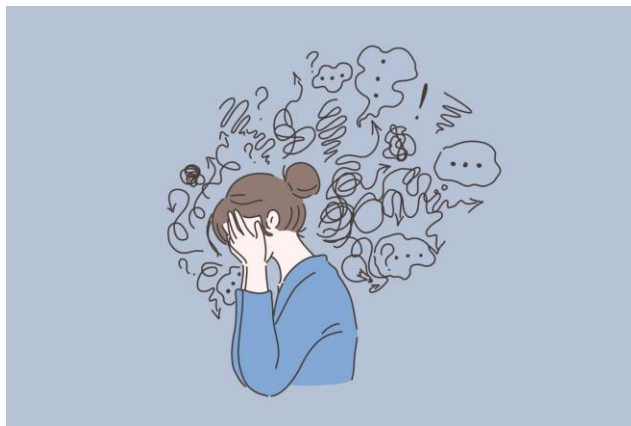
Out of these Vyadhi is the first on the list. Vyadhi seems to be only physical obstacles, whereas Styana is partly physical & mental but all other obstacles are mental in nature.

Once the disease or wrong identification of self is described, here is the symptomatology of the same. They are almost similar symptoms as a result of disturbance in neuro-humoral- endocrine mechanisms as a result of stress.

What is STRESS

Nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it. – Hans Selye

Circumstance external to a person which makes unusual or extraordinary demands on him, or threatens him in some way. – Lazarus



Stress is circumstantial as well as self-created.

Stress is a biological and psychological response experienced on encountering a threat that we feel we do not have the resources to deal with.

Anxiety is an intense feeling of uneasiness, worry or fear. .

A stressor is the stimulus (or threat) that causes stress. E.g. exam of children, death of loved one, moving house, etc.

Stress is a mind body reaction to stressors.

Reasons of Stress :

Individual's demands/ expectations from others.

Others' demands/ expectations from an individual.

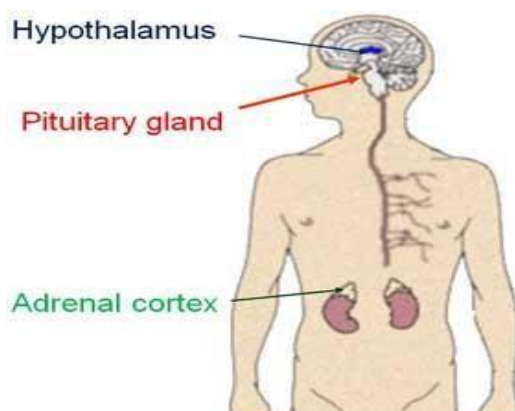
Individual's expectations from self.

For most of the persons, the anxiety they feel is just temporary. Once they adjust to the new situation or the circumstances that caused the anxiety are removed, they no longer feel anxious. However, for some, the feelings of anxiety don't go away, even if they remove the stressors. The constant feelings of worry and unease can be overwhelming and interfere with the ability to function in everyday life. When this happens, it is a sign of an anxiety disorder.

Firstly, our body judges a situation and decides whether or not it is stressful. This decision is made based on sensory input and processing (i.e. the things we see and hear in the situation) and also on stored memories, the sub-conscious mind, (i.e. what happened the last time we were in a similar situation).

If the situation is judged as being stressful, the Hypothalamus (at the base of the brain) is activated.

The Hypothalamus in the brain is in charge of the stress response. When a stress response is triggered, it sends signals to two other structures: the Pituitary gland, and the Adrenal Medulla.



These short term responses are produced by **The Fight or Flight Response** via the Sympathomedullary Pathway (SAM). Long term stress is regulated by the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) system. **The Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) System**

The stressor activates the Hypothalamic Pituitary Axis

The Hypothalamus stimulates the Pituitary gland

The pituitary gland secretes AdrenoCorticoTropic Hormone (ACTH)

ACTH stimulates the Adrenal glands to produce the hormone corticosteroid

Cortisol enables the body to maintain steady supplies of blood sugar.

Adequate and steady blood sugar levels help person to cope with prolonged stressor, and helps the body to return to normal

The adrenal cortex releases stress hormones called cortisol. This has a number of functions including releasing stored glucose from the liver (for energy) and controlling swelling after injury. The immune system is suppressed while this happens.

The Hypothalamus also activates the Adrenal Medulla. The Adrenal Medulla is part of the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS).

The ANS is the part of the peripheral nervous system that acts as a control system, maintaining homeostasis in the body. These activities are generally performed without conscious control.

The Adrenal Medulla secretes the hormone Adrenaline. This hormone gets the body ready for a fight or flight response. Physiological reaction includes increased heart rate.

Adrenaline leads to the arousal of the Sympathetic Nervous System and reduced activity in the Parasympathetic Nervous System.

Adrenaline creates changes in the body such as decreases (in digestion) and increases (sweating, increased pulse and blood pressure).

Once the 'threat' is over the parasympathetic branch takes control and brings the body back into a balanced state.

No ill effects are experienced from the short-term response to stress and it further has survival value in an evolutionary context.

Meditation:

Meditation can help students strengthen their self-regulation and their focus.

It also boosts their overall health, reduces negative feelings, and fosters compassion.



Benefits of Meditation

Meditation can result in both physiological and psychological consequences. Positive physiological effects include reduced levels of physical arousal, slowed heart rate and respiration, altered brain wave patterns, and reduced stress. The advantages of meditation are numerous.

The benefits of meditation for students and their both physical and psychological health have been amply documented by studies.

1. **Reduces Stress:** Practicing mindfulness meditation reduces the stress hormone cortisol levels. Cortisol levels can be reduced to lessen overall stress, anxiety, and depression.
2. **Stress Management:** Improves your stress management skills. Meditation creates a state of calmness in the body and mind that can lower stress.

Everyday meditation practices aid the nervous system and adrenaline to occasionally unplug, recycle, and revitalize.

3. **Boosts your Mood:** You'll feel happier. You get happy and feel better after practising meditation because it helps you manage stress, anxiety, and challenging circumstances. You'll be able to handle challenging situations without having them affect your moods.
4. **Retrain your brain:** One of the supreme benefits of meditation for students is that it holds the power to retrain your brain. Yes, your brain is trainable. As the brain is used, it tends to grow. Meditation can help the brain learn to manage its own system. Consider it as car-servicing.

Meditation redirects our minds back to think more calmly and clearly focus when presented with a stressor when we are not meditating, rather than letting our impulsive impulses drive us.

5. **Good for your Heart:**

It benefits your heart. Meditation can lower the risk of cardiovascular disease. Blood pressure, heart muscle efficiency, and overall cardiovascular mortality are all positively impacted by meditation.

6. Lowers Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, is regarded as a global epidemic and raises the risk of heart attack and stroke. Even doctors suggest meditation can lower blood pressure naturally and without medication. The benefits of meditation for students are diverse in physical and mental health.

7. Break Bad Habits

As a student, there are potential risks of falling into bad company and adopting a few bad practices. It can vary from the habit of procrastination to intoxication. Meditation practice helps you to get rid of bad behaviour. Meditation can help you break the cycle of a negative habit, whether it be excessive buying or smoking.

Having bad habits is not a big flaw. Most habits are formed subconsciously. Over time, meditation brings consciousness to what you're doing. The habit is interrupted by mindfulness.

8. Improves Relationships

In the age of social media that highlights fake friendships, one of the benefits of meditation for students is having positive relationships.

You'll improve connections. Strong relationships are characterized by effective communication, empathy, and respect, all of which meditation can improve.

Relationships become simpler and more satisfying when you have a stronger connection with yourself, according to Washam.

9. Boosts Concentration

Meditation improves mental focus.

It can be challenging to focus on responsibilities at work or even hobbies like reading a book when so many things are running through our minds at once as students.

Meditation for study concentration and boosting productivity is a widely trusted fact.

You can focus on what has to be done since meditation centres your thoughts.

10. Builds Inner Strength

It fosters fortitude. We've all waited impatiently to leave a long, dull class or the examination phase.

Meditation develops the capacity to be present in any situation. We're just able to handle challenging situations without breaking down or allowing them to impact us.

11. Learn to be Present

Meditation can help you to stay in the now by reducing brain activity in the area of the brain that wanders, worries, and overthinks!

Meditation is like a gym for the brain. It strengthens the brain like a muscle, it encourages mindfulness and helps us focus our thoughts. Everyday practice can help you to be into the present more quickly.

Meditation teaches us to live in the Present

12. Mental Fog

Meditation helps alleviate mental fog. You may experience brain fog if you have trouble concentrating, forget things easily, or have trouble focusing.

It's frequently brought on by stress, and meditation can help you feel more in the now by calming your mind and allowing you to pay attention to your breath.

13. Handle Anger

When interacting with challenging individuals or circumstances, anger is a normal emotion. However, if you behave rashly, you can make matters worse.

Meditation helps you to learn to manage and process your emotions in the present by practising meditation, which teaches your brain to concentrate on the here and now.

14. Helps you Cope with Pain

It aids with pain management. Meditation engages parts of the brain connected with processing pain, making it possible for patients to manage chronic pain through mindful breathing. Everyone, a student or a professional goes through a rough patch in life.

Even a little period of meditation can increase pain tolerance, and lower anxiety caused by pain.

15. Helps you Relax

You can unwind by meditating. Meditation has enormous positive effects on one's mental and physical health by teaching one to unwind and maintain composure under duress.

You'll feel more at ease if you practice mindfulness because it can drop your blood pressure and lessen stress.

16. Increase Productivity

You will notice that you have started to accomplish more after a few weeks of meditation practice. It increases your daily awareness & helps you focus on the topic at hand rather than switching between other projects.

17. Burnout

Prevention of burnout is one of the superlative benefits of meditation for students. Nowadays, students are not only managing academics but the extra courses online to develop skill sets.

Positive Thoughts/Mindset:

Positive thinking doesn't mean that you ignore life's less pleasant situations. Positive thinking just means that you approach unpleasantness in a more positive and productive way. You think the best is going to happen, not the worst.



Positive thinking often starts with self-talk. Self-talk is the endless stream of unspoken thoughts that run through your head. These automatic thoughts can be positive or negative. Some of your self-talk comes from logic and reason. Other self-talk may arise from misconceptions that you create because of lack of information or expectations due to preconceived ideas of what may happen.

Health benefits that positive thinking may provide include:

- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress and pain
- Greater resistance to illnesses
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Better cardiovascular health and reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease and stroke
- Reduced risk of death from cancer
- Reduced risk of death from respiratory conditions
- Reduced risk of death from infections
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

Following are some ways to think and behave in a more positive and optimistic way:

- **Identify areas to change.** If you want to become more optimistic and engage in more positive thinking, first identify areas of your life that you usually think negatively about, whether it's work, your daily commute, life changes or a relationship. You can start small by focusing on one area to approach in a more positive way. Think of a positive thought to manage your stress instead of a negative one.
- **Check yourself.** Periodically during the day, stop and evaluate what you're thinking. If you find that your thoughts are mainly negative, try to find a way to put a positive spin on them.
- **Be open to humor.** Give yourself permission to smile or laugh, especially during difficult times. Seek humor in everyday happenings. When you can laugh at life, you feel less stressed.

- **Follow a healthy lifestyle.** Aim to exercise for about 30 minutes on most days of the week. You can also break it up into 5- or 10-minute chunks of time during the day. Exercise can positively affect mood and reduce stress. Follow a healthy diet to fuel your mind and body. Get enough sleep. And learn techniques to manage stress.
- **Surround yourself with positive people.** Make sure those in your life are positive, supportive people you can depend on to give helpful advice and feedback. Negative people may increase your stress level and make you doubt your ability to manage stress in healthy ways.

Practice positive self-talk. Start by following one simple rule: Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to anyone else. Be gentle and encouraging with yourself. If a negative thought enters your mind, evaluate it rationally and respond with affirmations of what is good about you. Think about things you're thankful for in your life.

Diet (Ahar) and Yoga:



It has been said in Yoga that

“Yatha AnnamTatha Manaha”.

Hence the food that a person consume, should be healthy from all the angles. It should have proper balance of all the nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Proper and controlled eating at the right time, simple and regular exercise and sufficient rest are the most important components of physical and mental fitness. While the balanced food takes care of physical and mental health, Cleansing processes reduce the internal toxins created by wrong and irregular eating.

Any food or product that stimulates the nervous system due to high level of sugar and salt content should be avoided or kept to minimum for people with mental disorder, depending on the individual condition, strength of the digestive system and a reaction towards the product.

One of the key principles of yoga is eating a healing diet, based on unprocessed, nutrient-rich plant foods. This same yoga diet is what research has shown promotes health and vitality. Eating too many processed devitalized foods throws the body out of balance, resulting in obesity and chronic diseases. Foods like whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds, and small to moderate amounts of dairy products provide the nutrition we need without over stimulating the appetite or producing excess body fat.

In the yoga the ahar or diet is also very important aspect. For each activity physical or mental we need energy which is provided from the consumed food. So the ahar should be proper at time when the body needs the most. Intake of limited quantity at regular intervals of 4-5 hours can minimize the risk of any time food habit. Practicing Yoga is one of the beneficial regimes, but when complimented with the healthy food habits, it can really create wonders. Infact, eating the right food is an essential part of living a Yogic life.

What we eat, not only influences our physical well being, but also our emotions and thoughts. Yoga, does not dissect food into proteins, carbohydrates or fats, instead it classifies them according to the effect they have on the body and mind, into three types –sattva, rajas and tamas.

Satvik food:-

This category of food is those which purifies the body and calm the mind and makes one feel light, energetic and enthusiastic.



Rajasik food:-

They stimulate the body and mind into action. If consumed in excess, these foods can cause hyper activity, restlessness, anger, irritability, and sleeplessness in individuals.



Tamasik Food:-

They make the mind dull and bring about inertia, confusion and disorientation, lethargic or sluggish.



Behavioural changes are mostly overlooked upon but are important in losing weight. Scheduling time for exercise and getting enough time to sleep are all key factors. Late- night eating should be discontinued. Some people end up over-eating due to stress and depression. Many children have the bad habit of eating full-fat foods such as cheese crisps and fried potato crisps while watching television – this causes obesity in many children. Hence, this behaviour should be discouraged and replaced with better eating habits. The help of counsellor and support groups should be taken to help with emotional and behavioural factors related to eating.

Prevention is better than Cure

It is very important to prevent obesity than to cure by educating people to eat healthy and have balanced diet and be physically and mentally active.

Obesity has become the most prevalent nutritional problem in the world. Obesity is now reaching epidemic proportions in both developed and developing countries and is affecting not only adults but also children and adolescents. Over the last 20 years, Eating disorders and obesity are rising in prevalence and are problems of considerable public health significance. Prevailing treatments have a limited impact on public health.

Patanjali, the great exponent of systematic yoga had compiled Patanjala Yoga Sutra integrating varied branches such as Ashtanga Yoga, Kriya Yoga, Abhyasa & Vairagya Yoga, Samyama Yoga, Patanjala Yoga reigned supreme until about 900 A.D., when Gorakshanatha entered the scene and contributed such monumental works as Goraksha Shataka, Goraksha Samhita, Goraksha-paddhati and Siddha-siddhantapaddhati. Thus, a new system of Yoga, later known as Hatha Yoga, was established.

Gorakshanatha, the great exponent of Hatha Yoga defines Hatha Yoga as a science by which one can attain a spiritual state called Samadhi by 'knowing' and 'controlling' Pingala, Ida and Sushumna Nadis, the main channels through which Prana flows. Etymologically, the term 'Hatha' is constituted of two Devanagiri Varnas viz., "Ha" and "Tha" denoting Right and Left, Pingala and Ida, Shiva and Shakti, Sun and Moon etc. respectively.

In the **Patanjali's** metaphysics, Kleshas (afflictions) are considered as the root cause of existential disorders, in general, and of psychosomatic disorders, in particular. Kleshas are considered as hereditary in nature while Environment denotes the occurrence of critical incidences in one's life.

Patanjala Yoga has two broad stages, namely **Bahiranga** and **Antaranga**. The Bahiranga Yoga can be taken as a beginning step towards Hatha Yoga. Antaranga Yoga, indicating inward going processes, leading to Samadhi, can be taken to be Raja Yoga proper.

In short, Hatha Yoga is an easy and short-cut methodology initiated on the grosser body level, while Patanjala Yoga starts directly on the subtler levels of Chitta.

The process of making Yoga more useful and acceptable has resulted into a text known as '**Hatha Pradipika**' of **Svatmarama**, around 1450 A.D.

Svatmarama has said that a control on the flow of a prana results, in a control of Chitta and, conversely, a control on Chitta results into a control on prana.

Yoga Vasishtha defines Yoga as "the discipline that calms down the *manas*." Once calmed down, the manas becomes an effective instrument at the hands of **buddhi** and **atman**. The Manas can be calmed down through *sattva guna* whereby the sattva guna would endow one with –Total security (sat-swarupa).

Few Different Types of Yoga other than Ashtanga Yoga:

Mantra Yoga / Japa Yoga: is very useful for preparation of antarang sadhana. It improves concentration level.

Bhakti Yoga: Bhakti Yoga creates affection in the mind and purity in thoughts and behavior. Hence, it is most suitable and simple to achieve emotional stability.

Karma Yoga: It is important to do karma yoga without any lure (expectation) of the fruit to experience the complete joy.

Dnyana Yoga: it can be felt through the real and correct knowledge as it gives experience of divine satisfaction.

Hatha Yoga: "Ha" meaning Sun and "tha" meaning Moon. By joining these two extremes and balancing both the nostrils (through anuloma – viloma pranayama), elevates the kundalini shakti situated at the Muladhara Chakra.

Raja Yoga: Patanjali Yoga is also known as Raja Yoga or Astanga Yoga. It is divided into two broad categories. Antarang Yoga and Bahirang Yoga. In Bahirang Yoga, the body is the main instrument used for experiencing the essence and in case of Antarang Yoga, the mind is the main instrument for experiencing the essence.

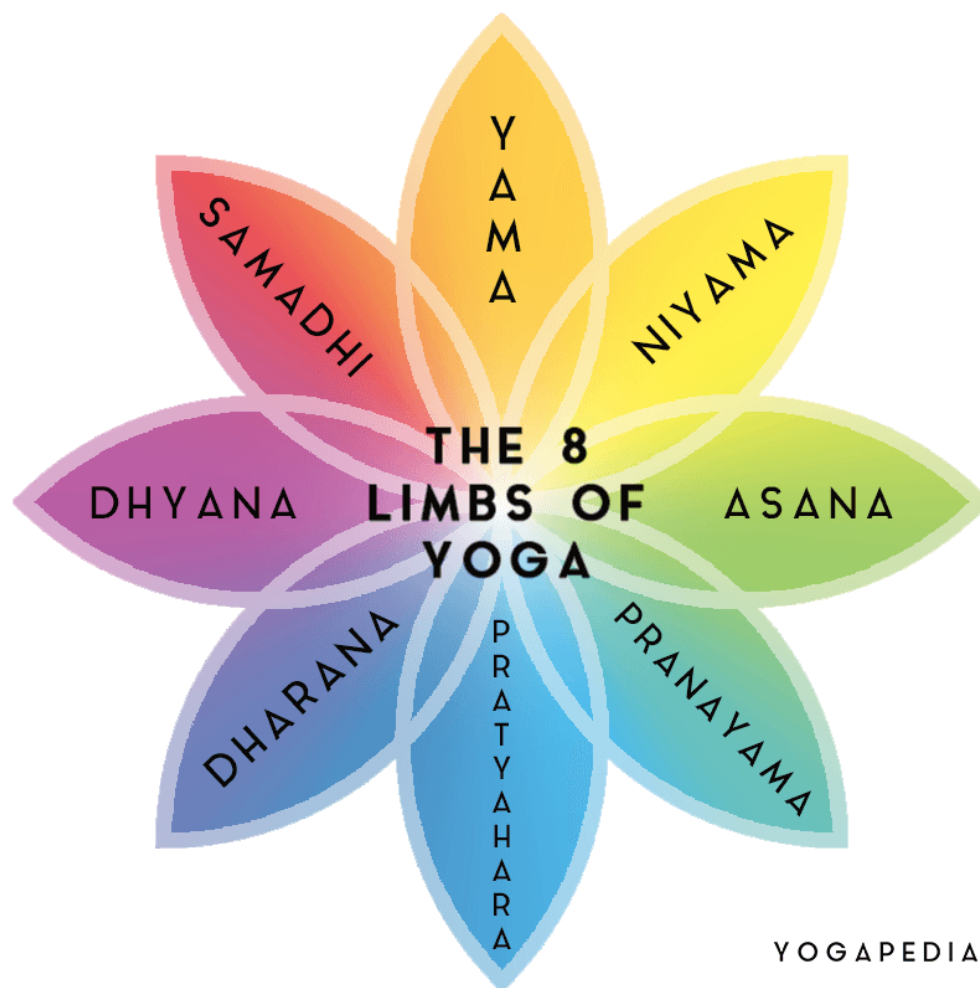
"Freedom from bondage" in yoga signifies one's liberation from all kind of fixations and attributes as well as a continual feeling of freedom and knowledge.

Ashtanga Yoga and Benefits on Mental Health

Ashtanga Yog :

The classical form of ashtanga is originally defined in *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, which is a yoga text defining the philosophy and practices of yoga. Patanjali defines "Ashtanga" as or "the eight limbs of yoga," which are: *yamas* (abstinences), *niyamas* (behaviors), *asanas* (yoga

postures), *pranayamas* (breath), *pratyahara* (inward focus), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (fusion of mind and body).



Ashtanga yoga is considered as a sequence of advanced yoga postures, performed in a specific manner, that emphasize the flow and breath between all movements. It is a traditional form of yoga that combines vigorous exercises and controlled breathing with the goal of bringing a meditative state through its physical practice. In this study, the effectiveness of Ashtanga yoga as an intervention to improve psychological well-being, is being examined.

Benefits:

It moves us from the sympathetic nervous system to the parasympathetic nervous system, or from flight-or-flight to rest-and-digest. We typically have less anxiety and enter a more relaxed state. As soon as we start breathing deeply, we slow down out of fight-or-flight and system. Scientific research is showing that mindful breathing is paying attention to the breath and learning how to manipulate. It can be the most effective ways to lower down everyday stress levels and improve a variety of health related factors ranging from different mood to metabolism. "Pranayama is at once a physical-health practice, mental-health practice, and meditation.

It is not just breath training; its mind training that uses the breath as a vehicle,” “Pranayama makes your entire life better.”

“There can be seen a direct relationship between breath rates, mood states, and autonomic nervous system state”. The autonomic nervous system governs the body’s sympathetic (fight-or-flight) and parasympathetic (rest-and-restore) responses, different functions like heart rate, respiration, and digestion up or down as necessary in response to potential threats.

It helps us build our sense of self:

Through yoga, we get to know ourselves and cultivate a more nonjudgmental relationship with ourselves

We build self-trust. We exercise more and eat healthier, because our unconscious mind tells that “I’m worthy of this me time, this effort.” At the end of the day, everything comes down to our relationship with ourself. When we get more confident and become more rooted in our sense of self and our center, we develop a healthy, balanced ego, where we have nothing to prove and nothing to hide. We become courageous, with high willpower. we’re not afraid of difficult conversations or anything else etc.

It helps us become aware of our “shadow” qualities.

The solar and lunar (light and dark symbolize) in yoga makes us recognize the qualities in ourselves that we were not aware of, helping us to be more mindful. How do we look at those places or situations in our bodies where we hold tension, tightness, knots of energy. That’s the place typically where we are holding our psychological or emotional energies. We work from the outside in, so asana is so important. A backbend will open your heart and release the stiffness between the shoulder blades at some point, you will have some sort of emotional release, which you may or may not be consciously know about it. It’s like doing the inner work to shift or change and be open to doing our best with our weaknesses and faults.

It helps us deal with our family of origin issues:

That’s our karma. we can’t give back to our family, we’re born with it. It’s about owning the sacred wounds and taking them on more mindfully approach. You can only change the only one thing or you can do only one thing is control your actions and your behavior now. Other people will inevitably be forced to show up in a different way you’re showing up in a different way. Yoga helps us rise up and do our best.

Few Asana and Poses for Improving Mental Health:

Sukhasana (Happy Pose)



Method: Place your palms on your knees, make the Siddha Mudra, and sit up straight with both legs extended. Now, Fold the left leg and tuck it inside the right thigh. Finally, fold the right leg and tuck it inside the left thigh.

Paschimottanasana - Seated forward bend



Method: Begin by sitting in sitting posture. Make sure your knees are slightly bent and your legs are stretched out in front of you. Raise your arms upward while keeping your spine straight. With an exhale, bend forward at the hips to place your upper body on your lower body. Grip your big toes with your fingers. Try to touch your knees with your nose. Hold the position for 30 seconds or as per the capacity. Release the asan by repeating all these steps back.

The Wheel pose



Method: Lying on your back. Making that feet are firmly planted on the ground and bend knees. Position of palms upward while bending your arms at the elbows. Put palms on the floor on either side of the head and rotate the arms at the shoulders. Take a deep breath in, apply pressure to the legs and palms, and raise your entire body in an arch. Allow head to softly droop behind you as you look back and relax your neck. All four of your limbs should equally bear the weight of your body. Maintain the position for 15 to 20 seconds or as per the capacity. Release the asan by repeating all the steps.

Upward-facing pose



Another excellent pose for handling anxiety and depression is upward-facing dog pose. This position opens your heart, helping you remove any pent-up emotions in your chest. It also works to regulate the respiratory system, bringing clarity to your heart and mind. Method:

Lie flat on your stomach on your yoga mat on the floor.

Keep the balls of the feet facing upward, with your toes pointing down.

Place palms facing down on the mat near your shoulder blades.

Push into palms to elevate your upper body, smoothly curving the spine.

Lift chest and head while keeping your shoulders back.

Lengthen the body from head to toe.

Take a few deep breaths here before gently releasing the posture by following all the steps.

Shoulderstand (Sarvangasan)



Shoulderstand is yet one of the another excellent yoga pose for relieving anxiety and depression. Same as downward-facing dog pose, shoulderstand increases blood flow to the brain, increasing the mental clarity and helps in balancing emotions.

It is important to note here that one should not do this pose if having neck or shoulder problems, high blood pressure, or are menstruating. Method:

Lie down on the yoga mat with arms outstretched alongside your body.

Bend knees, raising legs towards your chest.

Press hands into the floor to raise your bent legs over your head.

Move hands onto your back to support yourself as you move your hips farther towards your head, straighten legs as you do so.

Keep pressing palms into your back; feel body long and straight.

Take several relaxing breaths here before gently releasing or coming out of the pose and releasing the asan by following these same steps.

Standing Forward Fold Pose (Hast Padasan)



Another good way to describe it is simply touching the toes. This pose works wonders for removing tension in the neck, shoulders, and back, while also directing blood flow to brain. All in all, regularly practicing standing forward fold pose can make feel great.

Method:

Stand up straight with hands by your side.

Place your hands by hips and slightly bend your knees as you bend forward.

Your chest should touch thighs; if it doesn't, try bending your knees further.

Take your hands down and grab your ankles.

Remain here for a few breaths before gently standing back up by gently releasing or coming out of the pose and releasing the asan by following these same steps.

Child's Pose (Shashank Asan)



Child's pose is among the most restorative and comforting postures. Here, enjoy the immense comfort that comes with being totally grounded. The sense of being supported by the earth can provide great emotional comfort in times of anxiety and depression. In addition to being comforting, child's pose also works to release tension in the spine, thus calming the nerves. Method:

Kneel on the mat with your big toes touching and knees slightly wider than your hips.

Bend forward, stretching your arms and chest forward.

Rest head on your mat or a blanket with your arms stretched above the head.

Breathe deeply here for as long as one can. before gently sitting back up by gently releasing or coming out of the pose and releasing the asan by following these same steps.

Corpse Pose (Savasana)



corpse pose is one of the most gentle, easy, and comforting postures that yoga has to offer. This meditative pose is excellent for controlling the mind, freeing you from stress, anxiety, and depression while inviting clarity into your experience. Although the physical side of things is quite easy, mastering the mental aspect of this pose can be a challenge. However, with a continued focus on breath or any mantra, ultimately unlock deep states of calmness and bliss. This pose is typically performed at the end of each yoga session, allowing to integrate all the energy and revelations that may have been cultivated during the practice. Method:

Lie flat on your back on mat.

Rest arms on the ground a few inches away from your body.

Face palms upwards.

Keep knees slightly spread and toes pointing outwards.

Close eyes and consciously relax every part of your body, including toes, ankles, shins, calves, left knee, right knee, and so on until you've relaxed each body part.

After fully relaxed, keep breathing slowly and deeply from your belly.

Remain here for as long as one want.

When finished, gently roll onto your left side for a moment before getting up.

Trikonasan



Method: Stepping left leg back about four feet with feet hip-width apart and palms at your heart in prayer for Crescent Lunge. Bring front knee to a 90-degree angle with your back leg straight and heel lifted. Point tailbone slightly down so the sitting bones aim toward the earth. Inhale. On the exhale, reach right arm up toward the ceiling and revolve your torso to the right. Extend sternum forward on each inhale. On each exhale, twist a little more deeply. Unwind the body and step forward with the left leg. Switch sides and repeat. For gently releasing or coming out of the pose and releasing the asan by following these same steps.

Prasarita Padottanasana



Method: Standing at the top of the mat, turn sideways and step feet 4 to 5 feet apart with the toes angled slightly in. Reach the arms wide to the sides at shoulder height. Take a deep breath in then exhale. Extend the sternum and bend forward with a flat back. Clasp the hands behind the back as you allow the body to fold

forward. Firm the thighs. Breathe. Bring your hands back to your hips, firm thighs and, again with a flat back, rise back up.

Natarajasana



Method: Step the feet back together and face forward on the mat. Shift the body weight on left leg as you bend your right leg behind you. Open the right arm and reach back for the insole for your right foot as you extend left arm up alongside the left ear. Reach for the sky. Fix the gaze and begin to reach through the arm as you tilt forward and kick the top of right the foot back into your right hand. Firm standing leg and breathe. Switch sides and repeat.

Camel Pose (Ushtrasan)



Method: Kneel at the top of the mat your knees hips-width apart and the tops of the feet on the floor. With the tailbone pointed towards the heels, place the palms on your lower back for support as you firm your thighs and press hips forward. Shrug the shoulders back and hug the elbows in as you press your thighs forward. If one feel ready to go further, reach for the right hand back for your right heel. Extend the left arm up, over and back, gazing up at your left fingertips. Reach th sternum up and over to lift and expand your chest. Breathe. Follow left fingertips with the gaze as you reach forward to rise. Rest in Child's Pose briefly before you repeat on the opposite side.

Poorna Dronasan (Boat Pose)



Method: To come into Boat Pose, come to a seated position and bend your knees. Lean back slightly to balance on your seat, reach hands behind your knees, and lift the heels to knee level with your lower legs parallel to the mat. Keep the back straight and your gaze on your feet. Press inner arches together and spreading your toes. Straighten your arms and spread fingers. (Or can keep hands behind your knees.) Draw your upper arm bones back and broaden across chest. Engage low belly and lift your chest.

Plank Pose



Method: From Boat Pose, cross the ankles, roll over the feet, and step back to Plank Pose with the feet hip-distance apart and the shoulders over your wrists. Press the base of the fingers into the mat, soften the thoracic spine (upper and middle back), and hug the thumbs toward the center of the mat. Extend your crown forward and reach heels back. Lengthen your tailbone toward your heels and zip up low belly. (Can try lifting one leg and hovering it or crossing ankles.)

Vasisthasana (Side Plank Pose)



Method: From Plank Pose, roll to the left as stack on the heels. Slowly lift the right arm high. Press down into left hand, broaden across the chest, and reach a little higher. Lift the gaze and spread the fingers of top hand. Slowly return to Plank pose and remain for 5 breath or as per capacity. Repeat on the other side.

Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog Pose)



Method: From Plank, press the hips up and back into Downward-Facing Dog Pose. Push the tops of the thighs back as bring your heels toward the floor. Firm shoulder blades against the back as we press through the base of the index fingers.

Plank Pose with Knee to Arm

From Downward-Facing Dog, on an inhalation, lift the right leg in Three-Legged Dog. Keep both hip bones squared to the earth and lift from the inner right thigh. On an exhalation, move from core strength and shift the shoulders forward to touch the right knee to your right tricep. Engage the low belly and lift the knee high up toward your armpit. Then on inhalation, press right leg up and back to return to a Three-Legged Dog. Lengthen from the right wrist through your right heel. On exhalation, shift forward and cross right knee to your left elbow, keeping the navel drawing into your spine and squeezing your obliques. Inhale and lift back to Three-Legged Dog, lifting your right leg high

High Lunge



Method: From Three-Legged Dog, on an exhalation, use core strength and to draw your knee forward toward nose and curl your upper back as you gracefully step your right foot beside right thumb. Ground down through all four corners of right foot. With your left foot planted, on your inhalation, lift arms and chest high. Lengthen tailbone toward the floor. Root down through left foot, pulling left heel toward the back of your mat and engaging inner thighs. Press through your right heel. Set your gaze, or *drishti*, straight ahead.

Add a twist by drawing hands to heart center, inhale, and lift your chest to meet hands. Exhale and twist, hooking left arm over your right thigh. Continue to ride breath, lengthening as you inhale, twisting as you exhale. Press outer shins in, drawing in from foundation. Come back through High Lunge as inhale and step back to Downward-Facing Dog. Switch sides and repeat. Starting with Downward-Facing Dog.

Bakasana (Crow Pose or Crane Pose)



Method: From Downward-Facing Dog, walk feet up toward your hands and come into a squat. Place hands on the mat, shoulder-width apart or wider, bend your elbows, and keep seat high as you hug knees against the back of your arms, close to the armpits. Keep gaze forward in front of your fingers as you shift your weight forward and start to lift feet. Press the inner arches of your feet together and awaken your toes to ignite the power line up to the core. Step back to Downward-Facing Dog.

Supta Matsyendrasana (Supine Spinal Twist)



From Downward-Facing Dog, lower the knees to the mat, untuck your toes, and make the way to your back. Lie down and draw your knees into the chest. Extend your arms straight out from your shoulders and lower the knees to the left as you turn your head to gaze over your right shoulder. Inhale and breathe in, Exhale and draw your navel back toward your spine. Slowly come through center and repeat on the other side.

A fit physique is simply a fringe benefit of a regular yoga practice.

Rather than focusing on the physical perks of doing countless Sun Salutations, Yoga Expert believes that one should go deeper into exploring yoga's ability to heal and overcome grief and other mental blocks.

1.1 Three Components of Yogic Approach

When Yoga is used as a Science of Health & Healing, all its techniques and methods which are basically meant for spiritual experiences, automatically gets geared to do their job for the promotion of Health and for bringing the Healing touch to be body and mind suffering from ill-health. For this purpose, the approach that Yoga advocates has three main components.

1. *First is the PRACTICAL DISCIPLINE that involves the practices of Asanas, Pranayama & Meditation.*

Asanas involve the increased awareness of various physical and physiological processes influenced by controlled stretching, contraction and relaxation of various muscles, their co-ordination in balancing and during maintenance of posture, etc.

Pranayama practice similarly involves the manipulation of breathing mechanism along with the increased awareness of the pressure changes inside the cavities of chest and abdomen.

Dhyana or the meditation practice increases the awareness of one's own mental process including the thoughts, emotions, memory, etc. It can make one aware of how the constant restlessness at the level of mind contributes in the feeling of emotional stress, feeling of constant fear and insecurity. This increased awareness combined with the manipulative techniques of Dhyana practices, gradually restore the psycho-physiological functions back to its healthy, harmonious and balanced state.

2. *The Second component concerns with the regulation of Diet as well as the regulation of Daily habits involving the pattern of sleep, recreational activities and working habits. This helps in removing all those irritants that are responsible for the imbalance in the functioning of body-mind complex.*

3. *Third component concerns itself with changes in one's attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle* which would help in inducing the feeling of sharing of warmth in friendship as well as concern, love and respect for the whole beautiful world. This acts as an antidote for the feeling of hopelessness, helplessness and loneliness that may come in the absence of proper relationship with the world around.

Many times when people talk about Yoga: they focus their attention only on the first component involving varieties of Asanas, Pranayama and Meditational techniques. Thus, they confine Yoga to a small period of their daily life, as if the rest of the day has nothing to do with Yoga.

But really speaking, Yogic way of living in the rest of the day is not only equally but more important from the healing point of view. Whatever skills one has learnt from Yogic practices need to be used throughout the day. The use of Yogic Skills throughout the day needs to be given proper attention. The last two components attend to these aspects of Yoga.

If you undertake Yoga in this spirit keeping this broad framework in mind and comply with all the instructions given to you, you would find that Yoga gives you not only relief from your problems but opens up new ways of enjoying your life.

Therapeutic Approach:

When you feel stronger from inside, it radiates to each part of your life.



Mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, and insomnia etc are among the most common causes for children, adolescents and adults to seek treatment with other complementary cure such as yoga. Yoga encourages people to relax, slowdown the breath and focus only on the present, which shift the balance from the sympathetic nervous system and the flight-or-flight response to the parasympathetic nervous system and the relaxation response. It lower down the breathing and heart rates, decreases blood pressure, lowers down the cortisol levels, and increases blood flow to the intestines and other vital organs.

One of the main objective of yoga is to achieve calmness of the mind and create a sense of well-being, relaxation, better self-confidence, enhanced efficiency, improved attentiveness, reduced irritability, and an optimistic approach on life.

The practice of yoga creates balanced energy to all the children and whoever is practicing on regular basis which is important to the function of the immune system. Yoga helps to an inhibition of the posterior or sympathetic area of the hypothalamus.

Yogic practices inhibit such areas responsible for fear, aggressiveness and anger, and encourage the fulfilling pleasure in the median forebrain and other areas leading to such state of harmony and pleasure. This inhibition helps in lowering anxiety, heart rates, respiratory rates, blood pressures, and cardiac outputs in students practicing yoga and meditation.

Regular yoga practice helps in reducing depression and can lead to substantial increase in serotonin levels combined with decrease in the levels of monoamine oxidase, an enzyme that breaks down neurotransmitters and cortisol. Many studies demonstrate the potential beneficial effects of yoga interventions on depression, stress, and anxiety.

Improved physique flexibility is one of the first and most recognizable benefits of yoga. With regular practice comes a gradual loosening of the muscles and connective tissues adjoining the bones and joints; this is believed to be one reason that yoga is related with reduced aches and pains. Yoga also improves balance. Yoga increases blood flow and levels of hemoglobin and red blood cells which allows for more oxygen to reach the body cells, enhancing their function.

Yoga, breathing exercises, and meditation can decrease stress, promote healing, and improves quality of life even for patients with cancer. The growth of tumors and other cancer indicators are aggravated by stress, thus it is important for people with cancer to reduce and manage stress efficiently. Many Research suggests that yoga can produce an stimulating effect on mental and physical energy that improves fitness and decreases fatigue.

The postures precisely report the tension, holding, and blockage of energy in any particular joint or any organ. Once this tension is released, energy flows more freely throughout the body and allows patients to understanding a sense of increased well-being and strength as well as a balance state of mind, body and spirit.

While stimulation is good, but too much duties on the nervous system causes excess stimulation and the stressors and hectic nature of modern life and Yoga helps inn reduces the impact all of that.

Soothing postures, Savasana, Pranayama, and Meditation encourages Pratyahara, a turning inward of the all the senses which allows rest time for the nervous system, this often being improved sleep.

In short, stress has a negative impact on the immune system and prolonged exposure increases susceptibility to disease and leads to physical and mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Practicing yoga and meditation as a means to manage and relieve both acute and chronic stress helps people overcome other ailments associated with diseases and helps to improve quality of life.

Yoga's ability to improve relaxation and helps in having a balanced mental state is studied to evaluate its effect on sleep quality and helps in treating insomnia. Regular practice of yoga resulted in a substantial decrease in the time taken to fall asleep, an increase in the total number of hours slept, and in the feeling of being rested in the morning.

Yoga and meditation practices exert a positive influence on addictive behaviors. Through the regular practice of yoga, addicts shift from self-inflicted harms and disrespect toward their bodies into more respectful, caring, and loving approach.

Eating disorders are also a specific type of addiction and Yoga seems to be beneficial in improving body image disorders and beneficial in the recovery from eating disorders.

Yoga, a form of mind-body exercise, has become a progressively prevalent therapy used to maintain wellness, and relieve from a range of health problems and ailments. Yoga can be considered as a complementary therapy or alternative method for medical treatments of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders as it has been displayed to create a greater sense of well-being, increased feelings of relaxation, improved self-confidence and body image, improve efficiency, better interpersonal relationships, increased attentiveness, lower irritability, and encourages an optimistic outlook on life.

Yoga is a personalized practice, therefore the frequency and duration are individual questions with own individual answers. Practice should happen with our own wisdom and should be adjusted to meet individual needs and goals. Individuals must practice as often as possible, especially in the beginning. The length of this phase will vary subjected on an individual's initial level of fitness and health condition; there is a saying, the more difficult yoga is for someone in the beginning the more their body needs it.

Yoga reduces the fluctuations of the mind and by performing consciously, we live a better life and suffer less.

Yoga is the key of psychological and emotional healing as well as resolves issues with self-confidence, relationships, and many many more.

“Yoga is a psychology, the whole Yoga practice helps us work with the nature of the mind, so the nature of being a human, how emotions live in our bodies, how they touch our behavior and our minds.”



4. Research Project with school Students

The Study is for mental health awareness and impact of Yoga, specifically 10th std students, is a project for schools students in Thane, Named as A.H.S.A.S. (Awareness of Health (Mental Health) amongst students). The focus of the project is on initiating awareness amongst 10th standard students about mental health and its coping method such as yoga. This project is done having objective to provide students with the knowledge of common mental health issues in the age group (13 to 16) through the awareness, acceptance, and through prevention and adopting coping methods such as Yoga. This enabling them to understand and help themselves, and their peers.

Prevalence of Disorders was formulated for the purpose of screening the most common mental health issues faced by children in this age group as covered by the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of 30 items measuring the signs and symptoms of the mental health issues most prevalent in the target age group of children and adolescents.

Then after this, mental health awareness program as well as Yoga as its coping mechanism has been done through workshop and handouts and discussions.

This was followed by the post-testing of the students, After a month, using a mental health awareness questionnaire to examine any level of change in the knowledge about mental health as well as the Yoga as a coping strategy amongst the students and its impact if any.

5. Objectives

The objectives of the project are:

1. To communicate basic knowledge of mental health and awareness of the students towards mental illnesses, in a way that it will help them understand the importance of mental health as the same importance as physical health.
2. To train the students with yoga as a tools which helps them in being more empathetic while supporting their classmates or friends who might be dealing with such issues.
3. To furnish them knowledge to support themselves, adopting yoga as measures which may help in alleviating their mental health conditions
4. To enable them live a health lifestyle.

Base of the study

On the basis of this pilot study, Based on the samples and the data collected through the first-level screening of mental health of school students through questionnaires, inferences have been drawn and various strategies for coping and dealing with the situations, have been made for the further intervention and analysis.

Participants

The data for the present study was collected from 10th std students in Thane residing in my nearby areas eg. Majiwada.

Methods

For this study, a qualitative analysis is designed to collect data from the school participants. It is aimed at identifying the gaps .The participants are asked to identify the common issues faced by them.(school children.)

Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected from the participants is analyzed through content analysis. Then found out the major issues and challenges faced by the school children of this age group as listed by the participant. Below mentioned Table of Content analysis of questionnaire 1, demonstrating the few most dominant issues among the school students:

Issues Reported	Frequency
Exam related issues (anxiety, stress and competition pressure)	16
Anxiety related to academic issues (academic pressure, subject anxiety (maths anxiety), and stress due to homework)	16
Bullying (name calling, colour, complexion, sexuality and body weight, teasing, and based on looks)	12
Issues related to family (issues with siblings, parental pressure, unhealthy parenting, fights and financial anxiety)	8
Issues related to teachers (pressure, expectations, fear, communication anxiety and stress)	6
Anxiety (general)	5
Peer Pressure	5
Sexuality related issues (sex education (early puberty), sexual and reproductive health)	3
Coping strategies	2
Body Shaming	2
Relationship and related topics (stress related to relationships)	2
Stress	2
Time management	2
Depression	2
Body Image Issues (not being able to match beauty standards)	2
Mobile and Gaming Addiction	1
Self-esteem issues	1

Embarrassment	1
Gender Acceptance	1
Helplessness	1
Hopelessness	1
Importance of mental health	1
Abuse	1
Acceptance Issues	1
Adjustment	1
Confusion	1
Sedentary Lifestyle	1
Separation Anxiety	1

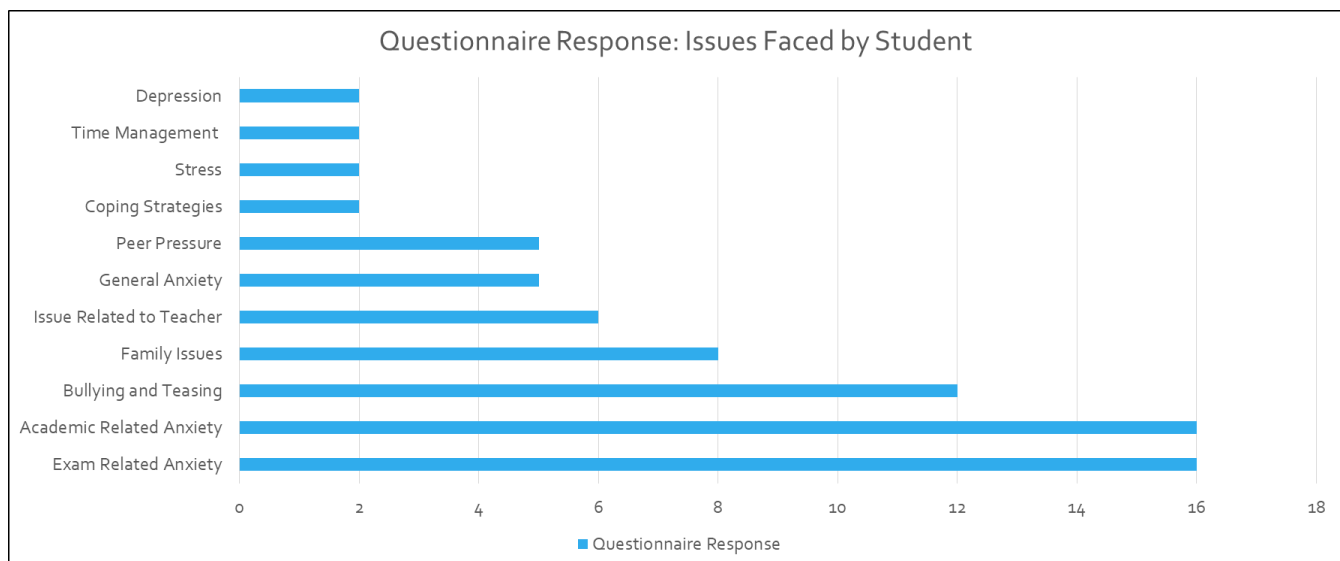
All the responses of the respondents are grouped in their group, for example exam anxiety, examination stress and competition pressure, that is, Exam related issues, which is the most reported and dominant issue according to the present. Secondly, anxiety related issues such as Academic issues group was made having, academic pressure, subject anxiety (math's anxiety), and stress due to homework/Projects.

Name calling, colour, complexion, body weight and sexuality, teasing, and based on looks, which are grouped as Bullying, which came out to be the third most dominant issue faced by school children.

Also, the issues with siblings, the parental pressure, the unhealthy parenting, the fights and financial anxiety are clubbed into the group of issues related to family, which is found to be the third most dominant issue faced by school children.

Then issues related to teachers are been stated, such as teacher related pressure, teachers expectations, teachers fear, teachers communication anxiety and stress due to all this. At the end, some of the issues which were catalogued by the participants were, general anxiety and peer pressure.

Interpretation and graphical representation of the data.



6. Scope of the Project:

Spread awareness of mental health among adolescent students at school level.

Spread preventions and promotion of mental health.

Equip students with effective coping mechanism like Yoga, meditation, relaxation techniques.

Such projects can be done with bigger and diversified population.

7. Limitations or constraints of the project

1. It is done with small population of 30 students as of now.
2. Done in a limited geographical area.
3. Time was the biggest constraint in completing the project.
4. Other research method can also be utilized.
5. Further in-depth study can be done.

8. Assumptions:

According to the sample it was a pilot study, can be done with a big population.

It will be a helpful reading for all the readers.

Resources utilized assumed to be correct for the study.

Time duration was assumed to be suffice for pilot study.

9. Methodology

1. Pre and post screening study , two way approach.
2. Questionnaire based survey for the project
3. Graphical representation of the data analysis.
4. Qualitative Evaluation of the responses of the respondents
5. Used Content Analysis method

10. Conclusion of the Project

This study has identified the major dominant problems faced by the school children precisely 10th std student. The major groups of issues recognized are issues related to exam, anxiety related to academic issues, issues related to family and bullying. This study is a pilot study that can help us to enhance the AHSAS project further to different age groups and demographics, as well as make sure better effectiveness of the coping strategies and also ensure that the study is meeting the purpose, precisely in the sample population. Yoga came out as an effective preventive Tool or coping mechanism for mental health disorders among children.

This study also shows the problem is related to the irregular interaction between children evolving need and capacities and their basic environments (home, community and schools.) and their whole lifestyles can be changed through Yoga.

After 1st screening, then awareness program was done then, post that screening is done to check the difference in coping and managing the major issues faced earlier (seen in 1st responses), Students self-realized the difference in dealing with real life issues and challenges in a more efficient manner. Students felt more empowered and calm and at ease who adopted yoga as a regular routine.

Questionnaire:

First Questionnaire: Before awareness.

Second questionnaire after mental health awareness -group session/workshop/handouts along with Yoga as practice as a coping strategy was introduced.

11. Summary:

The School Programme AHSAS focuses on Mental health literacy and awareness at adolescent group of 13 to 16 years. As a part of the three-step programme, the first step involved pilot study of schools students across Thane region. These schools consisted of 1 Government schools, 1 Private schools, 1 unaided Private school and 1 Public school.

During the first-step, a survey titled 'A.H.S.A.S' was administered on the participants for the purpose of Pre and post screening the most common mental health issues faced by children in this age and spread the effectiveness of Yoga as a coping strategy.

Most Dominant issues faced by children of the study is represented in Table Above, The aim of screening the participants was to gauge the prevalent mental health issues among students and coping strategies.

Based on the responses received by participants and mental health and Yoga trainers got involved in, various suggestions is also made for future intervention.

There should be more focus on Yoga as coping strategies for such issues being addressed, along with introducing a dialogue with the parents of the school students which is necessary to create a contented space between parents and children so that children can discuss their problems with their parents openly and easily , that can resolve many issues and can stopr many further issues to evolve. Moreover, more importance can be placed on including Yoga as a coping strategies in the workshops such as relaxation techniques, mindfulness exercises, Meditation etc.



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Child Psychology

Children & Yoga

Notes on Anatomy & Physiology

Yoga Psychology & Beyond

13. Personal Information:



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Marital status: Married

Hobbies: Singing, Listening to Music, Reading, Nature Walk, Travelling

Reasons for selection of this Topic: Lack of Mental health prevention, promotion and cure. Also my passion for yoga and its tremendous benefits on mental health on everyone including growing children.

Yoga is a skill in action-The Bhagavad Gita
The attitude of gratitude is the highest yoga–Yogi Bhajan
It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand battles– Buddha

“Yoga is a mirror to look at ourselves from within”

HARI OM