

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.

- Rabindranath Tagore

YOGA-A WAY OF HEALTHY LIFE

Yoga, an ancient practice originating in India, has transcended centuries to become not just a physical exercise but a holistic way of life promoting health and well-being on multiple levels. From its roots in spiritual disciplines, yoga has evolved into a comprehensive system that integrates physical postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), meditation, and ethical principles. Here's a deeper exploration of how yoga serves as a pathway to a healthy life: At its core, yoga offers numerous physical benefits that contribute to overall health. The practice of yoga asanas enhances flexibility, strength, and balance. Through regular practice, muscles become toned and joints are lubricated, promoting better posture and preventing injuries. Asanas such as downward dog, warrior poses, and tree pose engage various muscle groups, improving both stamina and endurance. Moreover, yoga's emphasis on mindful movement encourages practitioners to listen to their bodies, fostering a deeper connection between physical sensations and mental awareness. One of the most profound impacts of yoga is its effect on mental health. The combination of physical movement and focused breathing helps to calm the mind and reduce stress levels. Techniques like pranayama teach controlled breathing patterns that activate the parasympathetic nervous system, leading to relaxation and a decrease in cortisol, the stress hormone. Meditation practices incorporated into yoga sessions promote mindfulness, enhancing concentration, clarity of thought, and emotional resilience. Studies have shown that regular yoga practice can alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression, and insomnia, offering a natural and holistic approach to mental well-being. Yoga cultivates emotional balance by encouraging self-awareness and introspection. Through mindfulness practices, individuals learn to observe their thoughts and emotions without judgment, fostering a sense of inner peace and equanimity. Yoga philosophy emphasizes principles such as compassion, gratitude, and non-attachment, guiding practitioners towards a more harmonious relationship with themselves and others. As emotional intelligence develops through yoga practice, individuals are better equipped to navigate life's challenges with resilience and grace. Although yoga is not inherently religious, its spiritual dimension offers a profound journey of self-discovery and connection to a higher consciousness. The practice invites individuals to explore their inner landscapes, uncovering deeper layers of self-awareness and existential meaning. Yoga philosophy, rooted in ancient texts like the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, offers ethical guidelines (yamas and niyamas) that encourage virtuous living and spiritual growth. For many practitioners, yoga becomes a transformative path towards self-realization and a deeper understanding of their place in the universe. The beauty of yoga lies in its accessibility and adaptability to different lifestyles and stages of life. Whether practiced in a studio, at home, or outdoors, yoga can be tailored to individual needs and preferences. Beginners can start with gentle hatha yoga classes focusing on basic poses and breathwork, gradually progressing to more advanced practices like vinyasa flow or hot yoga. Yoga's versatility extends to its ability to complement other forms of exercise and therapeutic modalities, enhancing overall physical fitness and holistic well-being.

Caring for elderly senior citizens

The Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary defines a senior citizen (US) an elderly person over 65 of age who is retired and living on pension. In Indian context, the law in shrines a senior citizen any person, a citizen of India who has attained the age of 60 years or above. As per the population data of 2011 census there are around 104 million elderly persons aging 60 years and above. Out of this enormous numbers males count for 51 million and 53 million.

As per united nation organization (UNO) population fund and help India report, it suggests that the number of elderly person is expected to go upto 173 million ending year 2026. From year 1961 to 2011 (50 years span), the increased percentage has jumped from 5.6% to 8.6% which is astonishing and alarming too. The elderly report 2016 reveals that 715 of the population reside in rural areas whereas 29% inhabit in the urban areas. In rural areas 66% elderly are men and around 11% women working within 60 to 65 years age group.

The reports further reveal that 76% persons are quoted married while 22% are widowed or divorced per elderly in India ending year 2016. With the passing years viz a viz inadequate caring the elderly persons are prone to multihued diseases e.g Blood Pressure, Diabetes, Mentle ailments owing to anxiety and depression leading to the eventualities of death. At this crucial dilemma, more intensive caring is warranted for the elderly persons which, if so facto is not so. The scenario is painful and dismaying.

All through toiling life span, elderly persons scarcely every bit for their siblings which ultimately go on diminishing and flicking and they have to the dead end of the tunnel. They have to face a multitude of challenges despite the fact that their siblings are well established and can look after them. The agony and pain they suffer stings them beyond imagination. This sad state of utter neglect follows their all hopes and aspirations and tears rolled in isolation and they have to solely solace themselves. As per the policy of government, euphemism is warranted to the senior citizens are elders. These include physical, mental and physiological cares elevating from emotion stress else they are prone to anxiety, depression and age old ailments of multihued manifestations. But ironically, these grey citizens are facing a plethora of physiological and emotional distress, isolation and dependency thereby worsening the age old agonizing dilemma. Compare to last century, there had been a steady rise in the population of elderly people owing to age longevity, decreased death rate and above all advancement in the field of medicines that way there had been an increase in the life expectancy. As per UN population report, number of elderly person above 60 years. In India will increase from 100 hundred million at present to more than 325 million ending year 2050. It has also pointed out that elderly person over 80 years of age shall be seven fold and India shall be second most age old country in the world. The figure reflect a gloomy scenario in the sense that 50 to 55 million people sleep as hungry stomach every night and around 10-15 million people in India are blind and out of those 80% are elderly. Moreover elderly population of 60 years and above account for 7.5%-8% in Jammu and Kashmir alone.

In the Changing social milieu, the younger generation is subject to search avenues for economic dependence for the elderly/ senior citizen when all doors seem to be shut owing due to inadequate Job Avenue despite having their higher qualification and claim both in the professional training and allied expertise. With mounting urbanization coupled with modernization in unison are abysmally eating human values in more than one way leave aside caring for the elderly are the senior citizens.

Right from the day a child is born, the parents leave no stone unturned for the well beings and the best for their upbringings he or she should be left behind insofar as educational and extracurricular activities are concerned. And for such conscientious parents the hopes and aspirations do not make a stop. They put in the best of their efforts to make their famed brain to foreign drain; we call this as brain drain thus depriving their motherland and landing on foreign soil for better pay and perks with indelible stamp of being exported. The irony behind is that those who did all their dints in encountering all oddities and squabbles are their elderly parents or to say senior citizens. The so departed souls forget their culture, traditions and other rituals to the extent of their centuries old ethics and ethos. Does our education system inculcate this sort of way out of demeaning of demeanor? Why those who fed and cared for are being fended and left in lurch at the mercy of god. This is much more irony of any kind. The teacher and the taught should reciprocally interact so that out progeny picks up the thread for caring their oldies and for all in respecting and caring for senior citizens. (The author is former Dy. Conservator of Forest, J&K)

DR NEENA SHARMA

SuryaNamaskar, also known as sun salutation, is a graceful series of twelve yoga poses that is traditionally done to salute the Sun as a sign of respect and gratitude. The custom is believed to have originated from an early morning sun worship ritual. It is intended to harmonise the functions of the body, mind, and breath.

Mythology related to Surya Namaskar

In the history of the sun salutation, Hindus revere "Surya" as their god and view it as the source of all life. The ramayana occurrence in which Hanuman swallowed the sun as a child, serves as the basis for the mythological story of the suryanamaskar. The sun educated Hanuman sacred hinduscriptures, vedasand shastras while Hanuman paid guru dakshina by regularly practising suryanamaskar. This underlines the origin of Suryanamaskar.

History of Surya Namaskar

The suryanamaskar did not always look the way it does now. The Surya Narayana pujas are a group of rites that are suggested as the source of the suryanamaskar. Its origin dates back to 2,500 years. Surya Namaskar is now a complete set of 12 sequential positions after undergoing numerous alterations and adaptations over time.

It is thought that suryanamaskar originated during the vedic era and has been transmitted through vedic sages over many centuries. The Sanskrit words "Surya" and "Namaskar," which translate to "sun" and "greeting," respectively, are where the term suryanamaskar originates. The original suryanamaskar was a collection of sacred words chanted before dawn, not a sequence of yoga positions.

One of the first figures connected to the practise of the sun salutation is the saint Samarth Ramdas, who lived in the 17th century. He developed this technique without sequencing the correct motions. BhawanraoShrinivastro Pant Pratinidhi, the ruler of Aundh (current-day Pune, India), gave this sequence the name Surya Namaskar. Notable figures such as T. Krishnamacharya, his students, K. Pattabhi Jois, the father of Ashtanga Vinyasa, and B.K.S. Iyenger, the founder of Iyenger yoga, all learned suryanamaskar and advanced it into their respective yoga schools.

Types of Surya Namaskar

SURJIT SINGH FLORA

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed June 21 as International Yoga Day in December 2014, following a proposal by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On June 21, 2015, we celebrated the first International Yoga Day.

Where he stated: Yoga is a treasured gift of India's ancient culture. Rather than focusing on physical activity, the goal is to achieve a feeling of unity among oneself, the world, and the natural environment. When we make adjustments to our way of life and cultivate mindfulness, it may assist us in coping with the effects of climate change. We should make efforts to establish a day dedicated to yoga on a global scale.

He suggested designating the 21st of June as International Yoga Day. Specifically, he said that the day in question is the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere and that it has unique importance in a great number of regions around the globe.

Yoga is widely recognized for its effectiveness in enhancing mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, along with its capacity to enhance physical flexibility, strength, and balance.

As a means of fostering a healthy lifestyle, the day encourages individuals to incorporate yoga into their regular activities. Additionally, yoga is considered to be a method for bringing together the body, the mind, and the soul. As a result, both individuals and communities may experience a sense of harmony and tranquility. Celebrating Yoga Day not only celebrates the cultural history of the ancient discipline and its roots in India, but it also acknowledges the widespread attraction and acceptance of yoga across the world.

One of the most important factors in the revitalization and dissemination of yoga, an age-old practice that is deeply ingrained in Indian culture, has been International Yoga Day, which has been observed annually since 2015. Despite thousands of years of yoga practice in India, the

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International Day of Yoga is every year celebrated on 21st of June. The people world over are anxious to celebrate this day with great fanfare and enthusiasm on June 21st 2024 Friday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading India in celebrating yoga day from SKICC on the banks of Dal Lake Srinagar Kashmir. This is the 10th International Yoga Day and the people across the world are celebrating this day with fervour. The theme of the international day of yoga is "Yoga for Women Empowerment" focusing on enhancing the physical & mental well-being of women. To celebrate ,this day, various events and sessions are being organized globally to promote the practice of yoga. Every year on June 21, the world unites to celebrate International Yoga Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about the ancient Indian practice of yoga and its manifold benefits for the physical and mental well-being. PM Narendra Modi proposed the noble idea of a dedicated yoga day during his address to the 69th session of the UNGA in 2014. On 2014 December all the 139 UN member states unanimously agreed to observe the international Day of Yoga on June 21. It is due to PM Modi's relentless efforts that June 21 was declared as the international Yoga Day by the UNGA. International Yoga Day also known as World Yoga Day is observed on June 21st every year. It has not remained an Indian event but has become a global event and is celebrated to promote the practice of yoga for the development of human personality which is balanced one encompassing the fruition of the body, mind and spirit of the mankind. The role of yoga for a healthier, happier, contented and balanced personality cannot be exaggerated. The whole world is evincing great interest in practicing yoga for a meaningful and healthy life. This day is celebrated to raise the awareness of the importance and impact of yoga on the health of pop-

Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation)

The 12 Classic poses of traditional Hatha Surya Namaskar				
	Asana	Mantra	Chakra	Breathing
	Step 1. Pranamasana (Prayer pose)	Om Mitraya Namaha	Anahata	Exhale
	Step2. Hasta-uttanasana (Raised arms pose)	Om Ravaye Namaha	Vishuddhi	Inhale
	Step3. Hastapadasana (Standing forward bend)	Om Suryaya Namaha	Manipura	Exhale
	Step4. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (Equestrian pose)	Om Bhanave Namaha	Anahata	Inhale
	Step 5. Dandanasana (Slick pose)	Om Khagaya Namaha	Sahasrara	Exhale
	6. Ashanga Namaskar (Salute with eight parts or points)	Om Pushne Namaha	Whole body	Suspend
	Step 7. Bhujangasana (Cobra pose)	Om Hiranagarbaya Namaha	Svadhishthana	Inhale
	Step 8. Adho Svanasana (Downward facing dog pose)	Om Marichaye Namaha	Sahasrara	Exhale
	Step 9. Ashwa anchalanasana (Equestrian pose)	Om Savitre Namaha	Anahata	Inhale
	Step10. Hastapadasana (Standing forward bend)	Om Aarkaya Namaha	Manipura	Exhale
	Step11. Hasta-uttanasana (Raised arms pose)	Om Adityaya Namaha	Vishuddhi	Inhale
	Step 12. Tadasana (Mountain Pose)	Om Bhaskaraya Namaha	Anahata	Exhale

Daily Surya Namaskar practise assists in balancing our body's three primary energy, Pitta (body heat), Vata (air), and Kapha (phlegm), which influences our creativity and intuition. People of all ages can perform it anytime, anywhere. Numerous kinds of yoga incorporate Surya Namaskar:

1. Ashtanga Surya Namaskar: There are two types of Sun Salutations in the Ashtanga Surya Namaskar series: Type A and Type B. There are nine vinyasas in type A and seventeen in type B.
2. Hatha Surya Namaskar: It is a sequence of twelve spinal poses with emphasis on breathing. It is the earliest most common Surya Namaskar styles.
3. Iyengar Surya Namaskar: It is similar to hatha suryanamaskarbut performed at a quicker pace.

The Sun symbolises light, purity, clarity and consciousness.The

Yoga has several health advantages beyond physical exercise

worldwide recognition of International Yoga Day has recently led to even greater popularity of the practice both locally and globally.

The observance of International Yoga Day has inspired a significant number of individuals worldwide to engage in yoga. It has resulted in an increase in interest among people of all ages in India, from young children to the elderly, who have now begun integrating yoga into their daily routines. The number of yoga practitioners has increased.

India has been a popular destination for travelers who are looking to experience real yoga practices and teachings, thanks to the fact that Prime Minister Modi has celebrated Yoga Day every year. The recognition of International Yoga Day has led to an increase in yoga-related tourism in India. This has been beneficial to local communities and businesses, as well as promoting India as a center for those interested in yoga.

By highlighting yoga as an essential component of Indian customs, Yoga Day has also contributed to the strengthening of the cultural identity of Indian society. The day has created a feeling of national pride in Indians as they can see individuals from a wide range of countries and backgrounds enjoying and practicing yoga, appreciating the fact that yoga originated in India.

It is true! In addition to being a kind of physical exercise, yoga offers a multitude of health advantages, such as the alleviation of stress, the enhancement of mental well-being, and the enhancement of flexibility and strength. This has led to a larger focus on total wellbeing in Indian culture, which is a direct result of International Yoga Day's efforts to increase awareness about the excellent influence that yoga has on both physical and mental health.

Yoga has received substantial institutional recognition in India and throughout the world as a result of the commemoration of International Yoga Day. Numerous educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and government programs now incorporate it, emphasizing its crucial role in

maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It has received recognition as a valid treatment, despite its lack of widespread acceptance.

In general, as a result of promoting and revitalizing the ancient practice of yoga, raising awareness of the benefits of yoga, and bolstering India's cultural identity, International Yoga Day has had a significant influence on the culture and traditions of India.

The Sanskrit root "Yuj," which can mean "to connect," "to yoke," or "to combine among one another," is the origin of the term "Yoga." The Vedas, the Upanishads, the writings of Buddhism and Jainism, the Darshan Shastra, the Mahabharata, and the epic Ramayana all include descriptions of yoga. According to yoga, Lord Shiva is the first Yogi or Guru. In his book Yoga Sutra, Maharishi Patanjali outlined the Ashtanga practices, which are the eight limbs of yoga. Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, perception, consciousness, and samadhi are the eight limbs that make up yoga. In addition to being a physical practice, yoga is also a body of knowledge that teaches us how to live a life that is calm, joyful, and healthy.

The phrase "Yoga for Women Empowerment" will serve as the theme for International Yoga Day in 2024. This product would not be complete without the participation of women. According to a study compiled by the Secretary General of the United Nations, women make up half of the human resource pool, making them the second most valuable human resource after males with immense potential. Women play a variety of roles in the family, including those of wife, leader, administrator, controller of family income, and ultimately, mother. Mother is the most important person in the home because she is responsible for dedicating her time, energy, and thoughts to the well-being of all family members. Given this, it is of utmost significance for a woman to maintain her physical, mental, and emotional well-

regular practice of Surya Namaskar imparts power and radiance of sun because of which it is known as "Salute to Sun".It is performed with corresponding suryanamaskar mantrawith special concentration on each chakra or focal points ofbody.

The seven energy wheels in the body known as Chakras, run from the top of the head to the base of the spine. The body's energy centre is the third chakra, also known as Manipura, Solar Plexus, or Navel. A network of radiating nerves in the pit of the stomach called the solar plexus chakra is thought to be connected to the sun. The solar plexus grows in size with regular suryanamaskar practise, which enhances leadership, intuition, creativity, and confidence. Conditions such as indigestion, impaired skilful self-expression, aggression, lack of confidence, and low self-esteem can arise when the solar plexus chakra is out of harmony.

Performing suryanamaskar with mantra chants and awareness on chakras adds a feel of gratitude, spirituality and meditative aspect.

The overall benefits of Suryanamaskar are-

1. **Balance of Dosha:** The three doshas-Pita, Kapha, and Vata, can be kept in line by dailypractice of suryanamaskar.
2. **Weight-loss Booster:** Stretching the abdominal muscles burns the calories & manages the thyroid gland secretions.
3. **Improves mental health:** It strengthens the focus, relaxes mind, reduces sleepiness, somatic stress, worry, and negative emotions.
4. **Skin and Complexion:** Regular practice improves blood circulation, brings glow to the face and improves elasticity of the skin.
5. **Digestive System:** Routine practice increases the blood flow to the intestine and enhances intestinal peristalsis.
6. **Menstrual Cycle:** Regular practice helps in regularcycles, relief from cramps during periods and also aids in natural child birth.
7. **Detoxification:** Due to active breathing, lung capacity increases, lungs are ventilated and the blood gets oxygenated. Also, it improves the lymph flow, which removes the toxins from the body.
8. **Miscellaneous:** Reduces blood sugar levels, relieves frozen shoulder and revitalises the entire body.

A boon for all age groups, suryanamaskar is an intensive exercise and regular practice of it maintains good health.

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International Day of Yoga

The sixth edition of International Day of Yoga will focus on yoga at home with family members. PM Modi in the run up to yoga day launched an event -My Life My Yoga -in his Mann Ki Baat. He encouraged people to stay active and fit. The international Day of Yoga was first celebrated on June 21st 2015. As we all know, the environment is changing and the world is becoming more competitive .Yoga helps us to deal with this kind of environment and makes us healthy. The word yoga comes from Sanskrit and means to connect or unite. Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that gives people peace, confidence and courage to do many activities more effectively. At all levels of existence, it is a state of harmony. Yoga has always been considered by Indian wise men to be one of the most effective ways of connecting body and mind. It is the type of exercise that is performed through a diet, a breath and a physical posture to relax the mind and body. This ancient form of holistic healing was officially recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 11, 2014. The UNGA officially recognized June 21 as the world yoga Day. Since then people all over the world are showing keen interest in yoga and its practice and are performing yoga for a healthier, happier, fuller and contented life. People of the world are practicing yoga to be far from physical and mental ailments and thus it has become their daily diet to practice yoga. Since the benefits of yoga are manifold and so people are inclined to practice yoga and practice it to be free from the modern ills of life. It is in fact the practice of yoga and its breathing exercises which increases the life span of the people and so people practice the yogic exercises to be fit and to achieve longer life. It is worth mentioning that the importance of yoga is so much that India's resolution was adopted by 177 of the 193 UN member states without a vote. It had 175 co-authors, the highest per-

centage ever for such a resolution at the UNGA. The root of this historical statement goes back to the year 2001 when the Portuguese Yoga Federation and the Samkhya Yoga Institute took note of the proposal for the "World Yoga Day." Consequently, on June 21, 2002, a conference in Bengahuru titled "Yoga A Science for world Peace" marked the first world yoga day. For the first time in history, the yoga Gurus from around the world had endorsed the idea of an International Yoga Day. Narendra Modi at the UN General Assembly said "Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition and embodies the unity of mind and body ,thought and action ,restraint and fulfillment .Yoga implies harmony between man and nature ,a holistic approach to health and well being .It is not about movement ,it is about discovering the sense of unity with yourself ,the world and nature and it can help us deal with climate change and work towards the introduction of an International Day of Yoga. Sam Kutesa ,President of the United Nations General Assembly ,announced the celebration of the International Day of Yoga on June 21 and more than 170 countries supported the proposal for the Day of Yoga .June 21 is the day the Sadgurus are honored .It is also the day of the summer solstice. During the June solstice ,the north pole tilts towards the sun or we can say that sun begins to move southward. From the point of view of yoga ,it is the transitional period that is better time for meditation .We should know the objectives of the International Day of Yoga and these are as follows---1-Educate people about physical and mental illness and offer them yoga solutions. It also aims to develop a meditation habit that promotes peace of mind and enhances the confidence needed to survive in a stress free environment.2-Make people aware of the benefits of yoga and connect it with nature.3-Reduce the incidence of diseases affecting health in the world.4-Spread

of growth, development and peace in the world. It is in the fitness of things to know the benefits of Yoga and these are as under-1-Yoga makes the body and mind healthy.2-Yoga not only provides mental peace but also creates a peaceful environment. 3-It is also obligatory to do yoga as our life style changes day by day .It can also help us to cope with the climate change. 4-Yoga strengthens the muscles and the whole body. 5-Maintains a balanced metabolism in humans. 6-Reduces weight and keeps the cardio system healthy. There is no doubt that yoga helps alleviate diseases that cause health problems worldwide. It connects people with each other, helps them to practice meditation and reduces stress. It combines health protection with sustainable health development. That is why we should practice yoga regularly and make it a part of our lives. The theme of International Day of Yoga 2023 is yoga for humanity. It is a matter of satisfaction that people throughout the world are now appreciating the importance of yoga and a large majority is practicing yoga for good mental and physical health. People understand the benefits and importance of yoga and are making yoga a part and parcel of their life. In India schools and colleges are imparting yoga education to the students. Besides in government offices and private institutions yoga is practiced for a healthier, happier, contented, balanced and fuller life. People are switching to yoga for being free from the perils of life style diseases. It is so good that people are adopting yoga as a part of their daily routine and diet and many people feel vacuum in their lives without practicing yoga. In brief let us make yoga a part and parcel of our life and this will be the best way of celebrating the world Yoga Day. Let this year's International Day of yoga be celebrated for the balanced ,healthier ,happy and contented life.

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