

Yoga Education: Development of Personality and the Role of Teachers

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Introduction:

This age is an age of knowledge explosion and e-learning. Tremendous development in the field of education has been occurred due the increasing use of Information and communication Technology in the field of education. New Curriculum according to the needs of the learners and society has been introduced in all stages of education. Innovative teaching methods, strategies, tools and techniques have been introduced. Continuous comprehensive evaluation system has been implemented. But man making and character building education is yet to be achieved due to gradual value erosion. The objectives of all round development of the students have not been completely fulfilled. Recently the NCTE has recommended Yoga Education in B.Ed syllabus. The five thousand years Indian age old body of knowledge 'Yoga' is now considered as one of the effective ways to achieve the goal and objectives of education. It is the true union of our will to the will of the almighty. Mahadev Desai in his article *Gita According to Gandhi* mentioned, 'the yoking of all the powers of body, mind and soul to God; it means the disciplining of the intellect, the mind, the emotions, the will, which that Yoga presupposes, means, a poise of soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly'. Mahatma Gandhi followed the principles of Yoga and wanted to bring true development of the learners. Mahatma Gandhi categorically emphasized on the development of body, mind and spirit which is possible if development of 3 H's (Head, Hand and Heart) instead of 3 R's (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic) is given more importance. Development of body, mind and spirit is possible through the practice of yoga and implementation of Yoga Education in the curriculum all stages of education. Mahatma Gandhi propagated and followed the principles of *Astanga* Yoga for the attainment of Sustainable development and the sustainability of the human race on this planet.

The origin and concept of Yoga: The word ‘Yoga’ is derived from the sanskrit word ‘Yuj’ which means union of the ‘self’ to the ‘supreme self’ The word “Yoga” means “yoke” or “unity” translated from Sanskrit, the classical language of India. It also means “discipline” or “effort.”

Yoga requires to make an effort to unify our body and mind. We do this by concentrating our awareness on our physical body through breathing and postures. It is the aim of yoga to achieve purity and clarity of manas (mind), buddhi (intellect) and chitta (consciousness). This removal of impurities allows the individual to realize and remain in original and normal state of uncontaminated joy and bliss.

The five modes of acquiring knowledge described by Patanjali Maharishi are:

- (1) *Pramana* (true cognition based on three means of validity namely direct perception, inference and verbal testimony from a trust-worthy person),
- (2) *Viparyaya* (false cognition),
- (3) *Vikalpa* (merely verbal based cognition),
- (4) *Nidra* (through sleep)
- (5) *Smriti* (through memory).

There are the three undesirable modes which have to be totally discarded for the attainment of true knowledge. They are:

- (1) *Kshipta* in which mind is wavering through happiness, turbulent and unhappy states,
- (2) *Moodha* in which mind is operating in negative states, and
- (3) *Vikshipta* in which mind appears positive but can be taken over by the negative tendencies.

The two desirable states which is formed through the practice of yoga are:

- (4) *Ekaagra* in which single minded absorption in God (Paramaatman) and
- (5) *Niruddha* which is beyond the state of single mindedness with total restraint of mental operation.

Types of Yoga:

There are several types of Yoga. They are: Ananda Yoga ,Ashthanga Yoga, Bikram Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Sivananda Yoga, Viniyoga Yoga. yoga can be described in different forms as given below. However, these forms are inter-related. (1) Bhakti yoga (through devotion), (2) Karma yoga (through self-less action), (3) Jnana yoga (through self-enquiry and knowing), (4) Mantra yoga (through mantra), (5) Naada yoga (through transcendental sacred vibrations), (6) Raja yoga or Ashtanga yoga (through eight-limb approach), etc.

Various Obstacles in the Course of Development through Yoga:

The nine primary obstacles are:

(1) Disease (Vyaadhi), (2) Mental laziness (Styana), (3) Doubt (Samshaya) , (4) Lack of enthusiasm and delusion (Pramaada), (5) Lethargy (Aalasya), (6) Reluctance to give-up the craving of sense-pleasures (Avirati), (7) Erroneous perception (Bhranti-darshana

Meditation as a Part of Yoga:

- Meditation is a technique in which the meditator seeks not only to reach a deep state of relaxation, but to quiet the mind. The mind is a chattering monkey that one tries to make quiet with meditation. Meditation seeks a state of enlightenment, a freedom from the tyranny of our worries. Meditation is a conscious mental process that induces a set of integrated physiologic changes termed the “relaxation response” by Herbert Benson.
- Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) was used to identify and characterize the brain regions that are active during a simple form of meditation.

Astanga Yoga:

There are eight types of yoga in the Yoga sutra of Sage Patanjali. They are:

YAMA: This step contains five sub-steps, which need to be practised in the domains of thought, speech and action.

- (a) Non-Violence (Ahimsa) (b) Truthfulness (Satya) (c) Non-Covetedness (Asteya) (d) Continence (Bramhacharya) (e) Non-receiving (Aparigraha)

2. **NIYAMA:** This step also contains five sub-steps, which need to be practised in the domains of thought, speech and action.

(a) Cleanliness (Shoucha) (b) Contentment (Santosha) (c) Austerity (Tapas) (d) Scriptural Study (Svaadhyaya) (e) Surrender to God (ishvara Pranidhaana) 3. ASANA (Postures)

4. **PRAANAYAMA** (Regulation of Vital Force) In Asanas, the body is held steady in postures drawn from observing animals and nature such as a tree, mountain etc. In Pranaayama, control of vital forces is focused through proper regulation of breathing under strict supervision of a qualified Guru.

5. **PRATYAAHARA:** in this step, the yogi practises withdrawing the mind from senses and multiplicity of thoughts. The withdrawn mind is then directed towards inner-self.

6. **DHAARANA:** deals with the development of the ability of the indrawn mind to focus and concentrate on a Sacred Object (such as vision of the Guru, chosen Deity, and other Sacred forms).

7. **DHYAANA:** referred as meditation, is continuous contemplation or concentration on the Sacred Object. Meditation is to be achieved like a lamp (steady mind) in the absence of flickering wind (wavering worldly thoughts).

8. **SAMADHI:** This step refers to an experience of transcendental state of balance and deep spiritual absorption

Health Conditions in which Yoga may help heal or treat:

Herbert Benson, MD, founding President of the Mind/Body Medical Institute an Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School conducted a research and showed that the following diseases may help to heal or treat. They are:

- Arthritis, Allergies, Asthma, Hypertension, Coronary Artery Disease, Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Heartburn (GERD), Constipation, Tension Headaches and Migraines, PMS and Menstrual Discomfort, Menopause, Pain of the Back, Hips, Knees, Depression & Anxiety, Substance Abuse

- Skin Disorders, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Overweight
- Sleep Problems

Role of the Teacher:

The teacher as a facilitator, motivator, friend, philosopher and guide should come forward to create a positive class room environment where the age old practice 'Yoga' of our country may be implemented in institutional level for all round development of the pupils.

Conclusion: It may be concluded that Yoga education is an effective way to achieve the goal of education. The aim of true education is to attain self realization. Education is not for mere employment as it cannot secure the employment of *atman*. The aim of education is the building up of character. Knowledge is the means and character building is the end. Yoga will show a path of transcendental uplift of the learners and pave a way all round development.

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