

# Understanding the Need of Yoga Practices for Mental Well Being in the Time of the Pandemic

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**Abstract**— Yoga is a practise with its roots in a highly nuanced scientific tradition, with the ultimate goal of achieving a state of harmony between the mind and the body. Keeping oneself healthy is both an art and a science. When you practise yoga, you'll find that your mind and body, as well as your awareness and the consciousness of the universe, are in perfect harmony. Yoga may aid in the development of both physical and mental fitness, the maintenance of internal peace, and the control of stress and its aftereffects in everyday life. Psychological distress is spreading over the globe as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. The global lockdown has had a significant impact on the economy, the labour market, and company operations worldwide. All segments of society have felt the effects, but those tasked with providing healthcare or securing basic necessities have been hit particularly hard. COVID-19 is largely believed to mostly impact the elderly and those with preexisting conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and other CVDs. Anxiety and stress, as indicated above, have been shown to promote sleeplessness and have the ability to significantly damage the immune system, which is the body's only defence against the virus, according to preliminary findings from a study that is still underway. 'The research examines the importance of yoga for mental health throughout the epidemic.'

**Indexed Terms**— Yoga, COVID-19, Novel coronavirus disease, Mental health problems, mental health problems, etc.

## I.INTRODUCTION

Since December 2019, when the first confirmed case of new coronavirus illness 2019 (COVID-19) was reported, the virus has spread rapidly and prompted

coordinated efforts throughout the globe. This has prompted extraordinary attempts to introduce the concept of physical separation (usually referred to as 'social distancing') in nations all over the globe, leading to shifts in national behaviour patterns and the suspension of normal day-to-day operations. These measures may be necessary to slow the development of the illness, but they will have both immediate and long-term effects on people's emotional well-being. Because of the gravity of these repercussions, early preventative and interventional measures are required to mitigate the mental health crisis caused by the epidemic.

Since schools will be closed because to the COVID-19 pandemic, child abuse is also a definite possibility. Anxiety, sadness, drug misuse, isolation, and domestic violence are all expected to grow significantly. The mental health problems that have arisen in the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic may be traced back to the exposure of 'regular' individuals to 'exceptional' circumstances. Anxiety, sadness, sleep and appetite disorders, as well as serious mental disease and drug abuse, are only some of the many manifestations. Most people have moderate and transient forms of these symptoms, but others go on to develop serious mental health problems that need for intensive treatment. This population may include young children, the elderly, expectant mothers, persons with preexisting mental illness, people who live alone, and bereaved families as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. 'The mental toll taken by those on the front lines of the pandemic response is also crucial.' They are especially susceptible due to the lengthy hours they spend in potentially risky work environments. The extensive economic and social upheaval caused by the epidemic has had a psychological and sociological effect on the population that is unprecedented in the contemporary era. All of these have been exacerbated by the new

media's constant dissemination of both factual and fictitious information, as well as conspiracy theories, which have had a negative psychological effect on the populace as a whole. As a result, COVID-19 has had far-reaching effects on people's mental health and social lives.

Collectively, these factors have created an unparalleled burden for mental health care providers in India. All non-psychiatric health care practitioners who frequently constitute the forefront of the health care response must now deliver 'everything is feasible,' given the expected size of the epidemic and the uneven availability of expert mental health treatment throughout the nation. In addition, when pandemics strike, mental health treatment is often put on the back burner.

## II. THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND MENTAL HEALTH

We are all going through feelings, ideas, and experiences that we have never had before right now. It's not like there has never been previous pandemics. Pandemics, and the plague in particular, have been well-documented from the beginning of recorded history. Cholera and influenza pandemics, both occurring in the nineteenth century, stand out as the century's most notable health crises. 'Both the 'Spanish Flu' pandemic and a new cholera outbreak swept over the globe around the turn of the twentieth century.' While other pandemics such as SARS, MERS, Ebola, etc., have occurred in recent years, the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. It has sent shockwaves throughout the globe and sparked widespread fear. COVID-19 has been devastating countries throughout the world as it slowly emerges and then quickly spreads. The psychological effects of the pandemic vary widely from nation to country and from stage to stage of the epidemic. Pathoplastic effects of the pandemic on pre-existing psychiatric and psychological problems; reactions to social isolation and lockdown; the psychological response to the diagnosis; public responses to those with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 infection; and the aftermath of infection are all important to consider when trying to understand the psychological effects of the pandemic. Fear and a feeling of apparent and immediate danger have been the first reactions to the outbreak in India. Fears have varied from rational

ones based on analysis of actual events to irrational ones based on speculation or misunderstandings spread by the media, especially online forums. As we go through several phases, the only thing that is certain is that change is the only constant (in terms of recommendations and precautions). And now, we ask, 'What do we do?' How not to proceed. The uncertainty and unease that results from having unanswered questions is almost universal. Our individual reactions to the flood of information from both far-reaching and close-by media outlets is certain to be diverse. The 'worried well,' people with stressful psychological symptoms and poor coping mechanisms, and even mental illness, might result from this. Common responses to concerns about developing the disease include overreacting to every sign of sickness as evidence of COVID-19 infection, seeking testing for comfort despite stringent rules for testing, and stockpiling medicine despite no overall need for it. In addition to the warnings about washing your hands, there may also be questions about whether or not to wear a mask, what kind of mask is appropriate, how far apart people should stand, and what surfaces should be disinfected and with what. Concerns about employment losses and a potential downturn in the economy during and after the epidemic are equally valid. The list goes on and on, never ending the cycle of anxiety and tension it causes. On the opposite end of the spectrum are those who have absolutely no fear or concern, who believe they can handle anything that comes their way, and who thus disregard all warnings and safety measures. This kind of thinking may potentially put one's safety and the safety of others at jeopardy.

The potential stigma associated with COVID-19 is shocking. Health care workers have been forced out of their buildings by fearful landlords, those in quarantine have been cut off from friends and family, and those diagnosed with COVID-19 have been met with cruel responses from society. This has led some people to hide their symptoms and avoid getting medical care when they needed it. There have been a number of changes in daily routine as a result of the social isolation and lockdown, including a reorganisation of household duties, an increase in time spent at home, and the use of telecommuting. Despite the value of social distance (though many would prefer the phrase physical distance), this need has resulted in extended periods of time spent apart from loved ones

(for those who have taken jobs outside of their hometowns), added financial hardship, and strained relationships. It's possible to feel everything from boredom and irritability to rage, impatience, and frustration. One other unhealthy method of coping is to use drugs that affect one's mental state. Anxiety, panic attacks, and sadness all have a same root: a fear of the unknown or a feeling that one has lost control of a situation.

Individuals who already struggle with mental health issues or drug abuse issues are at a greater disadvantage during lockdowns. Reduced access to medicine, as well as added stress, may trigger a recurrence in the symptoms of mental illness and epilepsy. Seizures, psychosis, agitation, and even suicidal ideation have all been reported in people with drug use problems during the withdrawal process.

Professionals in the mental health field should be prepared for an increase in cases of mental illness as the epidemic progresses. 'Depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues are common reactions to receiving a terminal diagnosis.' Separation from loved ones hospitalised due to complications with COVID-19 may be emotionally and mentally taxing, triggering feelings of anxiety, helplessness, and melancholy. Sometimes, individuals have to deal with the tragic loss of a loved one or brace themselves for other unfavourable results. Concerns about potential direct neuropsychiatric consequences of COVID-19 infection, interactions between psychotropic medications and those used to treat the infection, and drug interactions in patients with multiple medical conditions are on the rise as our understanding of their impact expands rapidly. Additional research is needed to determine what, if any, adjustments need to be made in order to effectively administer electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and other physical modalities of treatment to individuals experiencing acute symptoms of COVID-19.

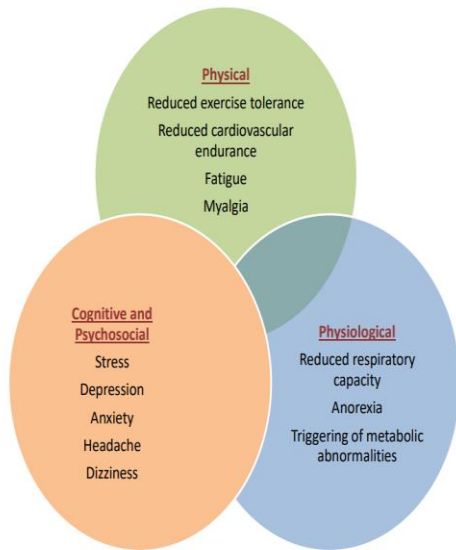
### III. NEED OF YOGA PRACTICES FOR MENTAL WELL BEING IN THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC

People all across the world are worried about catching the new COVID-19 virus. This is all pervasive in every aspect of society. Migrant workers, already among the most economically vulnerable members of society, are more vulnerable because of the current economic climate's severe effect on their 'daily wage'

employment mix. Contrarily, the lockdown has contributed to an upsurge in domestic violence among certain segments of the population. In a same vein, frontline personnel' fear and vulnerability to stress and anxiety are exacerbated by a lack of protective gear to treat patients with COVID-19. Anxiety and stress have widespread effects on people's bodies because of the effects of a statewide lockdown on companies and the closure of places of employment. Because of these modifications in their physiology, they are more likely to contract viruses. Melatonin is a natural antioxidant in the body, and it is commonly believed that stress, sleeplessness, and anxiety may all cause its production to decline. Many studies have shown that melatonin production declines with ageing. Therefore, it indicates that the elderly is at a higher risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. Increased melatonin levels may thereby mitigate the effects of advancing age on susceptibility to COVID-19 infection. The present lockdown has disrupted normal daily activities and sleep patterns, which in turn has an effect on the circadian rhythm and, by extension, the immune system. This underscores the need for self-regulatory mind-body treatments like a regular Yoga practise and a regular daily routine.

Several potential vaccinations and medications for use against or as a therapy for COVID-19 are now being tested in human clinical trials. HCV treatment options include hydroxychloroquine (HCQ), remdesivir, rotonavir-lopinavir, and convalescent plasma therapy, among others. At now, none of these medications has been heralded as the last, best hope for treating the COVID-19 virus. The effectiveness of potential medications can only be assessed by large-scale, high-quality, multicentric, randomised studies. 'The aforementioned complementary and alternative medicine treatments are crucial since they boost immunity and prevent illness.' To better understand the relative efficacy of HCQ and Ashwagandha for prophylaxis in healthcare workers, an interdisciplinary task force is planning to conduct a clinical trial under the supervision of the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy. A strong immune system based on cost-effective non-pharmacological intervention appears to be an appealing approach to battle infection given that the lockdown will have to be eased at some point and that

workplaces would need to be fully functioning with social distance rules.

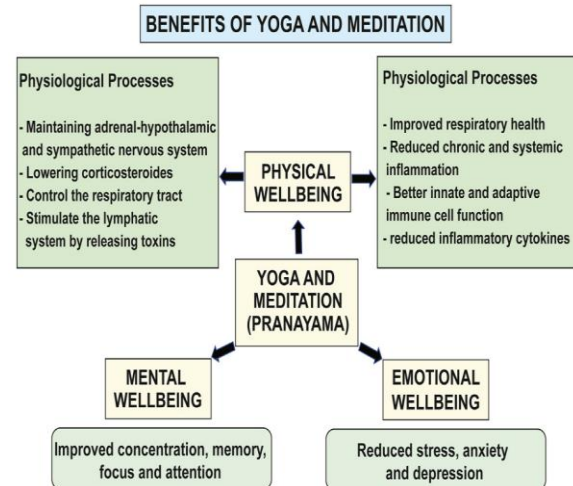


Various components which need to be addressed in COVID-19 rehabilitation

There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that yoga may be an effective way to improve one's emotional, physical, and mental health. Anxiety and depression are reduced, and the body's natural defences are strengthened, as seen in the preceding example, suggesting its potential use in the ongoing epidemic. By increasing parasympathetic activity and decreasing sympathetic activity, yoga prevents the overstimulation of the autonomic nervous system, which may lead to a depressive and anxious condition. During the present COVID-19 epidemic, it is recommended to practise Yoga at home as an alternative to being inactive and working from home because to the widespread worry, tension, and fear of infection that permeates both the workplace and hospitals.

#### IV. 2022 THEME: YOGA FOR HUMANITY

The global spread of COVID-19 virus has caused a humanitarian catastrophe on a scale never seen before. Because of the widespread implementation of measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, several nations have seen an increase in cases of mental health issues including despair and anxiety. The urgency of addressing the mental health part of the pandemic, in addition to the physical health issues, has been brought into sharp focus as a result of this.



During the epidemic, people all around the globe turned to yoga as a way to refresh their bodies and minds while also combating feelings of loneliness and sadness. 'Patients with COVID-19 who are quarantined and isolated are benefiting greatly from yoga as a part of their psychosocial therapy and rehabilitation. It works well to calm their nerves and worries.'

Human suffering aside, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light some critical weaknesses in the economic and developmental paradigms of nations around the globe. Future prosperity requires a new approach to reconstruction as member nations recover from the COVID-19 epidemic.

Balance, in all its forms, lies at the heart of yoga, from the internal to the external, and from the mental to the physical. Yoga promotes characteristics such as awareness, moderation, self-control, and tenacity. When applied to larger social systems, yoga may provide a blueprint for a more sustainable way of life.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Panic, tension, and anxiety were felt all around the world as a consequence of the lockdown and the subsequent lack of information about Coronavirus illness 2019 (COVID-19). The mind is one area where Ayurveda and yoga diverge [4]. The goal of Yoga, an ancient Indian science, is to achieve mental and physical harmony by discipline of the mind and will. Yoga, as it is understood in the modern period, is a sort of alternative medicine that makes use of mind-body activities, and it has been described as a method of bringing the body and the mind closer together in order

to foster health on all levels. There is mounting evidence that yoga might boost immunity and help people feel less stressed and anxious. In order to prevent the worsening of co-occurring disorders and mental health, yoga practises that may be performed at home can be used. As there are now no medications or vaccinations available to treat COVID-19, it is essential that people take measures to ensure their health. The available data suggests that regular Yoga practise may boost the immune system, lower the likelihood of developing co-morbid illnesses, and help with stress and anxiety. The benefits of yoga extend beyond the home and into the business.

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