

VK-AICYAM

NATIONAL YOGA SEMINAR

Yoga for Healthy Ageing

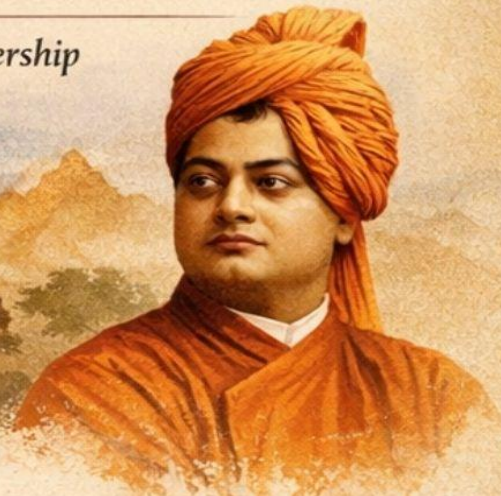
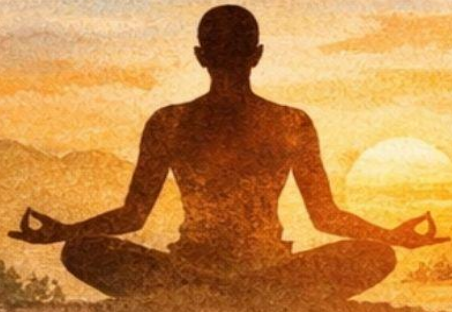
28th June, 2026

A Collection of
Research Papers
Presented in the Seminar



YOGA • CULTURE • MANAGEMENT

An Indian Vision for Inner Excellence and Social Leadership



Yoga – The Art of Self-Management

Yoga builds focus and inner strength.

“Yoga is the science which teaches us how to get control over the mind.” — Swami Vivekananda



Culture – The Foundation of Values

Culture nurtures character and harmony.

*“Culture is the manifestation of perfection already in man.”
— Swami Vivekananda*



Management – Purposeful Action

Management drives focused and ethical action.

*“The secret of work is concentration.”
— Swami Vivekananda*



Message to Youth

Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached!

— Swami Vivekananda



*Inspired by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda
Dedicated to Youth, Leadership, and Cultural Renaissance*

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Keywords in this Collection: Balanced Life, Bhagavad Gita, Emotional Wellbeing, Healthy Ageing, Holistic Wellbeing, Longevity, Mental Resilience, Mental Wellbeing, Physical Wellbeing, Preventive Healthcare, Purpose in Life, Self-Realization, Social Wellbeing, and Yoga.

This document is a collection of short-listed research papers prepared, submitted, and presented (after acceptance) at the National Yoga Seminar, held on Sunday June 28th 2026, at the auditorium of Vivekananda Kendra – AICYAM. The seminar organising team performed certain due diligence on these articles to verify the originality of expressions by the respective authors. The team observed that some part of the content on various research papers is generated with AI assistance with further edits by the authors to bring the alignment to the topic of discussion.

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Article: Prāṇa, Breath, and Consciousness: Yogic Pathways to Mental Resilience and Healthy Ageing

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Abstract

Healthy ageing is not only limited to preserving the physical state of body but also extends to mental resilience, emotional balance, purpose, and inner vitality. Classical yoga locates this inner vitality in prāṇa, the vital force intimately linked with breath and mind. Drawing on Upaniṣadic anthropology, the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā, the Bhagavad Gītā, contemporary research on pranayama, and Odisha's Jagannath traditions, this paper argues that the quality of one's breath influences the quality of one's mind, and that breath-centric yogic practices can meaningfully contribute to psychological well-being and healthy ageing.

Keywords

Prāṇa; Prāṇāyāma; Consciousness; Mental Resilience; Healthy Ageing; Jagannath Tradition; Odisha

Introduction

In modern times, healthy ageing is not only limited to absence of disease but also how well older people can think, feel emotionally stable, have good relationships and live a good life. Numerous studies have demonstrated yoga can benefit older adults in enhancing attention, memory-related functions, mood and sleep. The results indicate that yoga and other mind–body techniques may be helpful in mental and emotional health throughout the ageing process.

The benefits of classical yoga are explained in a different manner than modern science. Yogic texts do not speak of brain chemicals and neural networks, but rather of prāṇa (vital energy), citta (mind), and consciousness. As the breath is restless, so is the mind restless, and when the breath is calm, the mind is calm, says the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā. This close relationship makes it advisable for yogis to control the breath. The same concept is expressed in the Bhagavad Gītā (5.27-28): A meditator who subdues the senses and regulates the in and out breath to overcome fear, anger and desire.

This paper suggests that within the yogic tradition, the state of the mind is determined by the way in which a person breathes, and the quality of the mind determines the quality of the life. To investigate this concept, the paper looks at three aspects: firstly, the teachings of the Yogic

scriptures on prāṇa, mind and consciousness; secondly, contemporary studies on pranayama, mental resilience and healthy ageing, and thirdly, the Jagannath tradition of Odisha, where breath, devotion and spiritual awareness remain inextricably linked in daily life.

Prāṇa Beyond Air: Upaniṣadic and Yogic Foundations

The Upaniṣads describe prāṇa as more than just breath, it is the vital force that sustains life and the connection between body and mind. In the *Praśna Upaniṣad*, a story explains that when prāṇa begins to withdraw, the senses and mind lose their strength, showing that it is the most supreme sense.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes human existence through five kośas (sheaths): the physical body, vital energy, mind and emotions, intellect, and bliss. It also highlights the close relationship between prāṇa and mental well-being due to which controlling and refining prāṇa is considered crucial for mental peace and spiritual growth. This relationship between breath and mind is also emphasized in Haṭha Yoga. The *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* states, “As the breath goes, so goes the mind; as the mind goes, so goes the breath.” This means that calming and controlling the breath helps steady the mind. Therefore, prāṇāyāma is regarded as a central practice in Haṭha Yoga.

Breath, Mind, and the Technology of Attention

Control of the mind is an important part of the yoga practice as emphasized by Patañjali in the Yoga Sūtra, he says that yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind (citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ) and describes prāṇāyāma as the conscious control of inhalation, exhalation and breath retention to be practiced once one has attained stability in the posture. The text states that practising prāṇāyāma regularly can cleanse the obstacles that obstruct inner awareness and make the mind ready for deeper concentration and meditation.

This is the same understanding that is given in the Bhagavad Gītā. It refers to a practitioner who focuses on the outside distractions and brings them back inwards, stabilises the gaze, balances the breath, and diminishes desire, fear and anger (5.27-28). This is a disciplined way and it's offered as a way to inner peace and spiritual freedom. The traditional commentators interpret the balance of prāṇa and apāna to mean that breathing is regulated carefully and mindfully, and is perceived as a slow, steady, harmonious inhalation and exhalation.

This indicates a close connection between breath and mind. If the mind is disturbed, breathing becomes irregular; if the breathing is calm and controlled, the mind slowly calms down. Breath and mind affect each other constantly in this manner. Recent research has discovered that slow and deep breathing is a practice that has been suggested in many traditional yoga texts for restoring balance and mental tranquillity. Recent advances in neuroscience also suggest that the practice of controlled breathing can have an impact on regions of the brain that regulate attention, emotional control, and mental health.

Ida, Piṅgalā, Suṣumnā and Nostril Symbolism

In Haṭha Yoga, prāṇa (vital energy) is believed to flow through subtle energy channels called nāḍīs. Three important nāḍīs are Ida, Piṅgalā, and Suṣumnā. Ida is linked with the left nostril and calming, moon-like energy, while Piṅgalā is linked with the right nostril and active, sun-like energy. Suṣumnā is the central channel along the spine. Traditional yoga also teaches that the natural switching of breath between the nostrils reflects a natural body rhythm. The word *Haṭha* is often explained as a combination of *ha* (sun) and *ṭha* (moon), symbolising the balance of opposite yet complementary energies. Based on this idea, breathing practices such as alternate nostril breathing and single-nostril breathing were developed to harmonise the body and mind.

Modern research suggests that breathing through one nostril may influence the autonomic nervous system and brain activity related to attention and stress. Studies also show that yogic breathing can improve heart rate variability (HRV), an indicator of healthy nervous system function. These findings suggest that nostril-based prāṇāyāma can help with emotional balance, stress management, and mental well-being.

Contemporary Evidence: Breath, Resilience, and Healthy Ageing

Recent research indicates that yoga and prāṇāyāma can help alleviate stress and anxiety, enhance the functioning of the nervous system and maintain a healthy hormonal balance. The benefits are believed to stem from the reduction of body's stress response, such as the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic nervous system. Studies have also been published that suggest the heart, breathing, cognitive function and mental health all benefit.

The different prāṇāyāma techniques also have been shown in neuroscience research to affect brain activity. For instance, practicing bhastrikā prāṇāyāma regularly has been associated with reduced anxiety and alterations in brain networks associated with emotional processing. Slow and controlled breathing can also stimulate the parasympathetic system via vagal and baroreflex pathways, which helps the body to stay balanced and relaxed.

Yoga seems to be particularly beneficial for older people. Research has shown that attention, memory, decision making, and even depression, stress and anxiety symptoms have improved. Some brain imaging studies indicate that long-term yoga practice can contribute to healthy alterations in brain areas that play a role in memory and self-regulation, including the hippocampus. There has also been some evidence that yoga-based practices can improve sleep, mood and cognitive functioning in individuals with mild cognitive impairment and certain dementias. In conclusion, these findings align with the traditional yoga philosophy that breath control is not just a relaxation exercise, but a valuable tool for mental balance, emotional strength, and a long, healthy life.

Multi-Component Breath Practices: The Case of Śāmbhavī Mahāmudrā Kriyā

Śāmbhavī Mahāmudrā Kriyā (SMK) is a modern yogic practice which includes specific breathing exercises, mudrās, bandhas and concentration in a structured 21-minute practice. A study on those who learned SMK through a guided training programme showed that the regular practice for six weeks was correlated with reduction of perceived stress and increase of overall well-being. The improvements were assessed by standard psychological assessment tools. One year later, the same group of people who had continued the practice experienced many of the same benefits, such as decreased stress levels, improved sleep quality, and higher levels of mindfulness. However, SMK contains a number of components including breathing techniques, meditation, postures and lifestyle advice, making it hard to determine which of these components is responsible for the observed benefits so it is not possible to draw a definite conclusion but these studies provide clear evidence of the scientific study and measurement of a yogic practice that focuses on the breath.

Odisha, Jagannath Consciousness, and Cultural Pathways of Inner Balance

In Odisha, the concept of breath, devotion, and consciousness is still lived in daily life in a unique cultural context. The Odisha Tourism publications state that the Jagannath consciousness is not just a religion but a lifestyle that welcomes people of various faiths, traditions and backgrounds. Orissa Review, a government publication also refers to the Jagannath culture as a culture of equality, harmony, brotherhood and social unity. In these values, the tradition helps to foster peace, belonging, and social well-being in society. Recent psychological and ageing research indicates that these culturally-rich community settings can have a positive impact on mental wellbeing as they give people a sense of purpose, social connection and meaningful rituals which are essential aspects of well-being, particularly in older years.

One such important example is the Gīta Govinda of Jayadeva linked with the worship of Lord Jagannath. The verses of the Gīta Govinda have been sung and performed in the Jagannath Temple for centuries as a part of the nightly rituals. The devotional performances are rhythmic chanting, music and concentration and of course these require controlled breathing. On a psychological level, these practices can be seen as culturally-based forms of meditation that incorporate breath, emotion, and devotion. They can contribute to emotional regulation, positive social interactions and a sense of meaning and purpose over time, which are key aspects of healthy ageing.

A Yogic Model of Healthy Ageing: From Breath to Meaning

The teachings of classical yoga, scientific research and the living traditions of Odisha indicate a general definition of healthy ageing. Slow and mindful breathing techniques, like prāṇāyāma, can aid the body in coping with stress at the physical level. Studies have shown that these practices can enhance heart rate variability (HRV), promote parasympathetic nervous system function, and mitigate the negative impact of chronic stress on the body. On a psychological level, breathing awareness can help to reduce the “mind chatter” and diminish repetitive negative thinking.

Research has shown that the practice of breathing can help to reduce anxiety and improve emotional health.

Yogic traditions consider breathing as a stepping stone to self-awareness and spiritual development. The Upaniṣads as well as devotional practices like those of Lord Jagannath in Odisha, promote the idea that people should transcend their limited sense of self which is confined to the physical body and develop a broader awareness of their connection to consciousness, community, and the sacred. Meditation, devotion, chanting, and mindful breathing can help individuals cultivate a sense of meaning, acceptance, and inner stability.

Conclusion

The classical Indian texts offer an in-depth view of human life in which breath, prāṇa, mind and consciousness are linked. These traditions teach that control of the breath is not just a physical exercise but also a way to quiet the mind and increase self-awareness. While yoga and prāṇāyāma research is conducted through various methods and approaches, there is emerging evidence to suggest that breathing practices can have a positive impact on autonomic functioning, brain activity, emotional health and psychological resilience. These benefits are particularly significant in the context of healthy ageing.

The Jagannath tradition is an important example of the living and sustaining of these ideas within a cultural community. It fosters values of equality, harmony, and inner peace in life through practices of devotion, common rituals, social engagement, and spiritual reflection. This underscores the potential for healthy ageing to be a cultural and spiritual as well as medical and biological process. This presents new research avenues for yoga, psychology and ageing scholars. Future research may explore the link between traditional knowledge on prāṇa and current scientific discoveries thus creating culturally responsive and evidence-based breath-centred interventions. Supporting healthy ageing can be about more than just caring for the body, it's about caring for the quality of the breath, mind, relationships and sense of purpose in life.

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: Supporting healthy ageing can be about more than just caring for the body, it's about caring for the quality of the breath, mind, relationships and sense of purpose in life.

Article: Yoga for Healthy Ageing: Rediscovering Purpose Conscious Action

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Abstract

This article presents Yoga as a framework for healthy ageing through purposeful and conscious action. Drawing on Rama's वैराग्य in योगवासिष्ठ and Arjuna's विषाद in the Bhagavad Gita, it shows that life's later stages need not mean withdrawal, but renewed contribution. Through Patanjali's Yoga and कर्मयोग, ageing becomes maturing—preserving balance, relevance, wisdom, and meaningful participation in personal and social life.

Keywords: अनित्य, असार, अपरिहार्य, वैराग्य, विषाद, यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान, समाधि, कर्तव्य, कर्मयोग, ज्ञानयोग, and धर्म

Yoga for Healthy Ageing: Rediscovering Purpose Conscious Action

On the banks of the sacred river Sarayu, a teenager Rama returned from his pilgrimage (तीर्थाटन) and a short retreat to the wild (मृगया), with a strange heaviness in his heart. He had seen the world beyond the comfort of the palace. He had witnessed human aspirations, struggles, achievements and the inevitable changes that accompany life. Yet, instead of excitement, his mind became filled with deep reflection.

- अनित्य - The pleasures of the world appeared temporary.
- असार - The pursuit of achievement appeared pale and endless.
- अपरिहार्य - The certainty of change appeared unavoidable.

A question arose within him: “*What is the true purpose of life?*”

This is not ordinary sadness. It is वैराग्य — a deep awareness of the impermanence of worldly experiences. But even noble detachment can create uncertainty if it is not guided by wisdom. A person may see the limitations of worldly pursuits and yet remain unsure about the right way to live.

At that moment, Sage Vasistha became Rama's guide.

Through the teachings of योगवासिष्ठ, Vasistha did not ask Rama to withdraw from life. He helped him understand that wisdom does not mean abandoning action; it means performing action with awareness.

Many years later, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, another great soul faced a similar inner struggle. Arjuna was not a young man searching for direction. He was an accomplished warrior who had lived through responsibilities, relationships, victories and challenges. He stood at a mature stage of life, carrying the weight of experience.

Yet, when the moment of duty arrived, his mind became overwhelmed.

- His bow गण्डीव slipped from his hand.
- His question was different from Rama's:
- "How can I act when my responsibilities appear to conflict with my emotions?"

Thus, is विषाद — a state of sorrow, confusion and loss of clarity.

Krishna did not remove Arjuna from the battlefield. He restored his understanding of the battlefield. He showed him that the path to freedom is not escape from responsibility, but conscious action aligned with one's duty.

The journeys of Rama and Arjuna reveal an ageless truth: at different stages of life, human beings face different forms of uncertainty.

- Sometimes it is the search for meaning.
- Sometimes it is the burden of responsibility.
- Sometimes it is the question of relevance.

Yoga provides a meaningful answer to such questions and confusions.

Yoga: The Science of Remaining Connected with Life

The stories of Rama and Arjuna show that healthy ageing, which I call *maturing* - is not merely about adding years to life. It is about preserving the ability to participate meaningfully in life.

A person does not become less valuable because roles change.

The identity built around profession, position or external achievement naturally transforms with time. But the deeper ability to contribute — through knowledge, experience, compassion and wisdom — continues to grow. This is the essence of healthy ageing.

The question gradually changes from: "*What can I achieve for myself?*"

to: "*What can I contribute through myself?*"

The body may move through different phases, but the purpose of life does not retire. Yoga provides the framework to remain physically active, mentally balanced and socially connected.

- A teacher can continue to inspire young minds.
- A professional can mentor future generations.

- A person with experience can guide communities.
- A seeker can continue learning and sharing wisdom.

It teaches that life is not divided into productive and non-productive phases. That, every phase has its own धर्म. The key is to discover the right relationship between the individual and the responsibility that life presents. This is where the deeper philosophy of Yoga begins.

Understanding Yoga Through योग दर्शन: अनुबन्ध चतुष्टय

The Indian philosophical script योग दर्शन begins the study of any profound subject through अनुबन्ध चतुष्टय — The four essential considerations:

- विषय (Subject) - What is the knowledge being revealed?
- प्रयोजन (Purpose) - What transformation does this knowledge bring?
- अधिकारी (Seeker) - Who is ready to receive and apply this wisdom?
- सम्बन्ध (Relationship) - How is the teaching connected to the seeker?

Applied to Yoga, these four principles reveal its universal nature.

The subject of Yoga is not merely physical exercise.

- It is the relationship between consciousness, action and existence.
- Its purpose is not withdrawal from the world.
- Its purpose is freedom while living fully.
- Its seeker is not defined by age, position or circumstance.

Anyone who seeks harmony between inner awareness and outer action is a student of Yoga. And its deepest relationship is the connection between: कर्ता (THE DOER) AND कर्तव्य (THE DUTY).

योग दर्शन: The Philosophy of Yoga

Maharshi Patanjali defines Yoga: योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः - Yoga is the mastery of the fluctuations of the mind. The greatest challenges of life often arise not from external situations but from the interpretation created by the mind. The same change can appear as loss to one person and opportunity to another. Yoga trains the mind to respond with awareness rather than reaction through the eight-fold path: यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान, समाधि

Together, they prepare a person to engage with life consciously.

यम (Principles) and नियम(Discipline) guide our relationship with society and ourselves.

आसन (Physical Alignment) and प्राणायाम (Breath Control) maintain the body and breath.

प्रत्याहार (Sensory Withdrawal) धारणा (Concentration) and ध्यान (Meditation) cultivate inner stability and lead towards समाधि (Equanimity and Awareness)

From वैराग्य and विषाद to Conscious Action

Rama had detachment but needed direction. Arjuna had capability but needed clarity.

- Vasistha transformed Rama's वैराग्य into purposeful living.
- Krishna transformed Arjuna's विषाद into कर्मयोग.
- Both teachings point to the same wisdom:
- Do not run away from life.
- Understand your place in it.
- The Bhagavad Gita declares: योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय - Established in Yoga, perform action, abandoning attachment.
- Yogi does not stop acting.
- Yogi changes the quality of action.
- Yogi unshackles bondage by forsaking ego.
- Yogi undertakes action guided by awareness for liberation.

The Age-less Relevance of Yoga

Yoga is the philosophy that helps unite कर्ता to its कर्तव्य through कर्मयोग guided by ज्ञानयोग, aligning the individual and the universal purpose unfolding through life. Yoga is the art of skillful action - योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् (Bhagavad Gita 2.50).

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: Yoga is the philosophy that helps unite कर्ता to its कर्तव्य through कर्मयोग guided by ज्ञानयोग, aligning the individual and the universal purpose unfolding through life.

Article: Transformative Power of Dhyan on Healthy Ageing

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Abstract

Human life is the most precious gift, offering opportunities for growth, self-realization, and meaningful contribution to society. Ageing is a natural and inevitable process accompanied by profound physical, cognitive, and psychological changes. With increasing life expectancy worldwide, healthy ageing has become a major global concern demanding holistic and sustainable solutions. Among the various approaches to promoting healthy ageing, Dhyan (Meditation) occupies a unique place due to its transformative power on physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. This paper explores the concept of Dhyan as rooted in Indian philosophical tradition, its scientific validation, and its multidimensional role in fostering healthy ageing.

Keywords: Human Life, Dhyan, Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Physical Wellbeing, Mental and Cognitive Wellbeing, Emotional and Social Wellbeing, Spiritual and Self-Realization

Introduction

Human civilization has always revered life as the highest gift. The ancient Indian scriptures describe human life as a rare and precious opportunity, one that enables the soul to progress toward liberation, wisdom, and ultimate self-realization. Yet, like all things in nature, human life is subject to the cycle of birth, growth, decline, and death. Ageing, in particular, represents one of the most significant transitions in this cycle, bringing with it a host of physical, psychological, and social changes that can profoundly impact an individual's quality of life.

The global population of individuals aged 60 and above is growing at an unprecedented rate. According to the World Health Organization, the number of people aged 60 years and over is expected to double by 2050, reaching approximately 2.1 billion. This demographic shift has brought healthy ageing to the forefront of public health discourse. Healthy ageing is no longer understood merely as the absence of disease; it encompasses physical vitality, cognitive sharpness, emotional resilience, social connectedness, and spiritual fulfillment. Meeting this comprehensive definition of health in old age demands interventions that go beyond conventional medicine.

In this context, the ancient Indian practice of Dhyan (meditation) emerges as one of the most powerful, evidence-supported, and accessible tools for promoting healthy ageing. Rooted in the Yogic tradition and validated by contemporary science, Dhyan offers a holistic pathway to

physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual growth, making it uniquely suited to address the multidimensional challenges of ageing.

The Indian spiritual tradition regards human birth as a rare opportunity for self-evolution. The Bhagavata Purana states:

Labdhvā sudurlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte
mānuṣyaṁ arthadam anityam apīha dhīraḥ.

Human birth, though temporary, is extremely rare and valuable because it provides the opportunity for self-realization. Healthy ageing therefore should not merely aim at longevity but at the fulfillment of life's higher purpose through inner growth and spiritual awakening

Concept of Dhyan

"Healthy ageing is the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age." — WHO

Functional ability includes mobility, cognition, emotional well-being, social participation, and independence. Dhyan contributes positively to each of these domains

Dhyan is a Sanskrit word derived from the root 'dhi', meaning intellect or contemplation, and 'yana', meaning path or movement. Thus, Dhyan literally denotes the movement of the intellect toward a higher reality. In common usage, Dhyan is translated as meditation, contemplation, or deep concentration. It is an ancient Indian practice with roots in various spiritual and philosophical traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, each of which has contributed uniquely to its evolution and practice over millennia.

In the classical framework of Yoga, Maharshi Patanjali, widely regarded as the father of Ashtanga Yoga, systematically codified the practice of meditation. Patanjali placed Dhyan as the seventh limb (Saptama Anga) among the eight limbs of Yoga, which also include Yama (restraints), Niyama (observances), Asana (posture), Pranayama (breath control), Pratyahara (sense withdrawal), Dharana (concentration), and Samadhi (absorption). This placement underscores Dhyan as an advanced and indispensable stage of the yogic journey, attained only after the practitioner has stabilized the preceding six limbs.

According to the Patanjali Yoga Sutra, Dhyan is defined as: "Tatra Pratyaya Ektanata Dhyanam", meaning the continuous, uninterrupted flow of cognition or awareness directed toward a single object of focus. This definition distinguishes Dhyan from Dharana (concentration), where the practitioner strives to fix the mind on an object. In Dhyan, the mind naturally and effortlessly flows toward the object without interruption, reflecting a more refined and deepened state of inner attention.

The Bhagavad Gita (6.19) beautifully describes the meditative state:

Yathā dīpo nivāstho neṅgate sopamā smṛtā,
Yogino yatacittasya yuñjato yogam ātmanah.

"Just as a lamp placed in a windless place does not flicker, such is the comparison used for the yogi whose mind is controlled and absorbed in meditation on the Self."

This analogy highlights the stability, clarity, and tranquility developed through Dhyan, qualities that become increasingly important during the later stages of life.

In simple words, Dhyan is a systematic Yogic practice of focusing the mind and cultivating inner awareness. It is not merely a relaxation technique but a transformative discipline that gradually refines perception, dissolves mental impurities, and leads the practitioner toward greater clarity, peace, and self-knowledge. It provides individuals with mental tranquility, emotional stability, and spiritual growth, benefits that are especially valuable as one navigates the challenges of advancing age.

Dhyan and Healthy Ageing

Scientific studies and traditional Yogic literature both give emphasis on the transformative power of Dhyan in promoting healthy ageing. The relationship between Dhyan and healthy ageing can be understood across three interconnected dimensions: physical well-being, mental and cognitive well-being, and spiritual well-being.

- **Physical Wellbeing**

The ageing body undergoes a gradual decline in physiological functioning, including reduced cardiovascular efficiency, weakened immunity, hormonal imbalances, and increased susceptibility to chronic diseases. Regular practice of Dhyan has been found to counter several of these age-related changes through its profound effect on the autonomic nervous system. Specifically, meditation activates the parasympathetic nervous system, often called the 'rest and digest' system, while reducing the dominance of the sympathetic 'fight or flight' response that tends to be chronically elevated in many older adults due to accumulated life stress.

Clinical research has demonstrated that Dhyan significantly lowers blood pressure, reduces resting heart rate, and decreases levels of cortisol — the primary stress hormone associated with inflammation and accelerated ageing. Reduced inflammation is particularly significant in the ageing context, as chronic low-grade inflammation (sometimes termed 'inflammageing') is increasingly recognized as a central driver of age-related diseases including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease. By modulating inflammatory pathways, Dhyan may slow the biological ageing process itself.

Furthermore, studies on telomere length, a key biological marker of cellular ageing, have found that long-term meditators tend to have longer telomeres compared to non-meditators of the same

chronological age, suggesting that Dhyan may have a measurable impact on biological longevity. Immune function, another critical component of healthy ageing, is also beneficially modulated by regular Dhyan practice, improving the body's ability to fight infections and potentially reducing the risk of autoimmune conditions.

The Yoga Sutra (1.33) indirectly points to the health-promoting effects of a balanced mind:

Maitrī-karuṇā-muditā-upekṣāṇām

sukha-duḥkha-puṇya-apuṇya-viṣayāṇām

bhāvanātaś citta-prasādanam ॥

Cultivating positive mental attitudes leads to purification and serenity of the mind, which modern psychoneuroimmunology recognizes as beneficial for physical health and immune functioning.

- **Mental and Cognitive Wellbeing**

Cognitive decline is one of the most feared consequences of ageing, with conditions such as dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and mild cognitive impairment affecting millions of elderly individuals worldwide. Dhyan offers a promising protective mechanism against this decline. Neuroimaging studies using MRI and fMRI have consistently shown that regular meditation practice is associated with greater cortical thickness, particularly in regions associated with attention, sensory processing, and introspection such as the prefrontal cortex, the insula, and the hippocampus.

Research by Sara Lazar and colleagues at Harvard Medical School found that meditators showed significantly less age-related cortical thinning than non-meditators, suggesting that Dhyan may effectively slow the structural brain ageing process. The hippocampus, critical for memory formation, was found to be better preserved in long-term meditators — a finding of immense significance given that hippocampal atrophy is a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease.

On the psychological level, Dhyan has demonstrated substantial efficacy in reducing anxiety, depression, and perceived stress — conditions that are highly prevalent among the elderly and often go under-treated. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), a structured meditation program developed by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, has been extensively validated in clinical trials and shown to significantly improve psychological well-being in older adults. The cultivation of present-moment awareness through Dhyan fosters psychological resilience, enabling older adults to adapt gracefully to life's transitions — including retirement, bereavement, physical decline, and increasing dependence.

Dhyan also improves sleep quality, which is a critical but often neglected dimension of healthy ageing. Insomnia and disrupted sleep patterns are common in older populations and are associated with a wide range of negative health outcomes. Regular meditation practice has been shown to

reduce sleep onset time, decrease nighttime awakenings, and improve overall sleep quality, thereby contributing significantly to the physical and cognitive health of ageing individuals.

Swami Vivekananda emphasized the strengthening power of concentration:

"The power of attention, when properly guided and directed toward the internal world, analyses the mind and illumines facts for us."

According to Vivekananda, concentration and meditation are not merely spiritual exercises but powerful means for developing memory, clarity, and mental resilience.

- **Emotional and Social Wellbeing**

Ageing often brings a heightened risk of loneliness, social isolation, and emotional distress. The loss of loved ones, reduced professional engagement, and physical limitations can severely diminish an older adult's sense of purpose and connection. Dhyan addresses these emotional challenges by cultivating equanimity, a stable, balanced emotional state that is neither suppressed nor reactive. Through the consistent practice of Dhyan, elderly individuals develop greater emotional intelligence, enabling them to process grief, loneliness, and fear with greater acceptance and composure.

Loving-kindness meditation (Metta Dhyan), a specific form of Dhyan practice, has been shown to increase feelings of compassion, social connectedness, and positive affect — directly counteracting the emotional isolation that many elderly individuals experience. By fostering a sense of inner contentment and connection with others and the world at large, Dhyan helps older adults maintain a meaningful and emotionally fulfilling life.

- **Spiritual Growth and Self-Realization**

Beyond the physical, mental, and emotional dimensions, Dhyan facilitates a deepening of self-awareness and a profound sense of inner peace. The Yogic tradition views ageing not as a tragedy of decline but as a sacred opportunity for inward journey and spiritual maturation. In the framework of the four Ashramas (stages of life) described in ancient Indian philosophy, the later stages, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa, are explicitly devoted to spiritual inquiry and the gradual withdrawal from worldly attachments in preparation for the soul's ultimate liberation (Moksha).

Dhyan is the primary vehicle through which this inner journey is undertaken. By quieting the restless mind and directing awareness inward, Dhyan enables the practitioner to access deeper layers of consciousness, progressively moving from ordinary waking awareness to expanded states of clarity, stillness, and self-knowledge. This process, described in the Yoga tradition as moving from Dharana through Dhyan to Samadhi, ultimately dissolves the ego's identification with the body and mind, revealing the practitioner's true nature as pure, limitless awareness.

For the ageing individual, this spiritual dimension of Dhyan is perhaps its most profound gift. The acceptance of impermanence, the dissolution of existential fear, and the discovery of an inner wellspring of peace and joy, these are the fruits of sustained Dhyan practice that transcend the limitations of physical ageing and elevate life in its later stages to an experience of grace and fulfillment.

The Bhagavad Gita (2.20) reminds us:

- Na jayate mriyate va kadachin nayam bhutva bhavita va na bhuyah;
- Ajo nityah shashvato'yam purano na hanyate hanyamane sharire.

The Self is never born and never dies. Meditation gradually enables the practitioner to transcend identification with the ageing body and discover the eternal dimension of existence.

Similarly, the Katha Upanishad declares:

- Adhyatma-yogadhigamena devam matva dhirah harsha-shokau jahati.

Through the practice of inner Yoga and meditation, the wise transcend sorrow and attain abiding peace

Integrating Dhyan into Daily Life for Healthy Ageing

The practical integration of Dhyan into the daily routine of ageing individuals need not be complex or demanding. Even 20–30 minutes of daily meditation practice can yield measurable benefits when maintained consistently. Various accessible forms of Dhyan, including breath focused meditation (Anapana Sati), mantra-based meditation (Japa Dhyan), visualization practices, and body-scan meditation, can be adapted to suit the physical and cognitive capacities of elderly practitioners.

Community-based meditation programs in care homes, senior centers, and yoga studios have demonstrated high rates of adherence among elderly populations, along with significant improvements in quality-of-life measures. Healthcare providers, wellness practitioners, and policymakers are increasingly recognizing Dhyan as a cost-effective, low-risk, and highly beneficial complementary health strategy for ageing populations. The World Health Organization's Active Ageing framework and various national health policies now encourage the inclusion of mind-body practices such as meditation in elderly care protocols.

Conclusion

Swami Vivekananda envisioned a humanity that combines physical vigor, mental strength, and spiritual illumination. Dhyan serves as a bridge connecting these dimensions and empowers older adults to transform ageing from a period of decline into a stage of wisdom, service, and self-realization.

Dhyan stands at the rich confluence of ancient wisdom and modern science as one of the most potent practices for healthy ageing. Its transformative power extends across physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, making it a genuinely holistic intervention that addresses the multifaceted challenges of the ageing process. Grounded in the timeless teachings of Maharshi Patanjali and validated by contemporary neuroscience and clinical research, Dhyan offers ageing individuals not merely a longer life, but a richer, more meaningful, and more deeply fulfilling one.

As global demographic trends continue to place healthy ageing at the center of public health priorities, the promotion of Dhyan as a mainstream wellness practice becomes ever more urgent and relevant. Integrating Dhyan into the daily lives of the elderly does not merely address symptoms of decline, it transforms the very relationship of the individual with their own ageing, enabling them to meet this profound life stage with grace, equanimity, and spiritual depth. In doing so, it fulfills the highest purpose of human existence: growth, self-realization, and meaningful contribution to the world.

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1. Bhagavad Gita

~OXO~

One line to Remember: Dhyan offers ageing individuals not merely a longer life, but a richer, more meaningful, and more deeply fulfilling one.

Article: An Integrative Approach to Longevity, Mobility, Preventive Healthcare, and Holistic Wellbeing

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Abstract

Healthy ageing emphasizes maintaining functional ability, mobility, and well-being throughout life. Yoga offers a holistic approach by integrating physical postures, breathing techniques, meditation, and lifestyle practices.

This article explores the role of yoga in promoting healthy ageing and examines the effects of yoga on longevity, mobility, preventive healthcare, and holistic well-being. This study is based on a narrative review of published literature, including peer-reviewed articles, and WHO reports.

Keywords: Healthy Ageing, Yoga, Longevity, Mobility, Preventive Healthcare, Holistic Wellbeing.

Introduction

Population ageing is one of the most significant demographic transitions of the twenty-first century. Increased life expectancy has resulted in a growing number of older adults worldwide, creating new challenges related to physical health, mental well-being, and functional independence. Healthy ageing is defined as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age (WHO, 2020). This concept extends beyond the absence of disease and encompasses the preservation of physical capacity, cognitive functioning, emotional resilience, and social participation.

Healthy Ageing – A WHO Perspective

Healthy ageing has emerged as a central public health priority in response to rapid demographic transitions and increasing life expectancy worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) defines healthy ageing as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age. This definition shifts the focus from disease-centred models of ageing to an approach that emphasizes an individual's ability to function, participate in society, and maintain independence throughout the lifespan.

According to Beard et al. (2016), healthy ageing is determined by the interaction between an individual's intrinsic capacity and the surrounding environment. Intrinsic capacity refers to the composite of all physical and mental capacities, including mobility, cognition, sensory function,

psychological well-being, and vitality. Functional ability, in turn, reflects how these capacities interact with environmental and social factors to enable older adults to meet their needs, maintain relationships, learn, make decisions, and contribute to society.

The WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) further highlights the importance of promoting age-friendly environments, integrated care systems, and opportunities for social participation to improve the quality of life of older adults (WHO, 2020). Healthy ageing therefore extends beyond the prevention of disease and includes the preservation of physical health, cognitive function, emotional resilience, social engagement, and overall well-being. Rudnicka et al. (2020) emphasized that successful ageing requires maintaining functional ability despite the presence of chronic conditions and age-related physiological changes.

Several modifiable risk factors threaten healthy ageing, including physical inactivity, cardiovascular disease, obesity, sleep disturbances, cognitive decline, social isolation, and psychological distress. These factors contribute to reductions in intrinsic capacity and functional independence, thereby affecting quality of life and increasing healthcare burdens. Consequently, there is growing recognition of the need for holistic and preventive interventions that address multiple dimensions of health simultaneously. Within this context, yoga has gained increasing scientific attention as a comprehensive mind–body practice capable of supporting physical, psychological, cognitive, and social aspects of healthy ageing.

Physical Risk Factors	Psychological Risk Factors	Social Risk Factors
Physical Inactivity	Depression	Social Isolation
Hypertension	Anxiety	Loneliness
Obesity	Chronic Stress	Reduced Social Participation
Frailty	Cognitive Decline	Lack of Social Support
Chronic Diseases	Sleep Disturbances	Social Exclusion

WHO Healthy Ageing Framework (WHO, 2020); Beard et al. (2016); Rudnicka et al. (2020).

The relationship between the WHO dimensions of healthy ageing and the potential contribution of yoga is presented in Table 1. Yoga addresses several determinants of healthy ageing through its integrated practices of asana, pranayama, meditation, relaxation, and lifestyle modification. These practices may enhance intrinsic capacity, promote functional ability, and contribute to healthy longevity.

Yoga has emerged as an effective complementary approach for promoting healthy ageing because it addresses multiple dimensions of health simultaneously. According to (Cseh et al., 2026), yoga combines physical postures, breathing practices, meditation, and relaxation techniques that collectively enhance physical and psychological well-being. Unlike conventional exercise programs, yoga adopts a holistic perspective that integrates body, mind, and behavior.

Table 1. WHO Framework of Healthy Ageing and Potential Contribution of Yoga			
Sl.No	WHO Healthy Ageing Dimension	WHO Description	Potential Contribution of Yoga
1	Functional Ability	Ability to be and do what one values	Enhances independence, daily functioning, and quality of life
2	Mobility	Ability to move safely and effectively	Improves flexibility, balance, coordination, and muscle strength
3	Cognitive Function	Memory, attention, learning, and decision-making	Meditation and pranayama support cognitive performance and mental clarity
4	Psychological Well-being	Emotional stability and resilience	Reduces stress, anxiety, and depression while promoting positive emotions
5	Physical Health	Prevention and management of chronic diseases	Supports cardiovascular health, diabetes management, and musculoskeletal health
6	Social Engagement	Maintaining meaningful relationships and participation	Group yoga promotes social interaction and community participation
7	Intrinsic Capacity	Composite of physical and mental capacities	Improves strength, endurance, cognition, vitality, and sensory functioning
8	Quality of Life	Overall life satisfaction and well-being	Encourages healthy lifestyle behaviors and holistic wellness
9	Healthy Longevity	Living longer with good health and function	Supports healthy ageing through preventive and promotive health practices
10	Preventive Healthcare	Reducing risk factors before disease develops	Encourages physical activity, stress management, and healthy living

Yoga and Physical Health in Healthy Ageing

Ageing is commonly associated with declines in flexibility, muscle strength, balance, and mobility. These changes contribute significantly to functional limitations and increased risk of falls among older adults. A systematic review conducted by Youkhana et al. (2016) demonstrated that yoga-based interventions significantly improved balance and mobility in individuals aged sixty years and above. Improved balance is particularly important because falls remain one of the leading causes of disability and mortality among older adults.

Evidence suggests that yoga is an effective intervention for maintaining physical function among older adults. Ross and Thomas (2010) reported that yoga provides comparable or superior benefits to conventional exercise in improving flexibility, balance, muscular strength, and overall well-being. Furthermore, Sivaramakrishnan et al. (2019) concluded that yoga significantly enhances physical function and health-related quality of life in older adults, supporting its role in promoting functional independence and reducing age-related disability.

Similarly, Patel et al. (2012) reported that regular yoga practice contributes to improvements in muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, and overall physical fitness. These physiological adaptations support functional independence and enhance the ability to perform activities of daily living. The maintenance of mobility through yoga is therefore an important factor in successful ageing.

Yoga and Cardiovascular Health

The cardiovascular benefits of yoga have also been extensively documented. Cramer et al. (2014) found that yoga interventions positively influence blood pressure, heart rate variability, and cardiovascular risk factors. Slow breathing practices and meditative techniques stimulate parasympathetic nervous system activity, reducing stress-induced physiological responses and promoting cardiovascular health. Such effects are particularly relevant in older populations, where cardiovascular diseases remain a major cause of morbidity and mortality.

Yoga and Mental Wellbeing

Mental health is another critical component of healthy ageing. Older adults frequently experience stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression, and social isolation. Research indicates that yoga can significantly reduce symptoms of psychological distress while improving emotional well-being and quality of life. A systematic review by Mu (2026) reported positive effects of yoga on mental health outcomes among older adults, including reductions in anxiety and depressive symptoms. Through mindfulness and meditation practices, yoga enhances emotional regulation and psychological resilience.

The psychological benefits of yoga have been widely documented in scientific literature. Field (2016) reported that yoga reduces stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms through improvements in autonomic regulation and emotional self-awareness. Similarly, Cramer et al. (2013) demonstrated that yoga can serve as an effective complementary intervention for depression. Pascoe et al. (2017) further suggested that mindfulness-based practices associated with yoga influence physiological stress pathways, contributing to improved psychological resilience and emotional well-being.

Yoga and Cognitive Function

Cognitive decline represents another major challenge associated with ageing. Memory impairment, reduced attention, and diminished executive functioning can affect independence and quality of life. Gothe and McAuley (2015) observed that yoga practitioners demonstrated improvements in executive function, working memory, and cognitive performance compared with non-practitioners. These findings suggest that yoga may contribute to maintaining cognitive vitality in later life.

Beyond physical and emotional benefits, yoga may support cognitive health during ageing. Hariprasad et al. (2013) demonstrated that yoga is a feasible and beneficial intervention for

individuals with mild cognitive impairment, improving attention and mental functioning. Likewise, Lavretsky et al. (2013) reported positive effects of yoga and meditation on cognitive performance and mood among older adults, suggesting potential benefits for preserving cognitive vitality and delaying age-related cognitive decline.

Yoga and Sleep Quality

Sleep disturbances are highly prevalent among ageing populations and are associated with reduced physical and psychological health. Wang et al. (2020) found that yoga interventions significantly improved sleep quality among older adults. Improved sleep contributes to better cognitive functioning, emotional stability, immune function, and overall quality of life.

Yoga and Social Engagement

The social dimension of healthy ageing is equally important. Participation in yoga classes and community-based wellness programs fosters social interaction, emotional support, and a sense of belonging. Rudnicka et al. (2020) emphasized that healthy ageing requires maintaining meaningful relationships and social engagement throughout later life. Yoga provides opportunities for interpersonal connection while simultaneously promoting physical and mental wellness.

Yogic Philosophy and Healthy Longevity

The philosophical foundations of yoga further enrich its contribution to healthy ageing. Classical yogic texts emphasize balance, moderation, self-awareness, and harmonious living. These principles encourage individuals to cultivate healthy lifestyle behaviour and adaptive coping strategies throughout the lifespan. Telles et al. (2022) argued that the integration of yogic philosophy with modern health promotion strategies offers a comprehensive framework for enhancing quality of life and longevity.

Emerging evidence indicates that yoga may influence biological processes associated with ageing. Black et al. (2013) reported beneficial changes in inflammatory and immune-related gene expression among older adults practicing meditation-based interventions. Epel et al. (2009) proposed that mindfulness and meditation may contribute to telomere maintenance, thereby supporting cellular health and longevity. Furthermore, Tolahunase et al. (2017) observed significant improvements in biomarkers related to oxidative stress, inflammation, and cellular ageing following yoga and meditation practices, providing scientific support for the traditional yogic concept of healthy longevity.

Table 2. Yogic Practices Supporting Healthy Ageing			
Sl.No	Domain of Healthy Ageing	Yogic Practice	Expected Benefits
1	Physical Function	Asana	Strength, flexibility, balance, mobility
2	Respiratory Health	Pranayama	Improved lung function and oxygen utilization
3	Mental Health	Meditation	Reduced anxiety, stress, and depression
4	Sleep Quality	Yoga Nidra	Better sleep and recovery
5	Cognitive Health	Mindfulness Meditation	Enhanced attention and memory
6	Cardiovascular Health	Slow Breathing Practices	Improved autonomic balance and blood pressure regulation
7	Social Well-being	Group Yoga Sessions	Social connectedness and reduced loneliness
8	Healthy Longevity	Integrated Yogic Lifestyle	Improved overall healthspan and quality of life

Discussion

The present review highlights the multidimensional role of yoga in promoting healthy ageing through improvements in physical, psychological, cognitive, and social domains of health. The findings indicate that yoga is not merely a form of physical exercise but a comprehensive mind–body intervention that aligns closely with the World Health Organization’s framework for healthy ageing. According to the WHO (2020), healthy ageing is determined by the maintenance of functional ability and intrinsic capacity throughout life. The evidence reviewed suggests that yoga contributes positively to these dimensions by enhancing mobility, cardiovascular health, emotional resilience, cognitive performance, sleep quality, and social participation.

One of the major challenges of ageing is the progressive decline in physical function and mobility. Studies by Youkhana et al. (2016) and Patel et al. (2012) demonstrated that yoga-based interventions improve balance, flexibility, and muscular strength, thereby reducing fall risk and supporting independent living among older adults. These findings emphasize the potential of yoga as an effective preventive strategy for maintaining functional independence and quality of life.

The psychological benefits of yoga are equally important in the context of healthy ageing. Depression, anxiety, loneliness, and chronic stress are common among older adults and can negatively affect overall well-being. Research by Gonçalves et al. (2023) and Cramer et al. (2013) indicates that yoga significantly reduces psychological distress while enhancing emotional well-being. Such benefits may result from improved autonomic regulation, reduced stress responses, and enhanced mindfulness, contributing to greater psychological resilience.

Cognitive health is another critical component of successful ageing. Evidence from Gothe and McAuley (2015) and Hariprasad et al. (2013) suggests that yoga may improve attention, executive functioning, working memory, and overall cognitive performance. As age-related cognitive decline

and dementia continue to increase globally, yoga may serve as a valuable non-pharmacological approach for preserving cognitive vitality.

The relationship between yoga and healthy longevity extends beyond symptom management. Tolahunase et al. (2017) reported improvements in biomarkers associated with oxidative stress, inflammation, and cellular ageing, while Epel et al. (2009) proposed that mindfulness-based practices may support telomere maintenance and healthier cellular ageing processes. These findings provide preliminary evidence that yoga may contribute to both lifespan and health span.

Despite promising evidence, limitations remain. Many studies involve small sample sizes and short intervention periods, highlighting the need for large-scale randomized controlled trials. Overall, the findings suggest that yoga addresses many modifiable risk factors associated with unhealthy ageing. Consistent with the WHO framework, yoga supports functional ability through improvements in physical, psychological, cognitive, and social health (Beard et al., 2016).

Therefore, yoga may represent a practical, cost-effective, and holistic strategy for promoting healthy ageing and enhancing quality of life among older adults.

Conclusion

Yoga represents a multidimensional intervention that supports healthy ageing through improvements in physical fitness, mobility, cardiovascular health, mental well-being, cognitive functioning, sleep quality, and social engagement. Contemporary scientific evidence increasingly supports the traditional yogic view that longevity should be accompanied by vitality, awareness, balance, and purpose. As global populations continue to age, yoga offers a safe, cost-effective, and holistic approach for promoting functional independence and enhancing quality of life across generations.

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: As global populations continue to age, yoga offers a safe, cost-effective, and holistic approach for promoting functional independence and enhancing quality of life across generations.

Article: ସୁସ୍ଥ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥା ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗ ଏକ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠେଧକ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରୋହାହନମୂଳକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟସେବା

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ସଂକ୍ଷିପ୍ତ ବିବରଣୀ

ବିଶ୍ୱ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସଂଗଠନ (WHO) ସୁସ୍ଥ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥାର ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଉପରେ ଜୋର ଦେଇଛି। ଯୋଗ ଏହି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ସହିତ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ସମନ୍ୱିତ, କାରଣ ଏହା ଶାରୀରିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା, ମାନସିକ ଦୃଢ଼ତା, ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ଏବଂ ସାମାଜିକ ସକ୍ରିୟତାକୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହିତ କରେ।

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଶବ୍ଦ: ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ ଜ୍ଞାନ, ଜ୍ଞାନଯୋଗ, କର୍ମଯୋଗ, ଭକ୍ତିଯୋଗ, ଏବଂ ସୁସ୍ଥ ବ୍ୟାୟାମ

ପରିଚୟ

ଭାରତର ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ ଜ୍ଞାନରେ ନିହିତ ଥିବା ଯୋଗ ହେଉଛି ଏକ ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ପଦ୍ଧତି :- ଯାହା ଶରୀର, ମନ ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସମନ୍ୱୟ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଥାଏ । ଆସନ (ଶାରୀରିକ ମୁଦ୍ରା) ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ (ଶ୍ୱାସକ୍ରିୟା ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ) ଏବଂ ଧ୍ୟାନ ହେଉଛି ଯୋଗର ମୂଳଦୁଆ । ଯୋଗର ଏହି ସମସ୍ତ ଉପାଦାନଗୁଡ଼ିକର ମିଶ୍ରଣ ଶାରୀରିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା, ମାନସିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ କୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରିଥାଏ । ଯୋଗ ମନ ଏବଂ ଶରୀର, ଚିନ୍ତନ ଓ କର୍ମ ସଂମ୍ବନ୍ଧରେ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଥାଏ ।

ସମୀକ୍ଷା

ଯୋଗଧାରା ଭଗବାନ ଶିବ କୁ ସଂସାର ର ପ୍ରଥମ ଯୋଗିପୁରୁଷ ଅବା ଆଦି ଯୋଗୀ ବୋଲି ବିବେଚନା କରାଯାଇଥାଏ । ତେଣୁ ସେ ହେଉଛନ୍ତି ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଯୋଗର ଜନକ, ଯିଏ ଯୋଗ ସୂତ୍ରରେ ସମସ୍ତ ନୀତି କୁ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥିତ କରିଥିଲେ ।

ଶ୍ରୀ ରାମକୃଷ୍ଣ ପରମହଂସ ଯୋଗର ତିନିଗୋଟି ମହାନ ମାର୍ଗ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଅବତାରଣା କରିଥିଲେ - ଜ୍ଞାନଯୋଗ, ଯାହାକୁ ପ୍ରଜ୍ଞା ଓ ଜ୍ଞାନର ମାର୍ଗବୋଲି ବିବେଚନା କରାଯାଇଥାଏ । କର୍ମଯୋଗ - ଯାହାକି ନିସ୍ୱାର୍ଥପର ସେବା ଓ ସତକର୍ମ ବୋଲି ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଏ । ଭକ୍ତିଯୋଗ ଅର୍ଥାତ ଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପ୍ରେମ ଓ ଭକ୍ତି ର ମାର୍ଗ । ସେ ଆମକୁ ଶିଖାଇଥିଲେ ଯେ ଏହି ତିନୋଟିଯୋଗ ମାର୍ଗ ସର୍ବୋପରି ଏକତ୍ରିତ ହୋଇ ପରମ ସତ୍ୟ ଅନୁଭବରେ ସହାୟକ ହୋଇଥାନ୍ତି ।

ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥା ହେଉଛି ଜୀବନର ଏକ ସ୍ବାଭାବିକ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ଯାହା ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମଣିଷଙ୍କୁ ଅତିକ୍ରମ କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼େ। ବୟସ ବଢ଼ିବା ସହିତ ଲୋକମାନେ ଶାରୀରିକ, ମାନସିକ ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ଅନେକ ସମସ୍ୟାର ସମ୍ମୁଖୀନ ହୁଅନ୍ତି। ଶକ୍ତି ହ୍ରାସ, ଦୀର୍ଘସ୍ଥାୟୀ ରୋଗ, ଚିନ୍ତା, ଅବସାଦ, ଏବଂ ଶରୀରର ଗତିଶୀଳତା କମିଯିବା ଭଳି ସମସ୍ୟା ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥାରେ ସାଧାରଣ ଘଟଣା। ଆଜିର ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ ଜୀବନଶୈଳୀରେ ସୁସ୍ଥ ଓ ସକ୍ରିୟ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଛି। ଏହି ପରିପ୍ରେକ୍ଷୀରେ, ଯୋଗ ଏକ ପ୍ରଭାବଶାଳୀ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧାତ୍ମକ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରୋହାହନମୂଳକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସେବା ରଚନାତି ଭାବେ ଉଭା ହୋଇଛି, ଯାହା ସୁସ୍ଥ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥାକୁ ସମର୍ଥନ କରିଥାଏ ଏବଂ ଜୀବନର ଗୁଣାତ୍ମକ ମାନକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିଥାଏ।

ଆଜି ଆଧୁନିକ ବିଜ୍ଞାନ ଆମର ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ମୁନିରଷିମାନଙ୍କର ଶାଶ୍ୱତ ଚିନ୍ତନ କୁ ଅଧିକ ମାତ୍ରାରେ ସ୍ୱୀକାର କରିବାକୁ ଲାଗିଛନ୍ତି । ଏହିସବୁ ମୁନିରଷିମାନଙ୍କର ଅବିଶ୍ୱସନୀୟ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଜୀବନ, ସାମର୍ଥ୍ୟ ଏବଂ ମାନସିକ ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛତା ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଥିଲେ ଯାହାକି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳିତ ଜୀବନଚର୍ଯ୍ୟା ଯୋଗ ଏବଂ ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକ କର୍ମ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଦ୍ୱାରା ହାସଲ କରାଯାଇପାରିଥିଲା ।

ନିୟମିତ ଭାବରେ ଯୋଗାଭ୍ୟାସ କଲେ ଏହା ନିରାପଦ ଭାବରେ ବୟସ୍କ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ମାନଙ୍କ ଶାରୀରିକ ଓ ମାନସିକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ରକ୍ଷା, ଚଳନଶୀଳତା ଏବଂ ଶାରୀରିକ ନମନୀୟତା ରକ୍ଷାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୋଇଥାଏ । ଏହା ଫଳରେ ସେମାନେ ଚଳପ୍ରଚଳ ହେବା ବେଳେ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ହରାଇ ତଳେ ପଡ଼ିଯିବାର ଆଶଙ୍କା ଉଲ୍ଲେଖନୀୟ ମାତ୍ରାରେ ହ୍ରାସ ପାଇ ଥାଏ ।

ଯୋଗର ସବୁଠାରୁ ବଡ଼ ଲାଭ ହେଉଛି ଏହା ଶାରୀରିକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରେ। ବୟସ ବଢ଼ିବା ସହିତ ଶରୀରର ମାଂସପେଶୀ ଦୁର୍ବଳ ହୋଇଯାଏ ଏବଂ ଶରୀରର ନମନୀୟତା କମିଯାଏ। ଯୋଗ ଆସନଗୁଡ଼ିକ ମାଂସପେଶୀକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରିବା ସହିତ ଶରୀରର ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ଓ ନମନୀୟତାକୁ ବଢ଼ାଇଥାଏ। ଏହା ହାଡ଼ ଏବଂ ଗଣ୍ଠିକୁ ମଜବୁତ କରିଥାଏ, ଯାହା ଅସ୍ଥିକ୍ଷୟ (Osteoporosis) ଏବଂ ଗଣ୍ଠିବାତ (Arthritis) ଭଳି ରୋଗର ମାତ୍ରାକୁ କମାଇଥାଏ। ଏହାଛଡ଼ା ଯୋଗ ରକ୍ତ ସଞ୍ଚାଳନକୁ ସୁଧାରି ହୃଦୟକୁ ସୁସ୍ଥ ରଖିଥାଏ ଏବଂ ଉଚ୍ଚ ରକ୍ତଚାପ ଭଳି ସମସ୍ୟାକୁ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୁଏ।

ଯୋଗ ଦୀର୍ଘସ୍ଥାୟୀ ରୋଗଗୁଡ଼ିକର ପ୍ରତିରୋଧରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ। ଅନେକ ଗବେଷଣାରୁ ଜଣାପଡ଼ିଛି ଯେ ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗାଭ୍ୟାସ ରକ୍ତରେ ଶର୍କରାର ମାତ୍ରାକୁ ସନ୍ତୁଳିତ ରଖିଥାଏ, ଯାହା ମଧୁମେହ ରୋଗୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଲାଭଦାୟକ। ଏହା ଶରୀରର ମେଟାବୋଲିଜମକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରି ମେଟାବୋଲିଜ୍ମ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରଣ କରିଥାଏ। ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ପୁଷ୍ପପୁଷ୍ପର କ୍ଷମତାକୁ ବଢ଼ାଇ ଶ୍ୱାସ-ପ୍ରଶ୍ୱାସ ପ୍ରଣାଳୀକୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରେ, ଯାହା ବୟସ୍କ ଲୋକଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ବିଶେଷ ଉପକାରୀ।

ବୟସ୍କମାନଙ୍କ ସୁସ୍ଥତା ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗ କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାର କଷ୍ଟକର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଦାବିକରେ ନାହିଁ । ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଯୋଗାଭ୍ୟାସ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଭାବରେ ଏକ ସରଳ ଓ ସୁଗମ ନିୟମାବଳୀ ଯାହାକି ବୟୋଜ୍ୟୋଷ୍ଠମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଉପଯୋଗୀ ତାହାହିଁ ଦର୍ଶାଇଥାଏ । ସେଥିମଧ୍ୟରେ ରହିଛି ଯୋଗିକ ସୁସ୍ଥ ବ୍ୟାୟାମ ଅଥବା ସରଳ ଭାବରେ ଆଶ୍ୱିନାସି ଚାଳନା, ଚୈକି ସହାୟତା ନେଇ କେତେକ ଯୋଗାସନ କରିବା ଏବଂ ଏଥି ସହିତ ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ କରିବା ଏବଂ ଏହା ବ୍ୟତୀତ ଏପରି ଧ୍ୟାନ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ କରିବା ଯାହା ଆମର ସୁସ୍ଥ ମାନସିକ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଏବଂ ରୋଗ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ଶକ୍ତି ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରିବ । ଏଥିପାଇଁ ବୟସ୍କ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଙ୍କ ଶରୀର ଉପରେ କୌଣସି ଅଧିକ ଚାପ ପଡ଼ିବ ନାହିଁ ।

ସୁସ୍ଥ ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥା ପାଇଁ ମାନସିକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ମଧ୍ୟ ସମାନ ଭାବେ ଜରୁରୀ। ଅନେକ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଏକାକୀପଣ, ଚିନ୍ତା, ଅବସାଦ ଏବଂ ମାନସିକ ଚାପର ଶିକାର ହୁଅନ୍ତି। ଯୋଗ ଏହି ସମସ୍ୟାଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଏକ ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଓ ପ୍ରଭାବଶାଳୀ ସମାଧାନ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରେ। ଧ୍ୟାନ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ମନକୁ ଶାନ୍ତ କରି ଚାପ ହ୍ରାସ କରେ ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ରକ୍ଷା କରିଥାଏ। ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗାଭ୍ୟାସ ଏକାଗ୍ରତା, ସ୍ମୃତିଶକ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଚିନ୍ତନ କ୍ଷମତାକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରିଥାଏ, ଯାହା ବୟସ୍କଜନିତ ମାନସିକ ଅବନତିକୁ ରୋକିବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୁଏ।

ଯୋଗ ନିଦ୍ରାର ଗୁଣବତ୍ତାକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିଥାଏ। ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥାରେ ନିଦ୍ରା ସମସ୍ୟା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସାଧାରଣ। ଯୋଗ ଶରୀର ଓ ମନକୁ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ଦେଇ ଗଭୀର ଏବଂ ଶାନ୍ତିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନିଦ୍ରାକୁ ସ୍ଥାପନ କରେ। ଭଲ ନିଦ୍ରା ଶରୀରର ରୋଗ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ଶକ୍ତିସ୍ତର ଏବଂ ମନୋଭାବକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିଥାଏ।

ସାମୁହିକ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଲୋକମାନେ ପରସ୍ପର ସହିତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ ସ୍ଥାପନ କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଏକ ସମର୍ଥନମୂଳକ ପରିବେଶ ପାଆନ୍ତି । ଏହା ଏକାକୀପଣକୁ କମାଇ ଆତ୍ମ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ । ଯୋଗ ମଣିଷ କୁ ସକାରାତ୍ମକ ଚିନ୍ତା ଧାରା ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମ ସଚେତନତା ଶିଖାଏ । ପ୍ରତିରୋଧାତ୍ମକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସେବା ଦୃଷ୍ଟି କୋଣରୁ ଯୋଗ ଏକ ସରଳ, ସୁଲଭ ଏବଂ ମିତବ୍ୟୟୀ ଉପାୟ । ଏହା ପାଇଁ ବିଶେଷ ଉପକରଣ ର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ନାହିଁ । ଘରେ, ପାର୍କ କିମ୍ବା କୌଣସି କେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ କରାଯାଇପାରେ ।

ଏହା ସହିତ, ଯୋଗ ସାମାଜିକ ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ କଲ୍ୟାଣକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ। ସାମୁହିକ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଲୋକମାନେ ପରସ୍ପର ସହିତ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ ସ୍ଥାପନ କରନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଏକ ସମର୍ଥନମୂଳକ ପରିବେଶ ପାଆନ୍ତି। ଏହା ଏକାକୀପଣକୁ କମାଇ ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ୱାସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ। ଯୋଗ ମଣିଷକୁ ସକାରାତ୍ମକ ଚିନ୍ତାଧାରା ଏବଂ ଆତ୍ମ-ସଚେତନତା ଶିଖାଏ, ଯାହା ବୃଦ୍ଧାବସ୍ଥାକୁ ଆନନ୍ଦ ଓ ଗରିମା ସହିତ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୁଏ।

ଉପସଂହାର

ଯୋଗ କୁ କେବଳ ଏକ ସାମୟିକ ଶରୀରାଭ୍ୟାସ ଭାବରେ ନା ଆପଣାଇ ଜୀବନବ୍ୟାପୀ ଏକ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଏବଂ ନିରାମୟ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଭାବରେ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରନ୍ତୁ । ଗୋଟିଏ ସମାଜ ତାର ବୟସ୍କଜନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି କେତେ ମାତ୍ରାରେ ସେବା ଯତ୍ନ କରିଥାଏ ସେଥିରୁ ସେହି ସମାଜର ବାସ୍ତବ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱକୁ ମପାଯାଇଥାଏ । ଆମେ ଆମର ବରିଷ୍ଠଜନଙ୍କ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଏପରି ଏକ ଅନୁକୂଳ ବାତାବରଣ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା, ଯେଉଁଠାରେ ସେମାନେ କୌଣସି ଭୟ, ନିର୍ଭରଶୀଳତା କିମ୍ବା ଏକାନ୍ତତା ବିନା ଏକ ମର୍ଯ୍ୟାଦାବଦ୍ଧ, ସୁସ୍ଥ, ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଏବଂ ଶାନ୍ତିର ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚିପାରିବେ । ଯୋଗକୁ ଜୀବନ ର ଏକ ଲୟଯୁକ୍ତ ସଂଗୀତରେ ପରିଣତ କରି ଆମେ ସାମଗ୍ରିକ ଭାବରେ ଏହା ସୁନିଶ୍ଚିତ କରିପାରିବାଯେ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ବରିଷ୍ଠ ନାଗରିକମାନଙ୍କ ସକାଶେ ବାସ୍ତବରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନର ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣମ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ ଯେତେବେଳେ ସେମାନେ ସୁସ୍ଥ, ସୌହର୍ଯ୍ୟାପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଏବଂ ପରିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚିପାରିବେ ।

ସନ୍ଦର୍ଭ

1. ଭଗବଦ୍ ଗୀତା

~OXO~

One line to Remember: ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ହେଉଛି ବରିଷ୍ଠ ନାଗରିକମାନଙ୍କ ସକାଶେ ବାସ୍ତବରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଜୀବନର ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣମ ଅଧ୍ୟାୟ ଯେତେବେଳେ ସେମାନେ ସୁସ୍ଥ, ସୌହର୍ଯ୍ୟାପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଏବଂ ପରିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚିପାରିବେ ।

Article: Adjustment Mechanisms for Healthy Ageing: The Bhagavad Gita Perspective on ageing

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Abstract:

People worldwide are living longer. A longer life brings with it opportunities, not only for older people and their families, but also for societies as a whole. If people can experience these extra years of life in good health, their ability to do the things they value will be more meaningful and happier. This paper attempts to explore the spiritual theories of Bhagavad Gītā in order to make ageing healthy and happy.

Keywords: Resilience, Ageing, Bhagavad Gītā, and Balanced life

Introduction

The Indian way of living has its own self developing patterns of philosophy and values. These values and philosophy of life guide all human beings in all walks of life. These ethics and values are present due to spiritual cognitive paradigm initiated by Bhagavad Gītā itself and many other Indian holy literatures. The Bhagavad-Gita is the embodiment of Hindu philosophy. It is an internationally much-admired text which has enlightened people from different walks of life. From great philosophers such as Schopenhauer and Thoreau to great leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, the Bhagavad-Gita continues to enlighten people all over the world. The original text of the Bhagavad Gītā is in the form of a dialogue in Sanskrit language between Arjuna, the warrior and Sri Krishna, his charioteer.

The Gita has 18 chapters containing 700 verses. Bhagavad-Gita is divided into three parts. The first six chapters including two hundreds eighty verses deal with the path of Action (Karma-yoga), the seven to twelve chapters including two hundreds nine verses explain the path of Devotion (Bhakti-yoga) and the thirteen to eighteen chapters including two hundreds eleven verses point out about the path of Knowledge (Jnana-yoga) which establish the identity of the individual spirit with the Spiritual value of education (Srivastava, 2016). Bhagwad Gita tells the virtuous way to develop unfurled understanding of emotions and vision to achieve goals in a true and transparent manner. Without the righteous understanding of 'doing' and 'not doing' no one will "get the things done in right manner (Agrawal & Rastogi, 2021). The spiritual theories that Bhagwat Gita has imbibed in

the society is unique and everlasting. It is universally acknowledged as one of the world's literary and spiritual masterpieces (Mitchell, 2013).

Decision making

Decision making is a fundamental aspect of human existence across the life span. However, the elderly are faced with a greater risk for illness and disease (Karlman et al, 2007). Research suggests that the ageing brain may undergo differential decline of neural structures in the prefrontal region (as opposed to other regions of the cerebral cortex), possibly contributing to older persons having compromised ability to make well-reasoned and well-informed judgments and decisions. In this context, the entire Bhagavad Gita stands as a panacea to make an indecisive person viz. Arjuna a decisive one.

The very first chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gita starts with *Arjun Bisad Yoga* where, being overwhelmed by doubt and despair, the warrior Arjun refused to fight against his near and dear ones. Throughout the, Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has been trying to motivate Arjun to rise above such worldly attachment and raise weapons for the sake of Dharma i.e. Righteousness. At last, a grieved Arjun rose above the so called bodily fervours and confessed that his delusion has been destroyed and he has gained his intellect by the grace of the Lord. Now he would act as per the wish of Srikrishna. Thus, spoke the Gita:

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत । स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ 73॥

Naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvat-prasādān mayāchyuta

Sthito 'smi gata-sandehaḥ kariṣhye vachanam tava II (SBG 18:73)

The holy verses of the Bhagavad Geeta devote itself to one mission-making one decisive. It does so through its protagonist, the warrior Arjun. It does so by enabling Arjun to embark on a voyage of self-discovery so he can master the art of making a complex decision in the face of conflicting values. In the whole of Gita, the Lord has explained the core values of life along with its variegated aspects. He has tried to explain what is right and what is wrong. But he has never insisted Arjun to do as per His wish. Chapter 18 of Bhagavad Gita depicts the same in the following Shloka:

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया । विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ 63॥

Iti te jñānam ākhyātam guhyād guhyataram mayā

Vimṛiṣhyaitad aśheṣheṇa yathechchhasi tathā kuru (SBG 18:63)

Harmony and resilience

As people age, the body and mind lose resilience. This means they are less able to bounce back from physical sickness, emotional stress, or sudden life changes. When older people lack resilience, they struggle to recover from daily stresses, leading to a poorer quality of life. With ageing, the organism becomes more sensitive to environmental impacts and more susceptible to changes (Majnarić, et al., 2021).

A person, who does not engage in any feeling of disdain or malevolence towards any being, who is amicable and empathetic to all, who is free from the selfish thoughts of I and mine, who is ever equal in both distress and delight is favoured by his followers i.e. family and friends. The Bhagavad Gita has emphasized this equanimity of mind in several places. Just to cite a few:

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः । हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ 15॥

Yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate cha yaḥ

Harṣāmarṣha-bhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa cha me priyaḥ II (SBG 12:15)

This states that those who are not a source of annoyance to anyone and who in turn are not agitated by anyone, who are equal in pleasure and pain, and free from fear and anxiety, such devotees of the God are very dear to Him. Devotion softens the heart, and so the devotees naturally become gentle in their dealings with everyone. Devotees are equipped with the wisdom of the scriptures, and hence, they are conscious that pleasure and pain are both inevitable with the flow of life. Thus, they utilize all situations to enhance their work and ability. Being in harmony with the will of God, they experience neither fear nor anxiety. Quoting the Gita:

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः । तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥ 24॥

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः । सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥ 25॥

Sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ sva-sthaḥ sama-loṣṭāśhma-kāñchanah

Tulya-priyāpriyo dhīras tulya-nindātma-sanstutiḥ

Mānāpamānayos tulyas tulyo mitrāri-pakṣhayoḥ

Sarvārambha-parityāgī guṇātītaḥ sa uchyate II SBG 14:24-25)

This states that those who are alike in happiness and distress; who are established in the self; who look upon, a stone, and a piece of gold as of equal value; who remain the same amidst pleasant and unpleasant events; who are intelligent; who accept both blame and praise with equanimity; who remain the same in honour and dishonour; who treat both friend and foe alike; and who have abandoned all enterprises they are said to have risen above the three gunas . Bhagavad Gita emphasizes on self-realized individuals who recognize the dualities of the world but remain unaffected by them. Thus, they become (beyond the influence of the three). This gives them an

equal vision, with which they see a piece of stone and gold, favourable and unfavourable situations, criticisms and glorifications as all the same.

Self-esteem

Low self-esteem in older adults is a common issue often caused by retirement, physical health changes, or the loss of independence. It can lead to loneliness, sadness, and social withdrawal (Łabędzka et al., 2022).

Self-image and self-esteem play a great role in shaping one's personality. Positive self-image or self-esteem motivates a person to reach the peak of his performance. That is why Lord Krishna says a man's mind is his best friend and worst enemy. It has potential for creativity and success within every individual. It is up to man to make use of this potential and succeed in life. In several places of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has talked about the importance of human mind and the significance of controlling it. One of the most significant teachings about the mind in the Bhagavad Gita is found in Chapter VI, Verse 5, where it states:

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् । आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ 5॥

Uddhared ātmanātmānam nātmānam avasādayet I

Ātmaiva hyātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanah

This means the Gita has stated to elevate oneself through the power of his/her mind, and not to degrade because the mind can be the friend and also the enemy of the self.

The Bhagavad Gita has described a person as Sthitaprajna who has achieved a state of inner solidity and equanimity. Such an individual is not disturbed by the ups and downs of life, neither overwhelmed by victory nor flattened by defeat. Chapter 2, verse 55 of the Gita says:

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् । आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ 55॥

Prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān I

Ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadochyate II (SBG 2:55)

Thus says the Lord, when one discards all selfish desires and cravings of the senses that torment the mind, and becomes satisfied in the realization of the self, such a person is said to be transcendently situated.

The Bhagavad Gita also speaks of Sthitaprajna as a person who remains undisturbed amidst pleasure and pain. A Stitaprajna or the man of perfect wisdom is one who has abandoned all his desires, remains least perturbed by pain or pleasure, which is free from passion, anger, and greed. He withdraws all his senses from their objects like a tortoise withdrawing into a shell. He is never perturbed by the results of his actions, and he is always calm and composed.

Balanced life style

A balanced lifestyle (proper diet, regular movement, and mental rest) is rare among the elderly due to physical ageing, health issues, and a lack of daily support. These barriers make it hard to stay active and can lead to falls and illness.

A person can remain healthy only when he is judicious in food, sleep, work, and recreation. In Chapter XIV i.e. Guna Traya Vibhaga Yoga, Bhagavad Gita speaks about the three gunas viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The material energy consists of three gu as (modes) sattva (goodness), rajas (passion), and tamas (ignorance). These modes tie the eternal soul to the perishable body. The intellect will be able to make right choices if Sattva is predominant Dominance of Rajas or Tamas hampers its ability to make right decisions. The Gita says that the fruit of actions performed in the mode of goodness bestow pure results. Deeds done in the mode of passion result in pain, while those performed in the mode of ignorance result in darkness.

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् । रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥ 16॥

Karmaṇaḥ sukṛitasyāhuḥ sāttvikam nirmalam phalam

Rajasas tu phalam duḥkham ajñānam tamasaḥ phalam II (SBG 14:16)

It states that persons doing actions with sattva predominance are equipped with a measure of purity, virtue, knowledge, and selflessness. Therefore, their actions are performed with a relatively pure intention and the results are elevating and fulfilling. However, a person has to rise above the three gunas to accept both blame and praise with equanimity; to remain the same in admiration and disgrace and to remain the same amidst pleasant and unpleasant events.

In the same way, The Bhagavad Gita classifies diet into three types based on the three natural qualities (gunas): Sattvic (purity and peace), Rajasic (passion and activity), and Tamasic (ignorance and laziness). The Bhagavad Gita unveils diet secrets for a healthier life. With an emphasis on sattvik foods, it serves as a guide to develop an attitude of love, harmony and respect with nature. These sattvik diet principles are less about restriction and more about creating an inner and outer environment for vitality, peace and long life (The Times of India, 2025).

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः। रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥ 8॥

Āyuh-sattva-balārogya-sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ

Rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthirā hṛidyā āhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ II (SBG 17:8)

Means persons in the mode of goodness prefer foods that promote life span, and increase virtue, strength, health, happiness, and satisfaction.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that balanced sleep is essential for successful yoga and spiritual practice. In Chapter 6, Verse 17, Krishna declares that yoga destroys misery only for one who is "regulated in sleep and wakefulness" (yukta-svapnavabodhasya). The Gita warns against both

extremes: too much sleep breeds tamas (lethargy), while too little creates rajas (restlessness). The middle path of adequate, regulated rest creates the clarity and peace needed for spiritual growth. This middle path needs to be adopted by elderly people to make their ageing meaningful and blissful.

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: A person can remain healthy only when he is judicious in food, sleep, work, and recreation.

Article: Yoga as a Preventive and Promotive Healthcare Strategy for Healthy Ageing

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Abstract

Population ageing is one of the most significant demographic transformations of the twenty-first century. Advances in medicine and public health have increased life expectancy worldwide; however, longer life does not necessarily guarantee better health. Consequently, the concept of healthy ageing has emerged as a major public health priority. Healthy ageing focuses on maintaining functional ability, independence, and quality of life throughout the ageing process. The theme of International Day of Yoga 2026, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," highlights the growing recognition of yoga as an effective approach to enhancing health span rather than merely lifespan. Yoga, an ancient Indian system of holistic living, integrates physical postures (asanas), breathing practices (pranayama), meditation, relaxation, and ethical principles to promote overall well-being. Scientific evidence suggests that regular yoga practice improves flexibility, balance, cardiovascular health, respiratory efficiency, cognitive functioning, emotional stability, sleep quality, and social engagement among older adults. Yoga also contributes to hormonal balance, stress reduction, and neuroendocrine regulation, thereby preventing several age-related disorders. The present paper examines yoga as both a preventive and promotive health-care strategy for healthy ageing. It discusses the physiological, psychological, social, and spiritual benefits of yoga and explores its role in extending health span and enhancing quality of life. The paper concludes that yoga is a cost-effective, culturally relevant, and sustainable intervention for promoting active, healthy, and dignified ageing.

Keywords: Yoga, Healthy Ageing, Preventive Health Care, Promotive Health Care, Health span, Older Adults, Quality of Life.

Introduction

Ageing is a natural and inevitable biological process characterized by gradual changes in physical, mental, emotional, and social functioning. With improvements in healthcare, nutrition, and sanitation, people are living longer than ever before. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the global population aged 60 years and above is increasing rapidly and is expected to double by 2050. This demographic transition presents significant challenges for healthcare systems, families, and societies.

The World Health Organization defines healthy ageing as the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age. Healthy ageing is not simply the absence of disease but the ability to continue performing meaningful activities, maintaining independence, and enjoying a good quality of life. Modern health science increasingly emphasizes health span, which refers to the period of life spent in good health, rather than lifespan alone.

India's ancient tradition of yoga offers a comprehensive and holistic approach to healthy ageing. For thousands of years, yoga has been used to maintain physical fitness, mental clarity, emotional stability, and spiritual well-being. Recognizing its significance, the theme of International Day of Yoga 2026, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," encourages individuals to adopt yoga as a lifelong practice for maintaining health and vitality.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand the concept of healthy ageing.
- To examine yoga as a preventive health-care strategy.
- To analyze the promotive role of yoga in enhancing quality of life among older adults.
- To explore the physiological and psychological mechanisms through which yoga supports healthy ageing.
- To suggest measures for integrating yoga into healthy ageing programmes.

Concept of Healthy Ageing

Healthy ageing involves maintaining physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being throughout life. It emphasizes maximizing opportunities for health, participation, security, and lifelong learning.

The major dimensions of healthy ageing include:

- Physical health and mobility
- Mental and cognitive functioning
- Emotional stability
- Social participation
- Functional independence
- Spiritual fulfilment

The goal of healthy ageing is to enable individuals to remain active, productive, and independent for as long as possible.

Preventive and promotive health-care approaches are therefore essential for achieving this objective.

Yoga: A Holistic Health System

Yoga originated in ancient India and is comprehensively described in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. It is a science of harmonious living that seeks to integrate body, mind, and spirit. The eight limbs of yoga include:

- Yama (ethical restraints)
- Niyama (personal observances)
- Asana (physical postures)
- Pranayama (breath regulation)
- Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses)
- Dharana (concentration)
- Dhyana (meditation)
- Samadhi (self-realization)

These components collectively contribute to physical health, emotional balance, mental clarity, and spiritual growth. Unlike many exercise systems that focus solely on the body, yoga addresses multiple dimensions of human health simultaneously.

Yoga as a Preventive Healthcare Strategy

Preventive healthcare aims to reduce the risk of disease and disability before they occur. Yoga serves as an effective preventive intervention for several age-related health problems.

Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases

Non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and metabolic disorders are highly prevalent among older adults. Research indicates that regular yoga practice helps regulate blood pressure, improve insulin sensitivity, reduce body fat, and enhance cardiovascular function. Consequently, yoga lowers the risk of chronic diseases and their complications.

Improvement of Musculoskeletal Health

Ageing is often associated with reduced flexibility, muscle weakness, joint stiffness, osteoporosis, and impaired balance. Yoga postures help improve flexibility, muscular strength, joint mobility, and postural stability. Enhanced balance and coordination reduce the risk of falls and fractures, which are major causes of disability among elderly individuals.

Enhancement of Respiratory Function

Pranayama practices improve respiratory efficiency by increasing lung capacity, oxygen utilization, and breathing endurance. Better respiratory function contributes to improved vitality and overall health.

Stress Reduction

Chronic stress accelerates ageing and contributes to hypertension, cardiovascular disease, depression, and immune dysfunction. Yoga promotes relaxation through breathing exercises, meditation, and mindfulness practices. These techniques reduce stress and enhance psychological resilience.

Yoga as a Promotive Healthcare Strategy

Promotive healthcare focuses on enhancing positive health and well-being rather than merely preventing disease.

Physical Wellbeing

Regular yoga practice improves posture, flexibility, endurance, and energy levels. Older adults who practice yoga often experience greater physical vitality and improved functional capacity in daily activities.

Mental and Emotional Health

Mental health is an important determinant of healthy ageing. Anxiety, depression, loneliness, and emotional distress are common among older adults. Yoga promotes emotional balance through meditation, relaxation, and mindful awareness. Studies have shown that yoga reduces anxiety, improves mood, and enhances overall psychological well-being.

Cognitive Function

Age-related cognitive decline affects memory, attention, and decision-making abilities. Meditation and mindfulness practices improve concentration, memory, and cognitive flexibility. Research suggests that yoga may help slow age-related cognitive deterioration and enhance neuroplasticity.

Social Wellbeing

Group yoga programmes encourage social interaction, community participation, and mutual support. Such social engagement reduces loneliness and enhances life satisfaction among older adults.

Spiritual Wellbeing

Yoga promotes self-awareness, inner peace, acceptance, and purpose in life. Spiritual well-being helps individuals cope positively with the challenges associated with ageing and contributes to overall quality of life.

Brain Waves, Hormonal Balance, and Healthy Ageing

Recent scientific research has demonstrated the relationship between brain activity, hormonal regulation, and healthy ageing.

The human brain generates different types of brain waves, including Alpha, Beta, Theta, Delta, and Gamma waves. Chronic stress often results in excessive Beta-wave activity, which increases cortisol secretion and accelerates ageing. Yogic practices help shift brain activity toward Alpha and Theta states associated with relaxation, emotional balance, and mental clarity.

Meditation and Yoga Nidra have been shown to increase Alpha and Theta brain-wave activity, promoting calmness, creativity, and psychological well-being. Deep relaxation practices also enhance Delta-wave activity, which is associated with restorative sleep and tissue repair.

Hormonal Balance

Age-related hormonal changes may contribute to muscle loss, osteoporosis, sleep disturbances, cognitive decline, and reduced immunity. Yoga positively influences the endocrine system by regulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis. Regular yoga practice relates to

- Reduced cortisol levels
- Improved insulin sensitivity
- Enhanced melatonin production
- Better sleep quality
- Improved metabolic regulation
- Reduced inflammation

These neuroendocrine benefits contribute significantly to healthy ageing and quality of life.

Scientific Evidence Supporting Yoga for Healthy Ageing

A growing body of scientific literature supports the effectiveness of yoga in promoting healthy ageing. Research studies have demonstrated that yoga:

- Improves balance and mobility
- Enhances muscular strength and flexibility
- Reduces blood pressure
- Improves cardiovascular health
- Enhances respiratory efficiency
- Improves sleep quality
- Reduces anxiety and depression
- Enhances cognitive functioning
- Improves overall quality of life.

The Ministry of AYUSH and the World Health Organization have acknowledged yoga as a valuable complementary approach for health promotion and disease prevention.

Integration of Yoga into Healthy Ageing Programmes

To maximize its benefits, yoga should be integrated into community health programmes and public health policies. Key strategies include:

- Establishing yoga centres for senior citizens.
- Incorporating yoga into geriatric healthcare services.
- Training yoga instructors in geriatric yoga practices.
- Promoting yoga awareness through community outreach programmes.
- Integrating yoga into healthy ageing initiatives.
- Encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration among healthcare professionals and yoga experts.
- Supporting research on yoga and ageing.
- Educational institutions can also contribute by organizing yoga-based wellness programmes for faculty members, retired employees, and community participants.

Challenges

Despite its numerous benefits, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of yoga among older adults:

- Lack of awareness regarding its health benefits.
- Limited accessibility in rural and underserved areas.
- Shortage of trained geriatric yoga instructors.
- Physical limitations requiring individualized programmes.
- Need for further high-quality scientific research.
- Addressing these challenges is essential for maximizing the public health impact of yoga.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may strengthen the role of yoga in healthy ageing:

- Develop national healthy ageing programmes incorporating yoga.
- Establish community-based yoga wellness centres for older adults.
- Integrate yoga into preventive healthcare policies.
- Promote awareness through media campaigns and educational programmes.
- Encourage interdisciplinary research on yoga and ageing.
- Train healthcare professionals in yoga-based interventions.
- Support evidence-based practice and programme evaluation.

Conclusion

Healthy ageing is a multidimensional process that extends beyond the mere absence of disease.

It involves maintaining physical health, cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, social engagement, and functional independence throughout life. In an era of increasing longevity, the challenge is not only to add years to life but also to add life to years.

Yoga offers a comprehensive and scientifically supported approach to achieving this goal. Through the integrated practices of asana, pranayama, meditation, and relaxation, yoga promotes physical fitness, mental resilience, hormonal balance, cognitive health, and spiritual well-being. It serves both preventive and promotive functions by reducing disease risk while enhancing overall quality of life.

The theme of International Day of Yoga 2026, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," highlights the relevance of this ancient Indian wisdom in addressing contemporary public health challenges. Integrating yoga into healthy ageing programmes, healthcare systems, educational institutions, and community initiatives can contribute significantly in creating a healthier, more active, and more dignified ageing populations. Therefore, yoga should be recognized as an essential component of preventive and promotive healthcare strategies for healthy ageing in the twenty-first century.

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: Yoga should be recognized as an essential component of preventive and promotive healthcare strategies for healthy ageing in the twenty-first century.

Article: Yoga as a Multidimensional Approach to Holistic Ageing

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Abstract

Yoga as a comprehensive approach to holistic ageing promotes physical health, emotional stability, social connectedness, and spiritual well-being. It offers a multidimensional framework to address issues and challenges associated with ageing. Ageing is a natural process that brings physical, psychological, social, and spiritual transformations to every individual. As the elderly population is growing worldwide, there is now a need to adopt appropriate approaches to meaningful ageing. This paper highlights how yoga contributes to the quality of life and successful ageing in the later stages of life.

Keywords: Yoga, Holistic Ageing, Mental Well-being, Active Ageing, Spiritual Wellness

Introduction

Ageing is universal in nature. It is a biological process characterised by gradual physiological and psychological changes. It is often accompanied by chronic illnesses, cognitive decline, stress, social isolation, and reduced quality of life. Advances in healthcare and living conditions have significantly increased life expectancy across the globe. Therefore, the focus of modern healthcare has shifted from increasing lifespan to promoting healthy and holistic ageing. The healthcare system aims to maintain equilibrium among the individual's mental, physical, and social well-being.

Holistic Ageing

Health refers not just to the mere absence of any disease or infirmity, and thus holistic ageing emphasizes the enhancement of the overall quality of life. It maintains physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being throughout the ageing process. In this perspective, yoga emerges as a valuable and sustainable intervention. The roots of yoga originate in ancient India and are considered much more than a physical exercise. Yoga is a way of life that amalgamates body, mind, and spirit. The practice of yoga includes physical postures (asanas), breathing exercises (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), relaxation techniques, and ethical disciplines that collectively contribute to overall wellbeing.

Increasing scientific evidence supports the effectiveness of yoga in improving health outcomes among older adults. Its multidimensional nature makes it particularly suitable for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges associated with ageing.

Understanding Holistic Ageing

Holistic ageing is a multidimensional concept that encompasses physical health, psychological well-being, cognitive function, social engagement, and spiritual fulfilment. Traditional approaches focus primarily on disease management, whereas holistic ageing seeks to enhance overall wellness and promote successful adaptation to age-related changes.

Yoga addresses the following major dimensions of holistic ageing to make it a comprehensive strategy for healthy ageing. The dimensions are:

- Physical well-being that maintains strength, flexibility, mobility, and functional independence.
- Mental and emotional health to manage stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional balance.
- Cognitive functioning, which preserves memory, attention, and intellectual abilities.
- Social well-being for fostering meaningful relationships and community participation.
- Spiritual well-being that cultivates inner peace, purpose, and self-awareness.

Yoga – a Holistic System of Wellbeing

Yoga is an ancient Indian system of holistic well-being. The term "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', which means union or integration. According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, yoga is the cessation of fluctuations of the mind and the attainment of harmony between body, mind, and consciousness.

Yoga consists of eight limbs (Ashtanga Yoga), which contribute to balanced living and healthy ageing. Those limbs are as follows:

Yama (ethical restraints), Niyama (personal observances), Asana (physical postures), Pranayama (breath control), Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation), and Samadhi (self-realization).

Physical Benefits of Yoga in Ageing

Practicing yoga regularly provides numerous physical benefits that help people maintain independence as well as mobility. There are many declines in physical functioning that are often observed, which include reduced muscle strength, joint stiffness, poor balance, and increased risk of falls.

- **Improvement in Flexibility and Mobility**

Yoga postures gently stretch muscles and joints, enhancing flexibility and range of motion. Improved mobility enables older adults to perform daily activities with greater ease and reduces stiffness associated with ageing.

- **Enhancement of Muscular Strength**

Many yoga poses involve isometric contractions that strengthen muscles without excessive strain. Increased muscle strength helps maintain posture, prevents frailty, and supports functional independence.

- **Better Balance and Prevention of Falls**

Falls are a leading cause of injury among the elderly. Yoga improves proprioception, coordination, and balance, thereby reducing the risk of falls and enhancing confidence in movement.

- **Cardiovascular Health**

Breathing exercises and moderate physical activity involved in yoga improve blood circulation, regulate blood pressure, and enhance cardiovascular efficiency. Regular practice contributes to reduced risk factors for hypertension and heart disease.

- **Pain Management**

Older adults frequently experience chronic pain due to arthritis, osteoporosis, and musculoskeletal disorders. Yoga has been shown to alleviate pain, reduce inflammation, and improve overall physical comfort.

- **Improved Respiratory Function**

Pranayama techniques enhance lung capacity, oxygenation, and respiratory efficiency. This is especially beneficial for older individuals experiencing age-related decline in pulmonary function.

- **Psychological and Emotional Well-being**

Ageing often brings emotional challenges such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, and stress arising from retirement, bereavement, and health-related concerns. Yoga provides effective tools for emotional regulation and mental relaxation.

- **Stress Reduction**

Yoga activates the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation and reducing stress hormones such as cortisol. Practices involving deep breathing and meditation create a calming effect and improve resilience to stress.

- **Reduction of Anxiety and Depression**

Mindfulness and meditative practices help individuals develop greater awareness and acceptance of thoughts and emotions. Several studies indicate that yoga reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression among older adults, thereby improving mood and emotional stability.

- **Better Sleep Quality**

Sleep disturbances are common in ageing populations. Relaxation techniques and breathing exercises help regulate sleep patterns, enhance sleep quality, and reduce insomnia.

- **Enhancement of Self-esteem**

Regular practice fosters body awareness, confidence, and a positive attitude toward ageing. Older adults who engage in yoga often experience greater self-acceptance and improved life satisfaction.

- **Cognitive Benefits of Yoga**

Cognitive decline is a major concern associated with ageing. Memory impairment, reduced attention, and slower processing speed can affect quality of life. Emerging evidence suggests that yoga positively influences brain health and cognitive functioning.

- **Improved Memory and Attention**

Meditation and concentration practices enhance attention span, memory retention, and executive functioning. These benefits contribute to better decision-making and everyday functioning.

- **Neuroplasticity and Brain Health**

Yoga promotes increased blood flow to the brain and stimulates neuroplasticity. It has been associated with structural and functional changes in brain regions responsible for learning and memory.

Prevention of Cognitive Decline

Regular engagement in yoga may delay age-related cognitive deterioration and reduce the risk of neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Emotional Regulation and Cognitive Clarity

Mindfulness practices improve emotional regulation and reduce mental distractions, thereby promoting greater clarity and cognitive efficiency.

Social Dimensions of Yoga and Ageing

Social isolation and loneliness are common challenges among older adults and can negatively affect physical and mental health. Yoga promotes social connectedness and community participation.

Building Social Support Networks

Group yoga sessions provide opportunities for interaction, friendship, and mutual support. Shared experiences foster a sense of belonging and reduce feelings of loneliness.

Encouraging Active Participation

Yoga encourages older adults to remain physically and socially active. Participation in community-based yoga programs enhances engagement and promotes active ageing.

Strengthening Interpersonal Relationships

The ethical principles of yoga, including compassion, non-violence, and mindfulness, encourage empathy and harmonious relationships with others.

Spiritual Wellbeing and Meaning in Ageing

Ageing often prompts individuals to reflect upon life's meaning, purpose, and existential questions. Spiritual well-being becomes increasingly significant during later stages of life.

Yoga facilitates spiritual growth through self-awareness, meditation, and inner contemplation.

- **Cultivating Inner Peace**

Meditation practices reduce mental agitation and create a sense of tranquility and contentment. This inner peace helps individuals cope with life transitions and uncertainties associated with ageing.

- **Acceptance and Resilience**

Yoga encourages acceptance of physical and emotional changes without resistance. Such acceptance fosters resilience and psychological maturity.

- **Sense of Purpose**

Spiritual practices help individuals develop meaning and purpose beyond material concerns. A purposeful life contributes significantly to happiness and successful ageing.

- **Connection with Self and Nature**

Yoga promotes harmony between individuals, society, and nature, encouraging holistic living and environmental consciousness.

Scientific Evidence Supporting Yoga in Ageing

Over the past few decades, numerous studies have demonstrated the beneficial effects of yoga among older adults. Research indicates that yoga:

- Improves flexibility, balance, and muscular strength.
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress.

- Enhances sleep quality and emotional well-being.
- Improves cognitive performance and memory.
- Supports cardiovascular and respiratory health.
- Reduces chronic pain and inflammation.
- Enhances quality of life and overall well-being.

Meta-analyses and systematic reviews have consistently shown that yoga is a safe and effective intervention for promoting healthy ageing. Because it is low-impact and adaptable, yoga can be modified according to individual needs and physical capabilities.

Integrating Yoga into Healthy Ageing Programs

The growing recognition of yoga's benefits has encouraged healthcare professionals and policymakers to incorporate yoga into healthy ageing initiatives. Community centres, wellness programs, hospitals, and senior care facilities increasingly offer yoga-based interventions.

For effective implementation, the following considerations are important:

- **Individualised Practice**

Yoga programs should be tailored to individual health conditions, mobility levels, and physical limitations.

- **Professional Guidance**

Qualified instructors with knowledge of geriatric care can ensure safe and appropriate practices for elderly participants.

- **Regular Practice**

Consistency is essential for achieving long-term benefits. Even moderate daily practice can significantly improve overall health.

- **Integration with Healthcare**

Yoga should complement conventional medical treatment. Collaboration between healthcare professionals and yoga practitioners can provide comprehensive care for older adults.

- **Community-Based Approaches**

Accessible and affordable yoga programs can encourage wider participation and promote social engagement among seniors.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite the numerous benefits of yoga, certain challenges need further research, and awareness campaigns and inclusive yoga programs need to be designed specifically for older adults.

- Chronic illnesses may restrict participation in some postures.
- Lack of awareness and trained instructors can limit accessibility.
- Scientific studies often vary in methodology, making standardization difficult.
- Cultural perceptions and misconceptions about yoga may affect participation.

Conclusion

Ageing is a multidimensional process that involves physical, psychological, social, and spiritual changes. Promoting healthy ageing requires approaches that address these interconnected dimensions of human well-being. Yoga, with its holistic philosophy and practices, offers a comprehensive framework for enhancing quality of life throughout the ageing journey.

Through physical postures, breathing exercises, meditation, and ethical living, yoga supports mobility, emotional balance, cognitive functioning, social connectedness, and spiritual growth. Its adaptability and low-cost nature make it particularly suitable for elderly populations. As scientific evidence continues to validate its benefits, yoga is increasingly recognized as an effective strategy for active and successful ageing.

In an era marked by rising life expectancy and growing health challenges among older adults, yoga provides a pathway not only to longevity but also to vitality, dignity, and inner harmony. By embracing yoga as a multidimensional approach, individuals can experience ageing as a period of continued growth, self-discovery, and holistic well-being rather than a stage of decline. Thus, yoga emerges as a timeless and sustainable practice for fostering healthy, meaningful, and graceful ageing.

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: Through physical postures, breathing exercises, meditation, and ethical living, yoga supports mobility, emotional balance, cognitive functioning, social connectedness, and spiritual growth.

Article: ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗ – ଦୀର୍ଘାୟୁ, ଗତିଶୀଳତା ଏବଂ ସାମଗ୍ରିକ କଲ୍ୟାଣର ଏକ ସମନ୍ୱିତ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣ

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ସଂକ୍ଷିପ୍ତ ବିବରଣୀ

ବିଶ୍ୱରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଜନସଂଖ୍ୟା ଦ୍ରୁତ ହାରରେ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଉଛି। ଏହି ପରିସ୍ଥିତିରେ ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ (Healthy Ageing) ଏକ ଅପରିହାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସାମାଜିକ ଓ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟଗତ ପ୍ରାଥମିକତାରେ ପରିଣତ ହୋଇଛି। ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ କେବଳ ରୋଗର ଅନୁପସ୍ଥିତି ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ଶାରୀରିକ କ୍ଷମତା, ମାନସିକ ସ୍ଥିରତା, ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ଏବଂ ସାମାଜିକ ସକ୍ରିୟତାକୁ ବଜାୟ ରଖିବାକୁ ବୁଝାଏ। ଯୋଗ, ଭାରତର ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଜ୍ଞାନ ପରମ୍ପରାର ଏକ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅଂଶ, ଯାହା ଶରୀର, ମନ ଓ ଆତ୍ମାର ସମନ୍ୱୟ ଘଟାଇଥାଏ। ଏହି ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧରେ ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟରେ ଯୋଗର ଭୂମିକା, ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ପ୍ରମାଣ, ଗବେଷଣା ଫଳାଫଳ ଓ ନୀତିଗତ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଆଲୋଚନା କରାଯାଇଛି।

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଶବ୍ଦ: ଯୋଗ, ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ, ଦୀର୍ଘାୟୁ, ଗତିଶୀଳତା, ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ, ମାନସିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା।

ପରିଚୟ

ଏକବିଂଶ ଶତାବ୍ଦୀରେ ଜନସଂଖ୍ୟାର ବୟସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ଏକ ବିଶ୍ୱବ୍ୟାପୀ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ। ଚିକିତ୍ସା ବିଜ୍ଞାନର ଉନ୍ନତି ଫଳରେ ମଣିଷର ଆୟୁ ବଢ଼ିଛି, କିନ୍ତୁ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଜୀବନ ସହିତ ସୁସ୍ଥ ଜୀବନ ମଧ୍ୟ ସମାନ ଭାବରେ ଜରୁରୀ। ବୟସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ସହିତ ଶାରୀରିକ ଦୁର୍ବଳତା, ଗତିଶୀଳତାର ଅଭାବ, ମାନସିକ ତାପ, ଅବସାଦ ଏବଂ ଦୀର୍ଘକାଳୀନ ରୋଗ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଏ।

ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟର ଅର୍ଥ ହେଉଛି ଜୀବନର ଶେଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସକ୍ରିୟ, ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ଓ ସମ୍ମାନଜନକ ଜୀବନ ବିତାଇବା। ଏହି ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ପୂରଣରେ ଯୋଗ ଏକ ପ୍ରଭାବଶାଳୀ, ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ଓ ଅଳ୍ପ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚର ଉପାୟ ଭାବେ ପରିଗଣିତ ହେଉଛି।

ସାହିତ୍ୟ ସମୀକ୍ଷା

ଗତ ଦୁଇ ଦଶକରେ ଯୋଗ ଓ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ଅନେକ ଗବେଷଣା ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ହୋଇଛି।

Patel, Newstead ଏବଂ Ferrer (2012) କି ମୋଟା-ବିଞ୍ଚେଷଣରେ ଦେଖାଯାଇଛି ଯେ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କର ଶାରୀରିକ କ୍ଷମତା, ସନ୍ତୁଳନ, ନିମ୍ନମାନ୍ୟତା ଓ ଜୀବନମାନକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିଥାଏ।

Tulloch ଓ ସହଯୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କ (2018) ସିଷ୍ଟେମାଟିକ ରିଭ୍ୟୁରେ ୬୦ ବର୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ବୟସ୍କଙ୍କ ଉପରେ ଯୋଗର ପ୍ରଭାବ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା। ଗବେଷଣାରେ ଦେଖାଯାଇଥିଲା ଯେ ଯୋଗ ମାନସିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା, ଜୀବନର ଗୁଣାତ୍ମକ ମାନ ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ।

Ko ଓ ସହଯୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କ (2023) ଅଧ୍ୟୟନରେ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଫଳରେ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ, ମାଂସପେଶୀ ଶକ୍ତି, ନମନୀୟତା ଏବଂ ଅବସାଦର ଲକ୍ଷଣରେ ଉଲ୍ଲେଖନୀୟ ସୁଧାର ଦେଖାଯାଇଥିଲା।

ସମ୍ପ୍ରତି ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ଗବେଷଣାଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଯୋଗକୁ WHO Healthy Ageing Framework ସହିତ ସଂଯୋଗ କରାଯାଇଛି ଏବଂ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କର ସ୍ବାଧୀନତା, ଗତିଶୀଳତା ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଅଂଶଗ୍ରହଣ ବୃଦ୍ଧିରେ ଏହାର ଭୂମିକା ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ କରାଯାଇଛି।

ଗବେଷଣା ପଦ୍ଧତି

ଏହି ଅଧ୍ୟୟନଟି ଏକ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟକ ତଥ୍ୟ (Secondary Data) ଆଧାରିତ ବିଶ୍ଳେଷଣାତ୍ମକ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ।

ତଥ୍ୟର ଉତ୍ସ

- ଗବେଷଣା ପ୍ରବନ୍ଧ
- ଜର୍ଣ୍ଣାଲ୍ ଲେଖା
- WHO ରିପୋର୍ଟ
- ଯୋଗ ଏବଂ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ସିଷ୍ଟେମାଟିକ ରିଭ୍ୟୁ
- PubMed ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରମାଣଭିତ୍ତିକ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ଡାଟାବେସ

ଅଧ୍ୟୟନର ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ

- ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟରେ ଯୋଗର ଭୂମିକା ଅଧ୍ୟୟନ କରିବା।
- ଶାରୀରିକ ଓ ମାନସିକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଉପରେ ଯୋଗର ପ୍ରଭାବ ବିଶ୍ଳେଷଣ କରିବା।
- ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସେବାରେ ଯୋଗର ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଚିହ୍ନଟ କରିବା।

ଅଧ୍ୟୟନର ସୀମାବଦ୍ଧତା

- ପ୍ରାଥମିକ ତଥ୍ୟ ସଂଗ୍ରହ କରାଯାଇନାହିଁ।
- ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୋଗ ପଦ୍ଧତିର ପ୍ରଭାବ ଅଲଗା ହୋଇପାରେ।
- ଅଧ୍ୟୟନଗୁଡ଼ିକର ନମୁନା ଆକାର ଭିନ୍ନ ଥିଲା।

ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟରେ ଯୋଗର ଭୂମିକା

- ଶାରୀରିକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ

ବୟସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ସହିତ ହାଡ଼ ଓ ମାଂସପେଶୀ ଦୁର୍ବଳ ହୋଇଯାଏ। ଯୋଗ ଶରୀରର ନମନୀୟତା, ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ଓ ଶକ୍ତି ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ।

ଗବେଷଣାରେ ଦେଖାଯାଇଛି ଯେ ଯୋଗ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କର ପଡ଼ିଯିବାର ଆଶଙ୍କା ହ୍ରାସ କରେ ଏବଂ ଚାଲିବାର କ୍ଷମତାକୁ ଉନ୍ନତ କରିଥାଏ।

- ମାନସିକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ

ଧ୍ୟାନ ଓ ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ମନକୁ ଶାନ୍ତ କରିଥାଏ। ଯୋଗ ଚିନ୍ତା, ମାନସିକ ଚାପ ଏବଂ ଅବସାଦ କମାଇଥାଏ। ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ସ୍ମୃତିଶକ୍ତି, ଏକାଗ୍ରତା ଏବଂ ମାନସିକ ସ୍ଥିରତା ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ।

- ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ

ଯୋଗ ଉଚ୍ଚ ରକ୍ତଚାପ, ମଧୁମେହ, ହୃଦରୋଗ ଏବଂ ସ୍ଥୂଳତା ପରି ଦୀର୍ଘକାଳୀନ ରୋଗର ଆଶଙ୍କା ହ୍ରାସ କରିବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୋଇଥାଏ। ଏହା ଶରୀରର ପ୍ରତିରୋଧକ କ୍ଷମତା ବଢ଼ାଇଥାଏ।

- ସାମାଜିକ ଓ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ କଲ୍ୟାଣ

ସମୂହ ଯୋଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ସାମାଜିକ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ବଢ଼ାଇଥାଏ। ଏହା ଏକାକୀପଣ କମାଇ ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଓ ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରତି ସକାରାତ୍ମକ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରେ।

- ଜ୍ଞାନଗତ କ୍ଷମତା ଉପରେ ଯୋଗର ପ୍ରଭାବ

ବୟସ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ସହିତ ସ୍ମୃତିଶକ୍ତି, ଧ୍ୟାନ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରୀକରଣ ଏବଂ ନିଷ୍ପତ୍ତି ନେବାର କ୍ଷମତା କ୍ରମେ ହ୍ରାସ ପାଇଥାଏ। ଏହି ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କର ଦୈନନ୍ଦିନ ଜୀବନକୁ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ କରେ। ଯୋଗ ଏବଂ ଧ୍ୟାନ ମସ୍ତିଷ୍କରେ ରକ୍ତ ସଞ୍ଚାଳନକୁ ସୁଧାର କରିବା ସହିତ ସ୍ନାୟୁତନ୍ତ୍ରର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକୁ ସକ୍ରିୟ ରଖୁଥାଏ। ଅନେକ ଗବେଷଣାରେ ଦେଖାଯାଇଛି ଯେ ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ସ୍ମୃତିଶକ୍ତି, ଏକାଗ୍ରତା ଓ ମାନସିକ ସଚେତନତାକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ। ଏହା ଡିମେନ୍ସିଆ ଏବଂ ଅଲଜାଇମର ଭଳି ବୟସଜନିତ ଜ୍ଞାନଗତ ଅବସ୍ଥାର ସମ୍ଭାବନା ହ୍ରାସ କରିବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୋଇପାରେ।

- ନିଦ୍ରାର ଗୁଣବତ୍ତା ଉନ୍ନତି

ବୃଦ୍ଧ ବୟସରେ ଅନିଦ୍ରା ଏକ ସାଧାରଣ ସମସ୍ୟା। ଅନିୟମିତ ନିଦ୍ରା ଶାରୀରିକ ଓ ମାନସିକ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକୁ କ୍ଷତିଗ୍ରସ୍ତ କରେ। ଯୋଗ, ବିଶେଷକରି ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ଏବଂ ଧ୍ୟାନ, ସ୍ନାୟୁତନ୍ତ୍ରକୁ ଶାନ୍ତ କରି ଗଭୀର ଓ ଗୁଣାତ୍ମକ ନିଦ୍ରାରେ ସହାୟତା କରେ। ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ନିଦ୍ରା ଶରୀରର ପୁନରୁଦ୍ଧାର, ସ୍ମୃତିର ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଏବଂ ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସ୍ଥିରତା ପାଇଁ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଜରୁରୀ।

- ଜୀବନମାନ ବୃଦ୍ଧି

ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟର ଏକ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ସୂଚକ ହେଉଛି ଜୀବନମାନ। ଯୋଗ କେବଳ ଶରୀରକୁ ସୁସ୍ଥ ରଖେ ନାହିଁ, ବରଂ ମନୋବଳ, ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ୱାସ ଏବଂ ଜୀବନ ପ୍ରତି ସକାରାତ୍ମକ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିଭଙ୍ଗୀକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ। ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ କରୁଥିବା ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନେ ସାଧାରଣତଃ ଅଧିକ ସକ୍ରିୟ, ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଭାବେ ଅଧିକ ଜଡ଼ିତ ରହନ୍ତି। ଏହା ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସାମଗ୍ରିକ ଜୀବନ ସନ୍ତୁଷ୍ଟିକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରେ।

ଯୋଗ ଏବଂ WHO Healthy Ageing Framework

ବିଶ୍ୱ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସଂଗଠନ (WHO) Healthy Ageing କୁ ବ୍ୟାଖ୍ୟା କରିଛି ଯେ ଏହା ଏକ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ଯାହା ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ଷମତା ବଜାୟ ରଖି ସୁସ୍ଥ ଜୀବନ ବିତାଇବାରେ ସହାୟତା କରେ। ଏହି ଜାଣିାର ଚାରିଟି ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଉପାଦାନ ହେଉଛି—ଶାରୀରିକ କ୍ଷମତା, ମାନସିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା, ସାମାଜିକ ଅଂଶଗ୍ରହଣ ଏବଂ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନ ଜୀବନଯାପନ। ଯୋଗ ଏହି ସମସ୍ତ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ସକାରାତ୍ମକ ପ୍ରଭାବ

ପଦାଧିକାରୀ ଏହି କାରଣରୁ WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) ର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସହିତ ଯୋଗର ଦୃଢ଼ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ରହିଛି ।

ନୀତିଗତ ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଗୁରୁତ୍ବ

ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଜନସଂଖ୍ୟାର ବୃଦ୍ଧି ସହିତ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ସେବାର ଚାହିଦା ମଧ୍ୟ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇଛି । ଯୋଗ ଏକ ଅଳ୍ପ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚସାଧ୍ୟ, ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ଏବଂ ସହଜରେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ପଦ୍ଧତି ହେତୁ ଏହାକୁ ସାମୁଦାୟିକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ସାମିଲ କରାଯାଇପାରେ । ବୃଦ୍ଧାଶ୍ରମ, ସାମୁଦାୟିକ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର, ହସ୍ପିଟାଲ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରାଥମିକ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରଗୁଡ଼ିକରେ ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ଆୟୋଜନ କରାଗଲେ ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନତ ହେବା ସହିତ ସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟୟ ମଧ୍ୟ ହ୍ରାସ ପାଇପାରେ ।

ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଗବେଷଣାର ଦିଗ

ଯଦିଓ ଯୋଗର ଉପକାରିତା ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାପ୍ତ ପ୍ରମାଣ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ଅଛି, ତଥାପି ଭବିଷ୍ୟତରେ ବୃହତ୍ ନମୁନା ଆଧାରିତ ବିଷୟରେ ଦୀର୍ଘକାଳୀନ ଏବଂ ବୃହତ୍ ନମୁନା ଆଧାରିତ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ରହିଛି । ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଯୋଗ ପଦ୍ଧତି, ପ୍ରାଣାୟାମ ଓ ଧ୍ୟାନର ପୃଥକ ପ୍ରଭାବ ବିଷୟରେ ଅଧିକ ଗବେଷଣା କରାଯିବା ଦରକାର । ଏହା ଦ୍ବାରା ବୃଦ୍ଧମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସବୁଠାରୁ ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ଯୋଗ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରଣ ସମ୍ଭବ ହେବ ।

ଆଲୋଚନା

ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ଏକ ବହୁମାତ୍ରିକ ଧାରଣା । ଏହା ଶରୀର, ମନ ଏବଂ ସାମାଜିକ ଜୀବନର ସମନ୍ବିତ ଉପରେ ନିର୍ଭର କରେ । ଯୋଗ ଏହି ତିନୋଟି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରକୁ ଏକାସାଥରେ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ କରେ । ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ଅଧ୍ୟୟନଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଦର୍ଶାଉଛି ଯେ ନିୟମିତ ଯୋଗ ଅଭ୍ୟାସ ଦୀର୍ଘାୟୁ ସହିତ ଜୀବନର ଗୁଣାତ୍ମକ ମାନକୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନତ କରେ ।

ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ଯୋଗ ଦର୍ଶନ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଜୀବନର ଅର୍ଥ କେବଳ ଅଧିକ ବର୍ଷ ବଞ୍ଚିବା ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ସଚେତନତା, ସନ୍ତୁଳନ, ଶକ୍ତି ଓ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟ ସହିତ ଜୀବନ ବିତାଇବା । ଏହି ଦୃଷ୍ଟିକୋଣ ଆଧୁନିକ "Healthy Ageing" ଧାରଣା ସହିତ ସମଞ୍ଜସ ।

ଉପସଂହାର

ଯୋଗ ସୁସ୍ଥ ବାର୍ଦ୍ଧକ୍ୟ ପାଇଁ ଏକ ସମଗ୍ର, ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ଏବଂ ବୈଜ୍ଞାନିକ ଭାବେ ସମର୍ଥିତ ଉପାୟ । ଏହା ଶାରୀରିକ ଗତିଶୀଳତା, ମାନସିକ ସୁସ୍ଥତା, ଭାବନାତ୍ମକ ସନ୍ତୁଳନ ଏବଂ ସାମାଜିକ ସକ୍ରିୟତାକୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହିତ କରେ । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନର ବୃଦ୍ଧ ଜନସଂଖ୍ୟାକୁ ଦୃଷ୍ଟିରେ ରଖି ଯୋଗକୁ ଜନସ୍ବାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ସମ୍ମିଳିତ କରିବା ଉଚିତ । ଯୋଗ ମଣିଷକୁ କେବଳ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଜୀବନ ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ଉତ୍ସାହ, ସ୍ବାଧୀନତା, ସମ୍ମାନ ଓ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜୀବନ ଦେଇଥାଏ ।

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~OXO~

One line to Remember: ଯୋଗ ମଣିଷକୁ କେବଳ ଦୀର୍ଘ ଜୀବନ ନୁହେଁ, ବରଂ ଉତ୍ସାହ, ସ୍ବାଧୀନତା, ସନ୍ତାନ ଓ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜୀବନ ଦେଇଥାଏ।

Article: Yoga and Geriatric Health – Promoting Physical, Mental, and Social Wellbeing in Older Adults

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Abstract:

The global population of older adults is growing fast, straining healthcare systems worldwide. Many face physical decline, psychological stress, and social isolation, all of which reduce quality of life. Yoga, an ancient practice combining postures, breathing techniques, and meditation, has gained recognition as a holistic response to these challenges. This paper examines how yoga supports physical, mental, and social well-being in older adults, and argues for its wider use as an affordable, accessible, and sustainable approach to geriatric health.

Keywords: Geriatric Health, Pain Management, Mental Health, Social Wellbeing, and Adaptive Considerations

Introduction

Population ageing is no longer a distant projection; it is well underway, and arguably faster than most health systems anticipated. The World Health Organization estimates that by 2050, the number of people aged 60 and above will reach 2.1 billion. This shift brings with it a rise in chronic illness, physical decline, and psychosocial difficulty. Longer life expectancy is, without question, a major achievement of modern medicine. But it has also meant more older adults living with reduced mobility, emotional strain, and isolation, and these are burdens that conventional healthcare is not always equipped to address.

Yoga offers one such response. Rooted in ancient Indian philosophy, it brings together physical postures (asanas), controlled breathing (pranayama), and meditative practice (dhyana) within a single discipline. Unlike most exercise regimens, which focus narrowly on the body, yoga was designed to engage the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions of health together. Over the past two decades, this centuries-old practice has gathered substantial scientific support as a complementary therapy for age-related conditions.

This paper reviews that evidence, organised around yoga's physical, mental, and social effects on older adults, before turning to the practical challenges of running yoga programmes for this population and the adaptations needed to keep practice safe.

Concept of Geriatric Health

Geriatric health, as a field, is concerned with exactly this combination of physical, mental, and social well-being in people typically aged 60 and above. Ageing is not a single event but a gradual accumulation of physiological change. Muscle mass declines (a process called sarcopenia), bone density falls, immune response weakens, and the senses dull, though rarely all at the same pace in any one person. Collectively, though, these changes raise the risk of conditions such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, osteoarthritis, and cardiovascular disease.

The psychological dimension of ageing is equally significant, though it tends to receive less attention. Depression, anxiety, and dementia are common among older adults and are often triggered or worsened by bereavement, retirement, or a shrinking social circle. Loneliness in particular is now treated as a genuine health risk in its own right, associated with higher rates of cardiovascular disease, faster cognitive decline, and even earlier mortality. Taken together, these physical and psychological threads point to a single conclusion. A meaningful intervention for older adults needs to work across several domains at once, and few interventions are built that way. Yoga is one of the few that comes close.

Yoga and Physical Health in Older Adults

Physical decline is perhaps the most visible sign of ageing. Joints stiffen, bones thin, and balance becomes less reliable, all of which raise the risk of falls and the kind of functional disability that can end someone's independence. Yoga, being low-impact and readily adapted, is well suited to addressing precisely these concerns.

A systematic review by Patel and colleagues (2012) reported meaningful gains in flexibility, strength, and balance among older adults, with spinal mobility and lower-limb strength showing the clearest improvement. Balance is worth dwelling on here, since falls remain one of the leading causes of injury-related death among people over 65; an intervention that lowers fall risk carries real clinical weight. Several trials of Hatha and Chair yoga have reported statistically significant drops in both fear of falling and actual fall incidence among community-dwelling older adults.

Pain management is another area where yoga does reasonably well. Woodyard (2011) found genuine improvements in pain severity, physical function, and self-reported quality of life among older adults managing osteoarthritis and lower back pain, and the mechanism is not especially mysterious. Gentle stretching and isometric holds improve joint lubrication, ease inflammation, and sharpen proprioception. Cardiovascular benefits show up too, since pranayama techniques engage the parasympathetic nervous system, which lowers resting blood pressure and reduces cardiovascular risk over time.

More recent work reinforces these findings. Saranya and colleagues (2025), in a meta-analysis drawing on trials published through early 2024, found that yoga outperformed light exercise on

health-related quality of life measures among elderly participants, with the largest gains showing up in cognitive function and sleep quality. In other words, yoga appears to do more than simply beat inactivity; it may offer something conventional low-intensity exercise programmes do not.

Yoga and Mental Health in Older Adults

Depression, anxiety, cognitive decline, and disrupted sleep are all common in later life, and none are easily treated with medication alone, particularly given the degree of polypharmacy many older adults already contend with. Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness and stress regulation makes it a useful non-pharmacological option.

Depression among older adults is notoriously underdiagnosed and undertreated. Telles and colleagues (2012) found that yoga produced measurable reductions in depressive symptoms. The proposed mechanisms are plausible enough — increased GABA activity, lower cortisol, greater serotonin and dopamine signaling — and a number of subsequent randomised trials have reported similar moderate-to-large effects on both depression and anxiety scores across age groups.

The cognitive benefits are somewhat less firmly established but still promising. Mindfulness-based yoga appears to sharpen attention, executive function, and memory among older practitioners, possibly through neuroprotective effects that slow age-related cognitive decline. Sleep is another area where benefits show up. Yoga Nidra and gentle evening sessions have been linked to improved sleep onset, duration, and quality, likely through their calming effect on the HPA axis and the broader autonomic nervous system.

One newer and somewhat unexpected application concerns grief. A 2025 pilot trial by Goveas and colleagues compared Iyengar yoga with health education as an intervention for prolonged grief disorder in bereaved older adults. The trial was small and explicitly designed as a feasibility study rather than a definitive efficacy trial, but the results were encouraging. Safety was high, participants reported strong satisfaction, and there were early signs of symptom improvement. Grief disorder remains under-recognised in geriatric mental health care, so even a modest, low-stigma intervention such as yoga could fill a genuine gap.

Yoga and Social Wellbeing in Older Adults

It is easy to underestimate how much loneliness and social isolation cost an older person's health, but the risks are well documented. Group-based yoga offers a natural, if partial, counter to this. Classes create regular, low-pressure spaces in which older adults encounter the same faces week after week, share a common activity, and build a sense of belonging that can be harder to find elsewhere.

Community-based yoga programmes have been shown to reduce loneliness and strengthen social support among older adults living independently. Part of this effect is simply structural: attending a class regularly creates social contact almost by default. But yoga's underlying philosophy may also

play a role. Its emphasis on compassion (karuna), non-judgement (ahimsa), and contentment (santosh) appears to extend into how participants treat one another, not merely how they treat themselves.

Telehealth has opened new possibilities here, particularly for older adults in rural or otherwise isolated areas who cannot easily attend an in-person class. The evidence, however, is mixed. Teo and colleagues (2025) tested telehealth yoga specifically for loneliness reduction among rural veterans and found the program feasible and well received, yet it did not significantly reduce loneliness or social isolation over its eight-week duration. Virtual delivery, in other words, may solve a problem of access without solving the problem of connection. Longer programmes, or ones paired with more explicit social components, may be needed before any real change in loneliness shows up.

Challenges and Adaptive Considerations

None of this should suggest that yoga is straightforward to implement for older populations. Musculoskeletal limitations, balance problems, chronic pain, medication side effects, and overlapping health conditions can all make certain postures unsafe or impractical. Instructors working with older groups require genuine training in modification, including chairs, bolsters, straps, and walls, rather than a general yoga qualification alone.

Chair yoga, gentle yoga, and restorative styles tend to work best for frailer participants. Sound practice involves assessing each participant individually before they begin, coordinating with healthcare providers where relevant, and monitoring progress as the program continues.

Community-based delivery, linked to primary healthcare where possible, would help widen access, especially in rural or underserved areas. Cost, language, and cultural fit all influence whether people keep attending.

It is also worth being candid about the limits of the current evidence. The Gentle Years Yoga trial, a multi-site UK study involving 454 older adults with multiple chronic conditions, reported in 2024 that a 12-week chair-based program produced no statistically significant improvement in quality of life compared with usual care, despite high acceptability among participants.

Acceptability and effectiveness, in other words, are not the same thing, and yoga's benefits likely depend on dosage, population, and how chronic someone's existing conditions already are.

Conclusion

Taken together, the evidence makes a reasonably strong case for yoga as part of geriatric care: not as a replacement for medical treatment, but as a low-cost, low-risk addition that touches physical, mental, and social well-being at once. The picture, however, is not uniformly positive. Recent large-scale trials suggest that yoga's effects vary by population and by how a program is delivered, and claims of universal benefit should be treated with some caution. With sensible adaptation,

proper supervision, and realistic expectations, yoga can likely be incorporated safely into the lives of older adults. What is needed now is longer-term, larger-scale research that tracks these effects over years rather than weeks, across a more diverse range of older populations than most current trials include.

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One line to Remember: With sensible adaptation, proper supervision, and realistic expectations, yoga can likely be incorporated safely into the lives of older adults.

Article: The Bhagavad-Gita as a Guide for Life-long Health, Purpose and Successful Ageing

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Abstract

The Bhagavad Gita is a doctrine of universal truth. It deals with the most sacred meta physical science. It offers timeless wisdom for achieving holistic well-being, purposeful living and successful ageing. This qualitative study explores selected verses of the Bhagavad Gita to examine their relevance in promoting lifelong physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health. It provides practical guidance for stress management, emotional regulation and healthy lifestyle to enhance quality of life.

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita, healthy ageing, holistic well-being, purpose in life, self-realization

Introduction

It was widely believed that “*a healthy mind resides in a healthy body*” but modern research has discovered that human beings are psychosomatic units and “*a healthy body resides in a healthy mind*” The human mind which has no physical existence but it is the central functional aspect of human life. Our mind influences our thoughts, actions, emotions, decisions and behaviour. Modern psychology is the scientific study of those mental processes and behaviour. Mental well-being plays a vital role in maintaining physical health and improving quality of life across all age groups.

The Bhagavad-Gita is not merely a spiritual text but a timeless source of wisdom. It is a practical manual which has served as guiding light for generations. The dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna not only reveals the fundamental causes of mental distress and suffering but also provide us a path to alleviate suffering. It helps to achieve mental balance, purpose full life and successful ageing. (Bhakat, S., & Das Biswas, S, 2024)

Problem Statement

Ageing is a natural process that spares no one. Human ageing comes with physical deterioration, psychological stress, loneliness, anxiety and difficulties in coping with generation gap with rest of the family and society. Although numerous studies have highlighted the spiritual and

psychological benefits of the wisdom of Bhagavad Gita there is limited research examining its effect in enhancing overall well-being and promoting healthy ageing of older adults. There is also insufficient theoretical exploration on the Bhagavad Gita's contribution to healthy ageing and improved quality of life among older adults.

Objective of this Study

To explore the wisdom and principles of the Bhagavad Gita to maintain a healthy body, developing positive attitude towards ageing and satisfaction in life.

Scope of the Study

The study explores some verses of BG and finds the hidden knowledge to address physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual well-being, attaining a happy ageing.

Significance of the Study

The Bhagavad Gita promotes the holistic well-being of a person, decreasing the need for pharmacological approach in maintaining the old age problems. It offers deep insights into life such as self-discipline, equanimity, detachment, devotion and moderation.

Review of Literature

An empirical study by Susmita Bhakat (Assistant Professor) and Dr. Samapika Das Biswas (Professor) 2024 from the Institute of Engineering & Management, Kolkata, examines the Bhagavad Gita's teachings as a catalyst for emotional intelligence (EI) enhancement.

Targeting 100 engineering undergraduates facing academic and social stressors, it employed a pre-post intervention design over 10 weeks, incorporating Gita practices like *Dhyana Yoga* (meditation), *Sthitaprajna* (equanimity), and *Karma Yoga* (selfless action).

EI was assessed using the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). Interventions included guided reflections on verses (e.g., 6.35–36 on mind control) and group discussions on non-attachment (*anasakti*).

Results indicated significant EI improvements (mean SSEIT score rise: 24%, $p < 0.001$), driven by gains in self-awareness (32%) and regulation (28%), as Gita's Atman-focused wisdom counters ego-driven reactivity. Stress reduced by 31% (PSS drop), linked to detachment from outcomes (Verse 2.47), while self-esteem increased 22% (RSES), fostering intrinsic worth beyond achievements.

The authors bridge Eastern spirituality with Goleman's EI model, noting synergies in empathy via Bhakti Yoga. (Bhakat, S., & Das Biswas, S, 2024)

Sadhaka Sanjivani Vol 1 and 2 by Swami Ramsukh Das, Gita Press, Gorakhpur is a practical commentary on the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Unlike purely philosophical discourse it prioritizes actionable integration of *nishkama karma* (*selfless action*), *bhakti* (*devotion*) and *gyana* (*knowledge*) into daily life for both householders and sanyasis. This text transforms scriptural study into a disciplined path towards liberation.

Recent scholarly work has increasingly explored the intersection between the *Bhagavad Gita* and modern psychological thought. A notable contribution is the study by Dhillon (2023), which examines the relevance of the *Bhagavad Gita* within contemporary psychology and its potential role in enhancing mental well-being. The study conducts a thematic analysis of 24 research articles published between 2012 and 2022, identifying key areas of convergence such as parallels with modern psychotherapy, the presence of proto-psychological concepts, and the text's applicability in fostering resilience and well-being. It highlights that, despite its rich psychological insights, the *Bhagavad Gita* has historically been underutilized within academic psychology due to the dominance of Western empirical frameworks. However, there is a growing recognition of the need to integrate indigenous knowledge systems into psychological discourse. The study underscores the *Gita*'s potential as a culturally relevant resource for understanding human cognition, emotional regulation, and coping mechanisms, thereby advocating for a more inclusive and integrative approach to psychological science. (Dhillon, M., 2023)

The paper presented by Joshi and Sahu (2023) explores how the *Bhagavad Gita* offers a psychotherapeutic model for mental well-being. It compares Arjuna's emotional turmoil to modern psychological distress and highlights Lord Krishna's guidance as a method of emotional healing. Key concepts such as self-realization, detachment, equanimity, and positive psychology are linked to mental stability. Referencing Carol Ryff's model and modern psychological theories, the study shows that *Gita* teachings can promote inner peace, reduce anxiety, and improve overall psychological health. (Joshi P & Sahu K P, 2023)

Swami Rama (1985) presents a profound psychological interpretation of the *Bhagavad Gita* in *Perennial Psychology of the Bhagavad Gita*, emphasizing its relevance as a systematic guide for inner transformation and self-realization. The work conceptualizes the *Gita* as an integrative framework that bridges philosophy, spirituality, and psychology, highlighting the primacy of understanding the inner dimensions of human consciousness. The author underscores that the central aim of human life, according to the Eastern tradition, is the realization of the true Self (*Atman*), which transcends the transient and changing aspects of existence. The text elaborates on the distinction between the "real Self" and the "mere self," asserting that psychological suffering arises from misidentification with the latter. Furthermore, Swami Rama interprets the *Bhagavad Gita* as a structured method of psychological training that involves the systematic analysis and refinement of internal processes such as thought, emotion, and ego. He argues that mastery of the external world is contingent upon the understanding and organization of inner mental life, thereby

positioning the *Gita* as a practical manual for achieving both psychological balance and spiritual fulfilment. The work also highlights key themes such as equanimity, self-discipline, and non-attachment, presenting them as essential tools for overcoming emotional disturbances and attaining inner tranquility. In this sense, the *Perennial Psychology of the Bhagavad Gita* contributes significantly to the discourse on the intersection of ancient Indian philosophy and modern psychological thought, offering a holistic perspective on human well-being. (Swami Rama. (2008). *Perennial psychology of the Bhagavad Gita*. Himalayan Institute Press)

Methodology

This study is a qualitative approach to understand some verses of Bhagavad Gita that explain about lifelong health, purpose of human life and successful ageing. The methodology involves a comprehensive textual analysis of those verses supplemented by a review of relevant scholarly literature and multiple English translations of the Bhagavad Gita. Key translations include:

1. Swami Chinmayananda. (1976). *The holy Geeta*. Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.
2. Das S. R. (2025). *Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Sadhaka Sanjivani*. Gita Press.
3. Easwaran, E. (2007). *The Bhagavad Gita*. Nilgiri Press.
4. Swami Rama. (2008). *Perennial psychology of the Bhagavad Gita*. Himalayan Institute Press.

Discussion

The Supreme objective of the Bhagavad Gita is salvation from the endless cycles of birth and rebirth. The seeker has to learn and practice adaptability to every situation in life, that means using the situation rightly to remain focused on the ultimate prize, that is salvation. Right use means that, in unfavourable circumstances one should not become discouraged or remain attached to the desire for favourable condition. Instead, such situations should be accepted with patience, courage and inner strength. Similarly, when situations are favourable, one should utilize them by doing selfless service for others. This approach raises the person above pleasure and pain, developing a balanced state of mind or “*samatva*”. With this knowledge one becomes matured in life and finds inner peace. The Bhagavad-Gita in several key verses explains how to achieve lifelong mental and physical health. (Das, S. R. (2025). *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita: Sadhaka Sanjivani*. Gita Press)

- **Mental Wellbeing**

Chapter 1 shows the dilemma of Arjuna regarding what to do and what not to do, which is the source of his confusion and mental stress. This holds true for all human beings on this planet.

Chapter 2 gives the knowledge of changing body and non-changing soul, advocates to maintaining equanimity both in success and failure, while performing one's duties. When one focus on actions without worrying about outcomes, stress and anxiety are reduced.

Chapter 2, Verse-47,48 advocates that one must focus on performing one's duties without any worry about the fruits of the actions. It saves one from excessive expectations, resulting in inner peace.

Chapter 6, Verse-5,6 talk about self-elevation; one should uplift oneself by one's own mind and not degrade oneself. It inspires individuals to take responsibility for their own mental well-being. The mind can either support or obstruct a person's growth. (Joshi, P., & Sahu, K. P. (2023))

- **Lifelong Health**

Chapter 6, Verse-16,17 instruct that it is essential to regulate one's diet and sleep. Moderation in food, recreation and work, sleep and wakefulness are the key to a balanced and healthy life.

Chapter 17 -8 advocates that Satwik food promotes health, strength, happiness, cheerfulness and longevity. Satwik food is wholesome, nutritious, agreeable and nourishing. (Easwaran, E. (2007). The Bhagavad Gita. Nilgiri Press)

- **Purpose of Life**

Purpose of human birth is to realise the nature of the true self (*atman*) which is inconceivable, imperishable, immutable but conscious, eternal and blissful. Chapter 2 verse 71 explains about who can realise the Atman. The person who can completely let go of all desires for sensual fulfilment, sense of ownership, ego and remains content within himself, he can attain true peace and fulfill the highest purpose of life. (Joshi, P., & Sahu, K. P. (2023))

- **Successful Ageing**

Chapter 2 Verse- 62,63 explain that unbridled attachment to sense objects leads to desire. Unfulfilled desires lead to anger. Anger leads to delusions and delusions causes distortion of memories leading to a loss of intellect and common sense. Ultimately the person ruins his/her life.

Thus, a person should always remain watchful and perform the actions as his duty. Such action promotes both physical and mental well-being. When a person is matured with this knowledge his sense of perception changes. He enjoys every moment of his life and never feels like ageing because he is aware of this perishable body and is not afraid of death (Chapter 2 Verse 27). The soul/self has no desire to live because it is eternal. But when the soul/self identifies itself with the body, it is afraid of death and it has desire to live. This happens with ageing. Bhagavad Gita teaches the discriminating knowledge of body and soul which wipes away the desire to live and fear of death. An honest practitioner becomes a real sanyasi and is a source of good for the society. This is the successful ageing taught by Bhagavad Gita. (Das, S. R. (2025). Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Sadhaka Sanjivani. Gita Press)

Conclusion

The Bhagavad Gita encourages individuals for self-discovery providing lifelong health, purpose of human birth and finally successful ageing with self-realisation. By understanding the nature of the mind and practicing the principles of Bhagavad Gita, one can overcome the sufferings.

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