



NIMHANS Integrated Centre for Yoga

National Institute for Mental Health & Neurosciences, Bengaluru-29

SAMATVAM

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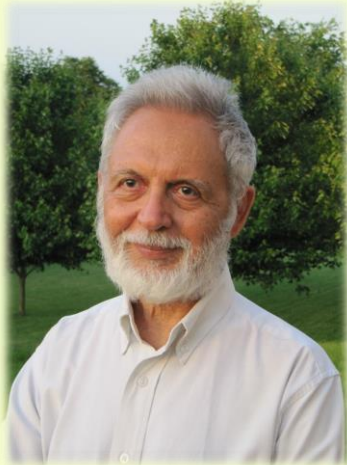
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SCOPE OF YOGA IN MODERN MEDICINE

Yoga is not a quick fix for health, but it may hold surprises for those who are willing to make the effort...!!

Kelly Morris



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*Retd. Prof of Physiology
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Specialized in Nutrition and Yoga

*Authored more than 200 scientific
papers, 50 articles, 14 books.*

Yoga is not a discovery of modern medicine. Elements of yoga have long been used by every system of medicine. However, there came a time in the recent history of modern medicine when it came to rely almost exclusively on drugs and surgery for treatment of disease. The rediscovery of yoga by medicine was triggered by the emergence of cardiovascular diseases, cancer and complications of diabetes as the major killers. It was soon realized that these diseases are the result of a poor lifestyle and undue mental stress. This led to a search for better lifestyles as well as for stress management techniques. Both these explorations led to ancient wisdom embodied in disciplines such as yoga, because these disciplines incorporate superb lifestyles as well as potent prescriptions for lasting mental peace. But yoga is neither a system of medicine nor was it originally designed for medical applications. It is a way of life based on a spiritual view of life. The yogic way of life facilitates spiritual growth, which in turn is accelerated by yogic techniques such as asana, pranayama and meditation. These techniques, even when torn out of context and practiced in isolation, also give considerable health

benefits. But that still does not make yoga just a therapeutic tool. It remains a system of spiritual growth, of which good health and amelioration of disease are the fringe benefits. Further, these techniques by themselves do not take away mental stress. Therefore enlightened use of yoga in modern medicine does not neglect its attitudinal aspects, and does not consider its spiritual goals irrelevant.

The yoga-medicine dialogue has been made more comprehensive by the support which the mind-body relationship has received from clinical, epidemiological and basic studies. Psychoneuroimmunology has helped place the mind-body relationship on a scientific footing. The result has been the emergence of mind-body medicine (MBM). MBM is neither a sub-specialty nor a super-specialty of medicine; it is a new era in modern medicine. Since MBM relies considerably on positive emotions to trigger self-healing, it needs a tool for influencing the patient's mind positively. Yoga is one such tool. The reason why tools such as yoga are able to achieve what conventional psychology cannot is because they

depend primarily on cognitive reappraisal. Thus everything remaining the same, the patient overcomes stress by learning to look at the situation differently. Cognitive restructuring is not always possible without belief in a supra-physical power which can override all mental judgement, evaluation or expectation. Because of belief in such a power, spiritual tools like yoga are able to provide a rational framework for a positive way of looking at any situation. That is why the prescription for mental peace embodied in yoga is potent, infallible and durable.

Yoga is not primarily a therapeutic tool, it is more than that. The situations in which it may be used in

medicine range from prevention of disease to management of terminal illness. The healthy lifestyle and mental peace inherent in yoga make it an attractive tool for prevention of disease. But if disease does occur, yoga helps in stimulating the self-healing mechanisms of the body, thereby providing invaluable assistance to any other therapeutic tools that may be employed. If the disease is basically incurable, yoga helps in improving the quality of life by improving the coping skills of the patient. In terminal illness, yoga helps the patient die in peace and with dignity. Thus yoga, like any therapeutic tool, helps healing. But if healing fails, unlike a mere therapeutic tool, yoga can relieve misery and promote peace. Finally, yoga may be used initially for treatment of disease, but for a patient with adequate receptivity it may eventually become an instrument of spiritual growth. Thus the disease becomes for such a patient a blessing in disguise. It triggers in him the process of self-discovery.

MBM (mind-body medicine) is neither a sub-specialty nor a super-specialty of medicine; it is a new era in modern medicine.

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Finally, it may be argued whether it is proper to get initiated into yoga through medicine. It is very rarely that embarking on the spiritual path is a cool, calculated, deliberate mental decision. Most people need a confluence of compelling circumstances to begin the journey. Illness is as good an excuse as any to set the process in motion. Hence even within the framework of medicine, the scope of yoga is far wider than that of a therapeutic tool.

NICY Activities

Yoga Appreciation Course (October 2016)

One month yoga course was conducted for staff and students of NIMHANS in the month of October 2016, which was attended by 19 Staff and students. A certificate of participation was provided at the end of the course to all the regular participants.



One day International Symposium: 27th October 2016

One day International symposium on “Applications of Integrative Medicine in Mental and Neurological Disorders” was conducted on 27th October 2016 at NIMHANS Convention centre in collaboration of University of São Paulo Medical School Hospital, Brazil. Approximately 140 delegates attended the symposium.



Release of “**Samatvam October 2017**” and Inauguration of “**Virtual Yoga Sessions**” from NICY to NIMHANS Centre for Well Being for Patients with Mental Health Disorders.

Friday Mass Yoga Session:

A one hour yoga session for staff and students of NIMHANS is being conducted at NICY every Friday between 7 to 8am.

Visit of Tibetan students to NICY: 17 Tibetan students and a faculty from the Tibetan Science Society visited the Yoga Centre and had an interaction with the faculty and staff on 16th December 2016. They appreciated the clinical and research work of the Centre.

Meditation Session by International Trainee at NICY:

A Special Meditation and breath awareness Yoga session was conducted by Dr. Veronique, International trainee at NICY for the staff and students of NIMHANS on 2nd December 2016 at 7am in NICY. It included some basic loosening exercises, along with focus on meditation and focusing on breath. It was attended by 18 members from NIMHANS.

Academic and Research Activities at NICY

A regular series of topic presentations and review of journal articles in the field of yoga and neuropsychiatry is held every Friday morning. Staff of NICY as well as scholars working in research projects get an opportunity to present, and the session is chaired by faculty and senior staff associated with NICY. All NIMHANS staff/ students are free to attend these sessions.

Training/ Internship for Postgraduate students at NICY:

Two M.Sc. students from SVYASA Yoga University, Bangalore completed their internship/ thesis in NICY.

1. **"Assessment of Virtual Yoga Training for persons with mental health disorders: Validation and Guidelines"**: thesis submitted by Ms. Raksha Bhide under the Guidance of Dr. Satyapriya Maharana, Assistant Prof. SVYASA Yoga University, Bangalore and Dr. Aarti Jagannathan, Assistant Prof. Dept. of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS.
2. **"The Role of Implicit and Explicit Attitude towards Yoga in understanding the efficacy of treatment in Schizophrenia"**: thesis submitted by Mrs. Sree Lalitha under the Guidance of Dr. Judu Ilavarasu, Assistant Prof. SVYASA Yoga University, Bangalore and Dr. Naren P. Rao, Associate Prof. Dept. of Psychiatry, NIMHANS

Current Ongoing Research Projects at NICY:

1. **"Yoga and Schizophrenia – a Comprehensive Assessment of Neuroplasticity (Y-SCAN)"**: A project funded Welcome – DBT India Alliance under Dr. Shivarama Varambally, Additional Professor of Psychiatry". NIMHANS.
2. **Testing of self – help yoga manual for Indian caregivers of persons with schizophrenia living in the community: A single blind randomized controlled study: An Indian Council of Medical Research funded project** under Dr. Aarti Jagannathan, Assistant professor of Psychiatric Social Work. NIMHANS.
3. **"Therapeutic effects of Yoga in Depression: A neurobiological investigation"** A Department of Science and Technology (SATYAM 2016) funded project under Dr. Muralidharan Kesavan, Additional Professor of Psychiatry, NIMHANS.
4. **"Establishing Collaborative Research Centre to carry out Collaborative Research"** A Collaborative Research Project with Central Council of Research in Yoga & Naturopathy (CCRYN) and NIMHANS Integrated Centre for Yoga under Dr. Shivarama Varambally, Additional Professor of Psychiatry. NIMHANS
5. **"Effect of Yoga and Meditation on Hippocampal Volumetry and Memory among People with Chronic Drug Resistant Mesial Temporal Lobe Epilepsy: A Comparative Study Before and After Epilepsy Surgery"** A Department of Science and Technology (SATYAM 2016) funded project under Dr. Malla Bhaskara Rao, Professor & Head, Department of Neurosurgery. NIMHANS.



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Feedback from an International Trainee at NICY

I recently graduated from my psychiatry residency in the United States. While I was in the residency I taught yoga to a variety of psychiatric patients, including military veterans with substance-abuse disorders. After seeing the positive impact it had on the well-being of these patients, I decided I wanted to expand my knowledge of yoga and yoga research.

NIMHANS has provided me with a great opportunity to learn more about yoga and yoga research from people who have advanced training,

including MD and PhD degrees in yoga, which are not available in the United States. I learned a great deal about research methodology as well as the inner workings of how to run a yoga research program. NIMHANS has taken special care to systematize and validate their yoga modules so that the yoga intervention for each disorder can remain the same across studies. Comparing their class structure to some classes in the US, I noticed a greater emphasis on pranayama and chanting. This is something I plan on incorporating into the classes I teach--including alternate nostril breathing, as well as longer periods of chanting--so that patients can experience the benefits of these central yogic practices.

The Yoga Center is not just focused on research, but also provides a place where psychiatric patients can participate in an ongoing practice and find a sense of community. Many patients have come to the center for years, continuing to take classes as part of their ongoing therapy. There is a palpable sense of interconnectedness around the center, which I believe is a great benefit to the patients.

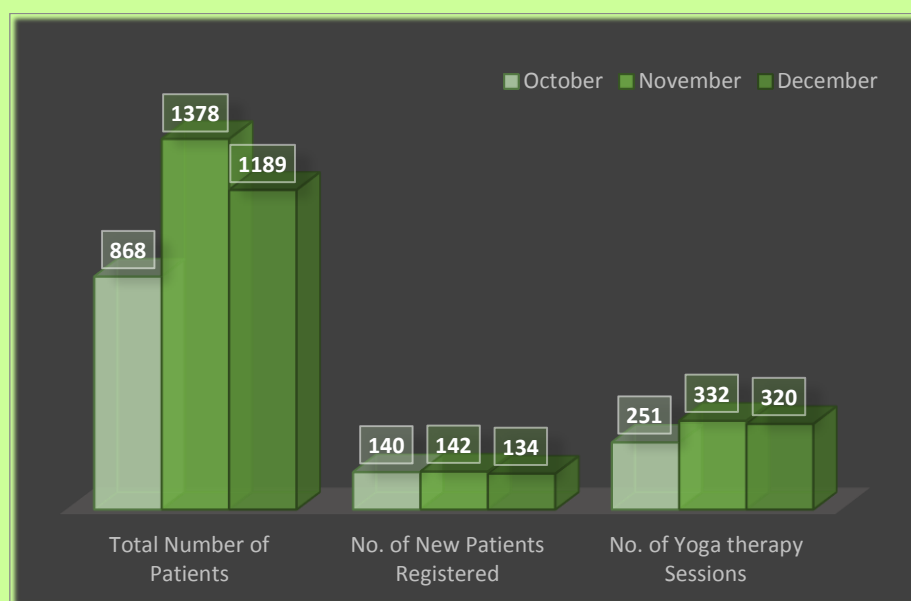
The Yoga Centre staff work well together and have created a true family. They also champion yoga, focusing resources on spreading its knowledge across the departments at NIMHANS by organizing weekly mass yoga sessions for hospital staff and scheduling special events where staff members can learn more about yoga and de-stressing. They are also active in preparing for the celebration of the WHO's World Yoga Day, which happens each year on June 21st.

My three biggest takeaways from my time at NIMHANS include gaining a deeper understanding of research methodologies, learning new yogic practices, and coming to appreciate their inclusive approach to mental health care. My hope is to take these lessons and incorporate them into my own practice back home in New Orleans, while also working to spread them to other parts of the medical community in the U.S., especially as it pertains to enhancing the reputation of integrative medicine in academic and allopathic medicine.

Yoga therapy for Psychiatric and Neurological Disorders at NICY

NIMHANS Integrated centre for Yoga (NICY) offers yoga therapy for both inpatients and outpatients. Referrals come from all the clinical departments of NIMHANS, with varied diagnosis such as Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders, Bipolar Disorder, Substance Use Disorder, Adjustment Disorder, Anxiety Disorders, Somatoform pain disorder, Dissociative Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Mild to Moderate Mental Retardation, Seizure Disorder, Migraine, Mild Cognitive Impairment, Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disorder, Fronto temporal Dementia, MND (Motor Neuron Disease), Multiple Sclerosis, Low back Ache, as well as caregiver stress. A total of 903 yoga therapy sessions were conducted at NICY between the months of October to December, 2016. The month of November 2016 has seen the highest number of new registrations and also the highest number of yoga therapy sessions. Statistics has been provided for the month of October, November and December 2016 below.

Month	Total No. of Patients	No. of Yoga therapy Sessions	No. of new registrations
October 2016	868	251	140
November 2016	1378	332	142
December 2016	1189	320	134



Upcoming Events

- Yoga Appreciation Course: 1st April 2017
- Inauguration of New Yoga Building: February 2017

Book Post

To

Mr/Mrs/Dr.....

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NIMHANS Integrated Centre for Yoga
National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences

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