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Stress Management through Yoga

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Introduction- Stress is the body's automatic response to any physical or mental demand placed on it. It is subjective and unpleasant feeling of distress. Every one of us irrespective of our age, sex, education, occupation, socio-economic status, whether live in rural or urban area face stress. Stress effect body, mind, behavior in many ways and everyone experiences stress differently. It adversely effect a wide range of health condition and yoga is the most comprehensive approach to fighting stress.

When we are in stress our nervous system respond by releasing a flood of stress hormone. This hormone stimulates the body for emergency action by "fight-flight or freeze" reaction also known as stress response. The agent which causes stress is known as 'stressors'. Stress causes many harmful effect on the body such as , Physical impact - Weight gain/loss, Unexpected hair loss, Heart palpitations, High blood pressure, Digestive symptoms (such as dryness of mouth, flatulence, nausea, butterfly stomach)etc. Emotional negative effect includes Mood swing, Anxiety, Can lead to depression & unhealthy coping strategies (i.e. alcohol, drugs).

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Stress Management through Yoga

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I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is the body's automatic response to any physical or mental demand placed on it. It is subjective and unpleasant feeling of distress. Every one of us irrespective of our age, sex, education, occupation, socio-economic status, whether live in rural or urban area face stress. Stress effect body, mind, behavior in many ways and everyone experiences stress differently. It adversely effect a wide range of health condition and yoga is the most comprehensive approach to fighting stress.

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All these changes occur because of excess secretion of adrenaline as hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal glands become hyper active under stress.

Prolong stress leads to increased 'wear and tear' of the body and mind, which in turn lead to:

1. Accidental proneness: because of poor attention and concentration it occurs.
2. Mental disorders: anxiety disorder (panic, phobic disorder) depression are frequently seen in people who are under stress.
3. Alcohol and other substance use: it is common experience that when a person is under tension he smoke and takes drinks more than usual and eventually become dependant on them.

a) Stress management

Stress can be managed by following Stress Relief Strategies –

1. Breathing meditation techniques.

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2. Physical exercise like yoga & work out routine.
3. Meditation

II. BREATHING MEDITATION FOR STRESS RELIEF

a) Pranadharana (fixation of mind on breath)

Pran means breath and dharana means fixation of mind. The practice of pran dharna is done in 3 graded steps i.e.:

1. Counting of breath-count exhalation and inhalation together as 1 breath.
2. Feel the touch of the incoming and outgoing breath at the wall of the nose.
3. Feel the thermal sensation on the soft palate.

Benefits:

1. The mind become more sharp and controllable.
2. It improves the concentration.
3. It prepares the person for meditation.

b) Deep Breathing Meditation

1. The key to deep breathing is to breathe deeply from the abdomen, getting as much fresh air as possible in your lungs. When you take deep breaths from the abdomen, rather than shallow breaths from your upper chest, you inhale more oxygen. The more oxygen you get, the less tense, short of breath, and anxious you feel.
2. Sit comfortably with your back straight.
3. Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise.
4. Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale.
5. Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

III. ROLE OF YOGA

It is observed that yoga improves attention and emotional control as well as affects the nervous system, making the parasympathetic nervous system more dominant and stabilizing the autonomic nervous system to enhance resistance to the effect of stress.

Yoga practices including asan's, slow breathing, meditation, increases activation of P.N.S. & leads to mental relaxation.

Yoga is a way of improving our self & understanding our internal state.



IV. MEDITATION

Meditation on the Basis of Body's Stress Response

a) *Fight Stress Response*

You may respond best to relaxation techniques that quiet you down, such as meditation, deep breathing.

b) *Flight Stress Responses*

You may respond best to relaxation techniques that are stimulating and that energize your nervous system, such as rhythmic exercise.

c) *Freeze Stress Response*

Your challenge is to identify relaxation techniques that provide both safety and stimulation to help you "reboot" your system. Techniques such as mindfulness walking.

We can deal stressful situation by adopting four A'S i.e.

Change the situation

1. Avoid the stressor
2. Alter the stressor

Change your reaction

1. Adapt to the stressor
2. Accept the stressor

d) *Stress management strategy*

Avoid unnecessary stress Not all stress can be avoided, and it's not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed.

Learn how to say "no" – Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life. & avoid people who stress you out.

e) *Stress management strategy*

Alter the situation If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it by following points -

- Express your feelings instead of bottling them up. If something or someone is bothering you,

communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way.

- Be willing to compromise. When you ask someone to change their behavior, be willing to do the same.
- Manage your time better. Poor time management can cause a lot of stress.

f) *Stress management strategy*

Adapt to the stressor If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude.

- Reframe problems. Try to view stressful situations from a more positive perspective.
- Focus on the positive. When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, including your own positive qualities and gifts.

g) *Stress management strategy*

Accept the things you can't change Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

Since everyone has a unique response to stress, there is no "one size fits all" solution to dealing with it. No single method works for everyone or in every situation, so experiment with different techniques and strategies. Focus on what makes you feel calm and in control.

We may feel like the stress in our life is out of our control, but we can always control the way we respond. Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of our thoughts, our emotions, our schedule, our environment, and the way we deal with problems.

These are four simple & general strategy to manage stress, by adopting all these method we can get rid from the stress.