



International Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine

Available at www.saap.org.in

ISSN: 2583-1305



Yoga and its path to spirituality – a review article

Madugula Sruthi¹, Ashish Kumar Mishra², Shivakumar S Harti³¹PG Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi²Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi³Assoc. Professor, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi*Received: 04 July 2022 Revised: 19 July 2022 Accepted: 14 Sep 2022*

Abstract

The Indian Yoga system is now recognized as a positive science worldwide. Yoga is inborn spiritual. The ultimate goal of yoga is the divine fulfillment of life. No yoga can be successfully undertaken and followed unless there is an awakening towards oneself for the necessity of spiritual existence. Both yoga practice and spirituality are associated with beneficial mental health outcomes. Yoga morality is necessary to provide the method to proceed on the yogic path and pave the path toward spirituality. Kundalini is the term for spiritual energy or life force with the practice of Kundalini Yoga one is thought able to liberate oneself from one's Karma. So present study aims to investigate the relationship between yoga and spirituality. We also explained the importance of kundalini yoga to attain spirituality.

Keywords: Kundalini yoga, Hatha yoga, Spirituality, Atman, bhakti yoga, Karma Yoga.

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. Copyright © 2022 Author(s) retain the copyright of this article.



*Corresponding Author

Madugula Sruthi

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46797/ijacm.v3i2.347>

Produced and Published by
[South Asian Academic Publications](http://SouthAsianAcademicPublications.com)

Introduction

The conceptual background of yoga has its origins in ancient Indian philosophy. Yoga is a spiritual science that teaches us how to develop our physical, mental, and moral spiritual selves in a comprehensive and integrated way. The soul, or spiritual self, brings the body, intellect, and emotions into harmony with one another. Yoga is not a particular religion, but an age-old practice based on a balancing system for the moral-spiritual body, mind, and spirit to attain inner peace and liberation. Yoga is the complete restriction of mental changes [1]. Yoga is a type of mind-body medicine that integrates a person's physical, mental, and spiritual qualities to promote health [2]. The main forms of Yoga,

are Hatha Yoga, Laya Yoga, Jnana, Bhakti, and Raja Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is Laya Yoga, these improve the spiritual well-being and spiritual intelligence of an individual.

Spirituality

Spiritual practice is one's journey towards moksha, awareness of self, the discovery of higher truths, the true nature of reality, and a consciousness that is liberated [3].

Our comprehension grows, our growth potential expands, and we experience more energy and excitement for meditation as we invest in our spiritual progress. Meaning, Value, Supremacy, Self-Connection, God/Supreme Power, the Environment, and Life Progress are all aspects of human spirituality. There is also a similar focus on the importance of mindfulness, tolerance for a wide range of practices and beliefs, and respect for the perspectives of other religious communities [4].

Spiritual practices include meditation, prayer, spiritual retreats and activities, love, and compassion are described as the key points of spiritual development.

Kundalini Yoga

Study the science of energy and spiritual philosophy. It is which treats Kundalini Sakti, the six centers of spiritual energy (Shat Chakras), the awakening of the sleeping Kundalini Sakti, and its union with Lord Siva in Sahasrara Chakra.

A Kundalini Yogi contains both Bhukti (enjoyment) and Mukti (liberation) in the fullest form of sense. As a result, this Yoga is regarded as the most important of them all. Various visions, powers, happiness, and knowledge are experienced by the Yogi.

It awakens you to the power of internal energy, and it leads us to a spiritual awakening that affected every area of our lives. All Sadhanas, such as Japa, meditation, Kirtan, and prayer, as well as all virtue development and observance of disciplines such as truth, nonviolence, and continence, are at best calculated to awaken this serpent-power and cause it to be pass through all subsequent Chakras, beginning with Svadhishthana and ending with Sahasrara [5]. To awaken Kundalini, Laya Yoga incorporates meditation practices that cause the prana to move in specific ways. When Kundalini is released, it forms a vertical connection between the chakras by opening the Nadis, or energy pathways. Kundalini energy rises via the chakras and flows through the body [6].

Hatha Yoga

Hatha Yoga activities are designed to assist us in controlling the nervous system's energy during inner fire meditation [7]. It incorporates ethical, dietary, cleansing, pranayama, meditation, and a yogi's spiritual development method [8]. When you exercise, you can feel the blissful kundalini energy flowing throughout your entire body, as the body is the source of kundalini energy. Hatha Yoga, often known as "Force Discipline," stresses body mastery as a technique of attaining spiritual perfection by detaching the mind from external objects. Hatha Yoga aims to awaken Kundalini through physical discipline, Nadi purification, and Prana control. Hatha Yogi who seeks liberation practices Laya Yoga Sadhana or Kundalini Yoga, which provides both happiness and liberation. Every center where Kundalini is awakened has a unique type of bliss.

Bhakti yoga

A Bhakta is a spiritual follower or person who performs bhakti yoga. Bhakti yoga is the practice of developing a highly energetic, spiritual, impulsive, and dynamic loving relationship between mankind and divinity. It is a profound awareness of the everlasting individual's

oneness and harmony with the divine and all creation [9]. Artha (distressed devotee), Jijnasu (seeker of knowledge), Artharthi (seeker of wealth), and Jnani (who knows wisdom) are four different sorts of bhaktas who practice Bhakti yoga and are noble because their pursuit of Bhakti yoga sooner or later starts the trip on the path of spirituality, it keeps one away from negativity and ill karma, and it produces spiritual transformation towards the objective of Bhakti yoga, to "know god as the essence within themselves and their true self always with god" [10].

Karma Yoga

The yoga of action is karma yoga. It prepares the yogi for the study of greater truths, such as self-knowledge, and teaches us how to work and serve without attachment, egoism, or the hope of gain or reward. Yoga even for yogins, morality begins with non-harmfulness, which is not the primary virtue. The yogin's virtues, exceptions to ahimsa, and subsequent Seva, or giving of oneself and what one values to others, become critical to the world-oriented practice of karma yoga [11]. A Karma Yogi who practices such Nishkarma karma which is a selfless action, without any expectation of fruits or results leads to a spiritual path to liberation [12, 13].

Raja Yoga

Because it emphasizes awareness of one's state of mind, Raja Yoga is also known as Mental Yoga or the Yoga of the Mind. This concentration technique teaches how to relax the mind and bring it to a single point of focus. At this time, we turn our attention toward our inner nature, which is Divine [14]. The three dimensions of Raja yoga are physical, mental, and spiritual. Swami Vivekananda associated Raja yoga with Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, which are sometimes confused with Ashtanga yoga, a road to spiritual liberation. Yama (self-discipline), Niyama (nonviolence), Asanas (Yoga postures), Pranayama (breathing techniques to manage prana), Pratyahara (sensual withdrawal), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (Meditation), and Samadhi (meditation) are the eight limbs of Raja Yoga (Union with the divine). Working through Patanjali's eight limbs of yoga's mental and body practices leads to samadhi, a state in which the actual self can be experienced [15]. When the mind is in a constant state of thought, we cannot see or access our true nature. We cannot realize our true Selves.

Jnana Yoga

Jnana Yoga is a spiritual practice that seeks to answer questions like "who am I?" and "what am I?" [16]. Self-realization is the purpose of jnana yoga, which is also known as buddhi yoga in the Bhagavad Gita [17]. Jnana yoga is the yoga of knowledge, not intellectual knowledge, but knowledge of Brahman and Atman and understanding their oneness. It is the knowledge that bestows Moksha or spiritual emancipation, either while alive (jivanmukti) or after death (Mukti) (videhamukti). Viveka, Viraga, Satsampat, and Mumuksutva are four types of behavioral credentials. Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titiksa, Sraddha, and Samadhana are the Satsampat. Sravana (listening), manana (thinking), and nididhyasana are the three disciplines of Jnana yoga for Advaitins (meditation). These techniques are thought to lead to proper knowledge, which eliminates avidya, psychological, and perceptual faults linked to Atman and Brahman, with the help of a guru [18].

Relation between Yoga and Spirituality

As a philosophical framework, yoga. It is a collection of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual practices aiming at enhancing overall health, well-being, and self-awareness. "Realization of the oneness of all things" is the ultimate goal of spiritual yoga practice. Regularity of practice is an intriguing component in the relationship between yoga and spirituality. The yoga experience is linked to the benefits of yoga and parts of spirituality such as the meaning of life and gratitude. Spirituality does not refer to any specific discipline. If we cultivate our body, mind, emotions, and energies to a particular level of maturity, it blossoms within us. Both your body and your breath are equally important to you. You will be continually spiritual if you make no distinctions as to which is superior and are equally immersed in all aspects of life. Nobody has to explain what spirituality is to you. Spiritual well-being is defined by a sense of peace.

Conclusion

Yoga improves spiritual health, a good view of life, and inner happiness, reducing existential anxiety. Yoga enhances spiritual well-being and spiritual intelligence. In Yoga, mental purity leads to perfection. Man's highest and ultimate goal is to achieve eternal, unlimited, unbroken, supreme enjoyment. Only one's Self or Atman can experience happiness. This eternal bliss can be attained through spirituality.

References

1. Patanjali, and G. L Verma. Patanjali Yoga Sutra: Sanskrit text with transliteration, English commentary along with a glossary of technical terms, etc.: Yoga sutra of Patanjali. Varanasi; New Delhi: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan ; Also can be had from Chaukhamba Pub. House, 2010.
2. Atkinson NL, Permeth-Levine R. Benefits, barriers, and cues to the action of yoga practice: a focus group approach. Am J Health Behav. 2009 Jan-Feb;33(1):3-14. DOI: 10.5993/ajhb.33.1.1. PMID: 18844516.
3. Sivaraman, Krishna, K. R. Sundararajan, and Bithika Mukerji, eds. Hindu Spirituality. World Spirituality, v. 6-7. New York: Crossroad, 1989.
4. Seybold, K. S., & Hill, P. C. (2001). The Role of Religion and Spirituality in Mental and Physical Health. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 10(1), 21–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00106>
5. Sivananda. Kundalini Yoga: Illustrated. Shivanandanagar: Divine Life Society, 2010.
6. Judith, Anodea. Eastern Body, Western Mind: Psychology and the Chakra System as a Path to the Self. Rev. ed. Berkeley, Calif: Celestial Arts, 2004.
7. Thubten Yeshe, Thubten Zopa, Robina Courtin, Ailsa Cameron, Jonathan Landaw, and Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang-grags-pa. *The Bliss of Inner Fire: Heart Practice of the Six Yogas of Naropa*, 2015.
8. Burley, Mikel. Hatha-Yoga: Its Context, Theory, and Practice. 1st ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2000.
9. Kumar, Samrat Schmiem. Bhakti - the Yoga of Love: Trans-Rational Approaches to Peace Studies. Masters of Peace, Vol. 1. Wien Berlin Münster: Lit, 2010.
10. Malpan, Varghese. A Comparative Study of the Bhagavad-Gītā and The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola on the Process of Spiritual Liberation. Documenta Missionalia 22. Roma: Pontificia università gregoriana, 1992.
11. Phillips, Stephen H. Yoga, Karma, and Rebirth: A Brief History and Philosophy. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
12. Bhawuk, Dharm P. S., and Dharm P. S. Bhawuk. Spirituality and Indian Psychology: Lessons from the Bhagavad-Gita. International and Cultural Psychology. New York: Springer, 2011.
13. Commentary by Swami Mukundananda, Shrimad Bhagavadgita, Karma yoga Chapter 3, Verse 19, 2014
14. Mehrad Nazari, Michele Hebert. Retrieved from online website <https://rajayogis.net/raja-yoga/>
15. Pata??jali, and G. L Verma. Pata?? jali Yoga sutra: Sanskrit text with transliteration, English commentary along with a glossary of technical terms, etc.: Yoga sutra of Pata?? jali. Varanasi; New Delhi: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan ;

Also can be had from Chaukhamba Pub. House, 2010.

16. Mann, Richard D. *The Light of Consciousness: Explorations in Transpersonal Psychology*. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1984.
17. Nadkarni, M. V. *The Bhagavad-Gita for the Modern Reader: History, Interpretations and Philosophy*, 2017. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/11276065>.
18. Davis, Leesa S. *Advaita Vedānta and Zen Buddhism: Deconstructive Modes of Spiritual Inquiry*. Continuum Studies in Eastern Philosophies. London; New York: Continuum, 2010.