

## YOGIC LIFE STYLE FOR STRESS, ANXIETY & DEPRESSION

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### ABSTRACT

“Yogic life style alone would endow us with equanimity amidst all types of dissonance in our life and would make all our endeavors creative and skillful”, as per Bhagawat Gītā (II: 48, 50). This obviously indicates the state without Stress, Anxiety and Depression. Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra (II: 18) too indicates the significance of the phenomenal world towards Apavarga or existential Liberation. It is, therefore, in order to understand Yogic life style with the purpose of exploring its propriety as a remedial measure for Stress Anxiety and Depression. Modern, as well as, Yogic views on Stress, Anxiety and Depression have been dealt with from psychological perspectives before elucidating extensively the need, significance and rationale of Yogic Life Style, in the light of Upaniṣadic and Patañjalian metaphysics.

**Key words:** Stress, anxiety, depression, yogic life style, upaniṣads, pātañjala yoga sūtra, experiential yoga

### Introduction

#### *Yoga as antidote to Stress*

Men of wisdom have, always, been appalled by the idea of freedom from human suffering and achieving eternal happiness. According to Yoga science, *mind* is an unsteady phenomenon with pleasure and pain as its main characteristics. When *mind* is disturbed, it can give rise to emotional reactions like resentment, hostility, anxiety etc. When these reactions overpower one’s available resources, one develops *Stress*, the mal – perception being the underlying cause. Depending upon the intensity of one’s *Stress* response and the extent of health status of different vital systems of the body different Psychosomatic, Somatic and Somato-psychic disorders are developed.

*Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra (P.Y.S.)*, an authoritative ancient treatise, holds a great promise in tackling *Stress* and emotional disorders. *Patañjali* suggests *Abhyāsa–Vairāgya Yoga* for *Cittavṛttinirodha* i.e. the cessation of modifications of mind with a comprehensively objective awareness. Thus *Abhyāsa-Vairāgya Yoga* can be useful for ‘*Stress Elimination*’. Regular /

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punctual practice with patience and perseverance is termed as *Abhyāsa* while *Vairāgya* connotes a virtual freedom from propensities of attitudinal attachment and indulgence to all worldly things, all pleasures of phenomenal life. *Viveka Khyāti* (discriminating wisdom) is the very base of *Abhyāsa-Vairāgya Yoga*, which leads the practitioner respectively to *Comprehensive Awareness* and *Comprehensive Freedom* in one's all endeavors. As a result the practitioner realizes that worldly things can give only a temporary relief from the sufferings and thus may develop a more objective attitude towards them. *Abhyāsa–Vairāgya Yoga* leads ultimately to *Jīvan-mukta* state, whereas the practitioner is fully aware of what is happening around him but at the same time remains '*least disturbed due to the same happening*'. This is fully proved in one experiment done by Swami Kuvlayananda. He compared the hypnotic trance with *Laya Samādhi* and found out that under the hypnotic trance the subject's E.E.G. pattern was changed due to pinprick and other stimuli, while it did not change during *Laya Samādhi*. It was a significant fact that the subject was fully aware of the stimuli being administered during the state of *Samādhi*.

The common man who turns to *Yoga*, generally, has some health related problems. He wants to manage Stress related disorders and thus lead a happy phenomenal life. He often has a *Vyutthita Citta* i.e. a disturbed state of mind. *Patañjali* has suggested *Kriyā Yoga* for the common person who leads a worldly life amidst all stresses and strains. In *Kriyā Yoga* main emphasis is given on *Tapas* (austerity), *Svādhyāya* (self-study) and *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (surrender to God). These practices are specially recommended to achieve *Citta-śuddhi*. *Tapas* is understood as practice of *Prāṇāyāma*, in particular, and has to be done with total dedication. *Svādhyāya* involves recitation of *mantras* (*Om, Gāyatri, Tryambaka* etc.), reading holy books and a deep contemplation on the ultimate reality, *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* is nothing but a total surrender to God with a complete non-expectancy. *Kriyā Yoga* basically helps to stabilize the mind, to attenuate the *kleśas*, (afflictions), as well as, to help prepare one for *Samādhi*.

The cognitive Stress is experienced because of mal-perception of the situation, which according to *Pātañjala Yoga* is due to *Avidyā*, i.e. *ajñāna* or absence of proper knowledge. *Avidyā* gives rise to four other *Kleśas*, namely, *Asmitā* (egoism), *Rāga* (attachment), *Dveśa* (antipathy) and *Abhiniveśa* (fear of death). *Kleśas* can be attenuated when one studies the scriptures, practices austerity and has a total surrendering stance towards God.

*Kleśas* give rise to nine *Antarāyas* (obstacles) that withhold one's progress in *Yogic* path. They are *Vyādhi* (disease), *Styāna* (unwillingness to do any thing), *Samśaya* (doubt), *Pramāda* (willful neglect of practice or violation of a programme), *Ālasya* (sloth/laziness), *Avirati* (sense entanglement), *Bhrāntidarśanam* (illusion), *Alabdha bhūmikātva* (non-attainability of a desired

state) and *Anavasthitattva* (not being able to maintain a state). Four *Vikṣepa sahabhuvah* (concomitants of *Antarāyas*) namely, *Duḥkha* (sorrow), *Daurmanasya* (weakness), *Aṅgamejayatva* (tremors/shaking of the limbs) and *Śvāsa-Praśvāsa* {unsteadiness of breath} further impede one's progress towards *Yoga* and accentuates further the stress response.

*Kriyā Yoga* is specially recommended for *kleśa tanukaraṇa*, as well as, for removing *antarāyās* and *vikṣepa sahabhuvah*. This means that *Kriyā Yoga* can be treated as a *Stress Management* intervention, According to *Pātañjala Yoga*, the mind undergoes constant modifications, which, when controlled, may result into *Self-realization*. The people, having achieved *Samāhita Citta*, at least to some degree through *Kriyā yoga*, can try for Stress Prevention through *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* describes eight different *aṅgas* or limbs of *Yoga*. *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* is mainly useful for removing *Citta-mala/Aśuddhi* (aberrations) from *Citta* (mind). *Yamas* and *Niyamas* are helpful to develop a positive attitude towards life and living. *Āsanas* are static stretching postures for attaining psycho-physiological vitality. *Prāṇāyāma* is breath control for expansion of *Prāṇic* activity. *Pratyāhāra* is withdrawal of senses. In *Dhāraṇā* the mind starts becoming stabilized and here the inward journey gets started. In *Dhyāna* mind gets concentrated/ stabilized with continuous awareness, following which *Samādhi*, the total psychological integration, is possible.

Authors have drawn certain *Yogic* Principles from *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtras* as follows, through which one can help achieve proper attitude and mental set for tackling Stress.

These *Yogic* principles can be achieved through *Prayatnaśaithilya* (withdrawal of efforts), *Ananta samapatti* (getting awareness to the whole expanse) and *Dvandvānabhighāta* (means no disharmony between apposite groups of muscles, as well as, cessation of mental conflicts). *Sākṣi-bhāva* is a state of mind where one has to observe thoughts and all phenomena around without getting involved into them. This helps to minimize the disturbing thoughts and to calm down the mind. Expanding the *Prāṇa* throughout the body, through mentally attending the whole body, helps to remove functional blockages in case of Psycho-somatic disorders. Instead of developing '*Kartā bhāva*' if one develops '*Draṣṭā bhāva*', through the practices like *Prāṇa-dhāraṇā* and *Śavāsana*, one can transcend the body and the psychological domain so as to help realize the ultimate truth. Such a realization prepares a sound background for tackling Stress.

### ***The need and significance of Yogic Life Style***

*Yogic* metaphysics does not cater to the idea of *Eustress* and *Distress dichotomy*. According to it the motivating force, to keep us on our mission trail of creative and productive endeavors, is

*an intense yet selfless inclination of service towards all living beings. Such an attitude towards our life related activities, along with attentional training, through Aṣṭāṅga Yoga and Kriyā Yoga, would help cultivate Samādhi-bhāva (a general feeling state of integrity and equanimity). Thus, Samādhi-bhāva is the very moving force for achieving a motivation to be skillful and effective in all our life-related endeavors.*

### **Yogic Life Style as a remedy over Life Style Disorders**

*Stress is defined as a maladaptive response pattern, characteristic to the individual concerned, to his overpowering and perceived psycho-physiological and bio-ecological demands. Stress, according to P.Y.S., can be defined as “A state of psycho-physiological imbalance experienced due to identification with one’s modifications of mind, emanating from our existential afflictions (termed as Kleshas), that get precipitated by unfavorable social environment and one’s dissonant psycho-physiological response patterns to the same social environment.*

### **The etiology of life-style related disorders as per Modern Medicine:**

Genesis of Existential Disorders as per Modern Medicine and as per *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra* has remarkable similarities. Only when predisposing factors (one’s hereditary characteristics) interact with precipitating factors (critical incidences taking place in one’s life) the existential disorders arise. This is the reason why either of the two sets of factors can not create any disorders, singly. For example, hereditary characteristics, howsoever impactful, can not produce a psychosomatic disorder unless they are coupled with critical incidences. As well, even if critical incidences befall a person, he may not show any ill-effect of the same, so long he has a sound hereditary constitution. Great men in human history have refused to cave in to great many sufferings and critical incidences taking place in their life. In the *Patañjali’s* metaphysics, *Kleśas* are considered as hereditary in nature while *Environment* denotes the occurrence of critical incidences in one’s life. *Cittavṛttis* denote mental functions of pathological nature.

In *yogic* metaphysics an indulgent identification with mental functions spells the symptoms akin to Emotional Responses. These symptoms, named as “*Antarāyas*” and “*Vikṣepa Sahabhavaḥ*” must obviously be tackled first. We often observe that a person, suffering from emotional responses, continues to be over-reactive with highly neurotic responses. These responses need to be channelized and sublimated adequately. Certain *Yogic* practices of *Kriyā Yoga* and principles of *Karma Yoga* may help sublimate the said responses.

### ***Modern perspective of Stress, Anxiety and Depression***

ICD -10 classifies Stress, Anxiety and Depression into Functional Disorders Depression is 4<sup>th</sup> leading contributor to the global maladies resulting in a huge loss of productivity. Marked with very low self esteem and a virtual loss of interest *depression* has variants like Dysthymia, Post-partum depression, and Seasonal affective Disorder.

Anxiety Disorders are characterized by fear, avoidance behavior and somatic symptoms like head-ache, sweating, muscle spasm, palpitations and hypertension often leading to fatigue.

Types include Phobia, Panic disorder and Generalized anxiety disorder that includes OCD. Kumar *et al.*, 1993; Ray *et al.*, 2001; wooley *et al.*, 2004; Sharma *et al.*, 2005; Butler *et al.*; 2005; Janakiramaiah, Lovey *et al.*, 2005 have shown encouraging results on depressives with yoga as an intervention. Vahia *et al.*, (1966, 1969, 1972 & 1973), Naug, 1975, Hamson *et al.*, 2004; Jensen, 2004 have shown favorable effect of Yoga on Anxiety.

### **Rationale of Yogic Life style as an effective antidote to Stress, Anxiety and Depression**

- 1 . Yoga holds the bodily existence and its life span as a means to self-realization. This gives a sense of purpose to one's life and living.
2. Dostalek (1977) has found that the restriction of consciousness induced by certain practices such as *mantra* meditation increases suggestibility that, in turn, may have a great therapeutic potential in Anxiety Management, as the person may become more open to therapeutic interventions.
3. Suppression and repression phenomena have a close relevance to Stress, Anxiety and Depression. All yoga practices particularly *Trāṭaka* and meditative practices provide easy ways of unveiling one's own ego defenses, thereby facilitating mental catharsis in case of normal and mental patients alike. Mental catharsis is a pre-requisite for implanting a sense of perceptual meaningfulness, self-worth and deep sense of one's own psycho-physiological harmony. Unlearning of past impressions, through catharsis, relaxes the learning set and thus enhances self adjustment and social adjustment.
4. Evolutionary Ethics does not influence man sufficiently to offer a cause to live with a sense of purpose amidst existential afflictions and pains. "*Objectless and Self-existent (Transcendental) Joy*", obtainable through *Yoga* practices and *Yoga Darśana*, offers the ultimate purpose of one's life. It almost invariably becomes a great motivating force to live on meaningfully.

5. Both in Anxiety and in Depression an individual is in nervous and defensive automatism that renders him as slave of impulses and emotions. Both psychology and yoga have the thesis that ills of the humanity are due to the ignorance and the way to its healing is through exploring and knowing one's inner being. Yoga has a varied range of practices to correct, preserve and strengthen one's psychosomatic assets, apart from a sound metaphysical reasoning pertaining to the meaning and the purpose of human life and living.
6. Yoga practices produce a feeling of self worth and meaningfulness in one's life. It often has a salutary effect on one's personal and social endeavors, which, in turn, minimizes the responses of Stress, Anxiety and Depression.
7. Use of the subtle suggestions found in Yoga in the form of meaningful contents of *mantras* and the tangible techniques of *Tapas*, *Svādhyāya* and *Īśvara–praṇidhāna* may enrich the technology of suggestion particularly while inducing the patient into a mento-emotional relaxation.
8. *Yamas* and *Niyamas* offer certain austerities to break the fixities and automatism at the physical level, as well as, it offers certain spiritual exercises to free the mind from conscious and unconscious impulses, reactivities and conditionings. Psycho-physiological methods, when correctly performed, free oneself almost completely from the dictates of mind and thus make one amenable to the dictates of *Will* and *Intuition*. Swami Vishnu Tirtha (1974) speaks of *Will* power: '*Will* for action brings the requisite knowledge and *Will* for knowledge gives the necessary impetus for work because *Will* is the creative energy in its potential state'. *Will* is supposed to give contents and direction to *Intuition*, which is an immediate subtle perception about the facts of things without reasoning, analysis or a conscious mental effort.
9. Anxiety and Depression have conflicts and desires at their roots. One needs to adjust with these once these appear on the conscious level. *Yamas* and *Niyamas* offer an ample possibility of *sublimation* for the purpose.
10. Through its higher yoga practices of *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*, Yoga explores the whole depth of one's internal environment and hence the very predisposing factors of Anxiety and Depression can be attenuated favorably, as claimed in P.Y.S.(II:2)
11. The suggestive *let go* element in Progressive relaxation and Autogenic training will be much more effective if the subject comprehends the distinction between the empirical

self (Physical state, concrete thought, emotions and sensations) and the eternal Self (Creative thoughts and actions of spiritual nature, Absolute/Transcendental Joy) as indicated in *Yoga Darśana*. Therefore, research into these concepts will enrich our understanding of human personality.

12. In the yogic practices viz. *Āsanas*, *Prāṇāyāmas*, and *Meditation* the common mechanism of tackling Stress, Anxiety and Depression can be summarized as follows:
  - Proprioceptive impulses from the musculoskeletal system are responsible for body awareness.
  - Viscero-ceptive impulses from the internal organs are responsible for internal awareness.
  - Many a ‘dormant’ cortical pathway are stimulated by proprioceptive and visceroreceptive impulses arising from different regions of the body. The resulting *sensory feedback* brings relaxation not only to the respective regions but it also brings repressed wishes, emotions and thoughts to the surface, which finally find their way out, resulting in relaxation and reduction in Stress, Anxiety and Depression.
  - The Internalized Awareness, gained through an enhanced *sensory feedback* makes yoga a special and probably the most effective intervention, different from all other interventions, for Stress, Anxiety and Depression.

### ***Yogic Metaphysics on Stress, Anxiety and Depression***

When the Transcendental consciousness is superimposed, significantly, by vagaries of Phenomenal consciousness the resulting existential aberrations give rise to somatic, psychosomatic and psychosomatic disorders.

*Kleśas* (afflictions) are considered as the root cause of existential disorders, in general, and of psychosomatic disorders, in particular. *Kleśas* in interaction with internal environment (psychophysical strengths and weaknesses) and external environment (acquired mental complexes prejudices and temperamental aberrations) produce *cittavṛttis*, the mental functions of pathological nature. If one starts identifying himself with these *cittavṛttis*, the *psychic stage* of stress starts getting expressed. If no remedial measures are adopted, one goes to the *psychosomatic* stage of stress. Here, an enduring impact of newly developed psychosomatic disorders is exhibited. If remedial measures are not availed, the next stage of stress namely *somatic stage* ensues. *Saṃsāras* (impressions) get established further if the further aggravation is not arrested. Thus the *organic stage* of stress is reached. The treatment approach for stress-borne disorders, therefore, should

include (i) adopting positive life style changes (Environment) and (ii) adopting appropriate yoga practices like *Kriyā Yoga* (P.Y.S.II:1) and *Omkāra* would be helpful immensely. Best results are seen at the *psychic stage*, next best results are evidenced at *psychosomatic stage* and the least impact is seen at the *somatic* and *organic stages* of stress if yoga practices are adopted and practiced regularly.

Comprehensive awareness leading to comprehensive freedom and vice versa is the mechanism behind *Yogic* effects on the said disorders. Comprehensive awareness can amply be gained through experientially correct *Yoga* practices, while comprehensive freedom can be accessed through *Yoga Darśana* that gives us perceptual objectivity. Therefore, *prāṇic* dynamics and *citta* dynamics conjointly work in restoring normality from the above-mentioned disorders. The Patañjalian Metaphysics asserts that the root cause of these maladies is *Kleśas*, i.e. inborn afflictions. It promises that *Kriyā Yoga* attenuates the said afflictions and endows its practitioner with a feeling state of Transcendental Joy. The related psychological rationale can be proposed as follows:

*Tapas* : a systematic process of desensitization;

*Svādhyāya*: an intent reflection and ‘a positive brooding’ on the Transcendental consciousness and

*Īśvara-praṇidhāna*: Surrendering oneself to the dictates of the supra conscious phenomenon resulting into an equanimity in ones behavior and thought patterns. Thus sufficient conditions are created for an Absolute Joy to emerge. *Omkāra* recitation is yet another significant method that has been advocated in P.Y.S. for removing existential impediments. This assertion seems quite convincing if we have a cognizance of the fact that Ether (*Ākāśa*) is present in all the five elements because of which our vegetative existence is possible. Thus *Omkāra* may bring about a sea change in one’s personality, restoring Normality in the process.

*Bhagvatgītā* guides us to contain Attachment and Antipathy towards achieving the Absolute Joy, which verily is a sure remedy over all existential maladies (B.G.II:64,65). If we know the nature of awareness, experiences and transcendence, evident in yoga practices, we will be convinced about the promise above. The patients suffering from the said disorders are also empowered sufficiently if one goes through the research findings in yoga.

Yoga thus can be preventive, curative and promotive intervention and thus emerges as an indispensable remedy for Stress, Anxiety and Depression.



**Basic assumptions and tenets of Yogic life style, as found in Upaniṣads :**

1. Transcendental consciousness can be realized only with the help of *Prakṛti*, constituted of five basic elements and therefore the vegetative aspect of our personality should be nurtured and taken care of properly, so that it becomes an effective instrument towards realizing Transcendental Consciousness.
2. Other element or *Ākāśa Tattva* is present in all the rest of the basic elements and therefore the same should be stimulated through *External adjustment* (proper diet, congenial environment and harmonious behavior with other individuals), as well as, *Internal adjustment*. (*Citta śuddhi, Āsanas, Prāṇāyāmas, Pratyāhāra Pratīpakṣa bhāvanā, Citta prasādana & Praṇava sādhanā*). Fresh air and adequate water should become a part of our life style mainly because of their significance in our diet.
3. Transcendental consciousness within, referred to as Cit should be first experienced and realized before perceiving its relationship with the all pervasive Transcendental Consciousness (Citi) on the perceptual plane.
4. Once we perceive Transcendental Consciousness as independent of phenomenal consciousness we are said to have achieved *Yogic life style* because then only we can be attitudinally detached from worldly affairs and would be able to continuously remain away from all types of existential maladies.
5. Knowing both *Parā Vidyā* (Phenomenal knowledge) and *Aparā Vidyā* (Transcendental knowledge) are equally essential so as to strike an existential balance. This alone would endow us with yogic life style.
6. All three states (waking, dream, deep sleep), three forms (Gross, subtle and causal bodies) and three levels (*Vaiśavānara, Tejas* and *Prajñā: Bāhyākāśa, Antarakāśa* and *Cidākāśa*) should be properly utilized for achieving *Yogic life style*.
7. Over indulgence into experiences at *Tanmātra* level should be avoided through certain *Tantra Yuktis*. According to *Kaṭhapaniṣad* the *Praṇava Sādhanā* is one of the most effective ways to exercise a check on the said over-indulgence.
8. When all the constituent *Akṣaras* in *Omkāra* (A-U-M) are recited methodically and with a proper experiential state, one transcends all the three forms of awareness, all the three states of awareness and also all the three levels of awareness before *Yogic life style* is achieved most natural way.

9. *Puruṣa sukta* says one has to experience breath at subtle level through our ears and also should follow the effect of breathing even in brain structures, as well as, in the internal regions of chest, abdomen and extremities.

Through all the above means one should transcend all our existential phenomena at vegetative, functional, emotional, intellectual and bliss related levels with the help of yogic practices which form an inherent part of *Yogic* Life style.

### **How to maximize the experiential domain of *Yoga* practices for a maximum advantage to the *Yoga* practitioner?**

Ancient yoga texts are replete with *Tantra Yuktis* so as to maximize the experiential phenomenon in yoga practices. As mentioned before, these *Tantra Yuktis* work on *Vibrations (mantras)* and *Experiential Dissolution (artha)* i.e. meaning). There are elaborate methods of *mantra* recitation available in Yogic texts. For example *Bhāgawata Mahāpurāṇa* (XI: 14:32-35) speaks of three conditions for the correct recitation of *Om*:

1. An impact of sound vibrations should be experienced in and around the heart region. Such an impact is possible only through low pitched and low toned *Omkāra*. Naturally, the low pitched & low toned *Omkāra* impacts deeper structures of the brain and viscera, the areas associated with emotions by virtue of the associated smooth muscles.
2. The sound of the *Omkāra* should taper off gradually just as the sound of a big bell reverberates while tapering off, in the process. “The gradual tapering off” phenomenon makes our attention continuously focused.
3. The sound of ‘m’ (i.e. *Makāra*), towards its end, should become as tender as the inner capillary of the stalk of the lotus. The subtler sound vibrations thus produced calm down our emotions, in a natural way. As a result the energy dynamics within the body get influenced favorably as *Citta* and *Prāṇa* are mutually interdependent (H.P.II:2)

*Bhā. Mah. Pu* (XI:14: 35) says that if recited ten rounds of it thrice a day, during the exhalation phases of *Sagarbha Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma*, the *Omkāra* would endow its practitioner a rare ability to achieve a conscious control on all his psycho-physiological functions, just within a month. Thus, the functional body can be corrected, made normal and transcended. Even the emotional body can be corrected and transcended through contemplating on the meaning (i.e. the transcendental aspect) of the *mantra*. This creates “*Samādhi bhāva*”, a feeling of a complete psycho-physiological balance. *Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra* (I: 31) amply emphasizes on the meaning

of the *mantra Om*. In fact, all yoga practices are essentially psycho-physiological, experiential and transcendental in nature. Therefore, yoga is truly a means, as well as, an end. It is quite clear now that experiential phenomenon in Yoga has seeds of transcendence in it. Even though all yoga practices, in essence, work on both functional body (*Prāṇamaya kośa*) and emotional body (*Manomaya Kośa*), their efficacy can be increased manifold if the correctness in mechanism of yoga techniques is enhanced, as well as, their experiential value is maximized.

***Some of the Experiential means for tackling Stress, Anxiety and Depression***

- A. Working intently with YOUR BODY: Working with postural substrate through passive movements involving controlled stretching, contraction and relaxation of various muscles, their co-ordination in balancing and in maintenance of posture etc. After the body- space-awareness we explore all possible sensations in different joints, muscles etc. until just-prior-to the-onset of pain – thus slowly expanding the awareness by slowly increasing the movements through the controlled stretching of the body in the practice of āsana.
- B. Working with the BREATH: Becoming aware of the breath flowing through the body space in a natural spontaneous way, known as *Prāṇa Dhāraṇā*.
- C. Working with CONSCIOUS-HEALTHY-BREATHING: It can be used off and on throughout the day, with selective use of the abdominal wall and muscles of the pelvic floor during inhalation and exhalation. The mechanism of *Prāṇāyāma* is appreciated in due course of time, once we master the conscious-healthy-breathing.
- D. Working with the MIND : Attentional faculty is kept intently active while silencing the thought process, as well as, transcending all mental activities:
  - (a) Use of *Prāṇāyāma* and *Omkāra* in realizing the inward awareness of spiritual nature. The creative force surges forth pervading our life and living in its entirety in the process.
  - (b) Use of *Mudrā* and *Bandha* during Meditation.
- E. Working with CONSCIOUSNESS itself, holistically:
  1. *Simple Meditative Eye Closure Technique*, whereby eye closure is allowed to occur in a passive manner. Reduction of intensity of mental activities is evidenced. In turn, innocuous nature of mental activity is also realized culminating into the Serene Awareness.

2. *Whole-Body Awareness Technique of Meditation*: Continuous awareness of body in all its comprehensiveness gets transformed into subtle inward awareness of yogic nature.

Through all the above means one should transcend all our existential phenomena at vegetative, functional, emotional, intellectual and bliss related levels with the help of yogic practices which form inherent part of yogic Life style.

### Summary

Through yogic life style alone we can remain perennially centered and integrated with all our potentialities and possibilities realized here and now, so that we can enjoy our existence as the best creation of the Mother Nature.

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***Author's Note***

The author expresses his gratitude to Maheshanandji (Director of Research), Shri O.P. Tiwari (Secretary) and Subodhji Tiwari (Administrator), Kaivalyadhama, S.M. Y.M. Samiti, Lonavla for their constant encouragement. He also thanks Dr. B.R. Sharma Asst. Director of Research, PLRD, as well as, staff of PLRD and SRD for stimulating discussions at interdepartmental meetings.