



YOGAVIDYA

SEPTEMBER 2024

BYK MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

"Everybody in some way goes through depression at some point in life. But for some, it gets exaggerated, and they get labeled. We live in a mad world, but when it gets worse, we need attention. If you can talk to these people, saying, 'You and I are not different, let's see how to get this off,' holding hands and walking together, there is a solution in most cases"

- Sri M



From TTC 5th Batch, BYK Yogashala, at TSF Madanappalle Ashram

Mental Health and Yoga

Yoga's Role in Mental Wellness

Dear Readers,

In today's fast-paced world, mental health challenges are at an all-time high. Depression, anxiety, and stress have become common struggles, affecting people across age groups. This month, we bring you insights on mental health from a Yogic perspective.

Yoga is a holistic practice that nurtures the mind and body together. From pranayama to dhyana, yoga offers time-tested tools that help create a stable, calm mind amidst life's turbulence. Mental health doesn't always get the attention it deserves, and when it does, the solutions offered often feel limited. This is where the ancient wisdom of yoga steps in.

Studies now show that simple, consistent yoga practices can not only help manage stress but also act as preventive care. And when paired with modern therapeutic support, yoga can

enhance recovery for those facing deeper psychological challenges. In this edition, we'll guide you through practical yoga techniques aimed at maintaining mental harmony. From breathing exercises to gentle asanas designed to calm the mind, this issue is filled with insights that anyone can adopt. You'll also hear personal stories of how yoga has transformed mental resilience for people from all walks of life.

Incorporating mental wellness practices alongside physical and spiritual practices brings a holistic balance to life. It's not just about getting through the day but thriving in it with peace of mind and heart.

We hope this issue serves as a gentle reminder that your mental health is as important as your physical well-being—and yoga can help you nurture both.

With warm regards,
The Yogavidya Team

In September Ed. of Yogavidya:

Mental Health & Yoga
- Sri M Exclusive

"Talking with M"
- Cartoon Series

Yoga & Mental Health
- Blog Post

Yoga & Mental Health & Beyond
- Book Review

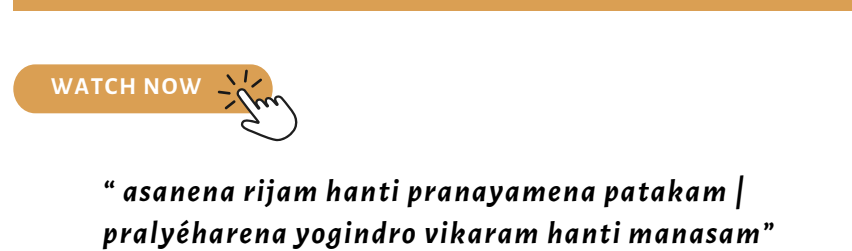
Body Quick Scan Technique
- Yoga Guide

5 practices to correct posture
- Yoga Resource

Unlocking Inner Harmony
- Ayurveda Wisdom

- Fully Online TTC
- Ganesha Pancharatanam
- Yoga Sangha reading Tenzin Palmo

AN END TO MENTAL ILLNESS: SRI M EXPLAINS | Hathapradipika on Pratyahara & Dharana



WATCH NOW

" asanena rijam hanti pranayamena patakam | pralyeharena yogindro vikaram hanti manasam "

BLOG POST

The Holistic Power of Yoga: A Path to Mental Health

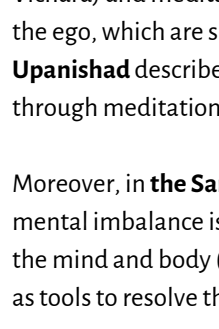
Mental health issues, including depression and anxiety, now affect 10% of the global population, with teenagers facing an alarming rise in these conditions. In a world where traditional therapies sometimes fall short, could yoga offer a solution? This article delves into how ancient yogic wisdom addresses the root causes of mental disturbances—known as "Vrittis"—through practices like Pratyahara (sense withdrawal) and Dharana (concentration). These disturbances, fueled by "Kleshas" such as ignorance, egoism, and attachment, are considered the foundation of mental suffering.

Yoga is not just about physical flexibility—it is a structured science that calms the mind, restores emotional balance, and, as the article notes, provides "a perfect solution for most mental illnesses—especially depression."

Practices like Yoga Nidra and Pranayama have been proven to promote relaxation, balance brain chemistry, and reduce stress. By integrating yoga into your daily routine, you can strengthen mental resilience, reduce anxiety, and find long-term peace. Ready to explore how ancient techniques can offer modern mental health solutions? **Read on** to discover how yoga's powerful, time-tested practices can transform your mental well-being.

READ NOW

DID YOU KNOW?



Long before the inception of modern psychology and psychiatry, ancient yogic texts have been addressing mental health and illness for thousands of years. For example, the **Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (circa 400 CE)** speaks about Chitta Vrittis—the disturbances of the mind—such as Avidya (ignorance) and Asmita (egoism) as the root causes of mental suffering.

Ancient yogic texts like the **Hatha Yoga Pradipika (1st century CE)** also address mental health through practices that focus on balancing the body and mind. The **Upanishads (circa 800-200 BCE)** emphasize self-inquiry (Atma Vichara) and meditation as methods to achieve mental clarity and transcend the ego, which are seen as the root of human suffering. The **Mundaka Upanishad** describes the mind as an instrument that, when properly controlled through meditation, leads to liberation from suffering.

Moreover, in the **Sankhya Philosophy**, which predates many of the texts, mental imbalance is seen as a result of misidentifying the self (Purusha) with the mind and body (Prakriti). The teachings offer introspection and meditation as tools to resolve this conflict and achieve mental peace.

BOOK REVIEW

Yoga & Mental Health & Beyond

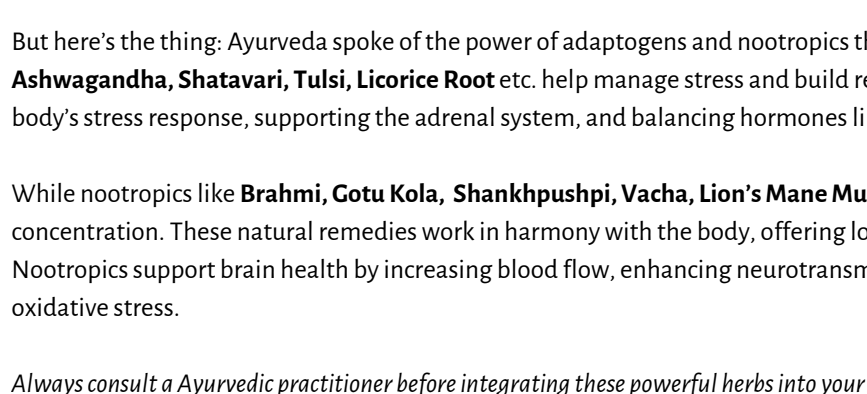
This book is a transformative guide for anyone seeking to harmonise mind and body through yoga. The book delves into the profound ways yoga can impact mental health, offering practical strategies that blend ancient wisdom with contemporary psychological insights.

Mr. R.S. Bhogal, with clarity and depth, navigates readers through the intricate relationship between yoga practices and mental well-being. The text is replete with accessible exercises, meditation techniques, and philosophical reflections designed to foster resilience and emotional balance. His approach is not just instructional but deeply empathetic, making the complex interplay of mental health and yoga approachable and actionable.

This book stands out for its blend of scientific rigour and spiritual insight, offering both theoretical context and practical tools. It's a valuable resource for yoga practitioners, mental health professionals, and anyone interested in a holistic approach to well-being. "Yoga & Mental Health & Beyond" is a beacon for those looking to deepen their practice and achieve greater mental harmony.

YOGA GUIDE

Body Quick Scan Technique



Practice Steps:

1. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position in a quiet environment.
2. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Breathe in slowly through your nose, allowing your abdomen to rise, then exhale allowing your belly to sink in towards the spine. Let your breathing become natural and relaxed.
3. Bring your attention to your toes. Notice any sensations or lack of sensations. Observe without judgement.
4. Gradually shift your focus from your toes to your feet. Pay attention to how your feet feel. Continue this process, moving your attention slowly up through your legs, knees, and thighs. Spend a few moments on each area.
5. Move your attention up to your hips, abdomen, and chest. Notice any sensations or areas of tension and allow yourself to relax.
6. Shift your attention to your fingers and hands, moving up through your arms and shoulders.
7. Finally, bring your awareness to your neck, face, and head. Notice how your jaw feels on your entire body as a whole. Notice the overall sense of relaxation and any changes in how you feel. Gradually bring your attention back to your breathing. When you're ready, gently open your eyes.

AYURVEDA WISDOM

Plant Power for Mental Wellbeing: Adaptogens and Nootropic

Modern humans are constantly striving to optimize their well-being. From energy drinks to focus-enhancing supplements, many people are turning to a variety of products to help boost their mental and physical performance.

This brings us to the fascinating world of adaptogens and nootropics. Adaptogens are natural substances that help the body adapt to stress and restore balance, while nootropics are cognitive enhancers that improve brain function, memory, and focus. The growing interest in these substances has led many to explore plant-based options, which are safer and more sustainable than synthetic supplements.

But here's the thing: Ayurveda spoke of the power of adaptogens and nootropics thousands of years ago. Ayurvedic adaptogens like **Ashwagandha, Shatavari, Tulsi, Licorice Root** etc. help manage stress and build resilience. Adaptogens work by regulating the body's stress response, supporting the adrenal system, and balancing hormones like cortisol.

While nootropics like **Brahmi, Gotu Kola, Shankhpushpi, Vacha, Lion's Mane Mushroom, Ginkgo Biloba** enhance memory and concentration, traditional remedies like **ashwagandha, shatavari, tulsi, licorice root** help manage stress and build resilience. Nootropics support brain health by increasing blood flow, enhancing neurotransmitter function, or protecting brain cells from oxidative stress.

Always consult a Ayurvedic practitioner before integrating these powerful herbs into your routine to ensure customized, safe and effective use.

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

(send us your work to be featured on our upcoming newsletters)

It was surprising to see the inmates doing asanas by themselves without the instructor, the entire class had merged into the calm quiet seriousness. The scenario was completely different when we started teaching Yoga in Prison a few months ago. Prisoners reported that they are able to handle their emotions in a better way & are feeling greater ease in their bodies.

The positive association of Yoga with physical and mental wellbeing of prisoners is already proven by research. But it is important to note that practising Yoga also creates a sense of collective purpose in the midst of a challenging Jail environment. The collective purpose towards peace and balance brings them together.

The class begins with an intention derived from Sri M Sir's address at Tihar Jail:- "whether you are inside the Jail or outside, we all are in the captivity of our own minds and using Yoga we can go beyond its limitations right here & right now". When the entire class engages in synchronised body-breath movements, it generates increased order, harmony and oneness; where inmates experience peacefulness going beyond their individual emotional expression.

Research on Yoga often excludes subjective experience of learning Yogic philosophy and spirituality. In this light, it is important to note that the inmates have often shared that they can feel an increased sense of connection with the unknown (irrespective of the religion) and they have started exploring their own spiritual side.

~ Gouri Keskar

SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH

BYK's First MoU with Cambridge International Schools, Punjab



We're excited to announce that Bharat Yogavidya Kendra (BYK) has signed its first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cambridge International School (CIS) in Punjab. With Sri M's blessings, yoga will now be an integral part of the CBSE syllabus at CIS's four schools. Through this partnership, BYK will:

1. **Train Students:** Provide face-to-face yoga training for students from grades 6 to 12.
2. **Develop Curriculum:** Create and update a comprehensive yoga curriculum for all grades.
3. **E-Learning:** Offer e-learning course on BYK's online learning platform.
4. **Community Building:** Work with the school to spread the benefits of yoga within local communities.

This marks a significant step forward in BYK's mission of bringing yoga to educational institutions!

BYK's Hosts Yoga Sessions @IIM Calcutta for Students & Staff



LALITA SAHRASANAMA CHANTING CLASS

Starting in October and continuing through December, this batch will focus on chanting the Lalita Sahasranama. Over several weeks, we'll explore and chant the 1,000 names of the Divine Mother, deepening our connection to her energy and experiencing the peace and spiritual growth that comes with regular practice.

Dates: 4 Oct - 20 Dec | Every Wed & Fri
Time: 7:00 - 8:00 pm IST
Fee: INR 5,000 | US\$ 90
Mode: Online Via Zoom

REGISTER NOW

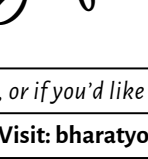
NAVARATRI SPECIAL COURSE

1. Learn to Chant Durga Saptasloki Mantra
2. Reading of the Devi Mahatmayam
3. Introduction to Navaratri Sadhana
4. Learn Shakti Bandha Asanas
5. Practice Pancha Bhanda Asana

A 9-day program to sync with nature and utilize the time of the changing seasons. Experience the calmness and within, as we reflect & connect with the Divine feminine.

Dates: 3 Oct - 11 Oct | Every Morning
Time: 5:30 am - 6:30 am IST
Fee: INR 5,000 | US\$ 90
Mode: Online Via Zoom

REGISTER NOW



Thank you for reading!

Write to us for any queries, or if you'd like to contribute to Yogavidya

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