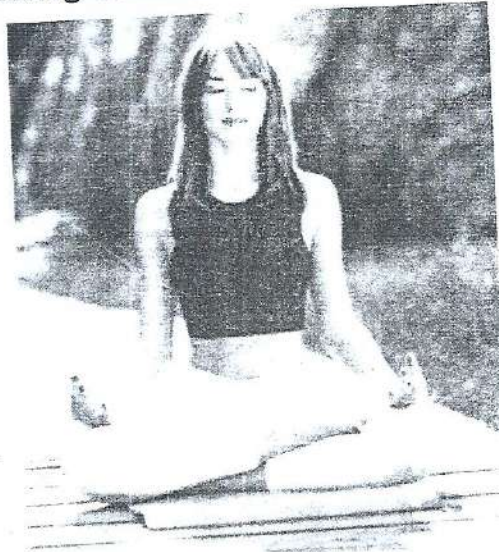


Yoga: An amazing tool to help in Memory Enhancement at any age

With International Yoga Day on June 21, it's advisable to make the practice of yoga part of one's life for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing



By Minoo Jokhi

Renowned US author Joan Borysenko rightly said: "Every day brings a choice: to practice stress or to practice peace." True, stress is really harmful and a hindrance to you in improving your memory, while a person who practices yoga and meditation regularly will definitely be more peaceful and be able to have an excellent memory for many years on end.

Why Yoga?

International Yoga Day is celebrated every year on June 21. But why is yoga so important and vital in today's times? Yoga is a complete way of life. It's not just a system of physical exercise but much more than that. It helps a person stay healthy and calm in any adverse condition and to retain his/her mental balance in any difficult situation. These are the essential steps towards a life full of harmony, joy and enjoyable moments and this is what makes life worth living. Yoga is a product of

the perennial wisdom of India. We can trace the origin of yoga back to the period of the Indus Valley Civilization. Through the last thousands of years, it has emerged as a very important facet of Indian culture and remains responsive to the changing times all through this period.

It is observed that individuals normally confine yoga only to asanas, pranayama and meditation. But in reality, the yogic way of living overall is most important from the healing point of view.

Yoga helps you to express yourself well. As Alexandra Vasiliu had rightly said: "Allow yourself to be free again; allow yourself to soar; your heart is an eagle." Yoga, indeed, gives you that freedom.

Yoga for Memory Enhancement

Yoga prevents memory lapses by making you calm and cool and improving your concentration. It can also improve your powers of recall by increasing circulation to your brain. And the biggest advantage to students is that they gain self-mastery and self-identity. Yoga is the vehicle through which one can tap into one's brain power and enhance it simultaneously.

As a child grows up and goes to higher classes, yoga helps to maintain the focus, which helps the child study well. Yoga isn't merely a

system of exercise, but a holistic science, promoting specific techniques for integrated development of one's wellbeing, be it physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

Some wonderful yoga asanas for developing memory retention are as follows:

- 1. Shavasana:** Lie down on the floor and close your eyes. Do not go to sleep. Hands on the ground. Please do Shavasana sincerely as apart from memory-retention it also helps in relieving depression and anxiety.
- 2. Vajrasana:** Keeping your eyes closed, be on your knees and place your hands on your knees.
- 3. Sarvangasana:** Keep both your legs high up and try to be on your head. Use your hands as support.
- 4. Pawanmuktasana:** Pull your legs towards your nose. Keep eyes closed, avoid stress. Start with one leg at a time and then go to both legs together.
- 5. Trataka:** Stare at a single point such as a small object, black dot or candle



flame. It is supposed to bring energy to the 3rd eye and enhance mind improvement.

6. Brahmamudra: Sit in a yogic posture and close your eyes and move your head in all four directions. This is a very wonderful and essential exercise for memory-development.

Along with these exercises, chanting OM also helps a lot.

Chanting for Fulfillment

1) Sit erect in any comfortable position, inhale fully up to your own capacity, but slowly and gently with minimum effort.

2) Now slowly start reciting a short word as a chant - it could be Ahu, Ashaum, Peace, Love... whatever you are comfortable with. Recite in either a low or a high pitch.

3) While reciting the abdomen slowly and gradually contracts and after reciting the abdomen is back to the original position.

4) After one recitation, you can repeat immediately but after a couple of breaths a little pause/break is advised.

Yoga is a very vital tool to increase memory and concentration.

Yoga & Meditation

Having trained several people of all ages in memory-development and maths over the years, I have seen how yoga and meditation can improve concentration and reduce stress that students always face. The union that yoga brings to the body is important for students because it brings everything back to the body and away from the head.

Not just students, even grown ups who are having work related stress can do yoga and get relief and feel rejuvenated and work more productively.

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goes to higher classes, yoga helps to maintain focus, which helps the child to study better.

Daily meditation helps with memory. Sit quietly in a comfortable position and start silently counting backward from 75. As your concentration improves, you can move the starting count higher to 100, 250, 350, 500, 750, 900 and more. This is a gradual process. This exercise will improve your concentration and help you remember things better.

Also try to recite ABCD backwards i.e. ZYXWV. Try slow at first and then increase your speed. You may make some mistakes initially but later it will be faster.

Meditation is a vital component of yoga. It helps the individual to eliminate negative emotions like fear, anger, anxiety and depression. It keeps the mind calm and quiet. It helps clarity in thinking process. It rejuvenates the whole body and helps in self-realization.

Regular practice of yoga ensures sound health, sharp intellect, youthful looks and abundant energy. Yoga breathing exercises like pranayama are very powerful since they work as a tonic to reduce stress, insomnia, emotional imbalance, headache etc. Yoga is indeed a must for all of us.

Starting with International Yoga Day on June 21, let us resolve to make yoga part and parcel of our lives.

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