

# Contents

<b>1. Yoga : The Science of Life.....</b>	<b>11</b>
• Legends and the Great Advocates of Yoga	
• Yoga: Mastering Oneself Through Self-Discipline and Learning	
• Attitudes and Lifestyle Required for the Practice of Yoga	
• A Brief History of Yoga	
• Issues One Might Encounter While Pursuing Yoga	
• The Yogi's Way	
<b>2. Enhancing your Child's Development and Growth .....</b>	<b>19</b>
• Children Can Benefit From Yoga Too	
• The Vital Importance of the Yoga Instructor	
• Checklist for Yoga- Important Things to Remember	
• Starting Young: Little Ones and Yoga	
• Yoga For Adolescent Children: How It Helps	
• Imbibing Virtues in Children	
<b>3. The Various Asanas .....</b>	<b>35</b>
• <b>Meditative Postures</b>	
(sukhasana, padmasana, vrshasana, vajrasana, yonimudra, bhadrasana)	
• <b>Asanas for Concentration</b>	
(ardhapadmasana, utkatsana, ekpadasana, sthitaparathanasana)	
• <b>Asanas for Relaxation</b>	
(shavasana, makarasana, nishpandabhava)	
• <b>Asanas for Humility</b>	
(yogamudra)	
• <b>Asanas for Willpower</b>	
(bhujangasana, ardha salabhasana)	

<b>4. The Science of Breathing .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>5. Healthy Food for Healthy Living! .....</b>	<b>65</b>
• Satvic Food	
• Rajasic Food	
• Tamasic Food	
• When is a Good Time to Eat ?	
• What Quantity of Food Must One Consume ?	
• Food and Illness	
<b>6. Yoga and Family: A Guide for Parents .....</b>	<b>75</b>
• The Effect of Quarrelling Parents on Their Children	
• Excessive Sheltering of the Child	
• Projection	
• Two-Way Communication: Channels Between Children And Their Parents	
• The Role of Television	

# 1

## **Yoga : The Science of Life**

# 1

## Yoga : The Science of Life

---

Yoga is an integral part of the ancient holistic medical science of India, called Ayurveda. The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word 'Yuj', which means union, referring to the union of the self with the Universal Consciousness. Yoga is not just the physical practice of asanas, nor is it a spiritual philosophy or religion; it is the means to become an ideal human being.

While it has the structure, logic and methodology that clearly makes it a science, yoga also helps the process of self-awareness and human development, which clearly makes it an art of life. Yoga is based on immense knowledge of the mind and body, and has been shown to be an alternative way to heal many diseases for which modern science has no cure.

### Legends and the Great Advocates of Yoga



There are many legends surrounding the science of yoga. No ancient scientific discipline can be free of intertwined myths and legends, and yoga is no exception.

It is believed that the first and greatest yogi was none other than Shiva. He has been followed by many others through the ages, who did not waver in

the face of great sacrifice, and have shown us the path that is to be followed.

Indian literature is full of stories and myths about these men and their relationship with the world. The cleansing of their minds and the oneness they attained with nature helped them see things differently, unlike other mortals.

They approached the world with a childlike fascination. Children see the world with unprejudiced eyes, enjoying the small and the great things and approaching each day with newness and a sense of excitement. The great yogis approached the world in this same way.

These men were fascinated by the smallest of things in nature; an ant going about its daily business, a grasshopper skipping gaily along its way, the wild beasts and the gushing streams, twinkling stars and tall imposing mountain ranges. They observed that the animals are instinctively connected to the Universe, so they imitated the animal's movements as a way of healing themselves.

These religious men lived in close communion with the earth. They lived by simple rules, and were governed by the values of truth, sincerity, hope and non-violent living.

The greatest and the foremost of these sages was, of course, the great Patanjali himself.

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali gave a description of yoga as a method by which our minds can be soothed and relaxed, and a means through which all negativity and discouraging thoughts can be eliminated.

### **Yoga: Mastering Oneself Through Self-Discipline and Learning —\***

Each person on our planet is unique. We come from different backgrounds, cultures, language groups and racial origins, and yet we are tied together by a common thread. All lives move towards the same goal, maturing from young to old, from innocent to experienced, from childishness to maturity, from ignorance to enlightenment. Spiritual growth is the final goal of all learning.

Yoga, quite simply, facilitates this process. Its ability to support the process of education, in a simple, yet effective and objective manner is what sets apart this unique discipline. In no other way can one master one's self in such a dogma-free manner.

All yoga flows towards a common goal. When a person's mind is free from unclean thoughts, when it is clear of anxiety and frustration and when it is absolutely relaxed and transparent, he or she becomes one with the Universal Consciousness, experiencing bliss, joy and self-realization.

This goal of yoga is known as Kaivalya or Samadhi.

### **Attitudes and Lifestyle Required for the Practice of Yoga —\***

There are certain requirements necessary for the practice of yoga, both from the perspective of attitude and lifestyle. Yoga must be practiced faithfully and meticulously. The mind must be kept free from negative thoughts, and it is important to learn. to let go, to surrender and let things flow.

A simple lifestyle is necessary for yoga. Your attitude towards life should be positive, and it is best to avoid things that can distract you from being yourself.

Take the initiative and develop good habits, and train yourself in a positive manner. Your body mind and soul is like a temple, and if you start your day with healthy habits, you will have a healthy life. Kindness, generosity and gratitude are important. Yoga encourages you to smile, and then things flow easily. Give thanks to the Universe, to yourself, and to your teacher. This attitude of gratitude is clearly exemplified by the yoga postures, as in the Surya Namaskar, or Salute to the Sun.

### A Brief History of Yoga

Yoga is not a new invention, although many people are under the impression that it is of rather recent origins. Rather, yoga is an ancient branch of knowledge, a science that has been passed down for thousands of years. The earliest traces of a yoga-like discipline date from over 5000 years ago, and it is thought to be even older. The first written literature mentions the practice of yoga and meditation, but Patanjali's Yoga Sutras is the earliest cohesive work on the subject, followed by Yogi Yajnavalkya.

Later, but equally significant manuscripts on yoga include the following:

Name of the Manuscript	Known Author	Approximate Dateline
Bhashya	Vyasa	6-7 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.
Gorakshasatak	Gorkshanath	9 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.
Hathyayogapradipika	Swatmarama	15 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.
Gheranda Samhita	Unknown	19 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.
Shivasamhita	Unknown	19 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.

### Issues One Might Encounter While Pursuing Yoga

The path of yoga is not an easy one to follow, and students of yoga will require discipline. It is best that you learn patience and tolerance, and avoid anger and egoism. The practice of yoga helps keep you from both nervousness and laziness.