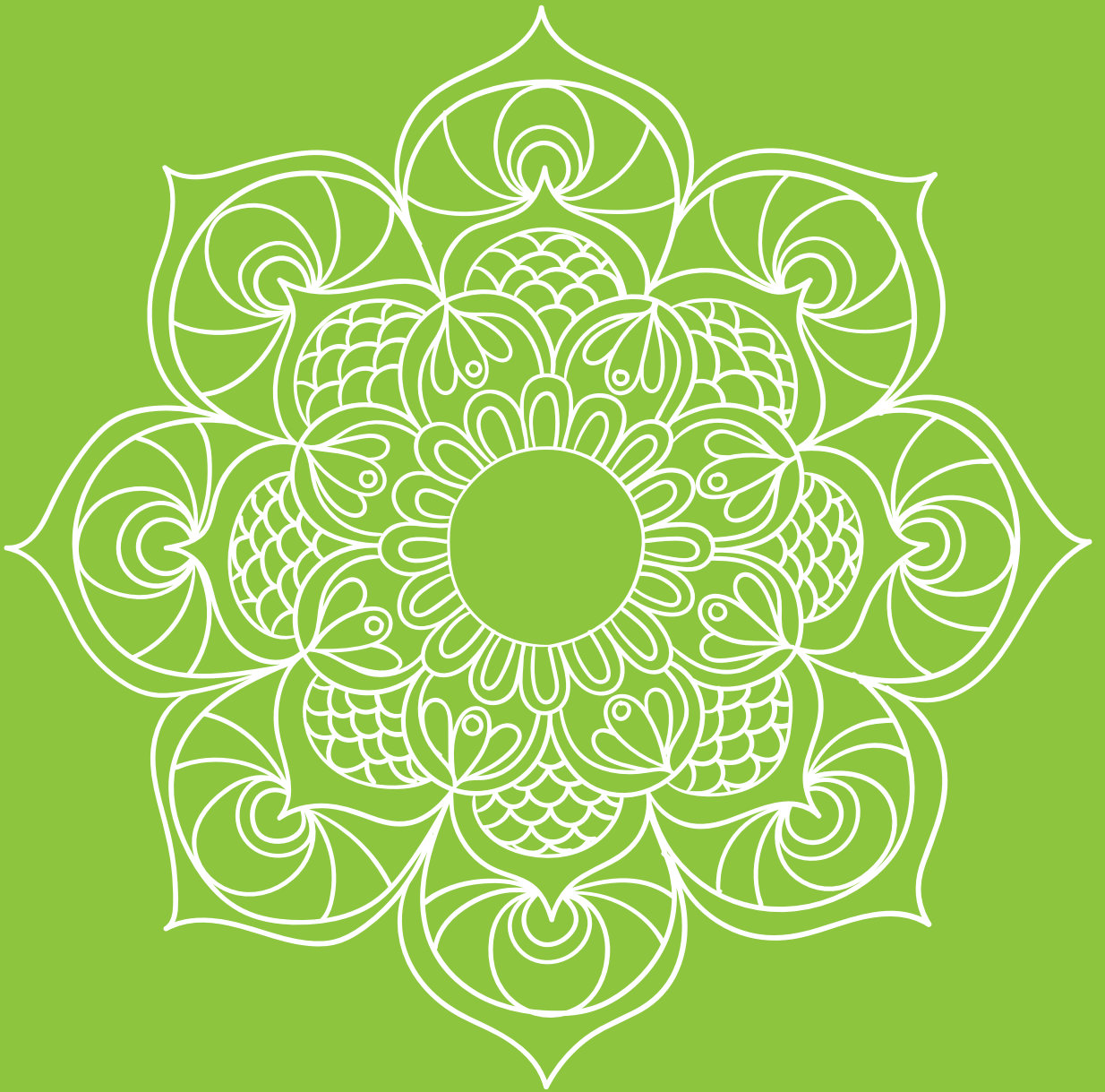


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# *Introduction*

Yoga had cured me of ailments which had not responded to the other popular therapies. I practised it religiously, read and spoke about it, and in due course became a yoga therapist. I was getting very good results, but initially had not developed full confidence in the system. At this juncture, a gentleman came with multiple sclerosis. He had already deteriorated a lot and was unable to climb steps or rise from a sitting position without help. I wasn't too sure that yoga would help him, but seeing the hope in his eyes, I thought of giving it a try.

By then, I had developed my own style of Yogic treatment, where diet played a major role. I had realized early in my career that without appropriate diet a disease cannot be cured and yet no system had made full use of it. They all had different views of the subject, and although valid, their views were incomplete. For modern science, diet is vitamins and minerals, while Ayurveda regards it is mucus producing, gas producing and so on; and many other traditional therapies label it as just cooling or heating. And then there is the alkalinity and acidity factor which is very important but is completely overlooked by most therapists.

As my interest in health had led me to innumerable books on Nutrition, Ayurveda, Nature cure, and other therapies, I noticed this shortcoming and synthesized the different disciplines to get a complete and powerful guide to attain and maintain good health. When I added that to yoga the result was astounding. So I tried my new integrated therapeutic formula on this gentleman and to my utter relief and satisfaction, it worked. He started improving and by the end of the course of two months, he could do everything on his own. And the last time I heard of him - which was more than two decades from the day he came to me first - he was still mobile and fine.

Since then I have treated a wide variety of serious diseases . Initially, every time I encountered a new serious case, I used to feel quite unsure and apprehensive, but mercifully, the treatment never failed. Sometimes the cure might not have been total, either because of the advanced age of the patient or because of irreparable damage of his or her body part, but the improvement has always been there.

People who have experienced the efficacy of Integrated Yoga have developed an unshakable faith in this system. Twenty years ago, a doctor pronounced a wheezing two year old child as asthmatic and went on to describe its distressing prognosis to the young mother in great detail. The woman heard it all , faced the doctor squarely and said “Doctor, six years hence you will see my child with no trace of asthma, I guarantee you that.” She asked for ‘six years’ because she knew that, a child could not practise yoga before the age of seven. Fortunately, she did not have to wait that long. With some natural remedies, and certain yogic practises meant for the mind-which I simplified for the baby- the child never wheezed again.

Incidents such as the above mentioned one gave me the confidence and encouragement to experiment, and the result has always been good. In this book I have tried to impart all my knowledge on health that I have gathered over more than thirty years as an Integrated Yoga therapist. If I have left out some ailments, it is because, either I did not get a chance to treat them, or have covered them in my previous books.

Chapter

1



*Integrated  
Yoga*

Medical science treats a disease according to its manifested symptoms. Ayurveda goes a little beyond that, and aims to pacify the humors. Some other therapies such as Acupuncture and Acupressure go still deeper and try to normalize the disturbed energy. All these health systems work on the physical aspects of a human being. But a disease is not always purely physical.

A human body is a complex mechanism that has a body, Prana, mind and a soul. And the mind itself has three different levels- conscious, subconscious and unconscious. A disease can start from any of the various aspects of an individual. In fact according to modern science, more than ninety percent of the diseases originate from the mind.

As mind is the mainspring of a disease, treating the body alone can not cure the affliction. It may suppress the symptoms for a while, but the cause of the disease remains which invariably brings back ill health - either as the same disease or a different one. Worst are therapies with medicines full of chemicals which add more poison to the already toxic and weak system making way for more serious ailments in future. At the same time, treating the mind alone does have not much value, as every tissue in the body is already affected adversely. They may not even have the strength to respond to the treatment.

Therefore to cure a disease, a system is needed that can recognize the fault and also has means to repair it. Integrated Yoga is such a system. It is the only therapy that has the techniques to counter each disease-causing factor and for that, it integrates practises from various yogas such as Hatha yoga, Raja yoga, Bhakti yoga, Mantra yoga, Tantra yoga etc.



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## THE PRACTICES

### Asanas

Yogic postures are called asanas. With their stretching, flexing and twisting movements, these exercises squeeze the toxins out of the tissues, which are then carried out by the blood to be eliminated. They also draw a rich supply of blood to a target body part wherein the posture is held for a while for the blood to do the healing. Specific asanas affect specific parts of the body, and there are asanas to reach even the innermost ones.

On the subtle level, asanas clear the energy pathways of pranic blockages so that prana—the vital life force—can flow freely in them. Prana, like blood is a major healing agent.



### Pranayama

These are breathing techniques that bring the external prana into the body to vitalize each tissue. This energy is first stored in energy centers called chakras and then distributed as, when and where it is needed. Pranayamas need asanas to precede them, to ensure that the paths are cleared before the energy is brought in to ply in them.

## Mudra

Having an abundance of prana in the chakras does not guarantee a cure. The energy has to reach the specific body part for the healing to begin. The job to channelize prana in the required direction is done by specific hand and body gestures called mudras. Pranayamas must be practised before or with mudras so that plentiful energy can be sent to the target area.



## Bandha

As the human body is a mass of swirling energy and not a solid structure, the stored prana leaks out continuously. To keep it within the body frame for a longer time, energy locks need to be created, which is done by various postures called bandhas.

## Satkarmas

Toxins in the system are a great hindrance for any cure. Unless they are removed first, practising yoga may not provide any benefit as the energy generated through asanas and pranayamas will be used up to eliminate these toxins and not for actual healing. It is because the body views toxins as life threatening and uses all the energy it can gather to expel them.

In hatha yoga, there are six purifying practises—neti, dhauti, basti, nauli, tratak and kapalbhati. Of them all, nauli and basti are the most difficult and can be



skipped. The other four are very important. Dhauti washes the digestive tract while neti clears the nasal passage—both are extremely beneficial in today’s highly polluted world. The last two practises are meant to energize the brain and clear unwanted elements from it.

## Yoganidra

The body heals best at night during deep sleep that consists of four phases—alpha, beta, theta and delta. Each of these stages has its own important functions. With tension and sleep medication, the phases are disturbed and even bypassed which diminishes the tissue rejuvenation capacity of the body. The tissues are only partially repaired and inadequately rested. Yoganidra is a technique, developed by my guru, the great yogi Paramahansa Swami Satyananda Saraswati. It ensures sleep with all the four stages in the most ideal proportion which repairs the wear and tear of the body perfectly and facilitates a relaxed feeling that is most unique and pleasant.

## Meditation

Sometimes an extremely negative experience can cause a deep-rooted psychological impression which cannot be eliminated easily but through deep meditation. There are many kinds of meditation in the world. Though they all are equally effective, for the person to benefit properly, the method should be chosen according to individual need. For the best result, meditation should be followed by yoganidra.

## Bhajan

A person unhappy due to a personal tragedy may not benefit much from the normal yogic meditation. Rather, the more the person tries to take the mind inward, the more unhappy he or she becomes, as it helps keep the memories of the tragic experience fresh. For such people, bhajan (devotional music) belonging to nada yoga acts like a balm. Not only does the lilting music soothe frayed nerves, it also takes the mind away from the hurtful memories, giving it a chance to heal. Also, devotion itself is a great healer. It generates a strong positive emotion that overpowers all other emotions including the offending ones.

## Kirtan

This too is devotional music, belonging to nada yoga, but here, the names of the Supreme are repeated, and these names are said to be mantras with great healing powers. Used in yogic treatment for certain mental conditions, kirtan has yielded great results.

## Mantra

If a disease refuses to respond even to the best of yogic routines, it is thought to be 'karmic', i.e., the result of a negative deed which the sufferer is supposed to have done in this or a previous birth. It is believed that karmic result cannot be changed ordinarily but there are certain ways to do that—mantras being one of them. In yoga therapy, some



universal mantras and the bija mantras (core sound) of the chakras are used to treat karmic ailments and enhance healing.



## **THE ACCESSORIES**

Yoga practises call for the following aids:

### **Yoga Spread**

Yoga needs a completely relaxed body to push the blood through the extremely thin blood capillaries. The muscles at the back loosen their grip and relax only when they feel a firm support from beneath. Traditionally, animal skin was used for yoga practises as its thickness and firmness were right for the body to relax. Also, animal skin produces electromagnetic waves that are health promoting. Next to animal skin, the best yoga spread is a pure wool blanket or rug. It is natural, thick and firm and still possesses some animal magnetism. Soft and spongy yoga mats should be avoided, especially if they are made from synthetic fabric, as that can decrease body's reserve energy.

### **Yoga Dress**

During yoga practise, the skin absorbs the atmospheric prana and oxygen. For that reason, it is necessary to wear loose and porous cotton clothing.