

Chapter 9

The Ancient Wisdom and Resurgence for Yoga: A Sociological Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims at connecting ancient wisdom and traditions of yoga by looking at the past with fast-paced, cutting edge natural science that constantly re-invents itself with time. It will unpack and explain both wisdom and experience from the orient against science and experiences from the West. The separation of East and West will give us an opportunity to see connections and boundaries of Western lifestyle as a convenient signpost to why yoga is relevant to society today. Furthermore, the chapter seeks to go beyond spirituality, mythology, and present yoga as a perpetual, evolving practice relevant in today's societies to challenge and engage today's science and medical research.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the times general people hold an idea that yoga originated in India and its roots are of Eastern origins, nevertheless some academics and historians suggest that yoga originated in Africa Kemet¹. Ancient Kemetic people originated Kemetic yoga which was later taken to the shores of the East by ancient Egyptians (Scaramella, 2012). Kemetic yoga focus on the styles that heals and restores body through spinal alignment focuses on relieving stress, improve blood circulation and uses pranayama to smooth the body (Scaramella, 2012). Most of the time, it is challenging to talk

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about Yoga to the general public and academic audience, especially when it comes to defining what Yoga is and why it is relevant on modern society. One should understand Yoga as a diverse and rich form of exercise. Some of the components of Yoga may include physical, cognitive and psychosocial aspects. Yoga has a long history and evolution and is ever-changing socially and culturally. A range of Yoga styles and applications have developed with slightly different characteristic (Sherman, 2001, Chan, Ng, Chan, Ho & Chan, 2003, Sherman, 2001, Knapik, Steelman, Hoedebecke, Austin, Farina & Lieberman, 2016). The simple broad definition of Yoga is that yoga is a mind-body and soul exercise rooted on Oriental traditions, this includes physical training, traditional medicine and philosophy.

Yoga differs with the normal Western attitude, Eurocentric model of life and philosophy. Third world countries with black population and some of the Western world, looks at yoga as strange practise. Yoga is not glamorous, it is something which is slow and steady, gradual and constant and humble. It requires a transformation of one's mind-set. Yoga takes time. This means, doing yoga is engaging in something for long time to commit on mindful manner (Sherman, 2001, Chan et al, 2003, Sherman, 2001, Knapik, et al, 2016). Practising yoga is based on the science of breathing, therefore breathing supplies every system in our body, each breath deliveries the cells with essential life giving force called oxygen (Sherman, 2001, Knapik, et al, 2016). By focusing our attention on the breathing and flow of breath we help to centre ourselves, strengthens our perception of our surroundings and respond with calmness.

The practice of pranayama² is a regulation of life energy by consciously controlling the breath. Research proves that diaphragmatic breathing has an immediate effect on mood and level of a calm person experience and blood circulation (Chan et al, 2003, Sherman, 2001, Knapik, et al, 2016). We should note that shallow chest breathing causes an excess of carbon dioxide in one's bloodstream, which directly affects the acidity level of the blood. Gases imbalance in the bloodstream can leave a person feeling tired, anxious, harried and stressed. When learn to breath and master it, we gain patience with yourself (Sherman, 2001, Chan et al, 2003, Sherman, 2001, Knapik, et al, 2016). Correct breathing is as important as rehabilitating an athlete after an injury. We should always remember that yoga practice is non-judgmental. The essence of mastering the art of yoga is learning to honour oneself and others. Therefore, yoga can be best described as set of living and evolving practise that have been informed by the insight of long lineage of devoted practitioners, moulded and adopted yoga over time to ever changing cultural needs and social landscape (Sherman, 2001, Chan et al, 2003, Sherman, 2001, Knapik, et al, 2016). The diversity and richness of yoga is intertwined in it historical origins.

Today we should focus attention on range components that are the makeup of Yoga, and most of these are therapeutic factors relevant on the psychosocial context

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