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Role of Yoga in Impulsivity

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Abstract

Practice of Yoga and Meditation as stress management techniques are rapidly being adopted by many of the good organizations who are employee focused. The stress response is a complex emotion that produces physiological changes to prepare us for fight or flight to defend ourselves from the threat or flee from it. Stress: Impact on Work Place Productivity

There is no standardized process for handling concerns or grievances relating to stress at work place in the organisation. The notion that the employees should learn to cope up with stress at work, stress at work place is quite normal and that we need to manage it is completely wrong. Negligence towards the stress of employees at workplace would lose the organization its internal customers, the productivity even.

Keywords: Yoga, stress, Impulsivity

Introduction

Stress produces the degree of physiological, psychological, and behavioral deviation from healthy functioning. But stress if is of moderate conditions remain positive also. This positive stress is called eustress, referring to the healthy, positive, constructive outcome of stressful events and the stress response.

This stress is enough to activate and motivate people in order to achieve goals and overcome their life's challenges. Employees frequently experience enough stress that not only hinder their performance and efficiency but also increase their risk of mental and physical health problems. So, the main focus is more on distress than eustress.

Work stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. Thus stress can be considered as a silent killer and may exert harmful effect on physical, psychological and behavioral wellbeing of the employees. And organization must implement effective stress management techniques in order to maintain the productivity of the organization with Stress –free employees. Practice of Yoga and Meditation as stress management techniques are rapidly being adopted by many of the good organisations who are employee focused.

Today people are stressed from overburden of work, job insecurity, information overload, conflicting roles and the increasing pace of life. Stress deteriorates the performance of employee which results in low turnover rates of the company. Stress, is the body's physical and psychological response to anything that's perceived as irresistible.

Stress-related disorders evolve gradually through four recognizable stages.

- The psychological changes such as anxiety, irritability and insomnia arise due to over stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system.
- In the second stage symptoms such as high blood pressure, elevated heart rate and increased intestinal motility surface.
- A more profound physical or biochemical imbalance starts invading,
- In last an irreversible symptom that often requires surgical or long term management appears.

Stressors, the causes of stress, include any environmental condition that brings burden of physical or emotional kind on an individual. Basically there are four main types of work-related stressors: interpersonal stressors, role-related stressors, task control stressors and

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organizational and physical environment stressors.

Stress has an adverse affect one's health, work performance, social life and even the relationship with family members. The stress, factors leading to it and consequences of stress are to be understood at individual and organizational level. The changed working conditions, multiple and overlapping roles have increased stress to a greater extent at workplace.

Research Study

Today young adults are changing deleteriously at physical, emotional, cultural, social and spiritual levels due to phenomenal shift from traditional to modern lifestyles. Current shift has resulted in a wide - range of impulsive behavior, which can potentially impact several areas related to psychological and pathological conditions. Besides these bio-psycho-spiritual consequences for the individual, there are financial burdens to society as well.

Perfect healthy behavior is a totality of these three entities: a homeostatic balance in the body, a calm and collected mind and a spiritual outlook that provides meaning and substance to our role in society. Without spiritual outlook, it is nearly impossible to sustain the degradation of the body along with mental deprivation that all of us go through during our lives.

Hence, a technique to not only bridge psychosocial and somatic aspects but also to address the subject's spiritual requirements is the need of the hour. Yoga in its original form consisted of a system of ethical, psychological and physical practices which develops the person at bio-psychosocial-spiritual level.

Although yoga is of ancient origin, it transcends cultures and languages to evolve the person at physical, mental, spiritual and emotional levels along with wisdom, ethics and higher quality of relationship.

Popular beliefs and modernization limited the yogic methodology to just asanas (postures) or dhyana (meditation). The ancient practice of yoga involves ethical principles: self-restraints –yama (non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, sensual abstinence, non-acquisitiveness), observances- niyama (cleanliness, contentment, austerity, self-study, resignation to god). Practitioners have to be actively involved in these practices with a sense of self-control and present moment awareness.

Awareness combined with a sense of self-control enhances the attention to mental experience. This in turn alters the perceptions and mental responses to both external and internal stimuli. Successively, non-reactivity and non-judgmental attitudes engulf the stimuli and instill a greater control over behavior. Recent publications have shown the applications of yoga based constructs and intervention for treating a range of disorders in which impulsive behavior is a significant component.

The research indicated that advanced practitioners did exhibit lower levels of impulsivity and distress. Additionally, advanced practitioners have shown higher levels of mindfulness compared to beginner practitioners. Further, experience level and mindfulness has shown a negative correlation with impulsivity scores. The majority of the current researchers have mainly focused on the effects of short-term yoga programs.

Discussion

The results of this previous morphometry study on yoga practitioner and impulsivity provide evidence that yoga based intervention may play a specific and unique role in the control

of impulsive behavior. Further emotional dysregulation, stress and acting without awareness are important psychological factors catalyzing impulsive behavior. Previous studies on long term yoga practices associated increased gray matter volume in regions that are important for emotion regulation and human awareness.

Yoga practices may lead to structural changes, most probably helps to cultivate positive emotions, retain emotional stability, and engage in mindful behavior. Alterations in control processes through yoga practices, in particular concerning the awareness may strengthen the brain processes involved in emotion regulation and stress to slow down response to the reactions. This may be a possible mechanism how long term practitioners have less impulsivity and high mindfulness.

Yoga is not a particular denomination or religion, but an age-old practice based on a harmonizing system for the body, mind, and spirit to attain inner peace and liberation.

Yoga is a tool that can deepen and benefit anyone, of any religion. It does not conflict with personal beliefs; it is simply a vehicle to help one transform oneself by promoting conscious connection with oneself, the world, and the highest truth. There are many traditional paths of yoga, including tantra, mantra, kundalini, bhakti, jnana, karma, raja yoga, and others, all of which have their own techniques to awaken these connections.

According to the classic text of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, "yoga" is the complete "inhibition of the modifications of the mind" or quieting of the constant chatter in one's mind so that our True Selves can manifest, rest in our own true nature and be free of suffering. Disease, as described in the sutras, is said to be an impediment to spiritual practice, growth and freedom from suffering. Traditional yogic practices include breath control and techniques (pranayama), meditation (including mindfulness), the adoption of specific bodily postures (asanas) and self-reflection (scriptural or self-study).

Medical yoga as considered here comprises the use of traditional yogic practices to prevent, cure, and/or ameliorate disease. The ideal medical yoga prescription includes the yogic practices of breathing techniques, bodily postures, meditation techniques and self-reflection; a healthy, nourishing diet; reducing substances such as caffeine, tobacco, drugs and alcohol; healthy sleep hygiene and appropriate support, which may include family, spouse, children, friends and/or support groups, with or without psychotherapy. It is important that medical yoga therapy should start gently and with self-compassion.

For providers considering adding yoga to their therapeutic armamentarium, the best place to start is to consider yoga therapy as a complement to their patient's current medical treatment. Yoga alone should not be considered a substitute for appropriate medication or psychotherapy. However, in situations where a patient is at risk of an illness but does not currently need more intensive therapy, introduction of yogic practices may forestall or prevent progression to the point where medical therapy is needed.

Significance of the Study

Patients whose daily activities produce back strain or who have inherently stressful lives may benefit from yoga as a prophylactic strategy, thereby potentially avoiding more intensive interventions. It is also important to remember that not all yoga is appropriate for all patients and that yoga therapy is different than simply taking a group yoga class where the yoga instructor may not be aware of an individual

student's health concerns or problems. Most certified yoga teachers, or instructors, have received some training in anatomy and physiology; however, this training can be quite varied and is not equivalent to the training required by the yoga therapist or healthcare practitioner. As noted previously, yoga therapy, different from a yoga class, starts with a detailed history and physical examination and assessment from the health practitioner.

Yoga brings the autonomic nervous system into healthy balance by stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system, or our "emergency response system," is activated when our body or mind feels threatened or perceives being stressed, whether that be a "positive" or a "negative" stress. This "flight or fight" response results in vasoconstriction, causing decreased blood flow to the extremities and the digestive system in order to prepare one for survival.

Conclusion

One's heart rate and blood pressure increase, the liver converts glycogen to glucose and releases glucose into the bloodstream, the bronchioles dilate, and the blood flow pattern changes, leading to decreased digestive system activity and reduced urine output. In contrast, the parasympathetic system is stimulated when one relaxes; it is often called the "rest and digest" mechanism of our nervous system. The parasympathetic system stimulates blood flow to the digestive system, brain, extremities and sexual organs.

As many of us go through our day, what is happening on the "outside"—i.e., what we may think or what we may encounter—causes a constant interaction between the two facets of the nervous system. Yogic practices work by decreasing physiologic arousal and quieting down this continual play of the autonomic system. They can reduce one's heart rate and blood pressure, ease one's respirations and increase heart rate variability—all signs of improved parasympathetic tone.

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