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Participant experiences of the One-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programme: A qualitative research study

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Abstract

Introduction: This study explored the outcomes of a One-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programme with 27 selected participants. The intervention model included components of Physical exercises, Yogic breathing exercises, forgiveness sadhana, various meditations and Yoga Prana Vidya (YPV) energy healing protocols for self and others.

Methods: This is a qualitative study to know the experiences of the participants. For data collection, research interviews of all 27 participants were conducted at the end of the programme using open-ended questions. The audio recordings were transcribed, and the contents were analysed for patterns and themes.

Results: Five themes emerged from data analysis. Theme 1 showed that a strong purpose of spiritual development motivated majority of participants. Theme 2 identified perceived benefits and multidimensional achievements of participants which are, health improvements, spiritual development, and personal development. Theme 3 relates to some Challenges/difficulties faced in the course of the programme and how they succeeded to overcome. Theme 4 is about their short-term and long-term goals after completing the programme. Theme 5 is their overall experience that summarises it as priceless programme and a great opportunity in life not to miss.

Conclusions: Results showed that the purpose of conducting this unique intensive inhouse one-year program is very well accomplished in training and generating leaders with clarity and needed competencies to bring, sustain and promote holistic health for people including physiological and psychological health, together with improving the personality and character building and accelerated spiritual development. This is aligned to the YPV Great Vision of achieving at least one trained healer per family to boost and sustain immunity of entire family and promote good health, peace, happiness and harmony at home and work place. This is a programme of a unique mission to promote multi-dimensional development of participants besides holistic health and peace globally.

Keywords: Yoga Prana Vidya system ®, YPV ®, integrated and holistic energy healing, one-year intensive programme

Introduction

Yoga Prana Vidya System

Yoga Prana Vidya System is an integrated and a holistic energy healing system which utilizes the knowledge of prana or energy to treat and heal physical or psychological ailments. It consists of energy healing plus practice modules of physical exercises, breathing exercises, right diet, and various meditation techniques to help bring overall improvement in a person's well-being thereby bringing a change in their environment also. It is based on the principle that our energy body has the ability to heal itself or normalize itself and the rate at which our body heals can be accelerated by the application of energy healing techniques on the affected part or the whole body ^[1].

It is known from ages that human existence has a physical body and also an energy body surrounding the contour of the physical body ^[1].

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The energy body is also known as bio-plasmic body, or simply called Aura. This energy is stated as ‘Prana’ or ‘life force’ in ancient texts [2]. The energy body contains a mechanism with Chakrams (wheels) and “Nadis” (channels) for receiving and distributing Pranic energy to the physical body, which is available abundantly in nature. In YPV practice the major chakrams (see Figure 1), addressed are eleven, and also some minor chakrams are addressed as needed. Energy Healing implies cleansing the chakrams and energy component of the body parts having dirty or used up energy, and energising the chakrams and energy component

of the body parts with fresh Pranic energy by the healer acting as a channel (See figure 2). A disturbance in the energy body affects the physical body and vice versa. An illness strikes the energy body at first and it affects the corresponding physical body part/s. Diagrammatic representation of energy body of a healthy person and a sick person are given in Figures 3 and 4 respectively, and the differences are noticeable. A trained healer can scan a Chakram with sensitised hands to check the condition whether it is weak or strong, which in turn correlates with the clinical condition of the patient.

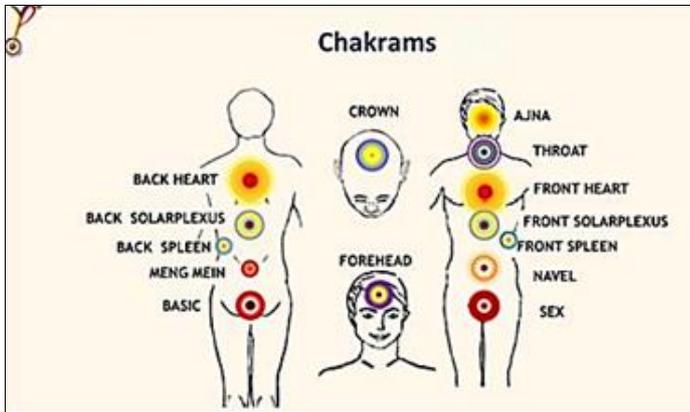


Fig 1: Major Chakrams

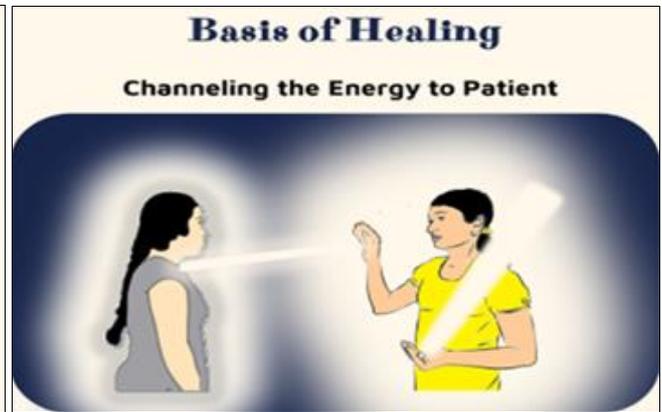


Fig 2: Channelling Pranic energy

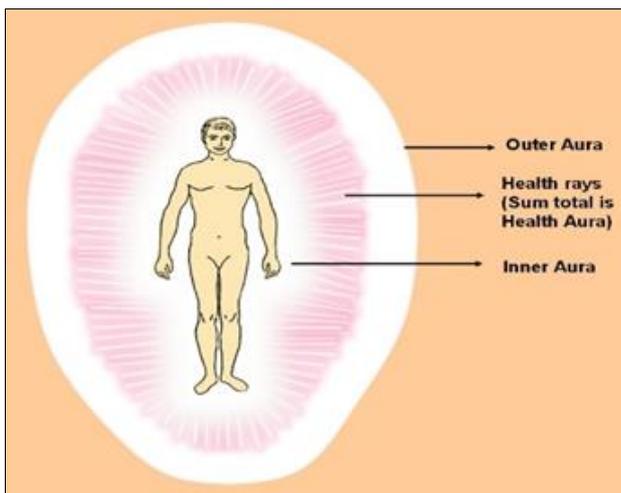


Fig 3: Energy body of a healthy person

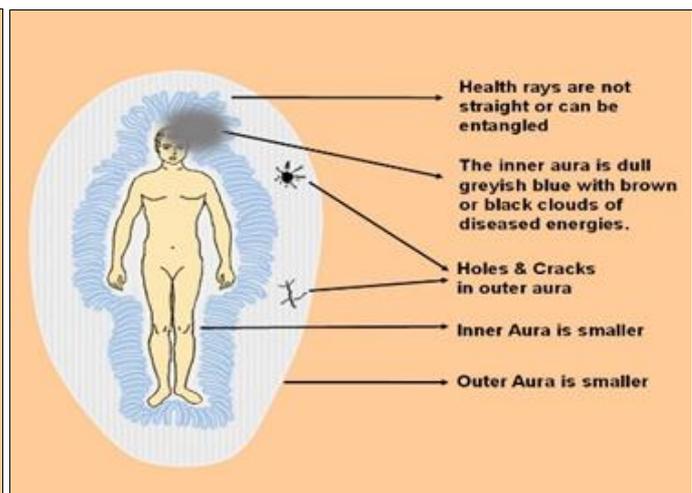


Fig 4: Energy body of a sick person

Published literature shows more than 40 research articles on successful applications of YPV healing, and more are expected to appear. It is noted that published successful case reports include, treatment of difficult medical cases [3], Diabetes management & control [4], removing arterial block in heart without surgery [5], vision improvements for participants of an Eye Camp [16], improvements in holistic wellbeing and immunity of participants in a one-month YPV intensive programme [7], Role of Yoga Prana Vidya in first aid and emergency [8], improvements of health and immunity of senior citizens [9], speedy recovery of COVID patients [10], treatment of hypothyroidism [11], Lowering academic anxiety and enhancing academic performance of high school children [12], saving life of a snake-bitten human female [13], improvements in the cognitive abilities and social behaviour of mentally challenged children [14], managing the pain and side effects of a Hodgkin Lymphoma patient undergoing chemotherapy [15], and healing treatment of a female patient suffering from kneecap dislocation [16]. Some experimental

studies also were conducted with successful outcomes such as improvements in the wellbeing of prisoners [17], and significant reduction in anxiety and depression in corporate employees [18].

Arhat Yoga is an advanced yogic system, also known as synthesis of Yogas i.e., the essence of different yogas, viz., Bhakti yoga, Raja yoga, Kundalini yoga, Dhyana yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Hatha Yoga and others. Arhat Yoga gives an opportunity of a safe and rapid growth to the practitioner. In Yoga Prana Vidya system, Arhat Yoga practices consist of multiple levels that are aimed at achieving substantial degree of Oneness with the Higher Soul.

One-year Programme at the YPV Ashram

The One-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programmes started from March 2014, and the number of participants who completed one-year programmes from year 1 to year 8 were: 12, 27, 20, 18, 13, 22, 10 and 27, making a total of 149. The present study is focusing on and taking data

from the 27 participants of the 8th batch that started from 19 March 2021 and completed one year on 18 March 2022.

Participants are selected from regular practicing and upgraded Arhat yogis with minimum 4 years of practice based on the recommendation of the respective Arhat trainers. Participants are not charged any fees for this one-year programme, and on the contrary, food, accommodation and medical expenses are fully sponsored by the Institution. The nature of the programme and the Ashram environment affords full concentration in the programme for the participants without getting entangled with family and other external influences.

The purpose of this intensive inhouse program is to generate leaders with clarity and competencies of how to bring, sustain and promote holistic health for people including physiological and psychological health, together with improving the personality and character building of the person and accelerated spiritual development. This is aligned to the YPV Great Vision of achieving at least one trained healer per family to boost and sustain immunity of entire family and promote good health and harmony at home and work place. Many of the participants of the 8 batches have maintained

their health improvements gained during the One-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programme. This is a programme of a unique mission to promote multi-dimensional development of participants besides holistic health and peace globally.

As the participants follow the given schedule (see Annexure 1), it is expected that some beneficial changes in their physical, emotional and mental faculties happen and develop as a result of training and practices in the one-year program. The schedule was prepared and fine-tuned by programme mentors continuously, as required for each batch. The mentors constantly guide and monitor the program. The mentors also invest quite a large amount of time to guide the whole group and also individually, as required. The schedule consists of regular and intensive practices of physical exercises, breathing exercises, book studies (see Annexure 2), oral teachings (see Annexure 3) and purification techniques, salt-free vegetarian and fruit diet and various deep meditative practices. How the participants devoted their time in the programme is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Categories of Intervention activities Vs. time devoted

S. No.	Activity	Time devoted (Percent of Total time)
1.	Physical exercises + breathing exercises	28%
2.	Meditation	20%
3.	Book study	18%
4.	Healing actions	11%
5.	Purification and manifestation of virtues	9%
6.	Service	7%
7.	Lecture/discourse	7%
Total 100		

Other ingredients of the programme

1. Vegetarian, fruit and salt-free diet
2. Leader of the Group on daily rotation

Study question

The question this study is designed to address is, how the participants experienced the one-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programme?

Method

This is a qualitative study to know how the participants experienced the one-year programme, by conducting qualitative research interviews with semi-structured questions at the end of the programme ^[19]. In accordance with the ethics requirements of research study, Institutional Ethics Committee clearance and signed informed consent documents from participants were obtained at the beginning of the programme.

Sample/ participant profile

The 27 participants of the YPV Ashram-based residential programme during the year 19 March 2021 to 18 March 2022 were purposefully selected as the sample for this study. It is observed that the group is highly diverse, and the age ranged from youngest at 26 years to eldest at 69 years, with mean age of 40.2 years. It is interesting to note that women's participation was very high; only 4 out of 27 participants were men, while the remaining 23 were women. The number of youths in the age group 26 to 35 were 10 (37%). In the middle age (36 to 55) were 15 participants (55.6%). The two seniors were aged 59 and 69 (Forming 7.4% of the total number). As regards level of academic qualifications, the group consisted

of 3 undergraduates, 9 graduates, 13 PG/Master's degree holders, and 2 were Ph.D. The participants belonged to different regions and mother tongues of the country of India. Yet, what was mainly common to all of them was the strong desire to go through and experience the One-year Yoga Prana Vidya intensive residential programme, coming from a YPV practice background ranging from a lowest of 5 years to highest of 17 years with a mean of 7.4 years.

Data collection

Data is collected from individual qualitative confidential interviews of all 27 participants, using semi-structured questions. Each interview response was audio recorded, transcribed and content verified and confirmed by each individual interviewee ^[20].

Data analysis

Content analysis method is used to analyse the data collected. All transcripts were read and re-read several times to clearly understand and interpret participants' perspective response content, to extract themes running across all transcripts ^[21]. In view of data saturation reached after analysing 20 interview transcripts, the remaining 7 transcripts were not considered to be included in the theme 2 onwards in the results which follow.

Results

The data analysis resulted in the following major themes.

Theme 1. Clear intentions and purposes that motivated participants to join the programme.

This theme is extracted from all 27 participant responses and

several of them stated more than one purpose they had in mind to join the programme. This analysis is presented in the categories of Youth, middle aged and seniors because of the possibility of different levels of perspectives.

Responses of Youth

When asked about what was the purpose of their joining the programme, majority of the youth (7 out of 10) stated their purpose of achieving higher level spiritually, uplifting or upgrading themselves. Example quotes are, “more purification, grow spiritually, to become baby arhat, upgrade myself, Spiritual growth (overcome fear of death, work towards purpose of life), Spiritual development and experiences, to know and gain clarity of purpose in life, search of a guru to guide and enlighten,” “Deep teachings”. The purpose next on priority (For 5 out of 10) was developing mentally and emotionally, such as “Grow personally, focus on self & come out of weaknesses, come out of emotional weaknesses, emotional and mental stability, self-development”. For three youth the next on priority was, “serving the people” and “working for Great Vision of YPV to bring peace on earth”. In two instances, it was for improving health. One interesting response was “YPV/OYSIP are life changing”, and one last responder felt that they had “No particular reason! Strong intuition!”

Responses of the Middle aged

Majority of the responses of middle aged (8 out of 15) were related to spirituality such as, “love of learning, Spiritual development, gain higher knowledge, higher teachings, Spiritual quest, clarity on some dilemmas, to experience nurturing teachings, inner purification. Four responses stated the purpose was “Service to people; train healers to spread YPV; to spread serving humanity; Great vision”. Four other responses stated the purpose to be “love of learning; grow emotionally and mentally; a Step higher; to overcome weaknesses”. Three other responses were “Life changing; lifetime opportunity”. Three responses had a clear intention of purpose for “health improvements”, including “to come out of depression”. One each of isolated but interesting responses were “inspired by seniors; Grow as healer”

Responses of the seniors

The two senior- aged participants stated the purpose was health improvements and overcoming weaknesses (emotional and mental) as primary purpose, and to experience the “*Life changing*” programme.

Theme 2. Perceived benefits and achievements of participants from the programme

The participants acknowledged that they had experienced various benefits and achievements from the programme such as related to health, mental and emotional dimensions, personal and spiritual developments, as explained below.

Health benefits

a) Concerning body weight

Healthy weight loss: 9 people lost weight, ranging from a minimum of 4 Kg to a maximum of 18 kg, with average weight reduction of 9.3 kg by the end of the year.

Healthy weight gain: Two of them gained weight, 5 kg and 2 kg respectively who were on the lower side of body weight at entry, indicating healthy improvement.

The remaining 9 maintained their normal healthy weight/BMI without appreciable changes.

- b) Generally, all gained body flexibility, activeness and mobility, stronger body, physical strength and fitness, and increased stamina
- c) Some participants had health issues resolved without medications, such as Kidney stones, PCOD, Dermatitis, eyesight, varicose veins, headaches, gastric issues, back pain, fatty liver, leg pain, blood glucose (sugar), knee pain, skin problems, BP, thyroid, joint pains etc. In some cases, medications were reduced on medical advice because of improvements.

Mental Development

The participants stated that, as a result of book study activities, positive affirmations, and teachings by the programme mentors, they experienced development of mental body and faculties. Some quotes are, “increased mental concentration and focus; reduced negative thinking, book studies and teachings influenced mental purification, self-confidence and faith increased, more mature, gained clarity, got rid of mental laziness, more discernment, concentration, prioritising, flexibility in thinking, great mental ability; positive attitudes to accepting people as they are, overcome mental blocks and barriers, awareness of self and others, alignment of body and mind, deeper understanding of the concepts, strong and sharp mind, mentally alert,”

Effects on emotional nature, and emotional behaviour:

The participants experienced improvements emotionally, helped by buddy feedback system, forgiveness sadhana, meditation and purification. Women participants had more emotional ups and downs compared to men. Some quotes for example are: “Now, can forgive easily; Now no enmity; Can see other perspectives; patience and listening improved; forgiving self, seeing my own mistakes; come out of anger, increased tolerance; reduced anxiety, panic and restlessness; aware of one’s own weaknesses; crying reduced; gained inner strength and emotional stability, calmness, stillness”.

“With instant inner forgiveness and purification, achieved calmness; immediate reaction tendency reduced; suppressed emotions like pain and anger on being criticised reduced; self-love and forgiveness developed at deeper level; feeling insecure and sad feelings no longer exist, home sickness gone.”; “emotionally has taken time to adjust with different type of people”

“Emotionally, was very sensitive, used to cry even on small issues, buddy feedback helps to become stronger”; “emotionally also I was weak. when somebody says something, I used to go into sadness. Cry alone. Now not anymore.”; “Emotionally very weak, wanted to run away from situations; here learnt to face the situations, overcame anger; stage fear completely gone.”

The emotional side played a prominent role in their efforts to adjust to the colleagues in this diverse group of members, besides emotional feelings of staying away from home and family. It took a few initial months for them to become stable emotionally.

Personal development - Improving Skills

It has been found from experience that participants of this programme acquire some important skills as a part of their personal development, and this study identified certain skills such as Social skills, Healing skills, Presentation skills, Communication skills, Relationship skills and Leadership skills. The participants were asked in the interviews to rate their skill levels at the beginning and at the end of the programme, on a scale of 1 to 10. The results of the calculated enhancement as percentage of the group’s mean value before

joining the programme are given in the Table 2 below. A short discussion of this phenomenon follows this table.

Table 2: Enhancements of Skills

Skill	Percent enhancement
Social skills	48.50%
Healing skills	65.90%
Presentation skills	61.40%
Communication skills	58.20%
Relationship skills	56.90%
Leadership skills	81.80%

Social skills: These are the tools used to interact, communicate and build healthy relationships. As part of social skills, “ice breakers” are activities used at the start of a meeting, in particular when meeting new people, to get to know each other, and 'warm up' before building acquaintance or relation. Social skills are important to work in groups or teams, and to organising and facilitating training programmes. Many of the participants in this group stated that they were very low initially in social skills, but learnt to improve through this programme. Analysis shows a 48.5% enhancement of this skill by the group.

Healing skills: All participants are energy healers using YPV healing protocols. Possessing higher healing competencies is important for them for giving healing treatment successfully to people with various illnesses or diseases. This programme enabled participants to enhance healing skills by 65.9% which has increased their confidence level importantly.

Presentation skills: Most people initially have stage fear feeling panicky and shivering at the thought of having to give a talk or make a Power Point Presentation to a gathering of people. One important activity in this programme is to conduct a book study event to the group and other attendees through a PPT presentation. Majority of the participants did not have prior experience of public speaking with PPT and they were able overcome this weakness, with enhancement of 61.4% noticed in this analysis.

Communication skills: These are the abilities to convey or share ideas and feelings effectively. Several things constitute communication skills, the language used, the meaning, emotions and feelings used, the purpose of what is communicated, and all of this matters. It is a common experience that inappropriate language used is a common barrier of communication. The participants in this group experienced that there were several colleagues in the group who came from different regional backgrounds, cultures and levels of education, and not well versed in conversational link languages such as English or Hindi, which caused difficulties in communication during the first few months until they consciously worked on it improving communication skills by 58.2%.

Relationship skills: These skills include relation building and managing it to maintain. These skills are important to achieve success when working with people. The participants in this study improved this set of skills by 56.9%.

Leadership skills: Generally, these are the abilities to lead a team or a group of people to achieve certain common goals. These participants perform roles of healers and trainers to promote YPV and propagate the theme of the Great Vision of

achieving one healer per family. These are leadership roles and this programme is essentially leader development platform. The Participants experienced enhancement by 81.8% in their leadership skills.

Self-confidence: Ability to handle one's own issues

In this study, the term Self-confidence is used to denote one's ability to handle one's own issues without depending on others. This is very important trait needed for the participants, who are trained as leaders with a vision and mission. It is observed that at the entry to this programme, several of them were low in this trait. The YPV practices plus teachings and book studies enabled the participants to raise their self-confidence by 70% on an average when asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 10. Some quotes are: “Able to manage much better”; “Yes .I handle myself and take my own decisions.”; “I ask others for opinion, but I take my own decisions.”

Spiritual development

We have seen it in Theme 1 that spiritual development was on the top of the intended purpose for which they joined the programme. The participants achieved great progress on the path of spiritual development enabled by the factors identified as Spiritual buddy feedback system, Book studies, teachings, continuous guidance and nurturing of the mentors, and deep meditations.

Some quotes are: “Spiritual buddy feedback system. my purification happened like that. I'm a better soul now; through buddy feedback, become humble; developed humility”. “After instantaneously forgiving people, many things have changed, degree of understanding and connectivity have increased, stopped judging people. Spiritually whatever I think, got manifested. I get several visions in meditation.

“In the matter of spiritual development, we were nothing when we came here, I would put it, now everything is spiritual, never have to look down upon the others, and this is what is complete spirituality”; “Willpower increased, energy increased, healings taking less time spiritually calmness and peace of mind; faith and gratitude increased.”

“By energy Scanning, it is noted that all Chakras and auras have become big; spiritual chord is big, meditations are much deeper”; learnt to sit for meditation without expecting anything. Meditation was deeper and more connected; spiritually improved a lot; every meditation is a deep meditation; no more negative thoughts during meditation; channelling of energy increased; visions experienced during meditation;”

Theme 3. Challenges /difficulties faced and experienced in the course of the programme

All of them felt that generally the programme is quite deeply immersive with busy continuous schedule and the main difficulty was to follow the daily schedule which was tightly paced, having to wake up very early in the morning and working through till about 10.30 at night (with few breaks for food and rest in between). The principal challenge for all of them was effective time management. They have also agreed that the programme was so structured that it facilitates multidimensional learning and development, which is possible only by overcoming one's weaknesses – physical, emotional and mental.

Some challenges were personal, such as having to handle and deal with a very diverse group of colleagues, and variety of situations needing patience. They faced these challenges

mainly during the first few months of the programme. A verbatim quote is: “To understand and adjust with co-sadhaks; each had own challenges; different communities and cultures in the group, sometimes emotions overwhelm, cause disturbance;”

For some, and mostly women, one challenge was “missing the family and feeling home sick.” “Challenges were more on my emotional side, emotionally missed family. emotional issues, family issues, to memorise lot of things learnt;”; “Husband asking to return.”

Some participants had challenges of physical condition of the body such as - “I had physical issues, my body had excess heat; weather gets too much cold sometimes; “Pain in some parts of the body, such as legs, shoulders, back etc.”

Yet, many of them felt that they did not feel much challenge or difficulty in course of the programme. Some verbatim quotes are – “The challenges are inside me only, the group is fine. No challenge.” “No challenges except that this is a big group.”; “I liked the schedule and environment.”

Theme 4. The Way forward-Short-term and long-term goals after completing the one-year programme.

When questioned about their way forward using the learnings from the programme, every participant was very positive on pursuing short- term and long-term goals.

Short- term goals

All participants had clear short-term goals such as – “to become active trainer, Psychic Self Protection and Soul trainer, I'm planning to conduct these programs in schools and colleges.”; “become financially independent, become certified Healer, conduct healing camps, train and produce hundreds of healers, to start a centre”

Long-term goals

All participants were very keen to spread YPV teachings on large scale in their respective native locations and regions. They were also aware of the Great Vision of YPV to train one healer per family, and this requires their committed contribution of effort and time. Some quotes are given below to cite few examples of this perspective.

“In the Long term I want to do very good work for Guru; To work for great vision of the guru; To spread YPV through Media presentations.”; “I want to work for the welfare of my villagers and my taluk”; “this teaching has given lot to me so, everyone has to get it that is my long-term goal. Still for great vision I need to work more. “To work for great vision of the guru, producing healers, want to develop 50 or more trainers. To serve humanity my final goal”

For some, the long-term goal is to become financially independent and render YPV services full time, to balance YPV with home, family, kids, business, using strength gained from the programme.

Some quotes are: “To involve in my family business and spread YPV to employees; to spread to colleges, hospitals, clubs; spread to schools - students and teachers; spread through relatives in foreign countries;”; “To become financially independent and work YPV full time.”

Theme 5. The Overall experience of participants

Priceless & rare opportunity: All of them appreciated that it was a priceless programme and what they went through was a rare opportunity. They all expressed gratitude to the Institution and the mentors for the great opportunity. Some quotes are: “*After going outside, we can handle any type of*

people. and any type of situation; One year experience is priceless. Because of high level of purification, powerful healings happen.”

“Very nice program, I just loved it. I would recommend it to everybody. I really recommend it to many people. It’s a great opportunity. I really thank my mentors for this wonderful program and wonderful opportunity.”

“Great opportunity to work on one-self; blessed to be part of this programme, it’s a life changing experience; I am totally different person now. Programme so designed that one becomes allrounder. Very, very priceless opportunity. Lifetime opportunity, not to miss when you are on spiritual path.”

“This program is structured so well, all the activities are planned so well, it was wonderful. from our grand mentor” “Grateful to the Guru who designed the programme so well. Very unique and nowhere else.” “I have learnt the art of living and being, if we learn how to handle this one year, then we will learn how to handle the life. I feel really like what I learned in this one year, I couldn't have learned outside for 10 to 15 years also.”

YPV Great Vision: For all participants it was an excellent avenue to work towards Guru’s Vision. “I will fulfil Guru’s vision, to become a wonderful channel; need to spread more work.” Guru’s work to spread in my home state ... so I take challenge.; in my incarnation I think I’m lucky to get this.”

Divine Grace and blessings: For several participants, grace and blessings of the Guru enabled them to complete the programme successfully and peacefully, despite disturbing and distracting personal financial and home issues that got resolved miraculously. Example quotes are as shown below.

“After coming to this program my financial level, and means of prosperity levels also increased my patience increased, my tolerance level improved, everything improved no words to express this feeling. Grateful to Guru for selecting me.”

“Whatever you can do from going there (home) you can do better things from here.”; “I'm here doing the spiritual work and because of that at home everybody is happy and things going very well there is no problem at all whole family is in peace due to family limitations, I thought of coming for 4 months only. So, after coming here for 4 months finally the family was able to adjust and it was convenient for me also to continue. Then I decided to continue for one year you start living these teachings.”

Life transformation: For some, it was transformation of life with compassion and being humane. “This helped me to be more compassionate, to be more humane, it helped me to become more patient with others.”; “There is no count of what we have gained experiences, teachings, many things. Just amazing. Compassion and loving kindness – which is possible only in this program.”; “developed more compassion, patience, more tolerance, this programme is really good opportunity.”

Time management: All of them acknowledged that in view of the tight and long daily work schedule, time management was very crucial, which they learnt effectively without getting stressed. “Time management increased.”; “time management reduced stress;”

Group Dynamics: For all of them, it took some time to adjust with the other members of the group because they came from diverse backgrounds. The programme was basically a group

practice model, and after they learnt to understand and appreciate others' perspectives, and also because of buddy feedback system, group alignment was achieved successfully contributing to group performance. The group participants overcame the tendency of complaining and developed the ability to accept people in the group as they are. Group members helped /supported each other to face and overcome individuals' situations, helping in individual improvement areas and overcome challenges to achieve Group Oneness. Some of the activities specific to the group, like, certain services as directed by the mentors, can only be accomplished effectively in a group. These activities helped the group members understand and accomplish tasks utilizing the group synergy.

Some quotes are given below as examples of their expressions

“Group alignment importance understood. Value of group. Loving energy increases month after month.”; “So many weaknesses have been removed, learnt a lot from the group; Being with a group for so much time, lot of weaknesses have been removed. it has been set up so well.”; “I have really grown., aligning with the group.”

“**Group support-Group is God:** The group activity and channelling from the group and vibration of the group is very important for life. My regeneration started here”

Leadership development: It is observed that many participants were women and also most of the participants never had any leadership roles earlier in their life. Group leadership on a periodic rotation basis gave them excellent opportunity to practically learn how to lead and motivate others in the group, with the support of programme mentors. A quote for example-“Learnt leadership here. doing YPV, The whole life changes for you”.

Service: The programme consisted of service activities, and each participant had opportunities to participate in service activities to the institution. Service delivery is a very fulfilling experience which they enjoyed. One quote for example is - “Most important thing is service. It helps a lot. Life changing experience. Great support from mentors.”

Discussion

This One-year Yoga Prana Vidya (YPV) intensive residential programme is very unique and no parallel is available for comparison because of differences in the duration and frequency of yoga classes, and differences in the specific yoga programs. However, Yoga broadly refers to a system of mind-body-spirit techniques involving exercises, breath control and meditation which promotes physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. However, additionally YPV System has a technique of energy healing which works on the energy body surrounding the physical body and not visible to the naked eye. It is understood from the Institution, that after the current and last 9th One-Year Intensive Programs ending in March 2023, Four-Month Intensive Programs are being scheduled. These and other programs at the Ashram/s of the Institution could fruitfully be utilized by the seekers who want to deeply practice, progress and contribute for the benefit of the humanity.

Several studies have evaluated the outcomes and gathered evidence on the efficacy of specific Yoga Practices. A review study of 35 published articles by Woodyard ^[21] show that

yogic practices enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, promote and improve respiratory and cardiovascular function, promote recovery from and treatment of addiction, reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, improve sleep patterns, and enhance overall well-being and quality of life.

Some studies reported that sustained long term Yoga practices also lead to important outcomes such as changes in life perspective, self-awareness and an improved sense of energy to live life fully, and with genuine enjoyment ^[22-24].

It is stated by the Institution that a major Group programme in 2024 for two months is planned with minimum 2000 Arhat yogis, to upgrade them and channel energies to bring peace on Earth through Meditations by big Group alignment. From then onwards, this program is planned to be scaled up every year. In this connection it is observed that a research study by Hagelin *et al.* (1999) ^[25] on the Maharshi Mahesh yogi effect (large group meditation) in Washington DC, found that the crime rate during that period there reduced by 23.3% ^[25].

Conclusions

Long-term YPV programmes are enabling the participants to acquire high level of capabilities for powerful healings providing great opportunities for treating health conditions such as obesity, pains and curing diseases which is of very practical importance to people in our societies. YPV is no-drug and no-touch modality, simple to learn and practice. Those who are keen to develop in multiple dimensions such as physical, mental, emotional and spiritual areas the long-term programmes such as this one-year program are great avenues. Regeneration of the bodies that has taken place through YPV practices for almost all the participants in various ways, as experienced and expressed by them in this study, means that a person's body, affected in various ways, can really be regenerated which phenomenon is also under research of modern medicine ^[26]. It can also be concluded that the One-Year Intensive YPV program has actually generated around 150 leaders to take the work forward nationally and further internationally to help humanity.

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Conflicts of interest

None

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Annexure 1

YPV One-year Intervention: Daily Schedule

The participants strictly follow the programme schedule (as shown below) of integrated and holistic YPV system on a daily basis for one full year at the Ashram, which involves following the fruit and saltless diet, physical exercises, breathing techniques, meditations, service and book studies. All these activities are group based.

Annexure 1: YPV One-year Intervention: Daily Schedule

Start Time	Activities
5.35 am	Aarti
5.40 am	Physical exercise
6.45 am	Arhat breathing
7.10 am	Isabgol & Green tea time
7.30 am	Rhythmic Yogic Breathing, Complete Breath, Cleansing Breath and Morning Sadhana* (fb live)
8.45 am	Breakfast
9.15 am	Service Activities
10.00 am	Divine group healing (fb live)
10.25 am	Healing time
11.45 am	Blue Triangles (virtue, service)
12.15 pm	Book study
01.00 pm	Afternoon Sadhana
01.45 pm	Break - Rest in horizontal position
03.30 pm	Book study
05.00 pm	IRFR-Virtue, Forgiveness sadhana
05.30 pm	Evening exercise (Hatha Yoga+1 set Arhat exercise)
5.50 pm	Walk and talk with buddies (buddy feedback)
06.05 pm	Tea break
06.35 pm	Evening sadhana (fb live)
07.40 pm	Recommended book reading
08.00 pm	Dinner
08.45 pm	Star gazing or any recommended activities by the Mentors
09.40 pm	Windup of the day
10.00 pm	Divine group healing (zoom live)
10.25 pm	Lord's prayer

*Additional weekly, one each meditation on Atma (30 min), Dhyana (40 min) and Arhat yoga higher meditations (2 hrs), done after Morning Sadhana done on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays respectively.

Annexure 2: Book study-Book and author titles

Book Title	Author
Etheric Double	Arthur E Powell
Astral Body	Arthur E Powell
Mental Body	Arthur E Powell
Causal Body	Arthur E Powell
Solar System	Arthur E Powell
Light on Path	H P Blavatsky
Voice of silence	H P Blavatsky
Mandukya Upanishad discourse	Shri N J Reddy
Astara	Earlyne C Chaney, Robert C Chaney
Virtues Understanding meditation	Shri N J Reddy
Understanding Meditation on Chakras	Shri N J Reddy
Hatha Yoga	Yogi Ramacharaka
Srimad Bhagavad-Gita	Shri N J Reddy
Study of YPV Materials including Handouts, ppts	Multiple sources

Annexure 3: Topics of oral Lectures

Discourses, study with guidelines along with mentors	No of sessions	Session Duration
Spiritual practices and deep study	50	1 hr
Mahavakyas related to 4 Vedas	10	1 hr
Lecture on Guru Ashtakam	20	1 hr
Important Shlokas from Isavasya Upanishad	10	1 hr
Discussion on sharing experiences, improvements	10	1 hr
Four Yugas and consciousness	4	1 hr
Karma to make future	2	1 hr
Silence beyond mind	2	1 hr
Purification	2	1 hr
Higher spiritual connection	2	1 hr
Evolution	2	1 hr
Dweller on the threshold	2	1 hr
Discussion on Nachiketa story from Katha Upanishad	2	1 hr
Discussion on Parabrahman, Akashik records	3	1 hr
Seven Planes and bodies	2	1 hr
Pursuit of Happiness	2	1 hr
Deeper discernment	2	1 hr
Higher connection manifest in lower	2	1 hr

Many levels of Union	2	1 hr
Affirmation	2	1 hr
Transformation and Transmutation	2	1 hr
Clarity of word Soul	2	1 hr
Right Awareness	2	1 hr
Acceleration and multiplication	2	1 hr
Purpose of great Vision	2	1 hr
Buddha teachings 4 Noble Truth and 8 Noble path	8	1 hr
Salt Kills	4	1 hr
YPV Sadhana app as parallel plan	2	1 hr
Management of resources and budget	2	1 hr
Will, Purpose and power purification	2	1 hr
Initiation	2	1 hr
Circle of concern and influence	2	1 hr
Discernment	2	1 hr
Use of Mantras	2	1 hr
Inspired Action	30	1 hr
Purpose of incarnation	2	1 hr
Spiritual Righteousness	2	1 hr
Understanding on breathing exercises	10	1 hr
lecture on level 5 healing	12	1 hr
lecture on Arhat Yoga higher level meditation	2	1 hr
lecture on Soul, Dhyana and kundalini meditation	3	1 hr
lecture on spiritual alchemy	2	1 hr
topics on different religions	2	1 hr
Discussion on fruit and raw diet and how and when to eat	2	1 hr
Boosting on immune system	2	1 hr
Importance of drinking water and the way to do it	2	1 hr
lecture on gene and environment	2	1 hr
lecture on mindfulness	2	1 hr
Lifestyle and liveliness	2	1 hr
lecture on Ahimsa Paramodharma	2	1 hr
Overcoming vicissitudes in life	2	1 hr
Free will and destiny	2	1 hr
Creation and evolution	2	1 hr
Lord's prayer	5	1 hr
Sri Ramana Maharshi's Upadesha Saram	10	1 hr
Cultivating Happiness	2	1 hr
Milarepa a great Tibetan Buddhist Master	2	1 hr
Angulimala and his spiritual transformation	2	1 hr
Pancha Koshas	2	1 hr
Shanti Mantras	20	1 hr
Wesak festival: Significance & practices	2	1 hr
Spiritual Technology	6	1 hr
Clarification on Book studies	20	1 hr
Total hours		325 hrs

Note: Additionally, below mentioned hours are spent by the 3 mentors and an advisor to guide and nurture the group: Mentor 1-2015 hours, Mentor 2-1800 hours, Mentor 3-100 hours, Advisor-15 hours, Total-2930 hours.