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PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH YOGA PRACTICES

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Abstract

In the science of yoga there is a two-way approach: the practice and the concept. Both are essential for development of personality. Concept helps man to follow the practice with shraddha (faith) and practical experience is useful to understand the concept in subtle ways. Let us see here four basic but very important concepts of yoga, which are useful to develop the internal personality of man.

‘Yoga karmasu kaushalam’ says the Bhagavad-Gita it means dexterity in action is yoga. Man cannot live without action for a moment, as breathing itself is an action. Man does actions through the physical body, the first visible personality of man. Using the physical body and a systematic approach in action man can reach a higher state of yoga. Dexterity involves three main points: maximum possible perfection and beautiful action, relaxation in mind while doing the action and the third is the right approach behind the action. This concept is useful for development of the personality at the physical body level.

Keywords: Personality Development & Yoga Practices.

Introduction

Development of personality is an important issue. Personality starts developing since birth, but it assumes great importance during adolescence, when reorganization of personality takes place. Personality is a very common term which is used in our day-to-day life. It tells us what type of person one is. We know that each person generally behaves consistently in most of the situations. The examples of this consistency can be seen in a person who remains friendly or a person who is generally kind or helpful in most situations. Such a consistent pattern of behavior is termed as personality. It can be called as the sum total of behavior that includes attitudes, emotions, thoughts, habits and traits. This pattern of behavior is characteristic to an individual. There are various dimensions of personality. These dimensions are related to physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual aspects of our behavior. For a holistic personality development, yoga plays an important role.

Yoga and Personality Development:

Yogic practices are found effective for development of all dimensions of personality. Let us talk about the yogic practices that influence development of different dimensions of personality.

Yoga and Physical Dimension of Personality:

Physical dimension is related to our body. It means that all organs and systems of our body should be properly developed and functions. It implies a healthy body without any disease. Yogic practices like asana, pranayama, and bandha play a beneficial role in physical development of children. There is a series of asanas and Pranayamas which help to improve the functioning of the body.

Yoga and Emotional Dimension of Personality:

Yogic practices are effective for development of emotional dimension related to our feelings, attitudes and emotions. There are two kinds of emotions: positive and negative. For example love; kindnesses are positive emotions, while anger and fear (exam phobia) are negative emotions. Personality Development through Yoga 9 Chapter-9 Yoga. Similarly, our feelings and attitudes may be positive and negative. For emotional development, positive feelings, attitudes and emotions should be developed and negative ones should be controlled, as the negative attitudes and emotions work as a mental block for the development of personality. Yoga plays a critical role in development of positive emotions. It brings emotional stability. It helps to control

negative emotions. Yogic practices such as yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara and meditation help in emotional management. For example, the principle of non-violence will protect us from negative emotions and develop positive feelings of love and kindness. Similarly, other principles of yama and niyama will help to develop positive emotions and attitudes in our personal and social life and therefore help in the management of emotions.

Yoga and Intellectual Dimension of Personality:

Intellectual development is related to the development of our mental abilities and processes such as critical thinking, memory, perception, decision making, imagination, creativity, etc. Development of this dimension is very important as it enables us to learn new things and acquire knowledge and skills. Yogic practices such as asana, pranayama, dharana, dhyana (meditation) help to develop concentration, memory and thereby help in intellectual development.

Yoga and Social Dimension of Personality:

Primary socialization, probably the most important aspect of the personality development takes place during infancy, usually within the family. By responding to the approval and disapproval of parents and grandparents and imitating their examples, the child learns the language and many of the basic behavior patterns of her/his society. The process of socialization is not limited to childhood, but continues throughout life and teaches the growing child and adolescent about the norms and rules of the society in which she/he lives. Some key elements of this process include respect for others, listening carefully to other persons, being interested in them, and voicing your thoughts and feelings politely, honestly and clearly so that you can be easily heard and understood. Principles of yama include these key elements and are very important as these help us in the betterment of our relationships with our friends, parents, teachers and others.

Yoga and Spiritual Dimension of Personality:

This dimension is related to the development of values. It is also concerned with self-actualization which is related to recognizing one's potential and developing them to the maximum. For spiritual development, yama, niyama, pratyahara and dhyana (meditation) are helpful. Yama and niyama help to develop our moral values while pranayama and meditation help us to realise our true self. Introspection is very effective for the development of 'self'.

Yogic Practices for Personality Development:

In the following section, we will discuss some yogic practices which contribute to the development of various dimensions of personality. We begin with Surya Namaskara and Asanas.

Conclusion:

Yoga is not just an art. It is science and it is life style. Maintaining perfect health, proper mental development and ability to manage emotions are essential to improve your personality. Yoga provides all this and more. It keeps you balanced and composed, it alleviates your physical sufferings, mental stress and negative thoughts. It helps to keep you focused and ultimately leads you to enjoy perfect harmony. Thus, including yoga in your day to day life can enhance your personality.

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