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YOGA & MEDITATION

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Yoga & Meditation

Yoga and Tantra are all part of the ancient life-disciplines that have been practiced in India for centuries. They find mention in the scriptures of the Vedas and Upanishads. Yoga is the science of the union with the Divine, with Truth Tantra is the most direct method of controlling



the energy that creates the ultimate union with truth.

The father of Yoga, Patanjali, described eight areas of Yoga and Yogic practices as : the natural regulation of the nervous system, discipline; cleansing; postures; concentration; contemplation; the awakening of awareness; and the state of perfect equilibrium. Yogic exercises have both preventive and curative value. They bring man to the natural state of tranquility, which is equilibrium yogic practices help to bring natural order and balance to the neurohormones and the metabolism and improve the endocrine system and thus fortify one against stress. Yogic practices for the treatment of stress and stress-related disorders (such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and obesity) are remarkably effective.

1.. Purification of thoughts and emotions:

To prevent internal disturbances from extraneous thoughts and sentiments arising during meditation one needs to practice purifications such as Five Yamas , Five Niyamas , four Brahma- viharas, The antidotes to disturbing thoughts, & ethical behaviour. Another aspect of purification is the conquest of the vikshepas, nine disturbances in the path of concentration : sickness, mental, laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, sloth, craving for sense-pleasure, false perception, despair caused by failure to concentrate and unsteadiness in concentration, and their five accompaniments : grief, despondency, trembling of the body and irregular breathing.

2.. Mindfulness

The practice of smrti-upa-sthana (buddhist sati-patthana) takes many forms, the details of which are taught in personal instruction. The asanas coupled with full awareness of the states of the body, breath and mind in a detailed methodology. In fact a major component in the practice of postures is self-awareness, a deep

self-observation, in all states of body, breath and especially the mind.

3.. Breath Awareness

It starts as part of mindfulness and becomes specialised as the very first step in the practice of meditation. Here, it is essential to learn diaphragmatic breathing that is slow, smooth, without jerks and without a break between the breaths. The practice of breath awareness branches off into many other modes of meditative experience. For Example : Nadi-shodhana, Pratyahara, Kundalini breathing, Sa-garbha pranayama.

4.. Japa

This is not simply a mechanical recitation of a randomly- chosen mantra. The science of mantra is based on an understading of sound vibrations which are primarily centered in the various stations of the kundalini And cannot be grasped without initiation. The ultimate purpose of japa is to go into supreme silence.

5.. Shavasana

Practices serve as ways of entering one's own subtle body. The interior exercises are detailed and complex and go far beyond mere relaxations. They may be practised at the levels of annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, or manomaya kosha in a logical progression. The last of these in shavasana is, as stated above, Yoga-nidra at several different levels.



6.. Dharana

Dharana or concentrations and pra-vrttis or resultant experiences. A proficient preceptor in the Himalayan tradition is trained in various methods of concentrations i.e. various focal points in the physical body, the chakra points, the tattvas & Vijnana-bhairava Tantra teaches a hundred different ways in which an altered state of consciousness may be triggered, and the enumerates nearly thirteen hundred dharanas.

7.. Dhyana

Dhayana or meditation. All the methods described above are integral parts of the approach to meditation, but meditation proper begins at the level of manomaya kosha.

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