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NATURAL HEALING OF PROBLEMS OF SCHOOL TEACHERS

WITH THE INNER SCIENCE – YOGA

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ABSTRACT

A good quality of life can be attained only through a good quality of education. Education is an important social activity, closely bound with intellectual, economic, cultural, emotional and social life of the human race. The “Pillars” upholding the aspirations of progress in education are the school teachers. Teachers are the real builders of the nation. The teachers’ role in the growth, development and prosperity of the nation is undeniable. If the teachers have to perform their duties with dedication and sincerity they must possess adequate mental health. Teachers are expected to be mentally healthy but the problems of teachers are more than what it was in the past. With proper practice of YOGA, school teachers can create the right kind of chemistry, where they are naturally peaceful, joyous and loving within themselves. This inner science of Yoga help teachers liberate from their problems and sufferings, both physically and psychologically. Yoga ultimately makes the school teachers work in harmony and mould the best citizens of the country.

INTRODUCTION

Nature transforms every bud into a beautiful flower through several steps involving natural process. Likewise, all children are flower buds when they enter a school for the first time. It is the role of the school teachers who are involved in blooming them into colorful flowers with sweet fragrance which is knowledge. School teachers are considered as a superior power of nature who takes the children from ignorance to intelligence. As every child comes out of the protected environment of home for the first time and is away from the parents, these school teachers become a parent substitute. What a child learns and experiences during his early school years can shape the child’s views about himself and the world around him, which would later play an important role in his success at his school, work and also his personal life. Therefore, the school teachers are responsible for the social, emotional and intellectual growth of the children.

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SCHOOL TEACHERS: JOB DESCRIPTION AND ACTIVITIES

Job Description

School teachers develop schemes of work and lesson plans in line with curriculum objectives. They facilitate learning by establishing a relationship with pupils and by their organization of learning resources and the classroom learning environment. School teachers develop and foster the appropriate skills and social abilities to enable the optimum development of children, according to age, ability and aptitude. They assess and record progress and prepare pupils for the exams. They link pupils' knowledge to earlier learning and develop ways to encourage it further, and challenge and inspire pupils to help them deepen their knowledge and understanding.

Activities of School Teachers

Typical activities are broadly the same for all school teachers and include:

- Teaching all areas of the primary curriculum;
- Taking responsibility for the progress of a class of primary age pupils;
- Organizing the classroom and learning resources to create a positive learning environment;
- Planning, preparing and presenting lessons that cater for the needs of the whole ability range within their class;
- Motivating pupils with enthusiastic, imaginative presentation;
- Maintaining discipline;
- Preparing and marking to facilitate positive pupil development;
- Meeting requirements for the assessment and recording of pupils' development;
- Providing feedback to parents on a pupil's progress at parents' meetings;
- Coordinating activities and resources within a specific area of the curriculum, and supporting colleagues in the delivery of this specialist area;
- Working with others to plan and coordinate work;

- Staying up to date with changes and developments in the structure of the curriculum;
- Taking part in school events and activities which may take place at weekends or in the evening;
- Liaising with colleagues and working flexibly, particularly in smaller schools.

TEACHERS ROLE IN THE SOCIETY

Teachers are the real builders of the nation. They are the pillars to uphold the national aspirations of progress. The teachers' role in the growth, development and prosperity of the nation is undeniable. It is the teachers who mold the future society and influence the coming generations towards successful achievement of the national goals. If the teachers have to perform their duties with dedication and sincerity they must possess adequate mental health.

A mentally healthy teacher is one who has confidence in himself and his pupils, one who expects much and gets much, one who is concerned for the future citizens of India. Teachers are expected to be mentally healthy but the problems of teachers are more than what it was in the past. In addition to the loss of special recognition, the profession has been infested with a number of other problems, such as enormous rise in the work load, lack of security of service, too much domination by the political bosses under local board managements, growing indiscipline among the students, delayed promotions and poor school climate.

The teacher has to cope with co many stressful and frustrating situations which results in mental ill health. A teacher, who is not mentally happy, will breed discontentment and dissatisfaction which will have a long term effect on the pupils. Therefore, mental health of teachers is a crucial issue to be tackled by educationists and all those concerned with the teaching profession.

PROBLEMS FACED BY SCHOOL TEACHERS

The school teachers play a very important role in the society, as they are largely responsible for molding the young and impressionable minds. There is growing concern

among educators about teacher's mental health. Job-related stress is an important factor in teacher's motivation and retention. Teaching once was considered a rather routine job; however, within the last decade it has become an increasingly complex profession. Issues such as litigation, liability, accountability, tenure, unions, along with increasingly diverse responsibilities and fast changing ideas have made teaching more stressful.

Two of the main sources of this stress were cited as work pressure and students misbehavior. This stress could be putting the school teacher's health at risk, as many find themselves unable to unwind out of school. Basically, school teachers play three different roles at home, school and society. They need to face numerous problems while playing these three roles. So they are flooded with extreme stress, anxiety and tension which finally affect their personality. The reasons for their stress can be channelised as follows:

1. HOME: Misunderstanding with the elders, financial problems, difficulty in nurturing their kids, etc.
2. SOCIETY: Recognition problems.
3. SCHOOL: Work pressure, children misbehavior, frequent changes in curriculum, lack of job satisfaction, insufficient salary package, etc.
4. PERSONAL: Physiological and psychological problems.

All these problems have direct influence on the personality development and work efficiency of school teachers. Sometimes, the pressures, which bear down upon them threaten destruction or serious injury to their personality and then they judge themselves helpless. So to tone up their personality development, Yogic science – Yoga and meditation is suggested to be tried as an educational technology which will help to improve the school teachers work efficiency.

WHAT IS YOGA?

Yoga is a science of the mind and soul. Yoga links the body with the mind, mind with the athma and finally athma with paramathma, the universe. It is the treasure of our yoghis and rishis. **Yoga – “Science of sciences** is too comprehensive in its nature and too profound in its scope of teachings to be fitted into the framework of any particular philosophy, religion or belief, ancient or modern”. (I.K.Taimni, The Science of Yoga). The Ashtanga Yoga System of Sage Patanjali gives us a wonderful road map for exploring yoga. (Phulgenda Sinha., 2001).

In simple words, yoga is a fantastic system for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. It is a “science” which provides a logical step-by-step process for a new understanding of ourselves and of the universe around us. The history of yoga remains veiled in a mystical culture of an ancient far-off land. The roots of yoga do lie in the ancient culture of India, where they remain firmly planted even till this day.

TRADITIONAL BRANCHES OF YOGA

Under the Vedic system there are four main or primary yoga branches from which most other types of yoga emerge. They are,

1. **Jnana Yoga** – The path of **wisdom**. Covers Yama and Niyama and is the science of acquiring proper knowledge.
2. **Bhakti Yoga** – The Yoga of universal **love and affection**.
3. **Karma Yoga** – The Yoga of **selfless service** that covers Pratyahra and is the science of action.
4. **Raja Yoga** – The highest Yoga. Covers Dharana, Dhyana, and Samashi and is the science of **concentration and meditation**.

MODERN YOGA STYLES

Yoga has erupted around the world in the matter of just a few, short decades. During this time many new practitioners have emerged with their own independent thoughts on the practice of yoga and some being quite ambitious as well as business savvy, have created large institutions and garnered much recognition in fairly short order. Many of these new styles of yoga have been branched with the stamp of their originator’s name like Sivananda Yoga, Bikram Yoga, Amit Yoga, Kaliray Tri Yoga, Satyananda Yoga and the ever popular Iyengar Yoga.

Other countless new varieties bear some name that can be vaguely associated with the yoga tradition in some way or another like Ananda Yoga, Dru Yoga, Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, Jivamukti Yoga or Anahata Yoga. And there is a growing trend toward even more new – age approaches to yoga with more functional sounding names like Power Yoga, Pre-natal Yoga, Laughter Yoga, Flow Yoga, Hot Yoga or Children’s Yoga, School Yoga, etc.

In India several yoga centers have bloomed out in recent years like that of after rain mushrooms. Some of the successful Yoga centers are “**Isha Yoga Center**” at the foot of Vellingiri hills by **Sathguru Jakky Vasudev**, “**Mana Vala Kalai**” by **Vethathiri**

Maharishi, “Vazhum Kalai” by Ravishankar, “Integral Yoga” by Swami Satchithananda, Osho’s Meditation Practices, AUM yoga therapy, etc.

YOGA TECHNIQUES

A combination of yogasanas, pranayama and meditation work wonders for those intent on cleansing both physical and subtle body.

i) Yogasana

A yogasana is a posture in harmony with one's inner consciousness. It aims at the attainment of a sustained and comfortable sitting posture to facilitate meditation. Asanas also help in balancing and harmonizing the basic structure of the human body, which is why they have a range of therapeutic uses too.

Functions of Yogasanas:

Asanas basically perform five functions:

1. Conative
2. Cognitive
3. Mental
4. Intellectual
5. Spiritual

ii) Pranayama

Pranayama is a compound term (*'prana'* and *'yama'*) meaning the maintenance of prana in a healthy throughout one's life. More than a breath- control exercise, pranayama is all about controlling the life force or prana. Ancient yogis, who understood the essence of prana, studied it and devised methods and practices to master it. These practices are better known as pranayama. Since breath or prana is basic to life, the practice of pranayama helps in harnessing the prana in and around us and by deepening and extending it, pranayama leads to a state of inner peace. The practices of pranayama—the correct breathing technique helps to manipulate our energies. Most of us breathe incorrectly, using only half of our lung capacity. Pranayama is a technique, which re-educates our breathing process, helps us to release tensions and develop a relaxed state of mind. It also balances our nervous system and encourages creative thinking. In addition, by increasing the amount of oxygen to our brain it improves mental clarity, alertness and physical well being .When practiced along with yogasanas the benefits of pranayama are

more pronounced. According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, pranayama enables the mind to acquire the capacity to concentrate on any given object of attention. It also says that scientific breathing helps in unveiling true knowledge from the darkness of ignorance. But it is eminently advisable to be aware of all the do's and don'ts of pranayama before practicing them.

iii) Meditation

Yogic meditation is a means of training the being to tune itself to the workings of the Divine Being. The central principle of such meditation is to concentrate one's mental faculties upon the object of quest. But it requires long hours of practice for the mind to be able to attain such sustainable levels of concentration and absorption. This discipline, above everything else, is the essence of yogic meditation.

The success of yogic meditation depends largely on the sincerity and strength of the person behind it. It is not the duration but the intensity of the aspiring consciousness, which is more important and ultimately effective. Fatigue is to be avoided at all costs, since it weakens the power of concentration and jades the mind.

Yoga meditation puts the being of the meditating person in a condition of increased and conscious receptivity to the workings of Yoga Shakti or the power of yoga. With a deepening of this state of mind there is often a total withdrawal from the external environment.

IMPACTS OF YOGA AND MEDITATION ON TEACHERS

Yoga is suitable for all people from young age to old age from family men to sadhus. Rather the most of it are for social well being and mental peace in the normal life of the man. So every teacher has to know of it, has to practice it and make his pupils to follow it, so as to have a balanced, awakened mind for the academic achievement, as well as, to have a total happy life.

Development of physical fitness and health of the student is not the responsibility of the teachers of physical education alone. Infact every teacher has a role to play in this direction, and must have substantial exposure to physical education. It should be viewed as an integral part of teacher education programmes at all levels.

The work efficiency of the school teachers not only depend on their experience, intelligence and knowledge but also on their complete personality. Their attitudes, self

concept, mode of adjustment, reaction to frustrating situations are important in determining the dynamic aspects of their personality.

The personality development of the school teachers will definitely be enhanced by a little practice of Yoga and Meditation regularly. The benefits they get through yoga and meditation are as follows:

1. Stress- free living and joyful relationship.
2. Enhanced productivity, creativity and efficiency.
3. Heightened concentration, high memory and decision-making capabilities.
4. Stimulates the release of all physical, mental and emotional blocks.
5. A proven tool for preventive health that has helped relief from chronic diseases.

The above said magnificent effects of yoga and meditation can definitely decrease the stress and increase the productivity of school teachers so that they can mold the children into the best citizens.

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