

Course Name : Bachelor of Physical Education

Year : IInd (Part - I)

Paper Name : Yoga

Paper No. : V

Lecture No. : 5

Topic no. : Sect - A (2)

**Lecture Title : Pranayam - I
Script**

Introduction

Hello viewers, today we are going to discuss about important topic of Yoga. It is the fourth limb of Ashtanga yoga i.e. Pranayama

Pranayama

The science of breathing (Pranayama) is very helpful in making mental and spiritual progress. It is equally important for physical improvement and maintaining health. Breathing is the most essential means of sustaining human life. We can live for some time without food and water, but without Inhaling and exhaling air, it is not possible to live longer than a few minutes.

The ordinary form of breathing is to Inhale and exhale in a regular manner that is, inhaling, retaining and exhaling in a regulated and natural continuity. Such natural breathing; when controlled and prolonged successfully, is the science of breathing, i.e. Pranayama and is the best method of prolonged the span of life.

The term Pranayama has been constituted by two words: Prana+Ayama. 'Prana' is the vital force which pervades the whole cosmos. Prana is more subtle than air and can be defined as the energy essence that is within everything in the universe. 'Ayama' means to control or to give a rhythm or a definite flow.

In this sense Pranayama may be defined as a process and technique

through which vital energy can be stimulated and increased; and this brings about perfect control over the flow of Prana within the body.

Many people equate air or breathe with Prana and therefore, define Pranayama as the exercise of breathing. But this concept is not so right. It is no doubt that Prana is related to air or breath but Prana is not only the air. It is the vital energy in the air. Through Pranayama we stimulate vital energy of the body.

It is often translated more specifically as "breathe control". Pranayama are of primary importance in yoga.

There is a very tight connection between breathing and emotions. "When the breath is still, so is the Mind." With breathing, we can help to either calm or excite the entire nervous system. When your breathing becomes irregular and unsteady, your mental state also becomes unsteady. However, when the breath is steady, so is the mind.

In other words we can also say that breathing can also be utilized for concentration. You have probably noticed that when you focus on something, you have a tendency to hold your breath. If you retain your breath, your minds tend to become focused. If your breath is irregular, your mind becomes scattered.

Maharishi Patanjali

According to Maharishi Patanjali:- in yogdarshan 2.49 "Tasmin Sati suasa-prasuasa yorgati vichhedah Pranayama."

Maharishi defined Pranayama as a modification of breathing in a sitting posture, which is steady and comfortable. Thus, Pranayama is a complex act, in which after assuming a suitable posture the person inhales and exhales slowly, deeply, and completely and also stops a little between exhaling and inhaling and equalize the two movements.

In any discussion of Pranayama there are three often-repeated technical terms. These terms are: Purak, Rechaka and Kumbhaka.

A puraka in Pranayama is the act of inhalation. It should be deep and complete. At the end of the puraka the lungs should be filled completely. It should be a slow act, there being no extra force applied for sucking the

air in. The flow of air should be uniform from the beginning to the end of a puraka. The time taken by each puraka should be the same. Thus Puraka is not just any form of Inhalation but it is controlled Inhalation.

Similarly, Rechaka is not just exhalation. It means a controlled exhalation which is slow, deep, uniform and completed in equal time in each round. At the end of a Rechaka the lungs should be emptied to the maximum extent, there tissues contracting as much as possible.

Retention of breath is called Kumbhaka. Kumbhaka means a water-pot. Just as a water-pot holds water when it is filled with it, so in Kumbhaka the breath is held after filling the lungs. Actually, Kumbhak can be practised in two ways. We can hold the breath in after a purak that is called Antah or Antaranga or Abhyantara Kumbhak means Inner Retention. The second variety is called Bahya or Bahiranga Kumbhak means external Retention or we can hold the breath out after a Rechak is called Bahya or Bahiranga Kumbhak means external Retention.

In traditional writings the two words Pranayama and Kumbhaka are often used as synonymous words. This may be explained by the fact that Kumbhak is the most important part of Pranayama.

Actually now the question arises, how long one should do kumbhak? It depends upon the progress of practice and purpose of doing Pranayama. "Holding the breath comfortable according to one's capacity without ever exceeding this capacity," is the principle, which should not be lost sight of by a student of Pranayama.

There is a fixed proportion of time to be maintained with regard to Purka, Kumbhaka and Rechaka. It is recommended that Rechaka should take double the time as for Puraka.

Benefits

According to Manu Smariti:- "Just as the impurities of metals (gold, silver etc.) are removed by the flame of fire, the Indriyas or the sense organs throw out their impurities through Pranayama." Infact not only the impurities of the sense organs but also those of the mind are removed, the mind is also brought under control.

In the present era, research has proved that a large number of

Psychosomatic, somopsychic diseases and mental imbalances like stress and worry can be removed by Pranayama, or we can say the regular practice and the different techniques of Pranayama can remove most of the diseases like asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and so on.

It also purifies blood and promotes digestion.

It gives strength and flexibility.

The person who desires success and salutation in life should practice it with faith and regularity.

Safety Measures and Precautions

The great men who discovered the science of breathing have laid down certain instructions for practising it. One of them says:-

Breathing, properly practiced cures all diseases, but improperly done, it causes all ailments. By irregular or unscientific breathing many troubles like cough, asthma, headache, eye diseases are caused. On the basis of this a proverb also has become popular that "if the yoga is practiced without necessary personal directions, it harms the body and causes diseases. Many people have suffered and are suffering from various diseases due to faulty ways of practicing Pranayama."

Pranayama should not be done after merely reading books on the subject or even observing others at practice of these. In the earlier stages the pranayama should be done under the immediate guidance of experienced instructors, who have thorough knowledge of the merits and demerits of the Pranayama, otherwise the consequences will be bad. In order to practice Pranayama, it is essential to follow certain rules. Intense Pranayama sadhna cannot be practiced under normal conditions: a separate place, separate food and separate guidelines are required.

1. Pranayama should be done in a beautiful spiritual region and that should be clean, peaceful and airy also. It should not be done in an atmosphere of smoke, dust, or foul smell, otherwise more harm is possible than good.
2. It should be practiced in the brahmamuhurta means before the dawn and not during the day time.

3. It should never be practiced in a closed room and not even under a fan on full speed.
4. Body must be properly cleansed before sitting for Pranayama.
5. One should not sit for Pranayama after immediate meals. At least a gap of 3-4 hour's is essential. Practitioners should eat a moderate, balanced diet; otherwise the full benefit of the practices will not be derived. The food should consist mostly of milk, ghee, rice, vegetable, khichadi, fruits, dry fruits etc.
6. Duration of Pranayama should be increased gradually.
7. Patients having high temperature and pregnant women should not in any case practice Pranayama.
8. For gaining the fullest benefit from the Pranayam, one should control one's Behaviour, activities, sleeping and waking hours.
9. For acquiring the power of meditation breathing exercise should be done, while keeping the spinal cord, waist, chest and neck in one straight line only.

Conclusion

So friends in today's episode we discussed about the important topic Pranayama. It is the fourth limb of Ashtanga Yoga. I told you its definition according to Maharashi Patanjali. Then its major benefits in day today life, how its regular practice removes so many diseases like asthma, bronchitis, hypertension, insomnia and how it purifies blood also. After that we discussed some of the major precautions safety measures while practicing pranayama. Like, it is practiced in clean and peaceful area. It should not be practiced after meal. One should have a balanced diet while performing Pranayama.

Thank you