



YOGA AND FITNESS

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Abstract:

Introduction:

History of Yoga:

The early writings on yoga were transcribed on fragile palm leaves that were easily damaged, destroyed or lost.

The development of yoga can be traced back to over 5,000 years ago, but some researchers think that yoga may be up to 10,000 years old.

Yoga's long rich history can be divided into four main periods of innovation, practice and development. Pre-Classical Yoga, Classical Yoga, Post-Classical Yoga, Modern Period .

Pre-Classical Yoga

The beginnings of Yoga were developed by the Indus-Sarasvati civilization in Northern India over 5,000 years ago.

The word yoga was first mentioned in the oldest sacred texts, the Rig Veda. The Vedas were a collection of texts containing songs, mantras and rituals to be used by Brahmans, the Vedic priests.

Classical Yoga

In the pre-classical stage, yoga was a mishmash of various ideas, beliefs and techniques that often conflicted and contradicted each other.

The Classical period is defined by Patanjali's Yoga-Sūtras, the first systematic presentation of yoga. Patanjali is often considered the father of yoga and his Yoga-Sūtras still strongly influence most styles of modern yoga.

Post-Classic Yoga

A few centuries after Patanjali, yoga masters created a system of practices designed to rejuvenate the body and prolong life.

They rejected the teachings of the ancient Vedas and embraced the physical body as the means to achieve enlightenment.

Modern Period

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, yoga masters began to travel to the West, attracting attention and followers. This began at the 1893 Parliament of Religions in Chicago, when Swami Vivekananda wowed the attendees with his lectures on yoga and the universality of the world's religions. In the 1920s and 30s, Hatha Yoga was strongly promoted in India with the work of T.Krishnamacharya

The History of Fitness

Ancient Greek Civilization (2500-200 B.C.)

Athens

Perhaps no other civilization has held fitness in such high regard as ancient Greece. The idealism of physical perfection was one that embodied ancient Greek civilization. The appreciation for beauty of the body and importance of health and fitness throughout society is one that is unparalleled in history. The Greeks believed development of the body was equally as important as development of the mind.

Sparta

The Spartans of Northern Greece valued fitness even more than the Athenians. However, the heightened interest in fitness within Spartan culture was primarily for military purposes. During this era, Greek states were frequently at war with each other. Fighting skills were highly correlated with physical fitness levels, making it imperative for individuals to maintain high fitness levels. Spartan society required males to enter special fitness programs at the age of six.

Roman Civilization (200 B.C.-476 A.D.)

The Roman Empire was the antithesis of the ancient Greek civilization with the overall

physical fitness condition of the Roman civilization highest during its time of conquest and expansion. During this period, all Roman citizens between the ages of 17 and 60 were eligible for the military draft. Therefore, it was imperative for all citizens to maintain good physical condition and be prepared for service. Military training consisted of activities such as running, marching, jumping, and discus and javelin throwing .

The Dark (476-1000) and Middle Ages (900-1400)

Their lifestyle consisted of hunting and gathering food, and tending to cattle . Physical activity and fitness were prerequisites for survival. Therefore, despite the cultural setbacks that occurred with the fall of the Roman Empire, fitness experienced a revival during the Dark and Middle Ages.

What is the difference between yoga and fitness? (Exercise)

In Yoga

Yoga is to reach Samadhi, a higher state of consciousness. In order to purify the mind it is necessary for the body to undergo a process of absolute purification in order to remove impurities so the nadis function and the energy blocks are released.

Yoga is excellent at building strength, flexibility, balance, and functional movement skills. And as a mind/body modality,

Yoga is unparalleled in its ability to relieve stress, help people cope with medical treatments, find meaning in daily life, and create more positive relationships with their bodies.

In Fitness

The ultimate aim of exercise is to improve overall physical fitness level and health by practicing aerobic activity, which elevates the heart rate. Exercise can strengthen muscles and the cardiovascular system, improve athletic skills and aid weight loss.

Regular exercise can boost the immune system and also improve mental health e.g. prevent depression and promote/maintain positive self-esteem.

Value of Yoga in Our Life

Human beings are made up of three components—body, mind and soul corresponding to these there are three needs—health, knowledge and inner peace. Health is physical need, knowledge is our psychological needs and inner peace is spiritual need when all three are present then there is harmony. (asanas) strengthens the body and creates a feeling of well being (pranayam) calms the mind

Value of Physical Fitness in Our Life

The importance of including physical fitness into your life spans every aspect from weight control to disease prevention to improvements in your physical appearance. It is not just a matter of doing so many pushups or situps. It means following an exercise plan which will enhance your body's ability to respond to stress.
