

Title: Yoga for Mental Health and Physical Therapy

Several researches around the world show that Yoga is highly beneficial for the Mind Body and Soul and show that Yoga calms the mind, improves the immune system, reduces stress, increases the gray matter, cultivates willpower, builds focus and concentration, boosts cognitive function, reduces depression, reduces stress, improves sleep quality, increases compassion just to name a few. Many companies and healthcare systems around the world have now started adopting Yoga as part of their wellness programs and have seen an increase in productivity and reduction in medical bills. Schools in US and Europe have also adopted yoga as part of their curriculum and evidence shows that yoga enhances children's performance in school work, improves children's focus, self confidence, cultivates positive thinking and helps in character building. The researchers say there's enough evidence to warrant a larger study on the effects of yoga on mental health, and it should be considered as part of treatment for more disorders. Even though Yoga originated in India thousands of years ago, its wisdom on overall health is universal and timeless. Yoga which is a holistic system states that in order for us to be healthy, we have to live in harmony with ourselves as well as the Universe. "As is the macrocosm (universe), so is the microcosm (individual)." This ancient science states that if the mind is affected, the body will be affected and vice versa. Yoga strongly emphasizes that both Mind and Body are closely interrelated and must be seen as a whole. Many people misunderstand Yoga to mean bodily movements and exercise, and physical therapy when Yoga is in fact a deep science that focuses primarily on the mind. The body is used as a tool to master the mind. Yoga states that in order to understand the body, one has to understand the Mind and its nature. By nature, the mind is in permanent motion and is affected every moment by external happenings through the senses. Yoga is a Sanskrit root word "yuj" which means to "unite" or "join" the aspects of ourselves which were never divided in the first place. Yoga means working with each of the levels of our being individually (body, senses, mind, energy) and then unifying all of those into their original whole. In another words dealing with a human as a whole (holistic approach) and not as parts (reductionist approach).

Biodata: Vasanthi Pillay

Vasanthi Pillay is the Founder and President of the Ayurveda Association of Singapore (AAOS) and Director of Innergy Ayurveda & Yoga Pte Ltd and Ayurveda and Yoga Institute (YAI). Vasanthi has teamed up with several organisations to elucidate the scientific elements of Ayurveda and Yoga. She has delivered numerous public and private talks and workshops in Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Macau and Australia. Vasanthi also travels to Taiwan hospitals regularly to conduct trainings on Wellness and Mindfulness and Preventive Medicine through Ayurveda and Yoga. She is also a regular speaker at the Malaysia Medical Association (MMA) for their annual seminar on evidence based complementary medicine. Vasanthi obtained her Yoga Teacher Training in 1995 from the renowned S-vyasa Yoga Institute that focusses on Yoga Research. Vasanthi has trained several doctors and nurses in Yoga Therapy in Taiwan hospital and has collaborated with them in conducting Yoga research. Vasanthi holds a Bachelor of Arts from the National University of Singapore (NUS)), Post Graduate Diploma in Banking and Finance (University of New South Wales (Australia)) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (Singapore Institute of Management (SIM)) and Certificates on Ayurveda and Yoga.

Presenting author details
Full name: Vasanthi Pillay
Contact number: +65 62873551 / vasanthipillay@gmail.com / vasanthipillay@aaos.org.sg
Facebook account : https://www.facebook.com/vasanthi.pillay.1

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