



# YOJANA

JUNE 2023

A DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY

## LEAD ARTICLE

**Ayush: Unveiling the Science of Life**

Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha

## FOCUS

**Yoga for Global Well-being**

Ishwar V Basavaraddi

## SPECIAL

**Role of Meditational Approaches  
in Mental Well-being**

Kamlesh D Patel

# INDIA

Gifting Holistic Well-being to the World

## DO YOU KNOW?

# MISSION LiFE LIFESTYLE FOR ENVIRONMENT

“ This word is LiFE, which means ‘Lifestyle for Environment’. Today, there is a need for all of us to come together and take Lifestyle for Environment forward as a campaign. This can become a mass movement towards an environmentally conscious lifestyle. ”

– Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India

### What is Mission LiFE?

Mission LiFE is an India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment. At the 26<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Glasgow, India shared the mantra of LiFE - Lifestyle for Environment - to combat climate change. India is the first country to include LiFE in its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).



### Objectives of Mission LiFE

- Mission LiFE seeks to translate the vision of LiFE into measurable impact.



- Mission LiFE is designed with the objective to mobilise at least one billion Indians and other global citizens to take individual and collective action for protecting and preserving the environment during 2022-2027.

- Within India, at least 80% of all villages and urban local bodies are aimed to become environment-friendly by 2028.

- It aims to nudge individuals and communities to practise a lifestyle that is synchronous with nature and does not harm it. Those who practice such a lifestyle are recognised as ‘Pro Planet People’.

The ideas and ideals of LiFE will be implemented as a mission-mode, scientific and measurable programme.

## Here's why it is crucial for the world?

	Environmental degradation and climate change impact ecosystems and populations across the globe
	Nearly 3 billion people are projected to experience chronic water scarcity due to droughts at 2°C warming
	It is estimated that global economy could lose up to 18% of GDP by 2050 without urgent action by one and all



**Continued on Cover-III...**



## Space Tech

Namaste, I have gone through the first Yojana received by me for April 2023, Startup India. It was full of insights on different government schemes & different kinds of support given to them. I am just suggesting a theme of 'Space Tech' for the next issue. It would be a great & fruitful issue to talk about different launching vehicles, the launching of different satellites -their orbit, different missions by ISRO, various achievements & a timeline of various events in the history of Indian Space Technology. And some terminology related to space tech. And I believe you can represent it in a very beautiful way from the very beginning to the present. (that India or ISRO has achieved). I hope you will consider my suggestion, if you find it interesting. I would be very grateful & thankful to you.

– **Kiran**, Uttar Pradesh

### Reply from the editor:

Thank you for writing to us. You may like to read an insightful article on Space Tech by S Somnath, the chairman, ISRO in the May issue of Yojana on 'Techade'.

## Importance for Civil Services Aspirants

There was a time when excitement used to be finding new edition of Yojana in market.

– **J Sanjay Kumar**

Sr DOM (Freight), Jhansi Division, IRTS 2016 Batch

### Reply from the editor:

Team Yojana too is excited to be a part of this journey of UPSC aspirants and civil servants. Every new issue of Yojana is planned and designed to bring the best-of-the-best minds and topics together in realising this dream.

## Role of India in G20

I have been a regular reader of the monthly magazine, Yojana for 11 years. It helps me greatly to know the actual facts of any issue with brief knowledge. My humble request is that if the G20 conference and the role and future of India could be discussed in details in this magazine, it would be great. Thanking You.

– **Pratik Sanyal**  
West Bengal

## Insurance Sector

Dear Sir/Ma'am, I am thankful for the Yojana journal. It really helps me in my research work. Even I recommended reading Yojana journals to many others. I would like to request you to provide

articles regarding Health Insurance, an overview of the Insurance sector in India, and a comparison between the private and public Insurance sectors. Thank you.

– **R Rawali**

## Startup India

A useful article titled 'Startup India Action Plan: Foundation of the Indian Startup Ecosystem' was published in the April 2023 issue of Yojana. The article gives a general summary of the government's Startup India Action Plan, which aims to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship across the nation.

– **Awanish Kumar Gupta**  
Uttar Pradesh

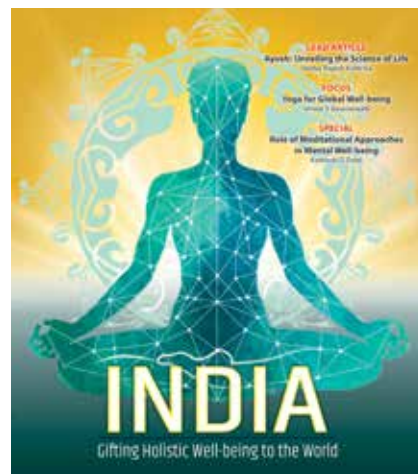


## May No One Suffer...

*Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niramayah.  
Sarve Bhadrani Pashyantu, Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhag-Bhavet, Sarve Bhavantu Niramaya  
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

*May all sentient beings be at peace, may no one suffer from illness.  
May all see what is auspicious, may no one suffer.  
Om Peace, Peace, Peace.*

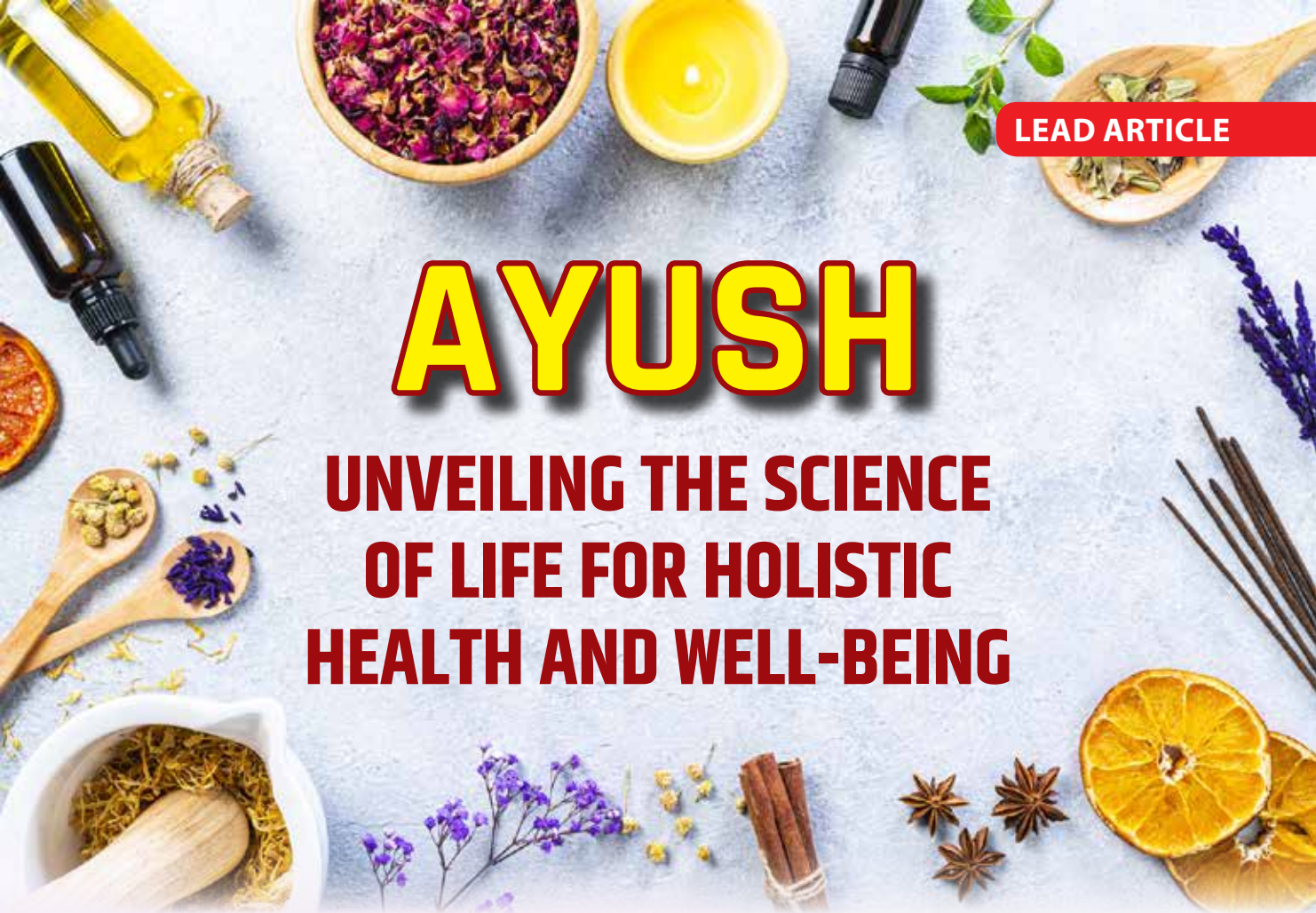
When we talk of well-being, it is the holistic health and wellness of the entire paradigm of physical body, mind, and soul (or spiritual being). The food that provides us nourishment, yoga and other physical activities that keep us fit, and the medicines that are taken when needed; they all work on the 'physical body' part of the well-being. The things one engage-in to keep the mind healthy, work on the various mental faculties that may include reading, writing, *pranayama* and other activities that challenge mind and keep it active. The final stream of well-being may fall into the spiritual well-being of oneself. This is the centre of a holistic living that is taken care of with sustained practices and methods that include *dhyana*, *jap*, and meditation. Different belief systems, areas of thoughts, and approaches cater to either or all of the above-mentioned verticals towards realising holistic health and well-being of the individuals and society at large. The delicate balance between the nature and us too plays an integral role in giving the vital energy or *prana* to the human beings.



This vast bank of knowledge and various approaches to healing have been a great resource that India has to offer to the world. In a world marred by diseases, conflicts, and chaos, the ancient systems of Indian medicinal sciences and meditational ways are gradually adopted by people beyond geographical boundaries and regional confinements. These knowledge and practices are flowing seamlessly and helping millions around the world. The annual celebration of International Year of Yoga, observing 2023 as the International Year of Millets, and acknowledgment of the role of 'Mission LIFE—Lifestyle for Environment' are some of the testaments that reaffirm the belief that the world has bestowed upon us. This becomes even more relevant in the year when representatives from the G20 nations are travelling to different parts of India and learning more of its heritage and contributions.

Today, India is focusing on integrated medicine and health research with a more evidence-based approach towards the Ayush streams of medicine. Various consultations and negotiations, under the G20 Health Track, are discussing the need for universal holistic health embodied under the larger philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*—'The World is One Family'. This is aimed at the betterment of humankind by ensuring health security to the people, last mile delivery of health services, an approach of preventive and curative medicine, approaches leveraging both traditional and modern medicinal systems, thus elevating global health for greater economic development.

This issue of Yojana is an attempt to bring together the contributions of India towards achieving the holistic well-being for the entire world. It has essays and write-ups from various experts that dwell upon the practices that are even more relevant today for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the world. This has the scope of laying the groundwork for widening of the role of India towards worldwide healthcare cooperation and partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of promoting good health and well-being. □



# AYUSH

## UNVEILING THE SCIENCE OF LIFE FOR HOLISTIC HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**India, known for its rich cultural heritage, has bestowed upon the world a precious treasure in the form of Ayush system of healthcare that has stood the test of time. Ayush represents a comprehensive approach to healthcare that encompasses ancient wisdom and holistic healthcare practices. It has been an integral part of the healthcare system for centuries. Ayush emphasises a personalised approach to health and well-being, balancing the body, mind, and spirit through a combination of exercise, diet, lifestyle modifications, therapeutic drugs, and treatment practices.**

**VAIDYA RAJESH KOTECHA**

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**T**he Ayush systems, especially Ayurveda are often referred to as the 'Science of Life', which is deeply rooted in ancient Indian knowledge and has been practised for millennia. While Ayush has a strong foundation in traditional wisdom and experience, there has been increasing interest in scientifically

exploring its efficacy and safety through evidence-based studies. The Ministry of Ayush is actively engaged in promoting the scientificity of Ayush systems of healthcare. Recognising the importance of evidence-based practices, the ministry has undertaken various initiatives to foster scientific research, validation, and integration of Ayush into





## Meaning of the word 'Ayush'

**Traditional & Non-Conventional Systems of healthcare and healing which include Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homoeopathy.**

the healthcare framework. This has led to increased funding for research, establishment of research institutes, and collaborations between Ayush experts and modern scientific researchers. The aim is to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and contemporary scientific evidence, ensuring the integration of Ayush into evidence-based healthcare practices.

### R&D initiatives of Ministry of Ayush

The Ministry of Ayush has setup five Research Councils as Autonomous Institute for undertaking research in Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani, Siddha, Yoga, and Naturopathy. The research activities by the Councils are undertaken through peripheral institutes/ centres/ units all over India and also through collaborative studies with various universities, hospitals and institutes. The research activities of the Councils include medicinal plant research (Medico-ethno botanical survey, pharmacognosy and tissue culture), Drug Standardisation Pharmacological Research, Clinical Research, Literary Research & outreach activities. They also develop protocols, and collaborate with national and international research organisations to promote scientific investigations in Ayush. The Ministry of Ayush also provides financial support for research projects through its Research Councils, National Institutes, and various schemes. These funds are allocated to facilitate high-quality research studies, clinical trials, and systematic reviews focusing on Ayush therapies, herbal medicines, and traditional knowledge. The Scheme of Extra Mural Research encourages academic and research organisations to pursue research activities with related sciences like Botany, Chemistry, Pharmacy,

Pharmacology, etc., enriching scientific data and leading to innovations having IPR Value across the country and at global level.

Ayush encourages collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and experts from various disciplines. By fostering interdisciplinary research and collaborative partnerships, Ayush aims to leverage diverse perspectives and expertise to find innovative solutions. This collaborative approach can lead to the development of integrated healthcare models that combine the strengths of Ayush and modern medicine. The Ministry of Ayush (MoA) actively collaborates with research institutions, universities, and international organisations of repute like CSIR, CIMR, ILBS, etc., to facilitate knowledge sharing and scientific advancements in Ayush. Collaborative research projects are undertaken to explore the efficacy, safety, and mechanisms of action of Ayush interventions and these follow an integrative research model for scientific evidence generation of Ayush medicines. The Center for Integrative Medicine & Research (CIMR) was established within the AIIMS-Delhi campus under the Ayush Centre of Excellence programme, where proper scientific research on yoga began for the first time in the country. Small breakthroughs and mid-way results from the cardiology, neurology, pulmonology, and gynaecology departments have now been released and are getting verified by peer groups and international medical journals.

In addition, MoA is involved in establishing and implementing quality standards for Ayush products, ensuring their safety, efficacy, and standardisation. During the Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit held in 2022, the Prime Minister announced

the launching of Ayush mark to recognise Traditional Medicine products which will give the authenticity to quality Ayush products of the country. The Ministry is also working in collaboration with Bureau of Indian Standards to develop standards for Medical Value Travel. Ayush Vertical at BIS will enable Ayush to develop standards and make stronger presence in ISO that would help in penetration in global markets at over 165 countries through ISO standards route. A total of 17 Indian standards have been formulated so far for Herbal materials, *panchkarma* equipment and yoga accessories. A dedicated Working Group (WG 10 – Traditional Medicine) created in ISO under ISO/TC 215 – Health Informatics to formulate International Standards on Ayush Informatics. The quality standards of Ayush products and practices help maintain the scientific integrity of Ayush systems and provide assurance to people.

The Ministry of Ayush promotes the dissemination of research findings through peer-reviewed journals and publications. This encourages scientific discourse and enables researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to stay updated with the latest scientific evidence and developments in Ayush. The Ayush Research Portal has been set up for disseminating Evidence Based Research Data of Ayush Systems at Global Level. Overall, 39109 research studies in clinical, pre-clinical, drug research, and fundamental are available till date.

**AYUSH MEASURES FOR IMPROVING IMMUNITY**

**Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation** for at least 30 minutes as advised by the Ministry of Ayush National Clinical Management Protocol for COVID-19 prophylaxis.

**Steam Inhalation:** Use plain water OR fresh Pudina (Mint) leaves OR Aajwain (Caraway seeds) OR Karpur (Camphor) can be practiced once in a day in case of sore throat.

**Dry Cough or Throat Irritation:** Lavang (Clove) powder 1 gm/Mulethi (Licorice) powder 2 gm mixed with honey can be taken 2-3 times a day.

The above measures can be followed in consultation with an Ayurvedic practitioner.

**Disclaimer:** The above advisory does not claim to be treatment for COVID-19.

TAKE BOOSTER DOSE    WASH HANDS    WEAR A MASK    PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING

The Ministry focuses on capacity building by organising training programmes, workshops, and conferences for researchers, clinicians, and stakeholders in the Ayush sector. These initiatives aim to enhance research skills, promote research ethics, and foster a scientific mindset among Ayush professionals. Recently, the Ministry has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with ICMR under which capacity building has been included as a focus area.

The Ministry of Ayush works towards integrating Ayush systems with modern healthcare practices. This involves collaborating with mainstream

**80%**

of the world's population rely on traditional medicine for their wellbeing.

- 170 WHO member countries report the use of traditional medicine
- The industry of herbal medicines, beauty products and wellness centres is valued at trillions of dollars

Source : WHO





healthcare providers, conducting research on integrative approaches, and promoting interdisciplinary dialogue between Ayush and modern medicine practitioners. The National Health Policy (NHP) 2017 has strongly advocated mainstreaming the potential of Ayush within a pluralistic system of Integrative healthcare. It re-emphasises the need for integrating Ayush in the National Health Mission, research, and education. Many initiatives in line with this have been initiated and are being implemented under MoA. Successful models of Integrative medicine in National Health care delivery and tertiary health setups includes NPCDCS, NRHM, NIMHANS, Functional integration, and cross referrals in tertiary health care setups (Safdarjung hospital), Integration of Ayush Systems into the RCH, CIMR, AIIMS, NCI Jhajjar, etc. These efforts are not only contributing to the credibility and acceptance of Ayush practices but also facilitate the integration of Ayush into mainstream healthcare systems, offering a holistic and evidence-based approach to patient care and well-being. Ayush thus offers a sustainable and affordable solution, driven by innovative thinking and can support in bridging the gaps while catering to healthcare needs of India and the world.

The WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine, the first and only global out posted Centre (office) for traditional medicine across the globe is being established with the support of the Government of India in Jamnagar. By adopting a whole-system approach that encompasses research, public health,

and capacity building, the WHO-GCTM strives to strengthen the scientific foundation of traditional medicine. It seeks to integrate traditional medicine into mainstream healthcare, ensure evidence-based practices, and enhance the overall quality and accessibility of traditional medicine services. As part of WHO's overall traditional medicine strategy, it has a strategic focus on evidence and learning, data and analytics, sustainability and equity, and innovation and technology to optimise the contribution of traditional medicine to global health and sustainable development. This will provide leadership on global health matters pertaining to traditional medicine and help position Ayush systems across the globe. One of its key responsibilities will be to ensure the quality, safety, efficacy, accessibility, and rational use of traditional medicine. This will involve developing norms, standards, and guidelines in various technical areas, as well as tools and methodologies for data collection, analytics, and impact assessment. The centre envisions the establishment of a WHO Traditional Medicine Informatics center that brings together existing traditional medicine data banks, virtual libraries, academic institutions, and research institutes to facilitate collaboration. In addition, the Global Centre for Traditional Medicine will design specific capacity building and training programs related to its objectives. These programmes may be conducted on-campus, residually, online, or through partnerships with the WHO Academy and other strategic collaborators. The aim is to enhance knowledge and expertise in relevant areas and promote the integration of traditional medicine into healthcare systems. Overall, the establishment of the WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar represents a significant step towards advancing traditional medicine on a global scale. It underscores the importance of evidence-based approaches, collaboration, and capacity-building in promoting the quality, accessibility, and effective use of traditional medicine for the benefit of global health and sustainable development.

### Pragmatic model of Research in Ayush

Ayush, as a system of healthcare, recognises and focuses on the grey areas of research to address the challenges posed in healthcare. It seeks innovative solutions to overcome these challenges and enhance the overall well-being of individuals. Here are some examples of how Ayush approaches the grey areas of research and tackles healthcare challenges:



**1. Exploring Traditional Knowledge:** Ayush systems, deeply rooted in ancient wisdom, possess a wealth of traditional knowledge that can offer insights and potential solutions to existing healthcare challenges. Ayush research aims to explore and validate this traditional knowledge, tapping into the wisdom accumulated over centuries to find innovative approaches to health and well-being. The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) is a pioneering initiative of India to protect Indian traditional medicinal knowledge and prevent its misappropriation at International Patent Offices. Traditional Knowledge (TK) is a valuable yet vulnerable asset to indigenous and local communities who depend on TK for their livelihood.

**2. Integrating Modern Scientific Methods:** Ayush recognises the importance of integrating modern scientific methods and evidence-based practices into its research. By adopting rigorous scientific methodologies, including clinical trials, observational studies, and systematic reviews, Ayush endeavours to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and contemporary scientific standards. This integration allows for a comprehensive understanding of Ayush interventions and their potential benefits. Covid-19 has made a potent platform for a successful integration at different levels, including R&D and Public health

care. Proactive initiatives of Ministry of Ayush in collaboration with different disciplines through a mutual understanding and cooperation resulted in successful conduction of integrative research and large public health outcomes. The Ayush Ministry has set up an Interdisciplinary Ayush Research & Development Task Force in collaboration with national organisations of repute to formulate and develop strategies for management of Covid. Under the guidance of taskforce, overall 150 clinical, pre-clinical and epidemiological studies on Covid-19 Research have been undertaken by the Research Councils and National Institutes under the Ministry. It includes 46 prophylactics, 49 Interventional studies, 17 observational, 10 survey, and 24 pre-clinical/experimental studies, two monographs and two systematic reviews. 63 manuscripts have been published. A 'National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga for management of COVID-19,' was also released. Based on the empirical evidence, Ayush-64 was repurposed for Covid-19 and extensive studies, viz. in-silico, in-vitro, and clinical studies were conducted to evaluate its therapeutic potential. The tangible evidence generated through robust studies led to positioning of Ayush-64/Kabasura Kudineer as potential adjuncts to standard care in Covid-19 management. The pandemic further fueled the demand for herbal products around the world and witnessed an exponential rise in sale of herbal drugs. The market size of the Indian Ayush industry has seen a growth of 6 times in 7 years from 2014-2020. (Source: Ayush Sector in India: Prospects and Challenges, 2021).

**3. Addressing Unmet Healthcare Needs:** Ayush focuses on addressing unmet healthcare needs, particularly in areas where modern medicine may have limitations. By exploring the grey areas where existing healthcare approaches fall short; Ayush aims to provide innovative solutions and complementary therapies to fill these gaps. This can include managing chronic conditions, addressing lifestyle-related diseases, mental health and promoting preventive healthcare. For instance, CCRAS has undertaken various research initiatives to generate tangible evidence of Ayurveda and Yoga interventions in the area of mental health. Most of the clinical





studies have been undertaken in collaboration with NIMHANS Bengaluru. Further preclinical studies of Ayurveda interventions in mental health related disease conditions and survey studies have also been undertaken. Likewise, under the Centre of Excellence at CIMR, AIIMS, Yoga based R&D studies on disease including mental health is being carried out. Likewise, under the Centre of Excellence at CIMR, AIIMS, Yoga based R&D studies on disease including mental health is being carried out. The Clinical evaluation of *Brahmi Ghrita* and *Jyotishmati Taila* in the management of Cognitive Deficit; Ayush-SR Tablet in Occupational Stress among IT professionals, neuroprotective role of *Sarasvata Ghrita* in Alzheimer's disease; comprehensive Ayurvedic intervention in the management of *Manodwega* (Generalised Anxiety Disorder), etc., have been successfully done.

4. **Promoting Lifestyle Modifications:** Ayush emphasises the role of lifestyle modifications in maintaining and improving health. Research in Ayush explores innovative ways to promote healthy lifestyles, incorporating practices such as yoga, meditation, dietary guidelines, and natural remedies. By focusing on preventive healthcare and empowering individuals to take control of their well-being, Ayush contributes to overcoming healthcare challenges. The multiple studies at CIMR CoE project have so far revealed the potential benefits of simple,

cost-effective yoga in patients with heart failure, rhythm disorders, and those recovering from heart attacks. Patients suffering from depression, sleep disturbances, diabetes, blood pressure, and episodic migraine have reported improvement in frequency, intensity, and impact of their ailments, while prenatal yoga is helping pregnant women to stay calm to changes that take place in the body during pregnancy. The yoga programme includes slow and deep breathing exercises, relaxation techniques and yogic postures that influence the autoimmune nervous system, and improve the mindset and quality of life of patients.

#### 5. **Predictive, Preventive, and Personalised Medicine:**

Ayush's holistic approach to health and well-being enables it to address the multidimensional aspects of healthcare challenges. It recognises that health is influenced by various factors, including physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Ayush research explores the interconnectedness of these elements and seeks innovative solutions that consider the whole person, fostering a comprehensive and personalised approach to healthcare. Ayurgenomics, also known as Ayurveda genomics or genomic medicine in Ayurveda, is an emerging field that combines the principles of Ayurveda and genomics to personalise healthcare and understand the genetic basis of individual variations in response to treatments. The outcomes of Ayurgenomics research have the potential to revolutionise personalised medicine and improve health outcomes. High end researches are being done on Ayurgenomics through CSIR-IGIB CoE, the TRISUTRA (Translational Research and Innovative Science through Ayurgenomics). It involves *Prakriti* based grouping or phenotyping of people and use Ayurgenomics approach to discover molecular correlates of *Prakriti*. Ayurgenomics research contributes to the advancement of Ayurvedic research methodologies and tools. Ayurgenomics study conducted so far at CSIR-IGIB has not only provided a novel molecular framework for integration of these two disciplines, but also highlighted that this integrative approach can accelerate discovery of markers and

development of therapeutic interventions for predictive and personalised medicine.

### Ayush in achieving Universal Health Coverage and SDG Goals

Ayush system of healthcare forms an important part of the pluralistic foundation of healthcare in India on the principle of *Swasthyasya Swasthya Rakshanam*. Ayush healthcare system is complying with WHO's strategic objectives for achieving the 4As to Universal health Coverage- Accessibility, Affordability, Availability, and Acceptability. Also, the efforts of the Ministry of Ayush are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Ayush plays an important role in achieving Zero Hunger (SDG 2) through POSHAN (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) Abhiyaan under which the Ministry of Ayush is coordinating with the Ministry of WCD for management of malnutrition and anaemia in adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers, as well as children through the principles and practices of Ayurveda, Yoga, and other Ayush systems.

Ayush healthcare diligently works towards Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10) through National AYUSH Mission (NAM), integrated health programmes and AHCs, simultaneously targeting health inequity and out-of-pocket expenditure. With the utilisation of herbal medicines and resources of nature, Ayush has always supported SDG 11-Sustainable

cities and communities. Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17) is one SDG that is achieved through Ayush in India, by promoting partnerships between different healthcare systems and exchange of knowledge and expertise. This has helped to improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare services.

The integrative approach recognises the strengths of both traditional and modern systems, enabling a more holistic and patient-centered approach to health. The emerging concept of 'One World One Health' emphasises the need for collaboration and coordination among various sectors and stakeholders to address global health challenges. The Covid has also highlighted the need for 'One World One Health' approach, which recognises the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. Ayush systems are rooted in traditional knowledge and practices that have been passed down through generations. This knowledge encompasses a deep understanding of the relationship between humans, animals, and the environment. Ayush can contribute its expertise to the 'One World One Health' approach by sharing traditional practices that promote harmony and balance in health and ecosystems.

### Conclusion

The focal theme of initiatives like G20 presidency, WHO-GCTM, etc., is *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* meaning 'The World is One Family', a philosophy that emphasises the interdependence of all beings and the importance of cooperating to build a healthier and more equitable world. Ayush has always played an important part in the Indian and global healthcare system and for providing quality healthcare services to all, which is affordable and accessible. Supporting the same vision, Ayush's focus on the areas of research and innovative solutions reflects its commitment to addressing healthcare challenges and improving overall well-being. Ayush as a science of life promotes and protects the health of populations by adopting a holistic approach, personalised medicine, preventive measures, integration with modern medicine, scientific research-based practices, and preservation of traditional knowledge. By embracing these principles, Ayush contributes to a comprehensive and patient-centered approach to healthcare aiming to achieve the goal of 'Health for All'. □







# YOGA FOR GLOBAL WELL-BEING

**ISHWAR V BASAVARADDI**

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**India's presidency at the G20 provides a platform for the country to share its rich cultural heritage, including the practice of yoga, with the rest of the world. By promoting the practice of yoga, India can build bridges between different cultures and develop greater understanding and respect for diversity. This practice can help to promote physical and mental well-being, which is critical for individuals to thrive and contribute to society.**

**Moreover, yoga can also contribute to global well-being by promoting peace and harmony, environmental sustainability, social harmony, cultural awareness, and unity in diversity.**



Yoga has a history spanning numerous centuries, and it has been practised by millions of people worldwide. It involves more than just physical movements; it is a lifestyle that incorporates physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The practice has proven to be

a valuable tool for global well-being, and in this article, we will explore the benefits of yoga, how it contributes to global well-being, and how it can be practised.

Regular practice of yoga helps to reduce stress and anxiety. Stress and anxiety are persuasive

issues that affect a significant proportion of the population globally, leading to various health problems such as high blood pressure, depression, and heart disease. Studies have shown that yoga practice can help alleviate the levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which leads to a reduction in stress and anxiety levels.

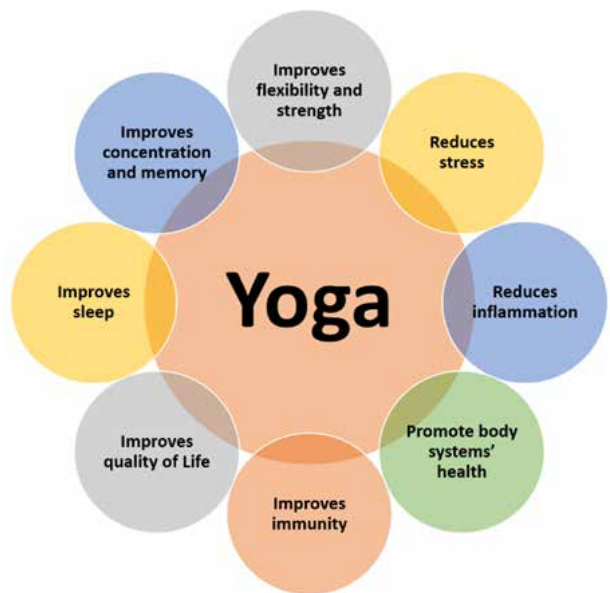
Yoga helps to improve the ability to focus by bringing clarity of thought. In the fast-moving modern world, it is easy to become distracted and overwhelmed by work, family, and lifestyle demands. Yoga improves concentration and focus by calming the mind and reducing distractions. This brings clarity of thought and focused attention, increased productivity, creativity, and overall well-being.

Yoga helps to improve physical health. It is an excellent mind-body practice that helps to improve flexibility, strength, endurance, and balance. It can also help to alleviate chronic pain, reduce inflammation, and improve respiratory functions. Regular yoga practice can also help to boost the immune system by improving overall health.

### Concepts and Principles of Yoga

Yoga, through the teachings of *Yama* and *Niyama*, encourages practitioners to cultivate a sense of inner peace and contentment, which can lead to more peaceful and harmonious relationships with others. The principles of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and *Santosha* (contentment) are vital in creating a harmonious society that values not just individual fulfilment but also the well-being of others. *Ahimsa* teaches us to avoid harming any living being, while *Santosha* reminds us to find contentment and happiness within ourselves rather than constantly seeking external validation. By integrating these values into our daily lives, we can foster a culture of empathy, compassion, and mutual care, ultimately contributing to the betterment of our society and the world.

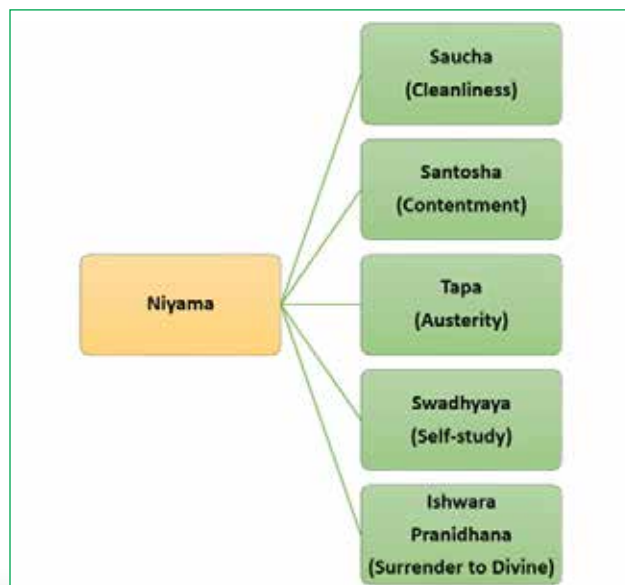
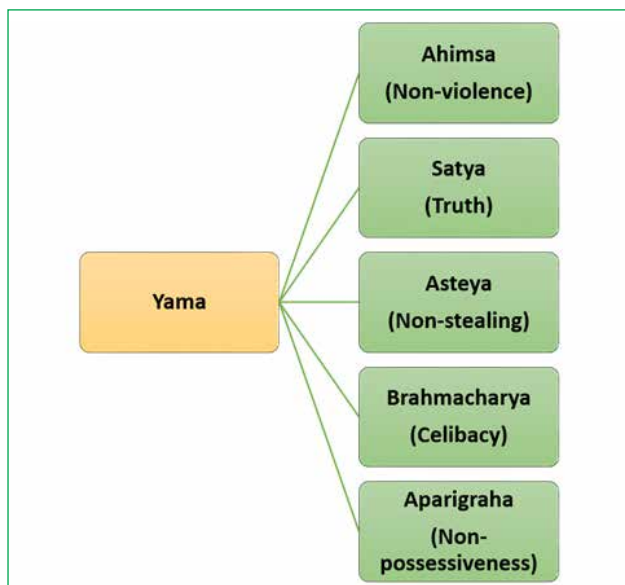
Yoga will also play a vital role in promoting environmental sustainability. By encouraging practitioners to connect with nature and live in harmony with the environment, it can inspire individuals to adopt more sustainable lifestyles that prioritise the well-being of the planet. Practising yoga can cultivate a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of all beings and the importance of preserving the natural world.



One of the fundamental principles of yoga is *Aparigraha*, or non-possessiveness, which teaches us to use what is necessary and to leave the rest for others. This concept can be applied to our consumption patterns and lifestyle choices, encouraging us to reduce our environmental impact and prioritise sustainability. By embracing the principles of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and *Santosha* (contentment), we can build a society that values the well-being of all beings, including the planet we call home.

Yoga teaches practitioners to be compassionate and to treat all beings with respect and kindness. This can lead to a more just and equitable world where all beings are treated with dignity and respect.





## Yogic practices for health and well-being

*Hatha* Yoga is one of the most popular forms of yoga that focuses more on the physical aspects of the practice. It consists of various practices such as *Shatkarmas*, *Yogasana*, *Pranayama*, *Mudras* & *Bandhas*, and *Dhyana*. Incorporating these practices into our daily routine can lead to numerous health benefits and improve our overall well-being.

- 1. Shatkarmas** – *Shatkarmas*, also known as purificatory practices, are essential in *Hatha* Yoga as they help to cleanse the body and prepare it for further practices. There are six primary *shatkarmas* with various subdivisions, but one can practice a few selected practices regularly. For instance, *Kunjla* or *Varisar Dhauti* helps to improve digestion and remove impurities from the upper digestive tract.

*Jal Neti* and *Sutra Neti* aid in removing toxins from the region above the shoulders and improve eyesight and nasal sinus cleansing. *Kapalbhati* cleanses the respiratory tract and stimulates the abdominal organs, enhancing overall health.

- 2. Yogasana**– *Yogasana*, or psycho-physical postures, are performed after the body is detoxified by various cleansing practices.

One of the fundamental principles of yoga is *Aparigraha*, or non-possessiveness, which teaches us to use what is necessary and to leave the rest for others.

Traditionally, it is believed that there are 84 lakhs different *yogasanas*, but the *Hatha* Yogic text explains 32 *yogasanas* that are essential. Their regular practice enhances strength, flexibility, endurance, the general fitness of the body, and overall well-being.

- 3. Pranayama** – *Pranayama*, or breath regulation, is one of the most important practices of yoga. Once the body is detoxified and stabilised through *shatkarma* and *yogasana* respectively, the role of *pranayama* comes into play. Traditionally, there are eight different types of *pranayama* called the *Ashta Kumbhaka*, which help in opening the subtle channels carrying vital energy throughout the body. *Nadi-Shodhana Pranayama*, *Shitali Pranayama*, and *Bhramari Pranayama* have numerous health

benefits, such as enhanced lung capacity, balancing the autonomic nervous system, and calming the mind. The objective of *pranayama* practice is concentration.

- 4. Mudra & Bandha** - These practices are used to control and channelise *prana* in the body. *Mudras* are body gestures, and *bandhas* are psychic locks that aid in maintaining the proper flow of *prana* in the body, leading to various health benefits.

- 5. Dhyana** – *Dhyana*, or meditation, is the most important





practice of yoga. *Dhyana* is a state of complete stillness of the mind, that helps in developing the inherent capabilities of the human mind. Various scientifically proven benefits of meditation include reduced stress, improved memory, and enhanced concentration.

These practices are effective not only in the development and maintenance of optimum physical health, but also in mental and emotional well-being. As we regularly engage in these practices, we begin to experience a greater sense of balance and harmony within ourselves. We become more aware of our body, breath, and mind, as well as their coordination which helps to learn and manage our emotions and thoughts more effectively.

These practices help us to cultivate a deeper connection with our inner selves and with the world around us. As we progress in our yoga practice, we begin to realise that we are not separate from nature and the universe, but rather an integral part of it. This realisation leads to a sense of oneness and interconnectedness, which is a powerful tool for personal growth and self-realisation.

In addition to the physical and mental benefits, the practice of yoga also has a positive impact on our social and environmental well-being. As we become more mindful and aware, we tend to make more conscious

and compassionate choices that benefit not only ourselves but also those around us. We also develop a deeper appreciation and respect for the natural world, which inspires us to take better care of our planet.

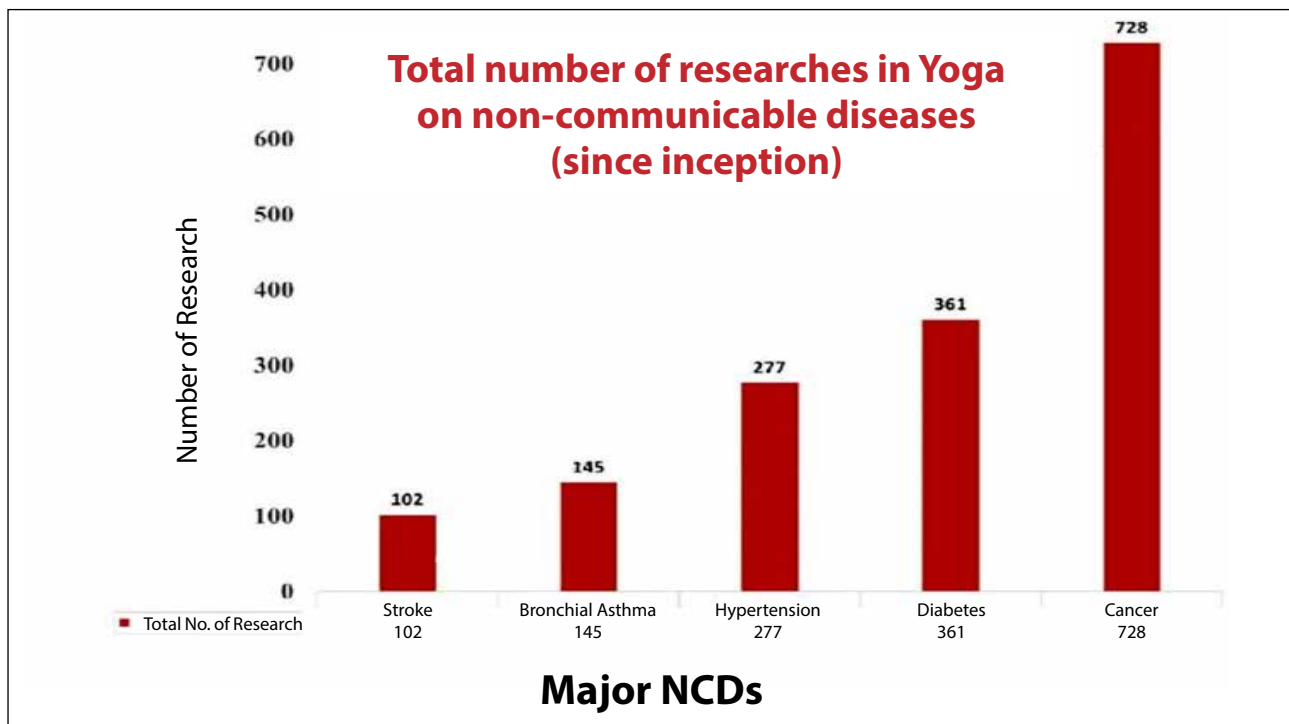
The practice of yoga has a transformative effect on our entire being, leading to enhanced overall health and well-being. By regularly engaging in these practices, we can lead a more fulfilling and purposeful life, and make a positive contribution to the world around us.

### Research in Yoga for Health and Well-being

Yoga's prominence in Indian and Western civilisation emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although a review of the PubMed search using the keyword 'Yoga' yields the earliest scientific studies dating to 1964, there has been an exponential increase in publications since the beginning of the 2000s. The yogic practices engaging the mind and body through meditation (*dhyana*), breathing practices (*pranayama*), and physical poses (*asana*) have attracted significant attention from the medical community, and yoga has been frequently used to study its efficacy and possible beneficial effects on physical and mental health.

Extensive research has been conducted to evaluate the efficacy of yoga on various

**The concept of Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam, has been a part of Indian philosophy for centuries and is closely linked to the practice of yoga. Yoga promotes the idea of oneness and unity, encouraging individuals to connect with their inner selves and with others in a spirit of compassion and understanding.**



diseases, especially non-communicable diseases such as stroke, cancer, hypertension, and diabetes, among others. Many studies have found that yoga can be an effective complementary therapy to conventional medical treatments for these conditions. Yoga has mainly gained attraction as a research area of interest due to its good effects and its potential as a therapy to combat age-related neurodegenerative diseases and lifestyle-related disorders. Yoga may be an alternative mode of physical activity that may help older adults achieve recommended levels of physical activity and individuals with disabilities or conditions that prevent them from performing more vigorous forms of exercise. The immense benefits of yoga are well established across the world through evidence-based research. According to a survey done in the US, yoga was perceived in several ways, such as an exercise activity, a spiritual activity, or a way to treat a health condition. In addition, as per a research review, yoga practices were found to be as effective as or better than exercise in improving several health conditions in healthy as well as diseased populations.

Yoga also helps to promote mindfulness and spirituality. Yoga is not only a physical mode of practice but also a spiritual practice. It

encourages practitioners to be present in the moment, to connect with their inner selves, and to nurture a sense of inner peace and contentment. This mindfulness and spirituality can lead to improved overall well-being and a more profound understanding of fulfilment in life. It also aims at promoting positive health, which helps us to tide over health challenges that occur during our lifetime. This concept of positive health is one of yoga's unique contributions to modern healthcare, as yoga has both a health promotion and preventive role in healthcare among the masses.

Yoga has gained widespread popularity globally, and many organisations are now incorporating yoga into their programmes to promote global well-being. The adoption of the International Day of Yoga by the United Nations helped yoga to reach the unreached and encourage more people to practice yoga worldwide. The International Day of Yoga (IDY) is a positive step towards global health. The United Nations has recognised Yoga as a valuable tool for promoting health and well-being, and to celebrate its benefits, the International Day of Yoga is observed annually on 21 June. Many schools, colleges, universities, and workplaces are now offering yoga classes, yoga workshops, and programmes to promote overall health and well-being.

## Yoga and Global Well-being

Maharishi Patanjali envisaged restraints and observances that have the potential to help people and nations to deal with global challenges and help the world to achieve the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals. Yoga can also help to promote cultural awareness and diversity; IDY celebrations go beyond the grand gatherings and into people's hearts and minds. It is an art and science of life that originated in India, but it has now spread all over the world. Its practice can promote cultural awareness and diversity, leading to a more tolerant and accepting world.

The concept of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam* has been a part of Indian philosophy for centuries and is closely linked to the practice of yoga. Yoga promotes the idea of oneness and unity, encouraging individuals to connect with their inner selves and with others in a spirit of compassion and understanding. This idea of global unity, irrespective of region, religion, culture, community, or similar bounds, is particularly relevant in today's world, where people from all corners of the globe face common challenges such as climate change, poverty, and inequality.

India's presidency at the G20 provides a platform for the country to share its rich cultural heritage, including the practice of yoga, with the rest of the world. By promoting the practice of yoga, India can build bridges between different cultures and develop greater understanding and respect for diversity. Moreover, the practice of Yoga can help to promote physical and mental well-being, which is critical for individuals to thrive and contribute to society.

## Conclusion

According to the available Yogic scriptures, the science of yoga helps to connect the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness and takes us a step closer towards attaining a disease-free body and a calm and peaceful mind. It is an art and science of life that brings an improvement in both physical and mental well-being by means of posture (*asana*), controlled breathing techniques (*pranayama*), relaxation (*yoga nidra*) and calms the mind through meditation (*dhyana*). Currently, the number of people adopting yoga among health-conscious people is increasing significantly. Mindfulness and self-control practices like yoga

encourage individuals to be aware, accept, and deal better with day-to-day emotions like stress, anxiety, and aggression-linked thoughts, which are prevalent symptoms of the current lifestyle.

Yoga is an excellent tool for global well-being. Its numerous benefits, including stress reduction, improved mental clarity and focus, physical health, mindfulness, and spirituality, make it a valuable practice for anyone seeking to improve their overall well-being. □

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# ROLE OF MEDITATIONAL APPROACHES IN MENTAL WELL-BEING

The foundation of our good health is the sustenance of a life force or our staying alive. When it leaves the human body, everything stops. The human body stops functioning. As long as life existed inside the body, even with illnesses, accidents, injuries, pains, and stresses, the human being survived. The yogis say the food for the soul is 'Grace' and 'Prana' from the 'Source'. That can be activated by a prayerful impulse from the heart, and a Spiritual Guide who can divert that Grace to our heart. Meditational approaches are known to thus create significant improvements in mental health and well-being, and emotional resilience.

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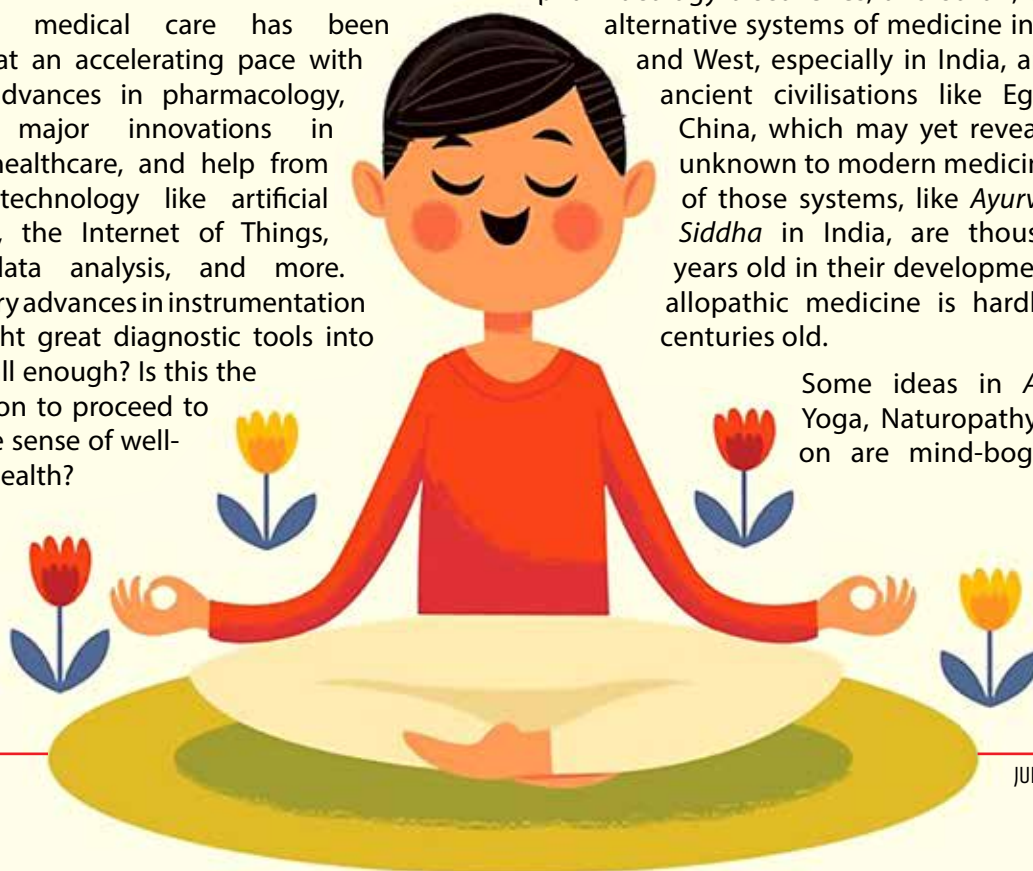
**T**he World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Hippocrates' Science of Medicine sets the goal of medicine as the complete removal of the distress of the sick.

Modern medical care has been advancing at an accelerating pace with so many advances in pharmacology, genomics, major innovations in medicine, healthcare, and help from electronic technology like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, robotics, data analysis, and more. Extraordinary advances in instrumentation have brought great diagnostic tools into use. Is this all enough? Is this the only direction to proceed to improve the sense of well-being and health?

## Ancient Medical Techniques

While there is no denying the great and unique benefits of modern medicine, like antibiotics, vaccination, physical hygiene with antiseptic chemicals, surgery with instrumental help, pharmacology discoveries, and so on, there are alternative systems of medicine in the East and West, especially in India, and other ancient civilisations like Egypt and China, which may yet reveal secrets unknown to modern medicine. Some of those systems, like *Ayurveda* and *Siddha* in India, are thousands of years old in their development, while allopathic medicine is hardly a few centuries old.

Some ideas in *Ayurveda*, Yoga, Naturopathy, and so on are mind-boggling to





# Surya Namaskar Benefits:

All round improvement in health.  
Increased energy levels.  
Glowing skin & hair.



the common man or even medical researchers. We learn from *Ayurvedic* doctors that the time of day when a herb or a plant medicine is procured from the tree, treated, and consumed has a remarkably powerful effect. *Tulsi* leaves, which are like nectar or medicine when plucked in the morning, can become poisonous if plucked at night, due to the effect of isomerism. Some plants used to treat cardiovascular diseases have the opposite effect if plucked at the wrong time of day.

## Healing and Holistic Well-being

Holistic well-being can be ensured only by therapies or processes that ensure the health of the whole being, comprising the body, mind, and soul. A human being has limbs outside and many organs inside, and all these must be synchronised in a healthy pattern of living. Further, inside a human being,

there are many layers of existence.

Healing is what restores health. Healing is not restricted to healing the body but includes the mind and emotions as well. This is reflected in a well-known Latin saying, *Mens sana in corpore sano*, a healthy mind is a healthy body. The scars on the skin, or flesh may be easier to remove than the scars on the emotional heart. These are caused by misunderstanding, selfishness, lack of love, and compassion. To correct them, right thinking, listening, feeling, and empathy is needed. The proper use of a purified heart is needed. For that, meditation and spirituality are needed.

**It is not only the healing of the individual but the healing of the whole of humanity, the whole planet is needed. In the early history of the planet, those with the strongest muscles were considered the healthiest and survived best. Later on, intellectual strength gave the best chance of survival. Today, and in the future, the person with the purest and strong heart will have the best health and will survive the best.**

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### Heart's Foundational Intelligence in Healing

Many of you may have read books like 'The Heart's Code' by Paul Pearsall and may know about the importance of the emotional heart, and the psychological heart, and how they influence even the health of the physical heart. A better use of the heart is to love better, to forgive more, and to be more generous and kinder, expand our consciousness, and this automatically results in improved health.

The foundation of our good health is the sustenance of a life force or our staying alive. The thing that makes us stay alive is called by different names in different cultures — *rooh*, soul, *atman*, etc. So when we talk about good health or well-being, the primary question we have to ask ourselves is, 'How to ensure the good health, growth, and well-being of the soul?' or 'How to keep that soul happy in a state of prayerful grace and feed it well with a life-giving force?'

### Enter the Koshas in Healing

At the physical level, we think of health as a healthy diet, exercising, a good lifestyle, etc. However, if one were to observe oneself at the energetic or vibratory level, we discover that there may be layers of existence inside the human body. We call

**The natural improvement in self-discipline as a consequence of adopting a meditative and prayerful lifestyle has many cascading benefits. One naturally reduces his digital addiction and escapes from excess radiation from electronic devices.**

these layers *koshas*, or sheaths, or coverings. The *Upanishads* describe the *koshas* as the five layers of awareness, starting with the physical body and moving deeper, inward, to the deepest layer of our soul or innermost self. The practice of yoga and meditation helps us experience these layers and brings us closer to understanding them in the real essence, thereby discovering our own true inner selves. The five *koshas* are as follows:

1. *Annamaya kosha* (food)- This outermost *kosha* takes care of the sustenance for the physical body.

2. *Pranamaya kosha* (energy)-

This *kosha* regulates the flow of prana, or life-force energy.

3. *Manomaya kosha* (mind)- *Manomaya* is the *kosha* that gives us awareness of our thoughts, and emotions.

4. *Vijnanamaya kosha* (intuition)- This *kosha* is connected to an intuitively-deeper level that gives access to spiritual wisdom.

5. *Anandamaya kosha* (bliss) - This is the deepest layer and the scriptures refer to this as the true inner self, that gives us joy and love.







between right and wrong, between good and bad, or between cause and effect. How to make our heart and mind conscious, and conscientious? Only by reflection and meditation. Only by centering ourselves, being settled on oneself. The Sanskrit word for health is *Swasthya*, and it means this 'settledness' in oneself. Such a person

Now, beyond the *koshas*, there is a foundation to our existence, and that is the soul or our life's force. When it exits the human being in an invisible manner, all mechanisms, all processes, and all factories in the body stop working. As long as that life existed inside the body, even with illnesses, accidents, injuries, and stresses, we survive. How to nurture that life or soul or deep inner Self to stay healthy and joyful? The yogis say the food for the soul is 'Grace' and *Prana* from the Source. That can be activated by a prayerful impulse from the heart, and a Spiritual Guide who can divert that Grace to our heart.

The Self or Soul is that which is eternal. It makes everything possible. Its well-being and nourishment are what make us perceive every experience of our life as a learning, as a joy, as a cheerfully accepting and cherishable moment. So do not take the philosophy of the *koshas* lightly. It stands as the basis of mental and emotional nurturing.

### Meditate for Internal Hygiene

Now, let's talk about something that regulates these *koshas*, opens up these layers to experience the soul or life force in a meaningful way. That's where we talk about mental hygiene. While external hygiene is of course important to prevent infection, internal hygiene is important to prevent mental illnesses. If the laws of ethics and morality are broken by wrong habits, inner hygiene is hijacked by our own weaknesses. Mental and emotional health is now destroyed. As a result, we cannot sleep well, we cannot enter *samadhi*, and we cannot have wisdom. We cannot discriminate

is not irritated or depressed due to fever or pain but is calm and therefore safe. It is like you are in the centre of a cyclonic storm yet safe; but in the periphery, you are pushed or pulled. Likewise, if you are centered in the core, you are less disturbed. If you are always conscious of your periphery, the body is thinking of illnesses and attracting illnesses. This is one way to look at it.

We do need antibiotics and surgery when we are critically sick. We do need vaccines if we lack natural immunity. Modern medicine is of course useful. But most of the minor problems have natural solutions. So many health problems are solved by natural adjustments in diet and exercise, healthy sleep patterns, in simple uses of *pranayama* and *yogasanas*. Most important of all these are simple meditation practices which result in a meditative attitude and a prayerful attitude that can handle any crisis; much better than an agitated or vacillating mind, or a selfish-cowardly heart.

### Vaccine for Mental and Emotional Health

We have vaccines for smallpox and chickenpox. What is the vaccine for the mind and emotional heart? Meditation. And a simple natural meditation like heartfulness, is practiced easily because it is aided by yogic transmission or *Pranahuti*. The Heartfulness-cleaning process enables us to reduce our daily levels of stress and tension. Most modern diseases are psychosomatic to a large degree. We call them lifestyle diseases, but they can become fatal. It is not merely high-blood pressure, diabetes, and allergy, it can be serious ulcers, cancer in various forms, and other

more serious diseases. Some are created in the womb of a stressed mother and have a hereditary effect.

The natural improvement in self-discipline as a consequence of adopting a meditative and prayerful lifestyle has many cascading benefits. One naturally reduces his digital addiction and escapes from excess radiation from electronic devices. One naturally forms healthy sleep patterns. One naturally develops a sense of faith in the higher Reality or higher Self or God, which guides us through a purified heart. By developing the skill of connecting oneself to the divine light in the heart before sleep, we get into a habit of reconnecting to the heart every time we change our activity. We start to act and live from the heart. Any blockade to this connectivity is removed by a spot-cleaning process, a skill which is improved by an evening-guided cleaning.

Heartfulness relaxation and Heartfulness polarity processes are used even by children who are too young to do long-term meditation. They find improvement in their educational performance and sports, and also refinement in creativity and joyfulness.

Significant research has been done on the effects of a Heartfulness lifestyle on serotonin and melatonin levels, telomere length, and other indicators of health. There may be many more indicators still waiting to be discovered. Modern instrumental research will surely significantly supplement the subjective research of millennia in human health.

Meditational approaches are known to thus create significant improvements in mental health and well-being and emotional resilience. We become more and more aware of our actions and even our life purpose. There is, of course, significant research and evidence in how it reduces anxiety, calms us, gives us peace, and even works on the very root of all problems. But let me tell you the secret that I have reserved for last. Meditation is not merely a means for good health. Meditation lets us experience an eternal good life in every moment of our existence. And this beautiful duet between meditational approaches and well-being is not merely about physical, mental, and emotional well-being, it lets us rendezvous with life in its most exuberant manner, in joy, health, and heart. □



# BASICS OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Every diet needs to be personalised to address food sensitivities. This not only ensures that you control your portions but also that you have the right amount of food from each food group. Research shows that those who plate all their food instead of going for second and third, eat 14 per cent less. Many behavioural issues occur due to deep-seated emotional problems and unresolved conflicts. Check your diet, exercise, thoughts, and habits like addiction, cravings, alcohol, eating disorders, etc., that conflict with your health goals. Do not succumb to social pressures. Learn the art of saying 'no'. Find desirable alternatives.

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**E**ating is one of the greatest joys of our lives. Applying science and research findings to eat in accordance is likely to be met with failure. Knowledge must appeal to our right brain as well, otherwise the information on diet will not get actioned. As a matter of fact, there is too much information—'an infodemic.' We are unable to follow these guidelines and dietary dictates. We get steeped in guilt and often feel like we are not good enough. Many of us begin the morning virtuously, but after 6 pm, it all falls apart. Constantly battling with our willpower

does not help. We need to eat for satisfaction, pleasure, health, and what is best for us. In other words, it must comfort us and appeal to our senses. In making the right selection of food, what matters is what you eat, how much you eat, when you eat, how you eat, and what you digest? Let's begin with establishing a healthy relationship with food. How does one get it right—what to eat and what not to eat?

## Understanding Food Groups and Choosing

A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, protein, good fats, fermented foods, fibre, and phytonutrients.





Limit grains, sugar, salt, and say no to trans fats. An easy tool to get you there is to follow the half plate rule.

### Half-plate Rule

Always pre-plate your food. Put all the food that you want to eat on your plate at once, so that you can see exactly what you are eating. This not only ensures that you control your portions but also that you have the right amount of food from each food group. Research shows that those who plate all their food instead of going for second and third, eat 14 per cent less. The traditional Indian thali or the Japanese bento box is a great representation of this.

Now, aim for the 'half-plate' rule. Half your plate should be full of vegetables. Divide the rest of it with foods from the other food groups and use grains or cereals as a side dish. Not a filler. Adequate amounts of protein should be included in the form of pulses, dals, nuts, low-fat dairy, eggs, lean meat, chicken, and fish.

If I had to summarise, I would simply say: use the half-plate rule, minimise sugars, reduce your current grain and cereal intake by half, and fill up on vegetables. Also include at least 2-3 servings of good protein through pulses, dairy products, meats, and good fats through nuts and seeds.

Every diet needs to be personalised to address food sensitivities. If you are intolerant to certain food groups, plan your diet accordingly. Commonly

seen issues today are wheat intolerance and dairy intolerance.

### How Much to Eat?

Portion control begins at the serving stage. Put less on the plate or put all that you want at one time rather than going for second. Looking at a full plate also increases fullness—quite literally! We also eat with our eyes! Tip: Follow the Japanese saying, 'hara hachi bu', the practice of eating until you feel 80 per cent full. It is believed to be the secret of the centenarian Japanese.

### What to Eat?

Eating better is about choosing foods that have a high nutrient density, from fruits and vegetables to whole grains and proteins. In fact, these need not be low-calorie—coconut, avocado, nuts, and their oils and seeds score high on the calorie scale—but what is important is that they are loaded with nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Many such foods also possess high satiation levels, so they can keep you from eating too much. Eggs, for example, are a food that's packed with nutrients but relatively low in calories. Basically, the approach should be to pick high-value foods (that are full of nutrients) and not really count calories.

Millets, quinoa, lentil flour, jackfruit flour, and unprocessed rice are healthy replacements to wheat & white rice.

### When to Eat?

Sleep early, giving your gut the time to break down the food you eat in the most efficient manner possible. This will not just provide a healthy amount of nutrition but a good gap between a meal and bedtime will help you sleep better. As mentioned before, the timing of meals is critical to good health. Eat between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm, according to the natural circadian rhythm of day and night. In other words, 'Eat during the working hours of your system!'

### How to Eat?

Eating slowly has a number of benefits. First, the digestive process actually starts in the mouth, so chewing slowly and chewing well improves digestion. Second, it gives the gut the time (about twenty minutes) it needs to register satiation levels. Hunger hormones get suppressed and the 'I'm full'

message gets released, which helps you stop eating before you overeat.<sup>1</sup>

## Principles of Eating

### 1. Keep up your motivation

When you are ready to give up on your diet, remember this—the difference between a successful person and an unsuccessful person is that the successful person never stops trying.

- Don't blame your genes. Even if your genes have a propensity for obesity and diabetes, you have no excuse for being overweight or obese. It just means that you have to work harder and walk a tighter rope than others. Making and sticking with lifestyle changes can help everyone.
- Stop making excuses and assume full responsibility for your weight.
- Make yourself feel important. Focus on yourself without feeling guilty. You are worth it!
- Nothing succeeds like success—reward success. Don't wait to reach your final goal. Get yourself a new dress or a health cookbook, or simply indulge in retail therapy.
- Develop negative associations with undesirable foods and being fat.

**Use the half-plate rule, minimise sugars, reduce your current grain and cereal intake by half, and fill up on vegetables. Also include at least 2-3 servings of good protein through pulses, dairy products, meats, and good fats through nuts and seeds.**

f. Develop a positive association with the kind of clothes that you would love to wear. Don't buy larger sizes; rather, try to get into your old clothes.

g. When faced with temptation, talk to yourself; think of all the hard work and effort that went into losing that weight, and ask yourself, "How will I feel tomorrow if I don't eat this food today?" Give yourself permission to eat if feelings of deprivation arise.

h. Divert your mind from food by being busy or away from home, talking to your friends, or going out.

- Do not succumb to fads or novel diets. Nutrition quackery is rampant, and this is largely an unregulated sector with plenty of self-styled experts.
- When seeking professional advice, carry out thorough research and background checks on the experts you are considering. Do not hesitate to ask questions; it's your right as a client.

### 2. Set Goals

- Set reasonable and realistic goals. Have short-term and long-term goals.
- Achieve your ideal Body Mass Index (BMI) and aim for a flat belly. Follow a healthy diet and exercise regularly to achieve an ideal BMI—that is, less than 23 kg per m<sup>2</sup>. The ideal waist circumference is less than 80 cm (approximately 31.5 inches) for women and less than 90 cm (approximately 35.5 inches) for men.
- Picture the effect weight loss will have on you, how different your life will be, and what you will be able to do differently.
- Think of a strategy that will help you attain that goal.
  - Make a diet plan for yourself and stick to it.
  - Exercise regularly for at least 60 minutes 6 days a week.
  - Keep up your motivation and resist the temptation to eat unhealthy foods.





- iv. Write your goals down and put them up where you can see them every day.
- e. Buy yourself a good digital weighing scale—better still, the kind that gives your body composition analysis as well.
- f. Weigh yourself as often as you wish. There are no rules anymore. Compare readings weekly.

### 3. Plan Your Eating Regimen

- a. Plan your meals and snacks in advance. Snack smart.
- b. Most social activities revolve around food, so plan your day accordingly.
- c. Start your day with breakfast if you are hungry, even if it is a light one. People who eat breakfast take in fewer calories throughout the remainder of the day. Choose a low-glycemic index breakfast. Studies have shown that people who eat small meals throughout the day are able to control their appetite well. If you're not hungry in the morning or are following intermittent fasting, modify your timing.
- d. Make sure your dinner time falls between 6.30 and 8 pm. If you find that it is getting late, keep your dinner light.
- e. Eat your favourite food once a week. But if you are intolerant to something, then make sure you keep it out.
- f. Keep indulgence to no more than one meal a week, and do not go overboard.

- g. Watch your weekend indulgences. Often, people who do very well through the week allow themselves to relax over the weekend, which leads to weight gain on Monday morning. Following the diet regimen during the week brings down the weight by the weekend, only for it to go up the following Monday. This keeps them from losing weight, much to their amazement.
- h. Make diet changes that can be maintained for life; quick fixes are counterproductive for healthy weight management.
- i. Travel smart.
- j. Follow your diet during the holidays.
- k. Create a timeline. You've started making those small changes already. What is your plan for the next week? What do you need to do to get from point A (your last weigh-in) to point B (your next weigh-in)?
- l. Don't let lapses become collapses—have a contingency plan. Parties, weddings, eating out, etc., will always happen. Plan ahead. If you know you're going somewhere where you may eat more, make the previous meal really light. If it's an unexpected outing, balance your meals out the next day.
- m. Track your progress. Make sure the results you are hoping to achieve are measurable—for example, 'I want to lose 1 kg in a week'. Focus more on short-term or weekly goals and measure your progress. Don't get overwhelmed by the 'big picture'—that you have to lose these many kilos in all.
- n. Reward yourself from time to time in a reasonable and smart way—not through a 'chocathon' on the weekend, for example.

### 4. Practise Mindful Eating

- a. Maintain a food diary.
- b. Increase your awareness.
- c. Learn the difference between psychological and physiological hunger.
- d. Pay attention to what you choose rather than what you forgo. Don't fool yourself by focusing on all the food that you did not eat and feeling sorry for yourself. You may still be overloading on calories, even if you didn't touch most of

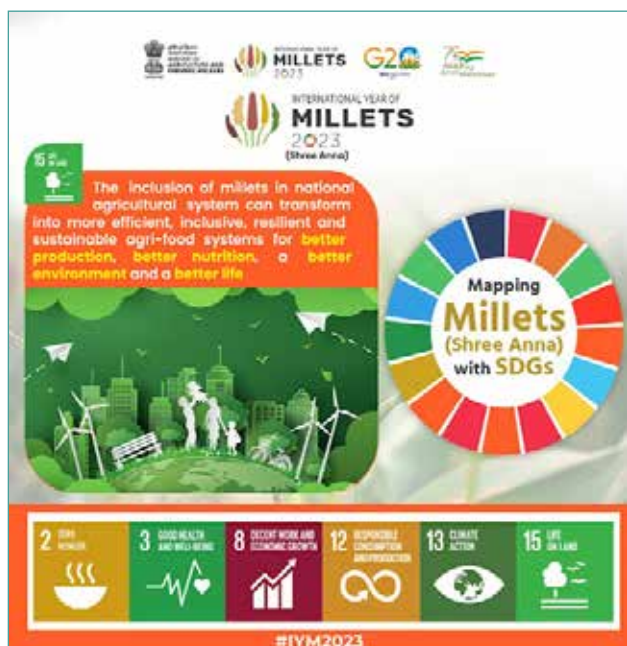


that buffet!

- e. Focus on your food. Enjoy how it looks and tastes, and notice how much you're eating.
- f. Eat slowly, chew thoroughly, and take smaller bites. What's the rush? Savour the food. You will enjoy it more and eat less.
- g. Pre-plate your food so that you can see exactly what you are eating. However, if you like to keep busy with food for longer, you may go for seconds and thirds as long as you keep the portions small.
- h. Postpone that second helping by 20 minutes—the time it usually takes for you to realise you don't need it. It takes that much time for the stomach to send the signal indicating that it is full to the brain.
- i. Seek professional help if needed. It makes you accountable.
- j. Practice portion control: 1. Use smaller plates and bowls. 2. Make smaller-sized *idlis*, cutlets, *tikkis*, chapattis, etc. We subconsciously treat numbers as a yardstick to judge how much we have eaten. For example, we tend to feel more satiated if we have 2 small chapattis than if we have 1 big or medium chapatti. Introducing millets as staples is a great way to add nutrition to your diet.
- k. Remember the principles of healthy eating—context, variety, balance, and moderation.
- l. Do not let food be too accessible, especially at work, if you are a compulsive eater. Seek professional help if needed.
- m. Identify your cravings and discuss them with your nutritionist.
- n. Do not compare yourself to others. Remember, you are unique.
- o. Pay attention to how you are feeling. Your mood can affect your food intake. People often eat when they are feeling tired, angry, upset, or bored. Find the proper activity to deal with the specific feeling—eating is not it! If you are tired, take a nap or go for a walk; if you are angry, talk to a friend or do something you love to do; if you are bored, make a phone call to someone you have not spoken with for a long time or make a list of all the things you have put off doing for some reason. Choose one thing from the list and start doing it. Learn to cope with emotional eating and boredom.
- p. Don't let family eating patterns disrupt your dietary discipline.
- q. Keep your home stocked with fruits and vegetables.
- r. Avoid eating while watching television or reading.
- s. Sip water between bites. It will slow you down.
- t. Eat small, frequent meals. Avoid eating large meals, particularly at night, as they promote weight gain.
- u. Do not starve yourself.
- v. Don't fall for the 'don't waste' dictum. Do not scavenge for leftovers. To deal with your perceived need to 'clean your plate', remember that excess food goes either to waste or to the waist.

## 5. Be Food-Wise

- a. Train your palate. Eating healthy and increasing your intake of raw vegetables and vegetable juices substantially can help you train your palate. You will realise that you have lost the taste for unhealthy food.
- b. Try out different cuisines.
- c. Make losing weight enjoyable. Eat something that you like once a day, ideally at your peak





hunger time.

- d. Avoid grains and cereals at the beginning of the meal; if you don't, chances are you will end up eating a large quantity. Start with soup, salad, and vegetables, and shift the grains and cereals to the end of the meal. This will help you limit their intake and stay within your grain or cereal allowance.
- e. Choose healthy sweets. If possible, replace sweets with fruits.
- f. Ensure adequate protein intake.
- g. Eat fresh fruits and fresh or steamed vegetables for satiety. Ensure adequate fibre intake.
- h. Increase fluid and water intake throughout the day; thirst should not be mistaken for hunger.
- i. Choose healthy, low-calorie beverages.
- j. Late-night fixes may include dark chocolate, hot chocolate (preferably without sugar), roasted gram, seeds, nuts, or some fruits. Never load up late at night.
- k. Increase the levels of phytochemicals through fruits and vegetables, as diets rich in these favour weight loss.
- l. Keep a check on alcohol and smoking. If you are trying to quit, avoid the company of those who drink or smoke too much.
- m. Cook interesting food or cuisines. Invest in cookbooks. Use different ingredients and

sauces, as you are expected to change the way you eat on a long-term basis. You must look forward to your meals.

- n. Make interesting low-fat dips and fruit salads. Try out new soups. Present your food attractively.
- o. Keep a healthy kitchen. Switch to healthier cookware and methods of cooking. Use pans, pressure cookers, slow cookers, steamers, oil sprays, and good oils. If you have a cook, ration out the oil on a daily or weekly basis.

## 6. Don't Live Against the Clock

- a. Stick to a regular schedule.
- b. Eat 2–3 hours before you go to bed.
- c. Most social activities revolve around food, so plan your day accordingly.
- d. Get good sleep. Avoid large meals before sleeping, as they can disrupt sleep, cause discomfort and heartburn. If eating late at night, take a short walk after your meal.

## 7. Shop Smart

- a. Plan your shopping in advance.
- b. Develop the habit of reading labels as you walk down the aisle of a supermarket. Do not buy foods only on the basis of claims such as 'fat-free', 'sugar-free', or 'cholesterol-free'. Buy and stock appropriate snacks like nuts, seeds, fresh fruits, vegetables, and roasted foods. Avoid storing unhealthy foods.
- c. Read food labels carefully and compare various products on the shelf on the basis of their nutritive value. Pay special attention to the calories, sugar, and fat content of foods.
- d. Look for hidden fats and sugars on the label, and choose foods that are without trans fats and low in sugar and saturated fats.
- e. Go organic whenever possible; choose organically or locally grown foods.
- f. A smart shopping list is important; include healthy choices and a variety of nutritious foods.

## 8. Exercise

- a. Engage in regular physical activity for at least 45 minutes, ideally 60 minutes, on most days of the week.

- b. Hydrate yourself well pre- and post-gym or exercise; drink enough fluids or water. Salted lemon water and coconut water are good options.
- c. If you are doing light weights, ensure you have a combination of protein- and carbohydrate-rich snacks like milkshakes, smoothies, fruits, eggs, milk, or a cheese, chicken, or egg sandwich as soon as you finish.
- d. Ensure your diet includes an adequate combination of proteins and carbohydrates for recovery.
- e. People tend to feel hungry right after exercising. When managing post-exercise hunger pangs, timing is critical—the sooner you eat after exercising, the better. Eating within the first 10 minutes after exercising is better than half an hour, and half an hour is much better than 3 hours.

## 9. Manage Stress

- a. Five to ten minutes (during any time of the day) of regular meditation can help you gain control, and clarity of thought.
- b. Deep-breathing exercises can be done anywhere—in the car, for example; and can help you relax and calm your nerves.
- c. Prayer, biofeedback, neurofeedback, hypnotherapy, and the pursuit of your hobbies are useful stress-management techniques.

## 10. Have Regular Health Checkups

These should include a thorough physical examination, blood pressure measurement, and assessment of blood glucose level, fasting lipid profile, body composition, diet, exercise habits, and stress levels. Others include ultrasounds and mammography. If all is well, such checkups should be done at least once every 2 years. If any abnormality is found, frequent follow-ups are desirable.

## 11. Check Medication

- a. Continue taking your supplements under the supervision of a qualified practitioner.
- b. Losing weight and adopting a healthy lifestyle may require cutting back on medication. Check with your doctor.

## 12. Don't Be Tech-Shy

Log on to authentic, reliable websites and online weight-management portals like [theweightmonitor.com](http://theweightmonitor.com), etc., to help you through your journey, but be careful not to fall into the fad-diet trap. They can help you track your food intake and progress with just a click. Remember, they are only a support and should not become self-treating tools.

## 13. Your Mind Counts Too

There is a lot of 'mind' in 'food'. Many behavioural issues occur due to deep-seated emotional problems and unresolved conflicts. Check your diet, exercise, thoughts, and habits like addiction, cravings, alcohol, eating disorders, etc., that conflict with your health goals. Work to correct these and seek professional help if necessary.

## 14. Be the Change

- a. Good eating habits are infectious. You should take the lead and be an example for your family and friends.
- b. Involve your family and friends—seek their support when possible. Insensitivity on the part of family members can cause patients to topple over.
- c. Do not succumb to social pressures. Learn the art of saying 'no'. Find desirable alternatives.

## 15. Remember

It is the journey, not the destination. There is no miracle or permanent diet solution for weight management. The benefits will last as long as you follow healthy habits.

If, however, you have tried everything and it is not helping, you need to take a deeper dive into your gut health. You may be suffering on account of a food sensitivity. This warrants a food intolerance test and consultation with a qualified expert.

The only permanent, sustainable approach is to make eating healthy a way of life.<sup>2</sup> Here's to a superb journey. Bon voyage! □

## Endnotes

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# **DIRECT BENEFIT TRANSFER IN INDIA**

## **A GLOBAL ROLE MODEL**

**Launched about a decade ago as a transformative programme in public service delivery using modern Information and Communication Technology, the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) has expanded to over 300 Central schemes and more than 2000 State schemes by April 2023. The DBT has been a force multiplier in facilitating the transfer of social safety net payments directly from the Government to beneficiaries' bank accounts, helping reduce leakages, curb corruption, and provide a tool to effectively reach households to increase coverage.**

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**T**he Indian political system has come to be associated with deeply grown democratic roots. The roots of democracy can be traced in India as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century. These roots finally bloomed into a robust institutional democracy in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the Constitution of India providing the legal framework. It expressly

provided for India to be a welfare state with rights for all and entitlements for the weak. The two instruments through which this was ensured are the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy. The Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) paradigm marks a quantum leap in terms of the accomplishment of the stated vision of these instruments. The right to a dignified



several price subsidies that governments offer, rich households benefit more from the subsidies than do poor households (say, in the case of electricity, water, or fuel subsidies), and distortions are created in the market that ultimately hurt the poor the most (say, in the case of minimum support prices or railway passenger subsidies). Further, on account of their leakages not only are direct wastages created, but opportunity costs of how the government could have otherwise deployed those resources also pile up. It held that the benefit that price subsidies seek to create for the poor can be directly transferred to the poor through lump-sum income transfers, avoiding the distortions that subsidies induce. Against this backdrop, the goal of converting subsidies into DBT mediated through the Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile Number (JAM) trinity was set into motion.

### What is DBT?

The DBT was originally envisaged as a scheme, where the welfare benefits provided by the Government are directly credited to the bank or postal account of the accurately identified beneficiary. It took off about a decade ago in 43 districts in 24 Central schemes. Till date, the DBT in India not only entails cash support to eligible

living guaranteed under the Fundamental Rights (Article 21) is actualised through provisions made under the Directive Principles of State Policy, whereby the State pursues its positive obligation to secure conditions of a dignified existence of individuals. Accordingly, the DBT gives more teeth to Article 21 by efficiently and efficaciously implementing schemes to address issues like inequalities in income, opportunities and resources, strengthening the health, and securing right to work and public assistance to those in need – all elements of the Directive Principles of State Policy. Delivering welfare benefits efficiently – the archetype of DBT – is an essential cornerstone of modern-day good governance in India.

### Economics of DBT

The Economic Survey 2015-16 observed that growth needs to be complemented with active government support to improve the economic lives of the poor and vulnerable, and achieve equity. Moreover, it showed that in

**The DBT is not a social assistance programme in itself; instead, it is a mechanism to consolidate and control the data on direct benefit transfers from multiple sources.**

**Over time, DBT in India has been recognised to bring all-round inclusivity and efficiency by experts from various fields.**

beneficiaries but also in-kind transfers to them, covering over 300 Central and more than 2000 State schemes. Widely known examples of cash support include farmer income support programmes like the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM KISAN), pensions for the old aged, *Divyangjan*, widows, etc., under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), scholarships for the deprived and other sections needing support; and instances of in-kind support like fertiliser subsidy, food grains support (Public Distribution System), mid-day meals for school children [Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN)], etc. Whereas the first set of support entails transfer of assistance in the respective

bank accounts of the beneficiaries, the second bucket of schemes involves provision of in-kind goods and services to intended beneficiaries. The common theme is the use of electronic-ID Aadhaar for identifying and authenticating the intended beneficiaries. At the time of enrolling beneficiaries, the Aadhaar is captured; it is then authenticated vis-à-vis the details stored in the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)'s Central Identities Data Repository (CIDR) – the frequency being determined by the scheme implementing agency (e.g., PM KISAN entails Aadhaar authentication only at the enrolment whereas in PDS the beneficiary needs to authenticate her Aadhaar each time to access the quota of grains).

### Progress of DBT in India

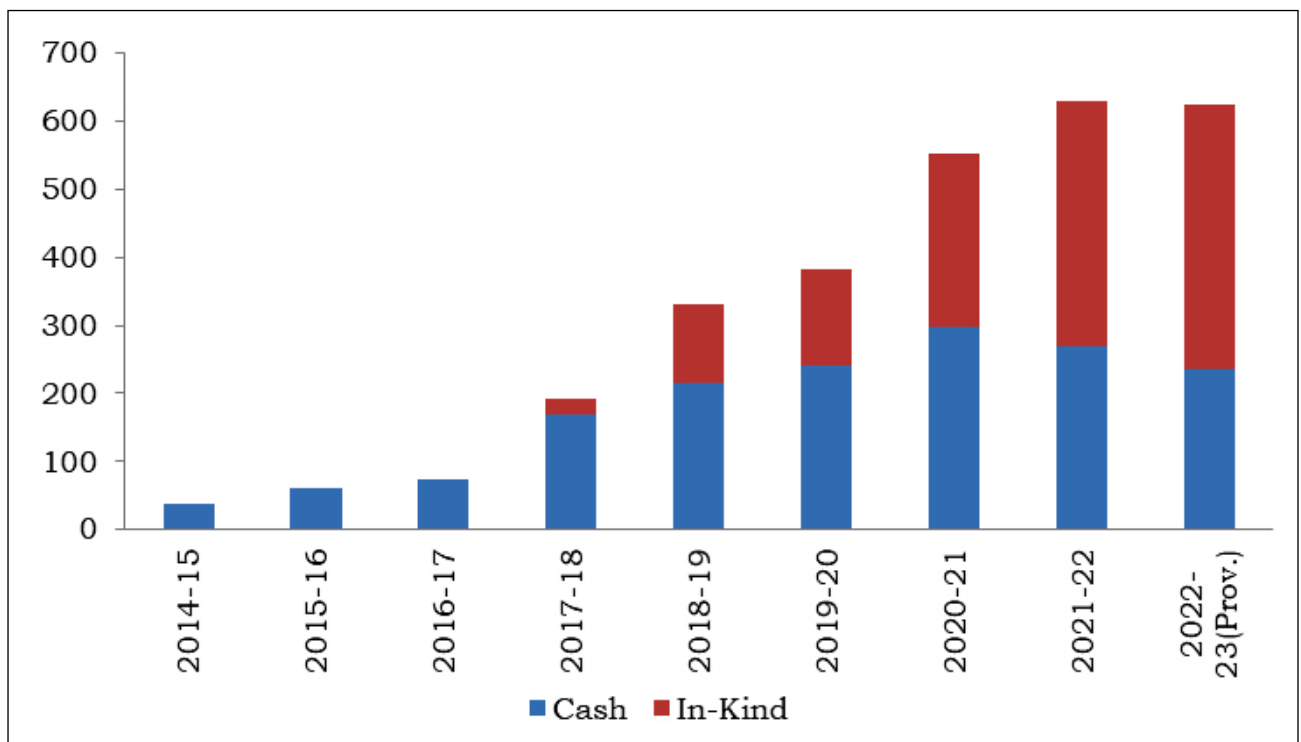
The Figure 1 captures the tremendous growth in DBT transfers at the level of Central government in the past decade. Over time, DBT in India has been recognised to bring all-round inclusivity and efficiency by experts from various fields. The World Bank (2022) also recognised the need for countries to back the DBT-styled public interventions into action plans for disaster resilience. The positive impact of DBT in India on the economic and

social position of women within and beyond their households.

### DBT and India Stack

India Stack is the moniker for a set of open APIs and digital public goods that aim to unlock the economic primitives of identity, data, and payments at population scale. The DBT is not a social assistance programme in itself; instead, it is a mechanism to consolidate and control the data on direct benefit transfers from multiple sources. For cash schemes, the DBT relies on bank accounts number or Aadhaar-linked accounts to directly transfer the social benefits to the beneficiaries. Accordingly, the use of Aadhaar doubles up not only as a unique identifier but also as a financial address [under the Aadhaar Payments Bridge (APB); the Aadhaar number is mapped against a unique savings bank account and transfers to such accounts can be done using the Aadhaar number as the address; further, under the Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS), biometric credentials can be used by an individual to carry out banking transactions in Aadhaar-linked bank accounts]. In summary, DBT leverages two elements of India Stack – identity

**Figure 1: Total fund transfer in Central schemes (in Rupees thousand crore)**



Source: Data as supplied by Ministries to DBT Mission, Cabinet Secretariat





## World praises India's DBT

India's Direct Benefit Transfer has been a force multiplier in facilitating the transfer of social safety net payments directly from the government to beneficiaries' bank accounts, helping reduce leakages, curb corruption, and provide a tool to effectively reach households to increase coverage. The IMF has hailed DBT for being 'a logistical marvel how these programmes that seek to help people who are at low-income levels reach literally hundreds of millions of people', with the World Bank also lauding the scale at which DBT impacts people's lives – 'Helped by digital cash transfers, India managed to provide food or cash support to a remarkable 85% of rural households and 69% of urban households'. At the same time, DBT and accompanying governance reforms have been estimated to save the Government of India cumulatively a sum of Rs 2.23 lakh crore up till March 2021 or close to 1.1% of GDP (Alonso et al., *ibid.*). This figure has subsequently gone up to Rs 2.73 lakh crore as of March 2022, as per the data available at [www.dbtbharat.gov.in/estimatedgain](http://www.dbtbharat.gov.in/estimatedgain)

## Future Scope of DBT

For a country with deep civilisational moorings and a policy approach for that seeks to be epoch making, the DBT is only a small step in a miles-long journey. Wheels are already in motion for realising the next big-bang reforms titled DBT 2.0 and DBT 3.0.

- The DBT 2.0 focuses on an online eligibility verification mechanism using Aadhaar. Briefly, the Schemes often require applicants to submit eligibility documents or certificates issued by different government agencies and departments. Subsequently, the scheme-implementing agency has to spend time and incur expenditure for verifying authenticity of such documents. The digitisation and Aadhaar seeding of such documents ensure citizen-friendly, real-time, and cost-effective verification or authentication. The DigiLocker and API Setu offer convenient digital platforms to issue and access eligibility certificates in electronic and machine-readable format. In his address on the occasion of the Civil Services Day on 21 April 2023, the Prime Minister alluded to this approach. The policy

and payments – building on and contributing to online, paperless, cashless, and privacy-respecting access to a variety of public and private services.

## DBT in the G20 Agenda

The ongoing Indian Presidency of the G20 is envisaged to be as inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive. It has also been stressed that since 'India is a microcosm of the world', the initiatives that we take for 'leveraging technology for citizen welfare' will ...catalyse a fundamental mindset shift, to benefit humanity as a whole. (PMO *ibid.*) The DBT is a shining instance of Indian innovation that fits seamlessly into this farsighted vision. India is endeavouring to use the G20 platforms for introducing the home-grown DPI-based DBT paragon to the world, particularly the Global South (PTI 2023). DBT also fits into the bigger picture of India's co-chairship of Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, a forum where India seeks to promote 'the development of an open, inclusive and responsible digital financial ecosystem based on the presence of a sound and effective digital public infrastructure (DPI) for the advancement of financial inclusion', a vision reiterated in FMCBG (2023). For its impact on promoting transparency, DBT was also showcased in the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group Meeting.

framework has been laid down; the technical platforms have been readied, and many States and Ministries/ Departments of the Central government have already been onboarded on the platforms. Others are being pursued to hop on the reform bus.

- The DBT 3.0 seeks to usher in a transformative shift in the scheme of benefit delivery to citizens. As things stand, citizens have to discover the Government schemes for which they would be eligible and apply to the concerned scheme implementing agency for availing the benefits. However, by pooling in data residing in various government databases, the State can suo motu reach out to eligible citizens and start delivering the envisaged benefits to them by obtaining their consent and willingness thereof. Several States have put in place such 'Social Registries' of varying levels of maturity and richness of data fields – such as *Kutumba* in Karnataka, *Parivaar Pehchaan Patra* in Haryana, *Samagra* in Madhya Pradesh, *Jan Aadhaar* in Rajasthan, Social Protection Delivery Platform (SPDP) in Odisha. The need now is to establish a national-level social registry that builds on the states' best practices and places governance in India on a peerless pedestal.

## Conclusion

For the far-reaching contemporary impacts of, and the possibility of futuristic reforms in India's DBT paradigm, it is one of India's most remarkable contributions to the discourse in ongoing G20 discussions. It clearly has the potential to promote harmony within our 'One Family' and engender hope for our 'One Future'. □

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# NON-POSSESSION

## THE GANDHIAN THOUGHT

**A happy working of the human machine depends upon the harmonious activity of the various component parts. Gandhiji's sustainable and minimalist lifestyle was based on self-discipline. Possession implies provision for the future. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment.**

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**W**hen Gandhiji was in the Yerawada Central Prison in 1930, his *Ashramites* were missing his daily discourses after the prayer. On their request, he wrote weekly letters to the Satyagraha Ashram. They contained a cursory examination of the principal Ashram observances, popularly known as the Eleven Vows. They encapsulate Gandhian thought and philosophy. They are: Truth, Ahimsa-Non-Violence, Brahmacharya-Chastity, Control of the Palate, Non-Stealing, Non-Possession, Fearlessness, Removal of Untouchability, Bread Labour, Tolerance-Equality of Religions, and Swadeshi.

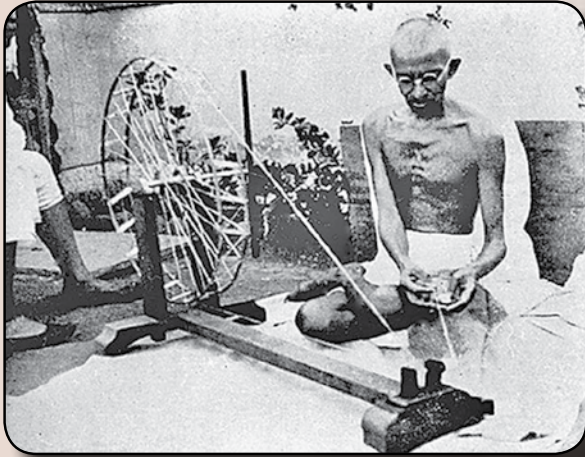
According to Gandhiji, "A vow means unflinching determination, it helps us against temptation. Determination is worth nothing if it bends before discomfort." Just as non-violence can be observed only by a strong person, not by a coward, vows are also a sign of strength, not weakness. Gandhiji lived by these vows. As a matter of fact, he arrived at each one by experimenting on himself. That is why his autobiography is known as 'My Experiments with Truth'. His life is a journey from truth to truth.

Gandhiji belonged to a well-to-do family in Porbandar, Gujarat province. He went to England in 1888 and obtained the degree of barrister. He enrolled himself in the British Bar but, on the very next day, sailed for India. On his return, he went to Bombay, applied for enrolment in the High Court as a barrister, tried to practise but did not succeed.

He lacked self-confidence. On the advice of an elderly relative, he decided to go to South Africa to translate Gujarati legal documents into English and the English ones into Gujarati for one Sheth Abdulla. Mohandas noticed that Sheth Abdulla was fighting the case against his own cousin, and both of them had spent a lot of money and time on this long-drawn case. Mohandas managed to settle the matter out-of-court. Dialogue and negotiation were his ways of establishing peace. During his stay, he was disturbed to notice discriminatory treatment by the English towards local Indians. He himself had faced a lot of humiliation. The turning point in his life was an incident at the Pietermaritzburg railway station, where he was thrown out of the First-Class compartment in spite of having a valid ticket for the First Class. The reason was, he was not a white man! This humiliation hurt him. He spent the night in severe cold, debating in his mind whether he should continue with the journey or return to India.

That was the night of Mohandas's metamorphosis. His sense of responsibility prevailed, he underwent a couple of more humiliating incidents, but mustered courage. Over a period of time, he was able to bring local Indians together, and on 22 August 1894 founded Natal Indian Congress to fight against colour prejudice. In 1901, he returned to India. While leaving, he assured to return to South Africa if his services were needed.





**Non-Possession  
is a principle  
applicable to  
thoughts as well.  
Why should a  
man fill his brain  
with useless  
knowledge?  
Habit of  
acquiring what  
is not needed  
becomes a  
burden on  
the mind and  
also in the  
environment.**





They called him back. He returned in November 1902. In October 1904, he took the responsibility of the *Indian Opinion*, a weekly newspaper. It was initially published in English, Gujarati, Hindi, and Tamil. The paper and the press were moved to Phoenix and in 1904 the Phoenix Settlement was founded. This was the beginning of community living.

In the *Indian Opinion*, Mohandas wrote a few articles under the heading *Guide to Health*. They were written in Gujarati and were based on his concern for those around him. This was around 1906. These articles were later published in a book form. He mentioned in these articles that all human activity is carried on by means of the mind aided by the ten senses. These are five senses of action and five of perception. A happy working of the human machine depends upon the harmonious activity of the various component parts. His question therefore was, "What is the use of human body?" Everything in the world can be used and abused. This is an eternal truth. Body should be treated as the temple of God.

Gandhiji was an ever-ready nurse and doctor. He did tell his parents that he should have been sent to England to become a doctor and not a barrister. The answer that he got was that to become a doctor, he would have to dissect animals and even human beings! Family values were against it. His passion to take care of the sick was through nature-cure and diet. He also believed that man's mental and spiritual well-being cannot be ignored. In Gandhiji's lifestyle, interconnectedness of the body, mind, and spirit were well maintained. Here comes the observance of eleven vows in daily life. During one of his speeches on vegetarianism in England, he said that "A man was not born a carnivorous

animal, but born to live on the fruits and herbs that the earth grows. He had limited his own diet to five articles only. A person's food intake should be according to one's physical work. One person's over eating not only spoils his/her digestive system but also deprives those who need that food."

The control of the palate is one of the eleven vows. The body is injured every time one overeats. In common kitchen, only such food is cooked that keeps the body a fit instrument for service. The observance of non-stealing is not limited to stealing someone's thing. It goes even farther. "It is theft for me to eat any fruit that I do not need, or to take it in a larger quantity than is necessary. We are not always aware of our real needs, and most of us multiply our wants, and thus unconsciously make thieves of ourselves."

I came across an interesting incident narrated by Vijayaben Pancholi when she was in Sevagram. It was mango season during the summer. Young Vijaya used to squeeze out juice from two local mangoes in a small bowl for Gandhiji every day. One day, it so happened that the bowl did not fill up so Vijaya took one more mango and poured the juice into a bigger bowl. While serving that bowl to Bapu, Vijaya did tell him softly that the bowl was a little bigger and she went to the kitchen. Bapu was busy talking to his friend Hermann Kallenbach. He did not hear what Vijaya had said. After finishing his meal, he picked up the bowl and found it bigger. He called Vijaya and asked her why was the bowl bigger. Vijaya explained. Bapu had taken a vow that no food would be left in his plate. There should be no wastage and no overeating either. He said that his stomach was not a garbage bin. That extra food not required by the body would not get digested.





Gandhiji's sustainable and minimalist lifestyle was based on self-discipline. Once a gentleman who had just obtained his MA LLB degree went to Gandhiji's Ashram and told him he would be happy to help in ashram affairs. Gandhiji was cleaning wheat. He said, "Please come. Join in cleaning this wheat." That gentleman was in his lawyer's dress, collar, tie, pant, etc. It was difficult for him to sit on the floor. However, he sat and cleaned wheat for half an hour. He sweated a lot. He took Gandhiji's leave and left. During his address, after the evening prayer, Gandhiji narrated that incident and said that he does not blame that gentleman. New education does not teach the importance of using hands for daily work.

In the year 1928, Gandhiji formulated certain rules for the ashram. They were:

1. All ashramites should attend the morning prayer at 4 am.
2. All should eat at the community kitchen.
3. Should spin 160 threads on a daily basis.
4. No servant or labour should be hired for house-work.
5. All adult men should engage themselves in night vigilance.
6. All young and adults should take turn in cleaning toilets.
7. Each person living in the ashram should do the work for the ashram at least for 8 hours daily.
8. One should maintain daily diary and note all the work done during the day.

This was significant training for all living in the ashram. Gandhiji himself was always present during the cleaning of kitchen and cutting vegetables.



He started maintaining a daily diary from that day onwards. His rules for himself and others were never different.

Non-Possession was allied to Non-Stealing. Possession implies provision for the future. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment.

Once at the river bank, Gandhiji filled up his *lota* - a small metal pot, with water. His close associate standing nearby asked him, "Bapu, why only this much?" Gandhiji replied, "This river does not belong to me alone." While using things, they can be food, clothes, water, furniture, etc., one should use only what is required. That leads to simplification of one's life. Non-Possession is a principle applicable to thoughts as well. Why should a man fill his brain with useless knowledge? Habit of acquiring what is not needed becomes a burden on the mind and also in the environment.

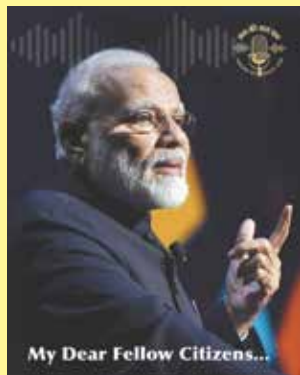
The Eleven Vows of Gandhiji, as mentioned in the beginning of this article, are the best formula for living a simple and happy life. You live and let others also live. □

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## Stories of health and well-being from the book 'My Dear Fellow Citizens...'



Over the course of last 100 episodes of Mann ki Baat programme, the Prime Minister has consistently shared captivating stories of over 700 change makers from across the nation. He has encouraged the citizens to work for a better future by highlighting the resilience and determination of ordinary people and power of small actions taken by them. The Vice-President of India released a special Book 'My Dear Fellow Citizens...'; brought out by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The book presents glimpses of over 100 inspiring stories, mentioned by the Prime Minister in the radio programme. This book also highlights some stories of commendable efforts made towards health and well-being of the citizens, which have been constantly inspiring and motivating people around the globe. Some of the notable ones are:

### MALLAKHAMB FEDERATION

Chinmay Patankar, the founder and volunteer of Mallakhamb Federation, USA (MFU), is a dedicated individual who has been working tirelessly to promote and teach Mallakhamb in the United States of America. His vision is to establish at least one training center for Mallakhamb in every state of the USA. Chinmay established MFU in 2013 and despite facing rejections initially, MFU has achieved numerous milestones. It is the first national-level federation of Mallakhamb outside India. MFU has also received recognition from the State of New Jersey Senate and has been promoting Mallakhamb at prominent places such as the United Nations and the Times Square. The Prime Minister's acknowledgment gave Chinmay's efforts a tremendous boost. Creating a positive impact, the Federation has gained more recognition and collaboration from the Indian diaspora.



### MALAVATH POORNA



Malavath Poorna is an inspiration to many, not just in India but around the world. Hailing from a poor family in Nizamabad of Telangana, she is the youngest mountaineer to scale Mt. Everest at the age of 13 years and 11 months in 2014. Since 2014, she has completed the seven summit challenge by climbing the seven most difficult and highest mountain peaks in the world. Being appreciated by the Prime Minister for bolstering the image of India at an international level has been a boost for her indomitable courage. She is now working on her new project 'Shakti' aimed at raising funds for underprivileged girls for their education.



## MANAV MANDIR

Manav Mandir, located in Kothon village of Solan district in Himachal Pradesh, is a voluntary organisation working towards generating awareness and providing relief and rehabilitation to the patients with muscular dystrophy. Established in 2017, the 50-bed facility, with efficient wheelchair accessibility, provides physiotherapy, electrotherapy and hydrotherapy treatments. The most encouraging fact about this centre is that it is primarily managed by the people suffering from this disease. Through all kinds of hi-tech facilities, the centre is constantly striving to bring positive change in the lives of the patients. By taking initiatives like 'Picnic with Purpose', 'Rehab Campus' and many more, the centre encourages its patients to engage in fun experiences and activities while building a stronger community that helps each other and heals together. Being recognised at a national platform has brought the much-needed awareness about the disease.



## PROJECT SAMPOORNA

Project Sampoorna, a noble community-driven initiative, started in the Bongaigaon district of Assam in 2020 with the aim of tackling the issue of malnutrition among the children in the region. The project was inspired by the idea of providing a comprehensive approach to child's health and development which includes not just primary education, but also health, vaccination, weight and nutrition. Under this initiative, a 'buddy mother', i.e., the mother of a healthy infant is paired with the mother of a malnourished child, where the former guides and provides support to the latter. Within three months, malnourishment has been eradicated in more than 90 per cent of the children from this region, garnering the attention of the Prime Minister. The district was also selected for the Prime Minister Award for Excellence in Public Administration in 2021 for the initiative. Since then, the project has been studied and considered a model for eliminating malnutrition and is being replicated in other districts as well.





## PATAYAT SAHU

Patayat Sahu is a name that resonates with the people of Nandol village in Kalahandi district, Odisha. Aged 66, he inherited his passion for collecting rare medicinal herbs and preserving them from his grandfather. For the last 40-years, he has been practising Ayurveda and has formed Ayurveda Associations across the tribal-dominated Kalahandi district. Along with other practitioners, he is creating awareness among local tribals about saving the forests, which are like lifelines for several blocks in the district. His work received national recognition when his name was mentioned in Prime Minister's 'Mann ki Baat', leading to increased popularity and recognition for his work. Today, even college students are seeking his guidance to learn about rare herbs and their medicinal qualities. Sahu's Ayurveda Associations are making strides towards preserving and promoting the rare herbs found in the hill ranges of Niyamgiri.



## RAMLOTAN KUSHWAHA

Ramlotan Kushwaha from Madhya Pradesh has built a museum of indigenous plants on his farm, where he has collected over 225 rare medicinal plants and seeds, grown organically on one-and-a-half acres of land. His efforts have not only helped to preserve these valuable resources but also provide a source of income and knowledge for others. People from different parts of the country visit his garden to learn about the properties and uses of the rare herbs. His work was brought to national limelight when the Prime Minister praised his efforts and urged people to learn from his example, stating that it could open new sources of income and bring health benefits. His dedication to biodiversity conservation and preserving indigenous plants has inspired others to value and protect these resources.





## ANVI ZANZARUKIA

Anvi Zanzarukia, a 13-year-old girl from Surat, has made a name for herself in Yogasana through her hard work despite her challenges. Anvi, a child with Down Syndrome, started doing Yoga in 2018. Yoga has helped her in leading a life like a regular child and she, along with her parents and Yoga teacher, is running a campaign, 'Do Yoga, Stay Healthy'. Her accomplishments and dedication towards Yoga was praised by the Prime Minister, which has helped her story reach millions of people. So far, she has performed Yoga in front of around 2.5 lakh people and more than 70 per cent of them have pledged to adopt Yoga. Her achievements are giving other divyangjans a ray of hope that they too can lead a normal life by adopting Yoga.

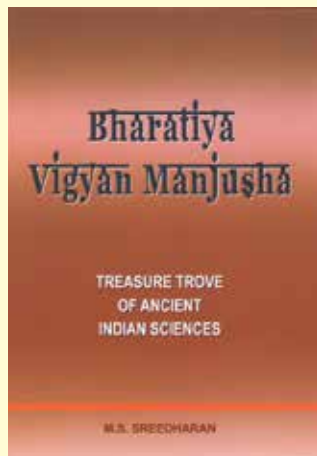


## OUR BOOKS

### **BHARATIYA VIGYAN MANJUSHA - TREASURE TROVE OF ANCIENT INDIAN SCIENCES**

**Author: MS Sreedharan**

**Language: English, Price: Rs 530**



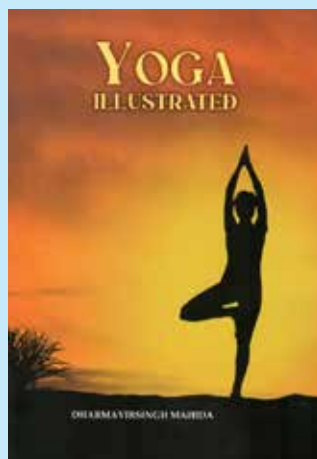
Science is a passion for facts and a constant and systematic search for truth. The people of ancient India made immense contributions in the fields of philosophy, religion, sciences, and technology. This is the reason why India is considered as one of the hotbeds of human civilisation that has made immense contribution to enrich the intellectual heritage of humankind.

The book, Bharatiya Vigyan Manjusha, was compiled after a good deal of research and enquiry. This is an encyclopaedia of basic information about various branches of ancient Indian scientific knowledge, rather an annotated index of extant information. Its Malayalam edition was published in 1987 in three volumes and the English edition was first published in 2005 by Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. This work is a glowing tribute to the erudite scholarship of the author, who is not amidst us anymore. It is a great guide and a source of inspiration for the readers, especially the youth of India.

### **YOGA ILLUSTRATED**

**Author: Dharmavirsingh Mahida**

**Language: English, Price: Rs 460**



This illustrated book by renowned Yoga expert, Dharmavirsingh Mahida, beautifully encapsulates the eight limbs of Yoga- Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi with a special focus on Yogasanas. This book was first published in 1995 in Hindi. Owing to its popularity and to stress the promotion of Yoga, the Publications Division has redesigned and reprinted the same. In this book, the author, who has been teaching Yoga and its manifestations for decades, has presented these Asanas in such a way that a person who is less fit but keen on learning Asanas does not feel discouraged by their complexity. Instead, this book develops a motivation to try and begin from the simplest Asanas gradually shifting to the more difficult ones. In his innovative methodology, Mahida suggests the use of various household items like chairs, blankets, beds, etc. and walls as props so as to make the body perfectly healthy, resistant to fatigue and strain and bring about spiritual strength and willpower.

To understand the interconnection and interdependence of mind and body, this illustrated manual gives guidance and inspiration to utilise Yogic exercises as both preventive and curative ways towards overall well-being. The author attempts to bring about every step and nuance of Asanas with more than 600 illustrations. One of the highlights of the book are the weekly plans that suggest the type of asana for each day of the week and its practice duration.

Visit [publicationsdivision.nic.in](http://publicationsdivision.nic.in) for a huge collection of books on health and nutrition along with other books in various genres.



## DELIBERATIONS ON HOLISTIC HEALTH IN G20

India's G20 Presidency has identified three priorities in the Health Track, namely Health emergencies prevention and preparedness; Strengthening cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector, and Digital health innovation & solutions. Nations have appreciated and commended the Indian Presidency for setting up the three health priorities. It was underscored that the pandemic has given an opportunity to strengthen our health systems and the need today is to accelerate our efforts to ensure universal health coverage. Various sessions and deliberations are being held under the G20 Health Track.

In the First G20 Health Track meeting, it was discussed how pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response require diverse multi-sectoral, multi-agency coordinate efforts and a need for strengthening and empowering communities to become resilient to the future health emergencies. It also highlighted the need to diversify capabilities to safeguard the people and systems in the face of any health crisis. It also underscored the importance of building resilient health systems and investing in life-saving vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.

Highlighting India's strong culture of medical

practices and innovation, it was noted that the Prime Minister of India's clarion call for 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' is pro-planet approach, one that is in harmony with nature for an increasingly globalised world.

Key interventions and detailed deliberations delved into promotive and preventative measures of traditional health services and its power in healing. It was unanimously agreed that the combination of modern medicine with traditional healing methods is exponentially powerful in not just treating the disease but holistically healing the body. The delegates pointed out that integrated health care is the need of the hour and poised to become robust, high-value and high-growth segment of the health care sector. They were of the view that it offers a medium to achieve universal health coverage by way of enable equitable access to value-based healthcare services across the globe. The panelists showed interest to collectively forge and harness knowledge and assets to take the momentum on medical travel tourism forward in this presidency.

The Second Health Working Group meeting under G20 India Presidency saw important brainstorming on citizen-centric health delivery





ecosystem for universal health coverage leveraging digital health and innovation. It emphasised on an integrative holistic healthcare model of service delivery through comprehensive IT backbone for Traditional Medicine through 'Ayush Grid' and by ensuring the benchmarking of AI in Traditional Medicine with the guidance and support of the UN bodies.

It saw eminent health experts pushing for a lifecycle-care framework where open-source software can enable data innovations. Suggestions such as a central organisation/coalition in the world to guide national governments, along with regional implementation hubs, paradigm shift towards Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) and AGI-enabled Digital public goods were put forward. Stakeholders also echoed concerted efforts to demystify technology and build trust among citizens through data privacy legislations and other checks, with interventions shared by G20 member states and invitee countries, showcasing their best practices and ongoing efforts towards utilising digital health in their health governance.

The deliberations explored various thought-provoking aspects of technological tools and how they can be used in better patient-care delivery. It was discussed that highly interoperable systems are needed, and for national digital transformation, nations must focus on a person-centered digital journey. Suggestions such as cooperation among tech innovators, Governments, NGOs, and health organisations, combined with strong political will and a coordinated and inclusive framework to guide investments, were discussed. Best practices from India, such as the National NCD portal for tracking Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and eSanjeevani teleconsultation services, were also showcased.

A session on 'Digital Public Goods (DPGs) to bridge the Digital Divide' highlighted the critical element of democratising digital public goods. The

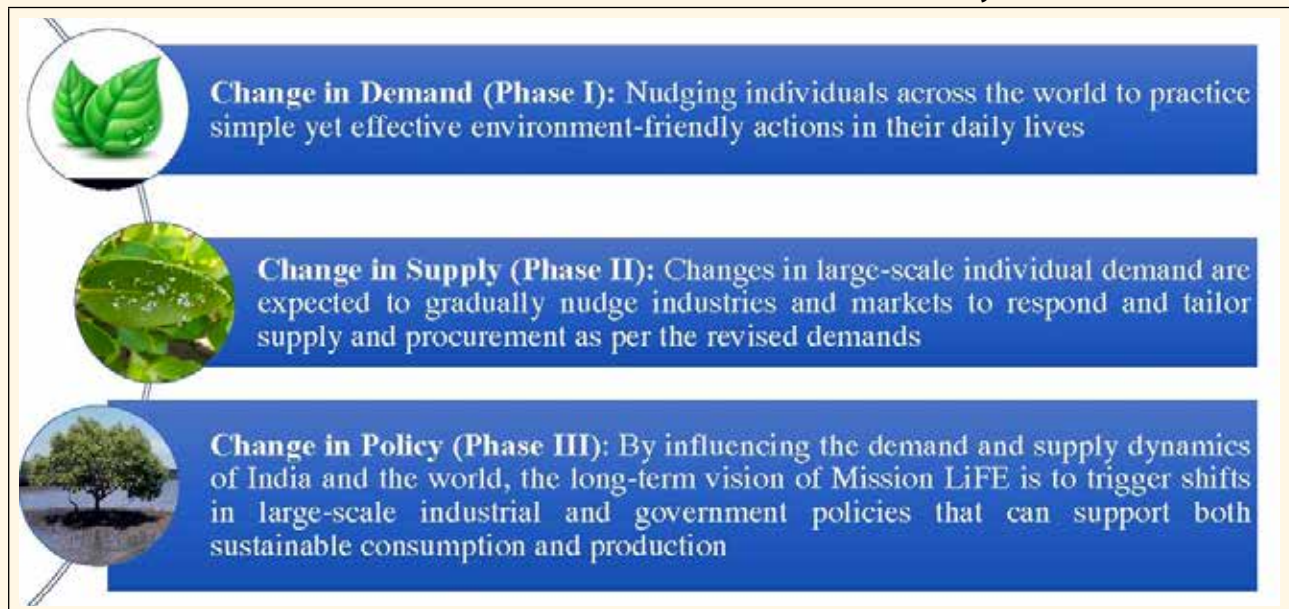


speakers concurred that investments in DPGs can reap multifold benefits, and in addition to DPGs, it was suggested that expert knowledge facilitated by digital interventions must be democratised as well. It was noted that governance and policy help scale DPGs nationally and internationally, while technology helps scale DPGs at the local and regional levels. Thus, robust health data governance can remove bottlenecks to the development of a global digital health ecosystem. It was also noted that the care is universal, and making user-intuitive platforms according to local needs must remain a priority. Several other important suggestions, such as collective action to promote the Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH), strengthening organisational capacities across the globe, and developing lightweight standards for Public Health Centers for better and faster adoption at grassroots levels, were discussed in the session.

The Health Track of G20 India Presidency comprise four Health Working Group (HWG) Meetings, one Health Ministerial Meeting (HMM), and four side events along with HWG meetings to enrich, supplement, and support G20 discussions. □

Source: PIB

### Mission LiFE: Three core shifts towards sustainability



LiFE builds upon India's environment-friendly culture and traditional practices.

- Adaptive architectural forms that minimise electricity consumption and hand-washing and sun-drying of clothes, as well as preference for plant-based foods can serve as foundations for LiFE.
- Many unique water harvesting techniques, contextual to local conditions, are practised across India. These include the step wells of Gujarat and Rajasthan, the underground tanks (tankaa) of Tamil Nadu, the check dams (johads) of Rajasthan and the Zabo system of Nagaland that deposit the water in pond-like structures on terraced hillsides.
- Clayware is commonly used for cooking and serving purposes. Several public food establishments continue to serve food in plant-based biodegradable utensils (sal tree leaves) and tea in clay pots (kulhad).



### Impact of Mission LiFE

When estimated against a business-as-usual scenario by one billion Indians in 2022-23 to 2027-28, the impact of LiFE actions can be significant, as demonstrated below with select examples:

