

Depression and its possible support with Yoga in Daily Life exercises

Tibor Kokeny

Depression is a prevalent mental health condition affecting millions of people worldwide. It is characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in activities, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating. While depression can be debilitating, there are various treatment approaches available, and one promising avenue is the integration of yoga exercises as a supportive measure.

Yoga in Daily Life System by Vishwaguru Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranandaji combines physical postures, controlled breathing, and meditation techniques to promote holistic well-being. When used as a complement to traditional therapies or as a standalone practice, yoga exercises have shown significant potential in alleviating depression symptoms and improving mental health.

Several aspects of yoga contribute to its effectiveness in supporting those with depression. Firstly, physical postures or asanas enhance flexibility and release tension stored in the body. This helps reduce physical discomfort and allows individuals to experience a sense of relaxation, easing the burden of depression. Additionally, engaging in yoga increases the production of endorphins and other neurotransmitters, fostering feelings of joy and contentment. These findings have been summarised in Nanthakumar's 2020 summary article.

Breathing exercises, known as pranayama, play a pivotal role in regulating the autonomic nervous system. Slow, deep breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous

system, which counteracts the "fight-or-flight" response, reducing stress and anxiety associated with depression. Nitric oxide (NO) is released in the nasal pathway. During inhalation through the nose nitric oxide follows the airstream to the lungs. As Abman states in the Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology NO (nitric oxide) increases arterial oxygen tension and reduces vascular resistance in the lungs. Slow yogic breathing has a remarkable impact on the production of NO (nitric oxide), facilitating the creation of new red blood cells. By enhancing blood flow and oxygen delivery, NO promotes the release of erythropoietin, a hormone that stimulates red blood cell production, optimizing cardiovascular health and overall vitality. In this way nitric oxide helps increase energy levels, a key problem in depression.

Yoga Nidra, a form of guided meditation and deep relaxation, holds immense potential in influencing depression positively. By reducing stress, promoting better sleep, and fostering self-awareness, it empowers individuals to manage their emotions, alleviate depressive symptoms, and enhance overall mental well-being.

Meditation is another crucial aspect of yoga that supports mental health. By practicing mindfulness and focusing on the present moment, individuals can break free from negative thought patterns, cultivating self-awareness and emotional resilience. Through meditation, individuals learn to accept their thoughts and feelings without judgment, which is vital in coping with depression. Through Self-Inquiry Meditation we can gradually learn to detach ourselves from our ingrained coping patterns and personality misconceptions while in a state of contemplation. The Yoga in Daily Life System's Self-Inquiry Meditation technique has helped many people to get rid of depression and burnout. A publicly known case is the burnout treatment of Hungarian national handball player Noémi Háfra, which quickly helped her return to competitive sports.

In conclusion, depression is a complex mental health condition that demands multifaceted support. While conventional treatments like therapy and sometimes medication remain fundamental, incorporating Yoga in Daily Life exercises can be a

valuable complementary approach. Yoga's physical postures, breathing exercises, yoga nidra, meditation, and sense of community contribute to reducing stress, enhancing self-awareness, and fostering emotional well-being. By embracing this practice, individuals battling depression may find a path towards healing and reclaiming a sense of balance and joy in their lives.

References

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Burnout treatment for Noémi Háfra:

<https://magyarnemzet.hu/sport/2022/03/hafra-noemi-a-kieges-hataran-alltam-es-panikbetegsegem-volt>

