The First International Day of Yoga

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, 177 countries co-sponsored the resolution for the International Day of Yoga. Never before has any resolution in the UN gotten this kind of support.

The science of yoga is more significant today than ever before. For the first time, we have the necessary capability to address every issue on the planet - of nourishment, health, education, you name it. We have tremendous tools of science and technology at our disposal - powerful enough to make or break the world several times over. However, if the ability to wield such powerful instruments is not accompanied by a deep sense of inner inclusiveness, balance and maturity, we could be on the brink of a global disaster. Our relentless pursuit of external wellbeing is already on the verge of annihilating the planet.

Our idea of wellbeing has to turn inward. Human wellbeing will not happen unless one turns inward because human experience is created from within. If a certain percentage of the human population turns inward, definitely the quality of life on the planet will change. Particularly if this shift happens to a segment of the world leadership, there will be a dramatic change in the functioning of the world. Inward is not a direction. It is a dimension. International Day of Yoga could mark the beginning of a profound dimensional shift for humanity.

"The only way to experience true wellbeing is to turn inward. This is what yoga means - not up, not out, but in. The only way out is in."
Sadhguru

Isha Yoga supports human well being,
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Namaskar

Yoga for All

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Above all, Balance

The word "yoga" means union. Union of all polarities -- of masculine and feminine, Yin and Yang, individual and universal, Shiva Shakti, right brain and left brain, or whatever else you may want to call it. To achieve this blessed union, the simplest of them all is the Yoga of Namaskar. Putting two hands together in alignment with each other, at the level of your heart will bring you to a certain harmony between the polarities within, that in turn brings a sense of being united with everything, whatever it may be.

Namaskar is aimed at. In placing your hands together, the dualities of your likes and dislikes, your cravings and aversions are leveled out and there is a certain oneness to the experience of who you are.

So for a few minutes every day, put your hands together in Namaskar and look upon something or something that means much to you. May be the sun, the moon, the clouds, the empty sky, a tree, a rock, your husband, your wife, your child, your mother, father or a picture that matters to you -- anything for that matter.

Myths about Yoga

Yoga is part of the Hindu religion

Because yoga evolved and was developed in the civilization which grew on the banks of the river Indus -- people have started identifying yoga as Hindu. The word "Hindu" comes from a geographical location. The people who lived in a land hemmed by the Himalayas in the north and the Indian ocean or the India Sagara in the south were called Hindu. Anything born in this region is Hindu. An earthworm born here is Hindu, as an elephant born in Africa is African.

If yoga is Hindu, then gravity is Christian. Whatever culture or religious background a certain scientist came from, you do not identify that aspect of science with that religion. Similarly, yoga need not be and should not be identified with any religion or culture.

Yoga is not a religion. It is not a belief system or a philosophy, but a technology for inner evolution, to hasten our evolution to its ultimate possibility. Yoga was engendered as a science, well before any religion was even thought up.

Yoga is an exercise involving impossible postures

Today, the word "yoga" conjures images of body-bending contortions. For most people on the planet, yoga means asanas. Of the 500 Yoga Sutras, Patanjali dedicates only one sutra to asanas. But somehow, in modern times, this one sutra has gained significance over everything else. Of all the different things that the science of yoga explores, today's world has chosen to represent yoga with only the physical aspect.

In many ways, it is a clear manifestation of where the world is going. The whole journey of the modern world is just this, from deeper dimensions -- from the spirit -- to body. That is exactly what we want to reverse. We want human beings to start their journey with the body but move towards their inner nature. Yoga is not a practice, an exercise or a technique. The science of yoga is a profound science of human interiority that enables one to be in perfect alignment and absolute harmony with existence.

Yoga is something you do in the morning or evening

Yoga is not something that you do morning - evening. Yoga is not about doing anything in particular, it is not about any practice or action. It is a certain way to be within yourself. One must become yoga. The word "yoga" literally means union. It also refers to that which allows you to reach your higher nature. The yogic system involves various practices including asanas, pranayams and meditations that can lead one to a state of yoga. There is nothing which is excluded from the yogic process. You are walking on the street, make it into your yoga. You are working in the office, make it into your yoga. You breathe, let that be your yoga. If being with your family is a process of your evolution, your family is your yoga. Every aspect of life can be used to enlarge yourself or liberate you. If it is a process of liberation for you, if it takes you into a higher dimension, then we call it yoga.
Over 15,000 years ago, in the upper regions of the Himalayas, a yogi appeared. Nobody knew where he came from or what his origins were, so they called him the Adiyogi, which means the “first yogi.” People gathered in huge numbers because his presence was quite extraordinary, but he sat unmoving for months on end, completely oblivious to everyone around. The only sign of life were the tears of ecstasy dripping out of his eyes. After some time, those who came to see him out of mere curiosity left and finally, only seven hardcore people stuck on. They pleaded with him, “Oh great yogi, we want to know what you know.” Seeing their perseverance, he said, “I will give you a preparatory step. Do this for some time, after that we’ll see.”

These seven men prepared and prepared. Days rolled into weeks, months and years, but Adiyogi ignored them. After 60 years of celibacy, one day when the sun shifted from its northern run to its southern run, the summer solstice, Adiyogi happened to look at them, saw they had become truly shining human beings, perfect receptacles for his knowledge. He could not ignore them anymore. He observed them for the next 28 days, and then he decided to teach.

Adiyogi went through a profound exploration of the mechanics of life with his first disciples, later known as the Saptarishis. For the first time in the history of humanity, Adiyogi opened up this possibility that if you are willing to strive for it, you can consciously evolve from your present state to another. He showed that the current framework you live by is not your limit; you can cross this framework and move into a completely different dimension of existence.

After many years, when the transmission was complete and had produced seven fully enlightened beings, Adiyogi gave the Saptarishis to different corners of the world: One went to Central Asia, one to Northern Africa, another went to South America, one stayed with him, one came to what is now referred to as Indian Himalayas, another went to southeastern Asia and Agastya Muni came south and traversed the Indian subcontinent. He established hundreds of ashrams around the country, with the aim of making spirituality a part of everyday life. They say he did not spare a single human habitation. If you took carefully, at the way people of this land sit, eat and sleep - you can see the imprints of Agastya’s work.

After thousands of years, the spine of knowledge that Adiyogi created is still the source of almost everything that you can call spiritual on the planet. Today, nearly 7 billion people around the world are practicing some form of yoga. Over all these years, there was no campaign, propaganda or enforcement. Other teachings and belief systems have been forced upon people. But nobody put a sword to somebody’s throat and said, “You must do yoga.” It has lived for over 5 millennia because of its sheer efficiency.

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Yoga Up for the Yoga Day!

Tools for Transformation
To celebrate this momentous day, the Government of India and various yoga institutions are framing up to conduct yoga classes in Indian embassies around the world. Isha Foundation has been a part of this effort to give everyone a taste of the benefits of yoga.

Free holistic yoga workshops designed by Sadhguru present simple yet powerful 5 minute practices which you can do anywhere, anytime. Practices include invigorating physical postures (Sadhajja, Yoga Namaskar), breathing methods (Nadi Shuddhi), Nada Yoga and meditation.

Nationwide Initiative
Isha has trained 35,600 teachers to conduct yoga workshops for IDY across India and the rest of the world in 100,000 locations. And plans to touch 50–100 million people on the digital platforms.

Learn the practices for free online at www.yogayoga.org

Join a FREE yoga session at Isha Yoga Center on Sunday June 21st!
Tamil: 10am, 12:30am, 3pm or 5pm | English: 3pm | Walk-in registration at the Suryakund
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VISIT US AT THE ISHA YOGA CENTER
The Isha Yoga Center is set at the foothills of the Veilangiri Mountains, about 35 km from Coimbatore. Created as a powerful shala (a center for inner growth), this popular destination attracts people from all parts of the world. The center is home to a number of consecrated spaces like the Dhyanalinga. The distilled essence of yogic science, Dhyanalinga does not ascribe to any particular belief or faith. Just sitting silently for a few minutes within its sphere is enough to make even those unaware of meditation experience a state of deep meditativeness.

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