

YOGA AS A THERAPY: A PERSPECTIVE

Yogacharya Dr ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI

MBBS, ADY, DPC, DSM, PGDFH, PGDY, FIAIY

Chairman: ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry, India.

E-mail: ananda@icyer.com Websites: www.icyer.com and www.rishiculture.org

INTRODUCTION:

The art and science of Yoga is first and foremost a Moksha Shastra meant to facilitate the individual to attain the final freedom, liberation or emancipation of Kaivalya. However one of the important by-products of the Yogic way of living is attainment of health and wellbeing. This is brought about by right-use-ness of the body, emotions and mind with awareness and consciousness. This must be understood to be as healthy a dynamic state that may be attained inspite of the individual's Sabija Karma that manifests as their genetic predispositions and the environment into which they are born. Yoga also helps us to maintain and sustain this dynamic state of health after it has been attained through disciplined self effort and conscious awareness of life itself.

Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, the visionary founder of Ananda Ashram at the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) in Pondicherry and one of the foremost authorities on Yoga in the past century, has explained the concept of Yoga Chikitsa (Yoga as a therapy) in the following lucid manner.

"Yoga Chikitsa is virtually as old as Yoga itself, indeed, the 'return of mind that feels separated from the Universe in which it exists' represents the first Yoga therapy. Yoga Chikitsa could be termed as 'man's first attempt at unitive understanding of mind-emotions-physical distress and is the oldest wholistic concept and therapy in the world.'"

To achieve this Yogic integration at all levels of our being, it is essential that we take into consideration the all encompassing multi dimensional aspects of Yoga that include the following: a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through Asanas, Mudras and Kriyas, invigorating breath work through the use of Pranayama and the production of a healthy thought process through the higher practices of Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga.

Yogi Swatmarama in the Hathayoga Pradipika, one of the classical Yoga texts gives us the assurance, "One who tirelessly practises Yoga attains success irrespective of whether they are young, old decrepit, diseased or weak". He gives us the guarantee that Yoga improves health of all alike and wards off disease, provided we properly abide by the rules and regulations (*yuvaa vrddho ativriddho vaa vyaadhito durbalo pi vaa abhyaasaat siddhimaapnoti sarvayogeshvatandritah-Hathayoga Pradipika I:64*).

YOGIC PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH AND DISEASE:

Yoga understands health and well being as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not a mere 'state' to be attained and maintained. The lowest point on the continuum with the lowest speed of vibration is that of death whereas the highest point with the highest vibration is that of immortality. In between these two extremes lie the states of normal health and disease. For many, their state of health is defined as that 'state' in which they are able to function without hindrance whereas in reality, health is part of our evolutionary process towards Divinity. The lowest point on the dynamic health continuum with lowest speed of vibration may be equated with lowest forms of life and mineral matter while the highest point with highest speed of vibration may be equated with Divinity.

Yoga aims at enabling the individual to attain and maintain a dynamic Sukha Sthanam that may be defined as a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual well being. The Bhagavad Gita defines Yoga as Samatvam meaning thereby that Yoga is equanimity at all levels (*yogasthah kurukarmani sangam tyaktva dhananjaya siddhisidhyoh samobutva samatvam yoga uchyate* - Bhagavad Gita II: 48). This may be also understood as a perfect state of health wherein physical homeostasis and mental equanimity occur in a balanced and healthy harmony.

Tiruvalluvar the great Dravidian mystic says in his 1330 versed Tirukkural, a treatise on righteous living, "Look for the disease, look for its primary cause, find the remedy for that primary cause and then apply that remedy" (*noinaadi noimudhal naadi athuthanikkum vaai naadi vaippach cheyal-Tirukkural 948*). Most modern doctors and even modern Yoga therapists seem to have lost their way in the maze and are content managing the manifest symptoms without understanding the real cause. As long as we are only giving symptomatic management through Yoga, it is then merely Yogopathy and not Yoga Chikitsa at all.

Maharishi Patanjali, the codifier of the Yoga Darshan has explained the primary causation of psychosomatic stress based disorders through the concept of Pancha Klesha (five-fold psychological afflictions). These are Avidya (ignorance of the ultimate reality leading to bodily identification), Asmita (a false sense of identification), Raga-Dwesa (addiction and aversion), Abhinivesha (clinging on to life for fear of death), (*avidya asmita raga dwesa abhinivesha kleshah -Yoga Darshan II: 3*). Avidya as the root cause enables other Klesha to manifest in different forms from time to time. They may be dormant, attenuated, manifest or overpowering in their causation of pain and suffering (*avidya kshetram uttaresham prasupta tanu vicchinna udaranam - Yoga Darshan II: 4*).

Dwaitam or the misplaced sense duality (due to Avidya, the mother Klesha) is the main initial cause of the imbalance at the higher level that may then manifest into the lower through psycho-somatic stress mechanisms. This occurs through the Pancha Kosha (five fold nature of human existence) as various disorders depending upon the propensity (due to Sanchita Karma) of the individual. He prescribes Kriya Yoga (consisting of Tapa, Swadhyaya and Ishwara Pranidhana) as the means to

reduce Klesha influences (*samadhibhavanarthah kleshatanukaranarthashca - Yoga Darshan II: 2*).

Yoga Vashista one of the great classical Yoga texts describes the causation and manifestation of disease (Vyadhi) in an admirable manner. (I often joke with my students that this text is the first recorded counseling session in human history- the Bhagavad Gita is of course the second!) In the dialogue between the great sage Vashistha and Prince Rama, it describes both psychosomatic (Adhija Vyadhi) as well as non-psychosomatic ailments (Anadhija Vyadhi). Samanya Adhija Vyadhi are described as those arising from day-to-day causes while Sara Adhija Vyadhi is the essential disease of being caught in the birth -rebirth cycle that may be also understood in modern terms as congenital diseases (caused due to Sanchita Karma). The former can be corrected by day-to-day remedial measures such as medicines and surgery whereas Sara Adhija Vyadhi doesn't cease until knowledge of the self (Atma Jnana) is attained.

The Guru Stotra from the *Vishvasaaraatantra* also takes a similar line in saying that the ultimate 'wisdom of the self' gained through the Guru destroys Karmic bondages from many births (*anekajanma samprapta karma bandha vidhahine atmajnana pradanena tasmai srigurave namah-Guru Stotra, verse 9*). It is interesting to note that traditional Indian thought views the very occurrence of birth on this planet as a disease and a source of suffering! Tiruvalluvar reiterates this when he says, "It is knowledge of the ultimate truth that removes the folly of birth" (*pirappu ennum pedaimai neenga chirappu ennum chem porul kaanbadhu arivu- Tirukkural 358*).

Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri has written extensively about the relationship between health and disease. He says, "Yoga views the vast proliferation of psychosomatic diseases as a natural outcome of stress and strain created by desire fostered by modern propaganda and abuse of the body condoned on all sides even by religion, science and philosophy. Add to this the synthetic "junk food" diet of modern society and you have the possibility of endless disorders developing...even the extinction of man by his own ignorance and misdeeds".

He explains the root cause of disease as follows. "Yoga, a wholistic, unified concept of oneness, is Advaitam or non-dual in nature. It suggests happiness, harmony and ease. Dis-ease is created when duality or Dwaitam arises in the human mind. This false concept of duality has produced all conflicts of human mind and the vast list of human disorders. Duality (dis-ease) is the primary cause of man's downfall. Yoga helps return man to his pristine, whole nature. All diseases, maladies, tensions, are manifestations of divisions of what should be man's complete nature, the Atman or 'Self'. This 'Self' is "ease". A loss of "ease" creates "dis-ease". Duality is the first insanity, the first disease, the unreasonable thought that "I am different from the whole.... I am unique. I am me."

He goes on to say, "The ego is a manifestation of disease. Only a distorted ego could feel alone, suffer from "the lonely disease", in a Universe, a Cosmos totally filled with the 'Self'. It is interesting that the one of the oldest words for man is "*insan*". Man is "insane". A return to sanity, "going sane," is the subject of real Yoga Sadhana

and Yoga Abhyasa. Yoga Chikitsa is one of the methods to help insane man back onto the path of sanity. A healthy man or woman may be known by the term-Yogi". A very strongly worded yet very true statement indeed from the Lion of Pondicherry!

APPLICATION OF YOGA AS A THERAPY:

The Tridosha theory of health and disease that developed during the late Vedic period is common to virtually all traditional Indian systems of medicine. Tridosha concept has correlation with Pancha Mahabhuta (elements of the manifest universe) as well as Triguna (inherent qualities of nature). Health is understood to be the balanced harmony of the three humours in accordance with individual predisposition while disease results from an imbalanced disharmony. Tirumandiram of Tirumoolar, the 3000 versed Tamil treatise by the Dravidian saint has prescribed the practice of Yoga at different times of day to relieve disorders arising from Tridosha imbalances. According to him, practice of Yoga at dusk relieves Kapha, practice at noon relieves Vata and practice in morning relieves Pitta disorders (*anjanam pondruda laiyaru mandiyile vanjaga vatha marumaddi yaanattir senjiru kaalaiyir seithidir pittarum nanjara sonnom naraithirai naasame* -Tirumandiram 727).

To live a healthy life it is important to do healthy things and follow a healthy lifestyle. The modern world is facing a pandemic of lifestyle disorders that require changes to be made consciously by individuals themselves. Yoga places great importance on a proper and healthy lifestyle whose main components are:

1. Achar -Yoga stresses the importance of healthy activities such as exercise and recommends Asana, Pranayama and Kriyas on a regular basis. Cardio-respiratory health is one of the main by-products of such healthy activities.
2. Vichar -Right thoughts and right attitude towards life is vital for well being. A balanced state of mind is obtained by following the moral restraints and ethical observances (Yama-Niyama). As Mahatma Gandhi said, "there is enough in this world for everyone's need but not enough for any one person's greed".
3. Ahar - Yoga emphasises need for a healthy, nourishing diet that has an adequate intake of fresh water along with a well balanced intake of fresh food, green salads, sprouts, unrefined cereals and fresh fruits. It is important to be aware of the need for a Satwic diet, prepared and served with love and affection.
4. Vihar - Proper recreational activities to relax body and mind are essential for good health. This includes proper relaxation, maintaining quietude of action-speech-thoughts and group activities wherein one loses the sense of individuality. Karma Yoga is an excellent method for losing the sense of individuality and gaining a sense of universality.

The application of Yoga as a therapy can be correlated with the Pancha Koshas (the five aspects of our existence) and various Yoga practices may be used as therapeutic interventions at different levels in this respect.

At the Annamaya Kosha (anatomical level) Jattis (simple units of movements), Mudras (gestures for energy generation and conservation), Kriyas (structured movements), Asanas (steady and comfortable postures) along with the dietary modifications are useful. At the Pranamaya Kosha (physiological level) Shat Karmas (cleansing actions), various Pranayamas, development of breath awareness and working on breath-movement coordination with emphasis on balancing Pranic energy is to be done. Work on reenergizing and integrating the energies of the Pancha Prana and Upa Prana Vayus needs to be done at this level. At the Manomaya Kosha (psychological level) there are numerous practices such as Trataka (concentrated gaze), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation), Japa and Japa-Ajapa practices that are useful. Various aspects of concentration such as the Mandala Dharana and other Yoga Drishti techniques are also available in the Gitananda tradition for this purpose. An awareness of all aspects of the Antah Karanas needs to be developed at this level.

When trying to deal with the Vijñanamaya Kosha (intellectual level) Swadhyaya (self analysis), Satsangha (lectures and spiritually uplifting exchange) along with the wonderful Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga relaxation and concentration practices of Yoga are useful. We must remember that according to Swamiji, we thankfully cannot disturb the Vijñanamaya and Anandamaya Koshas! However what can happen is that we get the other three bodies out of sync with the higher two and so suffer consequences of such ignorant actions.

To understand and work with the Anandamaya Kosha (universal level) it is important to loose sense of the limited individuality. Learning to implement principles of Karma Yoga (Yoga as skilled action performed without expectation) and following the principle of action in relaxation help us to achieve a sense of joy in all activities. A realization that we live in a blissful universe and that all life is joy is to be brought about in this intervention through use of Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and other aspects like Bhajana, Yogic counseling and Satsangha.

Yoga is basically a preventive life-science (*heyam dukhkam anagatham*- Yoga Darshan II: 16) and hence Yogic counseling is a vital component of Yoga Chikitsa when dealing with all lifestyle disorders. The counseling process is not a 'one off' matter but is a continuous process that starts from the very first visit and continues with every session at different levels. Helping the patients understand their condition, finding the root cause of the problem and creating a healthy opportunity for them to change themselves, is the Dharma of the therapist. My beloved Ammaji (Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani) has defined Dharma as doing the right thing for the right person at the right place and at the right time in the right manner. It may take many months before we start to witness benefits of these Yogic lifestyle changes and Yoga Chikitsa practices. We must continue to motivate the patient (and ourselves too!) to keep up their (our) efforts without allowing any slackening to occur.

SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF USING YOGA AS A THERAPY:

Numerous studies have been done in the past few decades on psycho-physiological and biochemical changes occurring following practice of Yoga. A few clinical trials have also been done that have shown promise despite Yoga not being ideally suited for the scientific gold standard of 'double-blind' clinical trials.

It is virtually impossible for subjects to be taught Yoga without their knowing it is Yoga! The difficulty of finding right methods and apparatus to study higher aspects of Yoga is still to be overcome as there doesn't seem to be much money in it and as we know, money makes the world go round!

Some of the researched benefits that are quite well proven are given below to facilitate an understanding of how Yoga works at least at the physical level though we are yet to research and understand subtler effects of Yoga.

Physiological benefits of Yoga: It has been found that Yoga produces stable autonomic nervous system equilibrium, with a tendency toward parasympathetic nervous system dominance rather than the usual stress-induced sympathetic nervous system dominance. This is of great potential in psychosomatic stress related illness abounding in populations worldwide. Cardiovascular and cardio-respiratory efficiency increases. Heart rate and blood pressure decrease implying a better state of relaxation leading to reduced load on the heart. Respiratory rate decreases with improved respiratory efficiency. The amplitude and smoothness of respiration increases, along with all parameters of pulmonary function such as tidal volume, vital capacity and breath-holding time. EEG - alpha waves increase. Theta, delta, and beta waves also increase during various stages of meditation. Gastrointestinal function and endocrine function normalizes with improvement in excretory functions. Musculoskeletal flexibility and joint range of motion increase. Posture improves with improvement in strength, resiliency and endurance. Body weight normalizes and sleep improves with increased energy levels and the immunity increases with improved ability of pain tolerance.

Psychological benefits of Yoga: It has been found that somatic and kinesthetic awareness increase with better self-acceptance and self-actualization. There is better social adjustment with decrease in anxiety, depression and hostility. Psychomotor functions such as grip strength, balance, dexterity and fine motor skills, eye hand coordination and reaction time, steadiness and depth perception, and the integrated functioning of body parts improve. Mood improves and subjective well-being increases while cognitive functions such as attention, concentration, memory, and learning efficiency improve.

Biochemical effects of Yoga: The biochemical profile improves, indicating an anti-stress and antioxidant effect which is important in the prevention of degenerative diseases. There are decreased levels of blood glucose, total white blood cell count, total cholesterol, Triglycerides, LDL and VLDL. At the same time it has been reported that there are increased levels of: HDL cholesterol, ATPase, hematocrit, hemoglobin, thyroxin, lymphocytes, vitamin C and total serum protein following Yoga.

THERAPEUTIC MODALITIES OF YOGA CHIKITSA:

There are numerous therapeutic modalities used in the application of Yoga as a therapy. Pujya Swamiji Gitananda Giri has enumerated 52 aspects of Yoga Chikitsa in an encyclopedic manner. His exposition of Yoga Chikitsa is unparalleled yet this is a small attempt of mine to put some of these ancient ideas into a modern context for us all to work together towards and harmonious and healthy world. Some of the commonly used modalities are as following:

Physical Therapies: Asanas (static postures), Kriyas (systematic and rationale movements), Mudras (seals of neuromuscular energy) and Bandhas (locks for neuromuscular energy) gently stretch and strengthen the musculoskeletal system in a healthy manner. They improve mobility and flexibility of the different joints and groups of muscles. There is also concomitant improvement in the systemic function such as respiration, circulation, digestion and elimination. A general sense of health and well being is also promoted by these aspects of Yoga that help release feel good hormones like endorphins and encephalin.

Emotional Therapies: Swadhyaya (introspectional self analysis), Pranayama (techniques of vital energy control), Pratyahara (sensory withdrawal), Dharana (intense concentration), Dhyana (meditational oneness) and Bhajana (devotional music) stabilize emotional turmoil and relieve stress and mental fatigue. They bring about an excellent sense of emotional balance that is vital for good health. Group work such as this is important to achieve proper emotional balance that is essential to good health.

Development of Proper Psychological Attitudes: Yoga encourages us to step back and take an objective view of our habitual patterns of behaviour and thoughts. This enables us to cope better with situations that normally put our bodies and minds under strain. Patanjali emphasized the need to develop following qualities in order to become mentally balanced humane beings: Vairagya (detached, dispassionate attitude), Chitta Prasadnam (acceptance of the Divine Will), Maitri (friendliness towards those who are at peace with themselves), Karuna (compassion for the suffering), Mudita (cheerfulness towards the virtuous) and Upekshanam (indifference and avoidance of the evil) etc. Adoption of the right attitude is one of the most important aspects of Yoga as a therapy and if this is not done it is again more or less Yogopathy and not Yoga Chikitsa.

Mental Therapies: There are a great many Jnana and Raja Yoga techniques of relaxation and visualization that are useful. Other practices such as Trataka (concentrated gaze), Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana as well as Dhyana may also be utilized. Relaxation is a central element in Yoga as it is the body's own way of recharging its cells and helps to ease physical, emotional and mental tensions.

Spiritual Therapies: Swadhyaya, Satsangha (spiritual gathering seeking knowledge of the reality), Bhajana sessions and Yogic counseling are important aspects of Yogic therapy that are often neglected in favor of physical therapies alone. It is important to help patients understand their inner spiritual nature and realize that "Oneness" is health whereas "Duality" is disease. We cannot remain lonely, depressed and

diseased if we realize that we are part of this bountiful and wholesome, wonderful, happy and healthy Universe.

Preventive and Rehabilitative Therapies: Yoga has numerous preventive benefits especially when it is started early in childhood. It helps in prevention of accidents by increasing awareness as well as agility. Improved immunity helps in preventing infectious and contagious diseases. The added benefit of starting early is that the person knows the technique so that they can do it if needed at a later stage in life. Psychosomatic, stress related and lifestyle disorders may be effectively prevented by adoption of a Yogic way of life. Yoga also offers rehabilitative therapies for most musculoskeletal conditions as well as in recovery for debilitating illnesses. The practice of Yoga also goes a long way towards prevention of disability and improving quality of life in numerous chronic conditions.

Pain Relief Therapies: Yoga is a useful addition to the pain relief therapies as it improves pain tolerance and provides an improved quality of life. It can be safely said that Yoga helps us endure conditions that it may not be able to cure. This is vital in end life situations where it is important that the patient has a sense of improved quality of life during their end days. Yoga can also benefit caretakers of such terminal patients who are under great stress themselves.

The right-use-ness of these modalities according to condition and needs of patients will enable us to strike at the root cause of the disease and by correcting its origin. If this is done properly, the manifestation of the disease corrects itself and health and harmony can manifest once again.

CURRENT SITUATION OF YOGA THERAPY:

Modern Yoga therapy seems to have lost touch with the real essence of Yoga. The art and science of Yoga aims to help us regain our psycho-physiological balance, by removing the root cause of the disharmony (*dukkasamyogaviyogam yogasamjnitham* - Bhagavad Gita VI: 23). Yet, as Yoga therapists, unless we aim to correct the manifest psycho-somatic disassociation as well as the underlying ignorant, jaundiced perception of reality in the individual, we are really not practicing Yoga Chikitsa.

Managing and suppressing the manifest symptoms with Yoga techniques is just as good or bad as modern Allopathic medicine that focuses primarily on symptomatic management without ever getting close to the "real" cause of most disorders. How many doctors look at the emotional and psychological issues that are the primary cause of the problem in so many of their patients? Remember, the concept of psychosomatics is not older than a hundred years in modern medicine and any doctor talking about 'mind affecting body' disease a couple of hundred years ago risked getting labeled a quack and may have even been crucified at the altar of science!

When today we find our Yoga therapists making the same mistake in merely treating manifesting symptoms without remedying the 'real' cause, I prefer to call it Yogopathy! It may be useful for many but please do understand that it loses the special wholesome nature of Yoga and is no longer Yoga Chikitsa anymore.

An example of this Yogopathy trend is when we use Shavasana to manage patients of hypertension quoting research that has shown that Shavasana reduces blood pressure. We seem happy just to bring the blood pressure down for the time being! Real Yoga Chikitsa would try to look for the primary cause of the patient's hypertension and try to tackle that along with Shavasana for symptomatic management. Without an attempt to remedy the root cause, it remains merely Yogopathy.

Another common example is of using the left nostril Chandra Nadi Pranayama to lower the blood sugar or using the right nostril Surya Nadi Pranayama to relieve brochospasm without looking for the real cause of the patient's diabetes or asthma. When we do this, how are we any different than the modern doctors who prescribe anti-diabetic and sympatho-mimetic agents for these patients? Where is the real Yoga in this type of therapy? Where is the effort to find and deal with the primary cause? Without a positive change in attitude or lifestyle, can it be Yoga Chikitsa?

In the application of Yoga Chikitsa it is vital that we take into consideration all the following aspects that are part of an integrated approach to the problem. These include a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through Asanas, Mudras and Kriyas, invigorating breath work through the use of Pranayama and the production of a healthy thought process through the higher practices of Jnana and Raja Yoga.

Extensive research on Yoga being done all over the world has shown promise with regard to various disorders and diseases indicating scientifically the feasibility of them being amiable to the application of Yoga as a therapy. However we must remember to try and deal with the root cause for if not, we are going to only be practicing Yogopathy and not Yoga Chikitsa!

As Yoga Chikitsa starts to be introduced into mainstream health care, we must not fall into the dangerous trap of claiming that Yoga is a miracle that can cure everything under the sun for that "puts off" the modern medical community more than anything. They then develop a stiff resistance to Yoga instead of becoming more open to this life giving and health restoring science. As the use of Yoga Chikitsa in medical centers is still in its infancy we must be cautious about the after-effects we may produce by our conscious and unconscious thoughts, words and actions. Better to err on the side of caution than be true to the adage, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

I am not downplaying the potentiality of Yoga for it **DOES** have a role in virtually each and every condition. We must however realize that though Yoga can improve the condition of nearly every patient, it doesn't necessarily translate into words such as cure. Modern medicine doesn't have a cure for most conditions and so when Yoga therapists use such words, it creates a negative image that does more harm than good.

I would like to reiterate at this point the need of the modern age which is to have an integrated approach towards all forms of therapy. We must try to integrate concepts of Yoga in coordination and collaboration with other systems of medicine

such as Allopathy, Ayurveda, Siddha and Naturopathy. Physiotherapy, osteopathy and chiropractic practices may be also used with the Yoga Chikitsa as required. Don't forget that advice on diet and adoption of a healthy lifestyle is very important irrespective of the mode of therapy employed for the patient.

Yoga can for sure, help regain the ease we had lost earlier through dis-ease (as implied by *sthira sukham asanam*- Yoga Darshan II: 46). It can also enable us to attain a dynamic state of mental equanimity (*samatvam yoga uchyate*- Bhagavad Gita II: 48) where the opposites cease to affect us any more (*tato dwandwa anabhigatha*- Yoga Darshan II: 48). This enables us to move from a state of illness and disease to one of health and wellbeing that ultimately allows us to move from a lower animal nature to a higher human nature and finally reach the highest Divine Nature that is our birthright.

REFERENCES:

1. A Primer of Yoga Theory. Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani. Dhivyananda Creations, Iyyanar Nagar, Pondicherry. 2008. www.rishiculture.org
2. Back issues of International Journal of Yoga Therapy. Journal of the International Association of Yoga Therapists, USA. www.iayt.org
3. Back issues of *Yoga Life*, Monthly Journal of ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry. www.icyer.com
4. Back issues of Yoga Mimamsa. Journal of Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Maharashtra.
5. Four Chapters on Freedom. Commentary on Yoga sutras of Patanjali by Swami Satyananda Saraswathi, Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, India. 1999
6. Srimad Bhagavad Gita by Swami Swarupananda. Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata. 2007
7. The Supreme Yoga: Yoga Vashista. Swami Venkatesananda. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt Ltd. Delhi.2007
8. Tiruvalluvar on Yogic Concepts. Meena Ramanathan, Aarogya Yogalayam, Venkateswara Nagar, Saram, Pondicherry-13.2007
9. Yoga Therapy Notes. Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani. Dhivyananda Creations, Iyyanar Nagar, Pondicherry. 2007