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Frontiers

The role of ‘Selective Yoga Practices’ for Anger Management in Adolescents

Dr.SadhnaDauneria¹ & Manjula Rohilla²

1. Head of the Department, Department of Yoga, Barkatullah University Bhopal
2. Research Scholar, Department of Yoga, Barkatullah University Bhopal

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ABSTRACT

The human life has evolved from ancient civilizations to the present age ‘internet enabled’ modern life, and with every perk naturally comes the associated disadvantages. In this case, we are referring to the everyday stress that results in behavioral conditions such as ‘anger. Anger is defined as an emotion which can be identified by opposition or hatred towards an individual or a situation one feels directly responsible for wrongdoing to them. Anger and its management have become one of the most critical concerns of modern society affecting both professional and personal aspects of an individual’s life, in almost every age group. And anger treatments have relatively low quantifiable success rates due to the fact that anger is not catalogued as a disorder at a diagnostic and statistical level.

In this paper, we will focus on the implications of anger, related disorders and anger management in adolescents. We have chosen to focus the research on the adolescents' age group as it has been proven by several researchers that younger age groups are able to grasp anger management skills and inculcate them in their daily life, being able to solve related problems. Yoga practices have been long recognized to be of healing and rejuvenating effects on the human mind and body. We propose to use these yogic practices for the initial and long-term control and remediation of anger in adolescents and measure the effectiveness of such practices. Suggested outcome is expected to prove that the introduction of selective yogic practices in adolescents can help aid anger management. We believe that post successful anger management, research participants will exhibit overall improvement in their mental and emotional balance and will be more constructive.

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1. Anger

Anger is a strong human emotion often caused by some of wrong-doing, ill-treatment or unfairness. This feeling is experienced when an individual has been either mistreated, injured or hindered from attaining personal goals. Anger, according to the cognitive behaviour theory is attributed to several factors such as:

- Past experiences
- Behaviour learned from others
- Genetic predispositions
- Lack of problem-solving ability (Loo, 2005, para.1).

There are several aspects of anger such as outlined by Williamson et.al. These aspects are often experienced in the form of restlessness in the body and mind which can affect an individual's day to day life. Anger also results in lack of general awareness and hence reduced attention to situations and surroundings (Scheier, M.F., 1976).

According to Mact (Macht, M., 1999.) food quality affects mind and how we respond to our emotions such as anger. In this study, subjects reported to experience:

Increased levels of hunger during anger especially

Impulsive eating and sensory eating were rated higher during anger compared to other emotions

Resting the body also plays a very important part in how individuals experience anger. Proper rest of body and mind can lead to less irritation. Ongoing research has outlined that there is a correlation between anger and the mind-body since medieval and modern medicine (Carrera, E., 2013.). And techniques such as compassion focussed therapy has helped subject to manage their anger (Kolts, R., 2012.).

Continuing from the above discussion, Anger causes loss in self-monitoring capacity (Novaco, R.W., 2002). Facial and skeletal muscles are strongly affected by anger including actions for attack defence nostril flare, resulting in increased blood to hands preparing for strike (Sell, A., Cosmides, L. and Tooby, J., 2014).

Along with the physical affects such as facial and skeletal muscles, stress releases 'cortisol' in human body (Vedhara, K., Hyde, J., Gilchrist, I.D., Tytherleigh, M. and Plummer, S., 2000.). Too much cortisol decreases serotonin which is the hormone responsible for making one happy. Further decreases in serotonin can make one experience anger and pain more easily, indicating aggressive behaviour leading to depression.

2. Effects of anger on Human Body

Cardiovascular system: It has been found that stress causes the increase of hearth rate in human body. This also results in increased blood pressure, and the increased tension in arteries. Due these several factors, the overall blood glucose level increases. (Herd, J.A., 1991.)

Immune system: Immune system is affected in ways where it is found that there is an impact on the overall function of thyroid and it decreases. Number of virus infected cell decreases along with the decrease in the number of natural killer cells. Due to the overall weak immune system, chances of 'cancer' increases. (Gu, H.F., Tang, C.K. and Yang, Y.Z., 2012.)

Digestive system: Digestive system functioning is affected in ways where it is found that the blood flow to the system decreases and hence decreasing the overall metabolism. It also causes dryness in mouth, indigestion and low absorption of nutrients. (Armata, P.M. and Baldwin, D.R., 2008.)

Bone Density: the overall bone density decreases which results in vulnerability towards other accidents and orthopaedic related body problems. (Myburgh, K.H., Hutchins, J., Fataar, A.B., Hough, S.F. and Noakes, T.D., 1990.) , (Basu, S., Michaëlsson, K., Olofsson, H., Johansson, S. and Melhus, H., 2001.)

3. Anger Management

There are several aspects of managing anger that can be taken into account, the key main being:

- Prevent – understand anger and what you like and dislike, know triggers and negotiate.
- Prepare – Self talk helps to manage angry feelings.

- Practice – Imagine a nice and calm situation and be assertive.

Anger management is training for temper control and skill of remaining calm and balanced in each and every situation. Prevention and practice to remain calm are the aspects of anger management. Anger is not categorised as a disorder. One should understand the trigger of anger & handle the situations by own. Some popular anger management techniques include relaxation and monitored breathing exercises.

Yoga practises are long known and recognised for the healing and balancing of mind and body. Asanas remove the restlessness in the body while pranayama and meditation help remain calm and balanced which leads to less anger. A cool minded person can take right decisions in adverse conditions. Therefore, 'anger management' is a very important part of life management.

Yoga is beneficial for different age groups from school children to older persons.

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Research has proved that younger age groups are able to learn skills faster than older ones. So if adolescent students learn positive strategies for anger management than perhaps society will have less violent and balance youth. Yoga practices have proven highly effective way to cope up with the variety of psychosomatic disorders, emotions and feelings. Anger is foremost of them. Yogic practises play a vital role to manage anger and its harmful effects.

4. Conclusion

Meditation and Relation can help the mind and body by being balanced in adverse situations. The moment a person becomes angry, he/she should close his eyes and take a few deep breaths. This results in the change of his/her state of mind.

Since youth are the future of society and our nation, it is therefore important that they stay balanced, thereby leading to a better future and good nation building. Yoga therapy is very helpful in reducing aggressiveness and improves emotional balance.

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