

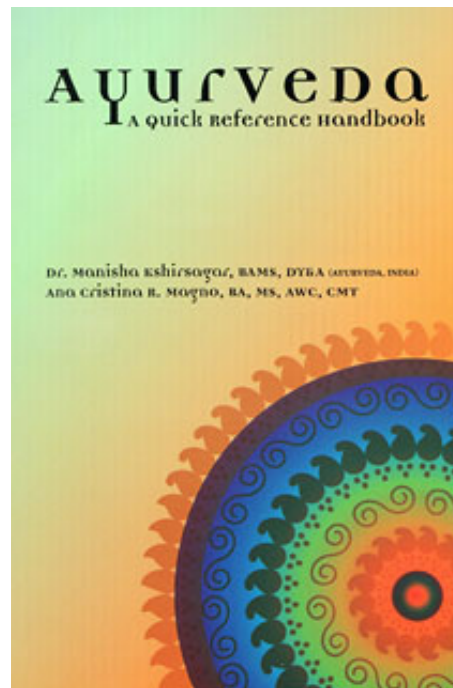
Kshirsagar M. / Magno A.-C. Ayurveda - A Quick Reference Handbook

Reading excerpt

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yoga principles

WHAT IS YOGA?

The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Yuja' meaning to unite, combine or integrate.

The union of the 'Atma' with the 'Parmatma', the finite with the infinite. A state of integration between the individual consciousness and cosmic consciousness, or a total integration of the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of the human being.

It has also other meanings such as:

Yogaha chitta vritti nirodhaha – control of fluctuations of the mind.

Yogaha karmasu kaushalyam – proficiency in the work.

Yoga of herbs – combination of herbal formulas.

Yoga of planets – a specific combination of the grahas (planets) in Vedic astrology.

The aim of yoga is to prepare the body to achieve the tranquility of mind that is necessary for the realization of the Divine or Supreme.

The practice of yoga is a simple process of synchronizing one's breath with movement into various physical postures. The combination of these two elements is what makes yoga unique and highly therapeutic. In order to heal the body, one must work with its counterpart, the mind, and see the correlation between the two in order to truly address the cause of disease.

In this way, yoga is a profound method for healing the root causes of illness, leading to a lasting feeling of peace and happiness.

The practice of yoga goes back an estimated 5,000 years. The sage Patanjali compiled the Yoga Sutras, a philosophical guide based on the Vedas. The Yoga Sutras include a wide range of yogic practices such as asanas, pranayama, meditation, and mantras. It also delineates the eight limbs of yoga to aid in the development of consciousness. They help with our journey from the outer world to the inner self toward the final goal in reaching Samadhi (liberation).

They are:

Yamas – social conduct

Niyamas – behavior

Asana – body postures

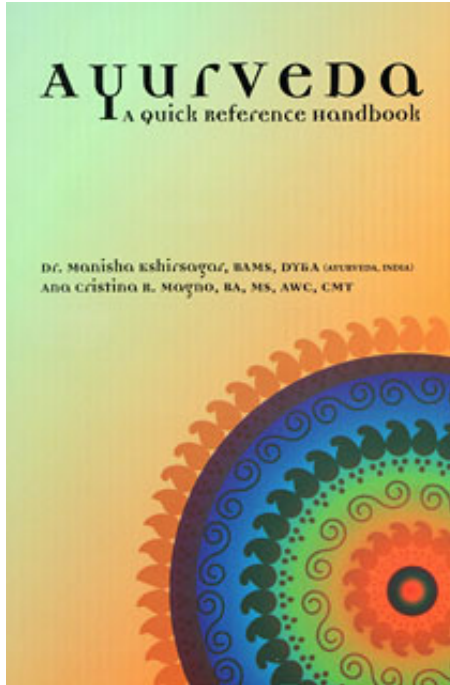
Pranayama – control of breath

Pratyahara – control of senses

Dharana – concentration

Dhyani – meditation

Samadhi – union



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