

AMERICAN TELUGU ASSOCIATION

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10th ATA CONFERENCE & YOUTH CONVENTION

NASSAU VETERANS MEMORIAL COLISEUM, UNIONDALE, NEW YORK, USA

JULY 3 – JULY 5, 2008

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PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT TICK!!!!

This time it's

The Tri-State Area Telugu Community

(NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY & CONNECTICUT)

Who have come up with open minds & hearts

To the mammoth task of conducting

10TH ATA TELUGU CONFERENCE & YOUTH CONVENTION

(JULY 3 – JULY 5, 2008)

To celebrate our Telugu Heritage & Language on behalf of

AMERICAN TELUGU ASSOCIATION

This time it's their dream, vision, dedication, love and experience

Coupled with their love of their language, culture and traditions

That will go into making of the most celebrated event

All the families in NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY & CONNECTICUT are

Gearing up for this event

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A GREAT SUCCESS & ONE OF A KIND

We appeal to all members and the Telugus living all across

America and Abroad

To come and participate and contribute generously

Most of all we thank you because you are the one

who is going to

MAKE THIS TIME TICK!!!

CONVENTION COMMITTEE



The Amazing Mamidi Sisters:

Shilpa Mamidi: A Meritorius Student Who Won Miss Asia USA 1st Runner Up

Rachna Mamidi: Winner of Top Academic Accolades & Miss Teenage Scholastic Achievement Award

Keeping our traditions, culture and values alive is not an easy task. It needs a lot of devotion, commitment and hard work. What if you want to do this through your kids while living in a foreign country? It certainly needs several fold more effort and the willingness of your children. Mr. Raja and Swaroopa Mamidi of California deserve applause from all non-resident Telugu people for their fantastic job in making their dreams of continuing Telugu traditions in USA a reality – for their daughters Shilpa and Rachna though born here turned out to be great blends of American and Telugu traditions.

Shilpa Mamidi – Miss Asia USA 2007 1st Runner Up

At the age of 19, Shilpa recently represented INDIA in the Miss Asia USA 2007 pageant and won the 1st runner up title among the 27 participants from different countries in Asia. Previously, she was the winner of Miss South Asia America 2006 title and Miss Showbiz India USA 2006 1st Runner-up title. Shilpa's academic achievements are equally stellar. She obtained Honor Student Award for each semester of her high schooling from 2001-2005. She received All-American Scholar Award for scholastic achievement (2003), U.S. Achievement Academy National Award for outstanding student (2002) and U.S. President Award for outstanding academic performance (2000-2001).



Shilpa was an honor student and varsity tennis player during all four years of her high school. She also served as an executive board member of National Honor Society (NHS), California Scholarship Federation (CSF) and Indian club for three years. After graduating from Diamond Ranch High School, she joined the University of California San Diego (UCSD) with a 4.3 GPA and as the captain of the high school varsity tennis team. At UCSD, she is currently a third year student majoring in clinical psychology. Shilpa's goal is to establish her career in clinical psychology, help the community and become a successful role model.

Shilpa Mamidi was born in California. Her parents are originally from Hyderabad. Her father, Raja Mamidi, is Vice President at a pharmaceutical company in southern California while mother, Swaroopa Mamidi, is a homemaker and coach for both daughters for beauty pageants and other activities. Although Shilpa was brought up in USA, she learned about Indian traditions through her loving parents, attending religious schools and by visiting India every other year. Shilpa is a blend of both American and Indian traditions, which have taught her to embrace other cultures around the world. She is in fact a recipient of 1st prize in Bhagvad Gita recital competition held in California.

In the past two years she modeled for Ziba Beauty, Frontier Heritage and Sahil Bridal Showcase, and as a member of dance team of University of California, San Diego, participated in several dance competitions and received 1st and 2nd place awards. While she was in high school, Shilpa volunteered for four years at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center (PVHMC) and accumulated more than 250 hours of voluntary service. She recently organized an event for the charitable organization, entitled "ASHA for Foundation" where she participated in a fashion show and raised money for helping children in India to receive proper education. While in Hyderabad she interacted with functionaries of Family Planning Association of India to learn about the health promotional activities, especially sexual and reproductive health awareness activities of adolescents. In September 2007, Shilpa was felicitated in Hyderabad by several institutions, including Bharata Vidya Bhavan School and local Telugu communities.

Shilpa's hobbies include dancing, modeling and playing tennis. She is very keen on participating in welfare programs aimed at amelioration of health and nutritional status of underprivileged children, especially in India.

Rachna Mamidi – Miss Teenage Scholastic Achievement Award Winner

Rachna Mamidi, Shilpa's younger sister, recently graduated from Diamond Ranch High School (DRHS) with the outstanding honor as Valedictorian of Class of 2007. Rachna secured first rank among 456 at the DRHS. Not only that, she achieved the incredible feat of scoring 800 out of 800 in SAT Math. She has also recently received Miss Teenage California 2007 Scholastic Achievement award for obtaining highest GPA in California and the certificate of recognition from the State of California.



Rachna was a member of the National Honor Society (NHS) during 2004-2006 and was on the honor roll during senior year (2006-'07). A few feathers quickly adorned Rachna's crown when she was named the recipient of the American Association of University Women Award for outstanding academic achievements in Science, Mathematics and Technology in March 2006 and won Advanced Placement (AP)

Scholar Award in September 2006 and received United States Achievement Academy's All-American Scholar as well as National Awards.

Rachna also excelled in Tennis. She was the captain of the Varsity Girls Tennis Team and Executive President of the Girls Tennis Club, both for two consecutive years. She won Varsity Girls Doubles Tennis Championship.

Like her sister, Rachna also modeled for several centers and firms such as Ziba Beauty Center, Frontier Heritage, Sahil Bridal Showcase and Bhindi Jewelers during 2004-'06 period. In addition to her academic fulfillment, Rachna has been a dedicated volunteer at the Pomona Valley Hospital & Medical Center (PVHMC) for four consecutive years and received certificate of Achievement for completing 200 hours of community service from the Mayor of the City of Pomona, CA and the executive members of PVHMC.

Well, it is obvious even with a few of the many honors mentioned here, that Rachna is an outstanding student and a remarkable personality bent on helping the community as well. Shilpa, a meritorious student herself, says that it is her sister Rachna who is super clever – what a great compliment coming from the sibling!

Both Shilpa and Rachna were felicitated by many institutions and Telugu communities in Hyderabad recently – well deserving recognition for their exemplary achievements! Here are a couple of pictures from these felicitations.



Shilpa & Rachna: Congratulations on your achievements and thanks for making the Telugu community proud! ATA and America Bharathi extend best wishes to you both for a great career and future!

Content and photos for this spotlight item were provided by Mr. Raja Mamidi

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Dr. Mohan Hindupur

Winner of “Dr. Robert R. Stuber Physician Recognition” Award

“Excellence, compassion, wisdom, helping nature” – these are just a few of many descriptors that could be used to describe Dr. Mohan Hindupur, MD, FACC of Heartland Cardiovascular Consultants. His exemplary service coupled with extraordinary dedication to his profession recently fetched him a well deserving honor from Heartland Regional Medical Center’s (HRMC) – he received the very first Dr. Robert R. Stuber Physician Recognition Award. This prestigious Award was named after Dr. Stuber who served as the medical director of HRMC before retiring in January 2007. This is an annual award created to honor Dr. Stuber, an HRMC Medical Staff physician noted for serving as a mentor, demonstrating a commitment to quality and excellence, inspiring others, and taking an active role in the health and well-being of the community.

Dr. Hindupur, a cardiologist, has practiced medicine in St. Joseph, Missouri, for nearly 20 years. In 1987, he came to Heartland and is the main reason for the existence of Heartland’s Heart Center and Cardiovascular Consultants group.



Dr. Hindupur with Dr. Stuber, in whose name the award was instituted

One of the nominations that led to this award reads “Dr. Hindupur is such a great doctor, but that is because he is such an extraordinary human being. His ability to listen with compassion and kindness are unlimited. He has the beautiful ability to give so much of himself to all the people that come in contact with him. His sense of humor and his wisdom in our everyday lives is always refreshing.”

In honor of Dr. Hindupur’s recognition, Heartland has donated \$1,000 to the charity of his choice, United Way.

Dr. Mohan Hindupur attended Rangaraya Medical College in Kakinada from 1967-1973. He completed his residency and fellowship in cardiology at Columbus Hospital Northwestern University, Chicago. He started the Cath Lab and Cardiology Department at Heartland Regional Medical Center in St. Joseph, Missouri in 1987. This cardiology group has since expanded to cater to the needs of more people. At present, Dr. Hindupur is working as the Director of Cardiology at Heartland Regional medical Center and Medical Director of heartland Clinic which has more than 110 doctors in the group practice. He received several awards in his career that included Gold Medals of Pharmacology and Surgery in Andhra Pradesh, Best intern of the year and Best Resident of the year (in Chicago) and Best attending of the the year for two years in a row while in Chicago.

American Telugu Association and America Bharathi congratulate Dr. Hindupur on this outstanding achievement!

Dr. Hindupur: We, the fellow Telugu people, are very proud of you!

Gopal Reddy

Winner of “Excellence in Entrepreneurship” Award



Mr. Gopal Reddy is the President and CEO of Action Development Corporation (ADC), a franchisee with the Aaron's rents Inc, headquartered in Atlanta. He opened his first Aaron's store in 1997 and currently his business owns and operates 10 stores in Illinois covering most of the central Illinois. ADC is continuously growing and currently has 75 employees on payroll with the current year's gross revenue estimated to cross \$10 million.



Mr. Reddy is a pioneering franchisee for Aaron's as he was the first franchisee to open up a store in Illinois. He opened his second store a year later and then continued to open a new one just about every year. He owns stores in Mattoon, Springfield, Decatur, Champaign, Bloomington, Danville, Quincy, and Jacksonville. He is a pioneer for the company in another area also - he custom built most of his stores and has several stand-alone locations. He believes that freestanding stores give him a competitive advantage and appeal to broader base of customers. Mr. Reddy is also a board member and treasurer of the Aaron's franchise association and has worked with the company to encourage new franchisees. He helped bring two Indian-Americans on board in California.

Recently, Action Development Corporation d/b/a Aaron's Sales and lease was listed in “Inc 5000”, as one of the America's Fastest Growing Private Companies. Aaron's could achieve this prestigious recognition only through the hard work, dedication and commitment of Mr. Reddy and the strong support from his wife, Tulasi, who is also a Vice President of Finance.

Befitting his outstanding entrepreneurship as an Aaron's Franchisee in leading the business to new heights, Mr. Reddy is awarded IndUS Business Journal's 2007 “Excellence Award”. IndUS Business Journal Awards of Excellence were instituted to celebrate and honor the individuals and companies that best represent the influential South Asian business community in the United States. Mr. Reddy is one of the 13 awardees for 2007 and received this honor for his leadership as Aaron's Franchisee.

Mr. Gopal Reddy came to the United States from Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, India, in 1968 to pursue graduate study at the University of California where he received a master's degree in mechanical engineering. He took a job with Essex Wire in Decatur, IL, which led to several years in the telephone cables manufacturing industry. After seven years with Essex he left for ITT in Pawtucket, RI, where he worked for 10 years. He eventually returned to Illinois and took a job with BICC Cables. His interest in starting his own business led him to the franchise industry. After working as a mechanical engineer for most of his career, Mr. Gopal Reddy decided it was time to shift gears, “I had that entrepreneurial itch” he said.

Mr. Reddy and his wife Tulasi live in Brownsburg, Indiana.

Gopal Reddy garu: Congratulations on this well deserved recognition you earned for yourself and your business!!! Your example is an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs!

America Bharathi appreciates Dr. Vijayapal Reddy for contributing this item.

Jay Reddy

Winner of "State Small Business Person of the Year" Award



Indian American Businessman Jay Reddy has received the "State Small Business Person of the Year award 2007" in this year's Small Business Administration's (SBA) nationwide search. There were no other Indian Americans in the nine categories that make up the National Small Business Champions list in 2007.

Virginia-based Reddy, Chairman and CEO of ProLogic, Inc., received the award for West Virginia state on April 24 at a glittering ceremony held in Washington. The event was attended by Senator John Kerry, Chairman, US Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and Matt Kistler, Senior Vice President, marketing, research and insights, Sam's Club.

Mr. Reddy founded the IT firm ProLogic in 1995 and steadily built it into a successful business, providing quality software development, IT products and systems integration and engineering. With SBA's help, Reddy won several federal contracts leading to a 400 percent increase in employment and a 600 percent rise in revenues during the last four years, according to SBA. "This is the first time a West Virginia company has made it to the list, which reflects positively on the leadership at ProLogic and also on West Virginia and the technology corridor as a whole," said Judy McCauley, district director of SBA's West Virginia office.

Mr. Reddy humbly said: "From simple beginnings and a dream to become a successful business, ProLogic has become home to over 230 skilled and valuable employees. This recognition is a validation of the hard work and effort our employees have put forth, not just in 2004 but over the 10-year history of the company."

Following is the message from SBA (Small Business Administration) on hearing about Mr. Reddy's Award: "Congratulations Jay Reddy, ProLogic CEO and Founder, Your vision and entrepreneurship have created hundreds of new jobs in the last 12 years. Your dedication to the American dream has made the skies over America safer by developing and delivering innovative air defense programs like Link-16 Alaska (LAK) and Pocket J. Your insight and investment in new technologies have created a new paradigm for military and civilian trauma-patient data recording with devices like the Emergency Management System - Mobile (EMS Mobile™) which has its roots in a device designed and successfully used by the U.S. military in Iraq. Your compassion and caring have helped hundreds of people all over the world through ProLogic's contributions to hurricane and tsunami relief, scouting, as well as curing vision problems among the underprivileged youth worldwide. "

America Bharathi and American Telugu Association congratulate Mr. Reddy on this top recognition and honor. Mr. Reddy is a proof that the American dream is alive and well and that small businesses play a big part in the business of America!

Contribute to "Telugu Tejam!"

"Telugu Tejam" showcases the achievements of our fellow Telugu people in USA. If you or your friends have been recognized for outstanding contributions at work or for community or social service, please consider submitting these achievements to America Bharathi. Report should include details, impact of the work and significance of the award or recognition. A photograph and mini-biographical sketch of the awardee is requested along with the submission.

America Bharathi appreciates Mr. Venugopala Udumula (udumula123@yahoo.com) for contributing this item.

YOGA: An Introduction

Dr. Siva Prasad Kumpatla

We are pleased to present two articles, back to back, about Yoga in this issue's *Our Heritage* section. This introduction is put together to provide some background to Yoga and the next article by Anupama Nvuddi explains the role and utility of yoga for the treatment of common ailments using hypertension as an example. - Editor

One of the greatest assets that ancient India handed over to us is Yoga. Many of us have seen the word "Yoga" in newspapers, in fitness centers, in television programs and in several other places. Also, many of us have colleagues at work who go to Yoga classes. Those who are not aware of Yoga may simply think of it as a physical exercise using many bodily postures, but in reality, Yoga is much more than a mere exercise since it focuses on harmony between body and mind. It derives its philosophy from Indian metaphysical beliefs and can play an important role in maintaining a balance between work and healthy mind and, no wonder, it is popular in the Modern world filled with mechanical life routines.

The word "Yoga" comes from Sanskrit language and means *union* or *merger*, since the goal of this discipline is to strike a balance between body and mind with the ultimate aim of attaining self-enlightenment. It has been estimated by some scholars that Yoga is about 5,000 years old. Several Yoga gurus also claim that it is a highly developed scientific discipline for healthy living that has been perfected through millennia.

Types & Styles of Yoga

Since yoga first came into existence, different types or forms of yoga have evolved over the centuries and were practiced around the globe. These include Ashtanga yoga, Hatha yoga, Raja yoga, Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga, Jnana yoga, Tantra yoga, Kundalini yoga, Kripalu yoga, Vini yoga and Mantra yoga. Each of these forms have a specific purpose or goal. For example, Raja yoga strives to achieve self control - mental clarity, discipline and purity of thought through meditation, simplicity, and non-attachment to mundane, routine, worldly desires and things. Bhakti yoga leads people in the path of devotion and love of God or Universal Spirit. Karma yoga stresses the path of action - it emphasizes on charity, service to fellow human beings and non-aggression as a means to peace. Jnana yoga administers

the path of knowledge and wisdom. There are also different styles of yoga named after the teachers who developed them.

The most commonly practiced form of yoga in USA is Hatha yoga, a system of nearly 200 physical postures (*asanas*), movements and breathing techniques designed to prepare and tune the body to realize good health. Hatha yoga makes a good use of *pranayama* - the science or technique of controlling the breath since breath is the major source of life force or *prana* by yoga philosophy. The two most popular schools of Hatha yoga in USA are Iyengar and Ashtanga yoga. Founded by B.K.S. Iyengar, one of the greatest innovators of yoga, the Iyengar yoga emphasizes on form and alignment and uses innovative variations of hatha yoga techniques. Ashtanga yoga, on the other hand, is relatively more vigorous and uses well orchestrated, dance-like routines and postures towards generation of body heat for purification of body through deep breathing and sweating.

Eight Limbs of Yoga

All yogas share a common lineage back to Maharishi Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, a text written sometime between second century B.C. and the first century A.D. This text outlines the basic philosophy and practices of classical yoga which is separated into eight limbs, each a part of the complete system for mental, physical and spiritual well-being. While the first four limbs are considered external cleansing practices dealing with mental and physical exercises designed to bring the mind in tune with the body, the next four deal with different stages of meditation. These eight limbs of Yoga are a progressive series of steps which purify the body and mind, ultimately leading the practitioner of yoga (a yogi) to enlightenment. Following are the eight limbs or ashtanga (ashta = eight; anga = parts or aspects) of the complete yoga system as they are found

in the famous Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:

- *Yama – Observance of moral discipline for interactions with others
- *Niyama - Moral observances for interactions with yourself
- *Asanas – Postures
- *Pranayama - Breathing modulation
- *Pratyahara - Sensory regulation and inhibition
- *Dharana - Focus or concentration
- *Dhyana - Meditation
- *Samadhi – The ultimate state of bliss – blissful absorption of one's individual consciousness in the essence of God.

Now, let us briefly go through these eight limbs to see what they contain:

1. Yama: While the supposed meaning of *yama* is 'self-control or forbearance', it can also be construed as "attitude" or "behavior" since an attitude can influence our behavior in interactions with others. Five different "yamas" or behavior patterns were mentioned in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras:

Ahimsa (Harmlessness, kindness and adoption of a considered attitude)

Satya (Truthfulness)

Asteya (Non-stealing, do not take what's not yours)

Brahmacharya (Control of senses, responsible and unwavering behavior in moving towards the truth)

Aparigraha (Take only what is necessary, resist or neutralize the desire to acquire and hoard wealth).

The Yoga Sutra emphasizes that adherence to these five yamas makes an individual's life happy and his/her presence instills friendly and pleasant feelings in people surrounding them.

2. Niyama: *Niyama* is a Sanskrit word meaning rules or laws. Unlike the *yamas* that are action-oriented, *niyamas* represent the attitude that we adopt toward ourselves. There are five *niyamas*:

Sauca (cleanliness – both inner and outer; practicing of asanas or pranayama are essential for attaining inner cleanliness)

Samtosa (contentment – learning to be happy with what we have)

Tapas (Keeping the body fit by cleansing it – through asanas, pranayama and diet)

Svadyaya (getting close to yourself – through contemplation, meditation etc.,)

Isvarapranidhana (the philosophy of 'do your best and leave the rest to God or a higher power).

3. Asanas: "Asana" means staying or abiding as in a posture or *bhanga*. Asanas help an individual achieve the unity of body and mind. The asanas have been developed for the purpose of comfort and steadfastness during meditation and pranayama. They harmonize energy flow in the individual thereby bringing transient peace and making the mind worry-free. This quieting or soothing effect of asanas on the brain has been verified by EEG data of brain during meditation demonstrating their healing potential.

4. Pranayama: Pranayama is the manipulation of breath thereby controlling the energy within the individual towards restoring and maintaining health. It gives control of breathing processes and that of vital force. The balancing of the flows of vital forces achieved through pranayama is a key prerequisite for directing the vital forces inward to the chakra system. Pranayama goes hand in hand with the asanas.

5. Pratyahara: This is the fifth limb of Ashtanga Yoga and means 'drawing back or retreat' of the senses from attachment to external objects. By concentrating on something, for example, our breathing during a pranayama session, we sever the links between mind and senses, therefore, the brain rather than processing the signals received from the senses, it will only accept and process the signals sent by sensory organs at the command of the brain. Now we have control over our senses rather than being controlled by them.

6. Dharana: It means concentration or focus of attention in one direction or one object rather than concentrating in many directions. Dharana's goal is to make the mind fixed or focused on one stable entity.

7. Dhyana: Dhyana means profound meditation or meditation without interruption. It involves concentration upon a point of focus with the intention of knowing the truth about it. It takes a lot of energy and practice to attain this ultimate stage of meditation and requires a perfect resonance between our physical self and our vital energy (life).

8. Samadhi: This is the final step in Ashtanga Yoga and it means "to merge or to bring together". It refers to an ultimate state of absorption, that is, we are in a state of Samadhi when we succeed in becoming so absorbed in something that our mind becomes completely one with it. In Samadhi our *personal* completely disappears and nothing can separate us from the object of our choice during that state. It is the union of the

contemplating being with the object of contemplation.

Today, the asanas, pranayama and meditation are very popular or widely practiced in the West. The general focus of yoga in these cases is on the improved physical fitness, mental clarity, stress control and general well-being. However, yoga in reality can offer a lot more than that. It can help the devout practitioners to focus on the physical, psychological and spiritual aspects or a combination of all three. In addition, yoga

has been used to treat several medical ailments. For example, it has been used to alleviate problems associated with many ailments such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, migraine headaches, asthma, backaches, constipation, diabetes, menopause, multiple sclerosis, varicose veins, carpal tunnel syndrome and many chronic illnesses. In the accompanying article Mrs. Anupama Nvuvddi, Yoga Therapist from Indo-American Cancer Research Center, Hyderabad, elaborates on the use of yoga for therapeutic purposes.



ATA 2008 Conference Souvenir Invitation to Authors, Poets and Artists

You are invited to send your literary and artistic works - stories, essays, poetry, novellas, plays, jokes, photo essays, drawings - for publication in the Conference Souvenir of the upcoming ATA World Conference in July, 2008 in New York.

This will be the 10th ATA world conference and as such the theme of the souvenir will be "Dasamaavathaaram". As creative artists, you can interpret this theme in your own way in your works, if possible.

Articles submitted for publication must be original unpublished works, and may not be submitted for publication elsewhere until the souvenir is released or the material turned down for publication.

This being a souvenir of the American Telugu Association, editorial preference will be given to articles dealing with issues of importance, relevance or interest to the American Telugu Diaspora. Preference will also be given to writers living in the United States. Articles may be in Telugu or English (the editorial committee will strive for a balanced mix of languages).

Additional guidelines and details will be published as soon as they are worked out. Please consider this to be an early advance notification and start working on your masterpieces.

With your help and blessings, we will strive to make this ATA souvenir the best one yet!

Sincerely

Sreenadh Jonnavithula, Editor (Souvenir Committee Chair)
Apparo Sunkara, Associate Editor (Souvenir Committee Co-Chair)
Bhargavi Rao, Associate Editor (Souvenir Committee)

Yoga for Common Ailments

Anupama Nvuddi

We are pleased to present this article by Anupama Nvuddi, a Yoga therapist from Hyderabad. She has kindly agreed to contribute 1 or 2 more articles to future issues of America Bharathi on the role of Yoga for the treatment of common ailments. -Editor

Man is the maker of his own destiny. Modern society is full of *rajasika* nature (speed). When the mind is not steady and calm there is an outburst of energy. The body is all the time itching for action with speed and rush, full of anxiety and stress. To calm down the mind, one needs to control the *rajas* and channelize the energies.

Mind is a dangerous weapon; it has great influence over the body. Behavior is the way we express the functioning of the brain. Concentrate your mind upon the natural rhythm of your breath, control yourself from dreaming, reasoning or otherwise becoming mentally active. One who has balance in every act of life is successful and able to enjoy a life of bliss.

The secret of harvesting the benefits of yoga is to manage our energies intelligently. This involves manipulating our behavior by controlling the mind. Let us briefly touch on how behavior results. The functional unit of our nervous system is the neuron or nerve cell and brain is the key part of our central nervous system. The cell body and the dendrites of neuron act as a receiving zone where the information from other nerve cells is received. The axon puts together the information (as electric signals) and transmits it to other cells. This brings us change in behavior, social contact, sensory experience, learning and positive thinking.

In the present day, yoga has hit headlines all over the world. Yoga provides a set of techniques that makes a person better. Yoga has the techniques needed to systematically channel our will power to solve the problems of suffering from various life's problems or suffering due ill health, tensions and stresses.

The rich heritage of our country, passed on to us from the sages, has given us a discipline and tools for keeping our system active and functioning well.

"yogaś citta vrtti nirodhah"

Yoga's ultimate goal is to gain mastery over the mind.

The word yoga means "Unity" or "Oneness". It means balancing and harmonizing the body, mind and emotions. It was always thought that growth does not cease with maturity of the physical body. Each of us contains an unlimited potential for mental and psychic growth to influence our personalities.

So how does yoga help in controlling the distracted mind?

Great sage Patanjali says yoga is the process of joining our small personality with that of Brahman. So by doing yogasanas we make human body systems like Nervous System, Skeletal System, Circulatory System, Respiratory System, Digestive System, Excretory System, Endocrine system etc., work harmoniously and bring the body, mind and emotions together.

Yoga mainly balances the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. When imbalance is experienced at this level, the organs, muscles and nerves no longer function in harmony, rather they act in opposition to each other. By practicing yogasanas very slowly, gently and effortlessly, it will help in shattering the *rajasika* nature of human beings. By doing this in a dynamic manner it takes away the *tamas*, laziness, stagnation and drowsiness.

Asanas are specific body positions which open the energy channels and psychic centers. They are the tools to higher awareness and provide the stable foundation for our exploration of the body, breath, mind and beyond. They also make the mind tranquil and the excessive speed of the mind is reduced. This brings a balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. *Asanas* also bring about balance in the autonomous nervous system and in the endocrine system which in turn is responsible for the reduction of stress.

By doing yogasanas one can gain mastery over one's own desires and this can lead us to overcome worries, anxieties and tensions. Yoga starts working from the



body level and moves towards muscular level, then the breathing level, the mind or emotional level to maintain the balance and calmness of the mind.

The purpose of asanas is to gain mastery over body and physical health. The goal of Pranayama is to gain mastery over mind, through breath and that of Pratyahara is to gain mastery over the mind through our senses.

Role of Yoga

Now let us discuss how yoga plays a key role. Yoga is the science of right living and as such intended to be incorporated, in daily life. It works on all aspects of the person the physical, vital, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual.

Further it is said that the control of mind has two aspects.

- * A power to concentrate and
- * Capacity to remain calm

Yoga can take care of both these aspects and can improve the efficiency of the person and also the personality.

The existence of yoga as a path to better living and ultimate eternal happiness can be traced back to the days of *upanishads* and *puranas*. Swami Satyananda Saraswati in his book says, "According to Mythical tradition, Lord Shiva is said to be the founder of yoga and Goddess Parvati his first disciple. Lord Shiva is widely considered to be the symbol or embodiment of supreme consciousness while Parvati represents supreme knowledge, will and action and is responsible for all creation. This force of energy is also known as *kundalini shakti* i.e., the cosmic force which lies dormant in all beings. Parvati is regarded as the mother of the whole universe. The individual soul is embodied and bound to the world of name and form and also liberate with supreme consciousness through her grace.

Yoga can be taken as a way of life in our culture. Rishis used to practice yoga, but they never maintained a script, yoga has also been referred in scriptures like *upanishads*, *Katopanishad*, *Svetaswata* and *Bhagavad Gita*. Yoga *vasistam* and *yoga sutras* we know today are only through our sages, rishis and munis who have followed yoga as their way of life and became immortal. In 21st century, physical and mental therapy is one of yogas's most important achievements. Yoga has clearly succeeded as an alternative form of therapy in

diseases. According to medical scientists yoga therapy is successful because of the balance it creates in the nervous and endocrine systems which directly influence all the other systems and organs of the body.

Yogasanas have often been thought of as forms of exercise. They are not exercises but techniques which place the physical body in positions that cultivate awareness, relaxation, concentration, stimulation and meditation. Therefore, yoga should be practiced with the mind and the body together not with separate entities.

YOGA FOR HYPERTENSION

The human heart is an incredibly efficient marvel of a pump. It works day and night contracting a hundred thousand times a day to pump blood five hundred thousand times into body's circulation.

When the blood pressure continues to remain very high it overstrains the heart muscles and also the whole of the circulatory system. Circulating blood presses against the walls of the blood vessels with a pressure. The pressure is greatest during systole, when the heart contracts and forces blood into the arteries of the body. The maximum pressure is systolic pressure. When the heart muscles relax, the pressure drops to a minimum. This is known as diastolic pressure. Blood pressure varies from person to person also from time to time. A normal young adult may have a blood pressure of 120/80 (mm of Hg) this means that the systolic pressure is 120, while diastolic is 80. If the heart pumps with more force and also at a greater rate, the cardiac output increases, also increasing the blood pressure.

Risk of events:

The coronaries provide the heart with the elixir of life - vital oxygen and glucose. The coronary vessels must remain efficient at all times. If fatty deposits begin building up in the inner walls of coronary arteries, increasing amounts of fat is laid down, making the arteries narrower. When the blood flow becomes poor, heart is quite incapable, but due to sudden extra workload or increased capacity in physical and emotional activity, it can lead to conditions generally referred to as coronary heart disease (CHD) or Ischaemic heart disease (IHD) or coronary artery disease (CAD).

The reduced blood flow through the coronary arteries leading to insufficient oxygenation of the heart muscles

results in cardiac problems known as CHD.

Let us now look at the kidneys. Kidneys have two important functions.

- * To remove waste products from the blood
- * To regulate the salt and liquid content of the body

The kidneys also act as endocrine organs, secreting substances which have the following effects: i) Formation of red blood cells; (ii) Regulation of blood pressure; (iii) Involvement in the control of calcium metabolism.

Reasons for Hypertension:

Modern living with the stress and strain, mounting tension and pressure in everyday life, too much work pressure, changes in the structure of the society, aggressive behavior, separation from family, changing dietary habits with city-folks, atmospheric pollution often opting for time-saving high-calorie, high-fat, junk food, lack of exercise and increase in smoking and alcohol intake all contribute to the problem. This trend is prevalent in all countries. Blood pressure is affected by emotions, such as fear or anger, when a person leads a life that is full of tensions, anxiety, worry, etc. It also could be due to advancing age.

Diet

High blood pressure levels can usually be lowered by reducing the salt in the diet. Go with the plain menu in regular diet.

Now let us go through some of the exercises that are helpful for hypertension.

Ankle stretch (Standing on toes): While inhaling, raise the arms and heels up, just like standing on the toes. Concentrate at one point. While exhaling, bring the arms down and stand on full foot.

Benefits: Strengthens up nervous system, improves the circulation of blood to all parts of the body.

Trikonasana (Triangle posture)

Inhale, stretch the right leg for about a meter. Both the arms should be at the shoulder levels and straight. While exhaling bend towards right side, place the right palm on the right knee, left arm straight up, palm faces forward, look to the tip of fingers. Maintain the final posture with normal breathing for about a minute. Observe the stretch and changes in the internal parts of the body. While inhaling come straight. Exhale - relax.

Benefits: Strengthens up the functioning of the kidneys, increases the capacity of taking the oxygen in.

Vrukshasana (Tree Posture)

Inhale, fold the right leg, place it on the left thigh.

Exhale, take the arms above the head and adopt namaskara mudra.

Maintain the final posture with normal breathing, by concentrating at one point for about a minute. Inhale, bring the arms by the side of the body.

Exhale put the leg down.

Benefits: Slows down the breathing, reduces the stress level, generates positive thoughts in the mind.

Nadisuddhi Pranayama (Alternate nostril breathing)

Adopt nasika mudra (with right palm, fold the pointing and middle fingers, open up thumb, ring finger and little finger). Inhale with both the nostrils, close the right nostril with thumb, exhale from left nostril and then inhale with same nostril, then close the left nostril and exhale with right nostril and then inhale, again close right nostrilgo on like this for about 5 minutes.

Benefits: It balances the surya nadi and chandra nadi and also balances central nervous system. It calms down the mind, relaxes your body and increases the capacity of intake of oxygen.

In my next article I will discuss about Yoga for the treatment of depression.



Anupama Nvuddi has received a diploma in yoga therapy. She has specialized in cancer and participated in a cancer project at Bangalore Institute of Oncology, Bangalore. She has worked earlier at Medwin Hospitals and Nizams institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad. She has also treated Neuro cases at ASHA Hospitals. She has conducted yoga classes for software professionals at INFOSYS and WIPRO companies. She is currently a faculty member of yoga at Rama Krishna Math and is working as Yoga Therapist at Indo-American Cancer Research Center, Hyderabad.

Publish your works in America Bharathi !

Dear America Bharathi readers,

Do you like to write in English or Telugu? If so, here is an invitation to you from America Bharathi, the magazine of American Telugu Association (ATA). America Bharathi is the first Telugu magazine in America and several thousands of members and non-members in USA and outside read it every quarter. In addition, we are also making the entire issue of America Bharathi available at our ATA website (www.ataworld.org) because of which the readership is several fold more making it a very prominent platform for conveying information about our Telugu community, life in the US, issues faced by Telugu people etc. In addition, we also would like to have articles towards educating our youth about our heritage. Please see below for categories of articles and consider contributing to America Bharathi:

Articles in English:

1. (a) **Essays** on issues faced by Telugu people in US or India; (b) **Short stories** (fictional or non-fictional); (c) **Reports** on events or meetings of interest or significant value.
2. **“Our heritage”**: (Regular feature based on contributions) To educate our youth on our Telugu culture, language, dances, traditions, history, values, remarkable personalities (past and present) etc. We will also consider articles addressing the above topics about India. Please contact Editor if you would like to write for this feature.
3. **“From the desktop of ATA youth”**: (Regular feature). This is a place for articles by our Telugu youth. Please encourage your children to write about topics that would be useful to community. Example topics include, but not limited to, their views about our culture, modern times, social service, interesting experiences during their trips to India. Although we are anticipating contributions from high school or college students, there is no lower or upper age limit. We will consider the works as long as the content and writing are acceptable.
4. **“Telugu Tejam”**: Report about significant achievements of Telugu people in US. Report should include details about the impact of their work, description and significance of the award. A photograph and mini-biographical sketch of the awardee is preferred.
5. **“Spotlight”**: Did your child or a child you know win a significant award, top prize or recognition in academics, cultural or social service oriented programs? Then, this is the place to highlight their achievements to serve as inspiration to fellow Telugu children. Article should include a mini-bio, a photo and a description of achievement(s).

Articles in Telugu:

Poems (according to chandassu); **Kavithalu** (on relevant topics); **Short stories** (fictional or non-fictional); **2 or 3 part serials**; **reports** on significant meetings, activities and initiatives in US or Andhra Pradesh; **Cartoons and Jokes** (appropriate content and intent).

If you have questions on the relevance of your articles, please send an email to Chief Editor at: spkumpatla@hotmail.com

“All articles will be reviewed by America Bharathi committee members and/or invited reviewers with respect to the content, language and relevance to Telugu community. The decision of America Bharathi committee is final.” The decision on acceptance of your article will be communicated to you soon after it is reviewed and found suitable. Accepted articles will be published in the immediate available issue and may be postponed to the next issue if the current issue is full. We will follow “first accepted – first published” basis.

The deadline to “receive” articles towards consideration for 4th quarterly (October - December) issue of America Bharathi is **Friday, November 23, 2007**.

Address to send your articles:

Siva Prasad Kumpatla
P.O. Box 68754
Indianapolis, IN 46268

Electronic files of your articles (MS-word) or digital pictures (JPG format, 1 Mb or less in size) can be sent to: spkumpatla@hotmail.com. Everything else to be mailed to the address above.

Thank you in advance for your contributions

-America Bharathi Committee