

YOGA AS A RETREAT FROM A MODERN LIFE

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According to the World Health Organization 300 million people around the world suffer under depression. (1) This is a huge amount considering the whole population. Nearly 50 percent of those are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. (1) As the Guardian magazine says: "... from the Office for National Statistics that suicide currently stands as the biggest single killer of men aged under 45 in the UK". (2) Knowing this, we would like to admit, that the average economic situation on the planet gradually improves within last decades. Evidence shows that rapid economic growth between 1985 and 2001 was crucial to this enormous reduction in poverty in China. (3) India has seen significant falls in poverty since the 1980s. (4) Mozambique illustrates the rapid reduction in poverty associated with growth between 1996 and 2002, the economy grew by 62 per cent and the proportion of people living in poverty declined from 69 per cent to 54 per cent. (5) We would also like to admit, in the recent time medical care, life expectancy and other social components constantly develop all around the globe. On the one hand we observe the improvement in many areas, which are supposed to promote the well-being of a person, but on the other hand we see an increase on depression rates, mental disorders etc. This is a really serious dilemma of our generation to which we must pay a particular attention.

For the last decades we live in a challenging society – wishing to have more, bigger, better, which obviously led us to working harder and not being satisfied with what we already have. In the Guardian magazine we read, that the Prince Harry suffers under the same feelings, struggles and doubts. He also represents a tacit plea for help, a kind of "Save me from what I'm supposed to be," which usually means autonomous, successful, potent, dominant, along with all the other clichés of what's been termed "hegemonic masculinity". (2) So many disorders of our time are caused by high expectations, ambitions and fast pace of life. We live in competition and constant challenge. Calmness, silence, rest is missing so we search for relaxation practices as well as practices which withdraw the attention and turn it inside. Some World's cultures and religions like Daoism, Buddhism, Hinduism for thousands of years state, that happiness is within and we must look for it inside. Therefore, yoga has become increasingly popular in today's busy society because it offers us such spectrum of solutions. More and more scientists and researchers of our time bring us empirical studies, which prove the benefits of yoga. That is why we consider it to be a savior from the modern life, a safe and silent island for an individual. In this paper we understand yoga as a sum of physical practices, breathing exercises, various meditative technics and some moral guidelines or belief systems. The teacher and his knowledge can help to balance the chaotic and busy life of a modern society and improve its quality.

In the next papers we would like to look at the practice of yoga deeper bringing examples of various practices and their benefits. In this thesis our purpose was to explain the importance and necessity of it.

Keywords: rapid life, yoga philosophy, yoga retreat, harmony, burn out

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