

Krishnamacharya Healing & Yoga Foundation

**IMPLICATIONS OF INDIVIDUALISED YOGA PRACTICE
TO GENERAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**

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Kausthub Desikachar, who shows how rich and endless Yoga is: behind a door and a next one and a next one

To Mart Vau, my husband, who never runs out of patience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Implications of individualised yoga practice to general health conditions” is the final thesis for KHYF Yoga Therapy Training European Batch 4-years studies by Merle Vau. This document has been prepared during last one and half years and the main idea is to summarise and reflect the last four years studies by Merle Vau.

The thesis relay mostly on the theory and experience introduced and taught by Kausthub Desikachar, Hanna Staaff and Karina Freij as well as by other teachers of the tradition of Krishnamacharya. Most valuable has been the knowledge obtained in the classes and the seminars during last five years. The list of literature used in preparing the thesis is presented in the end of this paper. Books of TKV Desikachar, Kausthub Desikachar as well as from other respected authors were the main source of literature used to prepare the thesis.

The thesis starts with an Introduction section. The Introduction gives the background and the general picture of the Yoga and the health definition in our contemporary world.

The next five parts are the main parts of thesis. The first section states the aim of the thesis as well as the targets for the other main parts of the work.

The second part gives a short overview of Yoga. Naturally, there is no ambition to present a ultimate definition or the full picture of Yoga but to introduce the origin and the main aims of Yoga.

The third part – “Yogic way to approach health and human system” is the main theoretical part of the thesis. It covers the fundamental understanding how Yoga sees the health and human system.

The fourth part – “Research” has the major role as a practical part of the thesis. It includes a description of the methodology used in the research and most importantly the summary and the discussion on the research. The qualitative research with open-end questions was conducted with the aim to understand if and how the Individual Yoga Practice works.

The final part – “Conclusion” sums up the most important findings of this thesis.

The appendixes include the list of open-ended questions used in research, sample file of care seeker filled in during yoga consultation and follow-up, sample practices prepared by the author of the thesis and the full answers to research questions grouped by key words.

INTRODUCTION

DKV Desikachar: „It’s my strong view that Yoga Therapy is in early stages of development in the modern era. Though Yoga Therapy has been flourishing in India for more than 2000 years, the context of its delivery is very different today, when it is compared to its glorious past. Hence it needs to undergo some changes, especially in the mode of delivery, so that it is well suited for the contemporary context.

We must not hurry to fix Yoga Therapy protocols or paradigms very soon, but rather, we must give time for its own development through this century. Only then its sustainability into the future will be ensured. In the meantime, those who are serious about Yoga Therapy must take time to train themselves at the higher standard so that the respect Yoga Therapy has gained over history, is maintained.“ (interview Chennai 27.Nov. 2010)

The concept of individual yoga teaching and as well the whole concept of Yoga Therapy is very new in Estonia and even in Europe. The aim of this research is to show how it works, what people gain from it. The outcome of this work would be useful material to present the idea of Yoga Therapy to people.

All those people who participated in the research know about yoga therapy as much they have learned during the process of individual classes. The author of the thesis strongly believes that there is necessary to have different materials to read about Yoga Therapy and Individual approach of yoga, the possibilities of practicing yoga this way. This thesis is to help to fill this gap.

In the frame of this work Yoga Therapy is defined, but the term Individual Class is used to mark very same thing, as the author of the work is not certified Yoga Therapist, she could not name the work done as therapy but used instead the term Individual Class.

According to Yogacharya Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani Yoga is spiritual science for the integrated and holistic development of our physical, mental and moral-spiritual aspects of

being. Yoga is applicable in our day-to-day living, the philosophy of Yoga is practical. Recent advances in the field of research have shown that it has sound scientific basis, yoga has been documented to normalise physiological function. Most importantly Yoga understands health and well being as a dynamic continuum of human nature and not a mere „state“ to be attained and maintained. (Bhavanani 2011).

To start from the boarder view to health 1948 World Health Organisation (WHO) definition states that: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Bhavanani points out that from Yogic perspective it is heartening that the WHO definition gives importance to “Well being” that is a vital aspect of “being” healthy as well as “feeling” healthy. There is no use in a doctor telling patients that all their investigations are “normal” when the patients themselves are not feeling “well”.

It was stated by Sir Donald Acheson in 1988, that public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through organized efforts of society.

On the level of WHO the understanding is following that health is an important investment and driver for development but at the same time as well as one of development’s most important results. For successful development of modern societies, and their political, social and economic progress is considered to be investment in health. There has been a remarkable growth in understanding of the importance to health of the conditions of life, including the distribution of power, influence and resources – the social determinants of health. **Health is now seen in a much more holistic and nuanced way, with the many determinants spread across the whole texture of society.** This was main ideas brought out by Zsuzsanna Jakab in 2011 in the congress of WHO about health in Europe.

Vision for Health 2020 was marked down as follows: A WHO European Region where all people are enabled and supported in achieving their full health potential and well-being,

and in which countries, individually and jointly, work towards reducing inequalities in health within the Region and beyond.

Author of the thesis finds it is important that holistic view and wellbeing are used to talk about the health in broad picture. This is not a way it is seen on everyday bases in western medicine context.

To become now more specific let look us what is the goal of Krishnamacharya Mandiram and how it is placed on broad picture. The slogan of Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram is sutra II.16

II.16 heyam dukhamaṅgatam

DKV Desikachar in his book of „Heart of Yoga“ translates it as follows: „Painful effects that are likely to occur should be anticipated and avoided. ... In brief, the practice of Yoga has as its purpose the reduction of effects that are painful to us by increasing our clarity. ...“

Qualitative aspect of health is something that Yoga and Indian systems of medicine have considered important for thousands of years. Same direction is given by Yoga main text Yoga Sutras where Patanjali tells us that trough the practice of asana we can attain a state that is not touched by extremes.

II.48 tato dvandva anabhighata

Kausthub Desikachar explained at „Heart of Yoga“ seminar in Austria in January 2008 sutra II 48 as follows: Then the Yogi is not affected by extremes of dualities. Asana practice should promote *sattva* quality as well in mind level, to reduce *tamas* and *rajas* dominance. Duality of life is dominated of duality of *gunas*. Through yoga we can learn to allow *sattva* to dominate.

One aim of Yoga is to enable the individual to attain and maintain a dynamic *sukha sthanam* that can be defined as a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

In Bhagavad Gita Yoga is defined using word *samatvam* which means Yoga is equanimity at all levels states Bhavanani. (*yogasthah kurukarmani sangam tyaktva dhanahjaya siddhyasidhyoh samobutva samatvam yoga uchyate* – Bhagavad Gita II.48). His translation is following - perfect state of health wherein physical homeostasis and mental equanimity occur in a balanced and healthy harmony.

It is criticised about WHO definition that one of the main lacunae of the WHO definition lies in the use of the term „state“ that implies health is something to be achieved „once and for all“ with no need for care about it thereafter! Instead there is continuous need to keep working on our health with great vigour and dynamic enthusiasm for the entire span of our life. If health is to be understood as a state, then it must be understood as a dynamic state that varies from day-to-day and often from minute-to-minute! It is common knowledge that more challenging is to maintain dynamic state of health than to attain it in the first place. Any World No.1 sports champion would testify to this inherent truth that applies to sports as well as to life itself. (Bhavanani 2011)

All mentioned above describes the situation where we are today: from one side there is starting of understanding health seeing human system holistically but it is long way to reach to the daily practice. From the other side there is huge deficit in understanding that we need to take care of our health continuously like sportsmen need to train continuously to keep their fitness. Yoga is perfect tool to solve both problems. Yoga looks at the person holistically and is most efficient while practicing daily. Yoga gives the tools to take care of persons' health every day influencing the whole human system.

1 The aim of this thesis

Yoga popularity is increasing very dramatically nowadays. There seems to be three common reasons why people are practicing yoga today: first for physical fitness, second for mystic reasons and third it is fashionable trend. There is lot more to gain from Yoga. Trends appear and disappear, but Yoga has existed for thousands of years. In order to preserve this knowledge we need to bring out more valuable part of the Yoga.

The aim of the thesis is to bring out real life practical gains and real experiences from doing yoga daily supporting health and coping better with life challenges on daily basis.

To achieve the aim the thesis the work consists of three major parts. The target of the theory part is to give the main essence of Yogic way of seeing human system through main models used in Yoga. The target of practical part of the thesis is to collect and show real experiences of doing daily yoga practice. The target of conclusive part is to summarise the connection between first and second part and clearly bring out that yoga is more than physical fitness and substantially more practical than mysticism – yoga is tool to use daily to take care of ones' health, to improve it or restore it and support oneself in daily difficulties.

2 Yoga

To start with we need to know where Yoga comes, the purpose of the Yoga, the models and techniques that convey the idea of Yoga, and how Yoga helps to take care of our human resources.

Yoga is one of the six *darsanas* = philosophical schools that originate from Indian oldest scriptures The *Vedas*. Each of these schools was based on concept of the *Vedas* and contained messages that would help alleviate suffering (*duhkham*), but each in a different way.

Yoga has been developing in India for at least the last 2000 years, so we know: (1) The origins of Yoga for healing are Indian; (2) The epistemological foundations of Yoga for healing are Indian; (3) Yoga for healing emerged out of and accordance with Indian understanding of the body, mind and human system; and thus (4) Yoga for healing is related to, and indeed the product of, these Indian anatomies. (Bossart 2007).

The goal of yoga was considered the elimination of human suffering, so it can be inferred that what was being aimed as an outcome was a sense of happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment from different aspects of life, be it health of the body (*arogyam*), or joy in relationships (*ananda*) or general sense of fulfilment (*santosa*). All this above implies that these philosophers have understood and sought the concept of wellbeing in a multidimensional manner. (Desikachar K 2010).

Three Indian anatomies could be brought out as particularly influential in the formation of Yoga for healing as both philosophical and a practical medical system in India: (1) the *pancamaya* model (described in 3.2), (2) the *prana vayus* model (described in 3.3), and (3) the model of the *Nadis and Chakras* (described in 3.4). (Bossart 2007).

Yoga has numerous practical techniques as well as advice for proper life style in order to attain and maintain health and wellbeing. Two groups of practises are *bahiranga* and

antaranga practices. *Bahiranga* practices such as *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama* and *pratyahara* help produce physical health, using our external faculties of our body. While *antaranga* practices of *dharana* and *dhyana* and *smadhi* work on producing mental health using our bodies internal faculties. It will suffice to say here that Yoga works towards restoration of normalcy in all the systems and/or layers of the human body with special emphasis on the psycho-neuro-immuno-endocrine axis. (Bhavanani 2011; Desikachar K 2008).

Yoga also aims at promoting positive health to help us to tide over health challenges that occur during our lifetime. DKV Desikachar has given colourful example of Yoga preventive and restorative capabilities. Our daily living is like small overdoing to our health, sometimes too little sleep, sometimes too much work etc. Our health is like a bank account, and we can hurt us little by little as long we have credit resources available in the bank. When sources in the bank are over we get sick. We all are born with different amount of resources. Yoga is the daily means to decrease our obligations towards bank. Yoga helps to keep our resources at the amount given to us.

We can build up our positive health balance to help us manage unforeseen health challenges with faster recovery and recuperation, just as we save money in a bank to tide over financial crises. Yoga's unique contributions to modern healthcare is this concept of positive health, both as preventive as well as promotive role in the healthcare. Not less important is the fact that yoga could be used in tandem with other systems of medicine in an integrated manner to benefit patients. (Bhavanani 2011)

3 Yogic way to approach health and human system

Yogic understanding to human system descends from ancient times in India. Today our understanding is influenced very deeply by nowadays understanding of anatomy. We take for granted the information received thanks to microscopes and ultrasounds. We need to step out to understand the picture from larger perspective to combine these two different worlds.

To understand the Yogic approach to health one must cover several concepts. According to main text of Yoga called Yoga Sutras our mind is the source of our problems as well as the mind is the key to solve our problems. All that is happening in our mind is reflected in all human system and is explained through fundamentally important models in Yoga – *panca maya*, *prana vauys* and *nadi chakra* system. Yoga Therapy rises from the Yogic understanding of health and human system. To get nowadays picture of yoga in addition to historical understanding one must cover scientific way of seeing and using yoga.

3.1 Health & mind in the Yoga

Our mind is the main source of our problems and disease as well the key to solve the problems and to heal. The Yoga Sutras state that mind has two extremes and the mind is constantly swinging between these extremes. Everything that is happening in mind is reflected on our whole human system layers. Yoga is defined in Sutras by the *nirodha* state of mind. Yoga teaches to find balance in us and to learn to move more towards the Yoga state of mind.

Svastha in Sanskrit language means **health** in English.

Sva = self *stha* = to stay, to be with

To discover myself and then to stay there is the meaning of Sanskrit word *svastha*.

Source: Yoga Therapy training

Vyadhi in Sanskrit language means **illness** (disease).

Vi = disconnect *adhi* = source of clarity in heart, light

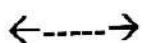
When we are not connected to our self is the meaning of Sanskrit word *vyadhi*.

Source: Yoga Therapy training

Knowledge of the eastern doctor about physical body appears to western people unscientific. Nevertheless for centuries awareness of a profound relation between emotional states and disease has been there and the Eastern medical training begins with a study of how to purify and control the desires and emotions. It was taught to investigate the state of patient's feelings before attacking his physical symptoms. Similarly the Eastern psychologists have much more to say about a definite schematic nature of the mind and emotions of man than their Western colleagues. (Coster 1998 p 88).

It is given in The Sutras that there are two extremes in our mind- a) *vyuttana samskara* vs b) *nirodha samskara*. One main target in Yoga is to shift Yoga practitioner from *vyuttana samskara* towards *nirodha samskara*, using the tools of yoga and taking into account the possibilities and abilities of the student.

Vyuttana samskara



Nirodha samskara

(agitated, not focused mind)

(stable and focused mind)

Stressed state

Calm, content with state

Same mind can experience both extreme states. Those patterns of states (*samskara*) are working like children swing – while one pattern is active, the other is not and vice a versa. At particular moment only one pattern can dominate. The pattern that dominates is felt and seen in the whole system of human. Meaning if we are focused we cannot be agitated or dispersed. If we are agitated or dispersed we cannot focus.

Sutra III 9 says to us that transformation or change in the mind is not fixed - mind is changing constantly. If you have reached calm mind state do not take it for granted. Transformation is a change, and not a permanent one so we cannot take it for granted and what is in the mind extends everywhere. (Therapy studies)

According to the Patanjali mind is the source of our problems as well mind is the key to solve our problems. If we increase the pattern of *vyuttana* we will suffer and feel unhappy. If we increase the pattern of *nirodha* we will feel happy. If our mind is stressed it will show on other levels of the human system (*panca maya* model).

I 31. *duhkha daurmanasya angamejayatva svasaprasvasah viksepsahabhuvah*

Symptoms of <i>vyuttana</i> <i>samskara</i>	Layer	Symptoms of <i>nirodha</i> <i>samskara</i>
<i>Dukham</i> – no space in heart, tightness	Emotional (<i>anandamaya</i>)	<i>sukham</i> - joy, space in heart region, feeling of happiness and freedom
<i>daurmanasya</i> – negative thinking, pessimism, heavy dark thoughts	Personality (<i>vijnanamaya</i>)	<i>saurmanasya</i> - positive thinking, optimism, light happy thoughts
<i>Angamedjayatva</i> – problems in physical level, organs not functioning or (physiological instability – body shaking, dry mouth, fever etc)	Body (<i>annamaya</i>)	<i>angastairyam</i> – body is stable and functioning well
<i>Svasa prasvasa</i> –disturbed breath, short or heavy breath	Breath (<i>pranamaya</i>)	<i>dirgha sukshma</i> – long and smooth breath

If mind is in extreme state it is not only mind that experiences that but whole system. Goal of Yoga is to stay more in stability and calm area. This way Yoga Sutras explain why

through Yoga is possible to influence human system at all the levels – key is to find out which layer is accessible or easier to work with for specific person. While influencing one layer all the others are influenced as well. In Yoga the movement is towards Yoga state called *citta vrtti nirodh*.

1.2 yogah-cittavṛttinirodahah

Patanjali defines yoga as a state of mind (Yoga Sutra I.2) and presents one of the fundamental concepts that it is the mind, which is the source of disturbance or happiness (Yoga Sutra I.5).

1.5 vṛttayah pañcatayyah-kliṣṭākliṣṭāh

This is because the mind is an essential tool in our ability to perceive and understand things and also forms the basis for decisions in life. (K.Desikachar 2010). Through practice we can facilitate (help, support) a smooth flow of *nirodha samskara*. Practice alone is the cause of success. No reading, wearing dress or talking will get us closer to *citta vrtti nirodha*. (Sutra III 10).

To quote Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri to explain the root cause of disease. “Yoga, a wholistic, unified concept of oneness, is *adwaitam* 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. ... 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”.” (Bhavanani pp 10)

According to the TKV Desikachar losing touch with our feelings is one of the biggest causes of stress and anxiety today. It will mean that affection and tenderness are stifled, sensitivity blocked while we are not in touch with our feelings. ... Two simple steps

actually would help. To turn our attention inwards and then listen to the feelings which emanate from the inner sanctum. (2001 pp. 160)

Dr Vasant Lad calls Ayurveda and Yoga as sister sciences. According to him yoga brings man to the natural state of tranquillity which is equilibrium. So from yoga both preventive and curative value can be gained. Yogic practices help to bring natural order and balance to the neurohormones and the metabolism and improve the endocrine metabolism and thus provide fortification against stress. Stress and stress-related disorders like hypertension, diabetes, asthma and obesity are effectively treated with yogic practices. (Lad 2005 pp 113)

3.2 *Pancamaya*

Yoga considers that we are not just the physical body but are of a multifold universal nature according to Bhavanani. While DKV Desikachar has put it this way: “Physical illness agitates the mind, which then submits to the dominance of the senses. **The focus of ancient therapeutic wisdom was to enhance health by preventing this dominance of the senses.** Although seemingly mystical in their presentation, they are essentially grounded in practical realities. Since many of these concepts were abstract, ancient Indian masters used metaphors and symbols that students would comprehend as they progressed in their quest for knowledge....”

One of the most important bases for Yoga's truly holistic model of the human system is presented in *Taittiriya Upanisad*, in a particular the *Brahmanandavalli* section. It is called the *pancamaya* model. *Panca* means “five” and *maya* means something “pervading”. The term *pancamaya* thus indicates that the human system is composed of five fundamental dimensions (physical body, breath/*prana*, intellect, personality, and emotions) that are completely interconnected and interrelated. Indeed, as the text says, they pervade each other. ... None of these five dimensions by itself can completely describe who we are as individuals, but together they present a complete picture of individual.

This interrelationship between the different dimensions of the human system can be approximately represented by the drawing by TKV Desikachar (shown in Figure 1).

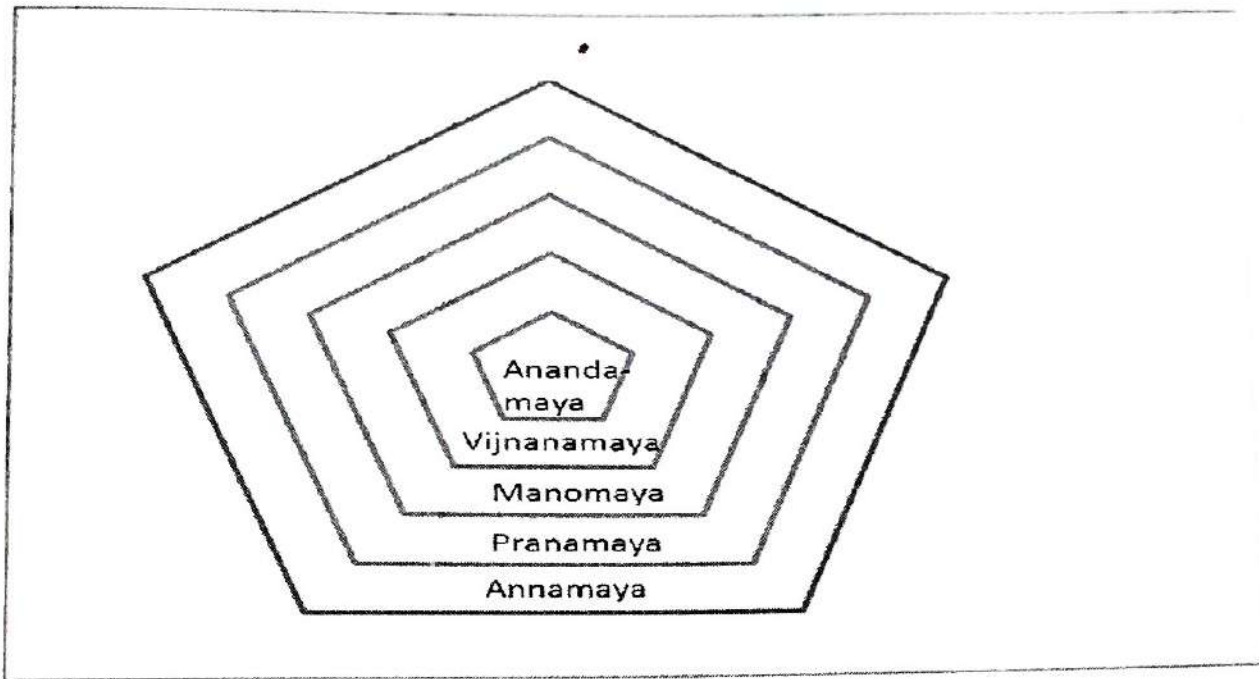


Figure 1. *Pancamaya layers*. (TKV Desikachar 1999) .

The *pancamaya* model gives positive basis of Yoga as a holistic system of healing and the health through the interconnectedness of *mayas*. “It is also the theoretical underpinning of almost all Yoga practices. For example, by changing the length of a person breath (through *asana* and/or *pranayama*), we can greatly influence that person’s mental and emotional state. The same is true of working on mental level. By asking the practitioner to focus on a particular object, we can see that breathing also changes, and over time so do the body and personality. This process takes time but it is a key mechanism underlying the effectiveness of Yoga for healing. (Bossart 2007)... The *Taittiriya Upanisad* specifically says that the *pranamaya* (breath/prana), *manomaya* (intellect), *vijnanamaya* (personality) and *anandamaya* (emotion) dimensions are in the same location as the *annamaya* (physical body). (Bossart 2007)

Other example of expressing how the same model works is presented by Van Lynsebeth (1971). In the breathing cycle every other point involves muscle tension except when the

exhale is complete, only then absolute relaxation can occur. Cutting short the end of exhale means that the exhale is incomplete and that the breathing muscles never quite relax between breaths. Dead air is retained and takes up space that could be occupied by fresh air when the lungs do not empty fully. So ending up that next inhale is less complete than it would otherwise be. This incomplete exhalation is often correlated with hypertonic shoulder and neck muscles. (Gilbert 1999)

One more example will be given to make it even more visible how the *pancamaya* model works. Parallel is brought out between mental and physical events....., the general doctrine of Yoga being that thoughts and emotions can either influence the body in a positive or negative way, and the reverse is just as true: the body state influences the thoughts and emotions. Since slow steady breathing associated with mental calmness, one can steady the mind by steadying the breathing. According to Gilbert, this is less commonly understood than the idea that the breathing will become steady when the mind becomes calm, but it works both ways. (Gilbert 1999)

3.3 Prana Vâyus

Another milestone model to understand Yogic way of thinking is *Prana Vâyus*.

Prana Vâyus presented in *Yogayâjñavalkya Samhitâ* and in many other texts. One way to understand *prâna* is “that which supports the physiology of the body”. In this capacity, *prâna* is sometimes compared to the role of electricity in electronic machinery. Without the electricity, nothing in the machine works, but when electricity is present (assuming the machine is in operating condition) it enables the machine to perform all kinds of different functions. (Bossart 2007)

Krishnamacharya has expressed it as follows: “The Yogi’s of the past understood that human being are different from other non-living entities, on account of what is termed, “*prâna*”. *Prâna* may be translated as “life force” and could also be understood as

synonymous with breath, for if we don't breathe, we are not alive. But, just to differentiate our normal breathing pattern this is quite unconscious, the ancient masters would sometimes use this term *prāna* to refer to conscious breathing. They also believed that the *prāna* was actually an expression of the consciousness within us...."

In the *prāna vāyus* model, *prāna* in different areas of the body is known by different names because *prāna* in different parts of the body supports different function. Functions of different *vāyus*: *prāna vāyu* is responsible for life force, sustenance; *apana vāyu* is responsible for elimination and creation; *samana vāyu* – digestion; *udana vāyu* – communication and *vyana vāyu* – distribution. (Yoga Therapy studies)

It was noticed that the *apāna* region responds to breathing ratios with an emphasis on exhalation, and that the *prāna* area respond to the breathing ratios with an emphasis on inhalation. They also noticed that *nyāsa* and *mudrā* affected the *vyāna vāyu*, and the different chanting could affect the *udāna vāyu* in different and predictable ways.

When we combine the perspective of the *prāna vāyus* with the *pancamaya* ideas about the interrelatedness of the different dimensions of the human system, we can begin to see how these anatomies not only influence, but truly direct our treatment decisions. (Bossart 2007).

3.4 Nadi Chakra system

How life force called *prāna* reached every part of the body? *Nadi Chakra* system gives the answer.

The concept of *nādi-s* was introduced in ancient times. *Nādi-s* are defined as subtle channels in the body that carry *prāna* to the different parts of the body. Some texts state that it is not possible to define the number of *nādi-s*.

Amongst the numerous *nādi-s* that travel throughout the body, three were considered most important. These three *nādi-s* are called *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Suśūmnā*. Of these, *Suśūmnā* is

considered most important. Ancient masters conceived the *Suṣūmnā Nadi* to be the central *nādi* that originated from the *Mūladhārā* (like all other *nādi-s*), and ran along the spine until the crown of the head. *Ida* and *Pingala*, the other two important *nādi-s*, also originated *Mūladhārā* ... are crisscrossing with *Suṣūmnā* at five different locations before terminating at the two sides of nostrils. ... These five crisscrossing points were visualised as being in line with certain important organs of the body with reference to the primary reference point, the *Mūladhārā* ... and were thus conceived to be the seven *cakra-s* of the human system. The *cakra-s* are defined as symbolic energy centres of the body. (DKV Desikachar 2003)

The *prāna* in the *pingala* is called the “*ha*” *prāna* and the *prāna* that is in the *ida* is called “*tha*” *prāna*. According to this anatomical model, one of the points of Yoga practice is to help move the *ha* and the *tha prāna* from the *pingala* and *ida nādi-s* into and up the *Suṣūmnā nadi*. This, not incidentally, is where word “hatha” yoga originates. What complicates this process is that the ancient yogis thought that at the base of the *Suṣūmnā nadi* is a blockage preventing the *ha* and *tha prana* from the entering the *Suṣūmnā nadi*. (Bossart 2007)

There are different names for that blockage. In Yoga Taravalli it is explained on such symbol is the concept of *Kundalini*. *Kundalini* was conceived as a coiled (around itself 3,5 times) serpent that represented impurities or blockages in the system. (DKV Desikachar 2003) Another name for the material blockage is *mala*, which literally means “impurity” and signifies things that are unhealthy for our system and should be eliminated. ... The ancient Yogis thought that the blockage could be eliminated by burning it in the digestive “fire” (*agni*) in the abdomen, and they correlated different aspects of breathing with different cleansing actions on the impurity. (Bossart 2007) To sum up this idea – the goal of yoga is to reduce and to eliminate the *Kundalini/mala* effects, so the flow of prana would not have any blockage to enter *suṣūmnā nadi*. DKV Desikachar concludes this idea as follows: the idea behind the concept of three central *nādi-s* is that while life is characterised by dualities, there is also the potential to exist in harmony.

This *mala* may be physical (*annamaya*), as results from bad food or poor digestion; it may be emotional (*ânandamaya*), resulting from some difficult experiences; it may be unuseful communication styles (*vijnanamaya*), or even negative attitudes (*manomaya*). In other words, the impurity may be in any or all the dimensions of our human system. (Bossart 2007)

According to the subtle anatomy model, Yoga practice is the process by which this blockage is destroyed and *ha* and *tha prâna* are thereby able to flow into and up the *susmnâ nâdi*. The ancient Yogis thought that the blockage could be eliminated by burning it in the digestive “fire” in the abdomen, and they correlated different aspects of breathing with different cleansing actions on the impurity. For example, exhaling was thought to bring the impurity up to the fire to be burned. This corresponds to the observation that when you exhale fully, the abdomen contracts and rises slightly. Inhaling was thought to blow the flame (*agni*) of the digestive fire toward the impurity at the base of the *susumnâ nâdi*, thus bringing it up. (Bossart 2007)

So breathing is a fundamental aspect of *asana* because it is the mechanism which results in the elimination of the blockage preventing the *prana* from flowing into the *susmnâ nâdi*. The whole classification system of *asanas* is based on the type of breathing postures support.

Here some examples are given. *Pascimatana* postures meaning to stretch the back side of the body when trunk moves towards the legs, works with exhalation and are meant to bring impurity (*mala*) towards the fire. *Purvata* postures meaning to stretch the front side of the body, focused is on the inhale and the idea behind is to strengthen the fire (*agni*). In *viparita* (inversions) postures the function of the posture is to intensify the cleaning process by lifting the *mala* above the *agni*. It would be very important to note that according to TKV Desikachar “inversions are more a test of health rather than a tool to enhance it. The ancient masters were of the opinion that as long as we are able to do inverted postures, we know we are healthy. If one was heavy or complained of shortness of breath, it would be

impossible to stay comfortable in such postures. Hence, good health, they felt was an essential pre-requisite to do such postures comfortably”.

All these models and symbols show how the *asana* practice is designed to affect the person on different layers of ourselves, and what actually is behind of yoga practice that is not so obvious at first look.

3.5 Definition of Yoga Therapy

Yoga Therapy is a self-empowering process, where the care-seeker, with the help of the yoga therapist, implements a personalized and evolving yoga practice (a unique practice that includes an appropriate selection of tools from among the wide range of possibilities yoga has to offer), that only addresses the illness in a multi-dimensional manner (including physical, respiratory, mental, behavioural, and emotional), but also aims to alleviate his/her suffering in a progressive, non-invasive and complimentary manner. Depending on the nature of the illness, Yoga Therapy can not only be preventative or curative, but also serve a means to manage the illness, or facilitate healing in the person at all levels. (TKV Desikachar and Kausthub Desikachar).

3.6 Today's science and yoga

In today's world we expect to have scientific proof. There are some examples of how yoga is used by scientifically proven contexts.

Status of Yoga in clinical settings is advanced through the program of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) developed by Kabat-Zinn. (Salmon P. etc 2009) In the frames of this program Kabat-Zinn carefully emphasize mindfulness in Hatha Yoga practice, clearly differentiating it from “physical fitness dressed up in spiritual clothing”. Yoga is well characterised as “mindfulness in motion” an opportunity for sustained attention to body and

breath during a progressive sequence of postural configuration. On the other hand, almost anything that one can do presents an opportunity to practice mindfulness, but there are several aspects of Yoga (and related somatic activities including Tai Chi and Chi Gong) that represent unique convergence of beneficial therapeutic elements suggested by La Forge. These include a) process-oriented focus (present moment); b) awareness of inner states (i.e. proprioceptive and interoceptive cues); c) using the breath as an anchor point; d) specific patterns of postural alignment; e) sensitivity to the flow of movement-based energy (*prana, chi*). All of this is essence of mindfulness through the factors of awareness and focus. Potential benefits of Yoga for relative beginners include following health related applications: 1) manageable physical challenges that should help build confidence along with improvements in physical status; 2) reduction of stress reactivity associated with the impact of illness on both the autonomic nervous system and HPA axis; 3) an opportunity to learn about one's personal physical capabilities and limitations in a relaxed, supportive atmosphere. (Salmon P etc 2009).

Udupa (2007) highlights Yoga's unique contribution because of the fact that Yoga directly affects brain, especially the psychic centre from where all the psychosomatic stress disorders are initiated. Their studies have enabled them to demonstrate that Yogic measures produce expected beneficial results by directly acting on the production of neurohumors. In Udupas view, it seems that it (Yoga) is one of the most efficient and scientific methods for the management of stress diseases.

On Singh view psychosomatic diseases are pathological expressions of biological, psychic and social parameters of health and illness; whereas yogic approaches are ways to bind closely the normal interrelationship of above. Thus he finds yogic approaches vibrant and successful in the management of many psychosomatic diseases. Yogic approaches emphasize self-regulation by the patient and stress the importance of somatopsychic functioning of the individual. Important to bring out is also fact, that due to virtual absence of side effects, there are not many contraindications of yoga therapy. (Singh 2006)

4 Research

In the research part of the thesis real experiences of doing daily yoga practice are found out and discussed. Research part consists of three parts. First part, methodology describes the method that was used for the research. Second part, describes how the research was conducted. Third part is findings and discussion part of the research.

The research was conducted in Estonia that is small Nordic country. In Estonia the Yoga world is diversified and increasing. In overall the way of thinking is that it is modern to say I am doing Yoga. Lot of different traditions and teachers, no clear standards are on the market. Hard to distinguish who is professional teacher, who is not.

The research was conducted in Estonia with the sample of 29 people who have come to the Individual Yoga Class with the author of the thesis. All respondents had a personal asana or seated practice that was designed in line of the studies in Krishnamacharya tradition concepts.

4.1 Method

As the aim of this research is to understand the real life experience through daily yoga practice it was conducted qualitative research using phenomenological method. Phenomenological method is used in all the different fields of science to describe and analyse the subjective experience.

This study is qualitative research. Here was used purposive sampling - subjects are selected because of some characteristic, people attending (or coming to) Individual Yoga class with the author of thesis. According to Patton (1990) stratified purposeful of purposive sampling would be that illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest; facilitates comparisons. Subgroup of interest was people who practice individual yoga at

home. The practice was designed by the author of the thesis in line of the tradition of Krishnamacharya.

Phenomenology is one method of qualitative research that seeks to describe basic lived experience. As a research method it is the study of essences, and in particular case it was main experiences that people doing yoga practice have felt, noticed etc. The gathering of information was done through face to face interviews but as well through e-mails (answering open ended questions).

Phenomenology studies structures of conscious experience as experienced from the first-person point of view, along with relevant conditions of experience. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, the way it is directed through its content.

We all experience various types of experiences including perception, imagination, thought, emotion, desire, volition, and action. Thus, the domain of phenomenology is the range of experiences including these types (among others). Experiences include not only relatively passive experience as in vision or hearing, but also active experience as in this case was individual yoga practice.

There are three distinguishable methods used by classical phenomenologists.

- a) Describe a type of experience just as you find it in your own (past) experience. For example first question: Would you describe your personal experience with yoga while doing your individual program?
- b) Interpret a type of experience by relating it to relevant features of context: People answering what they expected from the process of individual yoga practice and was it received or reached.
- c) Analyses of the form or type of experience: the discussion and findings part where all the answers were grouped through main points or most important issues or as according to the different subjects brought out.

Much of our intentional mental activity is not conscious at all as psychoanalysts have stressed, but may become conscious in the process of therapy or interrogation (in case individual yoga practice), as we come to realize how we feel or think about something. We should allow, then, that the domain of phenomenology — our own experience — spreads out from conscious experience into semi-conscious and even unconscious mental activity, along with relevant background conditions implicitly invoked in our experience. (Patton 2010)

All the material was read through in a manner of iterative, which means transcriptions were read many times to find underlying foci (underlying similar ideas). (Akerlind 2003)

Advantage of this method is describing the real life subjective experience directly from the person. The main limitations of the phenomenological method during this research are small sample size and subjectivity of interpretation of data. Additionally there was no comparison group to compare the outcome of the research. Given the limitations the conclusions derived from the qualitative research can only be indicative and not definitive.

4.2 How this research was conducted?

For this research 13 open ended questions were designed. Introduction letter (appendix nr 2) was sent out to 29 people who have come to Individual Yoga class with the author of the thesis.

In the introduction letter it was given choice for people either:

- a) come to interview and have one extra free of charge individual class
- b) to send the answers of open ended questions and then come to one extra free of charge individual class where the possible areas could be discussed concerning the questions designed

c) to send the answers of open ended questions.

All together answers from 23 people (which make the respond of 79%) were received. All the respondents were grownups in the age between 30-65 years. Answers were recorded either in speed writing and then later on transcribed, or people could sent in their answers to open end questions via e-mail and then later on there was free of charge individual class where some issues could discussed. All the participation was on the voluntary basis.

Majority of the participants in the survey came to the Individual Yoga Class with the author of the thesis during the time period of August 2010 till May 2011. Some participants were practicing yoga according to the principals of Krishnamacarya already for longer time. (4.3.1. gives exact overview of practice period). Classes usually were conducted in two different rooms for yoga therapy in two different locations in the Tallinn. Some exceptional classes (classes with 7 people) were conducted at home atmosphere either at client home or at home of the author of thesis.

All the interviews and the answers were conducted in Estonian language and later translated by the author of thesis.

Here the consultation and individual classes conducted with the questionnaire respondents are described. First meeting called consultation is usually 90 minutes or 120 minutes long. During consultation the main goal is to understand the situation of the person (about health, life style, wishes etc) and start to build relationship. Sample file of care seeker filled in during yoga consultation and follow-up is presented as Appendix nr 3. The data is collected for every single person during the consultation through dialog, when doing some *asanas*, and through overall observation. Follow up part is done in the next classes. Next classes are usually about 60 minutes. First class usually is after 5 or 7 days after the consultation. Second class is after two weeks or so. Following classes are agreed according to the situation (is it acute or not so) and the comprehension ability of the student, how well she/he feels while doing practice, does she/he have lot of questions and any hesitation, but as well how much support (or how quickly) he/she needs.

Teaching and designing an individual practice is very detailed process and demands from teacher to be totally present and listening of person and then being able to find right yoga tools for the concrete person for specific goals. Yoga practice always aims at the mind while dealing with the body in most cases of this research. How to engage mind is the key question and is different for different people. Most often the conscious breathing is main focus to link breath and body. It is rather experiencing the feeling of the breath flowing through the different body parts depending on asana where is the focus. "The feeling of the breath" refers to the feeling of energy or *prāna* moving in the body. (DKV Desikachar 1999) If the breath is smooth and continuous, the asana is beneficial. In some cases sound was used to support the breath if it was acceptable for the person but very often people are not ready for sounds.

Some example practices are given in appendix 4. These are randomly chosen sample practices designed for people participated in the research to illustrate the idea. Some of them may be first practice for the person, while some may be with additions done during the 5th class.

4.3 Research findings and discussion

This part of the thesis is structured as follows: every research question is in separate section as headline. Every section includes key words from the answers when possible. Every section ends with discussion of findings and conclusion. Full answers to the questions are grouped and presented in the appendixes.

4.3.1 How often do you practice?

In total 23 persons answered. More than half of them started to practice yoga during last year before the research was conducted. Eight persons are practicing already for longer time. Majority (91%) of respondents are still practicing. Half of respondents are practicing every day, while 1/3 practicing three to six times a week.

Started	Do you still practice?		How often do you practice?			
	yes	no	every day	6-5 times a week	3-4 times a week	2 (or less) times in a week
06 2007	1					
06 2007	1		1			
06 2007	1			1		
06 2008	1			1		
06 2008	1		1			
06 2008	1					1
06 2009	1	1			1	
06 2009	1				1	
06 2010	1				1	
06 2010	1		1			
06 2010	1	1				
09 2010	1		1			
09 2010	1		1			
09 2010		1				
12 2010	1					
03 2011	1			1		
03 2011	1					1
03 2011	1		1	1		
03 2011	1		1			
03 2011	1		1			
03 2011	1			1		
n.a			1			
n.a	1					1
TOTAL	20	3	11	5	3	3
Out of total	91%	14%	50%	23%	14%	14%

Tabel 1. The frequency of practicing by respondents.

4.3.2 Would you describe your personal experience with yoga while doing your individual program?

This is very personal question and so the answers are different, people appreciate different things they achieve through the practice. The answers are grouped by main experiences but it does not mean that this is only answer. Many time people described their experience and it includes many findings. Majority of answers were about health related issues (26%) and clear mind and contentment with myself (22%). Main keywords from the answers:

- Health related issues
- Time for myself
- Clear mind and contentment with myself
- New energy

- Calming
- Inner peace and achievements
- Ability to focus
- Confidence

This is the way people described their experiences while doing personal yoga practice daily at home environment. All the experiences show the shift from *vyuttana samskara* towards *nirodha samskara* described in theory part 3, being a main goal in yoga. Solving health related issues, like “no pain anymore” is example about moving from *angamedjajatra* to *angastairyam*. “Clear mind” and “focus” are expressions that show that thinking is calm and light, finding solutions, not heavy and pessimistic. All this shows movement from *daurmanasya* towards *saurmanasya*. While comments “contentment with myself” and “inner peace” are examples about moving towards *sukham*. During the classes always the quality of breath is discussed and aimed to be *dirgha and sukshma*, that is also one symptom of *nirodha samskara*. This way the research clearly indicates that personal yoga practice helps to move from *vyuttana samskara* towards *nirodha samskara*.

4.3.3 Has yoga influenced you in any way?

Totally 22 people (96%) said clearly „yes“ for an answer to the question if yoga has influenced them in any way and gave some personal reasons that would be described here. Only one person does not mark the yes answer but gives still positive result from yoga anyway. Main keywords from the answers:

- Relaxing
- No pain
- Supporting new way of life
- Improved breathing
- Contentment

- Calmness
- Clear thinking
- Discipline
- Effect of yoga on their close family members
- Less tired and better rested
- Being present

All these influences show directly how diversified the effect of yoga can be and should be according to the people and their wishes and capacities, abilities and goals. It is very difficult to summarise their different answers. The diversity of answers ensures the individuality of the process. For overall conclusion these keywords indicate peoples feeling of moving towards *nirodha samskara* with the help of yoga. From two answers tendency of the influence through your good feeling other people have been noticed.

4.3.4 Has your health situation changed during the time you have done your personal practice?

From the 23 answers 15 people (65%) said clearly „yes“ their health situation had changed during the time when doing personal yoga practice. Three answers were clear „no“ s (13%) and five (22%) answers were either „I do not know“ or just giving explanation how they felt, that can be different case by case and is discussed here as follows. The question was designed in this way if you say yes your health was improved then was asked to describe how. The main keywords to describe the positive change:

- Overall feeling of health and comfort improved
- No pain
- Improved breathing
- Improved sleeping
- Improved digestion

- Relaxed and calmer

With the answers to this particular question one may notice that for one person small change is big improvement while for another even pain has disappeared conclusion is no change in health situation. People are very subjective and their answers are influenced by many things.

In overall these answers approve once again the movement towards *nirodha samskara* on different layers.

4.3.5 What kinds of changes have taken place in your life during the period when you have done your personal practice?

15 people (65%) out of 23 found that there have taken place some changes in their life after starting personal practice and 8 people either did not know how to answer, did not find any changes in their life or just did not give any answer to this statement. Main keywords from the answers:

- I feel good & I enjoy life
- Less assessments
- Yes, it has changed
- Inner balance and stability in the mind
- Bigger motivation
- Peace
- Self-confidence
- Spiritual growth

Two persons found "*difficult to say*" that during the time they have done individual practice what changes in their life has taken place. Four responses (17%) were: "*either no or not much or no special changes*". And two people did not answer to this statement. The answer

“Yes, it has changed” was actually drastic positive change for this person but as she/he prefers not to be more specific, it will be only knowledge of the author.

These answers show in overall that yoga has helped to take life “easier” for those practitioners. Again clear mark of moving towards *nirodha samskara*.

4.3.6 What has prevented you to do yoga practice?

To the question whether at some time person was unable to practice everybody (96%) except one person said that they were at some point unable to practice.

Reasons for not being able to practice because of health issues in case of eight people (35%), because of while travelling was most often pointed out seven times (30%), laziness is given as a reason in five cases (22%) and too tired can be brought out as a small group as well. But some reasons were given both by the same person, like while I was travelling but as because of laziness also I did not had a chance to practice. So the answers show the reasons given in detail.

Most of these people were motivated enough and disciplined enough to do regular practice. It is human to have breaks in practice. Important is not to feel guilty for not practicing but just to know that yoga is there for your support and if conditions change start again.

4.3.7 What kind of differences have you noticed while practicing and not practicing?

16 people (70%) felt the difference while practicing and when not practicing. Interesting to point out is the nuance how different people having same question start to talk either positive qualities that they felt while practicing, while other people choose to talk with the same question about negative qualities that appeared when not practicing. There was no

answer to this question from one person. One student who had not had any gaps in her/his practicing frequency could not answer this question.

Two following groups of answers show how people notice/felt the difference between times when practicing and when they did not practice.

- While practicing how people felt:
 - clear perspective
 - calmer
 - deeper sleep
 - more energetic and more positive
 - brisk during the day
 - mentally and emotionally balanced
 - focus and self-confidence

- While not practicing what people say about it:
 - Difference is huge
 - Pain was back
 - Tired and restless
 - Thoughts dispersed and difficult to concentrate
 - Agitated and nervous

While meeting with people in individual classes, those remarks are important to notice to use them for motivating people. Too often we take good feeling for granted and assume that things should be this way, not noticing that it comes actually because of yoga or some other specific reason. Often in individual class the teacher works as a detective to notice and find connections what person does and how symptoms of ill health or even improvements are connected.

While practicing yoga answers indicate movement towards *nirodha samskara*. While not practicing the answers indicate movement towards opposite direction of *vyuttana samskara*.

4.3.8 Why you came to individual class?

For 11 people (48%) the answer to the question why you came to individual class was related to the health issues one way or the other. Two other bigger given reasons to come to individual class were appreciating personal approach and because of curiosity to try to do yoga this way. As well no time for yoga group class was mentioned at least by 2 people (9%).

For this question it is important to show here, how the question was designed.

Why you came to individual class?.....

- a. Was this (mentioned above) expectation fulfilled?If yes, please describe how..... (-> mark will be used to mark this sentence in the following text)
- b. If no, please describe how.....

(Please do not be shy, do give any critics, this will be only good for my development and how to improve the quality of individual class).

From the group of health related issues 75% say their expectations were fulfilled. 25% of those find they are on the way to the goal, but not arrived yet.

No time for going to group class was other main reason to come to individual class. For 22% of respondents was individual approach the key reason to choose individual approach.

From these answers it comes out that people expect from yoga very different results and it is very important during the process to ask this question from time to time again, because

during the process goals change. But all this goes under the main thing for yoga teacher – be attentive and act accordingly.

4.3.9 What kind of changes have you noticed in behaviour of other close people like family and friends towards you before and after practice?

Out of 23 responses 14 (61%) said short "no" to answer if they have noticed any change in behaviour of other close people like family and friends towards them before and after practice. "*They behave still same way, oh!*" is the answer that goes to same no group.

One answer "not yet" leaves impression that this option of change in behaviour of other close people like family and friends is at least not excluded or not arrived yet.

Only four people answers (17%) gave interesting insights and admit noticing changes in close people towards them before and after practice. Those four insights are indicating positive change on people close to them.

Author finds this question on very subtle territory. Some people do not see things they don't expect or know about, while others are more sensitive towards surroundings and notice more subtle things. This is area that should be talked about more. Sometime this knowledge of influencing others because of change in your self would even help to motivate people to do yoga practice.

4.3.10 How has individual yoga practice changed connection with yourself?

18 people (78%) out of 23 admit they find differences how they feel about their connection to themselves while doing individual yoga program. Some of them are shy to say it very

clearly but give some hints, while for others it is sure. There are three persons (13%) who think they are developing anyway and do not give credit to yoga and one person gave short “no” answer to this question.

Here below the author will give overview of the answers to the question whether by doing individual yoga program it has brought you to connect with yourself differently?

- Notice more myself
- Calmer
- Self respect and love

Nine answers (39%) show that person has started to notice and see him/herself differently. Two answers where people have found that the individual yoga practice has made them calmer. Seven answers (30%) were strong statements about self respect and loving oneself acquired through individual yoga practice.

Majority of answers clearly indicate that yoga helps to improve the connection with yourself. To discover myself and to learn to know itself refers that person starts to make better decisions for her/himself thanks to clearer picture or understanding. (Sutra II 16, explained in the introduction of thesis, also KYM slogan). **These answers indicate the fundamental aim of yoga to move closer to your self in order to start to understand better yourself and make better decisions that in the end result in less suffering towards *sukham*.**

It corresponds to the translation of Sanskrit word for health explained in the theory part. More challenging is to stay connected to yourself. Anyway it is indication that process is going to the right direction towards health and *sukham*.

4.3.11 How has individual yoga practice changed your outlook towards life?

As it is very broad and big question, answers were not so straightforward. Group of nine people (39%) find that individual yoga practice has changed among other things their outlook towards life. Seven persons (30%) are not so sure the change is because of yoga. Third group consists of people (5 persons 22%) who said no. Main keywords from the answers:

- Changes
 - More positive outlook
 - Less agitation, calmer
 - I dare to be myself, focus at myself
 - Tolerant

- Not so convinced, but admit that yoga has played a role

- No

To conclude the answers for the question whether individual yoga practice changed your outlook towards life people said that yoga helps or at least supports or plays a role in coping better with the life and take life easier. From results it is difficult to conclude is there any connection between practicing yoga and attitude of outlook towards life.

4.3.12 What is the one thing that you think this process of Individual Yoga class brought to you?

To this question of to bring out one thing that Individual Yoga Practice has brought you at least 6 respondents (26%) use the word peace (peace of mind and inner peace).

- Peace

- Mental clarity
- Better feeling of health and comfort and overall wellbeing
- Time for myself
- Yoga as a tool to take care of myself
- Balance

Even if in previous questions some people did not find any improvement through yoga – these answers tell 100% how every single person has gained through doing daily yoga practice at home. Once again answers show clear movement towards *nirodha samskara* symptoms.

4.3.13 Is there anything you would like to add to the topic?

It is very difficult to summarise these answers as it is too open question. At the same time the author of the thesis finds while reading the answers that people refer to bigger hope in life while practicing yoga. One illustrative example from the answers: *“I would like to believe and to see the world is opening even more, to see things that are invisible today.”*

5 Conclusion

Most important personal conclusion for the future of the author from this research was that this kind of research is inevitable from time to time while giving Individual Yoga classes. It would be very useful to conduct similar kind of research once in a year to have better overview how the process is perceived. Those answers gave to the author broader understanding what the respondents experienced while doing Individual Yoga Practice. Open ended questions gave much more information than the discussions usual during in the class.

The aim of the thesis was to bring out real life practical gains from doing yoga daily supporting health and coping better with life challenges on daily basis. For this purpose firstly the most fundamental models of Yoga as the theory was described and secondly the real life research was conducted. The comparison of the theory and the real life findings show strong link. Majority of the answers indicate how practicing Yoga (in the line of Krishnamacharya tradition) diminishes persons' sufferings.

People participating in the research choose to come to Yoga Individual Class most often because of different health related reasons. No time for group class was second biggest reason to choose to come to Individual Class of Yoga. Last but not the least important was appreciation of individual approach.

It was asked to say one thing that respondents think Individual Yoga practice has brought to her/him. Most often the answer was (26%) "peace". Also "better feeling of health, comfort and overall wellbeing" (17%), "time for myself" and "yoga as the tool to take care of me" were brought out.

To the question of if yoga has influenced you in any way, people almost homogeneously answered that "yes". Answers included relaxing, no pain, support my new life style,

improved breathing, contentment with myself, calmness, clear thinking till seeing effect of yoga on their close family members. This shows that individual human beings are very complex in nature. Yoga approach is holistic and can reach so different goals.

In the research respondents described their personal experience with yoga while doing your individual yoga program. From the answers describing personal experience main findings were following: health related gains and experiences, possibility to switch off from the world, time for myself, to clear the mind and contentment with myself, new energy, calming effect and inner piece, ability to focus and confidence etc. were main things brought out.

The respondents were asked if they noticed any change in their health and if they noticed any change in their overall life while doing personal practice. To both answers 65% of answers were positive and claimed positive change.

Also it was asked if the practicing was continuous or not and what were reasons behind not practicing. There were four main reasons that were preventing to practice: health issues, while travelling, laziness and tiredness. It was asked if people felt differences during the practicing and during not practicing periods and majority of respondents marked that they felt the difference. To the question whether at some time person was unable to practice everybody (96%) except one person says they were at some point unable to practice.

Some insights were received that people practicing daily yoga have noticed changes in behaviour of other close people like family or friends somehow towards them before and after practice. However, majority did not notice any this kind of change.

How the yoga practice has changed peoples connection to themselves or changed their outlook towards life. Majority (78%) of respondents admit they find differences how they feel about their connection to themselves while doing personal yoga practice. The question about change of personal outlook towards life turned out too broad, so the answers were not so straightforward. Still there was a small group of people who found that yoga has brought

changes how they see world. There was also a group of five people who clearly disagreed with that.

When starting this study author wanted to go deeply into what is happening while people regularly do their personal practise. The real insights and experiences that people describe were very warm and inspiring. However, the answers from the research surprised the author even though she has been giving the classes, has been designing the practices and has met with the people several times.

To sum up the author finds really relieving to read J.W.Young reflections about Yoga Therapy research: "Although it is much more clear to me now than at the beginning of my teaching, the process is still not without mystery." This learning process of Yoga Therapy has opened doors to endless Yoga World, knowledge that has been there for thousands of years. Thanks to Krishnamacharya, TKV Desikachar and K Desikachar who have brought the knowledge to us and share it with others. It puts a big responsibility to each of our shoulders, it is great honour.

This research is a result of Yoga Therapy Training European Batch 4-years studies and Internship in Yoga Mandiram in Chennai, as well as the Individual Classes given during last three years in Estonia. It is great honour to learn from thousands of years of experience and knowledge that has been made available through this process of studies. It feels special to use this priceless knowledge to help people who are ready and like to help themselves through yoga. This is the outcome of Yoga Individual Classes in one small corner of World called Estonia. The outcome material of this thesis would be suitable to introduce Yoga Therapy and the Individual Yoga approach in Estonia.

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- Materials from courses taken in addition to Yoga Therapy studies in the tradition of Krishnamacharya
 - “Yoga for Life” by K Desikachar 3 days August 2007 Stockholm
 - “Yoga Sutras” by K Desikachar 10 days January 2008 Piesendorf
 - “Universal yet personal” by K Desikachar 3 days March 2008 Tallinn
 - “Yoga for different life stages” by K Desikachar 3 days 2009 Helsinki
 - “Yoga Cikitsa. The Heart of Healing” K Desikachar 6 days May 2010 Kääriku
 - “Pilgrimage of Sound” by K Desikachar 4 days Tallinn
 - “Sutra course HOME OF THE HEART” by K Desikachar 10 days January Piesendorf
 - “Yoga for Women” by Menaka Desikachar 5 days March 2011 Tallinn
 - “Layers of Ourselves” K Desikachar 5days June 2011 Stockholm

Appendix 1. List of open-ended questions.

To begin with I encourage you to write down all the thoughts that come to your mind, when you start to think about the time when you started to do your personal practice. Please do not analyse your experiences in the following way that this can be because of yoga and this not. In life not always we know exactly what is reason for some things. Experience in yoga is very personal and results are very very individual. You can be even suprised when you look back at this period of time, what kind of changes in your life have taken place. But sometimes the change is very little, so we will not notice it and this is fine as well.

All the answers are anonymos, and only I will know who wrote it and it is confidential information. All the answers will be analysed all together.

If you feel you would like to answer more than the space given, please feel free to postpone the next questions.

2. When you started to practice your personal practice?
Do you still practice? YesNo

How often do you practice? (fill in x in proper place)

Every day6-5 times in the week3-4 times in the week.....

2 times in the week.....

3. Would you describe your personal experience with yoga while doing your individual program:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Has yoga influenced you in any way?

1. Yes

how..... If yes, please describe

2. No

5. Has your health situation changed during the time you have done your personal practice?

1. Yes If yes, please describe how

No.....

6. What kind of changes has taken place in your life during the period when you have done your personal practice? (please do not look for direct link with yoga).....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. What has prevented you to do yoga practice? If so, why.....

.....

.....

.....

8. If there have been gaps in your practicing frequency, what kind of differences have you noticed while practicing or not practicing?

1. Yes If yes, please describe how
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. No

9. Why you came to individual class?.....

1. Was this (mentioned above) expectation fulfilled?If
yes, please describe
how.....
.....

2. If no, please describe how.....

(Please do not be shy do give any critics, this will be only good
for my development and how to improve the quality of individual
class.).....
.....
.....

10. What kind of changes have you noticed in behaviour of other close people like
family and friends towards you before and after practice?
.....

.....
.....

11. How has individual yoga practice changed connection with yourself?.....
.....

12. How has individual yoga practice changed your outlook towards life?
.....
.....
.....

13. What is the one thing that you think this process of Individual Yoga practice brought to you?
.....
.....
.....

14. Is there anything you would like to add to the topic?
.....
.....
.....
.....

If you have any suggestion or idea in the area of yoga individual class, please feel free to write it here.....
.....

Thank you very much! Have a nice summer!

Appendix 2. Cover letter to participants in the research.

Tere, lgp

Täna Teid julguse ja avatuse eest proovida jooga isikliku praktika võimalusi iseenda toetamiseks. Ja võimaluse eest avada pisutki ääretult põnevat klassikalise joogamaailma ust Krishnamacharya traditsioonist lähtuvalt ja seda just läbi isikliku praktika. Läbi ajaloo on joogat õpetatud täiskasvanud inimestele just sellisel viisil. Jooga on üks võimalus end toetada elu virvarris, väga iidne ning võimas vahend, kui meil jätkub vaid tarkust ja kannatust sellega tegelemiseks.

Et oma tööd analüüsida ja kindlasti paremaks muuta ning ühtlasi ka kooli KHYF lõpetada (Krishnamacharya Healing and Yoga Foundation www.khyf.net), on mul vaja läbi viia reaalne uuring **jooga isikliku praktika mõjust inimesele**. Seda uuringut ei saa ma teha ilma tagasisideta, seepärast palun ma leida 15-30 minutit oma kallist ajast vastamiseks 13 küsimusele.

See uuring on üks väike sammuke analüüsimaks tänapäeva kontekstis, **kuidas jooga inimest mõjutab**. Vastust küsimusele „kas jooga mõjutab inimest?“ on teatud juba aastatuhandeid „jah, mõjutab“.

Olen koostanud 13 küsimust, millele vastamine võtab aega umb. 15-30 minutit. Vastamiseks on kolm varianti:

- e-kirjana tagasi saata
- e-kirjana tagasi saata ja tulla tasuta tundi
- tulla tasuta tundi ja lisaks tunnile suuliselt vastata neile küsimustele.

Mul on heameel pakkuda võimalust tulla tasuta tundi – uuendama oma isiklikku joogapraktikat, et saada suveks uut jõudu ja inspiratsiooni endaga tegelemiseks.

Kui otsustate vastata küsimustikule, palun, tehke seda **esimesel võimalusel** ja hiljemalt **25.maiks 2011**. Tundi tuleku soovist andke, palun, teada ja lepime aja kokku. Tasuta tunni võimalus kehtib kuni **3.juunini 2011**.

Jõudu ja heasoovlikkust soovides,

Merle Vau

Tel 50 11990

Appendix 3. Sample file of consultation

Individuaaltund

Kuupäev:

Nimi _____ Vanus _____ (sünnikuupäev) _____

Sugu Naine / mees _____ Pikkus _____ Kaal _____

Abielus / vabaabielu / vallaline / lahutatud _____ Laste arv _____ Laste vanus _____

Professioon _____ Haridus _____

Telefon _____ E-kirja aadress _____

Kust kuulsite sellise võimaluse kohta? _____

Varem olen joogaga tegelenud: EI / JAH (täpsusta kui palju ja kus) _____

Sportimisharjumused (kirjelda mida teed igal nädalal) _____

Meelistegevused: _____

Üldine tervislik seisund:
Loetle varem põetud tõsisemad haigused _____

Kas on olnud traumasid (kui jah, siis täpsusta millal ja mis?): _____

Perekonnas esinevad haigused:
Ema -> astma, artriit, diabeet, rasvumus, südame probleemid, depressioon, muu _____

Isa -> astma, artriit, diabeet, rasvumus, südame probleemid, depressioon, muu _____

Ravimite manustamine (loetle üles kõik ravimid, mida praegu võtad) _____

Söögiisu: Normaalne / vähene / suur
Magama jäämine: Hea (uinud kergesti) / raskesti (häiritud)
Uni (magad hommikuni): Häirimatu / häiritud
Seedimine: Regulaarne / kõhukinnisus / lahtisus / vahel häiritud
Energia tase: väga hea / hea / tagasihoidlik / madal / väga madal

Naised

Menstruatsiooni tsükkel: regulaarne / mitte regulaarne / ei ole
Sünnitus normaalne / keiser

NADI PARIKSA (Pulse reading)

Vererõhk _____

Istudes / Lamades

Parem:

Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Vasak:

Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Füüsiline vaatlus

Darsanam – sparsanam (Näeme ja tunneme)

- mis liikumised on võimalikud, mis välistatud
- millisena inimene näib

Prasnam (intervjuu)

Mis eesmärk?

Millal aega harjutamiseks?

Kui palju aega harjutamiseks?

Enesekindluse tase

Emotsionaalne seis

Enesehinnang

Kõne koherentsus

Muud tähelepanekud

Kuupäev

Mitmes kohtumine:

Harjutamise regulaarsus: _____ Kestvus: _____ (min)

Tagasiside ja tähelepanekud

Enne praktikat pulss: Istudes / Lamades

Parem: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Vasak: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Pärast praktikat pulss: Istudes / Lamades

Parem: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Vasak: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Kuupäev

Mitmes kohtumine:

Harjutamise regulaarsus: _____ Kestvus: _____ (min)

Tagasiside ja tähelepanekud

Enne praktikat pulss: Istudes / Lamades

Parem: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Vasak: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Pärast praktikat pulss: Istudes / Lamades

Parem: Vata / pitta / kapha

Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

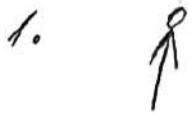
Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)

Vasak: Vata / pitta / kapha

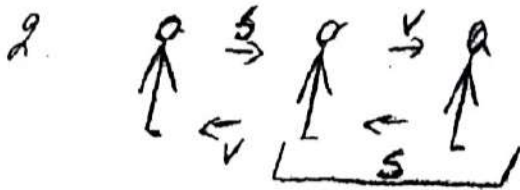
Pulsi tugevus: tugev / keskmine / nõrk

Rütm: regulaarne / ebaregulaarne

Pulss: (_____ lööki/min)



näti end mujavalt x1 ma
 nmita palast taeva pooli - tunne muutub seljar
 jalad paralleelsed
 lõputa pehmelt oma õlgu
 uute "teu hommikut" oma kehale = taju nulline
 mu keha line on

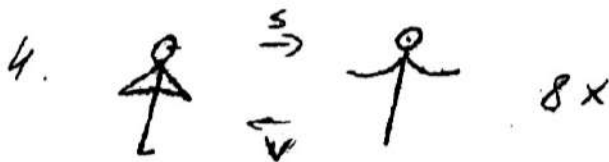


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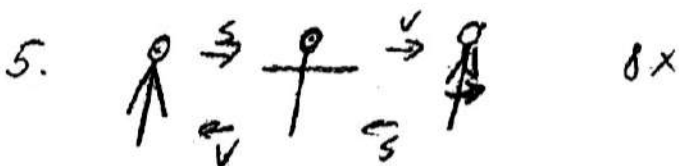
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 v = valja hingamine



6x



8x



8x



10x



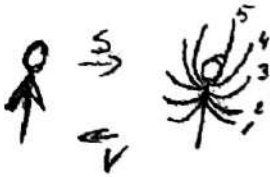
Merle Van
 w. joogatund. e

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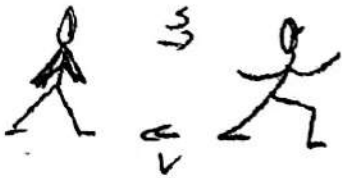
siir - keel nullis, nina lae peale
välja - labi nina, nina püüanda peale. | 6x

2.



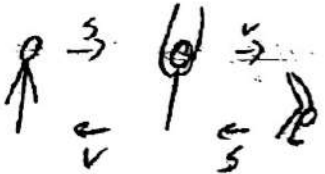
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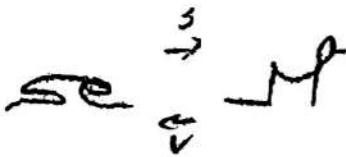
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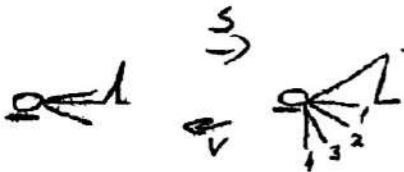
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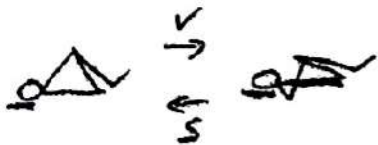
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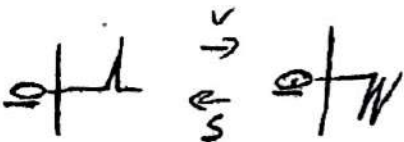
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- 2. 2x
- 3. 2x
- 4. 2x.

7.



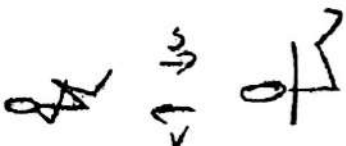
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8.



4x.

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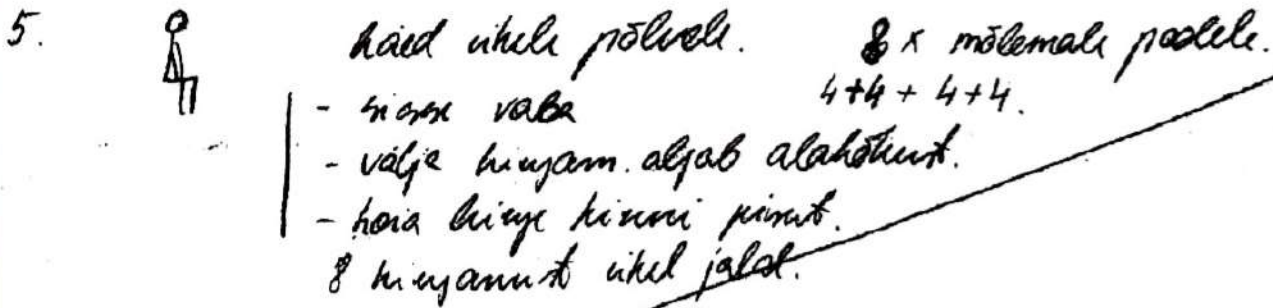
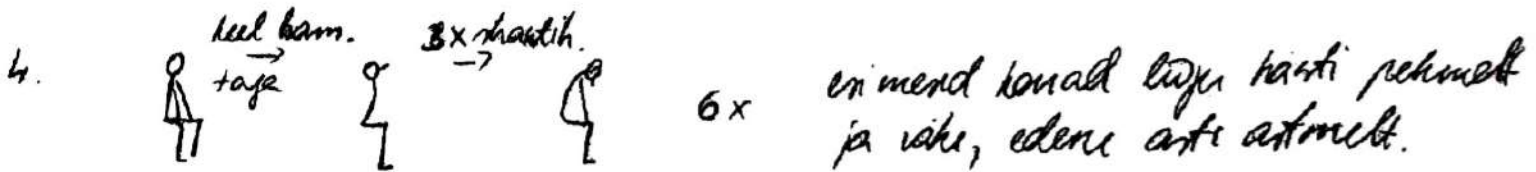
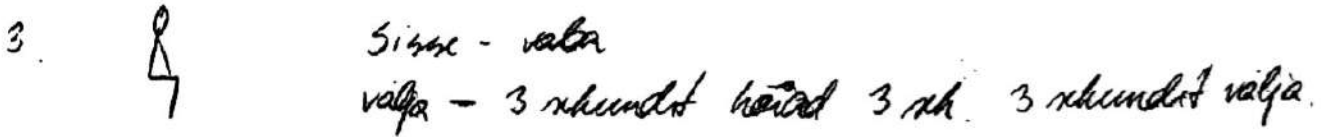
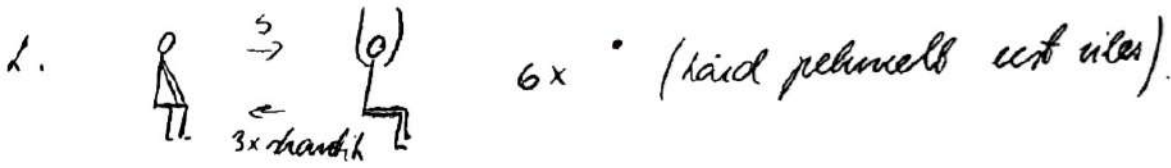
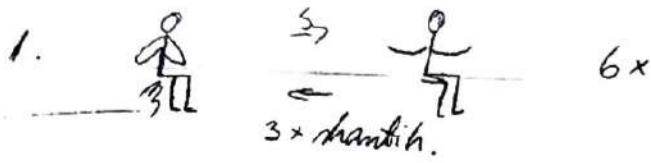


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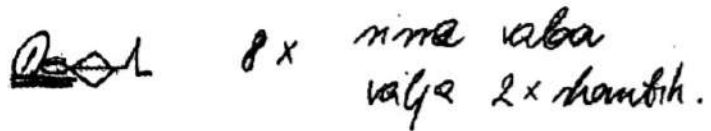


Siir ja mis

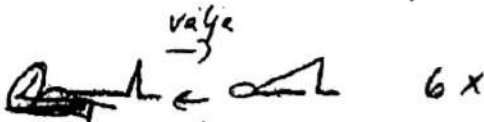


6. sama mis ④

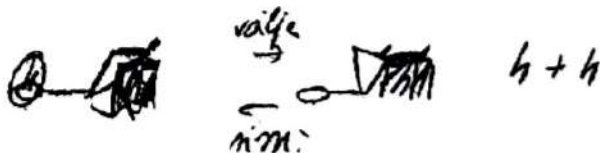
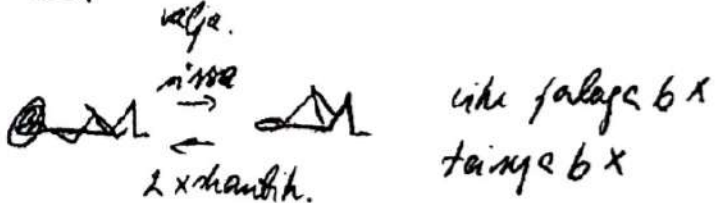
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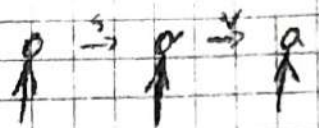
7. sama mis ③

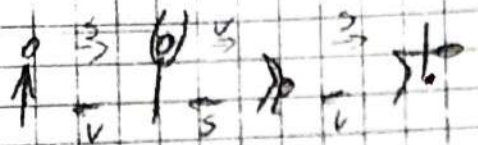


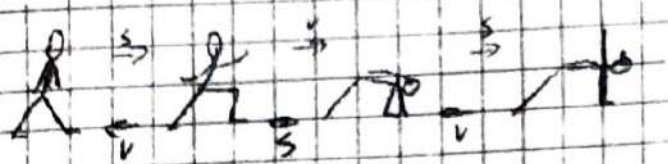
8. sama mis ①

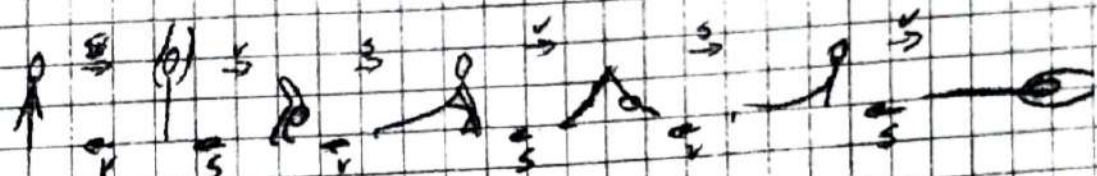


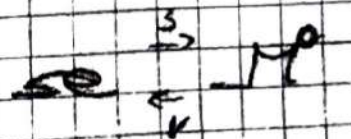
③ sama mis ①

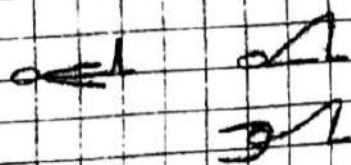
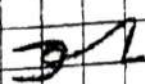
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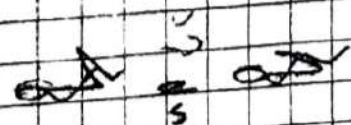
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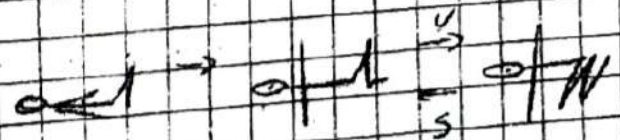
3.  3x *ada pool*

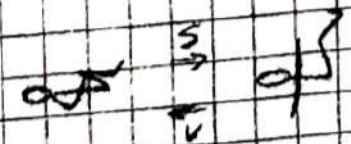
4.  4x

5.  6x

6.  3x
 3x

7.  6x

8.  6x *must analisis & henyamat*

9.  8x

10. 

varabunt	nm		1 way	x 6
paramat	alpa			
paramat	nm			
varabunt	alpa			

Appendix 5. Full answers to research questions grouped by key words.

1. **How often do you practice?** All data given in the research findings and discussion part.
2. **Would you describe your personal experience with yoga while doing your individual program?**

Health related issues.

"This yoga practice is part of my life now. Very unbelievable because every day I had hip pain because of joints problems (arthritis) and since I started to do daily yoga practice I have not had any pain in my hips."

"Main reason to come to individual class was: to cope better with my lower back pain, to soothe the pain after trauma in elbow, and to learn to relax (to push and have willpower are not problem for me but the other side is). All of this I have received. Main reason was also the curiosity about the individual approach in yoga. What else I have received without any knowledge to want it: breathing technique, ability to focus, ability to switch off myself from daily routines and haste for a half an hour, smoothness in movement and flexibility improvement, being aware of my movements and body sensations."

"Unfortunately I do not feel in me any special changes, may be I am not able to see them or I have just too many side illnesses that do not let to see changes in me."

"I started yoga to decrease problems with spine and I practiced actively till the pain was gone. From there on my practice consists of walking with my dog in the forest every morning, while I am doing some breathing exercises, some stretches. And at the moment with birds singing on background. All this gives good and calm start to the day."

"Yoga soothed my back pain and helped to relax my lower back."

"My experience with yoga has been positive. I have become more flexible and my feeling of health and comfort have improved while practicing. Meanwhile have been also setbacks with my health that have been obstacles to practice, but in overall yoga practice are becoming to be my everyday morning routine."

Time for myself

*"It is possibility and **ability to switch off myself from the world and just to be with you.**"*

Clear mind and contentment with myself:

*"Before yoga practice I feel I am confused. I feel that yoga practice gives me solid ground from where to decide. **Makes me like clear paper, to start over.**"*

*"Experience of creating myself good feeling physically and mental calmness or **contentment altogether.**"*

*"I reach such state of mind that is normally very difficult to reach. **I am focused and dedicated.**"*

"Content with myself"

New energy:

*"The best practices are those when the surroundings are silent and in the end of practice I will found that time has flied – **after this kind of practices I feel I have rested well or fresh.** I really enjoy singing my mantra but I do not like to use it when other people are at home and can listen it. **Practice makes me relax.** But I sometimes find myself from the*

thought that I need to run or walk, meaning I have challenge myself physically more or push myself."

Calming:

"Body will become flexible; mind will wake up and from the other side calms down"

"To sum up – to my mind I have become calmer. View to the world is clearer (may be)."

"I do my practice in the evenings before going to bed. I look forward to it, because it is time only for me. By that time I have put kids to the bed and at home is complete silence. I do love this peaceful feeling that will sneak into me during the practice. Sometimes it is hard to empty your mind from daily thoughts but after first exercise thoughts leave me themselves and piece will take place instead."

Inner piece and achievements:

„My life has become clearer, I understand things better and what is most important – seems that I have much more inside piece. This inner piece can be lost in few days and then it would take couple of days to have it back. I have experienced it many many times. How i am feeling is very important factor in my work results - so my ability to handle situations that some years ago would be difficult, has become much better“.

„To start practicing is very difficult, always seems something else is more important. At the same time when started it goes easier. Of course good feeling of health and comfort after the practice is enjoyable. Because of my very very seldom practicing it will not change much but it gives piece for coming day.“

Ability to focus:

"I reach such state of mind that is normally very difficult to reach. I am focused and dedicated."

Confidence:

"My first contact was started because of question "Have you ever meditated?". It was very strange and unfamiliar question for me and I thought I will try something absolutely new for me. And one suggestion was to try yoga and so I came. Individual practice is for me system of exercises that continuously practicing would make me more self-confident, to have more courage and hopefully more open."

Lists of points that were noticed during the practice was given by three people:

"It is different according to my overall health situation but it can be summed up as follows: inner calmness, focus, clearer thinking in combination of higher energy level. Especially strong effect is received from deep ashtanga- vinyasa breathing during exercises." (This probably refers more to her previous experience in Ashtanga yoga).

"A. During exercise the most difficult part has been to keep the focus. B. After the exercise the breathing is much more opened and deeper. C. Sometimes, 1-2 hours after practice I get little sleepy and tired. D. Most important general change has been the ability to focus."

"My experience is:

- Difference in body and in the of feeling of health and comfort before and after practice."

- *I like to use sounds and felt how powerfully they can support and influence me*
- *Sometimes I struggle with discipline, but at the end of practice I feel so grateful for doing this*
- *I have noticed the time difference in different days. Same practice can be sometimes very long, sometimes very short and sometimes timeless*
- *Body and mySELF are always happy”*

3. Has yoga influenced you in any way?

Relaxing

3 respondents bring out effect of relaxing for them. One states very shortly “relaxing”, while the other person gives relaxing effect among long list what he/she has felt as a yoga influence. *“Yoga in the mornings gives me good and calm feeling for whole day. Main reason to come to individual class was: to cope better with my lower back pain, to soothe the pain after trauma in elbow, and to learn to relax (to push and have willpower are not problem for me but the other side is). All of this I have received. Main reason was also the curiosity about the individual approach in yoga. What else I have received without any knowledge to want it: breathing technique, ability to focus, ability to switch off myself from daily routines and haste for a half an hour, smoothness in movement and flexibility improvement, being aware of my movements and body sensations.”* One person finds that his wife, who does yoga, is more relaxed and does better cooking, while for himself yoga gives inner faith.

No pain

Very important result is effect of **no pain** while doing individual yoga practice; it came out from two answers. *“No pain anymore. This yoga practice is part of my life now. Very*

unbelievable because every day I had hip pain because of joints problems (arthritis) and since I started to do daily yoga practice I have not had any pain in my hips.” While the other person expressed it as follows: “Yoga soothed my back pain and helped to relax my lower back. Lot of our problems come from inside us and person needs to deal with those problems. To follow more her/his body and try to understand it.”

Supporting new way of life

“Hard to say if yoga has influenced me, or just my wish to change my lifestyle has brought me to yoga. They support each other.”

Improved breathing

One common effect is about the **breath**, what people did felt while giving feedback if yoga has influenced them. *“Yoga has taught me to breathe and to control the human system, while we usually don t control it – in haste, when tired, nervous or anxious.”* The other response was straight forward: *“I have started to understand the importance of breath.”*

Contentment

One small group can be drawn from 2 peoples answers that highlight **contentment with themselves** brought from yoga. *“Even though my practicing time has been very short I feel bigger contentment with the world and myself.”* And the other response is: *“content with myself. Yoga reminds me constantly that exercises should be done slowly not in a hurry.”*

Calmness

Calmness or inner calmness can be headline for next small group of people (3 persons that is 13%). *"I believe that I have changed to become calmer and to have more patience, not seeing things only from my point of view. Sometimes I look at my thoughts and actions like outsider and this is pretty interesting."* While the other person expresses it as follows: *"It is different according to my overall health situation but it can be summed up as follows: inner calmness, focus, clearer thinking in combination of higher energy level. Especially strong effect is received from deep ashtanga- vinyasa breathing during excersises."* While the 3rd person brings out the calmness among the other things: *"to my mind I have become more calmer. View to the world is clearer (may be). Body is more flexibile, breathing is calmer."*

Clear thinking

"As I am in the process of yoga and changing my dietary choices I have found that diet gives physical freshness and yoga is more about mental freshness, even though the line between those two is very vague. Important is to end the day as well or fresh as I start it. To be able to do that is important for me."

Discipline

"In the morning it is easier for body to wake up."

One person has found that yoga has helped to find some **discipline** in life. *"Yoga has disciplined me a little, meaning almost every morning I do my practice before breakfast."*

Effect of yoga on their close family members

Two people claim to see **the effect of yoga on their close family members** as well saying some things about their selves as well. *"It is difficult to say how much I have let myself to be influenced by yoga, through active practice. But definitely I feel direct influence of yoga through my closest people (especially of course my husband), whose better feeling of himself (feeling of health and comfort) in surrounding world is passing to others as well."* While the other person finds that *"my wife is more relaxed and does better cooking"* and for him he says the *"yoga gives me inner faith"*.

Less tired and better rested

One group of findings was **less tired and better rested**: *"I feel that I am richer for one experience and I believe it works. I felt less tired while I was practicing. And: I have noticed if some evening I am not able to practice my sleep is not so sound. Even though I think I do not have any problems with sleeping. While doing yoga my sleep is shorter and I feel better rested."*

Being present

Being present in the moment would be one statement: *"for by now I know that after big effort it is possible to be present for you, but it is big challenge for me"*.

List of findings

Many people gave a list of influence felt from yoga and here is one example of this: "*more balanced, more self-confident, increased tolerance for myself and for others, more sensible, more aware of body, caring and more open*". And: "*Physical wellbeing, psychically balanced and step by step more patience have been added*". And: "*All kinds of problems have been balanced. Digestion, mental stability (to think clearly), physical endurance (stamina) has approved without additional physical training, flexibility*".

4. Has your health situation changed during the time you have done your personal practice?

Overall feeling of health and comfort improved

From the positive 15th peoples feedback we can find different experiences like: "*In overall the feeling of health and comfort has improved*", saying one person. While the other answer was: "*I feel more self-confident and more aware of my body*".

"*I am able to listen myself better and react when something is wrong*" was given answer as well. "*I felt less tired*", was one straightforward answer.

One positive answer was given this way: "*Actually it is difficult question. As I am confident that yoga can influence health positive way already this believe makes me believe and already influenced my health. Also I may say that this spring compared to last 3-4 years I am more energetic and happier, I wake up earlier and no neck problems. But still feel that back could be straighter*".

No pain

Many people felt the yoga practice influenced their health, removing their pain in different areas. Answers concerning the pain were following: *"My back problems are not there anymore after starting yoga"*. One positive explanation was: *"tension in neck area and pain in lower back have decreased dramatically."* *"Inner stability"*. *"No pain anymore"*, was said by one person. The other one felt: *"soothed back pain"*.

"My back pain is almost gone or is gone after practice, digestion is better. My posture is better", was said.

One person said "yes", but did not explain how the health was improved

Improved breathing

For the breathing problems one person have had good result from yoga: *"I started yoga because of breathing problems (I felt there is not enough air, not enough oxygen, I always felt want to yawn but to yawn actually I could not properly). At first I practiced quite often (4-5 times a week). Today this problem does not exist and unfortunately I do not practice anymore"*.

Improved sleeping & improved digestion & relaxed & calmer

Separate group can be drawn from the answers that give several reasons how health was improved. One person point out: *"a) Generally I sleep better. b) I have less headache weekends. c) Digestion has improved. (Less burning sensation in my stomach)"*

"In 2007 I was diagnosed 3-4 disk pro-laps but since then my back problem is much better. Only very seldom I feel it especially if the pauses in practicing are too long. I have had 3 times depression (last time 12 y ago because of menopause) so now when I practice yoga"

general wellbeing or feeling of health and comfort is much better compared to the times when I did not practice yoga."

"Seems that my problem with the bladder is reduced. I feel I am more relaxed and calmer. I will fall to sleep better, easier" was a list from one person.

No, but

There was group of 3 people (13%) with "No" answers and actually the answers do not say that yoga has not helped them but are given here: *"No, because I was healthy when starting yoga"*, finds a person. *"No, because I guess I have practiced too little to feel such changes"*, was feedback from the other person. And one no answer could actually be interpreted in the positive answers group: *"NO. My health situation has not improved neither went worse. Back pain is still there but it is easier to cope with that, especially after the practice the feeling is light and it is good to bend forward"*.

Two people did not know: *"I do not know any specific example to give"* and "no" answer from the other.

Three peoples answers were had positive and negative content: *"In overall the situation concerning the pain and inflammation is improved, even though there worse days."*

"Big changes I have not noticed. But to my mind positive is the fact that there have been no new MS(Multiplex sclerosis) niduses creation in my brain . Bad is the fact that while I have started to do yoga there have been some problems with lower back and in the blood and in urine the amount of residues have increased – but I do not see here connection with yoga."

"In overall my feeling of health and comfort have improved and mentality is sharper except now. Right now there is lot of all kind of pain. My weight has been reduced, eating more stable etc.- but have been setbacks – back pain and joint pain. But it may not be because of yoga."

5. What kinds of changes have taken place in your life during the period when you have done your personal practice? (Please do not look for direct link with yoga).

I feel good& enjoy life

"I feel good. I enjoy life more. What concerns me or is not so nice is that when waking up in the morning I have forgotten that I am happy. Good is that bad things are gone as well. But why I need to look for this good feeling every day again and find it. I would like that this good feeling would stay with me even after waking up, and not to have to deal with it especially day by day."

Less assessments

"I am giving less and less assessments to surrounding things. I choose what to say and what to leave for my knowledge. Gossip is not my friend. If I find myself thinking or saying about something or somebody negatively I feel bad about it and say sorry at least in my thoughts."

Yes, it has changed

"Yes it has changed" – This is very good change for this person but as she/he prefers not to be more specific, it will be only knowledge of the author.

Inner balance and stability in the mind

"There have been lot of changes in my life during those last 3 years (to be more correct how I perceive the world). I believe that the main initiator has been drastic changes in economic situation that have tested my existentialism very much. At the same time I should admit while analysing it now afterwards, there has been some inner stability that has kept

me on the road. What has given this **inner balance and stability in the mind....** this can be discussed. ☺”

Self-confidence

“Life is clearer and **self-confidence** has increased. I believe it can become even better.”

Bigger motivation

“I started to practice every day in November and following things have happened since: broke up with my boyfriend, I have started to want very very much to travel (I came from Denmark and will go to Scotland, I have done few first steps as volunteer, and I feel **bigger motivation towards my work and my studies.**”

Peace

“I have started to feel the **glimpse of blissful piece** that I have been missing after divorce (4 month ago). My emotions do not change from one extreme to another. I am not so easily agitated. If I am angry about something it will last lesser time. Like anger will end up and fortunately it happens more seldom. I have started to see beauty around myself and sincere happiness about my children is fortunately back. But it is important to say that in addition to yoga I am working with myself a lot. I have been meditating and will continue with that and take care of myself to keep my mentality fresh. “

Spiritual growth

"There have taken place many many changes – in working life and in relationships. And interesting is, in good way. Interesting job offers, nice and interesting people, workshops – it is continuous development – I dare to say spiritual growth."

Other

"I do hope it has influenced my health." Was one, not so sure answer.

"I can't give you specific example, but human being is continuously developing and growing".

"Healthier food, earlier to bed, 2 month no alcohol."

"My tempo of life is changed much – when I started to practice yoga I was at home with my third child, now I am working and doing hundred more things." "I have studied to become psychotherapist, divorced, children grown up, moved from Finland to Estonia etc."

This answer goes beyond this specific research as it refers to longer time of this person's life when she/he has been doing yoga in general not specifically in Krishnamacharya tradition.

"I can't say that there have been big changes (but before coming to yoga there were huge changes)."

Two persons found *"difficult to say"* that during the time they have done individual practice what changes in their life has taken place. Four responses (17%) were: *"either no or not much or no special changes"*.

One person found: *"too little time of practice to say anything"*.

And two people did not answer to this statement.

6. What has prevented you to do yoga practice?

Different health issues as obstacle

"When children (3) were sick it was not possible to find time for myself and actually I did not give much effort."

"Pain and inflammation did not let to practice"

"I had common cold"

"When away from home, sicknesses (common cold, viruses- sometimes), but the biggest obstacle is laziness."

"I have made 10 day long pauses because of my back pain"

"First small gap was when I was sick in December. But then second gap was when my morning practice was changed to evening practice and it turned out impossible for me (I never thought so myself) – it was too hard for me to motivate myself in the evenings. I do not know if it is laziness?"

"I feel too tired or I haven't slept properly or I feel unbalanced and/or dizzy"

"Because of travelling for my job. Health problems in april, may – pain in back and joints would not let me to practice and I did not dare to."

While travelling

"I was travelling"

"Mornings when my husband is away and everything (2 children) depends only on me."

"Once I was sick and during travelling it is complicated to practice"

"While I was travelling I had chance to practice only 2 times in the week."

"Because of travelling, for my job. Health problems in April, May – pain in back and joints would not let me to practice and I did not dare to".

Some other examples: " when we host somebody for a week or so I am unable to wake up earlier, or while travelling – in small hotel rooms it is sooo hard."

Too tired

"because of being too tired".

"I feel too tired or I haven't slept properly or I feel unbalanced and/or dizzy"

"There have been no periods without practice only sometimes evenings when I am too tired to do practice because of late time as well and then to do practice would be forcing myself..."

Laziness

"There are periods when I do not take much care of myself (there is no way I can call it active practice anyway) Definitely, it is because of laziness. Fortunately I have learned to listen and feel my body and whole system and when the balance is lost I can win the laziness."

"Either I am lazy or there is just no time."

"Because of laziness".

"When away from home, sicknesses (common cold, viruses- sometimes), but the biggest obstacle is laziness."

"First small gap was when I was sick in December. But then second gap was when my morning practice was changed to evening practice and it turned out impossible for me (I never thought so myself) – it was too hard for me to motivate myself in the evenings. I do not know if it is laziness?"

Other

"If the day goes well and there is so much to do. Always there is question weather to do your job or go and practice yoga – to increase value."

"I forget"

"When children were small, because of work, studies"- talking about longer period of life.

"I have had days when it is hard to find 5 minutes for myself. From time to time it is still so."

7. What kind of differences have you noticed while practicing and not practicing?

While practicing how people felt

"If I need more **clear perspective** in my life then I feel need to do yoga.

"Usually I am restless and nervous. It seems that during the practicing periods I am **calmer.**"

"I slept better, meaning deeper".

"It seemed that while practicing I felt **more energetic and more positive**".

"when I am practicing in the morning I feel more lively or brisk during the day".

"Yes"..... but no explanation

"Feeling of health and comfort improved, mentally and emotionally more stable or balanced. Of course physically better feeling and improved sleep quality".

"General feeling during frequent practice is slightly better. The first practises after the gap generate very good feeling".

"Sharpness (liveliness), ability to concentrate and focus, self- confidence, straight back, feeling of balance were weak or lost or never been there before".

While not practicing what people say about it:

"I feel the difference at once when I skip some days. Strange but the difference is huge. I can feel it even same day if I skipped the practice in the morning".

"Very strong pain was back".

"I was more restless and often tired".

"Thoughts are dispersed, difficulty to concentrate on one thing. In addition worrying without real reason will appear. When it is emotionally difficult I start yoga again".

"I was agitated or nervous, in haste, and felt struggling or rattling".

"After longer gap some exercise are more challenging".

No clear positive or negative influences felt:

"As I was able only practice when I felt better overall feeling of health and comfort was better."

"I felt missing this practicing time (30 min) just for me, nothing else".

No difference:

"I have felt quite well for quite some time by now".

"No, these were very short periods".

"No difference" for one student.

Setbacks from the practice:

"While starting to practice yoga I was kind of sceptic about it. But actually while practicing I felt my self well and what is more important I liked to practice. I think that this inner nervousness that was constant before practicing yoga amplified after quitting yoga, and I feel kind of reverted back. But at the same time it can be because of change of season – because last week when it was sunny and warmer I felt myself much better, and stronger inside".

"Back pain went away when I did not practice, but in the mornings I felt missing something".

8. Why you came to individual class?

Answers are grouped as follows:

Health:

"Daughter suggested for my health".

"Pain in the hip joint. ->. "no pain anymore".

"health issues.." -> "Partly fulfilled". Not -> "I feel that stronger and more challenging practice would suite me better. Like said previously, ashtanga-vinyasa deep breathing influences my a lot, helps me to realign the inner and outside. In case of your practice it remains only outside (at least this part what I feel)."

"To take care of my health" ->."I do hope yes".

"I wanted to have some exercise or something in the morning" -> "when I am practicing in the morning I feel more lively or brisk during the day".

"I had very strong pain in the back of my head". ->"pain has almost gone".

"One doctor whom I know, suggested this to me, because in the group class I did not feel well". ->"I did not expect anything specific. It was more like one sign from destiny that I decided to go with. I like individual class because all the attention of teacher is at me and if I have questions then I will have answers at the same time from teacher. Also I can give direct feedback if I do not feel comfortable during some exercises, and it will be changed quickly".

"I came because of back pain that I had for quite some time. I believe that some inner balance that was achieved abled me to continue with active sports and today I am happy to play tennis (direct translation: wave my arm with joy tennis racket in my hand)".

"There were two reasons: first of all because I am constantly restless and agitated or excited (two together). This kind of inner feeling disturbs me, makes me insecure and makes focusing difficult. From the point of view of my self development I felt yoga is good possibility to move inside me to the right direction and to change. For second reason individual class is good option for me because of very tight daily time schedule".

"It was fulfilled in that sense that I received individual approach that I really like. In the class there was nothing else except me and my practice".

"I have not fulfilled my goal. But I hope when practicing again I will move towards and closer to my goal. With other words my expectations will be fulfilled if I have found my inner piece. Also I think, that in case of individual class fulfilment of expectations is very much up to student. If the student is more open the easier is for teacher to work with student. I have to admit that I found out during this process how closed I am and how difficult it is for me to open up."

"I wanted." -> "I learned good exercises to relax my back and how to calm my mind before going to the bed. Worked very well."

No time for going to group class:

"To practice yoga without leaving home and do it the best way for me." -> "Yes, very much was fulfilled".

"It is not possible for me to go for group classes" -> "Fulfilled in that sense – that my difficulties and uncomfortable feeling about breathing is disappeared. Not fulfilled because of myself – I am not able to find time for yoga. It seems always that time for yoga is place to take some time from. Please give me some consultancy on time planning."

Individual approach:

"To start to practice individually and to feel/ to notice myself more". -> "So far so good".

"I felt being alone with teacher I can learn more and come closer to the essence of it".

"it was fulfilled – I got to know myself better".

"I like personal approach". -> "Yes it was fulfilled. I got suitable practice and got an opportunity to talk about my problems".

"I like the personal approach and it is important for me to be mentally on high level (at my peak) and keep it stable there." -> "If I would practice daily, this would give more stability, but seems so that need for that is not so high to motivate me more".

Curiosity

"Mainly because of curiosity, how it is. But as well to bring change and variety into my life". -> "Yes it was fulfilled. Compared to group class and individual work I like to be in the centre of attention, and that somebody is able to teach me exactly what I need. I like that teacher is following me and makes corrections, changes exercises if necessary and takes into account my feedback and wishes".

"I read a book "Eat, pray, love" and become interested". -> "now I know what it is".

Balance:

"Yes my expectations to find again the person inside me who has heart and soul in right place was fulfilled. I found them. Also I wanted to find balance – I am on my way but still to go as well. I will continue with yoga practice because it has become nice ritual of ending my day and I am convinced that yoga would help be to fix the balance inside me".

Other reasons:

"Individual class came to me". -> "In overall I do not like group classes for yoga, because it will disturb to concentrate and to find suitable tempo for me, that I feel are important in yoga. My expectations are more than fulfilled, because I have received more than expected".

"It seems that this possibility found me at my home and it would be stupid not to try it. But I admit that going to group class would take courage or would be challenging. I find that most important are the trust and openness (to be tolerant)".

"Wife told to". -> "I expected more physical effect and strength from regular practice and I expected faster and more clear effect".

"My expectation was fulfilled very much. Being attentive in asana, about my body, about body and breath cooperation increased very much. I became aware of my body specialities and opportunities and need to modify according to my needs and abilities."

9. What kind of changes have you noticed in behaviour of other close people like family and friends towards you before and after practice?

Out of 23 responses 14 (61%) say shortly "no" to answer if they have noticed any change in behaviour of other close people like family and friends towards them before and after practice. *"They behave still same way, oh!"* is the answer that goes to same no group.

One person has noticed: *"After the practice I have noticed reflection of the moment – my good feeling shines at them and becomes back to me. During the practicing period I have changed I guess and many close people do not understand why or what to do with that".*

One answer "not yet" leaves impression that this option of change in behaviour of other close people like family and friends is at least not excluded or not arrived yet.

4 answers (17%) gave interesting insights and admit noticing changes in close people towards them before and after practice:

"It is difficult to say how much I have let myself to be influenced by yoga, through active practice. But definitely I feel direct influence of yoga through my closest people (especially of course my husband who does daily personal practice in the same tradition), whose better feeling of himself (feeling of health and comfort) in surrounding world is passing to others as well.

"Hard to say something as the practicing period was too short for me. But may be I could say that relative importance of people who see things in life black and white and are negative in their views towards life, is diminishing. And also I feel that for those negative people I give depressive influence with my positive views. And what is very good that in my life have appeared some new friends (acquaintances)."

"They were supportive before and are continuing with that. I have seen the interest towards yoga growing in my friend's circles also because of my small but very powerful experience."

"I do not dare to state something but it seems so. At my office colleagues are surprised how I accomplish often things that others could not."

"To be honest I have not looked at it. I have changed my way to relate to things but hard to say is it positive or negative change".

10. How has individual yoga practice changed connection with yourself?

9 Answers (39%) that show that person has started to notice and see him/herself differently.

Notice more myself

"Yes I have started to love myself more. When I am looking at my CV it feels what a great person but inside I do not feel it. I have started to feel myself more.

"I am more aware of my dreams, wishes and expectations".

"I have started to convince and to persuade myself not to worry so much (especially about small things, details), everything will work out anyway. One needs to take care of health and nerves."

"I follow my breath. If I eat candies I think is this necessary and what I will receive actually. First of all is chocolate and candies good for my body and health".

"I am able to listen myself better and react when something is wrong".

"To focus at myself is soo good, especially while taking into account that the outside life, information and temptations reach us faster and with bigger pressure than before."

"Hard to say, because I have not practiced long enough. Most probably I have started to think about myself more."

"I have started to care more about myself and to give more time just for myself to take care of me."

"I take into consideration my feeling much more that before and try not to create difficulties for myself or to my body (I do not strain much but actually it seems I am able to do more). Feels like the old truth seems to be real – majority things you need to do mentally then you do not need to even execute this. But actually to state something very specific how it is in reality is very difficult."

2 Answers where people (9%) have found that the individual yoga practice has made them calmer.

Calmer

"I am really calmer during the day, the tempo seems to be slower but the result is same as earlier. Details are not so agitating easily. The centre of my mood has moved from outside agitators to more inside. What others do or don't do is less agitating. While waiting for something I can focus to my body posture/ standing or seated, my breath – and at this moment it is much easier to take it".

"I have become calmer".

7 answers (30%) were strong statements about self respect and loving oneself acquired through individual yoga practice.

Self respect and love

"My believe in myself has increased"

"There is huge difference. I have started to love and value myself much more."

"It is easier for me to love myself as I am . I respect my body more than before, listening it as smarter."

"I think I have started to respect myself more".

"To be friend to yourself – this process has started for me earlier but yoga has supported and helped it."

"I have accepted myself more."

"I believe that my self believe or self confidence have improved."

Not so sure answer

" May be but I am not able to describe it."

3 persons did not find that individual yoga practice did something to connect with themselves better.

No findings

"Very hard to answer, because I have been into my spiritual/mental development for 20 years and during that time the change is huge (cardinal). I cannot say exactly what role exactly is there for yoga. I think that all things will influence and right thing will come on right time and add its nuance."

"It is very difficult to separate from general inner development."

"Not much"

And one "no" answer.

11. How has individual yoga practice changed your outlook towards life?

First group of answers find that yoga has brought changes.

Changes

"I think my outlook towards life is more positive".

"I feel less agitated and feel more calmer"

"I do not look somebody to blame and do not blame others so much, I try to take things like they are."

"Yes, it has changed. I am more me myself, or better saying I dare to be me more myself. Opinion of others is not so important anymore. Thanks to becoming better friend with myself I have discovered a lot in me – curiosity – want to know more, creativity, being in

the moment, not to be attached, going with the flow etc. The story would become too long. To sum up – lot of good”.

“To focus at myself is soo good, especially while taking into account that the outside life, information and temptations reach us faster and with bigger pressure than before”.

“Relationship to your self will change also outlook towards life”.

“Yes. Yoga gives a promise for more stable and happier life.”

“I am really calmer during the day, the tempo seems to be slower but the result is same as earlier. Details are not so agitating easily. The centre of my mood has moved from outside agitators to more inside. What others do or don't do is less agitating. While waiting for something I can focus to my body posture/ standing or seated, my breath – and at this moment it is much easier to take it.”

“I believe that I have become more tolerant, accepting and may be more balanced. New ways of thinking and new ways of approach to the things in the world have arise.”

Not so convinced, but admit that yoga has plaid a role

“I believe that my outlook on life has broadened (it can be influenced also of reading). Noticeable is the interest towards the Eastern traditions.”

“I do not dare to say it has changed already, but I try to be more thankful and accepting towards everything in surroundings.”

“Yes and no. First of all I think I was before starting to practice yoga positive and enjoying life. But I feel that I want to have even more positive attitude towards life – to try new things and to be open to the world.”

“Very hard to answer, because I have been into my spiritual/mental development for 20 years and during that time the change is huge (cardinal). I can not say exactly what role

exactly is there for yoga. I think that all things will influence and right thing will come on right time and add its nyance."

"Thanks to all of those books, and people and also yoga my outlook towards life has changed a bit less worrying – I know it is possible to stay calm even though difficult situations. Things will always go as they go."

"My outlook towards life started to change when I started to change and this was influenced among other things by yoga. I do not make big problems out of small things and I am able to take people as they are."

"I have started to make critical decisions in daily life and to take into account my self more. But this is long process."

No

"Difficult to say"

"I doubt in that. It would be very difficult for me to think of someone who hits me that he / or she has really bad day, it would be more that I would make his/her bad day even worse."

3 persons gave concrete "no" answer

Two persons did not give any answer to this question.

Actually one answer was different from others because it was comment on population in overall thanks to personal experience. The author of the work feels important to add that this answer was given by a doctor.

"I am totally convinced that relaxing and stretching yoga would be very very beneficial for half of humanity. If they would just know about it. The tablet industry would have huge losses in incomes."

12. What is the one thing that you think this process of Individual Yoga class brought to you?

Peace

Here are the answers: "More piece in mind." "Piece at least during the practice and some time after that". "Piece of mind". "At the moment peaceful state of mind and I like it very much." "Inner piece". "Piece of mind".

Mental clarity

One respondent talked very clearly how he/she feels, how the individual practice helps to make decisions through mental clarity that arrives during the practice. "mental clarity – to make decisions".

Better feeling of health and comfort and overall wellbeing

The other group of statement is "better feeling of health and comfort and overall wellbeing", that was brought out by 4 respondents (17%).

For one person the only thing that individual class has brought is like a reminder: "I need to take care or look after myself".

"When practicing yoga my physical body feels much better, and flexibility is better".

One respondent brought out as most important for him/her that individual yoga practice brings "Briskness in the day".

Time for myself

Time for myself is also response from 2 people. *“First thing that comes to my mind is following: this 15-20 min practicing was time only for me. And it is freeing feeling”*. *“Time for myself and no pain”*. It is very interesting to see how person values or at least in which order the answer is given. While coming to a class because of pain, the time for my self is said first, before the no pain, that is important for the person as well knowing from previous answers.

Connection

“Connection between inside and outside. I have been practicing long time only mental/spiritual side, but I feel strong need to connect it with my body”.

Yoga as a tool

For other 2 respondents the individual practice feels more like tools to use when necessary: *“I have equipped with necessary exercises always and every where. I can use them if I need them.”* The same person has said about his/her practice in conversation that it is like painkiller – I do my practice and there is no back pain. Then I stop to practice and use it whenever the pain comes back. *“Possibility and ability to take care of myself”* was the way the other person expressed it.

“The ability to stay calm in those situations where I tend to get nervous or agitated (does not matter if it is about children, things through everywhere at house, messy home, difficult situations at work etc)”.

"The knowledge, or rather experience that you yourself design, create and influence your life."

For one respondent there is conviction that it has to bring something good that has not arrived yet and the answer is as follows: *"I feel good that I have new hobby that is not just spending time but that is useful for soul, mentality and for body. Right now I do not feel it yet, but I do hope soon to notice that at myself."*

One respondent did not give any answer to this question.

Balance

Balance on all the levels or overall was brought out as one result – *"Balance. (I have not been sick for long time and sometimes it seems that it is possible to prevent it or to parry the sickness)"*.

"To take into account my gymnastics background and the habit to do the exercises on the edge of pain and definitely to strain, it was very boring at first to focus on breathing and that is followed by movement. But if I got used to that it felt pretty good. I was describing directly the practice but actually I see how it is applicable in daily life or how it works in daily life".- shows how the individual practice has given through its mechanics to the person slightly other way of looking or understanding the things in life.

13. Is there anything you would like to add to the topic?

6 people (26%) chose not to answer this question. 7 people (30%) out of 23 say just "no" to answer the question if there is anything that you have noticed about yourself during the time you are doing your personal practice and questions above did not ask about, please note it here. Answers that were given were very different like different people and their lives are, and are given below:

"It turned out that the practice that first time was designed did not work for my back. And I thought suddenly that yoga is not for me. I am very happy that I was wrong. In that sense yoga has taught me flexibility in everything – modifications in exercises, body flexibility, and character flexibility".

"I would like to believe and to see the world is opening even more, to see things that are invisible today."

"Life will change, and the development feels good not the need to do same things again and again."

"I have told to some of my friends about me practicing and not practicing yoga and I have received only positive feedback. Even somebody wanted to come with me to yoga class."

"May be it is not linked to yoga, but I do not think about job or work related stuff, (she is at home with small third kid). Even though I do not know what I want to do in couple of years or where, I believe and hope that right thing will reach me. I am not worrying about it and this makes me happy."

"In relationships I have changed. Saying that I am not so attached or grasping seems to close people as indifference. The need to share my experiences, feelings, thoughts has increased a lot but unfortunately only on my side."

"Somehow I have met people for other reasons and it has come out that they practice yoga as well. It is so easy and nice to communicate with them; it feels like we would know each other for long time. Everything is so easy....."

"I have discovered that last 25 years I have been breathing in wrong way."

"I get still agitated but to my mind less, actually I hoped that in this area (agitation) yoga would influence me more. I do understand that I am pedant, especially after cleaning the house if something is spoiled or made dirty I can be very angry." This is interesting note

because it shows how multiple layers people expectations can be, or while solving one problem like not having pain anymore new expectation arises very soon.

14. Suggestion and/or ideas in the area of Yoga Individual class.

7 people (30%) out 23 give inspiring suggestions either to me or to themselves:

"I will make suggestion for myself – to continue with yoga practice without pauses!"

"I feel very happy and very thankful, that yoga found me and I came to individual class. Thank you! It feels soooo good"

"Thank you for being there!"

"Thank you!"

"May be I would like to suggest that in case of some people (like me) would be very useful to explain why some asanas are practiced and what influence it will give. Also I personally would prefer much challenging approach and concreteness. People are very different and of course delicacy and precaution are vital, but in some cases it may cause confusion and vagueness."

"Yoga could be one branch of medicine, that could be suggested by doctors. Difficulty will arise because with yoga there must be yoga way of thinking – and without interest towards it, it is impossible to explain it. It is much easier to take tablets."

"I would like if my teacher sometimes would write e-mail me where asking or motivating me to continue with practice and to say when it is time for new practice (even though I know it is against the principles of my teacher). Thank you very much!"