UNIT 3: DHYAN ASANA (MEDITATIVE POSTURE)

UNIT STRUCTURE

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3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will able to know

- about the meaning of Dhyan Asana
- about the goal and purpose of Dhyan Asana
- about techniques or method of Dhyan Asana
- about benefits of Dhyan Asana
- about precaution of Dhyan Asana

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Dhyana is a Sanskrit word meaning “meditation.” It is derived from the root words, dhi, meaning “receptacle” or “the mind”, and yana, meaning “moving” or “going.” An alternate root word, *dhyana,* means “to think of” and Asana means “posture.” Dhyana asanas are yoga postures that allow one to sit or stand comfortably for extended periods of meditation. They position the body

so limbs do not send stimuli to the mind. Meditative asanas have been mentioned in ancient Indian texts like the Puranas and Vedas, and formed the core of a comprehensive yoga asana practice. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika identifies four important meditative asanas, including Siddhasana, and singles it out as the chief. Meditative asanas involve keeping the neck and body erect, the legs grounded, and specific gazes and bandhas to keep the body steady for focus on meditation.

3.3 GOAL AND PURPOSE OF DHYAN ASANA

The purpose of the dhyana asana is to allow the practitioner to sit for extendedperiods without moving the body and without discomfort. When the body has been steady and still for some time will dhyan is experienced. Deep dhyana requires the spinal column to be straight and very few asanas can satisfy the condition. The dhyanasana, therefore, needs to hold the body in a steady position without conscious effort. If you can be able to sit in one of the dhyana asana you can sitone of the dhyanasanafor a full three hours at a stretch without the body shaking. Then, will gain true asana siddhi, over the asana and the ability to practice the higher stages of pranayama and dhyana. Without securing a steady asana cannot progress well in dhyana. The steadieris in Asana, the more you willable to concentrate with a one-pointed mind.

3.4 TECHNIQUES, BENEFITS AND PRECAUTIONOF DHYAN ASANA

3.4.1 BADDHA PADMASANA: BaddhaPadmasana is a Sanskrit term that translates to "bound lotus pose" or "closed lotus pose": Baddha: Means "bound" or "locked" Padma: Means "lotus" Asana: Means "position" or "pose" BaddhaPadmasana is an advanced yoga pose that involves crossing your hands behind your back to grasp the big toes of opposite foot. It's a challenging variation of the basic lotus pose, or Padmasana.

Sthiti: Dandasana

Techniques:

- Sit in the Padmasana where the left foot is on the right thigh and the right foot is on the left thigh. Breathe out, and move the right arm behind the back, closer to the left hip.
- Try to catch the right big toe with the right arm, hold this pose, and breathe in.
- Now, exhale, move the left arm behindback, closer to the right hip, and try to catch left big toe. Again, pause for a few seconds, and breathe in.
- At this point, the back and head should be aligned; eyes should be either partially closed or fully closed. If eyes are partially closed, then fix gaze at the tip of the nose.
- Keep breathing at a normal pace and maintain the BaddhaPadmasana pose.
- Remainthe final position for as long as is comfortable. Return to Padmasana cross the legs other way around and repeat the practice.



Benefits: It alleviates pain in the shoulder, arms,and back. It encourages normal growth in children with poorly developed chests. Spiritually, it is used to awakento awaken Kundalini.

Precaution: people with serious eye, back or heart conditions or with high blood pressure, hernia, or hydrocele should not perform this asana or its variation, as well as those in the early post-operative or post-delivery period.

3.4.2 VEERASANA: *Veerasana* or the Hero's Pose comes from the Sanskrit words 'Veera'. which means a Hero or a Warrior and 'Asana' which means a Pose. *Veerasana* is called the Hero's or a Warrior's pose and can be usedan alternate pose for meditation and contemplation.

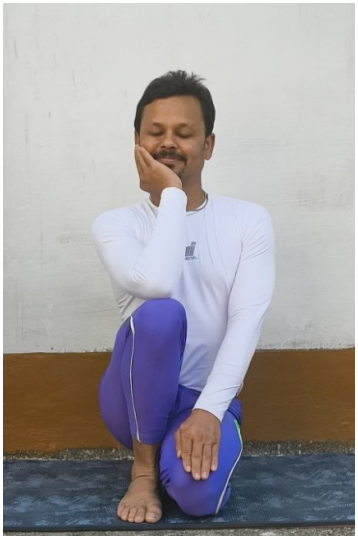
Sthiti: Dandasana

Techniques:

- Sit on the floor with the legs stretched in front with the hands on the sides. Then, fold the legs one by one and place them under the buttocks.
- Place the hands on top of the thighs. This is Vajrasana or the basic kneeling pose.
- Raise the right leg and place the foot on the floor in line with the left knee.
- Place the right elbow on the right knee and supporthead's weight using the right palm.
- The chin should rest on the right palm. The left palm should be placed on the left knee. Close your eyes and relax your whole body. This is the final Veerasana pose.
- Concentrate on steady breath for a while. This pose can be used for contemplation and deep thinking. Remain in this pose as long as you are comfortable.
- To release the pose, return the right hand to the right knee and return to the original position of Vajrasana.
- The whole process can be repeated withleft knee raised up and with the left hand supporting the chin.

Benefits: This practice can balance the mind, increase the power of concentration, allow more awareness of the unconscious realms, and induce physical and mental relaxation quickly. The thinking process becomes very clear and precise. It is useful for those who think too much or who have

disturbed or uncontrollable thoughts. It is very good for the kidneys, liver, reproductive, and abdominal organs.



Precaution: Those who are suffering from knee pain, or ankle joint join should avoid this asana practice.

3.4.3 BADDHA KONASANA: '*BaddhaKonasana'* is known as the 'Bound Angle Pose'. Baddha means bound, Kon means angle, and asana means posture. In this asana the feet are close to the groin and clasped tightly with the hands. The posture gets its name from its resemblance to a tightly bound object from a particular angle. The posture is also called the **cobbler pose or bound angle pose** as it resembles a cobbler at work.

Sthiti: Dandasana

Techniques:

- Sit with the spine straight and legs wide apart. Now bend the legs and bring the feet as close to the groin as you can.
- Join the soles of the feet together. Grab the feet or the toes tightly with the hands. Place the hands on the floor, below the feet, if need more support.
- Ensure the back remains straight. Now slowly try to bring the feet closer to the groin if possible. If comfortable, try to slowly push the thighs and knees towards the floor. Remember to be gentle and do as much as possible.
- Engage the core so that it can hold the posture.

- Keep attention on the stretch in the groin, inner thighs and back.
- Stay here for a few slow, deep breaths. This will help relax in the posture.
- Slowly, exhale and release the toes or feet.Extend the legsthe staff pose (Dandasana) and relax here.

Benefits: The asana opens and strengthens the hip flexors, inner thighs and knees, thus improving flexibility in the groin and hip region. It stimulates the abdominal organs, bladder and kidneys and improves circulation in the lower body. The asana is particularly helpful in relieving cramps and discomfort during menstruation. It also helps reduce anxiety and fatigue.



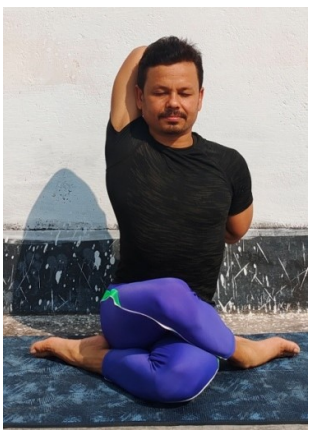
Precautions: For those with any knee pain or injury, keep the feet away from the body or hold a cushion or blanket under the thighs for support. If it feels intense, then this practice should be avoided. If there is back pain, one must be very careful or avoid the asana. In case of any lower back pain, keep the spine erect and do not let it curve even while bending forward. It should also be avoided in case ofgroin injury.

3.4.4 GOMUKHASANA (COW FACE POSE): A Sanskrit word, Gomukhasana literally translates into a cow face posture go means cow, mukha means face, asana means pose. A seated yoga posture, Gomukhasana can be performed along with a set of different seated asanas.

Sthiti: Dandasana

Techniques:

- Bend the right knee and bring the left foot to the outside of the right hip, weaving it underneath the right knee.
- Bring the right foot to the outside of left hip so thatright knee is stacked on top of the left knee.
- As you, inhale, lengthenspine and stretch your arms out to the sides, palms facing forward.
- Internally rotateright shoulder so that palm faces the wall behind andthumb points down.
- Sweep the arm behind the back, walkinghand up betweenshoulder blades, palm facing outwards.
- Stretch the left arm up, fingertips pointing towards the ceiling, the palm of the hand still facing forward.
- Bend the elbow and reach down for the right fingertips, hooking the fingers together if they reach. Right knee on top and left elbow pointing upwards Firm shoulder blades against back ribs and open chest. Stay for a few breaths.
- To come out of the pose, release the arms, uncross the legs and repeat on the other side.
- Remember to switch legs as well as the arms. Whichever knee is stacked on top, the opposite side elbow is pointing upwards.




Benefits: This practice stretches the ankles, hips and thighs. Works triceps and rotator cuff and upper back and chest muscles. This practice canopen chest and thoracic spine.

Precautions: People suffering from shoulder pain, neck pain, kneepain, back and hip pain should be avoiding this practice. People suffering from bleeding pilesfrom bleeding piles it might exaggerated problem.

Let Us Know

Dhyana asanas are yoga postures that allow one to sit or stand comfortably for extended periods of meditation. They position the body solimbs do not send stimuli to the mind. Meditative asanas have been mentioned in ancient Indian texts like the Puranas and Vedas, and formed the core of a comprehensive yoga asana practice.Deep dhyana requires the spinal column to be straight and very few asanas can satisfy the condition. The dhyanasana, therefore, needs to hold the body in a steady position without conscious effort. If you can able to sit in one of the dhyana asana you can sitone of the dhyanasana for a full three hours at a stretch without the body shaking. Then, will gain true asana siddhi, over the asana and the ability to practice the higher stages of pranayama and dhyana.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. What is the Sanskrit meaning of Dhyana?

Q 2. Write one benefit of baddhaPadmasana.

Q 3. Write the meaning of baddha.

Q 4. Write the Sanskrit meaning of veera.

Q 5. Write the benefits of gomukhasana.

Q 6. Write the contradictions of Gomukhasana.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

Dhyana is a Sanskrit word meaning “meditation.” It is derived from the root words, dhi, meaning “receptacle” or “the mind”, and yana, meaning

“moving” or “going.” An alternate root word, *dhyai,* means “to think of” and Asana means “posture.” Meditative asanas have been mentioned in ancient Indian texts like the Puranas and Vedas, and formed the core of a comprehensive yoga asana practice.Dhyan asana allows the practitioner to sit for extendedperiods without moving the body and without discomfort. Sit in one of the dhyana asanas for a full three hours at a stretch without the body shaking. It will gain true asana siddhi, mastery over the asana.

3.6 FURTHER READING

1. Swami SatyanandaSaraswati: Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.

2. Swami Muktibodhananda: Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.

3. Swami NiranjanandaSaraswati: Gherananda Samhita, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar.

3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. **Ans**: TheSanskrit meaning of Dhyana is dhi, meaning “receptacle” or “the mind” and yana, meaning “moving” or “going.”

Q 2. **Ans**: Benefit of baddhaPadmasana is it encourages normal growth in children with poorly developed chests.

Q 3. **Ans**: The meaning of baddha is "bound" or "locked".

Q 4. **Ans**: Sanskrit meaning of veera is Hero or a Warrior.

Q 5. **Ans**: Benefit of gomukhasana isthat it stretches the ankles, hips, and thighs. It works triceps and rotator cuff and upper back and chest muscles. This practice can open the chest and thoracic spine.

Q 6. **Ans**: The contraindication of Gomukhasana is People suffering from shoulder pain, neck pain, knee pain, and back and hip pain should avoid this practice.

3.8 MODEL QUESTION

Short Questions:

Q 1. Write the meaning of dhyana in Sanskrit.

Q 2. Write health benefits of baddhaPadmasana.

Q 3. Write the health benefits of Veerasana.

Q 4. Write health benefits of Baddhakonasana.

Q 5. Write health benefits of Gomukhasana.

Long Questions:

Q 1. Write about the dhyanasana in brief.

Q 2. Write about the techniques, benefits, and precautions of Buddha Padmasana.

Q 3. Write about the techniques, benefits and precautions of Veerasana.

Q 4. Write about the techniques, benefits and precautions of BaddhaKonasana.

Q 5. Write about the techniques, benefits and precautions of Gomukhasana.

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