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CONTROLLING AND DISCIPLINING THE MIND

At present we are living in the age of technology, industrialization and urbanization. The world is becoming very competitive. The Indian society has become very complex and fast moving. All these cause stress and strain resulting in many diseases like high blood pressure, insomnia, diabetes and heart attack. The remedy to deal with the stress and strain does not lie in taking drugs or alcohol. These are not solutions but may affect adversely. All this happens mainly because we are not in control of our faculties. We let the circumstances and outside world control ourselves. The solution of the problems lies in developing the ability of control to and regulate the mind or one-self. In this lesson we will discuss some techniques which will help us in attaining a peaceful mind and a healthy life.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- state the importance of control and discipline of the mind;
- explain some techniques and methods of mind control; and
- learn about the benefits of various method of mind-control.

27.1 IMPORTANCE OF CONTROLLING AND REGULATING THE MIND

For healthy development of the individual and society self-control and discipline are very important. Without it the negative feelings like possessiveness, arrogance, aggressiveness, anger, hatred and intolerance etc. take precedence.

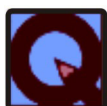
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The key question is: How to achieve control of ourselves? The answer lies in leading a disciplined life. We have to regulate our dietary habits and other aspects of life style. The Indian system of Yoga was developed for this purpose. Yoga as a way of life is necessary for healthy development of an individual. It is a profound physical, emotional and cognitive experience. There should be a balance between body, mind, intellect and emotions. Modern education lays more emphasis on the body and intellect. Its neglect of emotional aspects seem to result in lack of discipline, restraint, tolerance and character.

The control of mind is not a problem for religious or spiritual aspirants only but people in all walks of life need to control mind if they are to succeed in their vocation. No progress in the lives of the individual or the community can ever be done without proper mind-control and regulation. A peaceful and tranquil mind can achieve anything in life. Every human being wants to lead a happy and healthy life and it is possible only with a life without problems.

Interestingly the mind is controlled by the mind itself. The difficulties which we experience in controlling the mind are created by our own mind. Mind cannot be controlled by artificial external means or interventions for any length of time. It needs patient, intelligent, systematic hard work following certain practices of meditation. The mind has to be gradually and systematically brought under control. Let us discuss some of these practices in detail.

Now we will try to discuss some tested disciplines, methods and technique of controlling and disciplining the mind.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.1

Fill in the blank

- Self-control and discipline are very important for of individual and society.
- A mind can achieve anything in life.
- Yoga is a profound physical and experience.

27.2 JEEVAN VIGYAN

Jeevan Vigyan is a harmonious practical method to inculcate human values. It teaches us the positive values to enable us to control our mind.

Human behaviour can be disciplined only if our thoughts and mind are disciplined.

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Yoga : A Way of Life



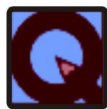
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According to psychology the control of behaviour is partly regulated by the nervous system and endocrine glands. They keep undergoing changes and they can be consciously changed. The changes can also brought by *bhavshuddhi* or purifying the emotions. The source of all emotions is body. The chemicals are produced in the gross body. If we learn to control our thoughts, purification of behaviour will follow.

Jeevan Vigyan is a plan to build a wholesome personality. It can be instrumental in fulfilling the dream of a new society and a new life style. We have to learn that we are interdependent beings and relate to nature as well as other fellow beings. Education is meant to develop the awareness of interdependence. Jeevan Vigyan is a method of controlling our emotions. Our emotions have to be refined otherwise they may create problems. The anger and rage of a single boy/girl can result in disintegration of the whole family. Jeevan Vigyan trains our brains to regulate emotions and behaviours.

It is often said that modern education helps the development of knowledge and intellect. It considerably neglects our attitudes, inner consciousness and spirituality. Jeevan Vigyan provides for a balanced development of both the hemispheres of the brain. It teaches control of our senses and reflex – actions. It is possible to get rid of negative thoughts by cultivating positive thinking. Jeevan Vigyan is a way of developing a balanced personality of an individual and provides a solution to build a healthy society.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.2

Tick the right answer

1. Jeevan Vigyan teaches us

- Positive values
- Negative values
- Only social values
- Impractical methods

2. The main objective of Jeevan Vigyan is-

- to develop a harmony between the individual and the society
- to develop the emotional competence
- to make us insensitive
- teaching us to be self-dependent.

3. Modern education helps in developing

- only emotional functions
- spirituality
- consciousness
- only cognitive functions

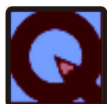


27.3 PREKSHA DHYANA

Dhyana or meditation is an important component of Jeevan Vigyan. It is a particular technique of controlling and disciplining the mind. Its objective is to attain change in attitudes and behaviours and develop an integrated and balanced personality. The different aspects of preksha include – Shwas Preksha (perception of breathing), Sharer Preksha (perception of body), and Chaitanya Kendra Prekshna (perception of psychic centres) When a person starts practicing dhyana or meditation one gradually experiences a change in one's thinking and feeling. He/she feels that anger and fear are no longer disturbing and person's behaviour changes. One becomes a more righteous person. Preksha dhyana brings poise to the mind and it looks controlled and disciplined.

Preksha Dhyana involves developing self awareness by relaxation. Today eminent doctors of various fields have realized the importance of relaxation as a therapy, for both healing and maintaining good physical and mental health. In Preksha Dhyana total relaxation is achieved by following stages meditations as given below:

- Kayotsarg** – It involves having the condition of perfectly motionless state of body. Unless body is relaxed mind can not be relaxed.
- Mental Concentration**– Here auto suggestion is used. By mastering this technique one will achieve mental stability in due course.
- Awareness of the body and realizations of the non-material self.** It is not a passive state. Both mind and spirit are very active in it. It is seeing, knowing and realizing. It leads to realization of spiritual self and attainment of wisdom.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.3

Tick the correct answer –

- Preksha is a technique of (concentration, meditation, relaxation)



2. Fill in the blank
 - a. Kayotsarg is a state of body.
 - b. Autosuggestion is basic to the technique of
 - c. Awareness leads to of spiritual self and attainment of

27.4 ART OF LIVING

The basic tenets of Art of Living and the Science of Living (Jeevan Vigyan) are the same: Let our body, mind and soul be in total harmony. A hundred years ago Sri Paramhansa Yogananda introduced the concept of Art of Living. The essence of his teachings is that to lead a more integrated humane and spiritual life we need discipline and control of mind. It gives certain practical methods for the uniform development of mind and soul. These include taking balanced diet, regular exercise, practice of meditation, studying religious literature and leading a pious life.

More recently Art of Living has been revived and refined by Sri Sri Ravi Shanker with the goal of creating an atmosphere of love and peace for entire humanity. For the purpose Sri Ravi Shanker has introduced a technique of Sudarshan Kriya. He says, unless we have a stress-free mind and a violence – free society we cannot achieve world peace. Art of living helps individuals get rid of stress and experience inner peace. The training includes stress-elimination programmes such as Prayanam (breathing techniques), meditation and yoga.

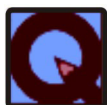
The degree to which stress unduly influences our lives is generally underestimated, often the mind clings to anger, guilt or regret about the past, or is plagued by anxiety and worry about the future. This oscillation of the mind between the past and the future causes tension and stress for us and for the people around us and leads to reduced effectiveness in action. Breath is the link between body and mind and thus works as a key to handle negative emotions and facilitate the use of true potential at work at home and at leisure. For example, when you are angry, the breath is short and fast, when sad, the out-breath is long and heavy. So, we can learn to skillfully use the breath to change the way we feel, hence release negative emotions (e.g. stress, anger, anxiety, depression and worry) and leaving the mind happy, relaxed and energized.

Sudarshan Kriya: Just as there are rhythms in nature – day and night, season after season, similarly, there are rhythms in the body, mind and emotions. When these rhythms get disturbed, say due to overwork, food habits or busy lifestyle, we feel stress, discomfort or get an illness. To get rid of such disturbances Sudarshan Kriya is used. Its cleansing power harmonises the whole system. Sudarshan Kriya incorporates specific natural rhythms of the breath which harmonises the body, mind

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and emotional stress, fatigue and negative emotion as anger, frustration and depression. Leaving you calm yet energized, focused yet relaxed. Actually it transforms the individual both physically, mentally and emotionally.

We need to do a cleansing process within ourselves. In sleep we get rid of fatigue, but the deeper stress remains in the body. Sudarshan Kriya cleanses the system from the inside. The breath has a great secret to offer. Thus by controlling breath through Sudarshan Kriya we can control and discipline the mind easily. In addition Satsang, observing silence, meditation and service may help.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.4

Write True or False

- Sudarshan Kriya is pranayam.
- Sudarshan Kriya is a breath cleansing process.
- Art of living is a movement for world peace.
- Art of living has been introduced by Swami Ram Dev.

27.5 TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

Maharshi Mahesh Yogi has propounded (developed) a simple system of meditation called Transcendental Meditation (TM). Meditation in general, helps in regulating thoughts and establishing a sense of peace in the mind of the participant. There are many types of meditation in India. Some people meditate using OM, some focus on Jyoti, some by worship an idol. Concentration is involved in all these meditations which make them strenuous. It is said that meditation is like floating on the surface of a pond, contemplation is like swimming on the surface and TM is like diving deep into the pond—from the outer surface to deep inside the water.

TM does not involve concentration or contemplation. Using this method the mind experiences subtler (finer) state of thought and eventually transcends (goes beyond) all thoughts. In TM the mind experiences a kind of freshness where all mental and physical tensions are removed. The qualities of energy, positivity and creativity then manifest (appear) in the mind or consciousness.

TM moves our mind from the surface of life to the depth of our Being. By this method the conscious mind takes a dive into the deeper levels of consciousness and this makes the surface value of the mind more powerful. The thought waves become more powerful. When the thought force is powerful, the whole life becomes powerful.

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Yoga : A Way of Life



Notes

**Notes**

Human life is just a play of the mind. If the mind is weak, life is weak, accomplishments are weak and problems and tragedies increase. If the mind is strong, thoughts force is strong, accomplishments are greater and tragedies do not occur.

TM ensures the connection of the outer life with the inner value of Being. This makes all the avenues of outer life to become positive and worthwhile. In other words, through TM the outer conscious mind can get access to the inner glories of life. We are able to experience the innermost core of personality – that field which is the source of all wisdom, all peace, all happiness and all creativity.

In TM the mind experiences subtler states of thought and eventually transcends all thoughts. Our existence is rejuvenated and all mental and physical tensions are removed. The mind becomes peaceful, disciplined and controlled.

27.6 VIPASSANA

It is a technique to bring peace and tranquility to the human mind. One has to keep on observing the truth that manifests itself and the Law of Nature starts revealing itself. While starting this exploration of truths within you have to abstain from every type of violence, sexual misconduct, speaking lies, and taking any type of intoxicants. If you are generating such defilement it becomes impossible to go to the deeper levels of mind.

To practice this technique you sit with your eyes closed without any vocal or physical action. Now start experiencing the breath coming in and breath going out. The breath comes in the breath goes out naturally. Start observing it. This is the reality, a very gross reality, but reality pertaining to your own mind and matter which has started manifesting itself. It is not breathing exercise, you are not to control your breath. Controlling, disciplining and regulating the breath is other technique called 'Pranayama'. But 'Vipassana' is quite different from 'Pranayama'. In Vipassana you observe the breath as it is – natural and normal breath. The exercise is to experience the reality which manifests itself within the framework of the body, not a breathing exercise.

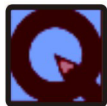
Let anything happen, you never try to interfere with the natural flow of breath. Let Nature play its own role. Your role is to observe. Just observe objectively.

After sometime the mind calms down, becomes more subtle and more sensitive. You develop your faculty of awareness. Now you are able to feel the touch of the breath. The barriers of conscious and unconscious mind are broken by this technique of observation.

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The word “Vipassana” means to observe the reality as it is in its true nature, not just as it appears to be, not just as it seems to be, but as it is in its true nature.

In this lesson we have familiarized with the different systems of disciplining and controlling the mind. Though Pranayama or Dhyana we not only learn to control our breath but also our senses and mind. Meditation teaches us to concentrate, relax, feel and receive the essence of real and universal life. All this leads to a feeling of peace tranquility, mental harmony and spiritual realization.



INTEXT QUESTION 27.5

Fill in the blanks:

- TM is that technique which brings our mind from the _____ to the depth of our being
- In TM the thought waves become more _____
- Vipassana is quite different from _____



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- For a healthy growth of the individual and society self control and discipline are very important.
- Jeevan Vigyan provides for a balanced development of cognitive and emotional functions. It teaches control over senses and reflex actions. It is possible to get rid of negative thoughts by cultivating positive thinking through Jeevan Vigyan. Preksha Dhyana is a very practical technique to bring out the desired result of jeevan Vigyan.
- Transcendental Meditation is that technique which brings our mind from the surface of life to the depth of our being. By this method the conscious mind takes a dive into the deeper level of consciousness, which get activated and this make the surface value of the mind more powerful.
- Paramhans Yogananda gave the concept of Art of Living; which has been revived by Sri Sri Ravi Shanker thought of Living foundation in 1981 and introduced Sudarshan Kriya which as a unique and wonderful breathing technique. It eliminates stress, fatigue and negative emotions.
- Vipassana is a technique of self observation, i.e. observing things as they really are not just as they seem to be. This is what the Buddha taught through the technique of self observation. Vipassana is a natural and normal breathing which is observed without any special effort, and in return it brings peace and tranquility to human mind.

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Notes

**TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. How are Jeevan Vigyan and Art of Living related disciplines?
2. How can we control our emotions?
3. Define Vipassana.

**ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****27.1**

- (a) healthy development
- (b) peaceful and tranquil
- (c) cognitive

27.2

1. (a)
2. (a)
3. (d)

27.3

- a. perfectly motionless
- b. relaxation
- c. realization

27.4

- a. False
- b. True
- c. True
- d. False

27.5

- a. Surface
- b. Powerful

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- c. Pranayam
- d. Rigveda

Hints for Terminal Questions

1. Refer to section 27.6
2. Refer to section 27.6
3. Refer to section 27.8

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