

Symposium | Psychopharmacology : [Symposium 71] Exploring the potential of Traditional Indian yoga as a psychotherapy based on clinical experiences from other countries

🏠 Sat. Sep 27, 2025 2:10 PM - 3:40 PM JST | Sat. Sep 27, 2025 5:10 AM - 6:40 AM UTC 🏠 Session Room 7 (Conference Room C)

[Symposium 71] Exploring the potential of Traditional Indian yoga as a psychotherapy based on clinical experiences from other countries

Moderator: Sachiyo Morita (Shiga university of Medical Science Hospital, Cancer Center)

[SY-71]

Exploring the potential of traditional Indian yoga as a psychotherapeutic modality: Clinical insights and cross-cultural perspectives

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[SY-71-01]

Assessment and Instruction theory & methods in yoga as a therapy

*Keishin Kimura¹ (1. Japan Yoga Therapy Society (Japan))

[SY-71-02]

Effects of Yoga Therapy on Psychiatric Symptoms and Cognitive Restructuring

*Sachiyo Morita¹ (1. Shiga university of Medical Science Hospital, Cancer Center (Japan))

[SY-71-03]

Involvement of Yoga Therapy in Patients with Mental Illnesses

*KAHORI ITO¹ (1. Sinsapporo Mental Clinic (Japan))

[SY-71-04]

FROM THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST STAGE OF EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH ON THE USE OF THERAPEUTIC YOGA IN PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON ALCOHOL

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[SY-71-05]

An Intervention Study on Yoga Therapy-Based Body-Mind Relaxation Exercises for Improving Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

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Keywords : yoga therapy、 mental illness、 cognitive distortion、 alcohol use disorder、 adolescent depression

Originating in ancient India, Yoga is a traditional discipline that fosters enlightenment and holistic well-being. In recent years, its therapeutic potential has attracted increasing attention in medical research, and studies are being conducted to explore its effectiveness across a variety of physical illnesses, including asthma, cardiovascular disease, hematological malignancies, stroke, and breast cancer. Concurrently, research into the impact of yoga on mental health conditions is expanding. However, methodological heterogeneity across studies, particularly regarding yoga practice methods, makes it difficult to clearly understand its direct impact on core symptoms of mental illness, particularly cognition. This symposium aims to address these critical gaps by bringing together researchers and clinicians who are actively developing yoga therapy from traditional Indian yoga into mental illness treatment. Presenters will share their clinical experiences, report on observed patient outcomes, and collectively explore yoga's potential as a cross-cultural psychotherapeutic modality. The symposium features five speakers:

1.Dr. Keishin Kimura will present on his development of a structured yoga therapy, which integrates traditional Indian yoga principles for identifying and addressing cognitive distortions in clients. He will discuss his methodology for developing patient-specific practices and for training certified yoga therapists, highlighting the broader impact of his work across diverse therapeutic fields.

2.Dr. Sachiyo Morita will elucidate the impact of yoga therapy on mental illnesses by presenting findings derived from patient narratives and validated psychological assessments, aiming to clarify its therapeutic mechanisms.

3.Dr. Kahori Ito will share clinical cases demonstrating how the implementation of yoga therapy assessments within general outpatient settings facilitated the recovery process for patients with mental health conditions.

4.Dr. Gantsetseg Tumulocir will detail the practical application and observed effectiveness of yoga therapy for patients with alcohol use disorder in Mongolia.

5.Dr.Hengsheng Chen will present the efficacy of yoga therapy in improving moderate depressive symptoms among adolescents from a study in China.

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Moderator: Sachiyo Morita (Shiga university of Medical Science Hospital, Cancer Center)

[SY-71-01] Assessment and Instruction theory & methods in yoga as a therapy

*Keishin Kimura¹ (1. Japan Yoga Therapy Society (Japan))

Keywords : yoga therapy、darsana、traditional medicine

It is thought that yoga was practiced in the Indus River basin during the Indus civilization, which flourished around 5000 years ago. For the past 100 years, there has been a movement to utilize this traditional method as a therapy (yoga therapy) for clients with mental and physical illnesses based on scientific evidence. Traditionally, the techniques of the yoga master and his disciples practicing darsana (a method of counseling) on a daily basis to assess the disciples' growth in humanity and the master's ability as a teacher have been passed down to this day. In particular, traditional yoga has attempted to modify the disciple's cognition. Traditional yoga is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy that has been handed down in India for thousands of years. The theory and practice of this "assessment and instruction" technique, as well as the theory and practice of "5,000 years of cognitive behavioral therapy in India", have been passed down over the years along with their own unique theories for understanding the structure and function of the human body and mind, and are now beginning to be used around the world as yoga therapy. The World Health Organization (WHO), which has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, held a "The Working Group Meeting about benchmarks for training in Yoga" in New Delhi, India, just before the new coronavirus infection spread. More than 20 yoga instructors and experts from around the world were invited to participate, and the author also attended as a representative of East Asia. The WHO is trying to include yoga as a therapy in the same category as traditional Chinese medicine and other 7 forms of "traditional complementary and alternative medicine". In this presentation, I would like to outline the assessment theory and practical instruction techniques of yoga therapy, as well as these movements.

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Moderator: Sachiyo Morita (Shiga university of Medical Science Hospital, Cancer Center)

[SY-71-02] Effects of Yoga Therapy on Psychiatric Symptoms and Cognitive Restructuring

*Sachiyo Morita¹ (1. Shiga university of Medical Science Hospital, Cancer Center (Japan))

Keywords : effect of yogaherapy、cognitive distortion、mental illness

Yoga therapy is posited to exert beneficial effects on people with mental illness through specific poses and breathing techniques that promote body awareness with an emphasis on tension and relaxation. In our study, continuous engagement in these practices by patients with mental illness has demonstrated improvements in insomnia, reductions in anxiety, and an enhanced awareness of self and their surroundings. Furthermore, many participants exhibited a proactive approach to independent problem-solving. Another notable outcome is the spontaneous cognitive transformation observed. It's as if yoga brings out the power that humans originally have. Rooted in traditional Indian scriptures, yoga therapy aims to systematically evaluate cognitive distortions and normalize them through traditional meditation techniques. A typical example of this type of cognitive distortion is the misinterpretation of finite things as infinite, such as the belief that pain will last forever. This presentation will elucidate the observed changes and the amelioration of cognitive distortions through yoga therapy, supported by research conducted on patients with mental illness.

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[SY-71-03] Involvement of Yoga Therapy in Patients with Mental Illnesses

*KAHORI ITO¹ (1. Sinsapporo Mental Clinic (Japan))

Keywords : Mental illnesses、relapse、yoga therapy assessment

Mental illnesses often relapse, and treatment often takes a long time. Patients have to live with their condition, but so do their doctors. Doctors try to find the cause to stop the relapse. However, the repetition of relapse may make doctors give up elucidating the cause as something intractable, or attribute it to the patient's personality. The speaker was one of such doctors. In 2019, speaker encountered the concept of yoga therapy and realized that our behavior was a mistake. Yoga therapy was arranged and structured by Dr. Kimura Keishin from the ancient Indian yoga scriptures. It is a method of restoring physical and mental health by providing a yoga therapy assessment and teaching three stages of yoga, such as exercise, breathing techniques, and meditation that are tailored to the individual. Unfortunately, it is not possible to do all of these procedure in daily medical practice in Japan, where consultation time is limited, so the future challenge seems to be to train yoga therapists. This time, the speaker will present a case in which yoga therapy assessment was incorporated into medical treatment and helped the patient recover. By adopting this method, doctors would be able to understand the true suffering and hopes of their patients and offer them the support they need without blindly providing guidance on rehabilitation or adjusting medication. A case was a woman in her 20s with depression.

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[SY-71-04] FROM THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST STAGE OF EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH ON THE USE OF THERAPEUTIC YOGA IN PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON ALCOHOL

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Keywords : alcohol、 exercise、 psychology、 society

Research from countries such as Japan, Thailand, and the United States has demonstrated that incorporating therapeutic yoga into addiction recovery programmes improves treatment outcomes. However, there is limited research on this approach among individuals with alcohol use disorders in Mongolia. This study aims to examine the impact of combining yoga therapy with cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) on alcohol abstinence, refusal ability, and quality of life. A clinical trial has been conducted since March 2025 in collaboration with the Japanese Society of Therapeutic Yoga, involving in-patient members of a hospital-based "Self-Help Group". Participants were randomly assigned to an experimental group (yoga + CBT) and a control group (CBT only) in a 1:1 ratio. Each participant in the experimental group practised yoga daily for 3 months. Data collection used three internationally validated instruments: the Alcohol Relapse Risk Assessment Scale (ARRS), WHOQOL-BREF, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). We administered these in four phases through one-on-one interviews. The study received ethical approval from the Ministry of Health of Mongolia. Data were analysed using SPSS 25. A total of 121 individuals aged 27–71 participated, with 66 in the experimental group and 55 in the control group. By comparing baseline and fourth-week scores, the experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in physical health (35.87 to 44.57), mental well-being (32.87 to 46.13), and social relationships (34.3 to 42.6), while the control group saw declines in all three areas. Self-esteem scores also improved in the experimental group (from 39.2 to 42.03) but declined in the control group. In conclusion, integrating therapeutic yoga into conventional treatment significantly

enhanced participants' physical and mental health, self-esteem, and social functioning compared to CBT alone.

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[SY-71-05] An Intervention Study on Yoga Therapy-Based Body-Mind Relaxation Exercises for Improving Adolescent Depressive Symptoms

*HENGSHENG CHEN¹ (1. China Academy of Sciences Institute of Psychology Chengdu CHINA. (China))

Keywords : Yoga therapy、 Teenagers health services、 Relieve depression

The "2023 China Depression Blue Book" reveals that there are 95 million depression patients in China, with those under 18 accounting for up to 30% of the total. A survey of over 30,000 teenagers conducted by the Institute of Psychology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, indicates that 14.8% of them are at risk of depression. In light of this, exploring non-pharmacological treatments is particularly urgent. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of yoga therapy in improving depressive symptoms among teenagers. The study selected 60 middle school students aged 13-18 with depressive symptoms and randomly assigned them to an intervention group (yoga therapy, n=30) and a control group (routine rehabilitation, n=30) using a randomized controlled trial (RCT) method. After a three-month intervention, changes in depressive symptoms were compared between the two groups. The intervention group received yoga therapy tailored to students' schedules, guided by professional instructors in a "5+1" model weekly, which involved 10 minutes of online practice on weekdays and 50 minutes of offline practice on weekends, to ensure standardized movements and reduce bias. As the first application of yoga therapy among Chinese teenagers, this study is of great significance in promoting the development of psychiatry among this group, strengthening early prevention and non-pharmacological rehabilitation for minors' mental health. It provides a diversified safeguard plan for the mental health of teenagers worldwide and contributes to the development of psychiatry.