

A SHOT OF HOPE THE SPEAKING TREE

The Biggest Investment A Family Can Make

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With rising costs and lack of social security, financial investments and planning have become integral parts of Indian urban living. Major financial investments and planning come on board generally from the middle age as life starts moving steadily, with a job and a family. In this busy phase, health seldom gets the attention it deserves.

As family grows and investments build up with time, unfortunately, so do the stresses, on both home and work fronts, often fuelled by continuous and limitless chase for name, fame and wealth. Ultimately, age catches up and the body starts to function suboptimally.

Reversal of this household trend is possible provided maintaining a good health, from early ages, is made a family priority. All physical, spiritual, and financial endeavours necessitate a solid health foundation; 'Shariromadyong kholu dharma sadhanam,' meaning closely, a sound physical body is the foundation of a meaningful life, so advocates Hath Yog.

A sliding health coupled with worries and apprehensions force many to seek a course correction and imbibe a holistic living by integrating suitable diet plans and exercise regime. Indeed, with Covid-19 spreading unabated, talk on such 'life investment plans' have become a common household subject. While, in principle, one can get into a regular exercise regime at any stage in life, one need not wait till health misfortune strikes. Consequently, venturing too late and shelving the idea to golden years are not desirable, since return, as with any investment plans, is not instantaneous. Started early, a daily routine or investment of about an hour of one's time, for five to six times a week suffices and yields rich health dividends, as many archival evidences appear to indicate.

While one can pick and choose a suitable exercise regime based on one's own appetite, a half an hour session, each on brisk walking and yogic exercises, asanas and pranayam, combined, can be tried as a first step. Such an exercise regime, made a part and parcel of daily living and practised over a sustained period of time can indeed produce marvellous health benefits.

As a final point, the subtle world encompassing mind, thought and ego, in contrast to the body, is traditionally given more emphasis in the Indic philosophy. Yet, Hath Yog proclaims substantive importance of a healthy body. The ancient Indian sages knew that health and mind operate synchronously and a healthy mind dwells in a healthy body. Therefore, by adapting a rejuvenating exercise programme and inculcating moderation as well as self-control, particularly, in 'aahar' and 'vihaar', mind and body can be made to evolve synergistically. As this happens, one can top up the physical exercise regime with meditation, least to enjoy the feel-good factor, if not beyond. One needs to make such wise and big investments and subscribe to a 'Holistic and Systematic Health Investment Plan', timely, to lead a healthy, worry-free life and to discover the true meaning of living. (The writer is professor at IIT, Kanpur)



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