

# Yoga

## A THERAPEUTIC ADDRESS IN FUNCTIONAL SPEECH REHABILITATION

### Wanda Genero speech therapist

(past co-ordinator of logopedics service, NPI USL IX, Turin, Italy)

Taking into consideration of one part of the yoga discipline, rich in centuries of practical and therapeutic experience, is due to the fact that it is able to offer:



- Body techniques, which possibly sensitize through gentle stimulation, the vertebrae, the abdominal fascia and the parts related to the phonetics mechanism
- Respiratory techniques which are able to elicit normal physiologic respiration essential for psychosomatic control
- Mental techniques destined to provoke attention and concentration for an active period



The yoga positions, carefully selected in treatment, indicate the posture that the body should take, the way to breathe and its mental attitude. The body is invited to simulate the form of an object or that of an animal with slow movements. Any form represented has a precise aim. The tree, for example, provokes stretching of the vertebral column, the willow invigorates the dorsal and abdominal musculature, the gull intensifies gaseous exchange and the cycle of the sun strengthens the shoulder, neck and head.



Representing a shape allows for the one to remain motionless without any effort, enabling concentrated breathing in an adequate manner. The body turns to the mind to be more aware, the mind expresses itself in the body. This effortless immobility is prepared by relaxation techniques, by using the art of economizing ones own strength with a healthy psyche and muscular techniques. Beyond the basic relaxation techniques, the relaxation of E. Jacobson (a systemic learning of neurological formulation) seems to be able to produce an observation-evaluation of the muscle tone and of its variation with the possibility to take part in its regulation.



The proposal of guided relaxation follows a topographic progression of the body segments: superior articulations, inferior articulations and the trunk. One is taught to recognize the tension needed for the contraction of a muscle and to relax that part which is put into contraction. Particular regard is given to breathing. Physiologic notions, illustrations and drawings portray costo-diaphragmatic breathing in normal conditions as a bodily function susceptible to conscious, voluntary control. Thus, the flow of breathing is consciously and patiently regulated until it persists with the elegance of a river and not as a chain of jagged knocks or as a horse in gallop. The great attention given to breathing is necessary to fuel concentration and reinforces nasal breathing.

A further step in learning this relaxation technique is to inspect the base muscle tonicity of the shoulders, neck and head. Muscle tension is recognized and is then mentally characterized, reduced, forgotten about or annulled. This re-educative technique can be considered for use in the oro-facial muscles whereby their actions are regulated be it at rest or in function.

Anatomic and physiologic principles, illustrations and sketches support the actions of these exercises according to well-known therapeutic addresses. The end is to understand the purpose and aim.

The resting and functional postures of the lips, cheeks and tongue are revisited in the **ASANA** for the purpose of repeating correct movements without frustration. The capturing of consciousness, induced from sensitization, does not involve an immediate

realization, but rather involves a constant application of all that is learned consciously. The lowering of muscle tonicity, fractionated to give space for rehabilitative interventions, is at present studied to the level of integration of the different segments: the general consensus is to induce the changes without particular emphasis on the sound of the voice. "...progressively, the muscles relax, the extended limbs greet sensations, the brow is smooth, the lips competent, the tongue is in its resting position, the nostrils await the air so as to purify and warm it and the mind participates and guides all. It is a state of diffuse calm."

In relaxation, further mental acts of attention are hastened with the dispatching of visualizations: one can mentally envision and design, without design, the dental arches in occlusion, the lips together and competent and the movement of the tongue in deglutition. It is a way of achieving contact with the elements in a more accurate manner that has more intent and to perceive new meanings. That which is imagined is so intense and vivid that it seems real. This is because the mind is equally stimulated either from a lived experience as from an imagined fantasy.

The simultaneous awareness of the mind and the body in learning to experience, to control and to regulate that, which is observed, induces:

- The taking into consciousness of the body as a psychosomatic entity
- The recomposition of self image to a level of a higher vibrational quality
- Activation of new conscious states owed to the increase in threshold of sensory discrimination
- Mobilization of new energy able to positively influence intellect and creativity

Greater involvement of the parents motivationally with respect to the child.

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