



Bullying creates future problems

BULLYING BY PEERS at school may bring on mental health problems for children later by altering the expression of a gene involved in regulating mood.

"Many people think that our genes are immutable. However this study suggests that social environment can affect their functioning," said Isabelle Ouellet-Morin, professor at the University of Montreal and Centre for Studies on Human Stress (CSHS) at the



Hopital Louis-H. Lafontaine.

"This is particularly the case for victimisation experiences in childhood, which change not only our stress response

but also the functioning of genes involved in mood regulation," adds Ouellet-Morin, who led the study, the journal *Psychological Medicine* reports.

A previous study by Ouellet-Morin, conducted at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, UK, showed that bullied children secrete less cortisol - the stress hormone - but had more problems with social interaction and aggressive behaviour.

The study indicates that the reduction of cortisol, which occurs around the age of 12, is preceded two years earlier by a change in the structure surrounding a gene (SERT) that regulates serotonin, a neurotransmitter involved in mood regulation and depression, according to a Montreal statement. *IANS*



Eka Pada Rajakapotasana - One-Legged King Pigeon Pose

Eka Pada Rajakapotasana or is an asana that is performed in the seated position. It is a backbend that causes the chest to puff up, therefore making the practitioner resemble a pigeon. The meaning of 'Eka' in Sanskrit is one, 'pada' is leg or foot, and 'raja' is king. The meaning of 'kapota' is dove or pigeon.

TECHNIQUE

- To begin this pose, you should first come to Adho Mukha Shvanasana (Downward Facing Dog). Then, bring your right knee forward so that it rests behind your right wrist.
- Next, bend your right knee and flatten it on the ground, such that your knee touches your right hand, and your toes touch your left hand. At the same time bring your left leg down on the ground.
- Let your lower back lengthen by bringing your tailbone forward and down so that your pubis is pulled toward your navel. The left side of your hip should come towards your right heel so that the left groin is stretched.



- Bend your left knee and with your left hand reach for your left foot.
- Bring your head back till the sole of your feet touches the top of your head or is close to it. Remain in this position for a minute.

PRECAUTIONS

- Avoid this pose if you are suffering from sacroiliac injury, ankle injury, knee injury, and

tight thighs or hips.

- This backbend is quite an intense one and only experienced practitioners should attempt it.

BENEFITS

- It helps in stretching the neck, shoulders, chest, abdomen, groin, and thighs.
- It helps in stimulating the organs of the abdomen.
- It is effective in opening the

chest and shoulders.

- Regular practice of this pose is said to be effective in the treatment and management of urinary disorders.
- Since the pose provides a deep internal massage of the abdominal organs, it helps in improving digestion and vitalising the immune system.

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ALIGN YOUR LIFE

The Third Eye

I first became aware of the concept of the third eye when I lived in the Himalayan village of Rishikesh some years ago. In many ways it helped me understand the spiritual aspects of things and opened up my mind to new ideas. The third eye also known as the inner eye is an esoteric concept referring to an invisible eye located in your forehead, which provides perception beyond ordinary sight.

In New Age philosophy, the third eye often symbolises a state of alertness and higher consciousness that is developed with the practice of meditation. Once the energy is strengthened in the third eye, it helps in seeing things clearly without bias or filters. The third eye is also connected to an energy center known as the ajna chakra between your eyebrows. This further enhances thought process and improves concentration.

I personally have practiced meditation to strengthen the third eye for years. I must admit, over the years my focus has improved, I have more clarity of thought and most importantly my migraines have disappeared.

Let's discuss the simple colour visualisation. Since the third eye is connected to ajna chakra and the colour for this chakra is indigo, you can use this colour to enhance the third eye. The best way is to sit in a quiet corner and relax. Slow down your breathing for a few minutes. Visualise indigo colour spreading around and inside your head. You can use white or violet colour instead of indigo for this visualisation as well. Do it for about 20 minutes a day, preferably early in the morning.

Another way is to practice specific meditation with focus on the third eye. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Light some scented candles or incense to clear up energy around you. Slow down your breathing for a few minutes and relax. Now focus on your forehead and visualise a candle flame in this area. This meditation can be done for 30 to 60 minutes depending on your level of concentration. If you have difficulty visualising a candle flame, then light a candle and stare at the flame for a few minutes and then close the eyes. Over a period of time, your mind will be trained to visualise the flame.

These two simple techniques can help eliminate headaches, fatigue, and mental stress. Daily practice of meditation and visualisation will help you gain clarity and improve focus. So why wait? Start today and experience stress release immediately.

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