



PHENOMENAL HEALING OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS THROUGH SPIRITUAL HEALING AND PRATIPAKSHA BHAVANA: A PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a patient's first-hand experience of integrating spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana in managing multiple sclerosis (MS). By understanding the patient's perspective, this research provides insights into how these non-pharmacological approaches may support individuals facing similar challenges. MS is an autoimmune disease affecting the brain and spinal cord, where negative emotional charges (NEC) at the cellular level may contribute to disease progression. Pratipaksha bhavana, as described in Patanjali's Yoga Sutra 2.33, focuses on replacing negative thoughts with positive ones, potentially fostering psychosomatic well-being. The study explores the transformative impact of spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana in alleviating suffering and enhancing emotional resilience. Through the structured practice of sublimation, substitution, and dilution, the patient experienced a transition from distress to comfort, ambiguity to clarity, and negativity to divinity. The findings highlight the potential role of these interventions in holistic health management, providing an alternative approach for addressing the psycho-spiritual needs of individuals with MS.

KEYWORDS : Autoimmune disorder, non-pharmacological treatment, patient perspective, pratipaksha bhavana, psycho-spiritual health, yoga.

INTRODUCTION

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a chronic autoimmune disorder affecting the central nervous system, leading to progressive physical and cognitive impairment.¹ Conventional medical treatments focus on symptom management and disease progression control, but holistic approaches, including spiritual healing and cognitive restructuring, are gaining attention.

Spiritual healing is an ancient practice based on the belief that higher consciousness or universal energy can influence well-being. Similarly, pratipaksha bhavana, a principle from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, involves replacing negative thoughts with positive ones to cultivate emotional stability.¹ This paper presents a case study exploring how these practices contributed to an MS patient's overall well-being.

Aim

- To explore the potential of pratipaksha bhavana as a transformative healing therapy for MS.
- To assess its impact on quality of life and general well-being in MS patients.

Objectives

- To analyze the experiences of an MS patient incorporating spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana.
- To evaluate the impact of these interventions on emotional well-being, physical health, and life satisfaction.

MATERIALS AND METHODS**4.1 Participants And Selection Criteria**

This study focuses on a single case of a 40-year-old female diagnosed with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS) for over ten years.

4.2 Spiritual Healing Sessions

The patient attended bi-weekly spiritual healing sessions for 12 months, each lasting 60 minutes, conducted by a certified healer.

Materials Used:

- A quiet space for uninterrupted sessions
- Aromatherapy (essential oils)
- Soft ambient music

Healing Process:

- **Grounding:** Establishing a connection with the Earth through breathwork.⁷
- **Setting Intentions:** Affirming a healing purpose.
- **Centering & Connecting:** Deep meditation and visualization.
- **Protection:** Visualizing a protective energy shield.
- **Energy Channeling:** Hands-on or distant healing.
- **Completion & Cleansing:** Gradual withdrawal of healing energy

and post-session grounding.

- **Reflection:** Journaling experiences for self-awareness.

4.3 Pratipaksha Bhavana Practice

The patient was introduced to pratipaksha bhavana and trained for daily practice.

Materials Used:

- Patanjali's Yoga Sutras for guidance¹
- A journal for reflections

Procedure:

- **Preparation (1 minute)** - Settling into a comfortable sitting posture with closed eyes.
- **Implementation (3 minutes)** - Practicing sublimation, substitution, and dilution techniques.
- **Conclusion (1 minute)** - Silent contemplation and positive affirmation.

Stages Of Pratipaksha Bhavana:

- **Awareness:** Recognizing negative emotions and bodily changes.
- **Sublimation:** Gradually reducing negativity by conscious slowing of distressing thoughts.
- **Substitution:** Cultivating gratitude and visualizing a healthier state.⁸
- **Dilution:** Strengthening the mind's ability to shift toward positivity.

4.4 Initial & Follow-up Assessments

Baseline and post-intervention assessments were conducted using the MSQOL-54 scoring system.²

4.5 Feedback Collection:

Detailed feedback was collected from the patient regarding her experiences, feelings, and perceptions throughout the process. This qualitative data provided valuable insights into the patient's perspective on the impact of spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana.

RESULTS

Utilizing the MSQOL-54 Scoring form, significant changes were observed in the patient's quality of life metrics pre and post the interventions. Before the spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana practices commenced, the patient's physical health composite was at 69.20, mental health composite stood at 62.99, and the overall Quality of Life (QoL) score was recorded at 41.58. Post-intervention, there was a notable shift in these metrics. The physical health composite score decreased to 62.4, the mental health composite score dropped to 55.67, while the overall QoL score saw a marked improvement, rising to 54. Beyond these quantitative metrics, a profound qualitative

transformation was evident in the patient's experiences and reflections. The journey witnessed a metamorphosis from pervasive negativity to an overwhelming sense of positivity. Themes of ambiguity transitioned to feelings of divinity, while experiences of suffering transformed into sensations of pleasure. Moreover, the patient reported a remarkable shift from discomfort to a state of comfort, alluding to an emergence into a divine realm of experience.

In terms of overall quality of life, the patient noted a significant enhancement across various domains. This encompassed improvements in physical well-being, bolstered psychological health, enriched social relationships, and an increased satisfaction with life in general. When evaluating psychological factors, there was a marked reduction in the patient's perceived stress levels, alongside diminished anxiety symptoms and fewer depressive feelings. Finally, regarding the adherence to the pratipaksha bhavana practice, the patient demonstrated a high level of commitment, consistently engaging with the practice throughout the duration of the study.

DISCUSSION

6.1 Spiritual Healing: Mechanism of Action

- **Biofield Modulation:** Healing may influence cellular functions through energy balance.⁵
- **Neuroendocrine Regulation:** Relaxation-induced neurochemical changes (endorphins, oxytocin) may aid mood elevation and pain relief.⁶

6.2 Pratipaksha bhavana: Mechanism of Action

- **Cognitive Restructuring:** Similar to cognitive behavioral therapy, this practice alters maladaptive thought patterns.⁴
- **Neuroplasticity:** Positive reframing strengthens adaptive neural pathways.
- **Stress Reduction:** Decreased activation of the HPA axis may lower cortisol levels.

The qualitative findings align with the quantitative shifts, highlighting the transformative impact of spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana on the patient's perception. The shift from negativity to positivity and discomfort to comfort suggests improved mental and emotional well-being, fostered by self-awareness, relaxation, and stress reduction.³ Enhanced quality of life, including better physical health and enriched social relationships, further supports these benefits. The patient's consistent adherence underscores the feasibility of pratipaksha bhavana as a self-help tool. However, as a single-patient study, broader validation is needed. These findings emphasize a holistic, biopsychosocial-spiritual approach to well-being.

Patient Perspective

- Pratipaksha bhavana helped me shift my perspective, enabling me to focus on healing rather than limitations.
- My overall well-being improved significantly with consistent practice.
- I cultivated self-compassion, which led to noticeable physical and mental improvements.

CONCLUSION

The journey of healing is multifaceted, and alternative therapies like spiritual healing and pratipaksha bhavana offer promising avenues for managing chronic ailments like Multiple Sclerosis (MS). This single-patient study highlights the profound impact of holistic practices, reflected in improved Quality of Life (QoL) scores and a shift from negativity to positivity. Enhancements in psychological well-being, stress reduction, and social relationships further emphasize their potential. While broader research is needed, this study paves the way for integrating holistic approaches into patient-centric care, complementing conventional treatments in the pursuit of health and well-being.

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