

Ishnaan the Science of Hydrotherapy , by Yogi Bhajan

I'd like to share the technology and science of a type of massage with you. It is called hydrotherapeutic massage. As I'm sitting before you, my first qualification and field of expertise is in hydrotherapy. You may not have known that, and there is no one else with this qualification in the whole world. I carry the lineage of those who now are very unknown, but who once were worshipped.

They worked on the bones, adjusted the body and did massage to recreate healthy organs.

Since ancient times, people have prayed for the blessing of Ishnaan. What is Ishnaan? Ishnaan is the total sum of hydrotherapy. The word is Ishnaan. We don't say we'll take a bath; we never say "bath". Ishnaan is when the body by its own virtue creates the temperature that it can beat off the coldness of the water. Ishnaan is not just wetting your body. There is a whole respect to it. There is a whole grace to it.

The power of water is sixty percent of the power of the human. In hydrotherapy we believe that the sixty percent water in the body can be totally exchanged in sixty minutes with outside water. We do ice cold water massage and not only do we open up the capillaries, but then when they close down again, that is, return to normal, that blood goes back to the organs. The heart, kidneys, lungs, liver-each organ has its own blood supply. In this way the organs get their flushing. When the organs get a flushing, then immediately the glands have to change their secretion. It is a law. And when the glands change, the guardians of the health and life change, youth returns. What is youth? Young glands.

Young glands are called youth. If your glandular system secretes correctly the blood chemistry is a young chemistry, and the glands can be made to do it. All this neurotic neurosis and angriness will all be over . . .

This science of hydrotherapy is very precise and sophisticated, and very simple. If you take a cold shower and let it fall just below the lower lip for ten or fifteen minutes, you will be bright and your mind will be very clear. If you put the water between the eyebrows and the upper lip, you will be very energetic. And if you put the water on the forehead, you will be so sleepy that you can't match it. If you massage the upper arm under a very cold shower from your elbow to just below your shoulder on your upper arm, you are totally curing your stomach. From your elbow to about two inches above your wrist corresponds to your digestive tract. Two inches above the wrist to the start of the wrist corresponds to your heart. The wrist corresponds to your liver and the finger tips correspond to your brain.

Then if you put the water on your neck in the front and let the water run down your entire body and hands, you will totally change all your cells. And if you let the water hit your chest and go all the way down to your genitals and you stay under it for a while, you are totally changing the chemistry of the blood from unhealthy to healthy. If you let the water hit your feet and massage the right foot with the left foot, and the left foot with the right foot, you are actually massaging your entire body. Stand before a cold shower and massage your feet and your calves by yourself. Use your

feet to massage, don't use your hands. Then stand away from the water and using both hands, massage your entire body and let the body get hot. Then take a cold shower again and massage your body again. Do that for about twelve to fifteen minutes. You should have a friend handy to pull you out. You will be in a totally different space.

Your body will be totally rebuilt. Each organ will be rebuilt. How? When you take a cold shower, your blood rushes out to meet the challenge. This means all the capillaries open up and all deposits have to go. Everything is cleaned; it is a very cleansing process. During hydrotherapy, the body is challenged by the cold water and by massaging the body, it can meet this challenge and not feel cold.

Do you understand this? When you are under the cold shower, your body will feel the cold, right? But when the blood and the capillaries are totally opened up to the maximum, the body will not feel cold. I repeat, it will not feel cold. And if you bring your body to that temperature where it can meet the cold by its own circulatory power, then all you have to do is come out and totally towel yourself, put on warm clothes, and put a blanket around you. Or if it is hot weather like it is here, use a big bath towel.

Bath towels are for the hydrotherapists, not for you. It's not a fashion. You don't even know how to use them. They are like blankets. Roll yourself up in one. Then your body will become wild hot. All the blood that is in the capillaries and in circulation will go back to the organs: the kidneys, the liver, the spleen, the lungs- because each part of your body lives on its own blood supply which is regulated by the beat of the heart. So the organs will get a rich supply of blood like a crop getting a beautiful rain, and then the crop grows up. In exactly the same way, this is how you can balance your health.

They didn't know how to make a shower when they first did hydrotherapy. You are very lucky you have modern showers. In ancient times there was nothing. They had to fill a tub that was about thirty to forty feet above the ground. It was huge and men had to fill it with water, it required about five hundred men to create enough water pressure for the hydrotherapy. When the machine age came they used a booster pump to create that effect. Have you ever taken a bath under a booster shower? It's fun. They take a pump that has a booster which comes through the shower head. It is so powerful, so wonderful; it's marvelous. We used to have a handle and a pipe and the pipe was flexible. For somebody who lay down under it, it had a tremendously soothing effect.

Now we have showers in every house, but the art of hydrotherapy is lost. Now a little pill can help you, and you can be on your own again. That is fine, but the difference between people today and people then is that today people want to be healthy, but they are not afraid of being sick. In those days, people were afraid of being sick; they never wanted to be unhealthy. That is how times have changed for us; that's what we are. Allopathic medicine is very effective. The chemical goes right in, right to the spot and it takes care of you. But the unfortunate part of it is that it has its side effects.

Body cells recuperate themselves in seventy-two hours. Sometimes they get delayed. Recuperation becomes slower as you become older; it's the time phase. But in hydrotherapy we believe youth is permanent, and youth is permanent not because it's God's gift. Youth is permanent because we know how to be young. It's a challenge but people who have done hydrotherapy have seen that they have remained young by their own virtue. I myself have seen my teacher, Sant Hazara Singh, remain ageless, so long as he did it.

By doing any exercise for hours, you cannot stimulate your cell psyche to the extent that you can with cold water. And the procedure is very simple. Take your hands, let the cold water fall, and rub them to the extent that they become hot under the ice cold water. And so with every part of the body; let it go, let it be, and stimulate yourself . And this stimulation may look to you like a fanatic, painful attitude, but that's what it is all about. Some people do deep muscle massage, some people go to spas, and others do this or that. There are one million methods and nothing even comes close to this one.

There's nothing like standing under ice cold water and making your body become hot. The word is "hot". Normally, in this therapy, we say to 'heat yourself', -heat your neck, heat your shoulders. heat your elbows. Can you believe a guy standing under a shower doing this for two hours? But that's how they do it. And everywhere that the cold water hits, the blood will come. Everywhere you massage, rebuilding will occur and the psyche of each cell of the body will be reconstructed.

Sometimes in your own life, you do not value your life. And then you cannot value it, because you are old. So play no such games with yourself; death will come, don't bother. Richness will come, don't bother. Poverty will come, no bother. Disease will come, no bother. Bother for nothing. But, if you have a strong-built mind, body and soul. everything will come. All adversity will come, but it won't touch you, because nobody wants to pick a fight with a powerful man. Therefore, the saying in hydrotherapy is, "shield yourself". In hydrotherapy, they think that water is a fatherly shield, *paanee pitaa*, and that anybody who can produce this shield that conquers the coldness of the water can conquer death. That's what hydrotherapy is based on. It's a very simple thing. If I with my body can conquer the chilliness of the water, I can take away the chilliness of my life.

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