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STRESS MANAGEMENT: SHOULD IT BE CONNECTED WITH YOGA AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION?

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Dear Editor:

In October 14, 2010, a special seminar on traditional medicine took place in Kazan Federal University (formerly Kazan State University, website: <http://www.ksu.ru/eng/index.php>), Kazan, Russian Federation.

The seminar was titled as "Science of yoga: stress management and asanas". A group of yoga instructors was invited for lecturing by the Head of the seminar – Prof. R. Zhdanov and Director of the Valeology Center, Prof. Vladimir Dvoenosov. The lecturers were Dr. Victor Odintsov and Mr. I. Gilmanov.

The first lecturer talked to students about special breathing techniques for stress management. In particular, he demonstrated Sudarshan Kriya yogic breathing. Dr. Victor Odintsov said that yoga techniques in cooperation with some principles of ontopsychology suggested by Antonio Meneghetti (by the way, his theories were prohibited in some European countries) may help anyone to manage the state of health and to reach the state of happiness.

The second lecturer, sportsman I. Gilmanov with his yoga-assistants presented some basic asanas (<http://www.ksu.ru/podrobnee.php?id=8030>). The duration of the seminar was 80 minutes only.

Our desire is to comment on some moments in connection with the seminar. First, the organizers recognized yoga as a science. This is not a correct approach. Yoga doesn't have its own methods of the scientific-research work. Thus, yoga is not a science. Second, Sudarshan Kriya rhythmical breathing was suggested by Ravi Shankar, founder of the "Art of Living". Although some investigators spoke on some usefulness of the breathing^{1,2}, solid scientific evidences on its efficacy are still absent.

Third, the seminar was held for students of KFU. Their attendance on the seminar was obligate. It should be noted here that yoga is not just a physical training. It has a spiritual connotations. Therefore, students of unclerical university are not obligated to be listeners of yoga propaganda. At their lectures on physical education, they should investigate scientific material that is envisaged by the accepted education programs. Yoga and elements of ontopsychology must not be taught to students in academic time.

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