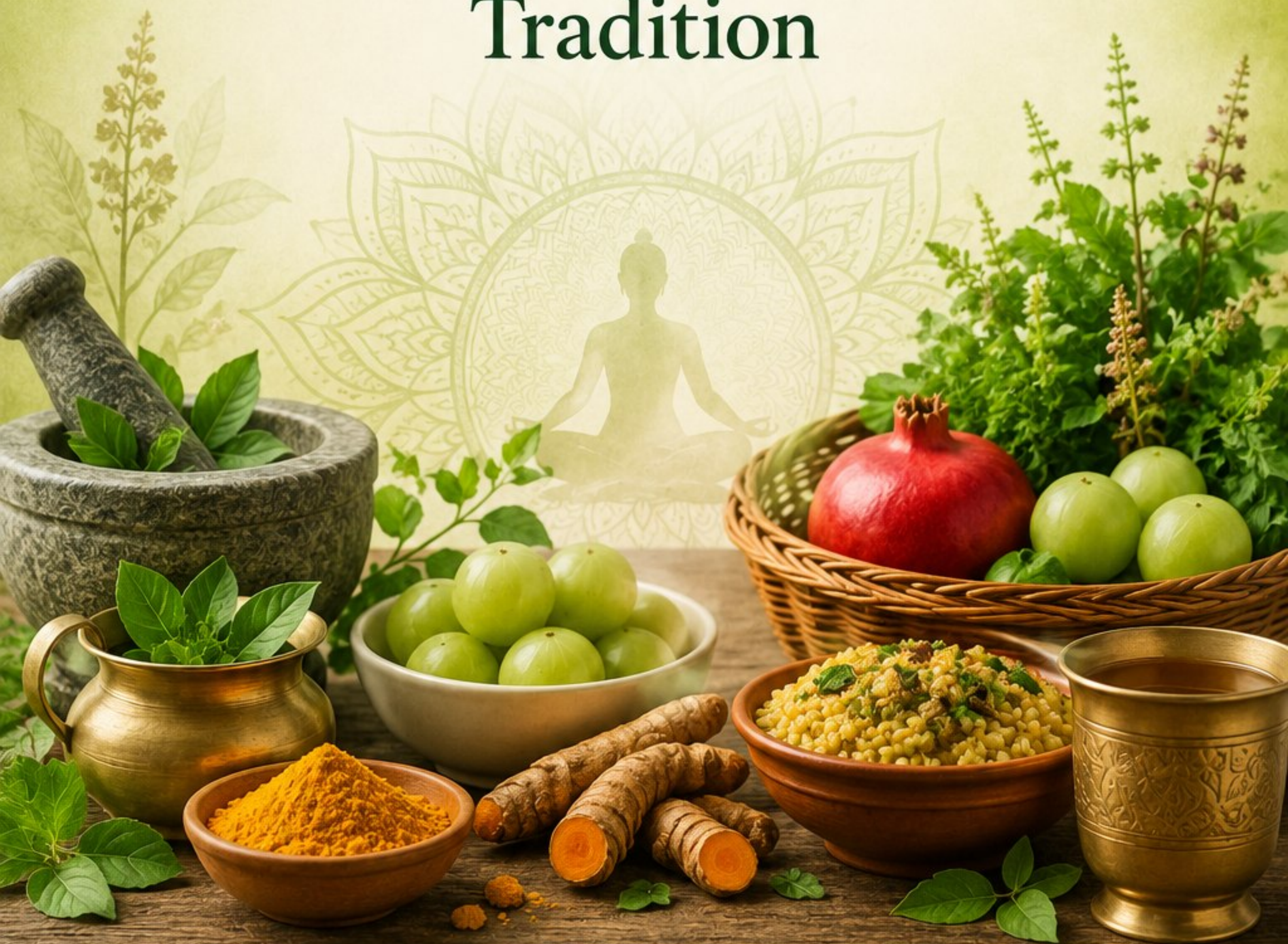


Preventive
Health
and
Nutrition
in
Indian Knowledge
Tradition





Preventive Health and Nutrition

in

Indian Knowledge Tradition



BOOKSKART WORLD

India
2026





Preventive Health and Nutrition in Indian Knowledge Tradition

Yoga, Meditation, Mindfulness and
IKS-Based Mental Wellness for
Holistic Living

Dr. Harshvardhan Singh

First Edition



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Yoga, Meditation, Mindfulness and IKS-Based Mental Wellness for Holistic Living

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Disclaimer

This book is intended for educational, informational, academic, and general awareness purposes only. It discusses preventive health, nutrition, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, Ayurveda, Indian Knowledge Systems, school wellness, teacher well-being, stress management, and holistic living from an educational and cultural perspective.

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The yoga, breathing, meditation, mindfulness, dietary, and lifestyle practices discussed in this book may not be suitable for every person. Individuals with chronic illness, pregnancy, injury, disability, heart disease, hypertension, respiratory conditions, neurological conditions, mental health concerns, trauma history, eating disorders, severe stress, depression, anxiety, or any diagnosed medical or psychological condition should seek professional guidance before attempting any practice.

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The discussion of Ayurveda, yoga, meditation, food categories, Sanskrit terms, Indian philosophy, and traditional wellness concepts is presented for educational understanding. Traditional knowledge should be interpreted responsibly and, wherever necessary, integrated with evidence-based professional advice.

The author and publisher shall not be responsible for any loss, harm, injury, discomfort, misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or adverse outcome arising from the use or misuse of the information contained in this book. Readers are advised to apply all practices with caution, moderation, self-awareness, and professional supervision wherever required.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all seekers of balanced living who believe that health is not merely the absence of disease, but a harmonious state of body, mind, emotion, conduct, nourishment, awareness, and purposeful living.

It is also dedicated to teachers, students, parents, wellness practitioners, researchers, and education leaders who are working to restore the importance of preventive health, emotional stability, mindful living, and culturally rooted well-being in contemporary society.

Author Profile

Dr. Harshvardhan Singh is an education researcher, psychometrician, and curriculum-evaluation professional working in the areas of educational measurement, teacher education, inclusive education, Indian Knowledge Systems, research tool development, learning assessment, mental well-being, and policy-relevant educational research. His academic and professional work focuses on evidence-based reform, learner diversity, holistic education, psychometric scale development, teacher capacity building, and the integration of culturally rooted knowledge with contemporary educational and social needs.

His work engages with the relationship between education, well-being, inclusion, assessment, and human development. Through books, research tools, policy-oriented writing, educational resources, and academic publications, he contributes to the development of knowledge products for teachers, students, researchers, institutions, education professionals, and general readers.

In this book, Dr. Singh brings together Indian Knowledge Tradition, preventive health, nutrition, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, teacher well-being, school wellness, and IKS-based mental wellness programming to present a holistic framework for balanced living and educational transformation.

Preface

Health has always been one of the central concerns of human life. However, in the modern world, health is often understood mainly through the lens of disease, diagnosis, treatment, medicine, hospitalisation, and clinical intervention. While modern medical science has made remarkable contributions to human survival and quality of life, the growing burden of stress, lifestyle imbalance, poor nutrition, emotional instability, sleep disturbance, digital overload, sedentary habits, and mental health concerns shows that curative systems alone are not sufficient. Contemporary society needs a deeper preventive and holistic understanding of health.

The Indian Knowledge Tradition offers such an understanding. It does not view health as a narrow biological condition. It approaches well-being as a balanced relationship among body, mind, breath, food, conduct, emotion, community, environment, and consciousness. Concepts such as *sharir*, *manas*, *prana*, *aatma*, *ahar*, *vihar*, *achar*, *vichar*, *sattva*, *agni*, *dinacharya*, and *ritucharya* reveal a way of thinking in which health is cultivated through daily discipline, self-awareness, moderation, nourishment, meaningful living, and harmony with natural rhythms.

This book, *Preventive Health and Nutrition in Indian Knowledge Tradition*, has been written with the purpose of presenting Indian wellness wisdom in a manner that is accessible to contemporary readers. It brings together themes of preventive health, nutrition, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, Ayurveda, lifestyle discipline, stress management, school wellness, teacher well-being, and IKS-based mental wellness programming. The book does not treat these themes as isolated topics. Rather, it presents them as interconnected dimensions of holistic living.

One of the major arguments of the book is that preventive health begins before disease appears. It begins with habits. It begins with the way one wakes up, eats, breathes, moves, thinks, rests, responds to stress, builds relationships, and understands the purpose of life. In this sense, prevention is not only a medical responsibility. It is also an educational, social, cultural, familial, and personal responsibility. A society that wishes to become healthier must educate its people not only about diseases but also about balanced living.

Yoga is discussed in this book as a complete pathway of self-regulation. In popular understanding, yoga is often reduced to physical postures. However, the Indian tradition views yoga as a disciplined path involving ethical living, bodily awareness, breath regulation, concentration, meditation, emotional discipline, and inner balance. When adapted responsibly, yoga can support mental clarity, stress reduction, physical fitness, emotional regulation, and resilience.

Meditation and mindfulness are examined as tools for developing awareness and emotional stability. Modern life exposes individuals to continuous mental stimulation, distraction, comparison, anxiety, and performance pressure. Meditation offers a method of returning to attention, silence, observation, and self-understanding. Mindfulness allows individuals to witness thoughts, feelings, and sensations without becoming completely controlled by them. These practices are especially relevant for students, teachers, parents, working professionals, and all individuals facing the pressures of modern life.

Nutrition is another major concern of the book. Indian dietary wisdom does not view food merely as a source of calories. Food is connected with energy, digestion, mood, clarity, vitality, and consciousness. The traditional classification of food into *sattvic*, *rajasic*, and *tamasic* categories may be understood as a cultural framework for reflecting on how food influences the body and mind. This book does not present traditional nutrition as a substitute for modern nutrition science. Instead, it argues for a balanced

approach in which traditional dietary wisdom, mindful eating, seasonal awareness, local food practices, and contemporary nutrition knowledge can complement one another.

The book also gives special attention to educational settings. Schools are not merely spaces for syllabus completion and examination preparation. They are environments where habits of body, mind, emotion, attention, discipline, and social behaviour are formed. When children and adolescents learn simple practices of breathing, mindful sitting, movement, food awareness, emotional regulation, and reflection, they gain tools that can support them throughout life. Similarly, teacher well-being is essential for educational quality. A stressed, exhausted, and emotionally unsupported teacher cannot easily create a calm, inclusive, and compassionate classroom. Therefore, teacher wellness must be viewed as a core educational priority.

This book also proposes the relevance of IKS-based mental wellness programmes. Such programmes can be useful in schools, colleges, teacher education institutions, community organisations, wellness centres, and professional development contexts. However, the book maintains that IKS-based practices must be adapted ethically, inclusively, scientifically, and safely. They must not be imposed as religious instruction. They must not be used to replace medical or psychological care. They must not be presented with exaggerated claims. Their real strength lies in preventive, promotive, educational, and complementary use.

The wider aim of this book is to encourage an integrative conversation. Traditional knowledge and modern science need not be placed in opposition. Indian Knowledge Tradition offers philosophical depth, cultural rootedness, and practical wisdom. Modern science offers methods of validation, safety, measurement, evidence, and clinical clarity. When both are brought together responsibly, they can support a richer understanding of health and well-being.

I hope this book will be useful for educators, teacher educators, students, researchers, wellness practitioners, school leaders, parents, policymakers, and general readers interested in Indian Knowledge Systems and preventive health. The book may also serve as a resource for institutions seeking to design school wellness programmes, teacher well-being initiatives, health education modules, or culturally rooted mental wellness frameworks.

This work is offered with humility and with the belief that the future of health education must include not only information about disease but also wisdom about living. Preventive health is not a single technique. It is a way of life. It is a discipline of food, breath, movement, thought, conduct, rest, reflection, and responsibility. The Indian Knowledge Tradition reminds us that true well-being is not achieved by treating the body alone; it is cultivated by harmonising the whole human being.

Acknowledgement

I express my sincere gratitude to the Indian Knowledge Tradition, whose vast intellectual, philosophical, spiritual, educational, and health-related heritage continues to inspire meaningful reflection on human well-being. The ideas of balanced living, mindful conduct, disciplined routine, food awareness, yoga, meditation, self-reflection, community harmony, and inner development have shaped the foundation of this book.

I acknowledge the contributions of the sages, thinkers, teachers, healers, philosophers, commentators, practitioners, and knowledge traditions that preserved and transmitted insights related to preventive health, nutrition, yoga, meditation, Ayurveda, mindfulness, and holistic living across generations. Their work continues to provide a valuable foundation for contemporary discussions on health, education, and human development.

I am thankful to the scholars, researchers, educators, wellness professionals, mental health practitioners, yoga teachers, and institutions whose work has helped create a bridge between traditional wisdom and modern evidence-based understanding. This book is informed by the need to interpret Indian Knowledge Systems responsibly in relation to present-day challenges such as stress, lifestyle imbalance, emotional instability, teacher burnout, student pressure, nutrition concerns, and the search for holistic well-being.

I also acknowledge the role of schools, teachers, parents, students, teacher education institutions, and community organisations that continue to explore more humane and balanced approaches to education. Their efforts remind us that wellness is not a secondary concern but an essential foundation of meaningful learning and social development.

I extend my gratitude to **EP DOWNLOADS**, an imprint of **BOOKSKART WORLD**, for supporting the publication of this work as a digital knowledge resource. I also thank all readers who approach this book with openness, reflection, and a commitment to healthier living.

Finally, I acknowledge the broader educational and cultural environment in India that is renewing interest in Indian Knowledge Systems, holistic education, preventive health, and well-being. This book is a modest contribution to that continuing conversation.

Methodological Note / Source Note

This book is a conceptual, educational, and integrative work. It brings together ideas from Indian Knowledge Tradition, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, Ayurveda, nutrition, school wellness, teacher well-being, and contemporary mental wellness discourse. The book is not based on a single empirical study. Rather, it synthesises traditional concepts, educational interpretation, wellness frameworks, and contemporary discussions on preventive health and holistic well-being.

The purpose of the book is to present preventive health and nutrition in a culturally rooted yet contemporary manner. It interprets selected Indian concepts such as *manas*, *sharir*, *aatma*, *prana*, *ahar*, *vihar*, *sattva*, *agni*, *dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness in relation to current concerns such as stress, emotional regulation, student well-being, teacher wellness, lifestyle imbalance, and institutional wellness programming.

The text uses an interdisciplinary approach. It draws conceptually from Indian philosophical traditions, yoga literature, Ayurveda-oriented wellness ideas, education, psychology, health promotion, lifestyle studies, and school-based well-being frameworks. The discussion is intended to be accessible to educators, students, parents, wellness practitioners, teacher educators, school leaders, and general readers.

Traditional concepts have been interpreted for educational purposes. Sanskrit and IKS-based terms are used with simplified explanations so that readers from non-specialist backgrounds can understand their relevance. The book does not claim to provide philological, scriptural, clinical, or medical commentary on classical texts. Readers interested in deeper textual study are encouraged to consult original sources, translations, commentaries, and specialist scholarship.

The health-related content in this book is preventive, promotive, and educational. It should not be interpreted as treatment advice. The book encourages responsible integration of traditional wisdom with modern professional guidance. Wherever yoga, meditation, nutrition, Ayurveda, school wellness, or mental health practices are discussed, they should be adapted according to age, health condition, physical capacity, institutional context, and qualified professional advice.

The practical frameworks included in this book are meant for general guidance. Schools, teacher education institutions, wellness centres, and community organisations should modify them according to local needs, professional standards, safety protocols, inclusion principles, and referral systems. Any institutional programme based on these ideas should involve trained facilitators and should include proper safeguards for children, adolescents, teachers, and vulnerable individuals.

How to Use This Book

This book may be read in different ways depending on the reader's purpose.

General readers may read it as an introduction to Indian ideas of preventive health, nutrition, yoga, meditation, mindfulness, and holistic living. Such readers may focus on the conceptual explanations, practical routines, and reflective sections.

Teachers and teacher educators may use the book to understand how Indian Knowledge Systems can support teacher well-being, emotional regulation, classroom calmness, and holistic education. The chapters on school education and teacher well-being may be especially useful for teacher training programmes, professional development workshops, and institutional wellness planning.

School leaders may use this book to design age-appropriate wellness activities for students and teachers. The discussion on yoga, meditation, mindfulness, stress management, and school-based wellness can help schools move beyond purely academic models of education.

Students may use the book to understand stress, emotional balance, lifestyle discipline, mindful eating, yoga, breathing, and meditation as part of personal development. However, students should practice under appropriate guidance, especially in school settings.

Researchers may use the book as a conceptual foundation for further study in Indian Knowledge Systems, preventive health education, school wellness, teacher well-being, yoga education, mindfulness, nutrition awareness, and culturally rooted mental wellness frameworks.

Wellness practitioners may use the book as an educational resource for understanding the broader cultural and philosophical background of yoga, meditation, nutrition, and preventive well-being. However, professional practice should always follow relevant training, ethical standards, and safety guidelines.

Parents may use the book to understand the importance of routine, food habits, emotional support, sleep, movement, breathing, and mindful living in the development of children and adolescents.

This book should not be used as a medical manual, diagnostic guide, therapeutic protocol, or substitute for professional consultation. It should be used as an educational resource for reflection, awareness, and responsible practice.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
ACT	Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
AYUSH	Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DASS	Depression Anxiety Stress Scales
GABA	Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid
HPA Axis	Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis
ICMR	Indian Council of Medical Research
IKS	Indian Knowledge System
MBSR	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
MBCT	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NEP	National Education Policy
NIN	National Institute of Nutrition
PSS	Perceived Stress Scale
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WEMWBS	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale
WHO	World Health Organization
YIC	Yoga Instructor Course
YT	Yoga Therapy

Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Meaning
Achar	Conduct, behaviour, or ethical way of living.
Agni	Digestive fire; a key Ayurvedic concept related to digestion, assimilation, and vitality.
Ahar	Food or diet; an important component of physical and mental well-being.
Ama	Undigested or toxic residue in Ayurvedic thought, often associated with imbalance.
Anicca	Impermanence; a Buddhist concept referring to the changing nature of all experiences.
Asana	Yogic posture practiced for stability, health, body awareness, and preparation for meditation.
Atma / Aatma	Inner self or soul; often discussed in Indian philosophical traditions.
Atma Vichara	Self-inquiry; reflective investigation into the nature of the self.
Ayurveda	Traditional Indian system of health and life science focusing on balance, prevention, and holistic well-being.
Bhakti Yoga	Path of devotion and emotional surrender.
Dharana	Concentration; focused attention on a single object, idea, sound, or point.
Dharma	Duty, ethical order, righteousness, or right conduct according to context.
Dhyana	Meditation; sustained flow of awareness or contemplative absorption.
Dinacharya	Daily routine recommended in Ayurveda for balanced living.
Dosha	Fundamental functional principle in Ayurveda; commonly described as vata, pitta, and kapha.
Guna	Quality or attribute; in wellness discussions often refers to sattva, rajas, and tamas.
Jnana Yoga	Path of knowledge, inquiry, wisdom, and philosophical reflection.
Kapha	Ayurvedic dosha associated with structure, stability, heaviness, and cohesion.
Karma Yoga	Path of selfless action and duty without attachment to outcomes.
Manas	Mind; includes thought, attention, emotion, and mental functioning.
Maya	Illusion or misperception; a philosophical concept related to misunderstanding reality.
Meditation	A systematic practice of attention, awareness, observation, and mental stillness.
Mindfulness	Present-moment awareness with non-judgmental observation of thoughts, emotions, and sensations.
Nadi	Subtle channel of energy in yogic thought.

Nadi Shodhana	Alternate nostril breathing; a pranayama practice for balance and calmness.
Niyama	Personal observances in the yogic path, including discipline, purity, contentment, and self-study.
Pitta	Ayurvedic dosha associated with transformation, heat, metabolism, and intensity.
Prana	Vital life energy; often connected with breath and vitality.
Pranayama	Regulation of breath; yogic breathing practice used for energy balance and mental calmness.
Pratyahara	Withdrawal of the senses from external distractions.
Raja Yoga	The royal path of yoga emphasising mental discipline, meditation, and self-mastery.
Rajas	Quality of activity, passion, restlessness, stimulation, and movement.
Ritucharya	Seasonal routine in Ayurveda; adapting diet and lifestyle according to seasons.
Samadhi	Deep meditative absorption or unified awareness.
Samsara	Cycle of worldly existence or repetitive patterns of experience.
Sattva	Quality of clarity, balance, purity, harmony, and mental peace.
Sattvic Food	Food traditionally associated with clarity, lightness, balance, and calmness.
Sharir	Body; the physical dimension of human existence.
Smriti / Smirti	Memory or mindful awareness, depending on context.
Tamas	Quality of inertia, heaviness, dullness, confusion, or stagnation.
Vairagya	Detachment or non-attachment.
Vata	Ayurvedic dosha associated with movement, air, nervous energy, and change.
Vichar	Thought, reflection, or thinking process.
Vihar	Lifestyle, movement, recreation, rest, and daily living pattern.
Vipassana	Insight meditation based on observation of body, sensations, mind, and impermanence.
Yoga	Union, integration, or disciplined path of body, mind, breath, conduct, and consciousness.
Yoga Nidra	Yogic sleep; a guided relaxation practice involving awareness and deep rest.

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Preventive Health and Nutrition in Indian Knowledge Tradition presents a holistic exploration of health, wellness and balanced living through the lens of Indian Knowledge Systems. Moving beyond a narrow disease-centred understanding of health, the book examines how Indian traditions connect body, mind, food, breath, conduct, emotional balance, community and consciousness.

The book discusses yoga, meditation, mindfulness, Ayurveda, nutrition, stress management, teacher well-being and school-based wellness as interconnected pathways to preventive health. It explains how concepts such as *manas*, *sharir*, *aatma*, *ahar*, *vihaar*, *prana*, *sattva*, *agni*, *dinacharya* and *ritucharya* can be interpreted in relation to contemporary challenges of lifestyle imbalance, emotional stress, unhealthy food habits, digital overload and declining well-being.

Written in an accessible yet research-oriented style, the book is useful for educators, teacher educators, school leaders, wellness professionals, students, researchers, parents, policy thinkers and readers interested in Indian Knowledge Systems. It also offers practical frameworks for daily wellness, school-based yoga and meditation, teacher well-being and IKS-based preventive health programmes.

At its core, the book argues that preventive health is not merely a medical concern. It is a way of living with awareness, moderation, discipline, nourishment, emotional balance and responsibility. By integrating ancient wisdom with contemporary educational and wellness needs, this book offers a culturally rooted and practical pathway toward holistic well-being.

