

Yoga and ABA Therapy for Children with ASD a Synergy of Interaction

Violetta Shevchenko

Yoga teacher and therapist, kinesiologist, Russia

Abstract

We consider the problem of helping people with Autism Spectrum Disorders from a combined angle of view (psychological-pedagogical-yogic). This makes it possible to use wide and deep opportunities for complex body-oriented developmental work with children.

Yoga, in turn, considers the human body as a whole system, helping to connect and connect the disparate and uncontrollable components of the human being in order to achieve integrity and control at a new level of functioning. These components can be different types of perception - such as motor skills, thinking, imagination and any other functions of a complex psycho-physiological complex, which is our body.

Using a holistic pedagogical approach, which includes an emphasis on the formation of positive behavioural stereotypes and only then - on their consistent development, we actively include work with the child's attention and with contact at all levels - tactile, verbal, cognitive.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders show marked abnormalities or distorted development of social interaction and communication, as well as specific limitations in motor activity and areas of interest. The most scientifically substantiated at the moment are approaches based on a behavioural model - Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Learning principles that are applied intensively early in a child's development improve socially meaningful behaviours.

Our practice of integrating Yoga and ABA in the course of classes with children has shown that children become more organized, they have less emotional outbursts, and in general it is easier for them to regulate their state, thereby remaining included in the process of activity for a longer time, and it is also easier to switch between different tasks during the lesson.

Breathwork helps to effectively "wake up" or "calm" the child.

Yoga-based movement exercises promote balance and better regulation of the vestibular and proprioceptive systems, which help children become more aware of their body position in space and increase their sense of comfort.

We can track the benefits of a holistic pedagogical approach with parents who note such positive changes in children as:

- increasing the quality and duration of sleep.
- better body awareness (regarding eating, using the toilet, etc.).
- improving accuracy and control over their movements.
- increase in muscle strength, tone and motor balance.
- better emotional stability.
- increased concentration of attention.
- the ability to move from one activity to another without stress.