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The Modern Ayurvedic Sage

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For a man who helms the Birla conglomerate Yash Birla makes no bones about the fact that his life has always been imbued with spirituality and Ayurveda. It started at the tender age of 5, listening to his Grandmother chant Hindu bhajans with little Yash in complete rapture.

Spiritual music, mythology, stories of sages and saints and eating wholesome food were part of Yash Birla's formative years, something boys of his age would shy away from. The boy grew up enjoying the two extremes of life's spectrum of offerings – bhajans at one end and fashion at the other. "Yes, that's true. I grew up to the incantations of my grandmother. As a 20 year old studying in the USA, I would spend my leisure time listening to spiritual music and would often retreat into the quiet surroundings of the campus. I found that highly exhilarating as most of my class mates would go either to the gym or to the bar, the latter being anathema to me. I also developed a penchant for the gym. It gave me an adrenalin rush especially because of the fitness levels exuded by the instructors and the people being trained there. Malls were another diversion because I've always been conscious about looking good."

Born in a Marwari household, Yash speaks of abstaining from all kinds of indulgences save for the fact of looking presentable and his consistent retreats to places of solitude and serenity like the Himalayas. And this stems from the fact that when you eat pure food ('Saatvic in Sanskrit') (unadulterated, non- fried /fatty) food, it gives the much needed amount of nutrients to keep the body healthy and fit.

One of the early entrants in the business of Ayurveda, Yash envisions the Birla Kerala Vaidyashala Pvt. Ltd, a part of the Birla Wellness vertical to become the largest and most inclusive destination of Ayurveda treatment and care. With 20 therapy centers, the Birla Kerala Vaidyashala offers day care and stay care treatments in cities like Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Bengaluru and Puducherry. A coterie of highly skilled and trained Ayurveda practitioners manage these centers that are equipped with the requisite infrastructure to treat patients suffering from wide-ranging ailments and even chronic illnesses like spondylosis, arthritis, obesity and skin disorders to name a few.

According to Yash, "Allopathy is 'prescribed drugs'; they offer instant relief but in the case of chronic illnesses, they cause more harm than cure. The repercussions are there for all to see". It's been almost 15 years to Yash Birla having made a foray into the world of Ayurveda Yash believes that the world was not ready to go back to the roots of Ayurveda when they first entered this market. However, with a growing change in the attitude and an increasing awareness on the benefits of this rich and ancient science, Yash purports the conviction toward his business. "Today, people at home and abroad are more aware of the science of Ayurveda and its treatments and are eager to indulge in the 'safe and sure' cure than have a dozen chemicals pervading the human body. Ayurveda is great as a supplementary treatment" affirms Yash. It's safe, has no side effects and unlike allopathy, it offers a complete cure.

Ayurveda (the knowledge of life), is native to India and had become a lost science. This rich source of holistic healing is

slowly resurfacing both in India and around the world. Despite the presence of many other competitors it doesn't unnerve the Birla Group's Ayurveda venture because as Yash affirms, "It's a panacea for all ills but only if you complement it with the right kind of food i.e. 'sattvic food' and follow a regimen prescribed by our skilled practitioners. It's a tough call but the results are phenomenal. It's not about healing of the body but mind and soul as well. The three attributes of Nature which our life revolves around are sattva (purity and harmony), rajas (over-active and confused) and tamas (chaotic). The cure is therefore a customized solution for each person as the proportions of the attributes are different in every individual. A trained or certified Ayurveda specialist ensures that complete healing is in tandem with the patients' requirements. Ayurveda dwells on the principles of Hetu (etiology), Linga (Symptomatology) and Anushadhi (medicine). Ayurveda helps maintain an ideal balance of the three doshas viz; vata, pitta and kapha, the three energies which circulate in our bodies and are responsible for our bodily functions, our individual temperaments and physical constitution.

The innate passion of Yash Birla to revive this ancient and effective medicinal science is very evident from the future plans laid out by him and his team. "We have to bring back the Sattvic things into our lives and it begins with embracing Ayurveda. Our energies are now focused on availing of enhanced technology, formulating additional manufacturing units, establishing more R & D centers and a number of clinics for lifestyle and chronic illnesses. We are considering more collaborations and productive innovations. My team and I are going the whole nine yards and I am extremely optimistic about the positive outcomes it holds for mankind at large".