

ROLE OF AYURVEDA AND YOGA IN MENTAL DISORDER OR MENTAL ILLNESS**Mittal Santosh kumar¹ Joshi Niraj kumar² Sunil Kumar³**¹MD Scholar, *Sharir Rachana* Dept. National Institute of *Ayurveda*, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India²MD Scholar, *Bal Roga* Dept. National Institute of *Ayurveda*, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India³Assoc. Prof, *Sharir Rachana* Dept. National Institute of *Ayurveda*, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India**ABSTRACT**

Mental health is an individual and personal matter. As human beings we require to maintain sound mental health. However, we develop certain behaviors and habits which can lead to a poor state of mental health. Such behaviors range from mild irritation to severe forms of anxiety and depression. Mental illness is a broad term which includes almost all the disorders of mood behavior which cause by faulty perception, emotion, thinking and attitude. Such individuals have problems in making adjustment with others in the society. Mental disorders is a significant contributor to the global burden of disease and affects people in all communities across the world. Mental disorders often start at a young age. Today every third person in Indian cities is a youth so Mental and behavioral problems are increasing part of the health problems in India. If we take a look in *Ayurveda* so in *Ayurveda* also mental health has a great importance for all over healthy personality. *Ayurveda* consider *prassana atma, indriya* and *mana* beside the equilibrium of *dosha, dhatu* and mala as *swastha*. *Ayurveda* deals with four aspects of lifestyle which can ensure good health in us. These include right food (*Ahara*), right recreation (*Vihara*), right routine (*Achara*), and right thinking (*Vichara*). Observing certain practices ensures a healthy and happy life. There are lots of discussion regarding *AacharRasayana, Sadvrutta, Pranayams, Aasnas* etc in *Ayurveda*. All these are helpful to maintain proper mental health as well as to tackle mental illness. Role of these in altered mood behavior will be discussed in detailed in full paper.

Keywords: Mental health, *Ayurveda, Pranayams, Aasnas*.

INTRODUCTION:

Health is refers to a state of physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being of the individual. Thus, mental health is one of the components of the broad concept of health. It is concerned with an optimum level of emotional and behavioral adjustment of the individual. Devil of mental disorders is gaining its worst shape as seen in various

data collected and published by WHO (World Health Organization). Today, depression is estimated to affect 350 million people. The World Mental Health Survey conducted in 17 countries found that on average 1 in 20 people reported having an episode of depression. The demand for curbing depression and other mental health conditions is on the rise globally (WHO, 2012) Mental health is a state of maintaining har-

mony or balance between the needs, desires, aspirations and attitudes of the individual with respect to the prevailing condition in the external environment. For these reasons, depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide in terms of total years lost due to disability.

Ayurveda covers not only for strengthening the physical power of the body, but also principles of spiritual as well as mental development. *Ayurveda* is inherently a psychological as much as it is a physical system of medicine. Its scope of practice includes both physical (*Sharirika*) and mental (*Manasika*) diseases. According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Ayu* (life) itself is the combination of the body, sense organs, mind and soul¹. The factor responsible for preventing decay and death, which sustains the body over time, and guides the processes of rebirth

MENTAL DISORDER OR MENTAL ILLNESS:

Mental disorders or mental illness is a psychological or behavioral pattern generally associated with subjective distress or disability that occurs in an individual, and which is not a part of normal development or culture. Mental health describes either a level of cognitive or emotional well-being or an absence of a mental disorder.

Concepts of mental health includes subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generation dependence and recognition of the ability to realize one's intellectual and emotional potential.

Mental health is an individual and personal matter. As human beings we require to maintain sound mental health. However, we develop certain behaviors and

habits which can lead to a poor state of mental health. Such behaviors range from mild irritation to severe forms of anxiety and depression. Mental illness is a broad term which includes almost all the disorders of mood behavior which cause by faulty perception, emotion, thinking and attitude. Such individuals have problems in making adjustment with others in the society. Mental disorders is a significant contributor to the global burden of disease and affects people in all communities across the world.

Mood disorders are a group of clinical conditions characterized by a loss of that sense of control and a subjective experience of great distress.

Three basic forms of mood disorders:

1. Major depressive disorder
2. Dysthymic disorder (a chronic, mild depression)
3. Bipolar disorder (also called manic depression)

Depression:

Depression is one of the most global public health issue and common disease on human race. Its burden on society is really impressive. It is chronic illness that affects mood thoughts, physical health and behavior of any individual and has been estimated to affect up to 21% of the world's population.

Depression is defined as a change in mood characterized by feeling of "tone of sadness" which may vary from mild despondency to the most abject despair. This change in mood is relatively fixed and can persist over a period of days, weeks, months or years.

The symptoms of depression can be complex and vary widely between people. But as a general rule, if we are depressed,

we feel sad, hopeless and lose interest in things we used to enjoy.

The symptoms persist for weeks or months and are bad enough to interfere with our work, social life and family life.

1. Psychological symptoms include:

- continuous low mood or sadness
- feeling hopeless and helpless
- having low self-esteem
- feeling tearful
- feeling guilt-ridden
- feeling irritable and intolerant of others
- having no motivation or interest in things
- finding it difficult to make decisions
- not getting any enjoyment out of life
- feeling anxious or worried
- having suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming yourself

2. Physical symptoms include:

- moving or speaking more slowly than usual
- change in appetite or weight (usually decreased, but sometimes increased)
- constipation
- unexplained aches and pains
- lack of energy or lack of interest in sex (loss of libido)
- Changes to your menstrual cycle
- disturbed sleep (for example, finding it hard to fall asleep at night or waking up very early in the morning)

3. Social symptoms include:

- not doing well at work
- taking part in fewer social activities and avoiding contact with friends
- neglecting your hobbies and interests
- having difficulties in your home and family life

Depression can come on gradually, so it can be difficult to notice something is wrong. Many people continue to try to cope

with their symptoms without realizing they are ill. It can take a friend or family member to suggest something is wrong.

Doctors describe depression by how serious it is:

- mild depression has some impact on your daily life
- moderate depression has a significant impact on your daily life
- Severe depression makes it almost impossible to get through daily life – a few people with severe depression may have psychotic symptoms.

AYURVEDIC CONCEPTS:

The *Ayurvedic* philosophy explained health is not just an absence of disease; it is achieved when there is perfect balance of all three *Doshas*, *Satva*, *Atma*, *Sharira*. *Satva* (mind), *Sharira* (body) and *Atma* (soul) are tripod of life². If one is disturbed; the whole life is in turmoil. When the *Satva* is in good state, it generates positive feelings but if the mind is not healthy then the body-mind apparatus gets imbalanced. Development of mind in man made him superior to other living beings. It also acts as a link or bridge between the materialistic world and spiritual world. Half a century ago the idea that the mind has the power over the functions and diseases of the body was regarded as laughable. Today it is generally accepted as a fact, although its implications are still largely neglected. It is realized that in human beings physical symptoms can be due to a state of mind and that the alterations in the state of a mind may be in itself sufficient to relieve the symptoms. Due to improper diet and actions, the natural state of the mind may disturb and the positive feelings may drive out. As a result negative feelings like anger, jealousy, cruelty, drowsiness can take place and may

lead to mental disorders. So it is easily understandable that the entire area of *Ayurvedic* healing process focuses on psychological health. It is already known that the mind can cause physical diseases as well as various mental illnesses. That's why the emphasis of "mind" in *Ayurveda* is more practical and realistic in the areas of health and healing and touching the day to day life of people.

In *Ayurveda* classics no special description of depression is given but all type of mental disorders are classified in "Unmada". As *Ayurvedic* point of view Raja & Tama vitiates leads to *Manasika Vikaras* like *Vishada*, *Bhrama*, *Glani*³ etc.

Vishada can be defined as the lassitude and inactivity in various action due to fear of failure. It is the lassitude of the speech, body and mind.

It can be defined as feeling of sorrow-ness.

It can also be defined as *Glani*.

It may be defined as *Mano-Dainya*.

Acharya Dalhan quoted *visada* as- "*Vishada is Chitta Dehae Glani (Dhalana)*."

Vishada also comprises a condition; *Avasada* that is lassitude of speech, body and mind. This definition clearly indicates the feelings of unwillingness to respond or retardation of physical and mental activities. *Avshad is Putradhi Vinasjam Daeniam (Dhalana)*.

Causes:

1. Aaharaja (Dietary causes):

Tamasika Aahara (including Irregular meal times or skipping meals, eating too late at night, Spicy food habits like pizza, burger, Chinese food, Oily foods, pickles, Salty and sour foods like chips, Over eating of stale, fermented foods etc.)

Improper dietary habits like *Sama-shana*, *Adhvashana* and *Vishamashana*. These may cause *Vishada* because of *Pragya-paradha*. These are more related with the lack of self-control over eating and show greedy nature in dietary habits.

The increase of depression can be linked to dietary factors in industrialized societies also particularly reduced levels of omega-3 fatty acids can cause depression. Excess alcohols have a negative effect on mood, and misuse of alcohol, and sleeping medications can play a major role in the length and severity of depression.

2. Viharaja (Life style causes):

Avyayania (lack of physical and mental exercise) is the vital causative factor in pathogenesis of depression. Lack of physical exercise is the primary factor for the prevalence of depression. The absence of physical challenge and overwhelming abundance of mental work is forcing more and more people to become victim to depression. [Short-tempered and irritating behavior, Anger and aggressive behavior, Restlessness, Increased or poor appetite and indigestion, Irregular sleeping pattern such as insomnia, disturbed sleep, or narcolepsy (excess sleep), Poor interpersonal relationships.]

3. Manasika karana (Psychological factors):

Duhkha produced due to loss of beloved one or any financial or social loss, *Bhaya*, *Irshya*, *Dainya*, *Lobha*, *Chinta*, *Krodha* may lead to *Vishada*. (Anxiety and worry, Negative attitude toward self and others.

4. Rogaja (Secondary to medical conditions):

Vishada is observed as a symptom in *Vataja Jwara*⁴ in the classics. But it can occur in all somatic disorders, because, if al-

lowed to persist for long time, psychic diseases and somatic diseases get combined with each other Haphazard and disorganized daily life routine.

Treatment:

Ayurveda is a holistic science, *Ayurveda* deals with four aspects of lifestyle which can ensure good health. These include right food (*Ahara*), right recreation (*Vihara*), right routine (*Achara*), and right thinking (*Vichara*). Observing certain practices ensures a healthy and happy life. As the *Vishaad* is not explained as a detailed disease in *Ayurveda* so its treatment is also not available. But the general method of treatment can be taken into consideration.

Acharya Vagbhatta stated the general treatment of *manasika roga* as- "*Dhi Dharya Aatmadhi Gyanam Mano Dosha Aushadam parama.*"⁵

The *Chikitsa*⁶ for treating mental illnesses are of three types-

1. *Daivavyaparshraya Chikitsa*
2. *Yuktivyaparshraya Chikitsa*
3. *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*

Yuktivyaparshraya Chikitsa refers to *Aahar*, *Aushadha* and *Dravya Yojana*.⁷ Food has been given the prime importance since Vedic period because health is dependent on food. It is considered as *Brahma* in *Upanishad*. Food is responsible for growth, development and enhancement of *Ojas*. According to *Acharya Charaka* body as well as diseases are formed by food. Wholesome and unwholesome food is responsible for the happiness and misery respectively. The disease can be cured without any medicine by just following the wholesome regimen. No medicine is equivalent to food. It is possible to make a person disease free with just proper diet because food increases the

enthusiasm, memory, *Agni*, life span, luster and *Ojas* etc.

Day routine (*Dincharya*) and night routine (*Ratricharya*) refer to eating and doing activities according to the time of day and night specifying *Doshas*. One should get up early in the morning before sunrise. Drinking water should be the first act after waking. It ensures smooth excretion of body waste, and is a sure remedy for constipation. After excretion and cleaning of teeth, massage of the body should be done before taking bath. Thus, there should be proper time for each and every activity in the cycle of twenty four hours.

Routine consists of three kinds of activities in which an individual indulges in. These are taking food and doing activities as per the seasonal demands called *Ritucharya*. It means taking food and doing activities in accordance with seasons. We must eat and act according to the characteristics of seasons.

Sound and positive mental health can only be maintained with right kind of thinking. A person who is mentally fit and healthy has self-satisfaction, accommodative intellect, ability to accept criticism, understanding of the emotional needs of others, and self-control. Such individuals are neither driven by greed or lust nor dominated by fear, anger, attachment, jealousy, guilt or worry.

According to the *Acharya Charaka* If peoples use of *Aachar Rasayana*, *Sadvrutta* (*Bramcharya*, *Gyana*, *Dana*, *Mitrta*, *Daya*, *Harsha*, *Upeksha*, *Shanti*), they will get *Aarath Dwaya* (*Aarogya*, victory on *Indraya*)⁸. All these are helpful to maintain

proper mental health as well as to tackle mental illness.

Mode of action of diet:

Acharya Charaka quated -“Bhojanam Vidhanma Cha Yatha Swyam Yuktya.”

That means diet have effect on *Agni, Tridoshas*. Milk, ghee, sweet dish, *Aachar Rasayan* influences the *Pravar Satva*. *Madhur Rasa* promotes the sixth *Indriya*. *Amla Rasa* strength the *Indriya*& influences the *Satva*.

Whether there is a direct link or not, eating healthily will help the subject generally feels better and give him more energy. In mild or moderate depression diet could be recommended affectivity. *Yoga* is being as an exercise referral scheme. Ideally both should be aiming to take depression down in shorter periods to fit it into your everyday life.

Mode of Action of Yoga:

Yoga has good effect on body as well as mind. When it is performed correctly it relaxes the mind and tone up the nervous system, endocrine system and the activity of internal organs. When *Savasana* is done it allows parasympathetic nervous system to operate and reverse the effect of arousal and returning the body to a balance state. *Savasana* aspects of autonomic nervous system is stimulated consequently the whole body is revitalized. *Bhramari Pranayam* produces a particular range of vibration which influences the body function in such a Way that it can maintain the integrity of body. Whole viscera are control by autonomic nervous system. Regular exercise of *Pranayam* increases longevity of respiration & controlling command. Chanting of mantras silently according to Vedas produces energy. This results in calm & relaxed stage of mind.

Benefits of Savasana:

The physiological benefits of deep relaxation are numerous likes-

- *Savasana* has a regenerative effect on the mind and the body.
- *Savasana* provides relief from any kind of stress and strain in few minutes.
- *Savasana* helps to strike a balance between work and rest.
- *Savasana* tackles restlessness, insecurity, frustration, anxiety, and fear.
- The ageing process is controlled.
- A buffer stock of energy is built up.
- Instead of many hours of disturbed sleep mind and body will derive more benefits from a few minutes of psychosomatic relaxation.
- The deep relaxation during *Savasana* induces sound sleep during night time.
- The physical and mental stress and strain during a hectic day can be suitably addressed through a few minutes practice of *Savasana*.
- *Savasana* is especially ideal for aged people as well as others who feel tired easily during the middle ages. They should remain in *Savasana* for longer periods.

Benefits of Bhramari pranayama:

- *Bhramari* causes the whole brain to vibrate. Vibration of the cerebral cortex sends impulses to the hypothalamus which has the capacity to control the pituitary gland (the master of all glands). The hypothalamus also sends impulses to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.
- Paroxysmal Gamma waves produced in brain during the *Bhramari* Pranayama which is associated with positive thoughts, feelings of happiness and acts as a natural antidepressant.
- In *Bhramari* Pranayama, pressing of the eyeballs leads to stimulation of the vagus nerve which in turn leads to activation of the

parasympathetic nervous system (PNS). PNS is associated with a relaxed and calm state of mind and body. Under the relaxing effects of PNS, autonomic nervous system facilitates to decrease the stressing effects of sympathetic nervous system and channels it towards more relaxed PNS.

- It calms the nervous system and brings in a mental state of calm and peace.

DISCUSSION:

After reviewing the literature, we can see that the definition of health given by *Acharya Sushruta* “*Prassana Atma, Indriya and Mana* beside the equilibrium of *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala* as *Swastha*¹⁰.” fulfills every aspects of healthy being which clearly establishes the importance of mental health. Today’s fast and unstable life style has given money but has taken a large toll on physical and mental health of human. Especially mentally the person become exhausted in young and seeks for salvation.

Various mental disorder had bubbled out of life, which both financially and socially had become burden on once life. In *Ayurvedic* classics a routine for nearly everything is described in either detail or briefly. Mental element is one of the basic concept of Ayurveda. Various causes, features and treatments are given in *Samhita* especially under title of “*Unmada*”.

So, depression i.e. *Vishadaitis* causes, features, types and also treatment both medicinal and non-medicinal have been discussed. The role of yoga especially *Savasana* and *Pranayama* i.e. *Bhramari Pranayama* worth to be noted. These mode of action clearly describes its Effectiveness In Mental Disorder Of Any Type.

CONCLUSION:

“A sound mind always lives in sound body.” Quality of life is a broad term without exact definition. It depends upon number of factors support from relatives and friends, interest of one's occupation and ability do work and financial status according to expectations course health and to disabilities whether congenital or recently acquired disease.

These Life Style Disorders are curse for unhealthy living. Our *Ayurvedic* classics have described a set of rules for nearly everything needed in life. That’s why it is known “**science of life**” nor a basically a source of medicine. Following them it is possible to lead a healthy life, depression like mood disorder can be tackled & kicked off life. Various *Yogas, Pranayama, Aaharas, Viharas* etc. can pave a way of health. Physical fitness is basic attempt to get the mental fitness and so both cannot be neglected and have mutual importance.

Knowledge of Ayurveda is boon for humanity, blessing given by god, the almighty himself. So, we should follow its teaching for full filling needs of our daily routine life as well as to attain *Dharam, Artha, Kama* and above all *Moksha* the ultimate aim of life.

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