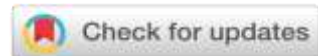


**SPIRITUAL VIEW ON THE CONCEPT OF *ANTAHAKARANA CHATUSHTAYA*-A *VEDANTA DARSHAN* PHILOSOPHY****Shah Kajal Vijay**M.D. Scholar, *Ayurved Samhita & Siddhant*, Y.M.T. Ayurvedic Medical College, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.**Corresponding Author:** shahkajal78@gmail.com<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj1512052024>**(Published Online: May 2024)****Open Access**

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Ayurvedic psycho-spirituality is a holistic approach to understanding the human experience, rooted in the belief that every individual is not just a physical being but also a soul on a journey towards enlightenment or the ultimate reunion with the divine. This ancient Indian philosophy recognises that human existence is not limited to the material realm but encompasses mind, body, and spirit. *Antahakarana*, a term derived from *Sanskrit*, holds significant importance in Indian philosophy as it comprises the entirety of the mind. This includes the faculty of thinking, the sense of self, and the ability to discern. The term itself can be broken down to '*antah*' meaning 'inner' and '*karana*' meaning 'instrument' or 'function'. Hence, *Antahakarana* can be comprehended as the 'inner organ', 'inner functions', or 'inner instrument'. Furthermore, *Antahakarana* also refers to the four distinct functions of the mind: *manas* (the lower mind or, simply, the mind), *buddhi* (the higher mind or intellect), *chitta* (memory or consciousness), and *ahankara* (ego or the creator of the sense of self). It is worth noting that *Antahakarana* is considered the bridge connecting the middle and higher aspects of the mind and the part of the mind that undergoes reincarnation.

Keywords: *Antahakarana, Mana, Buddhi, Chitta, Ahankara, Antahakarana Chatushtaya*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *Antahakarana Chatushtaya* is mentioned in *Vedanta Darshana*. The *Mana* (mind), *Buddhi* (intellect), *Ahankara* (ego), and *Chitta* (consciousness) are the four internal faculties that shape our thoughts, feelings, and actions. By understanding and cultivating these faculties, we can gain greater insight into ourselves and the world around us and ultimately lead more fulfilling and purposeful lives.

The *Mana* (mind) is often described as the seat of emotions and desires, constantly fluctuating and easily influenced by external stimuli. It is the source of our thoughts and feelings and can be both a source of creativity and turmoil.

On the other hand, the *Buddhi* (intellect) is the faculty responsible for reasoning, decision-making, and discernment. It is the part of us that weighs options, analyses information and makes choices based on logic and reasoning.

The *Ahankara* (ego), or sense of self, is the part of us that craves recognition, validation, and importance. It is the source of our pride, our insecurities, and our need for approval from others. The ego can often cloud our judgment and lead us to decide based on our self-interest rather than what is best for ourselves and others.

Chitta (Consciousness), on the other hand, is the deepest and most profound aspect of our being. It is the part of us connected to the universal consciousness, the source of all existence. It is the part of us that transcends time and space and is eternal and unchanging. Consciousness is the part of us aware of our thoughts, feelings, and actions and is the source of our inner wisdom and intuition.

DISCUSSION

The human body consists of two parts: inert and consciousness. The inert part is the physical body, composed of bones, muscles, fluids, blood, etc. The presence of consciousness within it allows life to be sustained. As soon as this consciousness ceases to exist, death occurs, and the body immediately begins to decay.

The power of consciousness is divided into four parts. The purpose of this division is that its functioning system operates in four directions. The mind, intellect, memory, and ego are collectively called the fourfold internal organs. Let us now gain some understanding of these.

1. MANAS (MIND)

The function of the mind is to desire, wish, and imagine. The mind generates various desires for different objects, and imagination is its primary quality. Therefore, it can instantly travel from one corner of the earth to another. Its flight is swift. No one can run as fast as the mind. It does not remain stable in one place for long.

2. BUDDHI (INTELLECT)

The function of intelligence is to create. The mind generates various types of imaginative thoughts. Intelligence accepts practical imaginations and discards useless ones. Reasoning is the primary tool of intelligence. Intelligence decides what should and should not be done by considering factors such as cause, circumstance, experience, example, opportunity, evidence, means, suitability, and capability. This is the general process of intelligence. Highly evolved souls possess pure intelligence.

Ordinary individuals' intelligence tends to lean towards either benefit or love. Benefit refers to self-interest and ultimate truth. Love refers to worldly pleasure and material gain, just like in a court case, where the lawyer for the plaintiff and the lawyer for the defendant argue against each other on the same issue, each defending their side as faultless and the other as guilty.

A discerning individual is someone who **harmonizes** both aspects. They adopt a policy and work method that brings together both benefits. They understand that excessive behaviour is not appropriate in a moderate state. In ordinary life, excessive greed is as detrimental as excessive renunciation. Excessive indulgence is also harmful to health, just like excessive tolerance. It is not impossible to earn a livelihood with righteousness, nor is it impossible to use wealth with self-control. It is not impossible to remain de-

tached like King Janaka while living as a household-er. The integration of self-interest and ultimate truth is possible. This middle path is dear to wise individuals. After this practice, the state of intellect gradually becomes elevated, called enlightened consciousness. In that state, one leaves self-interest and ultimate truth behind, and only divine inspiration and divine command become their foundation. *Paramahansa* and liberated beings exist in that state.

3. CHITTA (CONSCIOUSNESS)

The essence of the mind - nature, habits, thoughts, practices, and culture. The thought process and work system that one practices for a long time becomes ingrained, and one becomes accustomed to it. Letting go of it becomes pretty tricky. Just like two friends who have been together for a long time, their emotions surge when faced with a permanent separation, and they do not want to be apart. Similarly, those characteristics, thoughts, and behaviors practiced for a long time become ingrained in the mind as culture and life begin to follow that pattern. People with a nature of beggar, thief, addict, immoral, or lazy know that our actions are harmful to us, but their minds and bodies have been conditioned in such a way that, despite not wanting to, they become helpless due to habit and repeatedly engage in the same actions. Many individuals are stuck in such customs, foolish beliefs, and other traditions and ancient paths. Spiritual seekers must eradicate deep-rooted impressions in the mind and cultivate new impressions with strength and depth. Therefore, purification of the mental realm, known as the realm of consciousness, is considered a significant practice in mental cultivation.

4. AHANKARA (EGO)

The meaning of ego is the belief in oneself. The answer to the question "Who am I?" varies in the minds of different individuals. Some define themselves based on their profession, some on their wealth, some on their caste, and some on their religion, giving themselves importance based on various beliefs. People create their own beliefs about themselves through such diverse perspectives. If asked the same question to the public, the answers received will reveal that

these people consider themselves as Brahmins, merchants, millionaires, poor, landlords, farmers, beggars, Hindus, Christians, widows, married, educated, uneducated, unfortunate, fortunate, prisoners, rulers, sick, beautiful, thieves, generous, etc., based on their circumstances. It is this belief that becomes the mould in which they shape themselves.

The feeling of stability in one's relationship is referred to as ego. Many people consider pride and ego to be the same thing. Although these words may be synonymous, ego refers to 'self-identity' in spiritual scriptures. Ego is a state of mind that may not seem particularly useful from a broader perspective but holds great significance. The primary barrier to the separation of God and the individual is the 'ego'. If this ego exists, liberation cannot be achieved. When a tiny spark of divine energy acknowledges its existence and experiences the sense of 'I' within a limited scope, it attains the designation of an individual. Believing in the individual self, separate from God, is the fundamental cause of life. When this belief is removed, duality is eliminated, and 'I' and 'you' become one, then the state of non-duality is attained in union with Brahman.

The way our ego is, our thoughts, beliefs, and ideals will be according to that. Desires and aspirations will seek progress and success in that same field. Those who have a definite belief in their relationship that apart from being a beggar named so and so, they are nothing else can be more successful in begging and pleading for success. The ego of spiritual personalities manifests as virtuous, noble, saintly, idealistic, serving the people, great, and devoted to God; therefore, it excels in this field. They experience happiness and success in virtues rather than in wealth. Accordingly, the activities of their lives fall into the framework that aligns with the soul's greatness, prestige, and peace.

CONCLUSION

When the four parts of the internal organ, mind, intellect, consciousness, and ego, are advanced on the path of tranquility through purity, our conscious power develops daily. This mental development is the

father of many successes and riches. There is no wealth greater than mental strength in this world. The greater the cognitive perspective, the greater its glory in the world; otherwise, from a physical standpoint, almost all humans are equal. Those who aspire to progress should try to develop their internal organ ultimately. Because in this development lies the welfare of both the material and spiritual realms.

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