

CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF MIND IN AYURVEDA

Sadavrat Amlani*¹, Pragya Singh² and Anil Kumar Singh³¹Assistant Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa, Shivalik Ayurvedic Medical College, Azamgarh.²Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita and Siddhanta, Guru Gorakhnath Institute of Medical Sciences (Faculty of Ayurveda), Arogyadham, Balapar, Gorakhpur.³Professor and HOD, Department of Kayachikitsa, Shivalik Ayurvedic Medical College, Azamgarh.

*Corresponding Author: Sadavrat Amlani

Assistant Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa, Shivalik Ayurvedic Medical College, Azamgarh.

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda or the ancient Indian system of medicine, provides a comprehensive approach to the mental health that incorporates the mind, body and soul. Mental health is described in ayurveda ranging from ancient texts like *Atharva veda* to the subsequent treatise like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridayam* and so on, containing the causative factors, sign & symptoms and management of the mental disorders which includes *Daiva vyapashraya*, *Yukti vyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya chikitsa*.

KEYWORDS: Manas roga, Mental disorders, Mental health.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda or the ancient Indian system of medicine, provides a comprehensive approach to the mental health that incorporates the mind, body and soul. Mental health is described in ayurveda ranging from ancient texts like *Atharva veda* to the subsequent treatise like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridayam* and so on, containing the causative factors, sign & symptoms and management of the mental disorders. Ayurvedic theory of mental health is based on the combination of the three *gunas* (*Satva*, *Raja*, *Tama*), *Tridoshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) and *Panchamahabhutas* (*Akash*, *Vayu*, *Agni*, *Jala* & *Prithvi*). The dynamic balance of these elements bestows a good mental health.^[1]

Concept of Mind in Ayurveda

Mind is the one which helps in gaining knowledge. It has qualities of minuteness and oneness. And it is through the mind that the sense organs are able to indulge in their respective sensory objects. Mind deals with various subjects like concerns, thoughts, goals, determination and all the other knowledge that is perceived through mind are to be considered as the subjects of mind.^[2] The functions of the mind include direction of the sensory organs, controlling oneself from indulging in illicit matters and thinking & determination.^[3]

Factors for vitiation of Mind

The factors responsible for the vitiation of mind includes: *Asatmyendriyārtha samyoga* (Improper unification of mind with sense organs), *Pragyaapradha*

(Intellectual errors) and *Parinama* (Time factors).^[4]

These factors may be explained as follows:

- 1) *Asatmyendriyārtha samyoga*^[5] - It refers to the *atiyoga* (excessive), *ayoga* (ineffective), or *mithya yoga* (perverted use) of sense organs viz. *karna* (ears), *twacha* (skin), *akshi* (eyes), *jihwa* (tongue) and *naasa* (nose).
- Karna atiyoga*: listening to loud sounds.
 - Karna ayoga*: not hearing any sound at all.
 - Karna mithya yoga*: listening harsh, fearful, spurious, unpleasant and distress signalling sounds.
 - Twacha atiyoga*: touching excessive hot or cold objects.
 - Twacha ayoga*: not touching any object at all.
 - Twacha mithya yoga*: contact of air with evil spirit and noxious substances, untimely contact with oily, hot or cold objects.
 - Akshi atiyoga*: seeing excessively huge or microscopic objects.
 - Akshi ayoga*: not seeing any object at all.
 - Akshi mithya yoga*: seeing spiteful, horrible, disgusting images, seeing from very far or near as well as seeing vengeful images.
 - Jihwa atiyoga*: excessive intake of any one rasa (taste).
 - Jihwa ayoga*: No or little bit intake of any one rasa.
 - Jihwa mithya yoga*: intake of incompatible rasas.
 - Naasa atiyoga*: sniffing very mild or strong odours.
 - Naasa ayoga*: not sniffing at all.
 - Naasa mithya yoga*: sniffing rotten, toxic, noxious and unpleasant odours.

2) **Pragyaapradha**^[6] – Incorrect understanding by the intellect leading to inappropriate actions performed out of it is known as intellectual errors. It includes suppression of natural urges, performing adventurous tasks, excessive indulgence in sexual acts, improper intake of panchakarma procedures, giving up modesty and virtue, insulting revered men & gods, knowingly indulging in harmful activities, untimely visiting deserted places, friendship with mean peoples, not following *sadvrittas*, doing condemned acts influenced through envy, arrogance, fear, anger, greed, attachment, insanity & illusions.

3) **Parinama or Kaala**^[7]– Untimely acts in accordance with diurnal and seasonal variations following *atiyoga*, *ayoga* & *mithya yoga* of *vata*, *pitta* & *kapha*, which results in disease, aging and death.

Diseases caused due to vitiation of Mind^[8]- It includes

- i. *Unmada* (Psychosis)
- ii. *Apasmara* (Conversion disorders)
- iii. *Atatvabhinivesha* (obsessive compulsive disorders)
- iv. *Bhrama* (Illusion)
- v. *Tandra* (Drowsiness)
- vi. *Klama* (Neurasthenia)
- vii. *Avsaad* (Depression)
- viii. *Aptantraka* (Hysteria)
- ix. *Chittodvega* (Anxiety neurosis)
- x. *Madatyaya* (Alcohol intoxication) etc.

Remedies of Mental illness – In ayurveda, there are three types of treatment modalities which includes:

1) **Daiva Vyapashraya Chikitsa**^[9]: These methods promote assurance and favourable aptness. It includes *Mantra* (chanting hymns), *Aushadha* (sacred herbs), *Mani* (gem stones), *Mangala bali* (sacrifice), *Upahara* (offerings), *Homa* (worshipping), *Niyama* (regulations), *Prayaschita* (atonement), *Upvasa* (fasting), *Swastyayana* (reading religious books), *Pranipata* (wishing sacred ones) and *Gamana* (pilgrimage).

2) **Yukti Vyapashraya Chikitsa**^[10]: It includes management of diseases through *aahar-vihaar* (diet & lifestyle) & *aushadha* (drugs). Medicinal preparations include

- Single drugs like *Brahmi*, *Mandookaparni*, *Guduchi*, *Shakhapushpi*, *Jatamansi* etc.
- Formulations like *Brahmi ghrita*, *Panchagavya ghrita*, *Kalyanaka ghrita*, *Vata kulantaka ras*, *Smritisagar ras*, *Rasraja ras*, *Manas mitra vatakam* etc.

3) **Satvavajaya Chikitsa**^[11]: It aims in controlling the mind from indulging in unfair acts & deeds. Its techniques include- *Gyana* (spiritual knowledge), *Vigyana* (educating the patient), *Dhairya* (patience), *Smriti* (reviving the knowledge), and *Samadhi* (abstaining from over indulgence in materialistic world).

CONCLUSION

In Ayurvedic texts, although there is no clear-cut classification of *manas rogas* (mental disorders) but each and every text has detailed descriptions about *manas* (mind) and *manas roga* in the area of etiology and treatment.

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