

Presidential Address

**MENTAL HEALTH IN ANCIENT INDIA &
ITS RELEVANCE TO MODERN PSYCHIATRY**

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*Respected chairpersons and members of the
Indian Psychiatric Society,*

Esteemed fellows and members of IPS,
distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome
you all to this conference in this historic city of
Bhubaneswar close to the holy land of Lord
Jagdish. I am grateful to the members of IPS
for giving me an opportunity to serve the
highest office for one year.

At various occasions in the past in last
two and half decades as a student of psychia-
try I have heard the leaders of Indian psychia-
try, past president of IPS and academicians
involved in psychiatric education and research
like Prof. J.S. Neki, Prof. Venkoba Rao, Prof.
N.N. Wig, Prof. R.L. Kapoor, Prof. D.N. Nandi
and many others stating that we must develop
Indian models of psychotherapy for Indian pa-
tients and they should be culturally oriented,
western models of psychotherapy being not so
well suited*for Indian patients. In order to de-
velop Indian models we have to have adequate
knowledge of our heritage, how complexities
of mind have been understood in the past and
how there has been a subtle transfer of attitude
from generation to generation without really
having a formal education of this subject. I
thought it would be appropriate to title my presi-
dential address as "Mental health in Indian an-
cient India and its relevance to modern
psychiatry".

According to Hindu mythology the age
of human race on the earth is over 8 million

years which has been divided in four Yugs-
Satyug which lasted for 5.6 million years, Treta
which lasted for 1.4 million years, Dwapar which
lasted for 4.68 lacs years and the present yug
the Kaliyug which started about 5000 years ago
will last for 232000 years. Modern Geologists
tell us that the earth is 4500 million years old
and the earliest forms of life (Protozoic) ap-
peared 2700 million years ago. Two million
years ago we were not yet men which we be-
came just over a million years ago. The Indian
thought and astrology claims creation of Vedas
few million years ago however the estimation
of the age of ancient Indian literature by some
western researchers like Max Muller, Wintervitz
has been estimated 5000 to 1000 years B.C.

For the purpose of this presentation I
have tried to review the ancient literature from
pre vedic period (times immemorial), vedic
period (approx. 10000-5000 BC), Era of
upanishads (5000 to 2500 BC), Era of
Mahabharata (Bhagwad Gita 3500 BC),
Ayurvedic Era (1400 BC), Yog darshan (approx.,
5000 to 1000 BC), and other literature from 500
BC to 100 BC (The Puranas, Ramayana by
Valmiki, Mahabharata, Abhigyan Shakuntalam
by Kalidas, Nyay darshan and Sankhya
darshan), Vedantas 2000 BC to 700 BC.

Access to this literature was possible at
a library of ancient literature and quotes of vari-
ous authors. Authenticity of historical era is not
very important, what is important is how vari-
ous aspects of mental health were perceived
and understood in ancient India in the pre Christ
Era when most of western civilization were yet

to develop.

Concept of mind in vedas (10000 to 5000 BC)-

Mind has been conceived to be a functional element of ATMAN (soul which is self) in Vedas which are earliest written script of human race. In Rig Veda and Yajur Veda there is mention of prayer through mantras (Rhymes) for noble thoughts to come in the mind. It has been mentioned that thoughts determine facial appearance, thoughts influence facial expression, thoughts can be purified through mantras and purified thoughts influence instincts. In Veda there is emphasis on prevention of mental pain (depression).

In Rigveda (ऋग्वेद) (chapter 1- Richa 71, 76, 94, 46, 48) the speed of mind, curiosity for methods of mental happiness, prayers for mental happiness and methods of increasing medha (intelligence) have been described. It has been further stated in Rigveda that purification of mind prevents diseases in human beings therefore one should have noble thoughts. The power of mind in healing has also been described in Rigveda. First time the three traits of personality- Sattva (सत्त्व), Raj (राज) and Tam (तम) were described in rigveda (Rig 4/42/4) and also mental illnesses were independently identified along with physical illnesses in Rigveda (Rig 1/105/7) where it has been prayed that may these mental illnesses not destroy this body.

In Yajurveda (यजुर्वेद) the mind has been conceptualized as the inner flame of knowledge. In 34th chapter of Veda first six mantras lucidly describe various aspects of mind which says "What is mind ?" Perceiving knowledge is mind. mind is described as yog and Samadhi (state of mind), all our sensory organs are under control of mind and they function under the control of mind.

मनो श्रोत्रमन्त्रं मनो रसनमन्त्रो घ्राणम्
मनो वक्त्रमन्त्रो वक्त्रं श्रोत्रमन्त्रम्

In first six mantras of Shiv Sankalpamastu (शिव संकल्पमस्तु) important characteristics of manas has been described. It speaks of speed of mind, state of mind during wakeful-

ness (Jagrat) and dreamy state (Swapna). Mind has been described as basis of consciousness and instrument of knowledge (Shukla, 1998). Functions of mind have been described and prayer has been made that the mind may work for welfare of all.

On vedic statement tells us that Atman (soul) consists of three elements.

(i). Mind (मन) (ii). Vitality (प्राण) (iii). Matter (वाक्)

We may see these elements pervading us as well as the whole world. Our mind represents knowledge (ज्ञान), Vitality (प्राण) represents action (क्रिया) and matter (वाक्) represents all worldly objects (earth) and all literature (शब्द) one vedic shruti says -

ज्ञानजन्मा भवोदेवता इच्छाजन्मा भवेत् कृति ।
कृति जन्म भवेत् कर्म तदेतत्कृतमुच्यते ॥

Knowledge begets will and will begets effort and effort begets action, includes all born. Absolute (ब्रह्म) referred to above is the form of knowledge and will is the form of mind. This knowledge manifest itself in the form of will in the world. This world or the universe is the by product of this will hence the gross matter and the vitality pervading in the material world are the product of will - product of manifest form of absolute (Sharma, 1998).

In Atharvaveda Manas has been described as an instrument of hypnotism. In the 6th chapter of Atharvaveda there is detailed description of preservation of will power, subjects related to psychology like emotion, inspiration and consciousness. At some places it describes various emotional states like grief, envy, pleasure, hostility, attachment, laziness, etc.

The description of Unmad (psychosis) in vedas has been rather brief and it has been described as a deluded state of mind. The aetiological factors described in the vedas are fever, bacteria (Krimi) which is equivalent to organic psychosis and due to Rakshash, Gandharva, Apsara etc., sins towards Gods (with feelings of Guilt) which are equivalent to functional psychotic conditions as understood today. The methods of treatment described in

vedas include Bhesaj (medicines) and prayer to the God by mantras (psychotherapy). There has also been a mention of treatment of aggression (Anger), epilepsy and sleep disorders, and prevention of mental disorder by Yam, Niyam, Asan, and pranayam. The first two refer to behavioural controls while the latter two refer to physical activities (Yogasan) and breathing exercises (Atharvaveda).

Era of Upanishads (5000 - 2500 BC)

Upanishads are most important from the point of psychology. Literal meaning being "sitting near" as a student listening to a teachers secret teachings dates back any time from 5000 BC to 4000 BC. We are concerned with the profound psychological insight. The most important upanishads are 'Chhandogya upanishad' (छन्दोग्योपनिषद्), 'Shwetashwaropanishad' (श्वेतोपनिषद्) which describe what is mind, various states of mind, and 'Brihadaryaka Upanishad' (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्) which described the theories of perception, thought, chitta and smriti (memory). The upanishads also describe prakriti which can be equated with personality in modern understanding.

Shanirkopanishad (शरीरकोपनिषद्) mainly described prakriti and characteristics of various prakritis. Three types of Manas prakriti have been described Sattva Rajas & Tamas and characteristics of all the personalities have been described. The characteristics of prakriti are based on objective observable behavioural patterns of the individuals and it is very interesting to note that even at that time the classification of character traits was as systematic as seen in modern personality inventories which have been developed after rigorous statistical exercises. The other important upanishads which describe prakriti include Akashamalkopanishad (अशमालकोपनिषद्), Bhavamantarnopanishad (भवमन्तराणोपनिषद्), Gopichandopanishad (गोपीचन्दोपनिषद्) and Saraswati rahashyopanishad (सरस्वती रहस्योपनिषद्) has described philosophical prakriti as a separate personality.

This is the era when states of mind had

been understood and four Avasthas Jagrat (Waking state) Svapana (Dreaming state) Sushupti (Deep Sleep state) and Samadhi were described. In present day we know various levels of consciousness from conscious to unconscious.

The psychic states were described as instinct, impulses and emotions and methods how to control emotions and impulses were described. Various mental faculties three Shakties (power/potencies) Ichchha Shakti (will) Kriya Shakti (Action) and Jnana-Shakti (Knowledge). While the mental powers described are Vedana shakti (power of perception) Smarana Shakti (power of memory) Bhavana shakti (Power of imagination), Manisha shakti (power of judgement), Sankalpa shakti (Will or volition) and Dharana shakti (Power to hold) are the six important powers of mind (Sivananda, 1983). The Psychopathology was understood by Tringunas and Tridosas.

The Era of lord Rama (5000 - 4000 BC)

The Era of lord Rama (Treta yug) dates back approx. 5000-4000 BC. However Ramayana was written by the scholars later on but several anecdotes of mental suffering and mysteries like the melancholia and depression of Dashrath. Lord Rama's father who suffered from and ultimately died in despondency is an illustrations of major depressive disorder. Ramcharitramanas was written later, Valmiki Ramayana is said to have been written much earlier (500-300 BC). Several other anecdotes of depressive disorder and grief reactions have been described in Ramayana while describing the battle of Ramayana for e.g. emotional reactions of lord Rama when Laxman becomes unconscious etc. (Valmiki Ramayana).

The Era of Bhagwad Gita (3500 BC)

One may wonder why the Bhagwad Gita came into existence when we already had such scriptures as the Vedas and Upanishads. The great Vedantic sage Shanakra explained. "The Vedic dharma was practiced over along time.

But eventually discrimination and wisdom declined. Unrighteousness became more predominant than righteousness. The Vedas are the source of all streams of Indian philosophy and psychology, and the Upanishads are the later parts of the Vedas. With the decline of discrimination of wisdom, it became difficult for those who were not scholars to understand the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads. So it was necessary to restate these teachings in a way that could be appreciated and assimilated by all" (Swami Ram, 1978).

The Bhagwad Gita contains in condensed form all the philosophical and psychological wisdom of the Upanishads. It is said that the Upanishads are like a cow that Sri Krishna milks to bestow its nurturing wisdom to his dear friend and disciple, Arjuna. Sri Krishna imparts all the wisdom of the Vedic and Upanishadic literature through the teachings of the Bhagwad Gita. Rather than imparting a new trend of thought or expounding a new philosophy, Sri Krishna modified and simplified the Vedic and Upanishadic knowledge. He speaks to humanity through his dialogue with Arjuna. The word Arjuna means "one who makes sincere efforts" and the word Krishna means "the centre of consciousness". One who makes sincere efforts inevitably obtains the knowledge that directly flows from the centre of consciousness.

Bhagwad Gita describes all aspects of Yoga, psychology and is unique among the psychological and philosophical teachings for a student of psychotherapy, various aspects of psychotherapeutic techniques are described in it.

Earliest written description of symptoms of anxiety and depression are found here when Arjuna says :

सौमं देव मम गात्रं मुखं च परिशुष्यते ।
केपक्ष्ण शरीरे मे रोमहर्षित जायते ॥

My limbs are frozen, my mouth is drying up, my body trembles and hairs stand on end.

गाण्धेय असत हस्तावक्षयं परं दहति ।
न च शक्यामवस्थां भ्रमणीव च म मन ॥

Gandiva, the great bow is slipping from

my hands and my skin is burning. Nor can I stand up my mind is as it were whirling.

'निम्नता'नं न पश्यामि 'वेपरीता'नं केशव ।
न च शरीरे ऽ नुपश्यामि हस्ता रजजनमाध्वं ॥

And I see inauspicious omens O Krishna, Nor do I see any good occurring upon killing my own kinsmen in the battle.

Bhagwad Gita Chapter 1/29, 30, 31

कार्मण्यदोषोऽन्तस्त्वमानं पुत्रशर्मि त्वा धर्मसम्बुद्धवेता
वक्षस्य रथान्निश्चिता वदि तमे शब्द्यस्तेऽहं शधि मा त्वा पपन्न

My true nature subdued by the fault of miserableness, my mind deluded as to the righteous conduct I ask you whatever is definitely better do tell me that I am your disciple surrendering to you do teach me and guide me.

न 'हे प्रपश्यामि भ्रमापनुदाद वक्षसकमुच्यंशर्मिन्द्राणाम् ।
अलाप्य भ्रमावराफानमुद्ध राज्ञः सुराणामपि वाधिपसम ॥

I do not see anything that might remove this grief that is drying up my senses-not even a prosperous kingdom without enemies nor sovereignty over the gods.

Bhagwad Gita II : 7,8

Anxiety sticken, sorrowful, depressed Arjuna is converted into the unbeaten warrior of the battle of Mahabharata through psychotherapy by the therapist Krishna.

तं त्वा क्षयया ऽऽ विष्टम श्रुपूर्णां कृतेक्षणम ।
विषीदन्मिमं द वाक्यमुवाच गधुरसूदन ॥

To him who was thus possessed with a pitiful mood whose eyes were distressed and filled with tears who was suffering from Sadness the destroyer of Madhu, Shri Krishna addressed these words.

कुतस्ता कश्मदीमद विषमे समुपरिष्ठतम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमरतार्यम अकीर्तिकरमर्जुना ॥

From where has this Ignominy favoured of the ignorable, unheavenly and disreputable entered you at such a troublesome time O Arjuna,

Bhagwad Gita II , 1,2

कलैव्य मा सम गम वार्य नैतत्त्वं युपपद्यते ।
बुद्धं हृदयदीर्घत्वं त्यक्त्योत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥

Do not lapse into impotency O son of Pritha; it does not well bechove you. Abandon this littleness and weakness of the heart of rise O Scorcher of enemies.

मातरस्यैस्तु कौन्तेय सातोष्णसुखदुःखदा ।
प्रागमर्षायेनोऽनन्या साँस्तिरतिहास्य भारता ॥

The contact between the elements O son of Kunti are the causes of heat cold, pleasure and pain being non eternal, these come and go learn to withstand them O descendent of Bharat.

य हि न व्यथयन्त्या पुत्रस्यैव ।

सम दुःखसुखोपैतेऽमृतत्वसा कल्पते ॥

O Bull among men the person to whom these do not cause any suffering, the wiseman who is alike to pain and pleasure he along is ready for the immortal state.

Bhagwad Gita, 11, 3, 14, 15

In this excellent model of psychotherapy through 18 chapters way of self knowledge, the Yoga of action (कर्मयोग) knowledge of renunciation and action, the path of meditation, knowledge of the absolute and eternal, yogic vision, yoga of devotion, profound knowledge of three Gunas and the wisdom of renunciation and liberation have been described at length, which leads to personality transformation of Arjuna. In the modern psychotherapy cognitive restructuring is the goal of psychotherapy which has been accomplished a great deal through Bhagwad Gita.

Self realization is the goal of human life. The purpose of eastern religion, philosophy and psychology is to fulfil that goal. That word "philosophy" is a compound of two words Philo and Sophia which mean "love for knowledge" but this term is not applicable in east for those who consider the prime question of life such as Who am I ?, From where have I come ?, Why have I come ? And where will I go ? Are not interested in intellectual answers to these questions. The subject matter of eastern philosophy leads the students through a systematic way of directly experiencing the truths, of existence and height of self realization after realizing one's real self one knows that this self is the self of all (Swami Ram, 1978).

The Ayurvedic Era (1500 - 1400 BC)

Ayurveda derives its roots from Atharvaveda and it is one of the ancient sci-

ence which means science of life. Though principles of Ayurveda find a mention in vedantic treatise also, the classic written documents are Charak Samhita (1400 BC) and Sushrut Samhita (1500 BC). These two classics describe mental disorders, personality types according to trigunas - the satva, raj and tam and tridoshas - the three humours in the body vat, pitta, kapha. The chapter on manasroga describes hetu the causative factors for mental disorders. 14 causative factors have been described which include-

1. **Pragyaparadh** - involving in socially unsectioned behaviour and involving in actions arising out of envy (इर्ष्या), pride (मान), fear (भय), anger (क्रोध), greed (लाभ), attraction (भाव), proud (मद) and deluded thinking (मग). All activities arising out of raj and tam are included in pragyaparadh. Chakrapani has defined pragyaparadh as duties not performed at appropriate time.

2. **Anuchit bramhacharya** - one who is out following the rules of brahmacharya which includes Indriya Nigrah i.e. control over demands of instincts. Due to this when the person carries out activities to gratify his instinctual needs his consensus is not able to control his mind, he becomes conflict ridden which leads to mental disorders like depression, anxiety, irritability, fears and phobias, restlessness, which leads to mental illnesses.

3. **Durbal satva** - people who have weak satva characteristics have increased raj and tam characteristics which leads to emotions like anger and uncontrolled emotions which leads to mental disorder.

4. **Durbal Sharir** - Nutritional deficiencies leading to weak physical structure can lead to mental disorders.

5. **Sharir dosh vikrati** - According to theory of tridosha it has been described by sushrut as well as charak that increase in one of the three humours of body either vat, pitta, or kapha leads to vataj, pittaj, kaphaj, types of mental disorder.

ders of example increased vat leads to insomnia, while increased pitta leads to reduced sleep and unconsciousness and decrease in kapha also leads to insomnia. While decrease pitta leads to fear, anger, unconsciousness and deluded thinking. It has also been said that certain behaviour increase the humors of body which have been outlined in text of Charak Samhita.

6. Manas dosh - (psychological factors) different detrimental emotions arise out of disorder of raj and tam which leads to mental illnesses.

7. Manobhighat kardravya - Trauma to mind because of substance abuse. There are certain substances which derange the chitta e.g. alcohol.

8. Agantuk karan - (exogenous factors) factors coming to the body from outside like krimi (bacterias), Rakshash, Paishach, Pret (evil spirits) can also cause mental illnesses.

9. Malinahar vihar - Bad food and bad life style both lead to mental illnesses.

10. Manoabhighat - Trauma to mind because of stress, extremely pleasant and extremely fearful events (which may be equated to stressful life events) lead to unmade and mental illnesses.

11. Ashasht manah - Conflicts arising in the mind, out of doing actions mentioned in pragyaparadh.

12. Ojokshaya - loss of confidence leads to weakness of mind, depression and mental illnesses.

13. Ayukta nidra - excessive sleep and sleep at inappropriate time also leads to mental illnesses.

14. Chintya man - Inappropriate anxiety.

Classification of mental disorders based on exogeneous and endogenous factors trigunas, and tridoshas has been very systematically done in the ancient Ayurvedic

text. The classification is as follows :

1. Nijmanas rog (endogenous mental illnesses).
2. Agantujmanas rog (exogeneous mental illnesses).

Nijmanas rog has been further divided into (a) Manas Dosh Janya caused by psychological factors and (b) Sharir Doshanubandh Janya caused by physical illnesses.

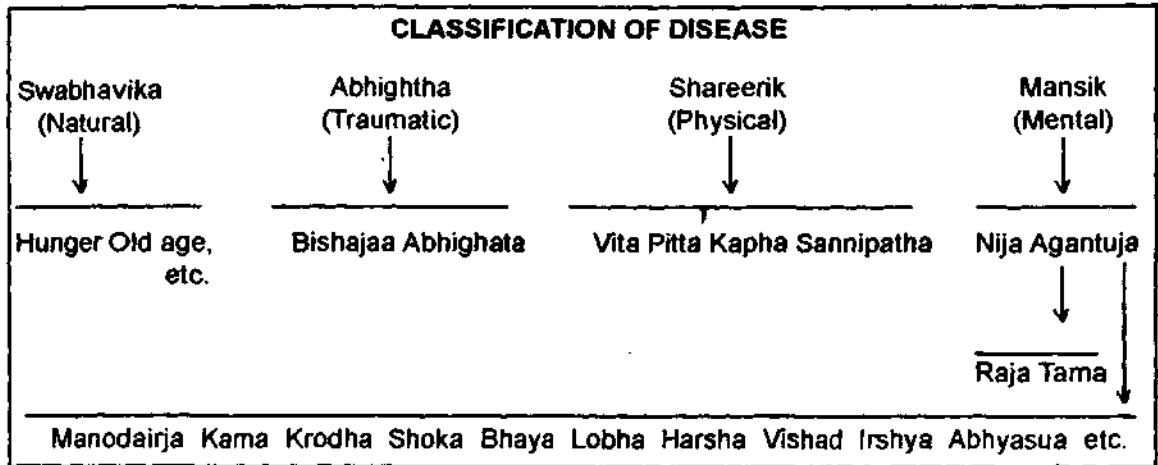
Manas dosh janya illnesses arising out of psychological factors are those due to pragyaparadh : e.g. - *Kam, Krodh, Lobh, Moh, Irshya, Man, Mad, Shok, Chinta, Chittodvaig, Bhaya* etc. These disorders can be equated with neurotic disorders. It has been mentioned that occasionally manas rogas may have contract with physical illnesses which may be equated to psychosomatic / somatoform disorders. While *Sharir doshanubandh janya* are those disorders where there is involvement of physical factors for e.g. - *Unmad* (psychosis), *Apasmar* (epilepsy) etc. which may be equated to organic psychosis and organic brain dysfunction as we understand today.

Apart from this classification major mental disorders have been described based on aetiological factors, various stages of illness, their signs and symptoms and treatment using psychological principles, Ayurvedic techniques (Shat karma), yôgic techniques and medicines of plant origin.

A detailed description of sleep disorders, epilepsy, unconsciousness, diseases due to excessive intoxication (substance abuse), excitement, unmad (vatajunmad, pittajunmad, kaphounmad) and agantuj unmad have been described in detail with Ayurvedic treatment prescriptions and methods of treatment. There is also a detailed description of mastishka jwar (Brain fever) leading to mental disorders, its varieties, signs and symptoms and their treatment. It is very interesting to see that in the ancient text the system of classification of mental disorders was very scientific and clear.

Yoga Darshan (5000 - 1000 BC)

Yoga had been the way of life in ancient



India. There are many aspects of Yoga which are not commonly known. Some of the systems and principles of yoga have been outlined in different vedic and upanishadic scriptures as well as tantrik traditions. There are eight common points known as *Asthanga yoga* or the eight fold path of yoga. This eight fold path of yoga does not necessarily belong to any one branch of yoga. It is common knowledge that the systems of yoga have to be used in relation to the techniques that we learn. The *Asthanga yoga* are as follows (1) *Yam* (restraint), (2) *Niyam* (discipline), together these help the individual toward self regulation, (3) *Asanas* (body posturing), (4) *Pranayama* (control of breathing), (5) *Pratyahara* (withdrawal), (6) *Dharma* (fixed attention), (7) *Dhyana* (contemplation) (8) *Samadhi* (the state of complete tranquillity). The set of last four exercises are concerned with psychological dimensions of personality and these basic principles of *Asthanga yoga* can be used with any system of yogic techniques (Niranjananda, 1993).

Six yogic disciplines have been described in the upnshads. They are 1) *Karma Yoga* (Yoga of action), 2) *Jnana Yoga* (Yoga of knowledge and wisdom), 3) *Hafha Yoga* (Yoga of attaining physical and mental purity, suddhi), 4) *Raj Yoga* (Yoga of awaking the psychic awareness and faculties), 5) *Mantra yoga* (the yoga of freeing the mind by utilizing a sound vibration) and

6) *Laya Yoga* (the yoga of conscious dissolution of individuality). The aim of these spiritual practices is to convert the self into a transcendental being. Each one of these yogic disciplines have specific techniques of life style and attaining self realization. What is being practised most these days is the *Hath Yoga* which has traditional *Shat karmas* of the *Hath yoga* (the six actions), known as *Neti, Dhauti, Basti, Nauli, Kapalbhati, Trataka*. Various *asanas* are methods of attaining these *shatkarmas*. Later additions to *hathyoga* are *Mitahara* (balanced diet), *Ahimsa* (non violence), *Asana* and *pranayama, Bandha* and *mudra*. It will be out of place and practically impossible to give details of all yogic techniques at this juncture, but a mention of the current schools of yogic thought will do justice to this subject. The popular yogic techniques being currently widely used and *Raj yoga*, (Patel, 1993), *Vipassana* (Fleischman, 1990) *Preksha dhyana* (Mahaprajna, 1987; 1988), *meditation* (Chinmayanand, 1989), *Pranayam* (Sivananda, 1984) and *Hath Yoga* (Niranjanand, 1993).

Understanding of personality

According to the Indian ancient thought personality has been understood on the basis of three *gunas*, three *vritis* and three *doshas*. The mind has three *gunas*, viz., *Sattva* (light, bliss, goodness), *Rajas* (passion, motion) and

Tamas (inertia, darkness). There are three vrittis in the mind corresponding to the three gunas. Shanta vritti (peace) comes out of Sattva Guna, Ghora Vritti from Rajo Guna and Mudha Vritti from Tamo Guna. Equilibrium or balance is Shanta Vritti; anger is Ghora vritti; laziness (Alasya), carelessness (Pramada) and drowsiness (Tandri) are Mudha Vrittis (Swami sivananda, 1983).

Though sattva, Rajogun and Tamogun (the trigunas) were conceived even in vedic period, it was during the time of Charak (1400 BC) that psychical characteristics of personality (भौतिक) Vatik, Paittik, Shlaishmik; psychological characteristics of personality (मानसिक) Sattvik, Rajsik, Tamsik were described in Charak and Sushrut Samhita. Basically three personalities are recognized in Ayurveda, namely the pure (sattvic), Passionate (rajas) and ignorant (tamas). "The pure mind is considered to be without any taint as it represents the beneficent aspect of the intelligence; the passionate mind is tainted as it represents the violent aspects; the ignorant mind also is tainted on account of its representing the deluded past".

Several variations of personality types are possible due to several combinations of body type. Charak Samhita (1949) described 16 personality types. 7 belong to the sattvic type, 5 to the rajas type and 4 to the tamas type. The development of the constitution is determined by the time of conception, the diet and drink of the mother during the period of gestation (VenkobaRao, 1978).

Sattvic personality

i) Brahma type : He is impartial, pure, devoted to truth, self-controlled, endowed with knowledge, understanding and power of exposition and reply, possessed of good memory, free from greed, conceit, desire, infatuation, intolerance. He is capable of scientific, philosophical and religious discourses. The name Brahma is derived from one of the Indian Trinity responsible for creation.

ii) Rishi type : He is devoted to sacrifice, study, vows, celibacy; he is hospitable, devoid of pride and endowed with genius, eloquence, and retentive power. Rishi is one who is devoted to contemplation and is a bachelor.

iii) Indra type : He is brave, energetic authoritative of speech; endowed with splendour; possesses foresight and is given to pursuit of wealth, virtue and sensual pleasures. He is blameless in his work. Indra was known as the king of Gods.

iv) Yama type : His conduct is governed by considerations of property, authority; he is free from passions, attachment, is unassailable, is constantly up and about, and has a good memory. Yama is the God into whose realm the souls enter after the death of the body.

v) Varuna type : He is valiant courageous, intolerant of uncleanness, devoted to the performance of sacrifices, fond of aquatic sports, and his anger and favour are well - placed. As indicated earlier, Varuna is the deity who presides over the cosmic order.

vi) Kubera type : He commands status, honour, luxuries, and attendants; is given to pleasures of recreation and his anger and favour are patient. Kubera is known for his wealth.

vii) Gandharva type : He is fond of dancing, song, music and praise, and is well versed in history, poetry, and stories. Though addicted to the pleasures of fragrant unguents, garlands, women and recreations, he is free from envy. Gandharva denotes a celestial dancer living among the trees.

Among the seven types described above, the Brahma type is considered the most desirable since the beneficent aspect of the mind is represented in it". Nevertheless all the personalities are beneficial to the society in which they live.

Rajas personality

i) Asura type : He is valiant, despotic, possessed

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of authority, terrifying, pitiless, and fond of self-adulation, Asura is an enemy of God.

ii) Rakshasa type : He is cruel, gluttonous, intolerant, and full of hate, fond of flesh, foods, somnolent and of indolent disposition. He is capable of biding time and striking. Rakshasa is a demon with evil designs.

iii). Pisacha type : He eats voraciously, is fond of secret company with woman, hates cleanliness, and is given to abnormal recreations and food. Pisacha is a demon who loves luxury and women.

iv) Sarpa (snake) type : He is brave, touchy, of indolent disposition, arouses fear in the beholder, and is addicted to pleasures of food and recreation.

v) Preta type : He is fond of food; his character, pastimes and conduct are of painful disposition; he is envious, covetous, and disinclined to work. He lack power of discrimination. Pretas haunt the burial ground and live on human corpses.

vi) Sakuna (bird) type : He is constantly devoted to eating and sports; he is fickle, intolerant, and unacquisitive.

Tamas personality

i) Pasva (animal) type : He is mentally deficient, disgusting in his behaviour and dietetic habits, abandoned to sexual pleasures, and given to somnolent habits.

ii) Matsya (fish) type : He too is poorly endowed, cowardly, gluttonous, fickle, prone to anger and sensuality. He loves water and is of itinerant habits.

iii) Vanaspatya (plant) type : He is lazy, and exclusively devoted to the business of eating. He is of subnormal intellect.

It may be seen that the Ayurvedic writers conceived personality as comprising multiple dimensions : Intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual, and moral. The sattvic and rajasic represent the intellectual and emotional types

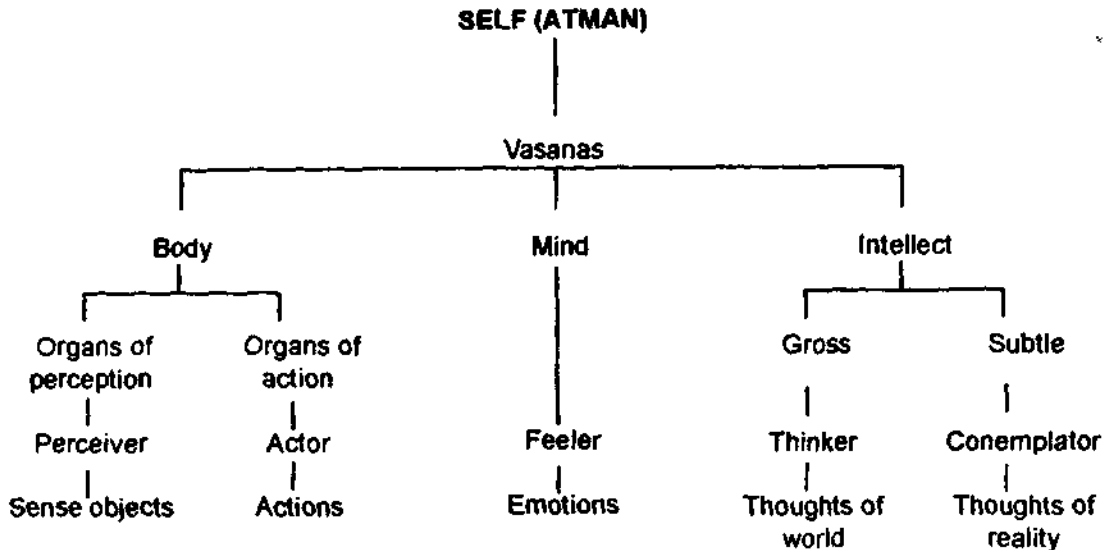
respectively. The tamasic group broadly represent the intellectually deficient ones. The descriptive types of mentally deficient as animal, fish and plant varieties is interesting.

In an interesting study of typifying personality according to Ayurvedic system, Ahluwalia (1990) compiled signs and symptoms of prakriti given in the two samhitas and found that there are 477 characteristics observable in human beings based on which personality was identified during this era. Deh Prakriti (physical characteristic) included Vatik Prakriti, Paitik Prakriti and Shlaishmik Prakriti having 102, 87, 88 characteristics respectively. While manas prakriti (psychological characteristics) were classified as Sattvik Prakriti, Rajsik Prakriti and Tamsik Prakriti having 111, 63, 26 characteristics respectively. This research study concluded that based on this Ayurvedic personality inventory, Jaipur Prakriti Parikshan Prashnavali, patients and normal controls could be classified into six major personality types and patients and normal controls could be differentiated statistically and correlation of certain personality types could be found between type of personality and type of unmad (Ahluwalia, 1990).

Composite personality

According to vedanta treatise, Atman is the core of personality. It is the prime mover of three material equipments. But vasanas (inherent tendencies) determine the nature and activities emanating from them. If vasanas are sattvic in nature thoughts, desire and actions will also be sattvic. If vasanas are rajasic or tamasic their manifestations again will be of the same type. If vasanas are of a kind and generous nature intellectual ideas, emotional feelings and physical actions will be kind and generous. If they are cruel and wicked so will be their manifestations. As the vasanas so the thoughts, desires and actions.

Composite personality is created by Atman functioning in the body, mind and intellect (see chart).



When Atman functions in organs of perception (gnana indriyas) one becomes the 'perceiver'. Perceiver means the combined 'seerhearer-smeller-taster-toucher'. The perceiver perceives sense objects of the world. The perceiver is one part of physical personality. The other part is the 'actor'. When Atman functions in organs of action (Karma indriys) one becomes the action. The actor perpetrates actions in the world. The perceiver-cum-actor is physical personality. Again the Atman functioning in mind creates the 'feeler'. The feeler is emotional personality feeling emotions of different sorts.

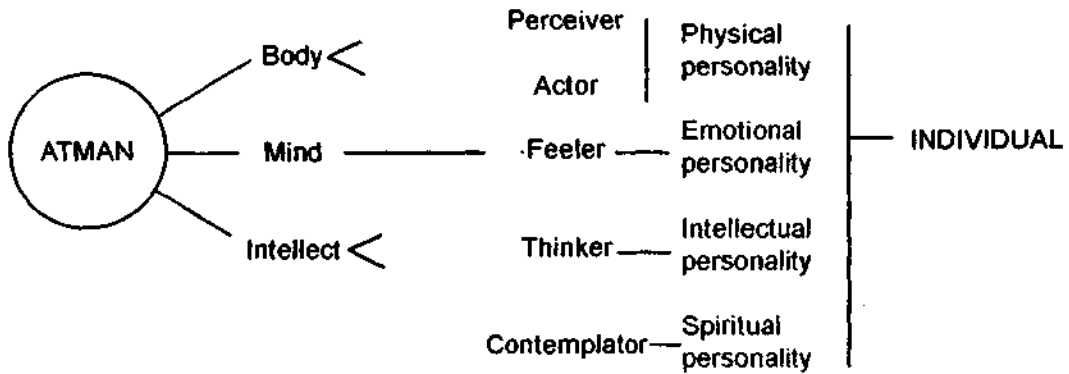
The same Atma functioning in gross intellect is the 'thinker', the intellectual personality. Human intellect is of two distinct types i.e. gross and subtle intellects. When intellect engages its discriminating faculty in the realm of the terrestrial world it is said to be 'gross'. Gross intellect thinks of thoughts pertaining to the world. It discriminates between the pairs of opposites all within the boundary of this world. It could range from the simplest of discrimination of a dog between its master and a stranger to the finest discrimination of a scientist in nuclear technology. But all of them are still classified as gross by virtue of its field of operation being the terrestrial world. When however intellect

crosses the boundary of the terrestrial world and conceives the possibility of a transcendental reality it is called 'subtle' intellect. No other creature except a human being can posit the transcendental reality. The subtle intellect is the discriminating faculty which contemplates upon and distinguishes the transcendental reality from the terrestrial world, discerns the difference between spirit and matter, between Atman and the world one experiences through material equipments. When Atman functions in the subtle intellect, one becomes the 'contemplator'. The contemplator revels in the thought of Atman, Brahman, God, Transcendental reality, supreme consciousness or whatever name you give it. The contemplator distinguishes between Atman and the worlds of waking, dream and deep-sleep. The contemplator is spiritual personality.

Personality layers

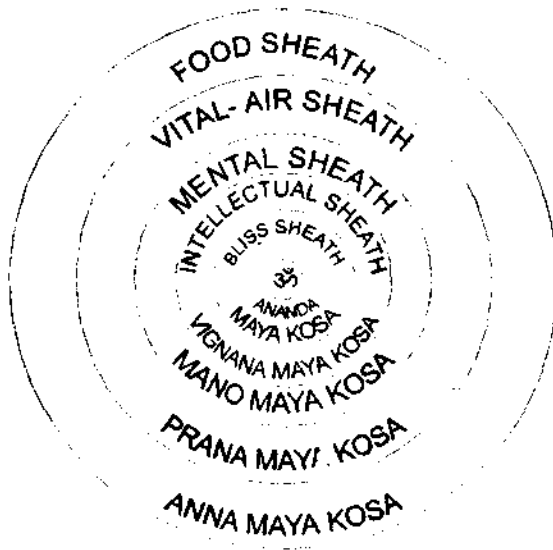
According to Vedanta Treatise, the structure of man can be further divided into five material layers enveloping Atman. Atman is the core of personality. It is represented in the diagram below by the mystic symbol ॐ (pronounced OM). The five concentric circles around the symbol represent the five layers of matter. They are called sheaths or kosas in

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Sanskrit. The five sheaths (Pancha-kosa) are :

1. Food sheath (Anna-maya kosa)
2. Vital-air sheath (Prana-maya kosa)
3. Mental sheath (Mano-maya kosa)
4. Intellectual sheath (Vignana-maya kosa)
5. Bliss sheath (Ananda-maya kosa)



Treatment of mental disorders

During the ayurvedic era a detailed description of various mental disorders and their treatment has been described in Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita and Bhel Samhita. The subsequent text of Ayurveda like Kashyap Samhita, Harit Samhita and Madhav Nidan carry concepts from the earlier texts.

However as opposed to modern psychiatry where diagnosis (निदान) is based on phenom-

enology, in Ayurveda it is based on etiology (the three doshas) and based on the effect of these dosha-vatt, pitta, kapha or sannipat (when all the three humors are involved) manifestations of the manas rog were described. Accordingly the prescription of AHAR (edibles), VIHAR (Behavioural life style); psychotherapeutic management by advice of yoga, meditation and medicinal management by use of plants of medicinal importance in various permutations and combinations were advised.

Detailed description are available on management of mental disorders. Eighteen principles of treatment of mental disorders have been described of which eleven are psychotherapeutic and behavioural and seven principles are related to Shatkarma and medicinal management.

The psychotherapeutic management principles include methods of guilt reduction, cognitive therapies, assurance, support, activities involving religious prayers and Yagna, use of opposite thoughts for stopping the thoughts and astrological techniques like prayer of unfavourable stars.

Elaborate description of sleep disorders, alcohol and other intoxication, unconsciousness, six types of UNMAD (vataj, pittaj, kaphaj, sannipataj, adhij, vishaj), epilepsy, brain fever are available along with various strategies of management.

The plants of medicinal use/combinational medicines have been classified into :

1. Medhya (to improve memory)

2. Madkari (intoxicating)
3. Sangyasthapan (analgesics and to improve conscious level and mental faculties)
4. Jivniya (tonics)
5. Shirovirechan (for local application on head)
6. Unmad Nashak (antipsychotics)
7. Apasmar (anticonvulsants)
8. Madatyay (used for deaddiction)
9. For insomnia
10. For hypersomnia

Observation from ethology - At some places it has been advised that certain medicines should be used with cow milk and others with buffalo milk based on observation of behaviour of calf and baby buffalo.

Medicinal plants - As many as 210 medicines of plant origin have been described under various categories of neuroleptics. Medical names of these mentioned in the ancient text with their Hindi and botanical names are available with the author.

Relevance to modern psychiatry

In the recent past there has been lot of research on use of many eastern techniques of healing in health sciences. Lot of emphasis is being laid on life style and health. Modern era and its increasing stresses call for stress management techniques and medicines devoid of side effects which increase the importance of alternative methods of medicine.

Scientific research on transcendental meditation programme has shown effectiveness of meditation on reducing neuroticism (Ander Tjoa, 1976) improving learning (Miskiman, 1976), improving academic achievements, prevention of alcohol (Shaffi, 1976) and drug abuse (David Katz, 1976). There have been reports on effect of transcendental meditation on reduction of anxiety, neuroticism (Jean Ross, 1976). Alexander and Schneider (1995) reported comprehensive effects on neuroendocrine, psychological, social and spiritual factors related to substance abuse. Role of yoga in stress and sleep management, im-

proving performance in sports and executives is being stressed recently. Prekshyadhyana a combination of meditation & relaxation technique has been found useful in improvement of concentration, memory and anxiety reduction in a study conducted at Jaipur by the author. Effectiveness of vipassana meditation as a therapeutic tool in psychological and psychosomatic illnesses has been reported by Iyer (1989) and Fleischman (1990).

Some Ayurvedic combinations have been used as anti-anxiety and antidepressants, reports of which are available from National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur. Vacha (*Acorus calamus*) and jyotishmati (*Cleastrus panniculatus*) were found useful in treatment of depression (Bahetra, 1996). Unmad bhanjan ras a combination of 24 compounds was found to have anti-psychotic effect equivalent to chlorpromazine.

While communicating with cancer patients it was found (Gautam and Nijhawan, 1987) that Indian patients tend to accept the diagnosis of cancer rather easily. The concept of death prevalent in Indian culture based on philosophy of Gita where soul is accepted as immortal and it is believed to transfer through death from one to another human/species plays a significant role in the easy acceptance of the diagnosis and the planning for the rest of the life.

The understanding of human psych in vedantic model is more acceptable to Indian patients because of transfer of attitudes from generation to generation. Anecdotes from Bhagwad Gita as a psychotherapy of dying patient is virtually a tradition in Indian culture. Even now in many families when death is anticipated preaching of Lord Krishna stating that thoughts at the time of death determine the species of next birth help the individual to accept the death in a more gracious manner. The concept of "Sthit pragna" (स्थित प्रज्ञा) how a person can remain detached from pleasure and sorrow unaffected by losses and gains inculcates peace in the mind. One of the Neeti Shloks says.

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गते शोको न कर्तव्यः, भविष्यं नैव चिन्तयेत् ।

वर्तमानेन कालेन न चिन्तयेत् भविष्यत् ॥

"It is not your duty to grieve the past nor you should worry about the future. Only he, who lives the present and thinks about the present is a wise man". Can help a depressed patient worrying for a recent loss.

Similarly many other anecdotes from ancient literature like Ramayana, Mahabharata and later writings like Neeti Shlokas and Panchatantra can be very usefully employed in supportive psychotherapy. There is need to re-explore this vast treasure of knowledge which may be culturally relevant and useful for Indian patients. What is needed is to make our patients aware of their hidden potentials as was done by Jamwant to Hanuman before going to Lanka in the epic of Ramayana. These ancient texts should be re-explored for models of conflict resolution, understanding psychopathology and attainment of self-realization.

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