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Review Article

Title of Article: Role of Ayurveda in Mental Health w.s.r. to *Manasika Swasthya*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the foremost life science of the universe which explains about *hitaayu*, *ahitaayu*, *sukhayu* and *dukhayu*. These components have a direct impact on health. The explanation of *swasthya* gives importance to *manasika swasthya* in terms of *prasanna manas*. This *prasanna manas* is responsible for the maintenance of health and the *aprasannata* of *manas* will lead to illness, with the help of *rajasika* and *tamasika doshas*. Almost all diseases are psychosomatic in origin. Many diseases manifest due to the effect of *manas*, like *unmada*, *apasmara*, *samnyasa roga*, *atatwabhinivesha*, etc. These all manifest due to *rajasika* and *tamasika guna dosha*, where the main cause is *asatmendriyarthasamyoga* and *pragnaparadha*. This leads to *kama*, *krodhadi vikaras*, and later the diseases manifest.

To treat these *manasika vikaras* one has to follow the *dharma*, *artha*, and *kama* properly and should follow life accordingly, also *satwavajaya chikitsa* should be taken. To avoid these diseases, one must follow preventive principles like *achara rasayana*, *sadvritta*, *medhya rasayana*, and *nitya sevaneeya ahara* along with *dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, and *ratricharya*. This paper highlights the role of *manas* in the maintenance of health and the understanding of *manas* in detail, concerning *manasika swasthya/mental health*.

Keywords: *Medhya Rasayana*, *Prasanna Manas*, *Rajasika*, *Satwavajaya Chikitsa*, *Tamasika*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the foremost life science and medical science of the universe. Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of maintenance of the health of the healthy person and restoration of the health of the patients.^[1] The World Health Organization's definition of health is: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity".^[2]

In the same way, the definition of *swasthya* as stated in *Sushruta Samhita* is: "The state of equilibrium of the following components: *samadoshas*, *samaagni*, *samadhatu*, *samavastha malakriya*, and *prasanna atma*, *prasanna indriya*, and *prasanna manas* all together is considered as *swasthya* or state of total health."^[3] Here 'the *manas*' is an important component that is mainly responsible for the maintenance of health or illness.

Manas is one amongst the *karana dravya*.^[4] The meaning of the word manas is, "that which is responsible to attain knowledge and by which the buddhi or jnana is attained is called as manas".^[5] Manas is responsible for jnana bhava and jnana *abhava*, the jnana bhava or attainment of jnana will be seen when the *atma* and *indriya sannikarsha* takes place, otherwise, the attainment of buddhi or jnana will not be achieved.^[6] Manas has *chanchala swabhava*,^[7] which can be considered as *lakshana* or quality of manas. The *indriyas* are capable of perceiving their respective objectives only when they are connected with the manas.^[8] The perceived knowledge will be of *anutwa rupa* in manas. For example, if we perceive an object it will be perceived by *shabdhendriya*, *chaksurendriya*, *spashanendriya*, *rasanendriya*, and *ghranendriya* separately. This separate perception is called "yugapad", but, the buddhi/knowledge attained by all these objects will settle together in a combination when it reaches the mind or manas. Thus, the manas has the quality of *Anutwa*. The manas is single and unique, that is *Ekatwa*. These two, *anutwa* and *ekatwa* are the *lakshanas* of manas.^[9] Manas resides in *hridaya*, as all the *indriyas* act at the impulse of the heart itself.^[10] But another reference of *Charaka* states that all the *indriyas* are connected with the brain directly and the *shiras*/head is the seat of all the *indriyas*, so the *shiras* / head, can also be taken as the seat of the manas.^[11] The manas performs the actions like *chinta* [thinking about the action], *vichara* [analyzing the action], *udhyam* [performing the action], *dhyeya* [planning future action], and *sankalpa* [concentrating or taking oath]. These all are the functions of the mind and only after *uha* and *vichara* the buddhi or knowledge will be attained.^[12] While explaining the manas in-depth, our acharyas explain that for the function of all these *indriyas* channels are needed. These working channels of the *indriyas* are called *srotas*. Thus the manas gets the knowledge from all over, with the help of *indriyas* which work all over the body. Beyond *indriyagrahana* it is *ateendriya* also; moves very fast all over the body, thus, we can deduce that manas is also a *srotas* called '*manovaha srotas*'.^[13] The *samanaska* bhava of manas maintains the *prakruta avastha* of manas, whereas the *atiyoga*, *ayoga*, and *mithya* yoga of *manasika* karmas, like, excessive thinking, no thinking, thinking irrationally lead to *vikruta avastha* of manas.^[14] Where the *rajasika* and *tamasika* *gunas* get vitiated and manifest the diseases.^[15] The intake of improper *ahara* which is not prepared following the rules of *asthavidha aharavidhi* *visheshayatana* enters the body and affects the body adversely, leading to *tamoguna prasara*, manifesting *kama*, *krodhadi vikaaras*, leading to *buddhibramsha*. Then it enters the *hridaya* and affects *manovahasrotas*,

giving rise to *manovikaaras* or *manasika vyaadhis*.^[16] The diseases like *unmada*, *apasmara*, *sanyasa roga*, and *atatwabhinivesha* all are having similar pathology of manifestation.

As a general principle of treatment of all the *manasika rogas*, the person has to differentiate *ishta labha* which are *kaama*, *harshaadi* from *anishta labha* which are *shoka*, *bhayaadi*,^[17] and has to perform the duties of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kama* in accordance with the *desh*, *kaala*, *kula*, *bala* and *shakti*.^[18]

One has to undergo the *satwavajaya chikitsa*, like, obtaining the *adhyatmic* jnana - spiritual knowledge, *vignana* - scientific knowledge, *dhairya* - courage, *smriti* - recollection of the actions, and *Samadhi* - keeping the mind away from all the *vishayas* or actions,^[19] which cures the *manovikaaras*. One has to follow *achara rasayana*,^[20] like, *ahimsa*, *prashantam*, *tapas*, etc., and *sadvritta palana*^[21] that is 'na *krodha*, na *harsha*' etc., also has to follow *medhyarasayana*,^[22] like, *satata adhyayana*, *vaada*, *paratantravalokanam*, *achara sevnam*, etc, and all these help to avoid the *manasika dosha avastha*.

By following all other principles like *nityasevaneeya ahara*, *dinacharya*, *ratricharya*, and *ritucharya*,^[23] etc., one can maintain the *dhatusaamyaavasta*,^[24] thereby leading to the *prakruta avastha* of manas, buddhi, and *indriyas*. Mental health is maintaining a balance between the individual and the surrounding world which maintains harmony with oneself and others.^[25]

Mental health can be assessed by the following principles: Free from internal conflicts, Well-adjusted with others Searching for identity in the society Strong self-respecting personality knowing own needs, problems, and goals, etc. Self-control in the personality – balances one's rationality and emotionality. Faces problems and tries to solve intelligently. By these parameters, a mentally healthy person can be identified and are the qualities of a mentally healthy person and will show bestowed personality in the society.

DISCUSSION

Satwa itself is manas.^{[26][27]} So one has to have *pravara satwa* to maintain *manasika swasthya*. The person should know that the deha is nothing but a home for the *atma* and the karmas are performed by *baddha* purusha that is the inadequate earthy body and the *indriyas* are *shakti rupa* in *bhoutika adhistana*, i.e. the body and this should be known by the *anthah karana*.^[28] The *atma* is the main *karana* for all karmas that provides jnana and does the jnana *pravartana*. The dimensions of mental health like

thinking, imagining, acting according to the situation, understanding the effects of performed actions, making decisions, and fulfilling the promises are already stated in Ayurveda, under the name of *manasika* karmas, whereas the assessment of mental health, like, self-esteem, having good relationships with others, tackling the situations intelligently, maintaining harmony with others, solving the problems, etc., are stated in Ayurveda under the headings of *sadvritta*, *achara rasayana*, and *medhyarasayana*, etc. The *sadvritta* explains association with *sajjana*/good people which leads to the inculcation of good behavior which in turn maintains the *manasika swasthya* of the person. To prevent psychological disturbances, guidelines like worshipping the god, cow, etc., rules regarding hygiene, such as trimming hair and nails thrice in fifteen days, having '*sumana*'-pleasant mind, etc., rules regarding speech, like., one should speak less, should not speak lies, etc., rules regarding diet like, should not take food without offering to forefathers, teachers, etc., rules regarding urges like one should not sneeze, eat or sleep in the prone position, etc., rules regarding relations with the females such as, not to insult women, not to indulge sexually with menstruating women, etc., rules regarding study like one should not study on new moon day, during earthquakes, etc., general rules like one should not waste time, one should not *rome* around in the night, etc., rules like worshipping the fire, rules regarding social behavior like one should not desire for others money, wife or wealth, etc., are explained. These principles maintain the mental health of a person. The *achara rasayana* which is explained as, one should always speak the truth, refrain from anger, etc., are effective in the maintenance of mental health of the person. By following the *nityasevaneeya ahara*, like, *shashtika shali*, *shali*, *mudga*, *saindava lavana*, etc., keeps the body strong and healthy which in turn maintains the mental health. *Asthavidha ahara vidhi visheshayatana*, are *prakriti*, *karana*, *samyoga*, *rashi*, *desha*, *kala*, *upayogasamastha*, *upayoktra* are useful to cook the food in a proper way which maintains *satwa* and *satmya*, which is useful to form *uttarottara* dhatu in proper proportions which in turn show impact on mental health. *Dwadashaashana pravichara*, like, *ushna ahara*, *sheeta ahara*, *ruksha ahara*, *drava ahara*, *shushka ahara*, etc., also maintain the physical and mental health of the person. *Dinacharya*, like *dantadhavana*, *abhyanga*, etc., maintains the healthy status of the body and mind always. *Ratricharya*, like *maithuna karma*, *nidra*, etc., gives pleasure to the mind and maintains the health of the mind. By *ritucharya*, like, *vasanta ritucharya*, *greeshma ritucharya*, etc., along with *swastha* panchakarma procedures according to the seasons like *vamana* karma in

vasanta ritu, *basti* karma in *varsha ritu* and *virechan* in *sharad ritu*, etc., are very much beneficial to maintain the physical and mental health of the person. By these one can maintain positive health resulting in a healthy body and mind. The proper coordination of functions between body and mind is seen. Thus *atma*, *indriya sannikarsha* is very much important to maintain the *manasika swasthya*.

CONCLUSION:

Ayurveda gives prime importance to maintain the health of a healthy person which is primarily giving importance to the body and mind. Even the WHO gives importance to body and mind first. Almost all diseases are of psychosomatic origin. So one has to treat both body and mind simultaneously. To maintain the health of the mind one has to follow the ethics, rules, and guidelines of society, place and time, etc. This maintains the mental health and keeps a person healthy physically and mentally. We should never react to someone's anger, discouragement or miseries, etc., which makes us stand out from everyone else and also makes us stand in with everyone because of Humbleness and humanity. Mental health is not just individual health; it is also a form of social health where the whole population/society matters, because the behavior in society impacts our mental health. For example gambling, corruption, scams, etc., reflect on our mental activity. We get reactions to all these unlawful activities and become mentally disturbed. If not, we just see and aggressively fight against them, this also leads to mental disturbances. So, to become mentally strong and healthy one has to avoid anger, greed and bad habits, etc., showing pure love to every being. By this one can become mentally healthy as well as the society too. So to become mentally healthy one has to follow preventive measures like *dinacharya*, *ratricharya*, and *ritucharya*, *nitya sevaneeya ahara*, *asthavidha ahara vidhi visheshayatana*, *dwadasha ashana pravichara*, etc. If the person gets affected with mental illness then the medicines like *jyotishmati*, *mahakalyanaka ghruta*, etc., should be advised. Mental health is a prime health component that is very much necessary in this scenario.

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