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Mental health, its promotive and preventive aspects: Ayurvedic view

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Abstract

Now a days it is the matter of discussion that how to promote health and prevent its disorders when men are in stress and no way to get proper modern medicine within the paying capacity in present corona pandemic. Here it is essential that for proper rest from the diseases within the paying capacity of patient. In this contest, Ayurveda is an important field to achieve the longevity and immunity i.e., which describes the total Health (Health of sharira, indriya, manas and atma) including physical, mental, spiritual & social aspects. Due to rapid change in social and economical aspects of human life, there is much deterioration in mental health. It is know to all that prevention is better than cure. Charaka has said that first and foremost aim of Ayurveda is to maintain health of an healthy person. According to charaka the mental factors such as, buddhi (intellect), dhriti (courage), and smriti (memory) are derived from atma (consciousness). Again smriti (memory), sauch (purity) and bhakti (devotion) etc. are derived from sattva (mind). A healthy person should posses a stress free and joyful mind (prasannatendriyarth manah). Along with this there should be equilibrium of dosha and normalcy of dhatu and malas. Efforts have been made in this paper for disclose the solution for promotion of mental health and prevention of its disorders through Ayurveda.

Keywords: manas dosha, health, promotive aspects, preventive aspects

Introduction

Ayurveda is a science of life and living being. It is an important field to achieve the longevity, immunity and maintenance of life, which describes the total health (health of sharira, indriya, manas and atma) including physical, mental, spiritual & social aspects. It is know to all that prevention is better than cure. Charaka has said that first and foremost aim of Ayurveda is to maintain health of an healthy person. According to Charaka, the mental factors i.e. dhi (intellect), dhriti (courage), and smriti (memory) are derived, from atma (soul). Again smriti (memory), sauch (purity) and bhakti (devotion) etc. are derived from sattva (mind). Thus the mental factors, which constitute the mind. But their mental ability is not same, because of atma and sattva are dependent on desire of that person

Excessive utilisation, wrong utilisation and non utilisation of sense objects, kala (parinam) and action (action). In any pathological process the imbalance of manas is bound to afflict the body in course of time and this in its turn afflicts the body and mind in course of times and thus a vicious cycle starts. Roga are classified mainly in two groups sharira rogas and manas rogas. The manas or mind has got three qualities - i.e. sattva, rajas and tamas. Out of them rajas and tamas are the causing disturbance of the manas. All the emotional stress of the mind are due to the actions of rajas and tamas. These mental disorders are raga (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), irshya (envy), chinta (anxiety), soka (remorse), bhaya (fear) and harsha (exhilation). The exciting factors are three types of improper utilisation are due to pragyanparadha. i.e. derangement of intellect (dhi), patience (dhriti) and memory (smriti). Person having intellectual derangement, loses power to discriminate between eternal and non-eternal, wholesome and non-wholesome. Due to impairment of patience (dhriti), person can not restrain his mind from harmful objects. Memory (dhriti) is impaired due to a person being overcome by rajas and tamas. As soon as rajas and tamas qualities predominate, the misuse of mental faculty begins and person goes in severe emotional changes which are considered to be pathological state of mind. The pathogenesis of mental disorders occur due to mental engrossment with worldly affairs (vishayas), there develops attachment (sangya) with them. This attachment leads to generation of kama (lust), which leads to hallucination or confusion (moha) which finally leads to destruction of memory (smritinasha) causing budhinasha, leading to all types of mental disorders. According to Charak, trishna is root cause of all the

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vedanas (pain). Trishna is only due to the predominance of rajas and tamas over the sattva are many principles are methods for the promotion of mental health and prevention of its disorders as described by Ayurveda, roughly classified as (i) Physical (ii) Mental (iii) Sensorial (iv) Spiritual.

Promotive aspect of Mental Health

Although these measures are of promotive value, however, they may be used also for the prevention of its disorders.

Sadvritta

Charaka said that there are good conducts named as sadvritta, by which person remains free from pragnyanparadha consequently from trival disturbances i.e., adhyatmika, adhibhautika and adhidaivika including mental disorders. By observing these principles of good conducts, person fulfils simultaneously both objectives viz. maintenance of arogya (good health), indriya vijaya (control of sense faculties). The sadvritta (good conduct) are given as-

- Practice preventing psychosomatic disturbances
- Practice regarding diet
- Practice regarding natural urges
- Practice regarding self control
- Practice regarding code of conducts and general ethics
- Practice regarding social relation.

Benefits of sadvritta

- Prevention of mental and sensorial disorders.
- Maintenance of the normalcy of sense organs & body.
- Maintenance of the normalcy of sense organs and mind
- Control over sense faculties
- To live for hundred years without any ailment.
- To earn friendship of all living beings.

Dharaniya vega (urges to be hold)

Hold up the urges of evil ventures relating to thought, speech and action. This leads to well being in his life and also after this life. According to charaka the following mental urges should be controlled.

- The urge of greed
- The urge of grief
- The urge of fear
- The urge of anger
- The urge of vanity
- The urge of Shamelessness
- The urge of envy
- The urge of excessive attachment
- The urge of taking another's property

Achar Rasayana

In Ayurveda, there is description about the code of conduct and good life style to be followed by the aspirants of Rasayana. It has been postulated that person follows the prescribed good virtuous life automatically gets all the benefits of Rasayana viz. immunity, longevity and mental competence etc.

Person should be truthful and free from anger, refrain from intake of alcohol, sex indulgence, violence exhaustion, remain peaceful and pleasing in his speech, dhairya, cleanliness, regular in awaking and sleep, free from ego, open and broad minded, should have love for spiritual knowledge excellent sense organs, aastika and person having self-control given by charaka under the heads achar rasayana and sadvritta.

Diet therapy

Person who takes sattvika diet (pure diet), maintains good memory. The person having good memory, can never fall victim of pragyaparadha, subsequently he remains free from asatmyendriyarth samyoga which is prerequisite to mental being. Thus diet is useful for the maintenance and promotion of mental health.

Proper Sleeping

Sleep is a natural gift given by God to all creatures to relieve their fatigue. Hence sleep is an essential requirement for mental health. Proper sleeping brings happiness, mental peace.

Improper sleeping causes-

- Fearfulness
- Anxiety - Stress

By observance of brahmcharya

Sukra is converted in to ojas, which is the form of energy that travels upward. Kundalini shakti with the help of ojas moves upto sahasrara chakra and controls over sexual urges of the person by which the personal enjoys good mental health.

Upavas (Fasting)

Through fasting the person becomes free from rajasika and tamasika action and their by can perform truthful action like prayer and meditation to God and with this the sign of his present and past life get destroyed. The fasting brings out the sharirika, manasika and adhyatmika benefits to the person. By avoiding rajasika and tamasika actions, there is no chance of impairment of memory of the person and there by person can become free from impairment of body functions, intelligence and patience. Which is the cause of psychosomatic disorders. Generally, after taking food, the blood flow gets increased to the viscera, subsequently there is relatively less supply of blood to brain tissues and thus it affects its normal function. In fasting, blood supply to brain is not altered, so the restoration and better mental function is expected.

Maintenance of Agni

Ayurveda has described that pitta, in normal state maintain good memory, intelligence and courage. Pitta is based on agni, which is predominated by sattva quality. It is the same sattva responsible for the intelligence, memory and thinking also. The particular type of pitta, present in hridaya responsible for all mental work is sadhak pitta. Like other organs, hridaya is composed of vata, pitta and kapha. Tridosha are predominated by rajas, sattva and tamas guna respectively. If kapha is increased, there will be decrease in pitta (sattva) as well as the mental function

Preventive aspects

Although the following methods have been advocated for the treatment of Psycho-somatic disorders, however, if used timely in healthy person or, may prove useful for prevention of mental disorders. Both mind and body are location of disorders. There are three types of therapies for all types of diseases. These are

1. **Daivavyapashraya chikitsa (Devine therapy):** The pathogenic factors of mind are reconciled by spiritual (Gyan), Scriptualknowledge (Vigyan), patience (dhairya), Memory (Smriti), Meditation (dhyana).

2. **Yuktivyapashraya chikitsa (Rational therapy):** In this therapy, dietetic regimen and drug administration are used.
3. **Sattvavajaya chikitsa (Psychotherapy):** Ayurvedic approach of the treatment of psychiatric illness. According to Charaka withdrawal of mind from objects, harmful to mind constitute psychotherapy in emotional disorders such as kama, krodha, bhaya, harsa, irsyas and lobha. It should be treated by producing the opposite nature of emotions. For example kama may be alleviated by producing krodha and vice-versa.

Conclusion

The promotion of mental health and prevention of its disorders can be done by diet and drug therapy is the important method for treating the mental patients. Sattvavajaya is the real measure for its prevention and alleviation. Here it is essential that awareness about sadvritta, achar rasayan, dharmiya vega, upvash, proper sleeping, pragyapstambh, sattvavajaya chikitsa, brahmacharya etc., will help in promotion and prevention of mental health and its disorders.

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