
Role of Achara rasayana In Chittodvega

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Abstract

Ayurveda "the science of life" deals with various dimensions of human being. In this age old science, psychological factors have been given equal importance as physiological factors in the etiology of various diseases. Though there are so many rejuvenation therapies, Achara Rasayana is mainly advocated for psychosomatic disorders. Chittodvega (anxiety neurosis) is one among those psychological diseases in which, the code of conduct (Achara Rasayana) plays an important role in both etiology as well as treatment. Here an attempt has been taken to clarify the role of Achara Rasayana in the disease Chittodvega.

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Introduction :

Though 'Charles Darwin' coined the term "struggle for existence", that principle was there since evolution of man, by that struggle only, man could have won over the invertebrates and vertebrates, marines and space, and his order of conquer is still continuing. This is one side of coin only, if we see the other side of coin that shows us, behind his struggle how many centuries he suffered with anxiety and tension, on the way of solution to this psychological suffering Ayurveda came out with a branch of psychology known as *Bhutavidya*. It deals with the factors that can disturb the harmony of *Manas* with *Sareera*, *Indriya* and *Atma* and in order

to reset this harmony, it advocates highest possible ways and means through the *Achara Rasayana* (code of conducts).

The majority of psychiatric disorders are due to stress and mood disturbance. Mostly they are anxiety, depression and often-mixed type. The emotional factors, when cross the state of normalcy and get deranged, become the mental disorders.

A group of psychiatric disorders described in Ayurveda under the heading of *Unmada*, strikingly resembles with psychosis. "*Chittodvega*" as it is not mentioned in classics, but it is described as a symptom of *Unmada*. *Chitta* refers to psyche and *Udvega* refers to anxiety, totally it is an anxiety neurosis.

Anxiety, depression, obsessional thoughts and various vague physical symptoms are experienced by many people in response to the stress and strain of every day life. In neurotic disorders, these symptoms become more intense and prolonged and are out of proportion to the severity of the stress.

Anxiety is a vague feeling of apprehension accompanied by one or more body sensations. As an alerting signal, anxiety is a normal and useful emotion since it prompts the individual to take necessary action to prevent the threat or minimize its consequence. Episodic anxiety without disorder of mood (i.e. depression) is usually classified as anxiety neurosis, with somatic symptoms such as palpitations,

paresthesias, weakness, dizziness, pessimism and irritability.

The etiological factors for *Chittodvega* described in Ayurveda are *Alpasatwa* (inadequate personality), *Hridaya Pradushya* (*As Heart is the seat of Buddhi, alteration of Buddhi*) and *Pradharshanam Deva Guru Dwijanam* (disobeying of God, teacher and Brahmins). Due to the above factors, alteration of '*Dhi*' (derangement of understanding) will be there, and that leads to provocation of *Mano Dosha* (*Rajas and Tamas*). There after misuse of mental faculty begins and one goes in severe emotional changes, which are considered to be the pathological state of mind, causing the *Chittodvega*. *Caraka* directly included involvement of *Mano Dosa* (*Rajas and Tamas*), in the *Samprapthi* of *Chittodvega*. These three causes lead to *Unmada*.

Absolutely the same are given by modern medicine as the etiology for anxiety. These are chronic insecurity, low self- esteem and nervousness. In this disorder several vasomotor and visceral alteration that underlie the symptoms are mediated through the autonomic nervous system. The limbic system and the frontal cortex are the important neuro- anatomic areas involved in the production and modulation of anxiety, particularly the sympathetic part of it, and also involve the adrenal glands. Neuro-transmitters such as nor-epinephrine, gamma amino butyric acid and serotonin are also important in the regulation of anxiety. So *Achara Rasayana* can be adopted as a preventive aspect, as well as a therapeutic mode for it.

Chittodvega- Achara Rasayana:

Achara Rasayana is a right code of socio-behavioral conduct; it teaches us a preferred life style with defined do's and don'ts. This helps as a defensive mechanism in the prevention of anxiety neurosis. There are various psychological mechanisms, which are used by individuals to ensure that normal anxiety does not become abnormal or pathologic. These are called defense mechanisms. Some examples of the commonly used defense mechanisms are repression, denial, displacement, dissociation, conversion, identification, introjection, isolation, projection, rationalization, regression, sublimation, substitution and compensation. When these defense mechanisms are inadequate to deal with anxiety, different neurotic disorders set in. Either these defensive mechanisms can fail or become too exaggerated, disturbing the internal homeostasis. This failure in coping with anxiety is the basic psycho- pathology of neurotic disorder.

Achara Rasayana is a code of good socio-behavioral conduct, such as worship to Gods (improves personality i.e., *satwa*), respect to elders, and ables, speaking truth, avoiding anger, avoiding excessive indulgence in alcohol, sex and excessive labor, keeping self-peaceful, speaking sweet words, and practicing *mantra*, *japa*, kindness to living beings, balanced sleep, regular use of milk, Ghee and other nutritious elements of diet, being humble, kind and well behaved, practicing meditation and studying religious texts. By adopting these measures, a person can be free

from the emotional disturbances and, gives less stressful life and maintains the adequacy of these defense mechanisms, thereby prevents the *Chittodvega*. Practicing this also helps to avoid stimuli or circumstances that disturb biological rhythms or emotional harmony

Rasayana not only deals with physical disorders, but also has a broad concept towards psychological disorders. As in general definition *Rasayana* gives *Sreshta Buddhi*, *Medha*, and *Smriti* along with *Sreshta Dhathus*. Charaka the first and only *Samhitakar* introduced the unique concept of *Achara Rasayana*. It is not only for prevention but also it can cure the *Chittodvega*. Among many concepts two of them are very important in treating *Chittodvega*. One is Meditation and another one is *Japa*.

The process of Meditation generates a passive state in the autonomic nervous system and in the central nervous system. When the volition rests on a state of calm detachment (non-anxious awareness), the autonomic nervous system allows a visualization of change. The bio-feed back cycle starts with perception of body sensations in the central nervous system, which leads to emotional responsiveness. That implies nervous activity in the limbic system, which in turn activates the hypothalamus, which further onsets reverberations in the autonomic system. These sensations and feelings are carried back to the central nervous system for their proper cognition and perception that turns on the same old cycle moving towards emotional responsiveness and activation of ANS and the bio-feed back cycle

continues. This meditation maintains bio-feed back cycle.

Japa (rhythmical repetition of some sound) is a state of absolute physical and mental relaxation. When the mind is passive and withdrawn in to its own recesses, *Achara Rasayana* suggests dietary pattern, which enhance the *Satwika Guna*, like *Ksheera* and *Ghrta*, improves the personality (*Satwa*). Probably the *Japa* and *Tapas* normalizing the important neuro-transmitters like serotonin, nor epinephrine, gamma amino butyric acid metabolism and regulates a wide variety of neuro-psychological processes like mood disturbances, sleep induction etc. There by it normalizes the deranged *Manodoshas* and ensure that normal anxiety does not become abnormal or pathologic.

Conclusion:

- *Rasayana* is the unique concept of Ayurveda, which takes care of physical as well as psychological disorders in preventive and therapeutic aspects.

- Ayurveda at the earliest systematized the study of *Manorogas* in detailed.

- *Chittodvwa* is one of the commonest mental diseases due to severe emotional disturbance.

- *Chittodvega* symptoms are mediated through ANS, via neuro-transmitters like nor epinephrine, Gama amino butyric acid and serotonin.

- *Achara Rasayana* a code of right socio-behavioral conducts effectively prevents the *chittodvega* by maintaining the adequacy of defense mechanism.

- It can successfully treat *Chittodvega* by means of *Dharana (Japa)* and *Dhyana (Tapas)*.

- *Dharana* and *Dhyana* normalizes the neuro-transmitters like serotonin, nor-epinephrine, GABA metabolism through ANS, thereby normalize the deranged *Manodoshas* and *Buddhibramsha*.

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