MANASIK Vega: THEIR CAUSES, EFFECTS AND PSYCHO SPIRITUAL TREATMENT

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ABSTRACT

Manasika Vega is the intensification of Dharaniya Vega – Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Mada, Matsarya, etc. This happens due to the intensification of Raga and Dvesha, which is triggered by the vitiations of Rajas and Tamas due to Asatmyaendriyarth Samyoga, Prajnparadha and Parinama. When Raga and Dvesha get intensified, it leads to strengthening of desires, which in turn leads to a series of associated emotions of anger, fear, greed, delusion, etc. Scriptures identify Manasika Vega as a disease in themselves because they affect the functioning and health of the mind when left unchecked and divert the mind from the purpose of life – which is the pursuit of the fourfold goals of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. As a result, they cause an imbalance in the three legs of life – body, mind and soul, leading to physiological diseases, psychological diseases and Vasanas that are the impressions from previous births which affects health as well. Therefore, Ayurvedic and Allied Scriptures recommend addressing the root cause, controlling the senses, cleaning the mind and the intellect through lifestyle modification, diet and psycho spiritual practices. These practices are listed in several different scriptures at philosophical and practical levels and need regular practice to have an effect. With regular practice aimed at restoring Sattva, the third Guna that is considered the purest, Rajas and Tamas can be destroyed, leading to detachment to sensorial pleasures and a steady, well-regulated and healthy mind.

KEYWORDS: Manasika Vega, Dharaniya Vega, Psycho Spiritual Treatment.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, healthcare technologies have improved. Life expectancy has increased, and ironically, so have healthcare costs. This is because of the several chronic diseases that man suffers today, chief of them being cardiac problems and diabetes at the physiological level, and anxiety, depression and personality disorders at the psychological level. Most modern treatment aim only at control and not prevention or complete cure.

Ayurveda is the science of life and health and a storehouse of knowledge on diseases, their causative factors and treatment. In conjunction with other Allied Scriptures, Ayurveda provides insight into the diseases man suffers from at not just the physiological level but at the psychological level as well. The scriptures recognize the intimate relationship between the components that constitute the mind and body and how they impact and influence each other.

They establish that the root cause of several diseases lies in the intensification of Dharaniya Vega such as Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha etc. The intensified Dharaniya Vega are nothing but Manovega or Manasika Vega, which disturb the functioning of the mind and so are called diseases in themselves. Subsequently, they cause other diseases of the mind if left unchecked and also physiological diseases such as cardiac problems, diabetes etc.

MANASIKA VEGA – A DISEASE

From a reading of Bhagawan Dash’s[1] interpretation of Caraka Samhita, it can be understood that the primary objective of the mind is deliberation. When there is right perception, there is correct awareness. But, from Srinivasa Rao’s[2] translation, we see that there can be excessive, deficient or erroneous perceptions, and these cause disorders of the mind and wrong awareness.
Ramachandra Rao points out that non-deliberation, excessive deliberation or wrong deliberation of its objects causes the mental awareness to be disturbed. Such a mind develops Manasika Vega and is clouded by ignorance, which is in itself a disease and a cause for disease.

Manasika vega are caused by vitiation of the mental Doshas, Rajas and Tamas, which cause both bodily and mental sufferings. Rao justifies this with Caraka's view as, both bodily and mental sufferings are a result of derangement of intelligence, will and memory, unwholesome climatic conditions, effects of previously committed evil actions and unwholesome contact of sense faculties with their objects. Thus, one can understand that Manasika Vega are a result of vitiated Rajas and Tamas that cloud the mental faculties and cause it to form unwholesome association with objects due to an impairment of the intellect and the other regulating factors.

Srinivasa Rao elaborates that diseases produced by emotional disturbances having Manas as their Adhishtana, are caused by the initial impairment of the Manodosha viz., Rajas and Tamas. Secondly, they affect the Shariradosha, and though they may present themselves clinically as physical illness, they can be treated only when the causative emotional disturbance is relieved. These conditions are similar to psycho somatic illnesses.

Rao emphasises that, sometimes primary impairment of Sharirika Dosha leads to the impairment of Manodosha, such as Nanatmajya Mano Vikara where the Manodosha viz., Rajas and Tamas is also involved. This can be considered as Ubhayatmakika Vikara. Thus the interrelationship between the physical and mental diseases can be surmised. Rao explains as, when only the mind is affected directly, it is called Kevala Manovikara and causes: Kama (Passion), Lobha (Greed), Mana (Pride), Shoka (grief), Krodha (Anger), Irshya (Envy), Mada (Arrogance), Cittodvega (Anxiety) , Bhaya (fear), Vishada (Anguish), Abhyasuya (jealousy),_Dainya (Inferiority Complex).These emotions are broadly classified under Iccha (like) and Dvesha (dislike). Iccha referred here is nothing but Raga, which is also called attachment. Some of the factors that cause Manasika Vega are: accrual of undesired objects; unfulfilled desires; and Alpasattva (weak psyche).

Mind is made of three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Suresh Babu calls these three gunas operational qualities viz., Sattva or Kalyanabhaga, Raja or Roshabhaga and Tamas or Mohabhaga. Sattva is characterized by self-control, knowledge, discriminating ability, power of exposition, etc., Rajas is given to violence, despotic envy, authoritativeness, self-admiration etc. Tamas tends towards dullness, non-action, sleep etc. These three qualities are the functional indicators of Manas.

Bi.Gi, which has several verses dedicated to the causes and treatment of Manasika Vega, triggered by Raga and Dvesha, establishing why it is a disease and how it causes other diseases. Mahadeva quotes a reference of Gita as, it is said that when a man thinks of objects, attachment for them arises. From this attachment arises desire; from desire arises wrath. From wrath arises when desire is frustrated. From wrath arises delusion; from delusion, failure of memory; from failure of memory, loss of conscience; from loss of conscience he is utterly ruined.

Bhagawan Dash's interpretation of Caraka Samhita stresses that those who want to remain in good health in the lifetime and after should suppress urges relating to rashness and evil deeds mentally, orally and physically. Not all urges have to be satisfied. In fact, some urges which need to be suppressed as otherwise they can be harmful.

Dash further indicates Caraka's views as, Rajas and Tamas cause morbidity such as Kama (passion), anger, greed, attachment, envy, ego, pride, grief, worry, anxiety, fear, excitement etc.

The diseases that follow the vitiation of Rajas and Tamas and triggering of Manasika Vega are fever, diarrhoea, oedema, consumption, dyspnoea, Meha (obstinate urinary disorder including diabetes), Kustha (obstinate skin diseases including leprosy) etc.

Murthy's interpretation of Ashtanga Hrdaya shows that one of the synonyms for Roga is 'Ragadi', which includes Raga (attachment), Dvesha (unhealthy aversion), Lobha (greed), Moha (confusion), Mada (vanity) and Matsarya (competitive mentality). Raga, which causes excessive desire towards worldly affairs, stains the mind which is pure due to vitiation of Rajas (aversion/ action) and Tamas (confusion/ fear). Dvesha is the aversion towards the unpleasant. Lobha is the excessive greed. Moha is the inability to take appropriate decisions at the
right time, it is confusion due to clouded conscience, this being a property of Tamas. Mada means vanity/pride/egotism, leading to underestimation of opponent's strength. Matsarya is hostile competitive deeds without proper thinking. It is a condition associated with terminal illness and is ominous, heralding death. Arati means restlessness, inability to be comfortable in any posture. Apurva means one who is the pioneer, the foremost, the first one to whom there is no antecedent.

Most of these can be related to the problems man faces in the modern world where competitiveness, vanity, greed for wealth and fame etc. drive their actions. As a result, he develops Stress and Anxiety, unstable behavior leading to physiological and psychological diseases.

Ayurveda therefore lays stress on first reestablishing the Sattva, Rajas, Tamas balance to restore holistic health.

**TREATING MANASIKA VEGAS**

Having established Manasika Vega as a disease which further causes other physical and mental diseases, it was also observed that it is caused because of the vitiation of Rajas and Tamas, which triggers Raga and Dvesha, which intensify Dharaniya Vega into Manasika Vega.

Therefore, Ayurveda's approach to treating Manasika Vega is to restore the balance between Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. This is also prescribed as the method by Madhavananda[14] in Vi. Cu as, Tamas and Rajas are destroyed by Sattva, and Prabhupada's[15] interpretation of Bh.G., which explains that under the influence of Sattva, the mind is steady and will constantly reflect on the Self.

Vimalananda[16] stresses on the purification of the mind at multiple levels – physical, mental, Prana and spiritual. These lead to internal and external cleansing using a four-pronged approach. Here, we use a four-pronged approach at physical, behavioural, intellectual and spiritual levels.

At the physical level Prabhupada[17] emphasizes stresses on moderation in food and recreation, exertion at work, sleep and wakefulness.

Jnanaesvara[18] lays down eight steps one must practice to improve physical and mental health. These are codes of self-regulation or restraint (Yamas), observances or practices of self-training (Niyamas), postures (Asana), expansion of breath and Prana (Pranayama), withdrawal of the senses (Pratyahara), concentration (Dharana), meditation (Dhyana), and perfected concentration (Samadhi).

Secondly, for behavioural approach, one can observe from the interpretation given by Sharma and Dash[19] that Caraka recommends: perform one's duties after duly considering their pros and cons with the help of the intellect together with the sense faculties applied to their respective wholesome objects and by acting in contradistinction with the qualities of place, season and one's own constitution including temperament. Further it can be seen that Caraka has a long list of virtuous behaviour that improves Sattva.

Jnanaesvara[20] points out that, one can understand that mind that is clouded by ignorance or Avidya can be rectified through the Intellect, which is a regulating component of mind, and can be used to free the mind of ignorance.

Madhavananda[21] highlights the importance of intellectual development and right discrimination for controlling the senses and preserving mental health.

Prabhupada[22] too stresses on the need for steady wisdom, as it helps one rise above desires and develops righteousness.

Jnanaesvara[23] recommends Dhyana for spiritual cleansing.

Through this four-pronged approach, the Sattva is strengthened and the attachment to sensual objects reduced. However, it is strongly recommended that mind being capable of distraction, regular practice is needed to achieve the desired goal. Also, an understanding of one's nature will enable one to adopt those practices that help in the initial days before graduating to the other methodologies.

**CONCLUSION**

From an analysis of Ayurvedic and other allied scriptures, it can be seen that the root cause for lifestyle diseases is Manasika Vega, which is itself a disease as it is the intensification of Dharaniya Vega due to strong formation of Raga and Dvesha, triggered by vitiation of Rajas and Tamas. To restore the Sattva, Rajas, Tamas balance is the one of the key solutions to develop detachment and control the Manasika Vega. A four-pronged approach involving internal and external cleansing through physical, behavioural, intellectual and spiritual practices as recommended in the various scriptures can help restore the balance and regain holistic health.
Since *Karma* plays an important role in causing diseases, the practice may not completely cure a person, but can help alleviate symptoms and reduce the *Vasanas*. Willingness and awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses can help one pursue these practices diligently and benefit from them in the long term.

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