



Review Article

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A REVIEW ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE THROUGH *AYURVEDIC* LIFESTYLE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a comprehensive, unique science that encompasses all aspects of health. *Ayurveda* affirms health can be attained only if all the physiological parameters are in equilibrium with a healthy mind, intellect and senses. Mental health is an integral part of *Ayurveda*. Emotional intelligence curtains a big part of human intelligence that exteriorise the ability to sense, value and understand efficaciously, to effectively apply the power of emotions as a source of human energy. Emotional intelligence is tied to cognition and emotional balance in life. An imbalance in the emotional state can create difficulties in people's social and individual lives and is the primary etio-pathological reason for many mental and physical disorders. *Ayurveda* has a beautiful insight into dealing with the causes and solutions to find how we can curtail these disorders and make our lives happy. The theory of *prakriti* is the core concept of *Ayurveda* that describes the individual constitution on a mental and physical basis. It is an indicator of the physical and psychological status of a person. *Ayurveda* provides an exquisite and insightful perspective on the mind and the art of fostering its health through *manas prakriti* (mental constitution) analysis. *Ayurveda* annotates the balance of health and well-being by numerous means using herbs and lifestyle management tips (*Achara rasayana, dincharya, ritucharya* and *sadvritta*). The paper highlights the concept of *manas prakriti* about emotional intelligence and the role of *Ayurveda* in curing emotional intelligence-related issues.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, Emotional intelligence, Mental health, *Manas Prakriti*, *Ayurvedic* Lifestyle, *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a comprehensive, unique science that encompasses all aspects of health. Health can be attained only if all the physiological parameters are in equilibrium with a healthy mind, intellect and senses. The WHO emphasises that mental health is more than being free of mental disorders. Mental health is an integral part of *Ayurveda*. The mental well-being state depicts one's qualified to live happily, work fruitfully and persuasively. Intelligence is an essential element of mental health that depicts the ability to adapt to different situations in life. It defines one's capability to understand and realise our potential and to live in harmony with the family and community.

Emotional intelligence curtains a big part of human intelligence that brings creativity and add morals and ethics to the value of life. Balancing the emotional quotient is more important as it is tied to cognition and emotional balance in life, which play a vivid role in expressing oneself and depicting one's personality. An imbalance in the emotional state can create difficulties in people's social and individual lives and is the major etio-pathological reason for many mental and physical disorders. Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in any kind of field, right from school to organisation. In today's life, solving emotion-related problems is critical. *Ayurveda* has a beautiful insight into dealing with the causes and solutions to find how we can curtail these disorders and make our lives happy. The basis of *Ayurveda* is the *panchamahabhuta* theory (Five elemental theory) which magnificently describes the role of the five elements in human beings and forms the core concept of *prakriti*.

Prakriti

The theory of *prakriti* describes the individual constitution or configuration on a mental and physical basis. *Prakritis* are discrete phenotypes based on three *doshas* (bodily humours) derived from the five elements. It is independent of geographical, racial or ethnic considerations¹. It is determined based on physical, psychological, physiological and behavioural traits. *Prakritis* underlies an individual's predisposition to his physical and mental status. The *prakriti* is said to be predetermined at conception and is impacted by the mother's dietary food and lifestyle as well as the *milieu interieur* (internal environment) of the womb². These *prakritis* exhibit attributes of the dominant bodily humours, which are the deciding factors of a human being's physical appearance, nature, behaviour and emotional and spiritual understanding. The disturbance in equilibrium of these humours can lead to physical, mental and emotional disorders.³

The Indian traditional healing system broadly categorises *prakriti* as *dehika prakriti* (physical constitution) and *manas prakriti* (mental constitution). *Manas prakriti* (mental constitution) is derived from the term '*Manas*', which conceptualises, evaluates, and considers how our inner subconsciousness and perception of the outside world interact. It explains the threefold psychic constitution as *satva, rajas*, and *tamas*. *Satva* is awareness; it is related with enlighten state of body and mind, which brings physical health and mental well-being. *Rajas* is dynamism; it is the state when the body and mind are super active and dynamic. *Tamas* is related to inertness which is the dull state of body and mind. As per *Ayurveda*, these three *gunas* with the three humours,

Vata, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, are vital in defining an individual's health and well-being status. The concept of life as per *Ayurveda* is the complex combination of *sharira* (body), *indriya* (senses) and *atma* (soul).⁴

According to *Ayurveda*, the concept of mind (*manas prakriti*) is comprehensive and significantly generates emotions in life. *Manas prakriti* is considered non-static and changes with the waves of mental thoughts and emotions. It's derived from various components like '*Buddhi*', which is the intellect that discriminates between different aspects of life. '*Ahankara*' is the 'I' maker, an identity former that personalises every experience of an individual. '*Chitta*' is considered to be consciousness and awareness. *Prana* connects all these aspects.⁵ Knowledge occurs when the self (*atma*), mind (*manas*), sense organs (*indriya*) and objects (*indriyarth*) are connected in sequence.⁶ *Mano doshas* (*rajas* and *tamas*) and *manas prakriti* (mental constitution) are responsible for the experiences and interpretations of life.⁷

Emotional Intelligence and Health

Emotions are powerful organisers of thought and action and are indispensable for reasoning and rationality. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognise, comprehend, appraise, and use the power of emotions as a source of human inspiration, knowledge, and influence. It considers individual differences in the capability to learn, think and reason logically, and interact with the environment adaptively. According to Olivier Serrat, emotional intelligence is the self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of oneself, others, and a group of individuals.⁸ Emotional awareness helps an individual respond better to others in different life circumstances. This way, an individual can understand the importance of emotional well-being, which helps in his behaviour and gives him the ability for better decision-making.⁹

Recent years have seen a rapid expansion of the idea of emotional intelligence, which is closely related to mental health. This is very well correlated with the *satvic* state of mind, where the mind and body are balanced enough to face life situations for relationship building, self-assessment and understanding one's potential. A person with a balanced *satva* can attain higher goals with better representation and understanding of life's challenges. People get increasingly better at handling emotions, impulses and performance with better emotional quotient. Thus, emotional intelligence is considered an essential tool for physical health and psycho-spiritual health¹⁰. It has been observed that people with higher emotional intelligence lead a positive quality of life, while people with low emotional intelligence tend to develop psychopathological, emotional, mental and spiritual issues¹¹. Emotional intelligence has been proven to be a resilient factor in mental health. A deficiency of emotional intelligence can have a variety of detrimental psychosocial and physical outcomes for individuals that may require therapeutic intervention from time to time¹².

Emotional Intelligence and Ayurveda

Ayurveda treaties have not mentioned emotional health, but we can find various references and subjects under which emotional health is important. According to *Ayurveda*, emotional health depends on the state of *dhee* (the intellectual ability for correct judgement and righteous discriminative power), *dhruti* (self-control, patience and willpower) and *smriti* (retention of memory)¹³. They render the power of *chintyam*, which is thoughtfulness and speculation, *vicharyam*, which is the power of discretion or judgement; *uhyam* is logical interpretation; *dhyeyam* is goal or aim and *sankalpam*, which is resolution^{14, 15}. Interventions like

education, persuasion, incentivisation, coercion, training, restriction, environmental restructuring, modelling and enablement are some behavioural techniques which aid in strengthening *dhee*, *dhruti* and *smriti*. Its rational state brings happiness, joy, and the feeling of well-being and health. Its demented state disturbs the three humours (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*), *trigunas* (three qualities, *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) in which *rajas* and *tamas* dominate. Dominance of *rajas* and *tamas* dosha hampers decision-making and results in impairment of memory and emotional imbalance, which arises negative feelings like *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobh* (greediness), *moha* (illusion), *irshya* (jealousy), *maan-mada* (arrogance), *shoka* (grief), *chinta* (worry), *udvega* (anxiety) etc. It is essential to have balanced emotional intelligence for proper mind functioning.

Diseases Related to Emotional Intelligence

With the fast-changing technology-oriented world health issues related to emotional imbalances are growing daily. Studies conducted in 2017 estimate that 792 million people lived with mental health disorders, slightly more than one in ten people globally (10.7%)¹⁶. Another study conducted by Salovey and Parker *et al.*, that weakness in components of emotional intelligence is related to neurotic subscale that indicates people with low emotional intelligence suffer from mental disorders, lack of empathy, anxiety, anger, hostility, depression, impulsiveness, vulnerability weak defence mechanism of the body, and have problems in understanding their emotions more than others. These issues are not new but have existed for a long time though the prevalence has increased several times in the new era due to the gadget-oriented world. Low emotional intelligence leads to Drug and alcohol abuse, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, bulimia, Schizophrenia, and substance use disorder. *Ayurveda* elaborates on the mental and emotional disturbances leading to psychological disorders such as *Apsmara*, *Ummada*, *Atatvabhinivesh*, *Grahabadha* etc., that are related to Insanity, Depression, epilepsy, Schizophrenia and manic disorders.

Management through Ayurveda

As *Ayurveda* is focused on attaining physical and mental well-being, the texts have elaborated various means adapted for the balance of emotions and sustenance of emotional health. These methods include pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches to cure and balance emotions. Emotional awareness can be evolved from childhood and cultured at later stages of life. Lifestyle management and trends can grossly change the emotional quotient. *Ayurveda* is among the rare sciences that emphasise lifestyle management to cure many diseases and disorders at the physical level and transform the emotional and spiritual grounds. These parameters are of utmost importance when it comes to emotional health. *Ayurveda*'s sublime concepts describe the following means to build emotional intelligence.

- *Dinacharya* and *ritucharya*: *Dinacharya* and *ritucharya* (Daily and seasonal regimen) give a glimpse of a spending discipline lifestyle. This not only helps build good habits but also helps in reinforcing positive emotional health. *Dinacharya* refers to the daily routine. It plans the day's activities over our body and mind to work more efficiently. *Ritucharya* means seasonal regime. It is preparing the *dinacharya* as per the season. The change of seasons out – turns our mental and emotional state. The daily regime should be customised based on the availability of seasonal provender and the activities per the season. The changing seasons affect our actions, and hormonal states alter our emotional health. The daily and seasonal regime is based on the three qualities - *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* that also change the *manas prakriti*, which is vital in boosting our emotional intelligence.

- **Sadvritta:** “*Sadvritta*” is a Sanskrit word derived from two words '*Sad*' means good, and '*vritta*' means regimen. This means to follow a good regime in life, in other words, a good code of conduct that shall be followed in personal, social, religious and practical dealings. This increases the mental faculties and describes rules related to general hygiene, food consumption and exercise. Following *sadvritta* helps increase the *satva* and curtails the *rajas* and *tamas*, which are the leading causes of psychological, physical and psychosomatic disorders hampering emotional intelligence.
- **Acharya rasayana:** *Acharya rasayana* is the rejuvenating attitude that implies moral, ethical, and benevolent conduct, personal and public cleanliness, truth, nonviolence, mental and personal hygiene, devotion, compassion, and a yogic lifestyle. These behaviours bring about rejuvenation in the body-mind and soul. These etiquettes count for emotional intelligence.
- **Medhya rasayana:** *Medhya rasayana* is a group of nootropic herbs that enhance biological nourishment of the brain, produce tranquillity of mind and improve memory, concentration, emotional health and intellect. They include rejuvenating herbs like *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Mandukparni* (*Centella asiatica*), *Shankhpushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*), *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)
- Treatment through divinity
 - **Daivavyapashraya:** It's a modality of treatment based on a divine power or divine remedies through the pleasing of Gods. It includes mantra chanting (enchanted hymns), *ausadhi* and *mani dharna* (wearing sacred herbs and precious gems), *mangala karma* (propitiatory rites) like *bali* (oblations), *homa* (sacrifice), *upahara* (offerings), *niyama* (vows), *prayascitta* (ceremonial penitence), *upavasa* (fasts), *santayan* (prostrations), *pranipata* (surrender) etc. These measures are said to increase the *satva*, purity of body and mind, and the spiritual energy that helps build up the emotional balance in life.
 - **Yuktivyapashraya:** *Yukti* means rational thinking or skill. *Yuktivyapashraya chikitsa* is a treatment deal with skilful planned and administered use of herbal medicine to enhance cognitive abilities and disorders that arise from emotional imbalance. These drugs are *Brahmi ghrita*, *Kalyanaka ghrita*, *Pancagavya ghrita*, *Chyavanaprasa*, *Sarasvatarista*, *Asvagandharista*, *Smritisagara rasa* etc
 - **Satvaavjaya Chikitsa:** This treatment is designed to increase the *satva*. The best approach to achieve the goal of *satvaavjaya chikitsa* is through *jnanam* (knowledge), *vijnanam* (analytical thinking), *dhairya* (courage), *smrti* (memory), and *samadhi* (concentration and meditation). These activities restrain the mind from desiring unwholesome objects and make it work on more virtuous and purposeful things. These treatment modes bring mindfulness that creates awareness about emotional well-being.
- **Panchkarma (nasya and abhyanga):** In *Ayurveda*, *panchakarma* is a detoxification therapy with five therapies. Using some of them can be beneficial to restore the normalcy of intellect, sense of faculties and mind and achieve emotional balance. They are *nasya* (nasal inhalation of aromatic herbs), *abhyanga* (massage), *shirodhara* (streaming of medicated oil or decoction on the forehead of the patient), *sirolepa* (application of medicated herbal paste on the vertex part of the head), *dhoompana* (inhalation of herbal fumes).
- **Aroma therapy:** Tropical application or fumigation of aromatic oils like sandalwood oil, camphor oil, cedar oil, rose oil, jasmine oil etc., have been proven beneficial to enhance emotional, cognitive and psychological well-being.

- **Yoga and meditation:** Regular practice helps by relaxing the mind, increasing mental alertness, deepening the sense of perception, preventing unnecessary distractions, improving attention span and working on the limbic part of the brain (hippocampus, amygdala). It integrates the body and mind and eases psychological stresses, calming and enhancing overall well-being. Mindful meditation relieves anxiety and depression, reduces negative emotions and helps achieve a strong mindset.

DISCUSSION

Emotional intelligence and mental health have multiplied in recent years and have a strong relationship with many aspects of human life. Studies reveal that culturally a person might be emotionally intelligent in one culture but not another. Level of emotional comprehension may also vary in different socio-economic strata. Whatever experiences the body has impacts the mind and vice versa. The body is a crystallisation of the mind; both being conjoint, have a mutual dependency. As per *Ayurveda*, *manas prakriti* is vital to physical and mental health. Mental health is influenced by emotional health. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in carving the mental status on one side where there is a sharp rise in mental disorders, especially since the covid outbreak. Experiencing positive emotions is now becoming the highest virtue since people are mentally very vulnerable. The cognitive vulnerability has led to emotional derailment and mood swings. These implicate the sharp rise in crime, ranging from violence, rage, and quarrels to suicide and homicidal cases. Utilising the power of emotional intelligence is essential in curtailing these illnesses. It becomes necessary for individuals to develop emotional intelligence competencies. Understanding emotional information is crucial in daily functioning health and may be a therapeutic intervention to improve emotional skills. It will enable an individual to respond to the moods of others accurately, remain calm in stressful conditions, remain optimistic in upsetting times, adapt to change in circumstances, seek opportunities and work efficiently in groups. The ancient concept of cultivating emotional intelligence through regulating emotion is the key solution to these problems. Proper understanding and utilisation of the components of emotional intelligence like self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill with the use of different behavioural and stress relieving therapies of *dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, *acharya rasayana*, *sadvritta*, mantra chanting, yoga and meditation, virtuous and rightful living and herbs such as *Ashwagandha*, *Shankhpushpi*, *Brahmi*, *Tagar*, *Jatamansi*, *Vacha*, *Bala* etc. can bring a drastic change in the present scenario. These therapies enhance the *satva guna* (purity of mind) of the individual. It decreases *rajas* and *tamo gunas* for normal functioning of the mind. *Satva guna* will enhance the *smrti* (memory), bring *bhakti* (devotion and submission to one's commitment), *krutanja* (gratefulness), *prajna* (interest to update knowledge), *suchi* (cleanliness in body, speech and mind), *svyavasthitagati* (ability of a person to concentrate on work till its completion), *gambheerabuddhicheshta* (decision making and problem-solving capacity) and *kalyanaabhinivesham* (positive attitude) of *satvasara* is contributed by *satva guna* and *mahotsaha* (enthusiasm to do the activities), *daksha* (skilful), *dheera* (courageous) and *samara vikranta* (constant and steady efforts to win). Thus, helping in building mindfulness and amplifying better quality of life.

CONCLUSION

Emotions have a considerable role in an individual's life. It fosters the ability to perceive, comprehend, value, and appraise them while managing them for understanding and self-expression and applying emotions as a source of motivation, change, trust,

creativity, and influence as it becomes easier with emotional intelligence. Self-awareness, self-regulation, and social and cognitive skills are all significantly influenced by emotional intelligence and improved physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being results from higher emotional intelligence. It changes a way of life and helps people nurture the competencies to deal with the exigencies and demands of day-to-day life. Therefore, the intelligent use of emotions is considered essential for one's physical health and psychological adaptations. *Ayurveda* provides an exquisite and insightful perspective on the mind and the art of fostering its health. The concepts of *Ayurveda* describe the fundamental practical aspects which integrate adopting good habits, etiquette and discipline. Combining *dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, *sadvritta*, *achara rasayana*, and herbs in different forms helps calm the mind, reduce stress levels and enhance positive thoughts. A lot more research on the areas of integration of *Ayurveda* and holistic healing can bring new outcomes. Thereby reducing the prevalence of mental illnesses worldwide and encouraging the use of *Ayurveda*. This will help achieve the personal goals of health and happiness and spread the aroma of *Ayurveda* for global wellness.

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