

CHAPTER

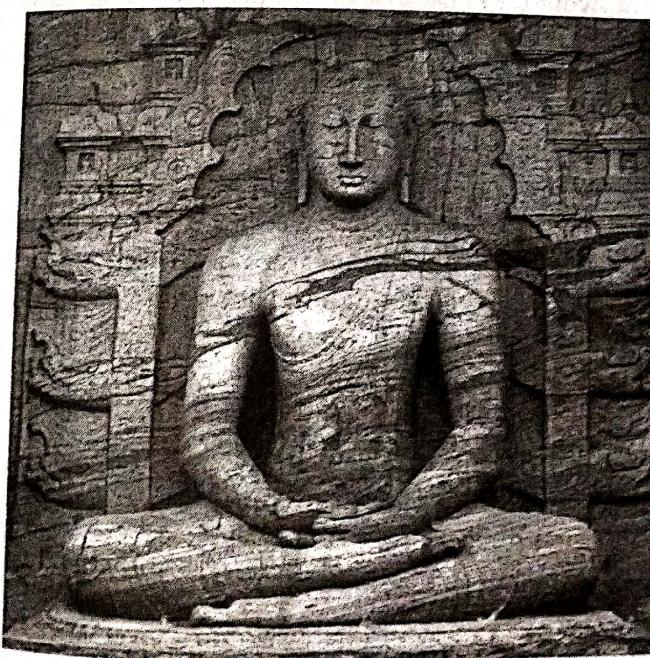
13 Health, Wellness and Psychology

LEARNING OUTCOMES



After finishing this chapter, you will be able to:

- ▶ Understand Āyurveda's approach to Health and Wellness
- ▶ Get to know the basic framework to health and disease management as spelt out in Āyurveda
- ▶ Understand the importance of yoga way of living in maintaining a sound physical and mental health
- ▶ Understand the distinctive aspects of Indian Psychology
- ▶ Get acquainted with alternative frameworks to understand body-mind-intellect-consciousness that an individual is made of



Yoga way of life was common to all ancient Indian practices including Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina schools. Buddhist school was mainly responsible for its spread to neighbouring countries. The Gal Vihara is a rock temple of the Buddha situated in the ancient city of Polonnaruwa in North Central Province, Sri Lanka. It was built in the 12th century by Parakramabahu I. The large, seated image is 15 feet 2.5 inches (4.636 m) tall and depicts the dhyāna mudrā. Such artefacts depicting Yoga postures are common in several parts of South and Southeast Asia.

By Bernard Gagnon—Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6685350>

IKS IN ACTION 13.1

Impact of Yoga Way of Life on Emotional Intelligence of Managers

The practice of Yoga helps individuals gain control over their minds and lead a stress-free and healthy life. A study was conducted in a unit of a manufacturing company in the state of Gujarat in western India, to experimentally understand the benefits of the yoga way of life. The company had employed about 120 people in the managerial cadre. Those who agreed to participate in the study were divided into two equal groups of 42 each; Group 1 was designated as the yoga group and Group 2 as the physical exercise group.

The yoga group was given 30 hours of yoga practice (75 minutes every day) and 25 hours of theory on the philosophy of yoga spread over six weeks. The theory lectures included topics such as definitions of the yoga way of life, implications of the four types of yoga (Rāja yoga, Karma yoga, Jñāna yoga, and Bhakti yoga) on life, analysis of the aspects of true happiness in life, Aṣṭāṅga yoga steps and the central theme of the universality of consciousness as propounded in these texts. The practice sessions which included āsanas, prāṇāyāma, and relaxation were conducted by a yoga instructor.

The other group was given training in a normal physical workout for an equal number of hours, and lectures on the success factors in life based on modern thought. The topics for theory given to this group included success and happiness, the importance of attitude, self-image, good relationship with others, goal setting, the power of the subconscious mind, communication, motivation, and leadership. The practice given to this group included fast exercises such as spot jogging, bending, body rotation, hand, and leg movements, etc.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) was measured for both the groups, before and after the study, with the help of a standard self-reported questionnaire. In addition, measurements of certain physical parameters such as weight, body mass index, blood pressure, and blood sugar were taken, before and after the study. 80% and 86% of the participants from the yoga group and the control group

respectively were from the age group of 21 to 50, while the rest were above 50.

Results and Implications

Statistical analysis of the data was done using SPSS. The average EI score for the yoga group and the control group was 5.50 and 5.61 respectively before the experiment. The average EI score after the experiment for the yoga group and the control group was 5.97 and 5.55, respectively. Statistical tests conducted revealed that EI showed significant enhancement in the yoga group but not in the physical exercise group. The results further showed that while the difference in the average EI between the yoga group and the physical exercise group was not significant before the experiment, the same was statistically significant at the end of the experiment.

The study indicated that a systematic adoption of the yoga way of life can result in better EI among managers, thus paving the way for their better performance as managers. In most organisations, leaders play a pivotal role in driving performance. Several leadership training programmes are being conducted by successful companies. But the yoga way of life is seldom taught systematically as part of these training programmes. Currently, yoga methods are taught more as a means to de-stress individuals and improve personal satisfaction. It would be beneficial to provide systematic exposure to the knowledge enshrined in the texts emphasising the yoga way of life to all managerial cadres of companies.

The study shows that such an initiative would help them personally as well as professionally. They can become more self-aware and self-regulated individuals, with a proper perspective of life and various relationships. It also shows the potential to include a significant component of yoga practices in psychological counselling sessions to improve the efficacy of such interventions.

Source: Adhia, H., Nagendra, H.R. and Mahadevan, B. (2010). "Impact of Adoption of Yoga Way of Life on the Emotional Intelligence of Managers". IIMB Management Review, Vol. 22, pp. 32–41.

Every living being in this Universe feels the need for happiness and makes all-out efforts to achieve this. No living being wants to experience sorrow. In the ancient Indian system, an overall framework was provided for achieving this by setting four life goals (*Dharma, Artha, Kāma, and Mokṣa*), known as *puruṣārthas*. To attain these goals in life health plays a major role. Caraka, one of the exponents of health systems in ancient India says, "Health is the best source of right deeds, wealth, desires, and emancipation while diseases are destroyers of this (source), welfare and life itself"¹. The focus, therefore, is on how to keep oneself hale and healthy.

In the modern systems of medicine such as Allopathy, health is defined at an average level for all human beings. For example, a healthy person's body parameters such as pulse rate, blood pressure, weight, etc. are specified to be a single number, which is at best an average reading. In reality, health is an individual phenomenon as people differ from each other vastly in their constitution, food habits, strength, mentality, age, and adaptability². Therefore, health systems must take these into consideration and the average values can at best serve as broad guidelines. This implies that every individual must know about their nature first in order to ensure that he/she is healthy. The Indian health system plays a significant role in this process and it focuses both on the preventive and curative aspects of health. We shall see in this chapter these concepts of Indian health system, namely Āyurveda. Furthermore, it is increasingly understood that the mental health of a person plays a significant role in overall wellness. Therefore, Psychology is closely linked to health and wellness. We shall also see in this chapter the Indian approach to psychology.

- ◆ The Indian health system focuses both on the preventive and curative aspects of health.
- ◆ The mental health of a person plays a significant role in overall wellness.

13.1 ĀYURVEDA – DEFINITION OF HEALTH

The word Āyurveda is derived from two words 'āyus' and 'veda'. The word 'āyus' is generally translated as life. The Caraka-saṃhitā defines āyus as the association of body, senses, mind, and Ātman³. Āyus is also called as dhāri (one which holds), jīvitam (flow of consciousness), nityaga (one with constant movement) and anubandha (one which binds or connects). The word Veda has already been explained in chapter two. Ancient Indians considered the body to be the first instrument for leading a satisfactory life by performing the right deeds for the attainment of puruṣārthas. Therefore, health was considered an important aspect of life and according to Caraka, Āyurveda must be studied and practiced by every individual in the society⁴.

The origin of Āyurveda is traced back to the four vedas. Subsequently three important treatises Caraka-saṃhitā, Suśruta-saṃhitā, and Aṣṭāṅga-hṛdaya serve as the authentic source books. The subsequent three books that are called "Laghu Trayī" are Mādhava-nidāna, Śāringdhara-saṃhitā, and Bhāvaprakāśa-nighaṇṭu. These books contain basic concepts of health and disease, disease management, anatomy and physiology, and other related topics. Diseases are classified according to organ systems and function and discussed in detail in Āyurveda. Although there is no record of pharmacological testing during the time period when Āyurvedic texts were written, 50 distinct pharmacological categories of medicinal plants were described.

Āyurveda borrows the philosophical aspects from two major schools of philosophy: Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya. One school follows the Sāṃkhya philosophy which proposed twenty-

four elements that make up an individual (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1 for more details on this). Āyurveda uses this to understand the anatomy and psychology of a human being in depth. According to Caraka the knowledge of Āyurveda is built on the concepts presented in Vaiśeṣika⁵. As we have seen in Chapter 7, Vaiśeṣika philosophy classifies all existing objects in this world

- ◆ In 1948, the World Health Organization (WHO) added 'mental wellbeing' as part of health definition.
- ◆ Āyurveda uses tridoṣas to map the symptoms to an appropriate cause by identifying the nature of imbalance among the tridoṣas.

into six padārthas (categories). In Vaiśeṣika, nine categories of substances (Dravyas) have been identified. When these get connected with Indriyas (senses) they become sentient being (cetana-dravyas), and without them, they are called insentient (acetana-dravyas)⁶. All the object in this Universe whether a living being or non-living being is made of a different combination of these dravyas. A good ayurvedic practitioner never overlooks this aspect while treating his patient.

Sāmānya, according to Vaiśeṣika is that which is generally present in many, thereby indicating similarity in characteristics of substances. This padārtha causes an increase in substances with similar qualities. When something with the same guṇa is consumed, the power of disease can increase (as in the case of sugar taken by a diabetic patient). Therefore, with a knowledge of the similar qualities between diseases and the dravya (and the associated guṇa and karma) one can take care of his/her health. On the other hand, Višeṣa in Vaiśeṣika enables one to distinguish between two substances. Though people may be anatomically similar and may have the same disease, there are specific qualities that make an individual different from the other. Therefore, disease and its cause and impact on individuals can be different. Identifying the distinguishing characteristics of individuals helps in treating an ailment. For example, the specific nature of vāta is roughness, coolness, and lightness. So, when vāta is high in the body it must be treated with food, medicine etc. of a specific nature which is exactly opposite to the nature of the vāta. That exists in the oil. The nature of oil is sticky, hot, and heavy.

The definition of health according to Āyurveda is broad-based and more encompassing. Suśruta's definition of health is as follows:

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः ।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमना: स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते ॥
*samadoṣah samāgnīśca sama-dhātu-mala-kriyāḥ |
prasanna-ātmendriya-manāḥ svastha ity-abhidhīyate ||*

The above definition comprises two parts: The first part states that good health is based on the equilibrium of doṣa (humor), agni (digestive fire), dhātu (seven body tissues), and mala (faeces, urine, and other waste products). The second part states that maintaining physical, mental, and spiritual well-being is also a part of good health. As we can see, the first part relates the health of an individual to the physical aspects (condition of the body), whereas the second part relates health to the psychological aspect (mental well-being). Figure 13.1 schematically presents the definition of health. In contrast to the āyurvedic perspective, in the west, early definitions of health focused on the theme of the body's ability to function. When one becomes unhealthy, the effort was to restore the body back to its normal state. It was only in 1948, that the World Health Organisation (WHO) added 'mental wellbeing' as part of the health definition.

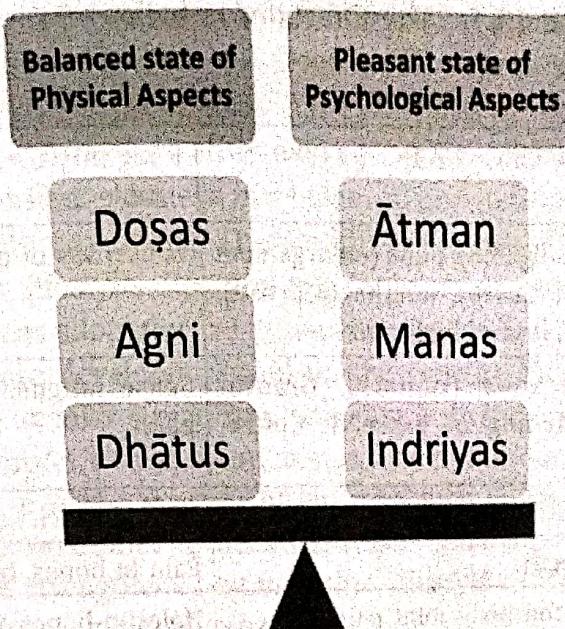


FIGURE 13.1 Health – A Two-dimensional Perspective

Physical Aspects of Health

There are seven dhātus (basic substances) that constitute a human body. Similarly, the doṣas (the humours) and mala (the wastes) are also defined. According to Suśruta a balanced state of the doṣas and agni (healthy digestive fire/juice), vital fluids and tissues of the body being in normal state and quantity and normal processes of secretion constitutes the physical aspect of good health.

Agni plays a vital role⁷ and is responsible for health, longevity, and vital breath. When agni extinguishes in the body the person dies and when it is in its normal state the person stays healthy and lives longer. The agni converts the food into energy which helps in the smooth functioning of the body. When Agni is disturbed and becomes low, high, or unbalanced it makes the person ill. The agni in the body is not a flame but is in a liquid form and manifests through the Pitta in the body⁸. The digestive fire metabolises what is eaten. If food is not consumed it metabolises doṣas, then Dhātus, and finally the vital energies⁹. Therefore, an individual must always focus on keeping the agni balanced.

The human body is made up of seven basic substances (dhātus): Plasma (Rasa), Blood (Rakta), Flesh (Māṃsa), Fat (Medas), Bones (Asthi), Bone-marrow (Majjā), and Semen (Śukra). The food that we consume first gets converted into plasma and in a gradual process, it gets converted into flesh and fat. From the fat to bones, bones to bone-marrow, bone-marrow to semen¹⁰. That semen when accumulated and meditated over gets converted into Ojas, the Vital power. This power leads to a long life without any diseases. An imbalanced state of the dhātus leads to bad health and several diseases. Table 13.1 summarises the effect of imbalanced dhātus in the human body.

Psychological Aspects to Health

The second part of the definition extends the notion of health to the psychological aspect by including a condition that one must also be in a pleasant state of mind and the senses. Mind (Manas) is considered as a subtle internal organ that cannot be seen but its presence can be inferred. For example, when a person eats his/her favourite sweet, he/she enjoys it. This

TABLE 13.1 The Effects of Imbalanced Dhātus

<i>Dhātus</i>	<i>Increase or Growth</i>	<i>Decaying or Loss</i>
Rasa	Like the Kapha (see Table 13.3)	Roughness, weakness, dryness, fatigue, unable to bear with sounds
Rakta	Visarpa (dry spreading itch), plīha (enlargement of spleen), vidra (fissure), kuṣṭha (leprosy), upakuṣa (gumboil), loss of limbs, etc.	Looseness of blood vessels, Roughness
Māṃsa	Gaṇḍa (boils), Arbuda (tumors), Granthi (swelling or hardening of vessels), Goitre, Mumps, etc.	Sense fatigue, Dryness of cheeks, Joint pains
Medas	Weakness and breathing problem	Loss of touch sense, thinness of body
Asthi	Extra bones and teeth	Pain in bones, teeth falls, etc.
Majjā	Heaviness in eyes and body, joint pains	Holes in bones, giddiness, blackouts
Śukra	Over desire for sex, stones in semen	Early ejaculation of semen and blood, pain in testicles, etc.

enjoyment is neither related to the tongue nor the sweet itself. If that would have been the case then the sweet must induce the same enjoyment in everyone, or anything that the tongue consumes must give one happiness. Since this is not the case, it can be inferred that there is some other organ that experiences joy, sorrow, and other such emotions. The mind is an internal sense organ of our awareness of happiness, unhappiness, etc.

Several philosophical and Āyurvedic texts deal with mind in detail. According to our scriptures, the mind is the cause for all the bindings and mokṣa (liberation). If the mind is not controlled, the sense organs will behave in an uncontrolled fashion. As stated in Bhagavadgītā, "The mind is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding, it is difficult to control as controlling the wind in an open place¹¹". According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the human mind is a manifestation of Prakṛti (Nature) which is made up of Tri-guṇas. The interplay between the three guṇas decide the psychological and emotional behavior of an individual (see Section 13.6 for some more details on Tri-guṇas). The psychological influence of the mind differs from person to person. In different ratios, it changes the mental and intellectual caliber of an individual. In the framework of Tri-guṇas, all actions, and the behavior of an individual can be classified which further helps us to analyse a person and his activities from a psychological dimension. When rajas and tamas get perturbed, they cause psychological disorders¹². All the internal enemies of humans like lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, envy, etc. overwhelm the individual which brings about demonic changes in an individual.

Once we lose control over ourselves the control of buddhi and manas is lost. On account of this, the control over the senses is lost and it leads to the distraction of the senses causing various ill effects. Caraka explains, "When a person performs inappropriate/inauspicious deeds being impaired by the buddhi (ability to comprehend), dhṛti (controlling power), and smṛti (power to recall memories, or reminisce), it leads to an aggravation of all doṣas"¹³. For example, if a person knows that eating ice-cream or cold beverages is not good for his/her health and still consumes those it is an inappropriate deed which leads to an increase in Kapha and

- ◆ The tridoṣas have a specific relationship with the time of the day and the type of diet one takes.
- ◆ Agni plays a vital role in the digestion process and it is also responsible for strength, health, longevity, and vital breath.

Vāta and causes various diseases related to those doṣas. Caraka relates the psychological state such as buddhi, and indriyas to the cause of diseases. Erroneous use, avoidance, and excessive use of time factor, intellect, and sense objects is the threefold cause of both psychic and somatic disorders¹⁴. According to Āyurveda, the overall health is determined by physical and psychological environment. To keep these in a balanced and natural state one must follow some specific routines explained in Āyurveda. These address the role of environmental factors, daily routine, seasonal changes, lifestyle, diet, and regular exercise in maintaining health.

Modern systems such as allopathy are primarily oriented towards the treatment of disease. In this approach, drugs are developed based on the concept that the elimination of specific causes of a disease, such as microorganisms, will cure a disease. On the other hand, Āyurveda is oriented toward prevention, health maintenance, and treatment. It is developed on the basic assumption that a disease is the product of an imbalance in the body and mental elements which reduce the body's resistance to diseases. If the imbalance is corrected and the body's defence mechanisms are strengthened by medicine, lifestyle changes, and diet, then the body will resist a disease and eventually eliminate it.

13.2 TRI-DOṢAS – RELATIONSHIP TO HEALTH

One of the cornerstones of health in Āyurveda is the balanced state of the three doṣas (Tri-doṣas). The word doṣa means that which perishes, spoils, or refutes. These doṣas, are Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha. As per the Vaiśeṣika system, the composition of these doṣas is based on the five basic elements. For example, Pitta is formed by the combination of fire and water. Figure 13.2 provides the composition of the three doṣas. According to the Tri-doṣa theory the kapha represents solid material substratum of the human body, pitta the chemical activity and vāta the energy pool of motion and movement. These three doṣas coexist in a predetermined proportion and function in a complementary manner to overall functioning of the body despite their opposite properties and functions. When these are in an equilibrium state the body is said to be in a healthy condition. By contrast, when the doṣas are vitiated they cause disease¹⁵. To balance or control these doṣas, one must know the nature of the three doṣas. Āyurveda gives specific details of the nature of these doṣas¹⁶. For example, Vāta is considered to be light, cool, dry, mobile, subtle, and rough. Similarly, Pitta is oily, sharp, hot, light, stinking, liquid. On the other hand, Kapha is cool, moist, stable, heavy, slow, and slippery.

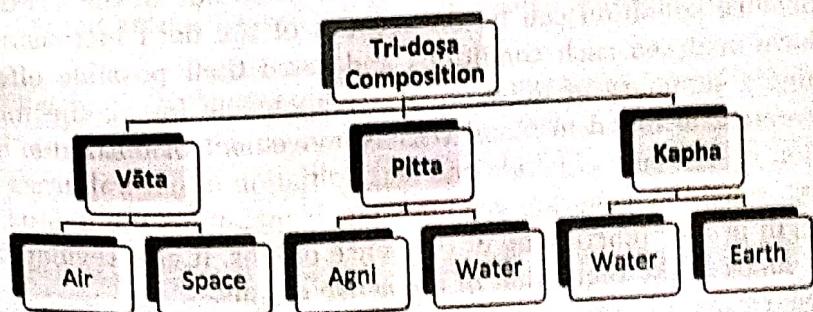


FIGURE 13.2 The Composition of the Tri-Doṣas

The doṣas have a specific relationship with the type of diet one takes. When similar-natured food is consumed, similar natured action is done, and the doṣa increases. For example, the vegetable Okra (Lady's finger) is of Kapha nature. Therefore, if it is consumed the Kapha level

In the body gets perturbed. Doṣas are related to the tastes in the food. For instance, sweet, sour, and salty tastes reduce the vāta, whereas pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes exaggerate it. Similarly, astringent, bitter, and sweet tastes reduce pitta, and sour, salty, and pungent tastes exaggerate pitta. In the case of Kapha, pungent, bitter, and astringent tastes reduce it, and sweet, sour, and salty tastes exaggerate it. Therefore, knowing the nature of the body and its current state a person should consume foods of the appropriate taste. A healthy person must have all the six tastes in his food.

Āyurvedic scholars have also identified the organs where these doṣas predominantly exist. All doṣas occupy different parts of the body. Mainly, Kapha occupies the part above the chest of a human body, Pitta occupies the chest to the navel and Vāta occupies the part below the navel. All the Kapha related problems such as cold, and cough are mainly experienced above the chest. The problems which are caused by Pitta such as acidity are experienced between the chest and the navel. Problems related to Vāta such as Arthritis and constipation are experienced mostly below the navel part of the body. These are merely indicative. In reality, the three doṣas, despite their primary location, are there everywhere in the body and are capable of causing disease in any part of the body.

Further, it is also associated with age. Kapha is predominantly present during childhood (till 16th year), morning hours, and the first part of the night. That is the reason we see the children being affected by Kapha often. Pitta dominates during middle age, noon hours, and mid-night hours. Nature of pitta is hot and hot weather or substance increase the level of pitta in the body. It gets cured by the opposite nature, i.e. cold. Vāta is dominant during old age and that is when such people suffer from the disorders related to stomach, pains, arthritis, etc. Vāta gets increased during evening hours and the third part of the night. Table 13.2 summarises these aspects of the tri-doṣas.

TABLE 13.2 Factors Affecting the Tri-doṣas

	<i>Body</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Night</i>	<i>Important Organ</i>
Kapha	Head to chest	Childhood	Morning hours	First part	Chest
Pitta	Chest to navel	Young age	Noon hours	Mid-night hours	Liver and pancreas
Vāta	Below navel	Old age	Evening hours	Third part	Digestive system

The issue of interest to us is the effect on health when one of the Tri-doṣas goes out of balance. The imbalance condition can be on account of the doṣa increasing or decreasing. Āyurvedic texts have analysed such conditions and listed their possible effects in the body. Table 13.3 provides a summary of these. Vāta is responsible for all the movements in the body like the movement of blood in blood vessels, movement of nutrients, movement of air in lungs, locomotion movements of hands and legs, initiation of natural urges like tears, faces, urination, sneezing, coughing, vomiting, yawning, etc. It maintains the dhātus in their normal condition and aids in proper functioning of the sense organs. It also regulates all activities of mind, speech, and helps in the regulation of the sense organs.

One of the major causes of physical illness in a human being is the suppression of urges. There are several urges which when suppressed cause different types of diseases. Table 13.4 has details pertaining to these. On the other hand, Āyurveda recommends the suppression of certain urges to attain psychological health. An intelligent person suppresses the urges of greed, grief, fear, fury, pride, shamelessness, envy, excessive passion as well as covetousness and

TABLE 13.3 The Effects of Dosas Going Out of Balance

Condition	Vātu	Pitta	Kapha
Balanced	Energy, balanced breath, movement, normality in urges	Digestion, warmth, vision, hunger, thirst, taste, gleam, intelligence, prowess/heroism, delicateness, softness	Stability, moisture, good joints, patience
Exaggerated	Thinness, need of warmth, shivering, constipation, weakness, chattering, dizziness	Yellowness in eyes and excretions, severe hunger and thirst, burning, insomnia, acidity	Indigestion, nausea, laziness, heaviness, frigidity, slack-limbed
Reduced	Exhaustion of limbs, noxious talk, giddiness	Indigestion, coldness, lack of gleam	Giddiness, emptiness in the abode of Kapha, loose joints

TABLE 13.4 Types of Urges that are not to be Suppressed

Urge	Diseases
Vāta	Retention of faeces, urine and flatus, distension of abdomen, pain, piles and many other abdominal diseases
Puriṣa (Faeces)	Colic pain, headache, retention of faeces and flatus, cramps in calf muscles and distension of stomach
Mūtra (Urine)	Pain in bladder and genital organ, painful urine, headache, bending of body, distension of lower abdomen
Kṣava (Sneeze)	Spasmodic contraction of the muscles of the neck, headache, facial paralysis, pain in one side of head and weakness of the organs
Tṛṣ (Thirst)	Dryness of throat and mouth, deafness, exhaustion, weakness and cardiac pain
Kṣudh (Hunger)	Abnormal thinness, weakness, change in bodily complexion, bodily discomfort, loss of appetite and giddiness
Nidrā (Sleep)	Yawning, malaise, drowsiness, headache and heaviness in the eyes and many other harmful health issues
Kāsa (Cough)	More cough, disorders related to breath, taste and heart, hiccup, etc.
Śramaśvāsa (Exhaustion)	Chronic enlargement of spleen, heart related problems, fainting, etc.
Jṛmbhā (Yawn)	Bending in body, muscular contractions, numbness, tremor and shaking of the body
Aśru (tears)	Inflammation of nose, eye diseases, heart diseases, inability to eat and giddiness
Vamana (Vomit)	Itching, allergic reaction, loss of appetite, and black pigmentation of face, disease called oedema, anemia, fever, nausea, and deep red inflammation of the skin
Retas (semen)	Pain in genital organ and testicles, general body weakness, cardiac pain and retention of urine are the problems
Hikkā (eructation)	Hiccough, difficulty in breathing, loss of appetite, involuntary shaking of body or limbs (tremor), obstacles in proper functioning of heart and lungs

any urge to speak extremely harshly, critically, falsely, or inappropriately. One should also suppress all the urges which involve causing bodily harm to another person, such as rape, robbery, or injury¹⁷.

IKS IN ACTION 13.2

Dinacaryā: Daily Regimen for Health and Wellness

Āyurveda guides an individual regarding the daily and seasonal routines. In dinacaryā which is the daily regimen for the individual, Āyurveda discusses activities that we can take up right from the time we wake up in the morning till we go to bed at night. Dinacaryā should be followed regularly for ensuring a healthy life. Some of the most important of them are listed below:

Getting up at Brahma-muhūrta

Each muhūrta is of 48 minutes. Brahma-muhūrta which means the muhūrta fit for Brahma is two muhūrtas before the sunrise. Assuming an average sunrise of 6.00 am, it points to 4.24 (or roughly 4.30) am in the morning. Brahma means any intellectual activity like studying, etc. It is considered auspicious as there is peace, purity, freshness, and happiness all around the environment.

Considering the Condition of the Body

Once the individual wakes up, he/she must observe the body and the breath. This helps in planning the day.

Uṣāhpāna (Drinking Water in the Morning)

One must drink eight handfuls of water before sunrise, even before brushing the teeth in a sitting posture. One who follows this will be able to keep the doshas balanced. This process also helps to flush out the toxins in the body.

Evacuation of the Bowels

The consumption of water induces natural urges. Proper cleansing of the bowels is very important for a joyful day. These urges happen naturally with autonomic reflex. So, one should not try to evacuate the bowel forcefully. Evacuation of the bowel forcefully leads to various diseases.

Brushing the Teeth

Āyurveda prescribes various stems of trees for this process. Those are Arka, Nyagrodha, Khadira, Karañja, Kakubha, Karavīra, Sarja, Vrīmeda, Apāmārga, Mālatī, etc. Ayurveda also advises using Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter) and Kaṣaya (astringent) tastes for brushing the teeth.

Jihvā Nirlekhana (Tongue Cleaning)

According to Āyurveda cleaning the tongue is a good habit. One can use the leaves of the mango tree or guava tree to clean the tongue. Some metals like copper and brass are also prescribed for this task. Regular cleaning of tongue removes bad taste from the mouth, eliminates the bad odour of the mouth,

reduces swelling of the tongue, relieves stiffness of the tongue, and enhances the sense of taste. Thus, it helps in maintaining oral hygiene and stimulating the taste buds.

Applying Sauvīrāñjana to Eyes

The eyes are one of the important human organs. It should be well taken care of. Āyurveda suggests that an individual must apply Sauvīrāñjana (collyrium made from antimony) to the eyes. It balances the oil, water, and mucus required for good eyesight.

Applying Oil to the Body Daily

One must conduct body massage regularly as it is beneficial in delaying aging, relieving fatigue, and mitigating Vāta. Āyurveda suggests that one must atleast apply oil on the head, ears, and foot.

Performing Exercises

Exercise should be a daily activity to keep the body light and in good shape. It also increases the power of digestion. The person suffering from indigestion or any Vāta related problems must not perform exercise. Yoga suggests that one cycle of Sūrya Namaskāra gives exercise to all the limbs of the body. Some breathing exercises provide additional benefits to both physical and psychological health.

Taking Bath Daily

Taking bath daily makes the body clean and it increases appetite, improves sexual vigor, and enhances the lifespan. It also protects one from bad dreams, cures diseases, and gives peace of mind.

Other activities to be followed as a daily regimen include the following:

- ◆ **Udvartana:** Massaging the body with fine powders of various herbs of astringent taste.
- ◆ **Karṇapūraṇa:** Filling ears with medicated oil.
- ◆ **Dhūmapāna:** Medicated smoking. The powder for this consists of basil leaves, turmeric, etc. It is free from tobacco and nicotine and is good for various Kapha-related problems.
- ◆ **Gandhamālya-niveśana:** Wearing an aromatic garland.
- ◆ **Pādatrāṇadhāraṇa:** Wearing footwear.
- ◆ **Chatradhāraṇa:** Using an umbrella.
- ◆ **Tāmbūla sevana:** Chewing betel leaves.
- ◆ Avoiding sinful acts, etc.

Some of the above-explained Dinacaryās are to be followed only on specific seasons to balance the tri-doshas.

13.3 DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Caraka-saṃhitā outlines four components of a disease management scheme: (1) the physician, (2) the drug, (3) the patient, and (4) the attendant¹⁸. A physician must have proper training, knowledge, and experience. A remedy must be abundantly available, effective, and relatively safe. A patient must provide all information to the physician about the disorder and be compliant and an attendant must have the knowledge of patient care and cleanliness. The treatment framework in Āyurveda consists of three basic steps: Symptoms (Linga), Cause (Hetu), and Remedy (Auṣadha). The process of curing a disease invariably begins with the recognition of symptoms. Symptoms merely provide the starting point for understanding the cause. Āyurveda differentiates itself from the modern schools of medicine in the manner in which the symptoms are further pursued to identify the root causes.

13.3.1 Diagnostic Techniques

Āyurveda lays great emphasis on an early and correct diagnosis. In the course of development of the art and science of medicine in ancient India a number of medical techniques were evolved which reflect on the technical skill in this field. These medical techniques can be categorised into three groups: Diagnostic Techniques, Prognostic Techniques and Therapeutic Techniques. In *Caraka-saṃhitā*, different diagnostic techniques have been discussed in Chapter 8 of *Vimāna-sthāna*. Broadly, diagnosing the ailment is done using an examination of the patient and an examination of the disease. In each of these, several aspects are studied, as listed in Figure 13.3.

Examination of the Patient	Examination of the Disease
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Prakṛti (Constitution) ◆ Viṁśti (Morbidity) ◆ Sāra (Tissue elements) ◆ Saṁphanana (Organs) ◆ Pramāṇa (Body measurements) ◆ Sātmya (Homologation) ◆ Sattva (Psychic condition) ◆ Āhāra-śakti (Food intake) ◆ Vyāyāma-śakti (Physical fitness) ◆ Vayas (Age) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Darśana-parīkṣā ◆ Sparśana-parīkṣā ◆ Praśna-parīkṣā ◆ Nāḍī-parīkṣā ◆ Mūtra-parīkṣā ◆ Mala-parīkṣā

FIGURE 13.3 Diagnostic Technique Prescribed in Āyurveda Texts

Examination of the patient was given greater emphasis and it essentially involved a study of the personality, strength and vitality of the patient using ten parameters shown in the figure. Since Āyurvedic concepts rest on the concept of Tri-doṣas, doṣa-prakṛti is an important component of the prakṛti analysis. It analyses seven possible constitutions under various combinations of Tri-doṣas. This presents an overall picture of the physical, physiological and psychological state of the patient. In order to make body measurements, the finger breadth (known as aṅguli pramāṇa) is taken as the unit of measurement. The normal measurements of all body parts in terms of aṅguli pramāṇa is described in *Caraka* and *Suśruta saṃhitās*.

Various methods to examine the disease have been specified in Āyurveda as listed in Figure 13.3. These are described in some detail below:

- ◆ **Darśana-parīkṣā:** This is a visual technique of inspection of the patient, the affected parts etc. The colour, lustre, external appearance, size, shape, etc. are assessed.
- ◆ **Sparśana-parīkṣā:** By a physical examination of the patient (palpation) the physician can get knowledge of qualities such as heat, pulsations, etc.
- ◆ **Praśna-parīkṣā:** Engaging the patient (and the well-wishers and accompanying people if the patient is unconscious) is a technique to elicit some information which will be helpful in the diagnosis and prognosis of a disease.
- ◆ **Nādi-parīkṣā:** This is a common practice adopted by an Āyurvedic practitioner although there is no description of this in the earlier texts. It ought to have been introduced during the medieval period. By observing the pulse, the health of the individual is assessed.
- ◆ **Mūtra-parīkṣā:** In addition to the usual urine examination, Āyurveda also prescribes an oil drop test (Taila-biṇḍu-parīkṣā) in which a drop of oil is left on the surface of the urine and observed. The movement of the oil drop in different directions and its rate of spread and change in colour are used to assess a number of chemical and physical properties.
- ◆ **Mala-parīkṣā:** Examination of faeces is a technique for diagnosis of a disease. In Āyurveda, an analysis of the movement of the faecal matter when dropped in water is made to assess the digestive and metabolic conditions of the patient.

13.3.2 Sleep and Food – Impact on Health

Dietary and lifestyle interventions are integral to disease management in Āyurveda. The dietary prescriptions vary according to the overall body constitution on account of the Tri-dosas and the nature of the disturbed dosas. We have already seen how the choice of certain foods vitiate the dosas and therefore need to be avoided. On the other hand, a healthy lifestyle is very important to maximise the effect of treatment. Towards this end, Āyurveda recommends certain practices related to food intake and sleep. There are also daily, and seasonal routines prescribed to lead a healthy life (see IKS in Action 13.2 box for details on the daily routine prescribed in Āyurveda).

Caraka explains that strength, complexion, and growth of the physical body rests on three important pillars: Food, sleep, and celibacy/control over sense organs¹⁹. A person goes to sleep when the mind is weary, and the tired senses withdraw themselves from their objects. According to Suśruta, the heart which is the place of the Cetanā (consciousness) when it gets covered by tamas one gets sleep²⁰. According to Vāgbhāta, excess of tamas leads to sleep during the night. Also, when the various channels of the body get enveloped by the kapha and the senses are tired and withdraw themselves from the objects a person gets to sleep²¹. Although we seem to take sleep for granted, sleep is considered an important element in our overall health condition. Sleep is the cause of joy and sorrow, fatness and thinness, energy and weakness, sexual energy and loss of potency, and knowledge and ignorance. When sleep is positive it gives positive results and vice versa.

Six Different Types of Sleep

In the Ayurveda texts, six different types or causes of sleep have been mentioned:

1. **Tamo-bhavā:** When Tamas covers the mind the person tends to fall asleep. This is the reason for a person to feel sleepy after a heavy food. Scholars consider this type of sleep as the root of all inauspiciousness or sins.
2. **Śleṣma-samudbhavā:** Caused by the influence of kapha in the body, the reason why children sleep more compared to elders.
3. **Manah-śarīra-śrama-samudbhavā:** The sleep caused by the exhaustion of the mind and body.
4. **Āgantukī:** Caused by some smell, medicine, massages or smearing of some ointments or oils.
5. **Vyādhy-anuvartini:** Caused due to some specific diseases like fever caused by Kapha.
6. **Rātri-svabhāva-prabhavā:** The sleep which is natural at night. This is the best of all the mentioned sleeps. It is named as Bhūta-dhātrī which means the supporter of beings. It takes care of a living being like a mother takes care of her child.

The best form of sleep is the one that we get at night. One must sleep according to his nature. It may differ from person to person. Staying awake during the night brings roughness and daytime sleep produces greasiness. Therefore, the best time to sleep is at night. If one feels sleepy at other times, it is prescribed to sleep in a sitting position. Tri-doṣas do not get exaggerated if a person sleeps in a sitting position. For a healthy person, daytime sleep is prescribed during the summer season because the nights in this season are shorter and Vāta gets perturbed which causes roughness. Other than the summer season the day sleep perturbs the Kapha and Pitta²². Although untimely sleep is not prescribed there are some specific conditions where daytime sleep is prescribed for a certain category of people. This includes those whose strength is impaired from a lifestyle including singing, studying, drinking alcohol, journeys, walking a long distance, night vigil, carrying heavy loads, old, women, children, patients undergoing therapy, etc.²³.

Sleep problems can be classified into two – insomnia and unwanted/excessive sleep. In this modern world because of various reasons people face the problem of insomnia. Insomnia may lead to other types of diseases such as body pain, heaviness in the head, yawning, laziness, exhaustion, giddiness, indigestion, a state of unconsciousness, and diseases related to vāta²⁴. Ayurveda suggests that oil massage, application of medicated powder, taking bath, eating Shali rice with curd, enjoying agreeable aromas and sounds, gentle massaging of the body, pleasing the eyes, application of the cooling ointment, using a clean and smooth bed, and sleeping at an appropriate time will solve the issue of insomnia²⁵. Unwanted sleep means sleep at an improper time. Both unwanted and excessive sleep is caused because of perturbed Kapha and Pitta in the individual. Solutions suggested for this are – evacuation therapy, medicated smoking, physical activity, bloodletting, fasting, and subduing the tamas²⁶.

Food Intake Methods

As diet is critical for the sustenance of life it is one of the pillars of life. An individual must be very cautious about the intake of the food and also of the quantity of food²⁷. Most diseases are caused due to wrong and excess intake of food²⁸. According to Caraka, the quantity which gets digested easily in time without perturbing the doṣas, dhātus and agni, is appropriate²⁹. Consumption of food itself is a great

- ◆ Strength, complexion, and growth of the physical body rests on three important sub-pillars: Food, sleep, and control over sense organs.
- ◆ Both unwanted and excessive sleep is caused because of perturbed Kapha and Pitta in the individual.



science and needs a careful process. Food is of two types – Guru and Laghu. In simple terms, 'guru' is hard to digest and 'laghu' is easy to digest. Guru causes fatigue, increases the quantity of bodily waste, is strengthening, satiating and growth-promoting and laghu is the opposite and it reduces weight as well as heals the wounds. Food, both heavy as well as light, acquires medicinal value only if taken in the right quantity³⁰. Hence, one should always consume in an appropriate quantity as this induces proper action of the digestive fire. Each meal must have a gap of at least three hours and at a maximum of six hours. If the food is consumed within three hours, digestive juices are disturbed. On the other hand, if the food is eaten beyond six hours it leads to a loss of strength. The food to be consumed must not be the one which was cooked before three hours. Such food does not get digested soon and is called tāmasa food as it increases tāmasic tendency in an individual³¹.

Role of Water

In Indian culture, water is always considered as nectar or medicine³². An individual drinks water to relieve the thirst, to stay healthy and to survive. Consumption of water has many benefits such as, increased energy and relieved fatigue. It promotes weight loss, flushes out toxins, improves skin complexion, maintains regularity, and boosts the immune system. It acts as a natural remedy for headache, prevents cramps and sprains, refreshes the mind, and helps maximize physical performance. Finally, it also relieves constipation and prevents formation of kidney stones. When water is consumed inadequately it causes fatigue, deafness, pain in the heart, dry eyes, dryness in mouth and skin, and weakness.

In modern parlance, we are advised to take two to three litres of water daily to stay healthy. From the basic principles of Āyurveda, we can infer that the quantity of water that one must take daily will depend on the constitution (prakṛti) of a being. It is quite possible that a person can lead a healthy life even after drinking one litre of water and another one may be unhealthy even after drinking three litres. The type of water and the quantity is dependent on one's own prakṛti and the prakṛti of water. According to Āyurvedic texts, there are two types of water; Āntarikṣa and Bhauma. Ānatarikṣa is the type of water which falls directly from the sky. Bhauma is the ground water. The properties of ground water depend upon the type of soil and also on the seasons.

After understanding one's own nature an individual must decide what type of water he/she must drink. However, there are some general instructions given in Āyurveda that can help an individual to keep himself/herself healthy at his/her place of dwelling. One must drink water which is slightly astringent and sweet, subtle, clear, light, neither unctuous nor deliquescent³³. Water is usually cold. Coldwater relieves intoxication, fatigue, fainting, vomiting, weakness, giddiness, thirst, heat, burning, rakta-pitta, and poison³⁴. But when the cold water is heated up it increases the power of digestion, metabolises undigested food, good for throat diseases, easy to digest, purifies the urinary bladder, indicated in hiccup, cures abdominal distension, vāta and kapha disorders, acute fever and cough³⁵.

13.3.3 Drugs and Physical Therapy

The drug treatment in Āyurveda primarily consists of herbal formulas, bhasmas, and medicated oils and ghee. A formula made up of several herbs is used rather than a single herb. They are always given with other foods or herbal items, such as honey, ghee, ginger, etc., which help mitigate toxicity and increase absorption of certain ingredients, thus obtaining the desired

therapeutic effect. Rasāyanas are equivalent to modern dietary supplements and Āyurvedic physicians determine the appropriate rasāyana required depending on the health needs. Rasāyana refers to compound preparations containing multiple herbs and minerals that improve transportation of nutritional materials to body tissues. Rasāyanas may act in a variety of ways by improving the nutritional value of the food, digestion and absorption of nutrients, transportation of nutrients to tissues, bioavailability of nutrients, metabolism of nutrients in tissues, immunity, and by cleaning the microcirculatory channels or pores (srotas) which improve uptake of micronutrients.

The oxidised form of metal and mineral preparations, called bhasma, is used in Āyurvedic medicine. Bhasmas are metal or mineral powder formulations prepared using instructions and specific procedures provided in Āyurvedic texts. The preparation of these involves several herbs and herbal extracts and subjected to heat treatment and extraction. These procedures detoxify toxic metals like mercury. There are several metal bhasmas described in rasa-śāstra texts such as Rasa-ratna-samuccaya. The common metals and minerals used in making bhasmas for therapeutic use are gold, silver, copper, mercury, iron, and zinc. In Section 10.3.3 we have seen the procedure for extraction of copper for Āyurvedic purposes.

In the 1970s, the government of India appointed a panel of Āyurvedic experts to evaluate the formulas in Ayurvedic texts. The work culminated in compiling a "Ayurvedic Formulary of India"³⁶, which has over 560 evaluated formulas, 22 bhasmas and 55 rasas.

The management of an illness often starts with cleansing and includes five procedures called pañcakarma, a sub-set of which may be prescribed depending on the condition of the patient. Pañcakarma is designed with the assumption that the major cause of body ailments is the toxic products produced by body metabolism, microorganisms, and other chemicals. If the body organs are not eliminating toxic products from the body, toxic symptoms will develop over a period. Therefore, elimination of toxic products can contribute to overall management of an ailment and its cure. Usually, pañcakarma is a three-step process. In the first step preparatory procedures are done for the body by applying oils and fats, sweating, and suggesting herbs that improve digestion and metabolism. In the second step, purification procedures involving emesis, purgation, enema and bloodletting are undertaken for detoxication. The last step is the post-procedure consisting mainly of recuperative measures in the form of diet and lifestyle change prescriptions.

The points where muscle, cartilage, nerves, and bones join each other are vital and it is believed that the life energies are concentrated at these points. There are 22 vital points on the upper extremities, 22 on the lower extremities, 12 in the abdominal areas, 14 in the back, and 37 in the neck and head. In Āyurveda massage of these points is prescribed to treat diseases and strengthen the body. During massage specially formulated medicinal oils are used. Specific medicated oils and types of strokes are chosen based on the disturbed dosas, body constitution, injury, and disease condition.

13.4 YOGA WAY OF LIFE – RELEVANCE TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Among the many challenges in modern society, work-life balance is one important issue. A growing number of dissatisfied employees complain that they feel deprived of meaning in their workplaces. This introduces considerable stress, physical as well as psychological on working individuals. Workers worldwide face increasing demands to work extended hours and consequently experience considerable work overload. On account of these, in modern



corporations, institutions working not-for-profit, and government organisations, there is a concern about the issue of burnout that employees experience at their workplace. Burnout can be defined as the end result of stress experienced but not properly coped with, resulting in symptoms of exhaustion, irritation, ineffectiveness, discounting of self and others, and problems of health (hypertension, ulcers, and heart problems). This has serious consequences including reduced productivity at the workplace, bad health, and mental stress for the employee. If not addressed effectively, this can threaten to manifest as a social problem at a later time. The stress initially experienced at the workplace slowly spills into personal and social life, threatening the health of an individual and his/her family members. The costs of stress are huge and not just financial; there are mental, physical, and social costs as well.

It is well understood today that a psychologically stressed individual suffers from ill-health (both mental health and physical health). If we go to a medical practitioner today for treatment for stress-induced chronic medical conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, in addition to prescribing certain medicines, some advice is also given to make certain changes in the 'lifestyle'. The salient aspects of the changes in lifestyle required to lead a healthy life are found in the yoga way of life. There is a repository of knowledge and accumulated experience in India on the role of yoga as a way of life in enabling individuals to lead a healthy life. Yoga is gaining greater international attention of late. As a holistic science concerned with all aspects of human functioning, the principles and practice of Yoga provide a comprehensive framework by which the psychological and physical aspects of stress can be understood and eliminated.

As we have seen already in Chapter 3, Yoga is one of the six philosophical systems. Patañjali proposed yoga as a mechanism to progressively work on the mental fluctuations to eventually still the mind. Yoga-sūtras outline a method to conduct a life that fosters moderation and promotes harmony. The uniqueness of Yoga way of life lies in its integrated approach to address both the physical and psychological aspects of one's life. According to Yoga, we are unconscious of mental, and emotional processes that habitually create stress. Yoga involves a systematic method by which we can begin to expand our awareness of these processes and eventually gain control over them. In any stress disorder, the para-sympathetic auto-nervous mechanisms fail to function adequately to minimise the impact of stressful stimuli. Among several relaxation practices, Yoga has the potentiality to influence the auto-nervous mechanisms in various ways. This restores the functioning of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems thereby preventing the build-up of stress. In a very practical sense, Yoga gives us the tools and techniques by which we can expand our conscious awareness into the unconscious parts of the mind in order to become aware of the patterns and habits which lead to stress.

The Yoga way of life addresses three aspects concerning one's life. One is a set of physical exercises that help an individual stay physically fit, nimble, and flexible. Another set of practices known as meditation that addresses the issue of calming the mind and providing a stable psychological state. The third set of ideas help reorient one's goals and worldviews so that there is a degree of realism that governs one's living. On account of these practices, an individual experiences stable and balanced physical and psychological states, thereby enabling the individual to reach the health and wellness goals. Figure 13.4 pictorially depicts this idea. Rāja yoga is the path of control of the mind through the practice of Aṣṭāṅga yoga or the eight-fold path given by the sage Patañjali in his Yoga-sūtras. We discussed these eight steps in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.3.2). The eight steps develop and enhance cognitive learning and moral conduct through sustained and continuous physiological and psychological practices.

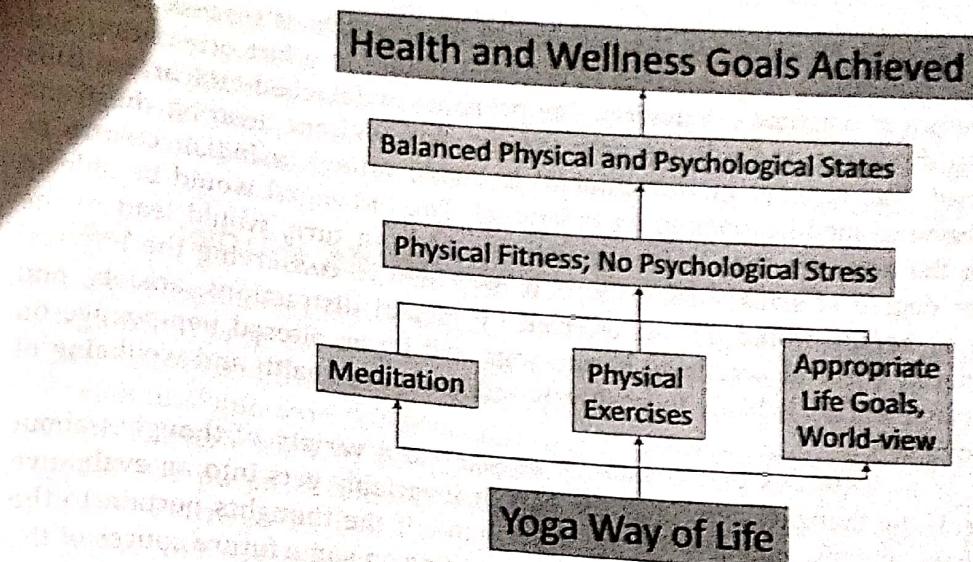


FIGURE 13.4 Yoga Way of Life and Health

Yama and Niyama involve moderating external behavior and thought patterns through mental and physical practices. On the behavioural side, abstention is sought from violence, falsehood, dishonesty, sexual excess, and acquisitive tendencies. On the other hand, the ideals prescribed are purity, contentment, austerity, self-study, and forbearance. Prolonged and diligent practice of this helps the individual remove negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, greed, attachment, ego, and an excessive desire for objects. These are very important in adopting the yoga way of life. Through such a process, the individual attains a state of 'cittasuddhi' or purity of mind, which is essentially the beginning of the yoga way of life. The stages of 'Āsana and Prāṇāyāma' are meant for disciplining the body and regulating subtle energy flows. Mastery of this and the regularity of these exercises provide a healthy and responsive physical infrastructure to an individual and make the mind subtler, alert, and more observant than before. In the fifth stage of Pratyāhāra, secondary input is regulated so that the mind is not distracted. By acting on the external stimuli using these five stages, it paves the way for control of one's mind.

Yoga works on the subtle aspects of one's mind in the next three stages and thereby makes one more self-aware, and self-regulated. In this manner, 'Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi' are mainly intended for uplifting one's spiritual self and for heightening consciousness. Practices such as āsanas (postures), prāṇāyāma (breathing control exercises), and kriyās (cleansing regimens) are taught as physical practices. On the other hand, several mediation practices are taught as part of the training for the yoga way of living. While various meditation techniques work at the mental level, all these practices are intended to develop a certain type of awareness within oneself. This in turn is expected to bring about a change in the emotional state of an individual. Furthermore, it will also induce a change in the intellectual and somatic functions of an individual.

Karma-yoga is an approach to life situations and activities by focusing on the action on hand without fixation of the mind on outcomes. In such an approach an effort should be made

- ◆ Yoga offers a well-formulated approach to lead a life characterized by health and wellness objectives.
- ◆ Yoga works on the subtle aspects of one's mind and thereby makes one more self-aware, and self-regulated.

to maintain emotional stability regardless of the outcome of the effort, be it success or failure. This can be called *detached attachment*, wherein attachment points to effort orientation and detachment to the absence of outcome orientation. The principle of detached attachment calls upon the individual to discharge one's duties with utmost skill without desiring the fruits of actions so performed. The concept of 'detachment' is highly valued in Indian culture as it induces several behavioral modifications in an individual. The individual would be able to concentrate better on the activities that he/she performs which, in turn, would lead to the attainment of a higher degree of skills. Furthermore, it may help in conserving the physical and psychic energies as he/she would be less affected by mental distractions, anxiety, and fear of failure. The overall effect of practicing karma-yoga will be an altered perspective on life goals and the worldview. This is likely to positively influence the health and wellbeing of an individual in the long run.

The human mind is a chatterbox that constantly engages in a variety of thoughts about the past or the future. If the thoughts pertain to the past, it invariably gets into an evaluative mode of events that have already unfolded. On the other hand, if the thoughts pertain to the future, it is one of speculation, dreaming, and expectation building on some future course of the event waiting to unfold. Very rarely the mind is able to fix itself to the present. In Bhagavadgītā, Arjuna observed that the mind is fleeting, firm, and strong, and it takes one's attention away at its will making it difficult to control. Patañjali begins the treatise on Yoga with the first sūtra that the very purpose of yoga is to stop the lamentations and block the mounting waves of thoughts emanating out of one's mind. In the set of prescribed methods in yoga, the need for quietening the mind is an important component. This is achieved through some meditative techniques and prāṇāyāma practices. Distractions caused by the fluctuation of the mind were thought to be linked to the fluctuation of the breath. Therefore, meditative techniques often involved regulation of the breath through prāṇāyāma. Moreover, since the mind was thought to be strongly influenced by the body, contemplative practices involved specific postures.

Meditation is a state which enables one to focus on the present moment, leading to a state of thoughtless awareness. While the very purpose of these prescriptions is to help one evolve

spiritually and realise one's true nature, these practices also have a useful dimension of health and wellness. Usually, the meditator focuses upon a thought, a vision, or a sound or other sensory experience. There are many types of meditation, but they all have been shown to have a similar effect. Transcendental meditation, essentially a simplified form of yoga, is the skill of effortlessly minimising mental activity so that the body settles into a state of rest deeper than deep sleep while the mind becomes clear and alert.

On account of the relaxation obtained through meditation, it has been found to help meditators in the reduction of anger and anxiety.

Several studies point to the beneficial effects of yoga way of life and its relationship to the wellbeing of an individual³⁷. In a study done at Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhan Samsthan (SVYASA), Bengaluru, it was found that Yoga training can help people to reduce their heart rate, which has possible therapeutic applications. Another study found Cyclic Meditation Technique, developed by SVYASA, to be more effective in achieving voluntary heart rate variability. A review of studies conducted on Transcendental Meditation (TM) in 200 Universities from 33 countries revealed that TM helps expand consciousness, decrease oxygen intake and stress

- ◆ Quietening the mind is achieved through meditative techniques and prāṇāyāma practices.
- ◆ Meditation is a state which enables one to focus on the present moment, leading to a state of thoughtless awareness.

level, increase basal skin resistance and coherence in EEG, and virtually suspends breathing up to one minute. The yogic lifestyle also resulted in a significant reduction in systolic and diastolic BP, body weight, serum cholesterol, and triglyceride levels. Other studies pointed out that long-term practitioners of Yoga had acquired a remarkable voluntary control over their autonomic processes, which helped them in coping with psychological stress.

13.5 INDIAN APPROACH TO PSYCHOLOGY

Human psychology is a subject matter of great interest in today's society. While we have made significant progress in Science and Technology (S & T) in the last 100 years, compared to the previous two millennia, we cannot say that there has been a commensurate improvement in our 'happiness' quotient. In fact, it seems to have either remained unaffected by the S & T progress or has deteriorated. At the core of human psychology is the basic question of individuals' life goals and purpose, sense of satisfaction, means of achieving them, and challenges one faces in this journey. Therefore, Psychology is a study of the mind and its behavior. Currently, we employ the dominant paradigms from the Western approaches to Psychology, which are of recent origin. It is increasingly felt that the 'positive psychology' paradigm of the West has taken a superficial account of feelings and the behavioral dynamics of an individual. Therefore, issues such as social and family violence, mental health problems, and moral decay faced by society have not been adequately addressed. Moreover, mechanically applying the constructs of Western Psychology in the non-western world has contributed more to the problem.

The Indian approach to psychology has long years of introspection, testing, contemplation, and experiential learning. It draws its frameworks, concepts, tools, and techniques from a rich repository of diverse knowledge traditions starting from the Upaniṣads. The Vedic corpus and the philosophical systems (Darśanas) have carried forward a tradition of discussion on matters of importance to psychology, which serves as the source. Indian psychological tradition is markedly different from the Western approach. In the contemporary discussion in the west, the body is considered as the primary factor that dictates the issue of health and wellness including psychological illness. A more liberal and somewhat less prevalent model of health in the West seeks to include the mind into consideration. In contrast, in the Indian approach, the 'body – mind – consciousness' plays an integrated role in matters of health and wellness. In fact, the role of mind and consciousness is considered very significant when it comes to issues such as wellness, and healing. The goal of health in the Indian tradition is not to find means to merely prolong the longevity and physical aspects of health. On the other hand, it is to promote happiness and a sense of satisfaction and fullness for an individual. The goal of longevity plays a sub-ordinate, but a useful role to this primary goal.

Distinctive Aspects of Indian Psychology

Indian Psychology (IP) has certain distinctive elements vis-à-vis the Western counterpart. First of all, the Indian approach to psychology has a much wider canvas to address. Rather than confining itself to merely materialistic and deterministic aspects of human existence, IP considers spiritual dimensions and self-evolution goals. While this has made the problem more complex, it has nevertheless provided a more inclusive agenda for psychological studies.

- ◆ The Indian approach to psychology has long years of introspection, testing, contemplation, and experiential learning.
- ◆ Indian Psychology is non-religious in its character, simply because the issue addressed is one of human existence, happiness, and contentment.

As already mentioned, IP is firmly rooted in the Indian scriptures and philosophical texts. Despite this it is non-religious in its character, simply because the issue addressed is one of human existence, happiness, and contentment. How an individual should liberate himself/herself from bondage, ignorance, and stress does not have to depend on any religious tradition, nationality, or sex. These are perennial issues of human existence that transcend geographical boundaries and time. Therefore, prescriptions of IP have a wider and international appeal. A case in point is the global acceptance of yoga and meditation, which are considered vital tools for addressing psychological issues in the tradition of IP. Since the issues addressed in IP are one of handling human suffering and alleviation of them leading to final evolution, they do not pose any threat to others. Moreover, there is a multiplicity of views in several matters of psychology and the methods to address them. The six darśanas and Buddha and Jaina schools of philosophical thought offer alternative views on the matter. This provides a wide platter of offerings for every individual to pick and choose what suits the person.

Since the basic premise of IP is to help individuals spiritually grow and liberate themselves from several constraints and limitations of mundane life, the methods adopted are veridical in nature. IP recognises the existence and importance of the 'world within' for every individual as much as the 'world outside' for addressing psychological issues. A vastly developed understanding of the 'world within' is a significant contribution of IP. In IP there is room for both 'objective knowledge' obtained from the 'world outside' and 'subjective knowledge' assimilated through experience, intuition, and deep contemplation. Therefore, every individual has multiple states of existence, a multi-layered understanding of one's own consciousness, and unique methods and possibilities to develop self-awareness. Methods for self-observation and experimentation have been developed to aid this process. Several yogic and meditation practices is one such example belonging to this category.

Basic Tenets of IP

Let us summarize the key features and basic tenets of IP in the light of these discussions.

Construct of a Human Being: According to Vedānta, human beings could be viewed as a composite of three basic ingredients; sat (existence), cit (consciousness), and ānanda (bliss). 'Sat' represents the physical or material infrastructure (substance) of an individual. On the other hand, every person is embodied consciousness (cit), which is the substratum and context to the life experiences. Furthermore, every individual in its purest form is nothing but an expression of bliss. IP derives various frameworks and constructs to articulate each element of this from the repository of ancient Indian knowledge. This representation of an individual is very different from the western conceptualisation and it significantly influences how IP addresses various issues of psychology.

Essential Goal: There is the oneness of humanity, articulated through the notion of ātman in IP. Therefore, the goal of IP is to help individuals come out of ignorance and ultimately experience the oneness and the divinity within. This strips an individual of all limitations and helps him/her realise the true nature and full potential. It requires transforming an individual from a state of conditioned and mechanical thinking to an unconditioned state of freedom.

Nature of Human Beings and Their Pursuit: The true self is the seeker of truth and repository of knowledge. IP begins with a basic premise that every individual is divine, infinite in terms of possibilities, and inherently an embodiment of peace, happiness, and fulfillment. Therefore, it is natural that the pursuit of happiness is the unwavering goal of every individual. However,

in an empirical world carrying out a mundane life the individual faces existential constraints that hamper the individual's pursuit of happiness and sense of contentment. Therefore, the goal of IP is to liberate the individual from these constraints and help rediscover one's true nature. This is markedly positivist and grand in its pitch compared to other possible objectives for developing the science of psychology.

Constraints in Life: Nobody wants to either long for unhappiness to descend on them or the happiness that they experience at certain times to fade away. Despite this, our experience of life informs us that the goal of happiness is fleeting. There are several existential constraints that we face, which are responsible for this apparent conflict. We suffer from an ignorance of our true nature and therefore mistake the ego to be the 'self'. This creates a basic fault line in our Body – Mind – Intellect complex and drives several choices that we make in life. Our attachment to impermanent things brings a mixed bag of emotions consisting of attachment, aversion, hate, and envy taking us through a roller coaster of happiness and sadness in life. On account of a distorted understanding and an uncontrolled mind, this results in an unhealthy, stressful, and a defeated life for many. Much of the work in IP addresses the reasons for this apparent conflict between what one's true nature is and what one ends up with in one's life. It provides mechanisms to resolve the conflict in a sustained and systematic manner.

Mechanisms to Address the Constraints: The underlying principle behind several mechanisms developed to address the constraints is to take the individual through a process of self-realisation. The mechanisms basically address the unsteady mind and help an individual exercise a certain control over it. These include methods for self-observation, recognising higher states of existence, and inquiry into different domains of consciousness. Specific techniques such as yoga, and meditation help in controlling several influences that affect the mind and cloud one's consciousness. The premise is that such a person will experience conflict-free and positive mental health, self-evolve, and passionately engage in societal transformation with a spirit of unselfish work for the common good.

13.6 THE TRI-GUNA SYSTEM

The Tri-guṇa system provides an overarching framework to understand the physical infrastructure of a human being that forms one of the three basic elements (sat – existence). At an operational level, the tri-guṇa system seeks to answer some of the commonly observed phenomena of human behavior. For example, we always wonder why some people are aggressive while some others are gentle and benign. Similarly, we find some individuals action-oriented, bubbling with energy, and taking leadership roles, while some others play a more intellectual role of calm thinking, guiding, and advising others. The tri-guṇa system provides us some basis to understand these differences and help us make certain behavioral modifications over time to gravitate towards an ideal guṇa composition. As per IP, every individual is a unique construct made of three ingredients, known as tri-guṇas. Tri-guṇa can be summarised in the following manner:

- ◆ The oneness of humanity is articulated through the notion of ātman.
- ◆ The goal of Indian Psychology is to liberate the individual from life constraints and help rediscover one's true nature.



- ◆ The tri-guṇa system seeks to answer some of the commonly observed phenomena of human behavior.
- ◆ In the Indian system, the tri-guṇa system is the basic building block of not only human beings but all conceivable forms of physical reality.

- ◆ It comprises Sattva-Rajas-Tamas (S-R-T) that serves as the basic ingredients to represent the physical reality
- ◆ It characterises something that exists in reality
- ◆ It is a mechanism for creating a world of multiplicity including rocks and rivers, plants and trees, and animals and human beings. In short, any manifested reality is supposed to be made of these three basic ingredients.

At the same time, IP also recognises that there is a great degree of commonality, known as divinity among individuals. The tri-guṇa system reconciles this apparent conflict and provides a framework to understand how this gets operationalised. If everything originates from a single source, then there must be a mechanism to 'manufacture' this infinite variety. This is not a new idea for us and there are many examples of this. Let us take a well-known recent example to understand this. Let us say we are preparing a presentation for a meeting using Powerpoint. In our PPT we may include a box with a bulleted list of items and may want to fill the box with a color. If we open a color pallet, it allows us to select any color already available. If we are not happy with the available choices, we can create our own color using a combination of R-G-B. By changing the RGB numbers we can create a very large number of unique shades of color. Figure 13.5 illustrates this for a sample set of colors.

Colour	R	G	B
Black	0	0	0
Dark Blue	25	50	75
Light Grey	208	216	232
Light Green	123	231	132
Dark Grey	100	100	100
Dark Orange	200	100	50
Red	230	81	70
Yellow	225	239	45
Purple	175	170	240
White	255	255	255

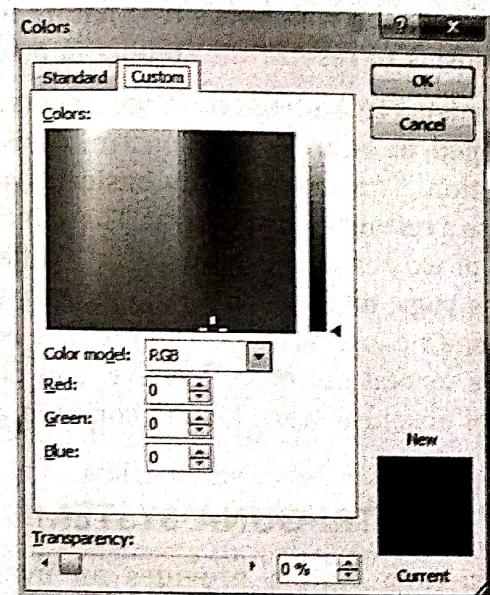


FIGURE 13.5 An Example of Generating Many Colours Using MS Office Colour Palette

This example indicates to us that three ingredients are enough to generate a world of colors using unique combinations of the three. The tri-guṇa system is the equivalent of the color palette. Using three basic ingredients known as Sattva (S), Rajas (R), and Tamas (T) the physical existence can be uniquely determined. While R-G-B can only vary between 0 and 255, the S-R-T has infinite possibilities to choose from. In the Indian system, the Tri-guṇa system is the basic building block of not only human beings but all conceivable forms of physical reality. In a nutshell, it is the R-G-B (or S-R-T) of everything in this universe.

The unique shade of every individual gives rise to the varied patterns setting the stage for psychological analysis of individuals. This basic feature is recognised and taken into consideration by other fields of study in India. For example, as we have already seen

in the chapter, Ayurveda recognises the unique nature of every individual. The Sāṃkhya philosophy has elaborately discussed the concept of tri-guṇa and its manifestations. Chapter 14 of Bhagavadgītā concisely introduces the Tri-guṇa system and the characteristics of each ingredient. Chapters 16–18 of Gītā captures the influence of the tri-guṇa on individuals and their behavioral patterns.

- ◆ **Sattva** is the source of knowledge and embodiment of happiness that every individual experiences. By its very nature, it binds by attachment to happiness and knowledge. What it essentially implies is that such times when an individual is triggered into deep thinking, contemplation, and focused efforts in search of meaningful knowledge, etc. then the sattvic aspect of the individual is manifesting dominantly.
- ◆ **Rajas** is known to be the nature of passion, the source of desire, and attachment. It binds fast by the attachment to action. The world of action, desire to achieve name, fame, wealth, and power emanate out of rajas. In other words, when an individual is triggered into action, motivating oneself and others to achieve some goals and targets, the rajasic component is dominantly manifesting in such a person. Expectedly, the behavioral patterns of anger, attachment, aversion, and envy primarily arise out of rajasic tendencies.
- ◆ **Tamas**, on the other hand, is born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings; it binds fast by heedlessness, indolence, and sleep. Tamas represents the gross matter and is the reason for us to rest, sleep, feel mentally dull and lazy. Tamasic tendencies heavily discourage a person from learning, making progress through experimentation, observation, contemplation, and self-reflection.

Table 13.5 summarises these aspects of the three guṇas.

TABLE 13.5 A Summary of the Three Guṇas

Guna	Binding Force	Attributes	Effects
Sattva	Attachment to happiness, knowledge	Stainless, illuminating, flawless	Longing for liberation, divine tendencies
Rajas	Attachment to actions	Source of passion, longing, attachment	Desire, anger, pride, jealousy, egoism, envy, etc. which are modifications of the mind
Tamas	Indolence, sleep, mis-comprehension	Stupefying through ignorance	Absence of right judgment, contrary impression, doubt, etc.

All three guṇas are important for a human being and they play a complementary role in one's life. The only issue of interest is the relative proportions with which the gunas call the shot while facing several events in one's life. For every individual, the proportion of the three gunas can keep swinging dynamically from time to time (making us happy at a time and restless at another time). However, in the long run, the gunas rest in a certain natural balance unique to every individual making the person sāttvika, rājasika, or tāmasika in nature depending on the relative proportion of the three ingredients in long-term equilibrium. From the descriptions of the three gunas, it follows that increasing the sattva component at the expense of the tamas and to some extent, the rajas is a progressive direction for an individual as it would greatly facilitate the process of self-evolution and growth. Viewed from a psychological perspective, changing the proportion of the three ingredients of tri-guṇa is possible, but is a slow and gradual process. It requires a sustained set of physical and mental practices to do so.

13.7 THE BODY-MIND-INTELLECT-CONSCIOUSNESS COMPLEX

We saw in Chapter 3 that according to the Saṃkhyā school of philosophy every human being is made up of 24 elements (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1 for details). Similarly, the Vaśeṣika defined nine categories of substances (see Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1 for details). Drawing from these, one can identify the physical and psychological components of an individual by defining the gross and subtle body. The gross body corresponds to the physical manifestation of an individual (in the form of the visible organs) which are made of the five bhūtas. The psychological part of an individual constitutes the subtle body. This consists of the five prāṇas, the organs of knowledge and action, and the internal instruments (intellect, memory, mind, and ego).

- ◆ Sattva is the source of knowledge and embodiment of happiness that every individual experiences.
- ◆ Rajas is known to be the nature of passion, the source of desire, and attachment.

It is normally misunderstood that the external organs such as eyes, ears, etc. are the organs of knowledge and action. In reality, they are mere inert parts of the gross body. The actual organs are internal and indeed subtle to these physical external manifestations. One can understand this from the fact that a blind person has a pair of eyes that look no different from that of a person of normal vision. Similar is the case with other organs as in the case of a dumb or a deaf person. Quite distinct from all these is the true self ('I') which is the consciousness. The person is nothing but embodied consciousness. Figure 13.6 depicts this pictorially.

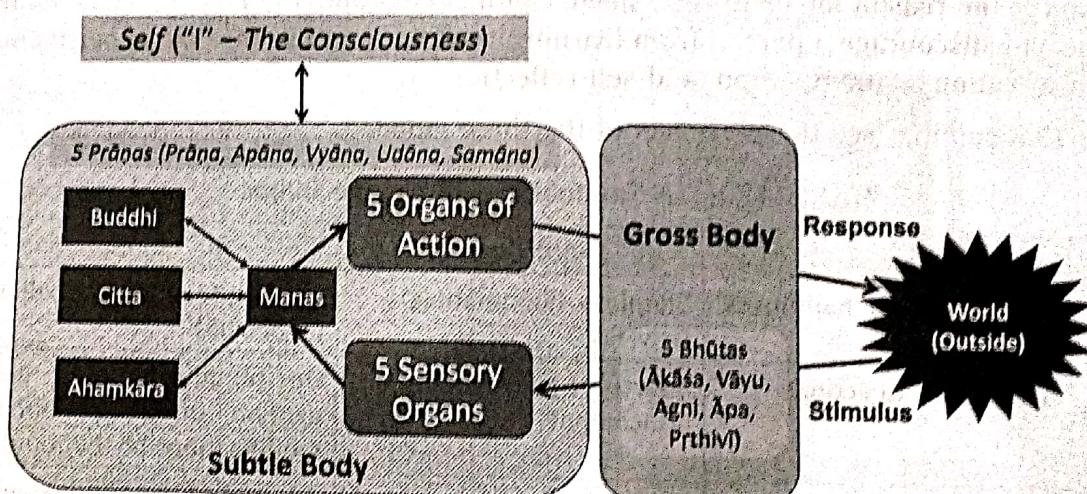


FIGURE 13.6 A Concise Representation of Body-Mind-Intellect-Consciousness

The figure illustrates the process of interaction with the external world by an individual. Stimulus from the external world is gathered primarily through the respective part of the gross body by the sensory organs. For example, the ear picks up the sound waves when somebody speaks to an individual and the pair of eyes read the body language of the person speaking. These signals are fed to the mind, which in some ways plays the crucial linkage between the gross body and the subtle body. The processing of the received signals is done with the help of other antaḥkaraṇas (buddhi, citta, and ahamkāra). While buddhi provides a subjective evaluation of the signal, the citta provides a vast repository of accumulated past experiences and memories for analysing the signal. The ahamkāra provides a sense of entitlement and agency to the issue on hand. On the basis of these, the signals are sent back to the mind for its final decision on the nature of instruction to be given to the organs of action. The organs

of action utilise the physical organs in the gross body and provide a response to the external world. In our example, the statements made by the person is analysed and an appropriate response is given back to the person.

While this appears to be a simple and straightforward process, in reality, complex psychological issues stem on account of the role played by the mind in conjunction with the other antahkaranas. It is also due to the interface between the antahkaranas (especially the mind) and the consciousness. The consciousness is the 'sāksi' and the reference frame for the entire world of transactions an individual goes through in his/her life. It is the 'true self' and the supplier of energy and vitality and therefore is the knower-doer-enjoyer in the process. However, for an untrained mind, the reflected consciousness on the antahkaranas seems to replace the original and the ahaṅkāra usurps its role. This is at the core of the psychological makeup of individuals and requires a deeper understanding.

- ◆ Complex psychological issues stem on account of the role played by the mind in conjunction with the other antahkaranas.

13.8 CONSCIOUSNESS – THE TRUE NATURE OF AN INDIVIDUAL

For time immemorial, one of the questions that we seek to find an answer for is, "Who am I, and what is my true nature?". The Indian scriptures unequivocally argue that we are nothing, but a bundle of consciousness caged in a physical frame called the body. As already discussed, consciousness is the ultimate essence of a person. In an empirical world, it embodies and expresses itself through the gross and the subtle body. Consciousness is corporeal and therefore one can infer its presence only on the basis of the effects of its existence. Reflected consciousness rather than the consciousness itself is in our domain of understanding and analysis using our antahkaranas. This is best understood using a contemporary analogy. Think of electrical gadgets such as a fan or a television. When there is electricity passing through the gadget, the gadget works and puts out useful work, in the absence of electricity the gadgets are inert and lifeless. Our gross body and the subtle body similarly get life and energy on account of the presence of consciousness. Just as software can be recognised only by seeing the effects of its working, consciousness also is inferred through its manifold manifestations.

Understanding the manifestations of consciousness is only possible by self-experimentation and deep contemplation of one's experiences. Given the corporeal nature of consciousness, it requires a graded and multi-faceted understanding. Upaniṣadic sages were seekers of this knowledge and were seized of this challenge and developed alternative frameworks to understand consciousness. Expectedly, IP draws from the rich repository of Upaniṣads and other scriptures to conceptualise these multi-fold manifestations of consciousness. We shall look at two such frameworks.

The Pañca-koṣa – A Five-layered Existence

Taittiriya-upaniṣad discusses the notion of an individual using a five-layered concept. It provides a step by step and a graded understanding of consciousness³⁸. Koṣa means an envelope or an enclosure. According to this framework, the consciousness is covered by five layers and it radiates through these five layers. This reflected consciousness is often mistaken to be the consciousness although it is a proxy for it. Figure 13.7 illustrates this in simple terms.

- ◆ Consciousness is the ultimate essence of a person. It embodies and expresses itself through the gross and the subtle body.
- ◆ Consciousness is covered by five layers and it radiates through these five layers.



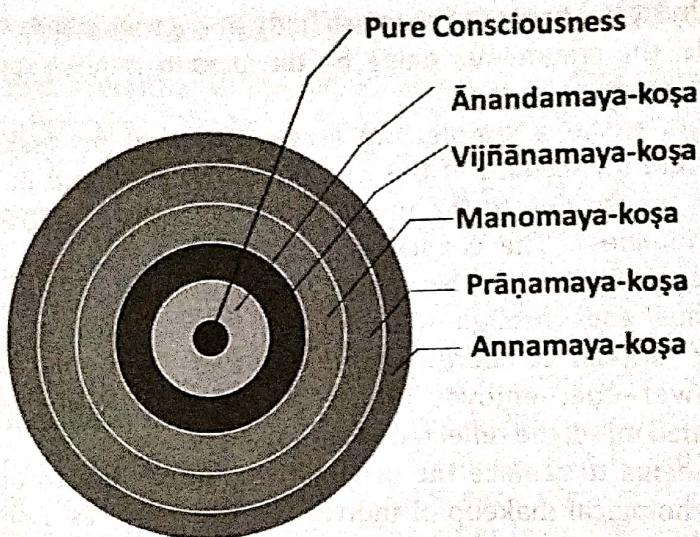


FIGURE 13.7 A Simplified Representation of the Pañca-koṣas

The outermost layer is the annamaya-koṣa, representing the grossest reality of an individual consisting of the physical body. Quite often we tend to mistake our physical body to be ourselves. If that were true, then a person who lost his lower limbs in an accident must have a proportionally reduced sense of 'I' ness, which is never the case. The next layer is known as prāṇamaya-koṣa or the vital energy layer. This is an expression of the life force that we all have, and we feel its manifestation in a physical sense. The third layer is the manomaya-koṣa, the mental layer. This layer is subtler than the other two layers and comprises the mind and its emotions. However subtle it may be, it is still possible to describe an individual in terms of his/her mental processes, feelings, and outcomes. The fourth inner layer subtler than the mental layer is the intellectual layer or the vijñānamaya-koṣa. This describes a person in terms of his/her intellectual makeup. The innermost and the subtlest layer is the layer of bliss. The closest we can get to the pure consciousness and the true identity of an individual is the layer of bliss that is ānandamaya-koṣa. See the box "the five-layered consciousness of an individual" (IKS in Action 13.3) for an illustration of this concept using a real-world example.

The choice of the word 'koṣa' succinctly communicates certain messages about the true identity of an individual. Since koṣa is a cover, it cannot be the original substance itself. It also has a temporary status as it can change with respect to time and place. Finally, if the cover is damaged or has become unfit for use, it can be discarded in preference to a newer, more suitable one³⁹. The other aspect to remember is that when an object is covered fully, it can be mistaken to be the object itself. These ideas map directly to the relationship between consciousness and the body (both subtle and gross).

The Four States of Existence

Another framework to describe the consciousness and its multi-faceted manifestations is discussed widely in the Upaniṣads and pertains to four states that a human being undergoes. For example, the Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad provides a description of the four states of an individual. These are waking state (Jāgrat-avasthā), dreaming state (Svapna-avasthā), deep sleep (Suṣupti-avasthā), and samādhi (Turiyā-avasthā). Western psychologists have not considered the fourth state and have a minimal and a different understanding of the third state. Moreover, analysis

of the dream state by the Indian philosophers has yielded a rich understanding of the nature of the association between the mind and the consciousness and the psychological fallout of this on human behavior.

In the normal waking state, the gross body in conjunction with the subtle body is fully engaged with the 'world outside' and it transacts with the outside world. The consciousness is felt by its indirect influence in the matters. The experiences gained are dual, constantly oscillating between pain and pleasure in all its attendant variations. On the other hand, once the consciousness slips to the next level of dreaming state, the gross body becomes inactive. The mind and the antahkaranas continue to actively engage with the world outside, albeit in an altered framework. The ego 'manufactures' a world within and plays out events and participates in the play both as an active player and as a curious observer. Several rules of the waking world are simply violated in the dream world and the events could be illogical. For example, while sleeping in a bed in a corner room on the outskirts of Bengaluru, the mind will enact an event in the dream in which the same person takes a boat ride to see the beauty of Niagara falls in close quarters. Illogical events and unrelated people will be connected through a chain of events unfolding in the dream. The 'self' if required can create 1000 such 'selves' and orchestrate a dream involving all of them, that we typically see in a movie. Whether the dream is real, or imaginary is not easy to answer. For example, it is a common experience that in the dream a dog may chase the dreaming person and after running for a long distance the person may sweat and gasp. Disturbed by this event, the dreaming person wakes up with sweat and gaps but there will be neither the dog nor the road on which the dreaming person was running. The dream experience provides a versatile laboratory to deeply analyse certain psychological aspects of human beings, which ancient Indians have extensively carried out.

When the consciousness enters the deep sleep state, even the subtle body is completely switched off. In some sense, there is a complete loss of continuity as the gross and subtle bodies are dull and dead. Deep sleep fully charges an individual, relieves him/her of all mental and physical tiredness, and makes the person fresh and energetic. This experience in deep sleep is universal since every living being (not just human beings) will have the same effect after a deep sleep. The consciousness, representing the 'true self' is *alone* in this state and the person will experience bliss without the help of the sense organs but may not be aware of it. On waking up from this state, the 'consciousness' reconnects seamlessly with the gross and the subtle body and transfers this peaceful experience as 'past knowledge'. This is the reason we get up and recount the blissful experience by saying, "I had a very good sleep", in the past tense⁴⁰. This peculiar state of losing continuity and regaining it also provides vital clues to understand the nature of true consciousness, which Indian sages and philosophers have analysed.

The fourth state of consciousness is 'turiyā', which is an enlightened form of consciousness. As per IP, this is the ultimate state that we all need to aspire for. In all other states, there is reflected consciousness but, in this state, an individual directly experiences the true consciousness. In this state of consciousness, the person is fully awake but is

- ◆ In the normal waking state, the gross body in conjunction with the subtle body is fully engaged with the 'world outside'.
- ◆ The dream experience provides a versatile laboratory to deeply analyse certain psychological aspects of human beings.

- ◆ The fourth state of consciousness is "turiyā", which is an enlightened form of consciousness.
- ◆ When the mind withdraws itself from all the sensory objects and empties its content, it will be in an illumined state.

in a state very different from the waking state, where the existence of the body, mind and the intellect are not cognised by the individual and the vibrations (a multitude of thought waves) of the mind cease. On account of this, there is a pure, thoughtless state, where the limitations of an individual are totally absent. In the Indian system, this state is variously described as 'samādhi' and 'nirvāna'. With a thought-free mind, one is supposed to realise one's true nature and immense potential. When the mind withdraws itself from all the sensory objects and empties its content, it will be in an illumined state. Yoga and meditation are tools to train and coax the mind into this. Therefore, prolonged and regular use of meditation practices helps an individual enter into this state and stay there for a while. Figure 13.8 summarises these discussions schematically.

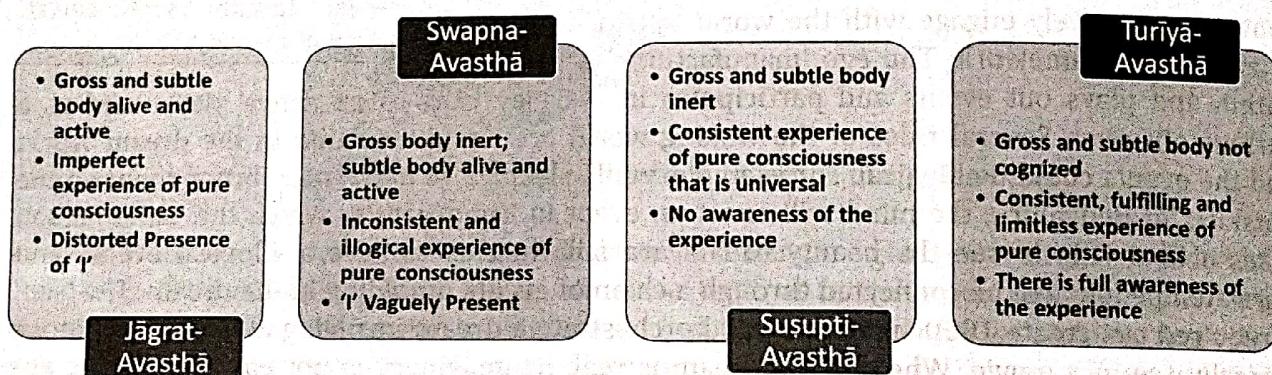


FIGURE 13.8 The Four States of 'Consciousness'

13.9 CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES – ISSUES

In IP, the body-mind-intellect (*antaḥkaraṇas*) is considered as the interfacing instrument, connecting the consciousness with the physical body. The reflected consciousness mediates through these internal organs and enables the mind to have knowledge and awareness. For an untrained mind, the consciousness is conspicuous by its absence and is assumed to be fully manifested through the mind. However, in reality, there are significant differences between the mind and the consciousness. Therefore, the manifest and unmanifest components of our existence interact in shaping our response to the unfolding events in our life. In the tradition of IP, the goal of every individual is to explore the inner states of a person finally experiencing the true consciousness. Since the study is about inner states, the method and means of attaining this ought to be different from the normal ones used to deal with the outside world. The methods of self-observation and experimentation required have certain distinctive features:

- ◆ There will be a shift in the focus from objects (*Viṣaya*) to the subject (*Viṣayin*). When there is a shift in the focus, the means of obtaining the knowledge will be only through experience. The existing means of knowledge and study will be of limited use. The valid means of knowledge (*Pramāṇa*) available for dealing with the outside world such as *Pratyakṣa* (Perception), *Anumāṇa* (inference), *Upamāṇa* (comparison and analogy) are less useful when it comes to studying the inner nature of an individual.

IKS IN ACTION 13.3

The Five Layered Consciousness of an Individual

Recognising the consciousness inside each one of us is a difficult task and even more difficult is to communicate this idea in a classroom setting. During a lecture on the subject, a video was shown to the students. After watching the video the students participated in a guided discussion, which brought out the essence of the subject.

The video is a self-narrated true story of a person, Mr. Tala Skeels Piggins, who is a professional motorbike racer. Earlier, he was a young and a handsome person undergoing his Navy service in Australia. After he left the navy, he came to the UK in search of a job. He was employed as a Physical Education teacher in a school. Barely after 6 months in the job, he was knocked off a motorcycle that he was riding by a speeding car. He fell on the other side of the road and was runover by a speeding car in the opposite direction, breaking T4 and T5 bones on his back. This left him paralysed chest down. He was told that he had a 30 percent chance of survival and would never walk again if he lived.

As a person who enjoyed and valued physical activity, this was a life changing event. His initial response was one of frustration and a desire to end his life as he saw no possibilities for his future. However, he underwent a dramatic transformation.

Describing what was responsible for this transformation in his own words, "... there is a mechanism within every person that can overcome any trauma that one faces. There is an incredible reserve of strength and resilience inside every person..."

Inspired by this thought, he chose to get back to riding a motorbike and to become a professional racer. After making several modifications to a racing motorbike by adopting newer technologies he entered into professional racing. He continues to strap himself to a motorbike and take on able bodied competitors at one of the most dangerous sports on the planet.

After showing the video, the students were asked to describe Mr. Piggins. The students shared several phrases to describe him. These are summarised in the table below.

The above example demonstrates how we can describe a person in five different ways. In each of these, there is a dominant manifestation of one aspect of the consciousness. The pañca-koṣa concept brings out this aspect of an individual.

Source: Adopted from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VKFIOMrey4>

Physical Layer (Annamaya Koṣa)	Vital Energy (Prāṇamaya Koṣa)	Mental Layer (Manomaya Koṣa)	Intellectual Layer (Vijñānamaya Koṣa)	Embodiment of Happiness (Ānandamaya Koṣa)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ He is a Man, bike racer ◆ 5 feet 7 inches well-built ◆ A person of fair complexion ◆ A person who is paralysed below his chest in an accident ◆ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A person with several months of hard work to go for bike racing ◆ A great fighter against all odds ◆ Energetic and action oriented ◆ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A person with positive attitude ◆ A person of grit and determination ◆ Burning desire to outgrow the limitations arising out of the accident ◆ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A great thinker ◆ Constantly thinking to accomplish goals ◆ Intelligent person ◆ Goal oriented task planner ◆ Strategist ◆ ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A person basking in satisfaction and fulfilment ◆ Happiness and joy of regaining life ◆ Bundle of ecstasy (of winning races) ◆ ...

In the IP tradition, *Sabda* (word, a testimony of past or present reliable experts) is considered as an important means of valid knowledge. Also, valid means of study for the inner world includes *śravaṇa* (deep listening—sensory understanding), *manana* (deep internalisation of the ideas—intellectual understanding), and *nididhyāsana* (deep intuition—experiential assimilation).

- ◆ In a study of the inner nature, the 'seer' and the 'seen' are not separate, they seamlessly merge into a single entity. The subject matter of study is not something else, but one's own nature. Also, the object of study is not material but a subtle noncorporeal entity.
- ◆ On account of this, there is a distinction made between '*parā-vidyā*' and '*aparā-vidyā*'. *Aparā-vidyā* constitutes the knowledge of the socio-physical world, known as the mundane and the empirical world that we live in. All science, technology, and management knowledge that we have developed belong to this category. On the other hand, *parā-vidyā* is about the issues pertaining to our 'inner world'. It will address issues that crop up in our 'inner world' of mental, psychological, and existential nature.
- ◆ The normal sensory organs are useful for dealing only with the outside world. They will be of very little or no use in dealing with the internal world. An easy way to understand this is in a large room where 100 people have gathered, if there is sudden power outage nobody needs a torch to know if he/she is in the room. It is a matter of consciousness. On the other hand, we need to use our sensory organs and some artificial source of light to find out if our friend is in the room.
- ◆ The study of the inner state will invariably lead to a study of the spiritual nature of an individual. In other words, it is a study of human beings in-depth. In such a study, the questions of what, why, and how become less important. In other words, if Newton's question had been "who made the apple fall?" instead of "why or how did the apple fall from the tree?", it would have led him into the deep nature of human beings and their relationship to other entities in the Universe.

While the mind is considered to be a subtle form of matter, consciousness is non-corporeal. This primarily drives the key differences between the study of the consciousness and the mind in the manner we saw above. On account of these, psychology studies typically involve methods of direct observation (intuition) relying on the blending of the first person (self or the student) and the second person (Guru). Moreover, Indian scriptures highlight the importance of continuous practice (*abhāṣa*) and cultivating a sense of mental dispassion towards the objects and entities in the outside world (*vairāgya*) to develop a high degree of mental concentration⁴¹. While at meditation, the mind is able to go beyond mere rational processing of the sensory inputs aided by the brain to accessing consciousness directly. Methods of yoga and mediation help an individual test, experiment, and internally validate the higher mental states. At the core, these have developed practical techniques and rigorous methods of inquiry into the domains of consciousness. In the process, they help an individual discover answers to several existential questions such as the relationship between an individual, the Universe, and the Lord and others pertaining to values, truth, and love.

SUMMARY

- ▶ A person who wants to lead a healthy life must show a keen desire to follow the ideas provided in Āyurveda. According to Caraka, Āyurveda must be studied and practiced by every individual in the society.
- ▶ Āyurveda borrows the philosophical aspects from two major schools of thought: Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya.
- ▶ The treatment framework in Āyurveda consists of three generic steps: Cause (hetu), Symptoms (līṅga), and Remedy (auṣadha).
- ▶ When the three doṣas, Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha are in an equilibrium state the body is said to be in a healthy condition. By contrast, when the doṣas are vitiated it causes disease.
- ▶ The doṣas have a specific relationship with the time of the day and the type of diet one takes. Moreover, Āyurvedic scholars have also identified the organs where these doṣas predominantly exist.
- ▶ Agni plays a vital role in the digestion process and it is also responsible for strength, health, longevity, and vital breath. Agni manifests through the Pitta in the body.
- ▶ The food that we consume first gets converted into plasma and in a gradual process, it gets converted into flesh and fat. From the fat to bones, bones to bone-marrow, bone-marrow to semen.
- ▶ To keep the internal organs including the mind and intellect in a balanced and natural state one must follow daily routines and seasonal routines prescribed in Āyurveda.
- ▶ According to Āyurveda, the quantity of water that one must take daily will depend on the constitution (prakṛti) of a being. An individual must boil and reduce the water before consumption according to the doṣa predominance in the body.
- ▶ The principles and practice of Yoga provide

- a comprehensive framework by which the psychological and physical aspects of stress can be understood and eliminated.
- ▶ Several mediation practices are taught as part of the training for the yoga way of living. It will also induce a change in the intellectual and somatic functions of an individual.
- ▶ The Indian approach to psychology has long years of introspection, testing, contemplation, and experiential learning. It draws its frameworks, concepts, tools, and techniques from a rich repository of diverse knowledge traditions starting from the Upaniṣads.
- ▶ The Tri-guṇa system provides an overarching framework to understand the physical infrastructure of a human being.
- ▶ The gross body is the physical manifestation of an individual (in the form of the visible organs) which are made of the five bhūtas. The psychological part of an individual constitutes the subtle body.
- ▶ Understanding the manifestations of consciousness is only possible by self-experimentation and deep contemplation of one's experiences.
- ▶ A framework to describe the consciousness and its multi-faceted manifestations is discussed widely in the Upaniṣads and pertains to four states that a human being undergoes.
- ▶ The body-mind-intellect (antahkaraṇas) is considered as the interfacing instrument, connecting the consciousness with the physical body. The reflected consciousness mediates through these internal organs and enables the mind to have knowledge and awareness.
- ▶ Indian scriptures highlight the importance of continuous practice (abhyāsa) and cultivating a sense of mental dispassion towards the objects and entities in the outside world (vairāgya) to develop a high degree of mental concentration.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by the term 'health' and 'wellness'. Do they mean the same?
2. What do you mean by the term 'Āyurveda'?

3. How does Āyurveda define health? Is it any different from the western definition?
4. Comment on the statement, "Health is both a physical and psychological" issue.
5. Write a note on 'tri-doṣas'. In what way the tri-doṣa influence the health of an individual.
6. What are the prescriptions of Āyurveda to maintain the psychological faculty in a pleasant state?
7. What are the main recommendations of Āyurveda with respect to sleep, food, and drinking water? How will we benefit from following these?
8. Prepare a two page note on the salient aspects of disease management as prescribed in Āyurveda texts.
9. What is the 'yoga way of living'? What benefits accrue to an individual following yoga practice?
10. Comment on the statement, "Rāja-yoga can help an individual maintain a healthy and stress-free life".
11. Does meditation have anything to do with consciousness?
12. How does Indian Psychology differ from the western counterpart?
13. What are the basic tenets of Indian psychology?
14. Enumerate the following as discussed in Indian psychology:
 - (a) Tri-guṇa framework
 - (b) Four states of consciousness
 - (c) Five layers of an individual
 - (d) The subtle and Gross body
 - (e) Antahkaraṇas
 - (f) Organs of action and knowledge
15. How does consciousness influence the psychological processes of an individual?
16. What are the challenges of studying human consciousness? Can we use the normal means of knowledge in consciousness studies?

DISCOVER IKS

1. Dr. B M Hegde is known for comparing the Indian and the Western approach to health and wellness. Watch the following video entitled, *Āyurveda over Western Medicine*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzTvEK1sVi0>. After watching the video prepare a two-page note to answer the following questions:
 - (a) What is the view of modern science about the human body?
 - (b) What do you mean by the Western reductionist approach to medicine?
 - (c) How does Āyurveda link the body-mind, and consciousness to health?
2. Watch the following video of Dr. Rammohan, *Āyurveda and Indian Psychology* where he brings out the intricate relationship between Psychology and Āyurveda: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DivT7icPvyA>. Prepare a note to answer the following questions:
 - (a) How does Āyurveda treat the mind and the body?
 - (b) How does Āyurveda use the idea of mind and the body in developing treatment?
 - (c) What is the relationship between mind and consciousness? .
3. Sri Sri Ravishankar has a very large global following. He emphasises the need for a "Yoga way of Life" in this talk he delivered in the European Parliament: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7socwFbYRk>. After watching the video, prepare a two-page note to answer the following questions:
 - (a) Why do we need yoga, according to Sri Sri Ravishankar?
 - (b) From a practical point of view of conducting several day-to-day activities how does yoga help an individual?
 - (c) Is Yoga a religious prescription? Why or Why not?

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