

Concept of Disease in Yogavasishtha and it's Relevance in Modern Scenario

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Abstract

This research paper is based on *Yogavasishtha*, the main text of Advaita Vedanta. In which, through the dialogue between Shri Ram and Vasishtha, the means of liberation from all kinds of sorrows in life have been described. In this, two types of sorrows have been described - physical and mental diseases, which are called *Vyadhi* and *Aadhi* respectively. The root of physical disease has also been told to be impurity of thoughts, dirtiness of mind. Also, the cause of both diseases has been told to be ignorance and lack of control of senses. Ayurvedic medicine, mantras, good deeds, etc. have been told as the temporary solution for both types of diseases and Moksha has been told for the permanent solution. Moksha, that is, complete freedom from sorrows, has been told to be possible through Yoga and Gyan. In today's era of rush and competitive social media, ideological pollution is also increasing like other pollutions. Due to this ideological pollution, impurity of the mind is increasing and due to impurity of the mind, psychosomatic diseases are increasing. This theory was propounded in *Yogvasishtha* of the 10th century. Psychologists have paid attention to it in the last few centuries. In this research paper, the concept of diseases described in *Yogvasishtha* and the measures for its prevention have been analyzed and an attempt has been made to study how the principles can be adopted in the present times.

Keywords: Yogvasishtha, Aadhi, vyadhi, pranayama, chitvritti, pranayam

Introduction

Yogavasishtha is a major book of Advaita Vedanta. In which all the contemporary spiritual principles are mentioned. This book sheds light on every aspect of human life. This book begins with Vasishtha advising Shri Ram, who was suffering from depression in his youth. Just as the Bhagavad Gita was told to Arjun to bring him out of depression, its relevance remains even today. In the same way, *Yogavasishtha* was spoken to remove Shri Ram's depression. *Yogvasishtha* and *Bhagawadgeeta* both are books of pure psychology. But perhaps due to their vastness, they could not reach the common people. The importance of Bhagavad Gita for Karmayogis, Bhagavad Purana for Bhakti Yogis, the same importance of *Yogavasishtha* for gyanyogis (Atreya, 2003). Today's era is logical, in such a situation the importance of the principles of this book increases even more. In the course of this dialogue, the suffering in the form of disease has been discussed and the remedy for its cure has been given. It is natural to ask whether the

disease, the cause of disease and the remedy of disease, as described by Maharishi Vasishtha in the 10th century treatise, are relevant in the present scenario ?

Disease

Life is full of sorrows. These diseases are also the reason of sorrows. Diseases are of two types - 1. Mental affliction 2. Physical affliction. Which are called *aadhis* and *vyadhis* respectively (**Atreya, 2003**). Both are inter-related. Sometimes it's occur both, sometimes it's occur separately both, and sometimes *aadhis* occur from *vyadhis* and reciprocal so on. There is happiness by removing both these sorrows, but permanent removing is possible only through knowledge of the *tatvgyan* or liberation (**Sharma, 2022**).

Cause of disease

Vyadhi (physical illness) occurs due to three reasons -

1. Due to craving (*trishna*) (**Sharma, 2016**), non-fulfillment of practical essential things of life like hunger, thirst, wife, son etc.
2. As a result of the sanskar of inauspicious deeds (bad karma) done in the previous birth or this birth .
3. Mental suffering i.e. caused by Aadhi (**Yogvasishtha**)

Aadhi (mental illness) is caused due to lack of *Tatvagyan* (knowledge of truth) and sense control. *Tatvagyan* means true knowledge. *Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya* means Brahma is the absolute truth which is the soul, apart from this everything is temporary, changeable, Maya. The proximity of senses and objects may give happiness at the time of enjoyment but ultimately it gives rise to many types of sorrows (**Bhagavadgeeta 6.22**)

On the other hand, due to lack of sense control, the mind becomes unstable. Due to the mind not being stable, the senses want enjoyment from their objects. When enjoyment is complete, desire keeps on increasing, when enjoyment is not complete, hatred increases, which initiate anger. Lust and anger together churn the mind, which is the cause of many types of mental diseases (**Bhagavadgeeta 2.62, 2.63**)

Vyadhi (physical illness) from Aadhi (mental illness)

The mind becomes unstable due to lack of knowledge of absolute truth (*Tatvgyan*) and control of senses. Due to instability of mind, attachment-hatred, lust, anger, greed increase, which are described as the door to hell in the Gita (**Bhagavadgeeta 16.21**).

A person addicted to the never-quiet attachment-hatred, in order to fulfil it, makes the essential parts of his lifestyle (diet, sleep, sex) unbalanced. Which gives rise to many types of lifestyle diseases such as heart attack, type-2 diabetes, obesity, cancer etc. On the other hand, a person addicted to attachment-hatred has to leave his place of residence, live in opposite mentality and unfavorable environment to fulfil that desire. Which somewhere gives rise to loneliness, insecurity, fear etc. Due to imbalance in the essential parts of life (food, sleep, sex), loneliness, insecurity, fear etc., the fluids in the nerves become unbalanced, as a result of which the life force (*prana*) becomes restless due to the imbalance of phlegm-pitta etc. and gives rise to many types of diseases (**Sharma, 2022**).

Due to mental distress like lust, anger, passion, hatred, fear, greed etc., the distressed vital force (*prana*) leaves its equanimity and flows in another direction, just like the water of the river starts flowing towards the bank when an elephant enters it. The food consumed with imbalance in the circulation of vital force (*prana*) becomes afflicted with defects like indigestion, indigestion and extreme indigestion. As a result,

this undigested food gives rise to many physical diseases due to the imbalance of the dhatus (**Dashora, 2022**).

Basically, this unique book of *Yogavasistha* presents the theory that the root cause of physical and mental diseases are our impure thoughts. Modern American writer Louis L. Hay also tells in his book “*You Can Heal Your Life*” that the cause of most diseases is the impurity of our thoughts. Also, diseases can be cured by bringing good thoughts in the mind. After research and study of many diseases, he has presented a table in his book, in which he has given a detailed description of various types of possible diseases caused by different types of impure thoughts and also the end of different types of diseases by bringing different types of good thoughts. The author has described a table of many diseases in his book. Some parts of that table can be understood as an example in the following way (**Hey louise, 2022**).

Tables of disease and possible causes

S.N.	Problem (Disease)	Possible Causes
1.	Tumor Stubbornness	refusal to change old ideas
2.	Testiopsoriasis	Mental stress and rigidity
3.	Hypertension	Long-standing emotional problem not resolved
4.	Anaemia	Blocking the flow of joy
5.	Leukaemia	Lack of joy
6.	Paralysis	Over-control of anger, unwillingness to express feelings
7.	Arthritic fingers	Desire to punish, blame, victimization
8.	Arthritis Feeling unloved	Feeling unloved, criticism, resentment
9.	Asthma	Suppressing love, suppressing tears
10.	Itching	Guilt about the past
11.	Appendicitis	Fear of life, blocking the flow of goodness
12.	Menstrual aplasia	Dislike for being a woman, not liking oneself
13.	Memory loss	Fear of extinction, running away from life, inability to stand up for oneself

14.	Pain	Desire for love,
15.	Sore throat	Family conflict, child feeling unwanted

Remedies for curing diseases

Common diseases arise due to non-fulfillment of such as hunger, thirst, wife, son etc. practical desires. These can be cured by taking medicines mentioned in Ayurveda, bathing in holy places and by doing auspicious deeds. Auspicious deeds mean those deeds which are prescribed by the scriptures, are in accordance with social beliefs and also make the soul happy. By doing such deeds, auspicious *sanskars* are formed which help in purifying old bad *sanskars*. The mind gets purified by good deeds, selfless service, charity and pious deeds. By purifying the mind, happiness starts increasing in the body, due to which hormones are secreted in the right way. As a result, digestion of food starts getting correct due to which the *Saptadhatu* gets balanced and diseases get destroyed.

Aadhis (mental disease) arises due to instability of the mind and instability of the mind arises due to the vibration of *Prana*, which can be stabilized by the methods of Pranayam (Rechak, Purak, Kumbhak etc.). When the mind becomes stable, the *aadhis* ends.

There is only one way to root out both types of diseases *Aadhi* and *Vyadhi* - destruction of the mind. Two ways have been told for cessation of the mind.

- Yoga
 - Gyan
1. Yoga- Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of mind. When the tendencies of the mind are not restrained, lust, anger, greed, passion, hatred, ego etc. become dominant and give rise to many diseases and ailments. The restraint of the tendencies of the mind is possible only by preserving the life force and enhancing the life force. This is called *Prana nirodha*. *Prana nirodha* can be done in the following way (**Sharma, 2022, pp 572**).
 2. Study of the Scriptures: As food is necessary for the discharge of our body. In the same way, the mind is hungry for ideas. The way grass grows spontaneously in the farm without sowing crops. If good thoughts are not given to the brain, then bad thoughts automatically arise. Only a good book can quench the mind's thirst for ideas. A study of the Scriptures reveals what kind of thought should be allowed to come into the mind. The lower and quieter the mood, the lower the vibration.
 3. Association of good men: It is said that without *satsang* there is no wisdom.
 4. *Vairagya* and *Abhyasa*: practice of Bringing good thoughts into life is and avoiding bad thoughts is *vairagya*. By following *yama-niyama* etc also stopped the trembling of *prana* and enhancing *prana*.
 5. *Pranayama*: *Pranayama* is a mechanism of preserving and enhancing vital energy. In this by good practice of *Rechak* trembling of *prana* is constant no feeling of *prana* moving and when good practice of *purak* whole *nadis* of fullfill from *prana*. after that motion of *prana* is absoulttly constant, no feeling of *prana* movements it seems stopped *prana*.
 6. Chanting of Om and Meditation of Omkar: Om is the Vedic name of God. The trembling of *prana* starts decreasing by uttering Om in a loud voice. At the same time, the palpitation of *prana* decrease with meditation.

7. By applying khechari mudra also the pranic trembling stops. In this the tongue is attached to the indriyoni hanging in the palate.

1. **Gyan-** Knowledge is the realization of the soul. This will bring relief from all troubles. Among the many means of acquiring knowledge, the practical means of the "four gatekeepers of salvation" for ordinary persons have also been described. Practicing even one of them in your life automatically leads to three behaviours. These four are - 1.sham, 2.vichar, 3.santosh, 4.satsang or sadhusang (**Dashora, 2022 pp 129**).

1. Shama: In situations like love-hate, odd-even, happiness-sadness, joy-sadness, honor-disgrace, love-reproach, etc., the mind remains the same, this is called the state of shama. In such a state there is neither the desire for happiness nor the feeling of renunciation in the attainment of the goal. All kinds of ailments are like nectar for the thirsty mind in attaining health. As the darkness is dispelled by the fire of the sun, so is all disease dispelled by the appearance of shama (**Yogvasishtha Mumuksha prakaran 13.6**).
2. Thoughts: Thoughts are the root cause of all kinds of success and failure, ups and downs, joys and sorrows, bondage and liberation. As are the thoughts, so will be the actions, as will be the deeds, so will be the results. If there are good thoughts in the mind, the mind is a friend, if there are bad thoughts in the mind, the mind is like a foe (**Bhagavadgeeta 6.6**). Who am I ? What is this world ? What is Brahman ? Thinking is the real thinking. Because only such a thought can lead to philosophy, which can lead to self-knowledge. This can eliminate pain.
3. Satisfaction: One who does not desire what is unattainable and enjoys what is obtained with equanimity, leads a life of righteousness, is called satisfied. Just as the particles of dust are quenched by rain, mental diseases are ended by contentment.
4. Satsang: Just as the gardener constantly gets bunches of fruits when the garden is irrigated, similarly the mind is constantly cleansed by leaving with enlightened men.

These four are called the gatekeepers of salvation. Sham, Vichar, Santosh, Satsang or Sadhusang are the four main means of crossing the ocean. Consuming them practically cleanses the mind. And as the mind becomes clearer. Diseases and pains will disappear. Finally, with the complete purification of the mind, the attitudes of the mind are finally stopped. With this, one gets freedom from all kinds of sufferings. In practical terms, knowledge of life consists of knowledge of genes, natural laws, principles and tools used in everyday life. In the absence of it, physical and mental ailments are bound to occur.

Relevance:

Yoga is a holistic approach to health (physical, mental, social, spiritual, emotional). At the same time, it presents a new dimension of disease and its prevention. In which the cause of disease is imbalance of prana, uncontrollability of mind, suppression of senses, inauspicious karma. The seed of most physical ailments lies in the mind in the form of unsound thoughts. One can get rid of diseases by purifying thoughts. At the same time, it describes Yoga and Gyana as the path to freedom from diseases and prevention of mental disorders. Till now in the medical system the treatment was done on the fruits on the spoilage of the fruits whereas the reason behind the spoilage of the fruits is in the root. This treatise presents a mystical theory of parallel elimination and root elimination of diseases, which can play an important role in providing health to all at zero cost.

Conclusion

A proper discussion makes it clear that the concept of *Yogavasistha* is still relevant in today's time. Today's psychologists are also proving some of its theories through their research studies. As Lewis L. Hay proved in his book, the cause of diseases is impure thought, and it is possible to get rid of these diseases by correcting thought. While this theory has been discussed in the tenth century itself in the *Yogavasistha* text. In the same way, many remedies have been given in *Yogavasistha* for the prevention of aadhi-disease. There are other books too. In today 's logical age, if these principles are scientifically communicated to the masses, they will certainly be useful to the whole of mankind in the same way as hatha yoga is being proved.

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