

Ayurvedic Medicine and Its Application on Mental Health

**by
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I certify that I have read this paper and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a product for the degree of Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology.

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Abstract

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This thesis explores the ancient practice of Ayurvedic Medicine as an integrative approach to enhancing and accelerating the benefits of counseling and psychotherapy to, reduce stress and anxiety, depression and increase cognitive abilities. It also explores how the knowledge of Ayurveda offers tools for self growth and experience of transcendence and spirituality compared to Jung's experiences of the Numinous.

Hermeneutic methodologies are used to explore major concepts of Ayurvedic Psychology as it is applied to the field of Mental Health. A sample treatment plan for treating anxiety demonstrates how Ayurveda can be used as conjunctive therapy in psychotherapy. Using a heuristic methodology the writer will share her personal experience of utilizing methods of Ayurveda for improved personal development and heightened awareness. This work demonstrates the efficacy of employing Ayurvedic Medicine with psychotherapy to improve mental health conditions and increases self-awareness.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my parents Marilyn and Bernard Zivin, and my daughter Anna Brett for their patience and support during my time at Pacifica Graduate Institute.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my teachers Vaidya R.K. Mishra and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for generously giving me the knowledge of health and the experience of unbounded inner silence.

Table of Contents

Chapter I	Introduction.....	1
	Area of Interest	2
	Guiding Purpose.....	4
	Rationale	5
	Methodology	5
	Ethical Concerns	7
	Overview of Thesis	8
Chapter II	Literature Review.....	10
	Definition of Ayurveda	10
	Historical Background	11
	Ayurvedic Medicine in the West	12
	Fundamental Concepts of Ayurveda.....	13
	Ayurvedic Anatomy.....	13
	The Five Elements	14
	The Three Doshas	14
	Mind Body Types	15
	Subdoshas	16
	Agni.....	17
	The Role of Karma in Mental Health	17
	The Three Gunas – Impulses of Nature that Govern the Mind.....	17
	Ama and Ojas: Mental Toxins and Neurohormones.....	19
	Atman: Experience of the Self.....	19
Chapter III	Findings and Clinical Applications.....	22
	Causes of Mental Health according to Ayurveda	23
	Pragyaparadha: Mistake of the Intellect	23
	Physiological Causes of Mental Health	25
	Effect of Under and Overuse of Five Senses	27
	Effect of Physical Toxins on Mental Health.....	28
	Ojas and Its Role on Mental Health.....	29
	The Role of the Three Gunas on Mental Health	30
	Remedial Measure of Ayurveda on Mental Health	31
	Sattvavajaya: Ayurvedic Psychology	31
	Understanding the Self to Reduce Suffering	32
	Meditation as Way to Experience the Self.....	35
	Personal Experience of Meditation.....	35
	Beyond Anxiety and Depression to the Numinous.....	37
	Personal Experience of the Numinous	38
	Goal of Therapy	39

Ayurvedic Detoxification and Rejuvenation as Conject Therapy	40
Ayurvedic Herbal Formuals for the Mind and Emotions	42
Yoga as Conject Therapy.....	43
Dietary Management as Conject Therapy	45
Sample Treatment Plan	46
Chapter IV Summary and Conclusions	48
References	53
Autobiographical Sketch.....	59

Chapter I

Introduction

Area of Interest

My area of interest is in the application of Ayurvedic medicine to be used as an adjunct therapy to accelerate the benefits of psychotherapy. I have been an Ayurvedic Health Educator since 1989 and have witnessed profound changes such as stress reduction and reduced depression in clients in a short period of time, often within a month of adapting some of the techniques and knowledge of Ayurveda. I am particularly interested in understanding how Ayurvedic medicine can be incorporated into a treatment plan for anxiety and depression, and improving cognitive abilities through the use of meditation, body therapies, herbal medicines, and Ayurvedic psycho education. I am also interested in seeing how Ayurveda's methods of diagnosing could deepen a therapist's understanding of the patient's symptoms and support a more comprehensive integrative treatment plan.

Ayurvedic medicine is a comprehensive holistic system of health care originating in India that spans over 5000 years. This thesis explores how the practice of Ayurvedic medicine is a complementary modality to psychotherapy by including all aspects of the person: mind, body, environment, and soul. In the language of the Vedas, Mauricio Garrido, Ph.D. Physicist and Hindu Monk said, "the soul is called Atman or pure being as the imperishable, non-changing, eternal part of oneself" (Garrido, M. 2013, p.1). Vedic seer, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi describes Atman, by quoting the Bhagavad-Gita from his groundbreaking book written in 1969, *The Science of Being and Art of Living* said of the soul;

"Water can not wet it nor can fire burn it. Wind cannot dry it and weapons cannot slay it. It is in front, it is behind, it is above and it is below, it is to the right and left. It is all pervading, omnipresent, divine Being"(p. 16).

This thesis explores how Ayurvedic medicine offers knowledge and techniques to prevent illness and fulfills a need in contemporary Western culture on how to prevent mental and physical illness. Stanley Knick, Ph.D. Director, Native American Resource Center, defines *modern culture* to have started in America in the 1950's. He said it is a culture "that creates new goods and services, and teaches us to want them". (Knick, S. 2011. P. 1). In an age when toxins bombard the environment (EPA, 2016), high levels of stress

and addiction plague society (Segura, G. 2013) and the cost of health care is sky rocketing (Bryan, B. 2016, para 8) the need for preventive health care education and services is at an all-time high. This research addresses how the ancient practice from the Eastern culture of Ayurvedic medicine might offer practical solutions to some of modern society's mental health issues.

This research explores how the health modalities of Ayurvedic medicine can be used as complementary tools to improve mental health as part of an integrative approach to psychotherapy. Such approaches offer alternatives for individuals who feel limited by the mainstream medical model or have not had success in therapy and want something more. It also may provide a model for those who want to integrate time-tested approaches with conventional modern medicine as a way to accelerate and enhance the benefits of traditional therapy. While some of the modalities of Ayurveda have been scientifically researched to be beneficial, as we will see in Chapter III, there is still a long way to go for Ayurveda to be accepted by western scientific standards. The purpose of offering Ayurvedic approaches to psychology is to prevent some of the psychological and mental problems that particularly plague our culture. Ayurvedic medicine addresses Alzheimer's (Rao, R. 2012), grief, depression, anxiety, ADHD, adapting to change, relationship issues, (Elder, C. 2014, para 5) and answers existential issues questions such as "who am I?"

In addition to the reduction of mental health issues through Ayurveda, this paper explores the gifts and benefits that Ayurveda has on personal and spiritual growth through knowledge, experience of Atman, and the numinous. Psychiatrist Carl G. Jung said, "The *numinosum* is either a quality belonging to a visible object or the influence of an invisible presence that causes a peculiar alteration of consciousness." (Mehrtens, S., 2013, para 12).

Ayurveda defines two selves; one is the small self or ego—denoted in this thesis by *self* with a small *s*. The Self, when written with a capital *S*, transcends the ego and is the silent witness and the universal backdrop for all thinking, feeling, and concepts (Maharishi, 1983, lecture). Jung (1951/1969, p. 5) described the ego as the center of and field of consciousness and the Self as the ego-transcendent and transpersonal regulating center and totality of the psyche, or the "God within us" (1928/1966, p. 238). He observed that "the most decisive qualities in a person are often unconscious" and are difficult for the ego self to perceive (p. 5). The goal of Ayurveda is to live a state of consciousness where an individual experiences himself and all of

life as a perception of a deep interconnection to all living beings and things; “I am That, I am that wholeness, that totality, infinite silence...” (Maharishi, 2001, p. xix).

Guiding Purpose

This thesis proposes to support personal growth and reduction of psychological symptoms for psychotherapy clients by exploring the benefits of Ayurvedic medicine to the field of counseling psychology. An Ayurvedic orientation may bring to therapy an extensive and comprehensive understanding of the source of the client’s problems on a physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual level. An Ayurvedic treatment plan not only approaches the client from a cognitive level, but is inclusive of all of areas of his life, from inquiry into the house one lives in, called *Vastu* or *Vedic architecture*; lifestyle and habits, diet and nutrition; familial history; significant life events; and spiritual health. By understanding the etiology of the client’s issues from this comprehensive view, a solid treatment plan can be constructed that does not isolate any area of the client’s life and that contributes to growth toward wholeness.

My guiding purpose is to understand how psychotherapy and Ayurveda can be integrated to complement each other. Ayurveda can bring to Western psychology an ego-transcendent experience of one’s Self and of the source of one’s thoughts and feelings as *Turiya*, which is pure awareness, pure being. (Maharishi, 2001 p. xvi). Without this one’s full development may be missing. Psychotherapy can help prevent in Ayurvedic practices a spiritual bypass of repressed or undeveloped aspects of the self. By adding a depth psychological orientation to the practice of Ayurveda, a fuller experience can be attained.

Rationale

This thesis contributes to the field of psychology an understanding of how Ayurvedic techniques might be used as adjunct therapy to provide additional support for clients to make profound changes in their psychological, cognitive, and physical health. The Ayurvedic practice of meditation has been shown to support cognitive development and reduce psychological symptoms. For example, meditation, is used in inner city schools to help students reduce violent behavior, improve grades, and reduce detentions (Barnes, V. 2003, p. 1). There are gaps in the fields of psychology and medicine to the extent that they treat the mind and body as separate and body awareness is left out of the therapeutic process. According to heart health researcher Robert Schneider (2015), “Heart disease is now correlated with mental health”; to prevent

heart disease, mental health issues need to be addressed (Schneider, R. 2015, lecture). Ayurvedic medicine can contribute to addressing such issues in that it treats the person as a whole, a bodymind, in progressing toward client goals (Chopra, D., 1989, p. 39).

Nancy Leibler, Phd., a clinical psychologist and Sandra Moss, M.S.P.H. both Ayurvedic practitioners and authors of *Healing Depression the Mind Body Way* (2009) said about the mind body connection;

Mind-body medicine and its emerging field psychoneuroimmunology are bringing the issue of the unity of the mind and body to the forefront of modern science. The Vedic sages, on the other hand understood this concept a long time ago. They looked for the unity that underlies all the systems of our physiology rather than focus on the systems diverse functions. This is the holistic approach that we need when we study the global affliction of depression (Pp. 32-33).

As a contribution to the field of counseling psychology, this thesis examines the potential life changing benefits Ayurveda can have for both clients and therapists. It brings attention to the way in which Ayurveda techniques can cultivate a deepened sensitivity, receptivity, and aware consciousness making one a more effective therapist. Ayurveda provides holistic and comprehensive ways of addressing an individual's psychospiritual and existential needs. This research supports therapists in working with clients who have an interest in integrative modalities and gives the client access to more choices in how to attend to mental health and culture personal growth.

Methodology

Ayurvedic Medicine can be applied to the field of mental health to accelerate and improve the efficacy of psychotherapy. To research the application of Ayurvedic medicine in psychotherapy I have adopted hermeneutic and heuristic methodologies and organic inquiry. Using hermeneutic methodology (Romanyshyn, 2007), I describe what Ayurveda is, its deeper significant meanings, and its effects on mental health by gathering, interpreting, and assessing information from a variety of sources such as scientific journals, Ayurvedic literature, and research by Vedic scholars. In addition, I use hermeneutics as I compare and contrast Ayurveda with current psychological orientations.

Applying organic inquiry to heuristically obtained autobiographical data, I explore, discover, and review my personal experience with Ayurvedic medicine and its impact on my mental health. The analysis of the heuristic data arises organically from its exploration: "Organic Inquiry is anti-method and unique results are expected" (Pacifica Graduate Institute [PGI], 2015, p. 56). The process involves a descent into

my own material that honors what emerges from the unconscious and views my story as having teachings within it that need to be shared (PGI, 2015). Through my research, I introduce my own ideas on how Ayurveda can be implemented into a treatment plan for therapists who have an interest in a more integrated way of working with a client.

Ethics

This research is not intended to suggest that Ayurvedic Medicine's modalities are a substitute for psychotherapy, but rather that they may be used as adjunct therapy to accelerate and expand its goals and benefits. A therapist's scope of practice is a consideration: Various certifications and training are prerequisites to becoming an Ayurvedic medicine practitioner. Therapists are ethically bound to observe the limits of their expertise and if appropriate to refer the client to a trained Ayurvedic practitioner. For example, a therapist not certified in Ayurvedic medicine should avoid giving dietary and herbal medicine recommendations, but could refer the client to a book, website, or trained practitioner. Because psychotherapists are discouraged from touching their clients, even Ayurvedic certified psychotherapists may want to refer clients out for Ayurvedic bodywork and massage therapy. The client could agree to sign a release form so that the Ayurveda practitioner and therapist can consult with each other for the benefit of the client. Clinicians should also understand the differences between the authenticity of ancient Ayurveda and its more commercialized, superficial applications in order to keep the client safe and client's interest a priority. The treatment plan is highly individualized and necessitates working closely with the client's medical doctor, psychiatrist, and Ayurvedic physician. .

I believe this study and the practice of Ayurvedic Medicine can have relevance to clients of all demographic and cultural backgrounds who express an openness to alternatives to Western mainstream approaches. In my experience as a practitioner of Ayurveda, I have found it to be a mostly patriarchal tradition. Because of this, in introducing scholars of Ayurveda, I have been attentive to the works of luminaries of Ayurveda who are women to offer a more inclusive picture.

Ayurveda, as highlighted in this research, can be flexible and adapted to modern Western culture. However, therapists have an ethical responsibility to respect a client's culture and refrain from imposing their ideology onto the client. A therapist who intends to use Ayurvedic methods should include it as a part of the client's informed consent. In discussing Ayurvedic approaches with a client, therapists should avoid making

sweeping claims about its efficacy, which would cause overly high expectations for the client. In my experience of former training programs, I have found that highly idealistic claims to be ungrounded and unrealistic.

Therapists should also be aware that Ayurveda is not licensed anywhere in the United States. That means health insurance does not cover sessions in this health modality. This then tends to limit the availability of Ayurvedic health care modalities to economically privileged people and excludes people who have low social economic status.

Overview of Thesis

Chapter II is the Review of Literature. The concepts of Ayurvedic mental states and Ayurvedic anatomy are introduced. Ayurvedic anatomy includes the subtle body, energetic body, as well as what is known in western anatomy, the physical body.

Chapter III is divided into two sections. Section one explains the cause of mental health conditions according to Ayurvedic including concepts such *pragyaparadha* described as the mistake of the intellect and cause of suffering. Understanding the fundamental causes of mental health conditions according to Ayurveda is essential in diagnosis and treatment. In part two of Chapter III, the remedial practice of Ayurvedic medicine is highlighted. A discussion of how it offers an integrated approach to mental health issues with its ancient modalities of body therapies, meditation, herbal medicine, yoga, and dietary corrections are practically applied. Included are specific examples of how Ayurvedic therapies in can be integrated into traditional psychotherapies to accelerate and enhance the goals of certain mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, existential issues, and learning problems. Chapter IV provides a summary of the research and concluding thoughts.

Chapter II Review of Literature

As is the human body, so is the cosmic body
As is the human mind, so is the cosmic mind.
As is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm.
As is the atom, so is the universe.

Aitreya Upanishad

The above Upanishad verse adequately explains the goal of Ayurvedic medicine; the ability to perceive the interconnection of everyone and everything, to see oneself reflected in the cosmos and with each person. The Upanishads are expressions of experiences of the East Indian seers from over 2500 years ago and describe some of the main concepts of Ayurvedic medicine (Egnes, T. 2015 p. 2). Tom Egnes, professor of Sanskrit and Vedic Science at Maharishi University of Management, wrote, “The Upanishads are the culmination of the Veda and so are called Vedanta. They are known as the gyana kanda, the section of the Veda that deals with knowledge—knowledge of the ultimate reality” (2015, p. 3). Egnes explained the origin of Ayurvedic practices from East Indian seers:

According to India’s ancient tradition of knowledge, the Upanishads (and Ayurvedic medicine) were cognized by *rishis*, or seers. The profound truths dawned spontaneously in the silent depths of their consciousness and were recorded by them and passed down through generations, first orally, and later in written form. (p. 2)

This thesis includes several references from the Upanishads to describe an aspect of Ayurveda called Atman Gyan, meaning knowledge of the Self (Brooks, 2016, p. 91) as path towards healing the mind, which is written about in detail in Chapter III. Many of the Ayurvedic concepts discussed herein are included in their original form, the language of Sanskrit, followed by the English definition, because “Sanskrit conveys subtle concepts that do not have an exact correspondent in the English language” (Strickland, T. 2014, p. 1). There are many benefits to hearing the sounds of the original texts: “The study of Sanskrit creates orderliness within the mind because Sanskrit is a highly systematic language, reflecting the orderliness of nature itself. . . . Sanskrit means “perfected”, or “put together” (Egnes, 2003, p. xi). Moreover, the translation of Vedic textbooks from Sanskrit into English is variable and questionable. Interpretations included in this thesis are from a few selected Vedic scholars. Research by physicians and psychiatrists versed in Ayurveda are also included.

Definition of Ayurveda

Ayurveda translated from Sanskrit means the knowledge of the lifespan. *Ayus* means life and *veda* means knowledge (Kshrigar, M. 2011, p. 9).

Neuroscientist and Vedic scholar, Dr. Tony Nader (2001), describes Ayurveda as follows;

Ayurveda provides the holistic knowledge of how to maintain balance in mind and body, prevent imbalances from arising, and re-establish balance and health when they are threatened. Ayurveda is Brahma Vidya—knowledge of Totality. It is the knowledge of life in every one of its aspects. (p. 13)

Ayurveda is a natural system of health care that includes body therapies, herbal medicine, detoxification procedures, psychology, meditation, and yoga (Kshrigar, M. 2011, p. 9).

Historical Background

Ayurvedic medicine dates back over 5000 years, starting first as an oral tradition and later written down in ancient Sanskrit by engraving iron onto Palm leaves (Nalin, 2002, film). Some of these leaves still exist and are kept in libraries and anthropology labs throughout India (Nalin, 2002, film). In later years the notes were handwritten in Sanskrit into Ayurvedic textbooks dating around 400 BCE, known as the *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtang Samgraha*, *Ashtang Hridaya*, *Bhava Prakash*, and *Sharangdhar Samhita* and *Bhagavat* , (Lad, V. 2002, p. 2).

Many records of Ayurvedic knowledge have been destroyed due to various invasions and wars in India and Ayurvedic teachers were either prohibited from practicing or ancient textbooks destroyed (Chopra, 1989, p. 5). Much of this ancient knowledge has been lost due to the passage of time. Many of the translators are not versed in Ayurveda; translations and interpretations from Sanskrit to English have become debatable within the Ayurvedic scholarly circles. There are still a handful of families that have unbroken lineages of this ancient healing system. The Ayurvedic physician and teacher, Vaidya R.K. Mishra comes from one such lineage called the Shaka Vansiya Lineage. Historian and Sanskrit professor at Oxford University, Christopher Minkowski (Minkowski, 2016, lecture), researched Mishra's lineage at least 14 generations back in India. R.K. Mishra graduated from Bihar University in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery and also has a Sanskrit degree. Upon completing his formal education he interned with his father, Kameshwar Mishra, for seven years, mastering the science of diagnosis and remedy formulations as handed down in his ancestral lineage. As the author's teacher since 1997, Mishra is referenced throughout Chapter III.

Because Ayurveda is part of the ancient Vedas from India it is often assumed to be religious in nature and a part of Hindu religion. This misunderstanding arose from the history of foreign invaders into the Indus River region who categorized a diverse people and their beliefs and practices as Hindus. (Goldberg, P. 2015,p. 3). Regarding the words *Hindu* and *Hinduism*, philosophy professor and author of *American Veda* Phillip Goldberg (2010) wrote:

What we think of as one religion is a multifarious collection of sects, tradition, beliefs, and practices that evolved from the Veda, the world's oldest sacred texts, and took shape across the vast Indian subcontinent over the course of many centuries (p. 4).

Ayurvedic Medicine in the West

In the 1980's, Vedic Scholar and founder of the Transcendental Meditation program, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, introduced Ayurvedic knowledge to North American and Europe (Chopra, D. 1991, p. 6). This thesis includes references to two of Maharishi's books, *The Science of Being and Art of Living* (2001) and the *Translation of the Bhagavad-Gita Gita* (1987). In the last forty years over 340 peer reviewed published studies have confirmed the efficacy of one of the main healing modalities of Ayurveda, Transcendental Meditation (Rosenthal, N. 2014, p. 14). Chapter III examines some of this research as well as the author's own personal experience of practicing Transcendental Meditation for over forty years.

Ayurveda continues to be taught at Ayurveda Colleges that offer medical doctor training throughout Southeast Asia and the United States. Ayurvedic hospitals and clinics throughout India, Nepal, Europe, and North American offer alternatives to the modern medical institutions and practices that may be combined as complementary medicine with allopathic medicine. Ayurvedic medicine is organized into categories of care much like Allopathic medicine, including pediatrics, geriatrics, internal medicine, eye, ears, and throat, surgery, psychiatry, fertility, and gynecology (Brooks, 2016, Pp. 81-82).

Fundamental Concepts of Ayurvedic Medicine

This next part of the literature review introduces some of the basic concepts of Ayurveda for the purpose of creating understanding of it is applicability in the field of mental health as outlined in Chapter III. The concepts are more elaborate than can be discussed within the parameters of this thesis; the descriptions offered herein provide a foundational understanding of the most relevant to the field of counseling psychology. These concepts form the basis of an Ayurvedic understanding of the cause of mental illness and the building blocks towards creating a treatment plan for depression, anxiety, and cognitive disorders. Understanding the cause of mental illness with the perspective of Ayurvedic Medicine offers the psychotherapist a deeper understanding of how to diagnose the client and its practical application in a therapy container.

Ayurvedic anatomy. Ayurveda anatomy has its own language and there are volumes of book and ancient texts to describe it. Ayurvedic anatomy is unique from western anatomy because it explains the

energetic bodies which are more subtle than the physical body. What follows are the basic anatomical constructs needed to understand personality types and emotional temperaments relevant to Ayurvedic psychological practice.

The five elements. The main precept of Ayurvedic theory states that each manifestation of creation contains the five elements: space, air, fire, water and earth (Sachs, M. 2007, p. 14-15). Each human being, animal, and plant is born with a unique and various amounts of all five of the elements. In Sanskrit this theory is called *Panchamahabhuta*. *Panch* means five and *mahabhuta* can be explained as elements of nature. Melanie Sachs a longtime Ayurvedic practitioner and former student of renowned Ayurvedic physician, Dr. Vasant Lad, described these five elements: Space is an energy in the human body and is found in the natural world that is formless, expansive, vast, and open (Sachs, 2007, p.14). It corresponds to the spaces in the body, which include the mouth, nostrils, abdomen, respiratory tract, and cells. Air is an energy that has qualities that are dry, cold, light, subtle, changeable, penetrating, and clear. Movement in the body such as breathing and muscle movement are due to the air element. Fire element in the body is energy that is hot, light, upward moving, intelligent, transformative. Fire element expresses itself in the body such as digestive processes, cellular functioning, and hormonal balance. Water element energy is cool, flowing, nourishing, lubricating, and wet and can be seen in the body as bodily fluids and secretions. Earth energy is dense, cool, supporting, grounding, inert, stable, solid and slow and can be seen in the body as bones, teeth, hair, and nails. (Sachs, 2007, p. 15).

The three doshas. Sachs (2007) explained the relationship between the five elements and the human body and personality:

The five elements combine dynamically within the human body. Working in pairs they organize all the bodily functions that are necessary to life. These are the doshas of vata, pitta, and kapha. The way we look, think, behave, and feel is the result of a unique combination of these subtle energies (p. 39).

The ancient rishis observed that there are seven different combinations of the elements and categorized these as various mind body types based on one's predominant dosha. All individuals carry within themselves all five elements. However, each person has a pair of elements that dominates his or her mind and body, creating a particular dosha or body type (Sachs, 2007, p. 39). In the dosha of vata, the elements of air and space are predominant; in pitta, fire and water; and in kapha, water and earth.

Ayurvedic Mind–Body Types. The traits of each dosha can be described in their appearance as either in balance or out of balance. When out of balance, there is either too much or too little of the elemental energy present. Understanding imbalances in the doshas gives the therapist information to better diagnosis a patient. Following are some of the mental and physical traits of each dosha.

Vata. When the elements of air and space are in balance, the vata personality is enthusiastic, energetic, inspirational, and clear. Vata types tend to be thin, wirey, and have small bones. (Tiwari, 1995, p. 44). When out of balance, vata (excess air and space) is temperamental, insecure, anxious, manic, anorexic, restless, and fearful. Vata predominant people tend toward insomnia, anxiety, constipation, and dry skin.

Pitta. In balance, the combination of fire and water elements appears as leadership qualities, have articulate speech, self-confident, reliable, productive, intelligent, and has the ability to make decisions quickly. They tend to have a medium build, athletic, and tendency toward skin rashes and acid stomach (Tiwari, 1995, p. 48). When out of balance the pitta personality may exhibit impatience, anger, rage, violence, grief, discontent, be overly critical, and addicted to perfectionism. The individual may become paranoid, delusional, or have addictions or obsessive behavior.

Kapha. Kapha in balance with water and earth elements is steady, content, consistent, methodical, affectionate, patient, parental, and generous. They tend to have a large skeleton structure, more mass, and thick wavy hair (Tiwari, 1995, p. 52). Kapha, out of balance manifests as depression, grief, lack of motivation, instability, stagnate, low self-esteem, blaming of others, unable to let go of past and move forward, and lack of introspection. Kapha predominant people may have problems with being over weight and use stimulants to combat depression.

Subdoshas. Longtime Ayurvedic practitioner and teacher, Maya Tiwara (1995), author of *A Life in Balance*, wrote, “Each dosha manifests in five forms or divisions. Through these vehicles of systemic outreach the doshas influence the entire bodily system” (p. 24). These 15 divisions comprise the subdoshas, each of which is located in specific parts of the body and mind. The subdoshas related to mental health and discussed in Chapter III include the pitta subdosha *sadhaka* located in the physical and emotional heart; *prana vata*, the subdosha of vata located in the head; *vyana vata* located in the heart and all over the body; *apana vata* located in the organs of elimination; and *avalambaka*, the subdosha of kapha located in the heart. Also, included is *tarpaka kapha*, the kapha sub-dosha that provides nourishment,

lubrication, and overall support for the physical brain and spinal cord (Mishra, 2016, p.1). Understanding the subdoshas allows the therapist to accurately diagnosis where the imbalance lies in the client and be able to offer a precise treatment plan to effectively influence the mental health of the patient. To demonstrate, Vaidya Mishra (2016) says; “ Mental stress and fatigue, identified as prana vata imbalances, can deplete tarpaka. When tarpaka goes low, then pitta dosha can also go high – heating up the cooling and lubricating system of the brain...(p.1).

Agni; is translated as fire and Ayurveda says there are many internal fires responsible for the transformation of food into nutritional materials and waste products as well as cellular functions (Mishra, 2014, lecture). Vaidya R.K. Mishra explains that it is important in understanding how a client can balance one’s agni to improve mental and physical health. A healthy agni is not only vital to digestion of food but of digestion emotions. Undigested emotions build up and are the cause of depression, the inability to adapt to change, accept one’s circumstances, and adapt to new situations (Mishra, 2014, lecture.).

The Role of Karma in Mental Health

Karma means action (Maharishi, 2001, p. 23). The Brihadaranyake Upanishad describes karma, “As one does, so one becomes; by virtuous acts one become virtuous, by errant acts one becomes errant”.

According to psychologist, vedic scholar, and founder of the Mind Institute in Sidney Australia, Dr. Satya Prakash (2013), says;

Karmic diseases are a result of past unwholesome or undesirable actions...such karma may be from this life or even past lives. Illnesses of this type cannot be treated by medicine. The remedial measures are psycho spiritual in nature and ideally seek to neutralize the negative karmas through positive karma (actions) such as selfless service, charity, and asking for forgiveness (para 3).

The Three Gunas - Impulses of Nature That Govern the Mind and Body.

According to Vedic theory, there are three subtle energies that preside over all living systems, universal principles or laws of nature; *sattwa* constructive, *rajas* maintaining, and *tamas* destructive (Maharishi, 1987, p.128). There are many interpretations of what the three gunas are, abstract in nature, but manifest as qualities in human behavior. Under these three main gunas (impulses), Ayurveda theorizes that there are 21 personality types called *manus prakruti* (Lad, V. 2006, p. 177). For the purpose of this thesis, only the three major gunas are discussed. In terms of mental health, Amy Weintraub, MFA, a teacher in the field of yoga and mental health for over twenty years, founder of the Life Force Yoga Healing Institute, and author of *Yoga for Depression* (2004) said about the three gunas;

In Yogic science (Ayurveda), three basic archetypes, known as the *gunas* categorize our basic psychological states. If you are feeling in balance, neither depleted nor supercharged, you are in a *sattvic* (balanced) state. If you are out of balance, feeling lethargic and hopeless, then you are in a *tamasic* (inertia) state. Most people who are suffering from dysthymia or major depression are in a *tamasic* state. If, on the other hand, you are feeling too much energy, are nervous or anxious, you are in a *rajasic* (aggression) state. People who are suffering from anxiety-based depression or mania are in a *rajasic* state. All of the practices of Yoga (Ayurveda) are meant to bring your physical and emotional body into balance, or *sattva*....This is why it is important to understand your depression, so that you can, with the help of a qualified teacher, design a practice that will be most balancing (*sattvic*) for you (p. 36-37).

To demonstrate the understanding of the three *gunas* in a counseling session, would for example, be a client who finds himself not getting along with people at work by being reactionary and frequently losing his temper. A therapist could make a note that this tends to be a *rajasic* or destructive tendency. The client discloses that he stays up to 2:00 a.m. playing video games and has to be up to go to work by 7:00 a.m. The therapist may recommend the client to increase *sattwa* energy and reduce *rajas* energy, by changing the lifestyle to get a full night of sleep rather than staying up late engaging in activities that agitate the nervous system. Reducing the cause of agitation can directly influence other areas of the client's life.

Using this as psychoeducation allows the client to see the connection between the activity and the resulting feeling of lashing out at co-workers. Understanding the three *gunas* applied to mental health enables one to cultivate *sattvic* energy, energy that is supportive rather than destructive to individual life. However, all three *gunas* are required to live a life in balance, it depends on the amount of each one that makes a difference between being in or out of balance. The Vedic term *sattva vajaya* is interpreted as the victory of the light of pure consciousness (*sattva*) over ignorance and suffering (*tamas*). (Frawley, D. 2016, p. 221-222).

Understanding the three *gunas* assists in creating another layer of understanding of the nature or tendencies of the client. It tells the therapist where the client is at presently and where to go from there. It's part of the Ayurvedic diagnosis road map, along with assessing the *doshic* body type of the client. In addition, the goal of Ayurvedic psychology is to cultivate a more *sattvic* nature; it is this intention that is at the heart of Ayurvedic psychology that is discussed in more detail in part two of Chapter III.

***Ojas* and *Ama*: Mental Toxins and Neurohormones**

Poor diet and lifestyle habits can often lead to *Ama*, translated as toxin. *Ama* is a physical and mental toxin caused by undigested foods, environmental toxins, wrong decisions in life, trauma and abuse (Leibler, N. 2009, p. 77). These physical and mental toxins can be released through Ayurvedic

detoxification body therapies known as *Panchakarma* (Liebler, 2009, p. 67). *Ojas*, is a specific type of neurotransmitter, that gives rise to balanced emotions, the experience of joy, immunity, and mental and physical stability. One of the prime goals of Ayurveda is to create a healthy amount of ojas in order to have good mental and physical health, low amounts signal distress in the mind–body system (Lad, V. 2001, p. 283).

Atman: Experience of the Self as adjunct therapy

According to vedic philosophy there is a fourth state of consciousness different than waking, dreaming, and sleeping states of consciousness called *turiya* (Maharishi, 2001, p.xvi). Turiya consciousness transcends all thinking, feeling, and intellectual processes. Turya is also called a variety of different names such as the Self, Atman, Samadhi, Pure Awareness. It is experienced as pure being; pure silence; and pure awareness, devoid of thought.

Sanskrit Professor Tom Egnes (2015) said of the Self;

The Self is known when the mind has completely settled and there is no perception of anything limited or temporal in nature. What remains is awareness itself in its unbounded state. One is still aware, but there is no localized object of awareness. Awareness is aware of itself alone (p. 8).

The body of knowledge of the big Self that witnesses and is able to observe the ego, or small self that is the center of ordinary consciousness, is called *Atman Gyan* (Brooks, J. 2015, p. 91). Atma Gyan is knowledge of the totality of one's Self. The Self is further explained by Egnes and Vedic teacher Vernon Katz (2015):

The Upanishads define Atman as the Self, the inner essence that transcends the personality. The Self is awareness itself, devoid of any content such as thoughts, feelings and perceptions. It is pure wakefulness, the awareness that enables one to be conscious. Like the silent depth of the ocean, the Self is described as the abstract core of the mental and physical levels of reality. It is not limited by any kind of physicality; it is pure spirituality, with no distinctions, no boundaries, no thoughts, no emotions, and no sensations –just pure, unbounded awareness aware of itself. (p. 7)

Deepak Chopra, M.D, Endocrinologist and pioneer of Ayurveda in the west described the Self in his book (1994), *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*:

Each of us inhabits a reality lying beyond all change. Deep inside us, beyond the five senses, is an inner most core of being, a field of non-change that creates personality, ego, and body. This being is our essential state-it is who we really are. (p. 7)

In Chapter III, The experience and knowledge of this state 4th state of consciousness will be expanded upon as adjunct therapy to counseling. The concept and remedial experience of the Self is a foundational

piece for working with counseling clients as a path towards wellness and personal development. In addition, the exploration of the experience of the Self can give rise to what Jung describes as the numinous.

The review of literature gives definitions to some of the major concepts of Ayurvedic medicine used in Ayurvedic psychology and its application to mental health. It also introduces some of the major scholars and physicians of Ayurvedic Medicine such as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Vaidya Ramakant Mishra, Dr. Jim Brooks, Maya Tiwari, Nancy Liebler, Phd. Dr. Vasant Lad, Deepak Chopra, M.D. and Amy Weintraub, M.A. In Chapter III, these concepts expand to explain the cause of mental health conditions. In part two of Chapter III remedial measures of Ayurvedic medicine are discussed and how they can be incorporated as part of an integrated treatment plan in psychotherapy/

Chapter III

Findings and Clinical Application

Unexpected cures may arise from questionable therapies and unexpected failures may arise from allegedly reliable methods.

C. G. Jung, Psychology and Religion, Volume
11 /1969, p. 602

Overview

How can Ayurvedic medicine be applied in the field of mental health?

This chapter seeks to answer that question by examining how Ayurvedic medicine can be utilized as an integrative approach to mental health that takes into consideration every aspect of an individual: mind, emotions, physical body, subtle body, environment, and Self, the *being* level of life itself. Ayurveda addresses all these areas and am I am particularly interested in introducing the Self, one's essential beingness as a vital part of healing and prevention.

Before delving into how Ayurveda can be used as complementary therapy to mental health, the cause of mental health problems according to Ayurveda's theories are addressed. By understanding the root cause of symptoms, a therapist can accurately make a diagnosis and create a treatment plan that is effective in addressing root causes rather than simply alleviating the symptoms. As a caveat, it is important to note that Ayurvedic medicine can also be limited to addressing symptoms without approaching the cause. For example, an Ayurvedic practitioner can recommend herbs for anxiety but never address the underlying dosha imbalance causing the anxiety. If the cause of anxiety remains hidden, it can eventually rear its head due to the limitations of masking symptoms. Thus, the patient becomes dependent on the herb or eventually the herb will stop having any beneficial effect (Mishra, 2014, lecture). Both addressing the fundamental cause and bringing relief are needed. The way to approach suffering is to attack it from every direction (Maharishi, 1991, lecture).

This chapter is divided into two parts. Part one focuses on the cause of mental health. Due to the length limitations of this thesis, only a few of the Ayurvedic concepts pertaining to the causes of psychological issues and mental health are presented. Part 2 addresses the remedial value of Ayurveda and its application to clinical practice.

Causes of Mental Health Problems According to Ayurveda

Pragyaparadha: Mistake of the Intellect. The problem of pragyaparadha can be described by the declaration, “We are not who we think we are.” In the Ayurvedic analysis of the pathogenesis of disease and suffering, the term *pragyaparadha* means the mistake of the intellect in the misunderstanding of the true nature of one’s self. This concept is written about in the main ancient Ayurveda textbook, the *Charaka Samhita* (Brooks, J. 2016, p. 89). It suggests that life is experienced within the limitations of the parts, leaving the individual unaware of the whole (Brooks, 2016, p.89).

Psychologist, Satya Prakash (2013) explains pragyaparadha and said,

If one is possessive of true knowledge (sat), then one understands the unity in everything, the oneness of the Self and Universe, and hence, does not suffer from the afflictions of the ego. The erroneous belief of an individual as a separate being... arises out of ignorance.

My interpretation is that pragyaparadha is a form of memory loss; one’s essential nature of being—the Self that transcends ordinary awareness—is forgotten or unconscious and the superficial levels of the mind and emotions hijack the deeper levels of awareness of being. Being, or the big Self is invisible but is the basis what is visible. At the level of the intellect, through the five senses, one gets drawn into the material outer world of living, work, family, leisure, conflicts, and the problems of everyday reality. The individual is over identified with sensory experience and temporal life. In my experience of growing up in and practicing Ayurveda in modern culture, there is not much acknowledgment of this essential Self or being and a pronounced focus of doing and accomplishing. This awareness of being is a contribution of Eastern thought. In Carl Jung’s development of analytical psychology, in dubbing his construct of the Self as the “God within” 1928/1966, p. 238, Jung paid homage to its Eastern origins:

I have chosen the term “self” to designate the . . . sum total of [humankind’s] conscious and unconscious contents. I have chosen this term in accordance with Eastern philosophy, which for centuries has occupied itself with the problems that arise when even the gods cease to incarnate. (2016, p. 56)

This lack of awareness of Self that, from the perspective of the Ayurveda, can contribute to making poor decisions and choices, as if the intuitive knowing—or teleological sattva of one’s Self is blocked (Chopra, 1991, p. 193). I believe that these poor choices in the areas of personal life, nutrition, and behavior set up a domino effect. It is akin to an unfolding sequence of events that starts at this primary level leading

toward an increasingly imbalanced dosha with its health problems and mental health issues. Maya Tiwari (1995) said,

Through our endless capacity for distraction and superficial countenances, we have lost access to our inner guide...without it; we are becoming a universe of living amnesiacs. Knowledge of the life force is not new. We have almost all known it some time in our past, but we have forgotten (p. 13).

The cure then is the removal of pragyaparadha, coming to know one's essential nature, the Self, pure being, pure awareness. It is a process of remembering one's own essential nature. The vedas say, *Smriti Labda-I have regained memory (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XVIII, Verse 73)*. Ayurveda offers tools to experience and remember this aspect of one's very own Self, which is written about part two of this chapter. This understanding of pragyaparadha is the fundamental concept in Ayurveda as the cause of mental and physical health problems.

Physiological causes of mental health issues: The Doshas. In Chapter II the five elements and the doshas were introduced. The doshas manifest as mind-body types and form the subdoshas located in various organs and systems within the individual. Mental health issues here are discussed here as being caused by physiological imbalances involving the subdoshas.

Subdoshas connected to depression. In the ancient Ayurveda textbook, the Charaka Samhita, it is written, *hridaya chetana sthanam* (Mishra, 2002, p. 2) Dr. R.K. Mishra explained that *hridaya* is the heart, *chet* is consciousness, and *sthanama* is placed. The saying means that the mind and the heart are intimately connected, because the heart is the dwelling place of consciousness. It also indicates that the sadhaka pitta subdosha of the heart is associated with the processing of emotions (2002, p. 3). Dr. Mishra said (2002) said;

The main cause of depression is the lack of ability to process emotions in a timely fashion. Some people are able to process an emotion quickly, which means they are able to let go of it and move on with their lives. For others, the processing or "cooking" of thoughts is slow so the negative impression remains with them for a very long time and this impacts their current thoughts and emotions, resulting in depression. (p. 3)

Mishra further explained that the *agni*, (fire) or metabolic mechanism, associated with sadhaka pitta is responsible for the cooking or processing of emotions. The health of sadhaka pitta processes effect the metabolic processes or agni in every cell of the body, as well as the agni associated with each subdosha. The sadhaka agni of the heart is related to neurohormones. The neurohormones located in the heart send signals to the brain to register depression or happiness (Mishra, 2002 p. 3).

An individual can be born with low sadhaka pitta and agni levels are unique to each person. Agni can also become low due to emotional and physical trauma, poor nutrition, environmental pollution, and digestive problems. If low sadhaka agni continues without being corrected for a long time, it can lead to a clinical depression (Mishra, 2002, p. 3), with symptoms such as the inability to enjoy normal pleasures and bipolar disease (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The solution from an Ayurvedic perspective is to offer procedures to increase agni and nourish sadhaka pitta, which are discussed in the section on remedial interventions.

Subdoshas connected to postpartum depression. According to Mishra, (2002), after a baby is born, prana subdosha of vata dosha is aggravated and the digestive fire, or *jataragni*, is decreased to a very low point during the exertion of giving birth. This can lead to fluctuating emotions such as anxiety and depression. Ayurveda offers specific diet, daily routines, and massages that increase the agni to help process both food and emotions (Mishra, 2002, p. 7).

Subdoshas connected to anxiety. Anxiety is caused by many factors contributing to excess vata, comprised of air and space (Chopra, D., 1991, p. 79). Vata's imbalanced qualities as mentioned in Chapter II are frenetic, dry, cold, unstable, and changing. Excessive vata shows up in the body as constipation (dryness), poor digestion, fatigue, and restlessness. It can present itself in the mind as disorganized, forgetfulness, anxiety, phobias, insomnia, and insecurity . If it is not corrected, vata can continue to increase and may turn into mania, anorexia, attention deficit disorder, and other learning problems.

Behaviors that contribute to increased vata are excess stimuli such as overindulgence of internet games, excess cold foods, irregular schedules, excess travel, excessive exercise, and excessive sexual behavior. (Chopra, D. 1991, p. 79). More serious vata imbalances are due to trauma, car accidents, fasting, eating disorders, lack of sleep, drug abuse, exposure to constant unpredictable behaviors and anything that overwhelms the senses. When vata goes high, this disturbs pitta and kapha as well. The way to address this

problem is to educate the client about vata dosha and offer lifestyle recommendations and diet that help to reduce vata and balance it in conjunction to counseling.

Effect of Over or Under Use of the Five Senses on Mental Health

In my opinion, modern culture continually bombards all five senses with outer stimuli such as air and noise pollution, indoor florescent lighting, incoming advertising, daily driving, overworking, overeating, and mindless entertainment via technology, internet, cell phone use and television. In addition, many people who live in large cities are no longer connected to the natural world and do not have access to nature, whether through gardening, walking in forests, looking at the stars at night, walking barefoot on sand, visually looking at a distant horizon, or swimming in natural waterways. In the larger cities one cannot see the stars in the night sky due to the city lights.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, not only do the senses become over stimulated creating excess vata, but also the individual becomes out of sync with the natural rhythms and cycles of the body, the natural environment, and cosmos. I believe that this lack of physical perception and experience of nature, can lead to a myopic visual orientation and promote limitation in one's thinking, leading to depression, black-and-white thinking, and a lack of problem-solving abilities, leading to anxiety and depression. As such, Ayurvedic medicine can be seen as deeply connected to the concepts of ecopsychology. An Ayurvedic protocol would be for the client to observe the sunrise or the sunset to connect him with the rhythms of nature. Take breaks from computer work every few hours with a walk near trees and nature, without the cell phone.

I believe that modern technological cultures tend to cut one off from one's innate bodily rhythms through overwork and overstimulation that contributes to ignoring signs of physical and mental distress. This distress is then often avoided through behaviors such as substance abuse and disordered eating that perpetuate disconnection from one's essence of Self as the basis of life including a disassociation of one's primary elemental nature that consists of water, air, space, fire and earth.

The Effect of Physical Toxins on Mental Health

Toxins, or *ama*, form a sticky substance that blocks tissues and bodily channels, disturbing ojas and digestion (Leibler, N. 2009, P. 77). In addition to physical ama, there is a type of mental ama that disturbs the mind and can form excessive anger, fear, self-criticism, greed, or resentment. Undo stress due

to intense relational problems, tension at work, loss due to death, divorce, or financial problems can contribute to the creation of ama if the individual lacks resiliency or ojas. Exposure to negativity, violence, and shocking sensory stimuli whether in real life or media increase ama (Leibler, 2009, p. 78). Ayurveda can assist in reducing depression, anxiety, and memory problems by helping the client eliminate these toxins through Ayurvedic detoxification therapies, diet, and herbal medicines.

Ojas and it's role in Mental Illness

The ancient Ayurvedic medical textbooks describe a physical compound produced from good functioning digestion of high quality food as Ojas. "Ojas is the connecting factor between universal intelligence and inner intelligence" (Teitlebaum, M., 2009, p. 205).

Ayurvedic physician and researcher, Dr. Kinshuk Hirpara (2016) said;

"When ojas gets low in the body, depression symptoms gets high. In simple words, ojas is the will to live life and when the desire of living is exhausted it's called as depression" (p. 3).

Ojas, according to Ayurveda is considered a neurotransmitter that is enhanced by consuming healthy fats such as clarified butter called ghee, fresh fruits, olive oil and pure water. Emotionally, ojas is enhanced through loving relationships, sleeping well, laughter, cultivating patience, compassion, and living a sattvic life (Teitlebaum, 2009, p. 205).

One of the most important factors responsible for the cause of mental health issues is low ojas. The strength of ojas is directly proportional to a person's resistance to dysfunction or disease. Just as in the body, the quality of ojas cultivates strength and stability in the mind. The role of ojas is to stabilize the mind, and offers physiological protection from stress. It also helps in creating resiliency when under stress and unexpected events. When ojas is healthy it helps one to feel confident and grounded and with feelings of contentment and peace. Ojas can be observed on the skin as radiance, healthy glow in the eyes, voice and behavior (Teitlebaum, 2009, p. 205).

Depletion of Ojas Effect on Mental Health; Ojas is depleted or weakened by excessive alcohol, fever, ejaculation, overwork, fasting, excessive exercise, anger, poor sleep habits, chronic pain, certain medications.excessive travel and aging as well as exposure to environmental toxins (Teitlebaum, M. 2009, p. 205).

As a therapist trained in Ayurveda, it is important that the therapist to be alert to the signs that indicate low ojas in order to create a treatment plan. Usually when there is depression, anxiety or other type of physical disease, ojas will be low. The goal in an integrative approach to psychotherapy is to increase ojas by referring the client to get stress reducing therapies such as body therapies, meditation, and change of diet, behavior modification as adjunct therapy. A therapist trained in understanding ojas can assess the client to whether the ojas is high or low. This offers additional understanding of the client, in order to create the treatment plan. Often there is a connection between the level of sattva and ojas, meaning that sattvic (calm) lifestyle can help to increase the level of ojas, and low ojas is be connected to activity that is paper or tamasic (destructive or stagnant) in nature

The Role of the Three Gunas on Mental Illness

In Ayurveda, as discussed in Chapter II, the three energies that govern the mind, and living beings are the three gunas--*sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. By knowing these impulses that govern the mind, the therapist can better understand the nature of the client undergoing therapy and create the treatment plan. An example of how a therapist can assist one in this area was discussed in Chapter II. Understanding the three gunas brings the reader into the next main topic of Ayurvedic psychology called Sattvajijaya as discussed in the next section.

Part Two

Remedial Measures of Ayurveda in Mental Illness

Now that the basic understanding of the cause of mental health problems have been established, a discussion of the practical methodologies and theories can be applied. Each method is described on how it can be practically applied in a counseling or therapeutic setting.

Sattvavajaya: Ayurvedic Psychology

Sattvavijaya is broad term to describe the branch of Ayurvedic medicine concerning mental health. It can be interpreted as the branch of psychiatry because it involves both the body and mind or it can be considered Ayurvedic Psychology.

Vaidya R.K. Mishra (2002), offers a comprehensive definition said;

By Sattva, is meant the positive pure qualities of the transcendental Self. The more you are in touch with that infinite field of bliss within, the more you will feel uplifted... and emotionally stable. So Sattva Vijaya refers to the protocol, the Ayurvedic therapies, which restore the connection between heart, mind, and Self. They are dietary, behavioral, and environmental choices that allow you to become more self referral, more aligned with your cosmic, infinite potential rather than remain caught in the small, narrow boundaries of emotional stress” (p. 3).

The relevance of understanding the three gunas as mentioned in Chapter II applied to mental health is the cultivation of mental clarity, resourcing oneself in healthy avenues, and releasing and dealing with stress in constructive ways. The concept of the three gunas is both abstract and subjective; the following description brings a deeper clarification to what sattavijaya mean; Satya Prakash, M.M.H., founder of the Mind Care Clinic & Institute of Behavioural Sciences in Sidney Australia (2013) said about Sattva Vijaya:

... *Vedanta* and *Buddhist* psychology have a full-fledged working model of the mind that can lend itself to the clinical practice of counseling. While rational interventions work well with predominantly somatic illnesses wherever the psychological *manasika doshas* are involved, psychological interventions are required. Apart from being a synonym for the mind, “*Sattva*” is one of the three

gunas, in fact the one and only wholesome *guna*. In its most wholesome state ideally the mind or *manas* is in the state of *sattva*. But what could have been a *sattvic* (calm and clear) state is often clouded by the other two afflicting *gunas* - reactivity (*raja*) and delusion (*tamas*). This results in distorted thinking or lack of discernment (*pragyaparadha*). Either way, when the two psychological *doshas* predominate, they cause various psychological/emotional afflictions. Afflictions can lead to mental illness once they cross a threshold. Hence the psychologically afflicting *rajas* and *tamas* have to be overcome. The aim of psychotherapy (*sattvavijaya*) is to restore or augment *sattva*. Thus “*sattvavijaya*” is nothing but the restoration of *sattva* by overcoming *rajas* and *tamas*, (Prakash, para. 12-14)

How does Sattvavajaya contribute to the field of mental health? Through the goal of helping clients cultivate more progressive sattvic quality in their lives in an integrated approach to diet, behavior, body work, yoga, and meditation. Together therapist, client, and Ayurvedic practitioner can create a treatment plan that includes these modalities that are specifically catered to the clients abilities, needs, and goals. To clarify, all three gunas are necessary, the problems that occur in an individual when either rajas or tamas is overpowering sattva guna in a high degree.

Understanding the Self to reduce suffering. Incorporating the understanding of Ayurvedic body types and the Self, the notion of *atman*, in psychotherapy can be used in the same way as psychoeducation in Western psychotherapy. It informs clients about their mental health condition so that they can understand, manage, accept, and take actions to get better. Ayurvedic knowledge offers a further perspective to help give a client understanding to the cause of mental health conditions. Understanding organic and inorganic causes helps to normalize the client’s self-perceptions as well. Including both allopathic and Ayurvedic understanding of a mental illness may deepen awareness of both the cause and cure of an illness. I heard Maharishi say that; “Knowledge is the greatest purifier” (Maharishi, 1991, lecture) which stems from the ancient Vedic book,

the Bhagavad Gita, which says in chapter four, “Truly, there is in this world nothing so purifying as knowledge...” (Maharishi, 1986, p. 311).

This means that understanding is an essential part of getting well. It corrects the mistaken beliefs - *pragyaparadha*, and replaces doubt and confusion with hope and empowerment. It helps the client to be more empowered and have the self confidence to take authority in the healing process. Doubts will lessen, and instead, gain clarity of thought and function by the intellect.

Expanding on this, Ayurvedic psychoeducation continues to take it a step further and offers specific education about the five elements and how they can become out of balance and thus cause illness and mental health problems. It involves education about individualized diet and lifestyle to balance the elements.

Educating clients about personality traits and physical appearance of the different Ayurvedic body types offers a positive vision to hold on to and work toward without too high of an expectation. For example, a kapha-predominant body type is not thin and small boned like a vata predominant type. A kapha predominant type has large bones, high muscle mass, and more body fat. Although kapha individuals can be trim and have normal weight, understanding their body type can help the person accept his or her physique rather than expect to be small and thin like a vata predominant type. I believe that self-acceptance, a goal in therapy, can increase because one can not change the elemental nature which one is born with.

Ayurvedic psychoeducation may recommend that the depressed client to get up early in the morning and take a brisk walk for 20 minutes at 6:00 am to reduce excess kapha. The client may be instructed to avoid daytime sleep because this causes an increase in water and earth (kapha), increases ama (toxins), increases weight, and increases tamas guna (lethargy) all which increase depression. A therapist can point to a book, website, or Ayurvedic practitioner to get information about a following specialized diet and lifestyle to reduce kapha. Examples of a kapha reducing diet would be to avoid eating after 6:00 pm, avoid cold, heavy foods such as cold beverages, wheat, dairy and instead favor high amounts of fresh vegetables cooked with black pepper, ginger, turmeric, cumin, and clove, moong bean soup, and small amounts of lighter grains such as millet and quinoa. Drinking hot herbal teas to reduce the cold heaviness

of kapha. This type of knowledge offers a way for the client to take charge of their condition and feel empowered when they take action to walk and eat healthily.

I believe that Ayurveda can take this cognitive psychoeducational approach even a step further and offer education on one's essential Self, the big cosmic Self. This introduces to the client undergoing psychotherapy a concept beyond one's individuality and a more expanded state of awareness and consciousness and a connection to something bigger than the personal self. The introduction of this type of Self-understanding answers the existential question such as "Who am I?".

Psychiatrist and Ayurvedic Practitioner, Jim Brooks said in his book *Reflections of Maharishi Ayurveda on Mental Health* (2016);

Vedic wisdom holds that there is one vital memory that everyone has lost, the restoration of which totally transforms one's life: that is the memory of the Self. This area of one's being lies below the subconscious part of the mind that houses past trauma, at the deepest level of our existence. . . An important focus of an Ayurvedic approach to therapy is to help the individual restore this lost memory, both by informing him about it (the cognitive component) and by teaching him techniques to directly experience it... (pp. 93-94)

It is important not to impose this concept on the client, but rather to introduce the idea and proceed according to the client's openness to it.

I believe that knowledge of this big Self and experience of it will be a main value in the therapeutic process because it is what many people, I believe are ultimately yearning for, that there must be something more, an innate desire to know and realize oneself. And as the vedas say, this knowledge can alleviate **great fear and anxiety**. This also is in accord with Jung's assertion that the Self, as the deity within (1928/1966, p. 238), is the goal of all psychological development (1961/1963, p. 196). While knowledge of the Self can be integrated into psychotherapy, the *experience* of the Self has equal importance.

Meditation as way to experience the Self. One of the main health modalities that Ayurvedic psychology (Sattvavijaya) recommends as a remedial value is the experience of Self or *Atman* as described in Chapter II. The experience of the Self be accessed in a variety of ways, and Ayurveda recommends meditation as the most effective way (Maharishi, 1991, lecture). Ayurvedic health techniques help to reduce stress and quiet mind so that the client can be receptive in psychotherapy to making new changes in one's behavior and life. A daily practice of meditation (Transcendental Meditation) can not only can relieve symptoms of anxiety and depression, but also reduce mental health problems by releasing deep-rooted stresses that inhibit the full functioning of the individual (Elder, C., Nidich, S., Francis, M. Nidich, R. 2014, para. 6).

Meditation can be defined in many ways because there are a multitude of techniques that stem from various traditions and cultures where quieting the mind has been used to help one relax and experience inner calm. Psychotherapists can become trained in how to teach stress reducing meditations or refer their clients out to a meditation center. I believe that it is important for therapists to study a variety of meditation techniques so that they can appropriately recommend a type of meditation that is most beneficial and safe for their client.

My personal experience of meditation; Ayurveda stems from ancient India, and therefore I am demonstrating the effect of meditation on my own mental health from a Vedic form of meditation called Transcendental Meditation (TM). In addition, it is the form of meditation that I have practiced since 1976 and studied with its founder, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for most of my adolescent and early adult years. At age thirteen, I was fortunate to learn how to do TM meditation. At that time, I was very depressed and anxious and I was having difficulty with school both academically and socially. After a few months of meditating for 15 minutes twice a day, my grades unexpectedly improved. I got along better with people, and I changed my direction of hanging out with friends who abused drugs and alcohol to new friends that had a positive influence on me. I felt that it saved my life from either a drug addicted life or suicide.

I believe that meditation, in particular Transcendental Meditation, is of one of the most beneficial therapies a therapist can offer to his client because a quiet mind and more relaxed body is essential for the therapy client to be able to react less, have more perspective in his life, and manage his moods and emotions. If a client is overwhelmed by stress, it becomes more challenging to progress into self-inquiry and be receptive to the changes that psychotherapy can offer. The quiet inner time is a way the client can resource himself in stressful times and use it a preventive means to remain more stable in unexpected outer turbulence. It helps the client to be more insightful and have more self-observation so that he can reap the benefits that psychotherapy has to offer. Meditation makes the mind more sattvic, calm and steady taking time to reflect and respond rather than react.

Transcendental Meditation is an evidence based practice as discussed in Chapter 1, and therefore psychotherapists can feel safe to recommend it for their clients who suffer from anxiety, depression, learning problems, insomnia, and addiction. Research published in the **Journal of Psychiatry (2011)** shows Transcendental Meditation **reduced ADHD symptoms and symptoms of other learning disorders (Travis, F, 2011, p. 2)**. A study published in the American Journal of Hypertension (2009) shows that Transcendental Meditation practitioners had a **significant reduction in psychological distress, including stress, anxiety and depression (Nidich, S. 2009, para 3), and a 55% reduction in symptoms of PTSD and depression (Rosenthal, J. Journal of Military Medicine, 2011, p. 1)**.

Beyond anxiety and depression to the numinous

Besides reducing stress, meditation has the possibility of opening up the experience of transcendence, the numinous, and a heightened sense of awareness. Jung said about the numinous, “Being bigger and beyond oneself, it induces speechlessness. Being a mystery, it bewilders the rational mind. Being divine, it links us to the “ground of the soul...” (Merhtans, S. 2013, para 17).

I believe that the goal of psychotherapy and Ayurveda are similar in many respects, in that it takes one beyond our beliefs of whom we think we really are. Numinous experiences, and experiences of the transcendent offer this expanded state of consciousness, a change of perspective that helps to loosen the grip of over identification of ones limitations. Lionel Corbett, Jungian Analyst, said in a published lecture, “Numinous happens to ordinary people all the time”. He said, Jung said, “What really heals you in psychotherapy is contact with the numinous, it frees one from the curse of pathology” (Corbett, L., 2010, lecture).

I believe that these numinous experiences shine a light in a dark tunnel, offers hope in the many trials of life. One can look back at them and be reminded of something true and profound. I believe the numinous experiences are a sign of the growth of individuation and towards self-actualization, which is one of the goals of Ayurveda and what I believe is the ultimate goal of psychology. It is an exploration into the many possibilities of what human consciousness can achieve. Roderick Main (1977), author of Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal quotes Jung’s experiences of the numinous:

In describing his 3-week hospitalization after a heart attack in 1944, Jung reported that he would lay awake for an hour each night after midnight in a transformed state:

It was as if I were in an ecstasy. I felt as though I were floating in space, as a though I were safe in the womb of the universe—in a tremendous void, but filled with highest possible of happiness. “This is eternal bliss”, I thought. “This cannot be described; it is far too wonderful!” (p. 138)

In another experience, Jung described:

There was a pneuma of inexpressible sanctity in the room, . . . we shy away from the word “eternal”, but I can describe the experience as the ecstasy of a non-temporal state in which present, past, and future are one. Everything that happens in time had been brought together into a concrete whole. . . . One is interwoven into an indescribable whole and yet observes it with complete objectivity. (pp. 140-141).

Jung believed that these numinous experiences provided the platform for which his greatest contributions to psychology were made (Main, R. 1997, p. 141). My own numinous experiences influenced the entire theme of my life. When I was fifteen years old, on a family trip to the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina, a life changing experience set me on my life path into the exploration of human consciousness. I share the following experience from that family trip as a way to demonstrate that Ayurvedic Medicine is not only about relieving symptoms of mental health conditions but has side benefits such as personal and spiritual growth.

I wandered off by myself on a forest trail and found a flowing stream surrounded by old growth trees. In the middle of the creek lay a large flat stone, just big enough to sit on. I sat cross-legged and began my transcendental meditation practice. I was surrounded on all sides with a gentle flow of water, pristine forest air, and deep silence except for the gurgles of the water and gentle breezes. As my mind drifted inward to deeper levels of silence, I felt complete on the inside and the outside of me. There were moments of no thought and no sense of I, just pure being, pure awareness, pure witnessing Self. On the inside was an experience of no space and time; a sense of no boundaries of consciousness and the outward environment was an extension of this beingness. As the meditation ended and my awareness became more outward, I felt as if all of creation was in a perfect harmonious dance. The stars, galaxies, the earth, the solar system, all living beings became particles of bliss and I was part of it. At that moment, I understood, and knew in my heart that there is a state of awareness so crystal clear, purely silently; purely peaceful that can be accessed by anyone (Author’s personal journal, June, 1978). At that moment, my life path became clear to me. While the experience did not last and only shows up in moments through out my life, I still hold the belief that there’s a place beyond our rational mind and feelings, a state of non dual pure being, that when accessed will reduce individual suffering. This was demonstrated in my life with grades improving, getting

along better with family and friends, and feeling more self-confident. It also addressed my depression by giving me hope.

Jungian Analyst, Donald Kalschad, author of *Trauma and the Soul*, beautifully describes the goal of therapy, said;

Wholeness can be an abstract idea, all inclusive and somewhat vague, but to Jung, it means something unique, something related to psycho spiritual integration. Perhaps no other single notion is more central to Jung's understanding of the human struggle is the idea of wholeness- For Jung, as we know wholeness is a universal human urge or desire to fulfill all of oneself - all of one's potentials, all the aspects of ourselves as they have come into being or failed to come into being in our particular environmental circumstances. The unfolding of this potential wholeness from within is what Jung meant by individuation – “the strongest, the most ineluctable urge in everything, namely the urge to realize self” (Jung, June 1949, Para 289). (Kalschad, 2013, p. 176).

I believe that Ayurvedic medicine not only offers to the field of mental health techniques to support the therapy process to overcome and deal with mental illness but has the possibility to support a client's state of wholeness, the realization of one's Self. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi said:

Ayurveda is a very precious and practical aspect of the Veda. Its purpose is enlightenment. It restores balance in order that a very balanced state of the intellect is generated. In that state, activity and silence are coordinated to make the full value of life a living reality (Lonsdorf, N.1995 p.5).

“The goal of counseling, from the Vedic point of view, is not only to help a person resolve his or her conflicts, but to learn skills for cultivating the mind and nervous system in the direction of higher states of consciousness” (Brooks, 2016, p. 143).

Thus seen, Ayurvedic Medicine offers a number of ways to balance the elements in ones psychophysiology through meditation, psycho education, diet, and lifestyle. In addition to these modalities, Ayurvedic medicine offers further supportive tools that are vital to include when creating a comprehensive treatment plan in conjunction with psychotherapy. These health modalities include specialized body therapies called Panchakarma, herbal formulations, yoga therapy, and diet. Following is a basic introduction to these health modalities and how they can be incorporated in a clinical setting.

Ayurvedic Detoxification and Rejuvenation Treatments as Conjoint Therapy

Ayurvedic detoxification and rejuvenation therapy is called *panchakarma*. The purpose of panchakarma, which traditionally includes 21 days of body treatments helps to detoxify the body from physical and mental ama (toxins), restore ojas, balance all of the doshas and provide deep rest and relaxation to restore the mind and body (Douillard, J., 2004, p. 11). A variety of internal and external cleansing

therapies are performed through diet, herbal formulas, enemas, and external treatments such as specialized massages with herbal oils, shirodharas (oil streamed onto forehead), swedana (herbal steam bath), and other treatments. Panchakarma creates profound change on a cellular level by balancing the doshas and purifying out excess toxins or ama. It is particularly useful for depression, grief, anxiety, memory problems, insomnia, ADHD, joint problems, digestive problems, schizophrenia, fibromyalgia, and a host of other illnesses. (Nalin, P. 2001, documentary).

There have been a few scientific research studies done on Pancha Karma showing the benefits it has on mental and physical health. Studies founded by the National Institute of Health and conducted by Maharishi University have shown that person's receiving panchakarma treatments had a 70% reduction of heavy metals, pesticides and other hazardous chemicals (Sharma, H.M., 1993, para. 3). An additional study on Maharishi Panchakarma was conducted in the Netherlands on 93 patients and showed improvement in cardiovascular risk factors. In addition, psychological evaluation was conducted using the Freiburger Personality Inventory before, immediately after, and six to eight weeks after panchakarma treatment. Over the two-week treatment period, there were significant reductions in bodily complaints, irritability, bodily strain, and psychological inhibition, as well as greater emotional stability. Results of testing conducted six to eight weeks after treatment showed evidence of sustained benefits for mental health and well being. (Waldschutz R, 1988, para 7).

In a clinical setting, a therapist could recommend that the client undergo panchakarma treatments at an in residence facility that specializes in treatments specifically for mental health. Ideally the clinician would be available for counseling sessions with the client undergoing these detoxification treatments for emotional support. It is my experience as both a recipient and practitioner of panchakarma that treatments sometimes release memories and feelings that have been stored in the body for many years, best to have client continue psychotherapy to support them through this detox of emotions. I believe that clinicians may recommend panchakarma for a client who has become dysfunctional due to burn out from over work. He may also recommend panchakarma for clients who are struggling to overcome grief due to loss, general anxiety, depression, memory problems associated with aging as well as inflammatory disorders such as arthritis, IBS, M.S., chronic fatigue, and fibromyalgia. It is my experience as a panchakarma administrator, that it helps serve a client in transition, like a jump start, after a divorce, end or beginning of a career,

empty nest, menopause, or recovery from physical and emotional trauma. Careful consideration is given when or if panchakarma should be administered to a client undergoing psychotherapy. Age, socio-economic status, mental and physical history, emotional stability and maturity, and medical assessment are necessary to insure the safety and well-being of the client.

Ayurvedic Herbal Formulas for the Mind and Emotions

The branch of Ayurveda concerned with herbal formulations is called *Dravyaguna*. Dravya Guna medicines recommended for mental conditions are called *medhya rasayanas* (Mishra, 2013, lecture). These herbal formulas help to restore memory, reduce anxiety, insomnia, learning problems, and depression. Mental formulas include herbs such as Bacopa, Brahmi, Arjuna, Ashwaganda, and Jatamansi. These are brain tonics, many which have been clinically proved to nourish neurological tissues (Mishra, 2013). Herbal formulas are taken either orally as a tea, tablet, capsule, or syrup, transdermally in cream or oil form (through the skin), or through the nasal passages in powdered form or herbal oil. Many of the herbs have been scientifically researched for its affect on the mind, memory, and mood states. For example, a research study on the Ayurvedic herb Ashwagandha, reduces forgetfulness and reduces stress (Rao, R. 2012, para.6).

While there have been many research studies on Ayurvedic herbal formulas for the mind in the past few decades, the Ayurvedic seers of old have recorded the effect of the herbs through out the millennia so that the precise herbal formulations have a specific predicted result (Mishra, 2013). What is needed is research on the interaction of prescription medicines taken together with herbal formulations. This lack of information may be having the possibility of creating harmful side affect. (Mishra, 2013).

Prescribing herbal formulations is beyond the scope of practice for therapists. However, they may refer the client to an Ayurvedic practitioner who is knowledgeable

about both western and herbal medicines. It is my belief that if a client is currently not taking any prescription medication, the clinician can refer the client to a book or website that offers education on the effect of these herbal nutritional supplements without the possibility of the client harming himself by self-medicating. The clinician can observe any changes or inquire how the herb is influencing their mood and mental functioning in order to monitor and track the progress of the client.

Yoga therapy. Yoga is a separate branch of Vedic knowledge than Ayurveda but it is interconnected with it. Yoga philosophy is a vast field of knowledge that includes not only yoga poses but includes pranayama (use of breath) and many other modalities for personal and spiritual development. In the West, yoga has been limited to a type of physical exercise, rather than an all inclusive practice. Exercise is an activity that has long been recommended to reduce stress, anxiety and depression (Taylor, B.C. 1985, p. 195). More specifically, yoga poses may play a significant role in balancing the mind and body because they help to reduce symptoms and balance the doshas and subdoshas. Yoga poses along with breathing techniques are recommended and instructed as a part of Ayurvedic Medicine and are specific to each person's mental health goals. According to Richard Brown, M.D., associate professor of clinical psychiatry at Columbia University of Physicians and Surgeons in New York says; "Yoga offers an alternative to the problems of conventional medicine for depression. It does not have detrimental side affects; it has side benefits for the body and mind" (Weintraub, p. xvi). Weintraub quotes Ann Brownstone, M.S., O.T.R.; who teaches yoga says;

Mood is enhanced during and after inverted postures (shoulder stand, headstand)...partly because an inversion challenges the suffer's posture and muscle tone –think of the slumped shoulders of dysthymic depression. Our feelings show up in our posture, so addressing the "muscular" can have a profound effect on mood. The increased extensor tone in the spine has a positive effect on the limbic cortex (emotional centers) and frontal cortical functioning in the brain (Weintraub, 2004, p. 67).

There has been some research on the beneficial effects of yoga on mental health but according to Amy Weintraub, more research is needed (Weintraub, 2004, p. 68). Despite the limitations of research, yoga is currently offered at mental health clinics, prisons, schools, and places of business to help reduce stress (Goodman, P.S, 2013, para 6). There are psychotherapists who have become certified yoga teachers and offer instruction in a psychotherapy sessions when it is relevant to a client's goals. Clinicians can research

skilled yoga teachers and reputable yoga centers in their location and refer their client to them as a way to further support and enhance the benefits of psychotherapy. Yoga is not for everyone and the clinician can discuss the benefits and challenges of what is entailed in a yoga practice without pushing or imposing on the client but offer information as part of a mutually agreed upon treatment plan.

Dietary Management

Dietary intervention are instructed by an Ayurveda practitioner according to the disturbed doshas and the physical and mental constitution of a patients moods and nutrition, and neurochemistry. All food is comprised of varying degrees of the five elements and in addition food carries the qualities of the three gunas. Food such as chili peppers, peanuts, onions, mustard, vinegar, garlic, pork products, and corn are considered heating and therefore increase pitta dosha. There is a principle in Ayurveda that like increases like and the opposite balances it. If an individual who has excess heat (excess pitta) ingests these foods it will increase and aggravate pitta. This can have a rajasic influence on the mind and emotions by possibly making the individual irritable, argumentative, impatient, and contribute to IBS, heartburn, headaches, and skin problems. A dietary protocol for someone with a pitta imbalance would be to avoid eating the heating foods listed above and instead ingest foods that are more cooling such as fresh salad greens, cucumber, sweet potato, clarified butter, organic milk, moong beans, fresh sweet juicy pears, coconut juice, and cooling watermelon. Each dosha has specific food recommendations to avoid and to favor. Since it is out of scope of practice for a psychotherapist to recommend a diet, it is possible for the therapist to recommend a book, website or health educator trained in Ayurveda so that the client can better understand the influence of food and beverage and the value of proper nutrition on one's overall mental and emotional states.

Ayurvedic education on nutrition also includes knowledge of digestion and when to eat. For example, a client suffering from depression and is overweight would be explained how eating heavy foods after 9:00 pm such as cheese and ice cream increase kapha and are difficult to digest. This could explain why the client has difficulty waking up in the morning and has a foggy mind. The following is an example of a treatment plan to be used in conjunction with psychotherapy for someone who has generalized anxiety. This is a very general approach and would have to be adapted to the unique needs of each individual. A therapist would work as a team with the client's Ayurvedic health practitioner and if necessary psychiatrist.

To demonstrate how psychotherapy and Ayurvedic medicine can be used as conjunct therapy, I have created a sample Treatment Plan for Anxiety using Therapy in conjunct with Ayurveda;

counseling: sessions with psychotherapist: once per week addressing anxiety issues, therapist determined that client has vata imbalance, (specifically an imbalance of prana and apana subdoshas) and has generalized anxiety. Therapist offers information on vata body types or recommends book on Ayurveda to help client understand anxiety. Understanding that the client has a vata imbalance helps the therapist create a treatment plan that integrates remedial methods to balance vata. The client benefits from understanding his body type helps to validate his symptoms of anxiety. Once the client understands what increases and decreases vata, the client can take actions and make decisions regarding daily habits and diet helping the client to feel more self empowered and self confident which fulfils one of his goals in therapy. The client can track if anxiety is decreasing by connecting actions, diet, and feelings.

meditation: instruction in meditation: instruction is once per week for eight weeks either at therapist office or referred out to a meditation teacher. The client is recommended to continue to practice meditation for 20 minutes twice per day at his home. *The instruction sessions could be an additional meeting with therapist and does not take the place of therapy.* Meditation instruction also includes psychoeducation about consciousness and Self as mentioned in Chapter III. The meditation practice helps the client deeply relax and reduce anxiety levels. The client can see how to resource himself when he is anxious and prevent anxiety from arising.

behavior modifications: Can be given as psychoeducation in a therapy session. The therapist instructs the client to have a regular schedule by going to bed by 10:00 pm and waking up about the same time each morning between 6:00 and 7:00 am. Client is instructed to apply warm herbal oil on the limbs and lower back followed by a warm bath or shower each morning. Therapist recommends that the client perform 15 minutes of specific yoga postures for anxiety, 5 minutes of breathing exercises, and 20 minutes of meditation. The client is instructed to avoid computer screen time after 7:00 pm. The client is also recommended to walk for 30 minutes after dinner. The client can make a chart to monitor these new habits and what the challenges are in keeping up with them. The client can bring these challenges in to be discussed within a therapy session. For example, the client was in the habit of playing video games every night and now is feeling lost not doing them, creating a new type of anxiety. Creating new hobbies and

exploring new feelings that come up are supported during therapy sessions. It is possible that anxiety can increase at times while the client is making changes in his life.

diet: Client is referred to read about a vata reducing diet, which includes the following information: avoid coffee, colas, and stimulants; avoid cold, dry and raw foods such as salads, iced beverages, and crackers. Eat foods that are warm and nourishing such as baked apples, warm hearty soups, hot organic milk with cardamom, sweet potatoes, hot herbal teas, include ghee and olive oil in diet. Do not skip or delay meals. Eat a minimum of three meals per day. The client feels challenged because he is addicted to drinking cola several times per day, but notes that he feels less anxious when he does not drink them. A feeling of emptiness without the stimulants can arise and can be brought into therapy sessions as way to explore these uncomfortable feelings.

panchakarma treatments: Th client is referred out to an Ayurvedic clinic that offers bodywork and is recommended to get three days of Ayurvedic massage and other oil treatments such as shirodhara, warm herbal oil gently flowing on the head and third eye to calm the nervous system. These treatments help the client feel calm, nurtured, and emotionally supported. It helps to reduce the insecure and ungrounded feelings that a vata imbalance can cause. As a byproduct, the treatment can help reduce the clients feeling of emptiness from playing video games at night and not drinking cola.

herbal formulas: The therapist recommends that the client read up about the herb Brahmi to calm the mind or refers the client to an Ayurvedic practitioner to find out more about herbal formulas. The client notices that taking brahmi helps him be calm but alert, reduce levels of anxiety.

The client keeps a journal to monitor progress and the therapist tracks the client. This is a three-month plan.

Precautions: My experience working with some Ayurveda clients who have a more perfectionism oriented personality (pitta imbalance), is that they tend to get stressed out by having high expectation for themselves and not being able to follow every recommendation completely perfect. In effect, this can contribute to further tension anxiety. If this type of client skips an item on their recommendations list, they can often get upset at themselves and shame themselves. For this reason, it's particularly important that an awareness and sensitivity to these personality tendencies is taken into consideration otherwise it will perpetuate the issues that they came to the therapist for. On this note, some clients need more time to incorporate one instruction at a time or else they become overwhelmed and feel defeated just from the start. For examples, the suggestion

of going to bed by 10:00 pm is going to be the only thing a client can start off with. Once they have achieved this goal over a period of time, the next instruction can be given. Ayurvedic medicine or any other type of holistic medicine can be practiced too rigidly and the client can create further isolation to “non followers” again perpetuating symptoms of imbalance.

As the habits and diet begin to loosen the grip on the client, at first hidden issues may come to the forefront such as eating disorders, food and stimulant addictions, behavior addictions, avoidance issues such as avoiding sleep, being by one’s self meditating, adaptability issues, how clients can or can not make changes. All of these issues are supported through the therapy. In a way, the way a client incorporates Ayurveda into their lives is a mirror or microcosm of the issues in their life. It brings to light the hidden and brings it up for healing. That means a client can benefit from both the Ayurvedic modalities and what it brings up to heal in the process.

This chapter has given a comprehensive understanding of the cause of mental health problems according to the ancient knowledge of Ayurveda as well as the remedial modalities to be used as conjunctive therapy in psychotherapy. Psychotherapy complemented by the holistic health modalities of Ayurvedic medicine offers an integrative approach to alleviating and getting to the root cause of anxiety, depression, and cognitive disorders as well as the possibility of the experience of transcendence and the numinous.

Chapter IV

How does Ayurvedic Medicine apply to the field of mental health and what are the benefits of employing Ayurvedic Medicine to psychotherapy? From Chapter II, we learned that Ayurvedic Medicine offers an integrated approach to mental health issues because it takes into account the whole person, mind, intellect, emotions, soul, environment, and physical body. Employing specific ancient therapies in addition to traditional psychotherapies can accelerate and enhance the goals of certain mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, existential issues, learning problems, ADHD, and cognitive functioning. In addition, employing Ayurvedic medicine therapies can help to prevent mental health issues through nutrition, exercise, stress reducing techniques, and meditation.

As we saw from Chapter III, Transcendental Meditation, an aspect of Ayurveda has over 340 peers reviewed research studies showing that people from all ages and walks of life can benefit from the deep rest and relaxation of this effortless technique. Changes in the body promote changes in the mind and positive changes in the mind and emotions promote better health, for example, modern science has shown that heart disease is connected to the condition of one's mental health. The concept of pragyaparadha, the mistake of the intellect, was defined as cause of suffering. And by offering the intellect knowledge and experience of the Self helps serves as psycho education repairing pragyaparadha.

Ayurvedic Medicine offers a comprehensive program, which would maximize and accelerate the benefits of psychotherapy by offering specific ancient body therapies such as herbal oil massage to calm the central nervous system and increase neurotransmitters that enhance the mood. A treatment called shirodhara, to help balance brain function, improve sleep and reduce anxiety, swedana – mild herbal steam bath to detox the body, heart basti to reduce depression and grief, and full range of ayurvedic herbal formulations to help reduce stress, increase learning ability and memory, decrease depression, help with sleep, and even help to detox and cleanse brain tissue which reduce memory problems. Ayurvedic medicine takes a comprehensive understanding of one's physical and vibration environment, which includes geography, the architecture of the house, and psychosocial stressors, as does traditional psychotherapy. It takes it a step further to the outer environment of one's connection to the stars, planets, and the Sun. It takes into a deep knowing and experience of the Self, to see one's unbounded pure eternal nature as an experience of one's own consciousness, as a numinous experience.

Summary

The research on Ayurvedic Medicine and its application in the mental health field has many clinical applications and in addition many challenges. One of the major problems is that Ayurvedic Medicine is not licensed yet in the USA. It stands where chiropractic medicine and acupuncture medicine was 20 years ago when insurance companies did not cover it. That means many of the therapies Ayurveda offers is an out of pocket expense and would remain something for privileged people since many of the therapies are very expensive and labor intensive. However, many western medical doctors in the USA are trained in

Ayurvedic Medicine and they can bill insurance companies for office visits. There are also legal and ethical issues for some of the therapies of ayurveda such as the bodywork. However, the Ayurvedic psycho education, meditation, and lifestyle could be addressed in a psychotherapy setting. In conclusion, the goal of Ayurveda, beyond mental illness is a state of health and self knowing which is summed up by Professor Tom Egnes (2016) ;

Because Brahman permeates every aspect of creation, it also permeates each of us. In other words, Brahman is our own being, our own pure consciousness. In this sense, Brahmin is the same as Atman. Brahman is the ocean and Atman is a drop in the ocean. Each drop of water can say, "I am the ocean," because each drop is made of the same substance of which the ocean is made" (P. 11).

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Autobiographical Sketch

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