

# To study the effect of Gayatri mantra on Manas Prakruti and stress

Dr Rashi Sharma  
BAMS, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor, Uttaranchal Ayurvedic College

**Abstract - Ayurveda is the divine science of life which deals with Ayu (life). Therefore every research done in the field of Ayurveda also gives- emphasis to health prophylaxis along with treatment. In Ayurveda, the individuals are classified according to Prakruti. There are two types of prakruti-Sharir prakruti and manas prakruti. Sharir prakruti belongs to Vataj, Pittaj, kaphaj and Manas prakruti belongs to Satva, Rajas and tamas prakruti. In the context of stress in individuals, Acharaya charak says that one who indulges in activities which are above ones performing capacity, puts too much strain on oneself in excess perishes like a lion trying to drag an elephant. i.e., putting too much of stress on a system leads to disastrous effects on the body. According to modern science, stress is a state of affair involving demand of physical and mental energy. It is a condition, which can disturb normal physical or mental health of an individual. Observations in the present scenario suggest that in the present fast paced life stress and strain are increasingly becoming contributory factors for health hazards. However, It is impossible to change sharir prakruti but a person can definitely change the percentage of satva, rajas and tamas in his manas prakruti. He can achieve more powerful and superior quality of mind with the help of self-psycho analysis and by nurturing self mind with positive thoughts. Various means to overcome rajas and tamas are described in Upanishads, allied literature and even in charak samhita. One of such effective mean is to chant the Gayatri mantra. The triveni of Gayatri also purifies the trigunas. It enhances the satva guna and hence induces the spiritual illumination. It excels the force of Rajo guna which provokes the hidden potentials and progress of life. It refines the tamo guna which creates fearlessness, endurance, provides courage to fight against injustice. Thus, it enables the individual to follow the path of total social wellbeing and least affected by stress.**

**Keywords - Prakruti, manas gunas, Gayatri mantra, stress**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the divine science of life being practiced since time immemorial. Researches in the field of Ayurveda give emphasis to health prophylaxis along with treatment.

Ayurveda classifies persons according to prakruti. They are of two types:

1. Sharir Prakruti,
2. Manas Prakruti.

Sharirprakruti belongs to vatta, pitta, kapha and manasprakruti belongs to Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Rajas and Tamas are considered as the two doshas of the manas (mind).

Sattva: The illuminating, pure or good quality which leads to clarity and mental serenity sattva is full of love. Sattva is light, light giving full of knowledge.

Rajas: The quality of mobility or activity which makes a person active, energetic, tense and wilful.

Tamas: The dark and restraining quality which obstruct and counteracts the tendency of rajas to work and of sattva to reveal. Tamas is full of destruction. Tamas is heavy, covering and obstructing light.

In spite of this different nature they help mutually in creation. The quality of sattva leads towards the divine and tamas towards the demonic while in between these two stands rajas. Thus, due to the predominance of any the above gunas determines the psychological constitution of mind. Imbalance in any kind of gunas, result in various mental disorders. The balance of rajas and tamas are disturbed by stress condition, desires and negative thoughts. To maintain a healthy body and mind, one should try to balance the three gunas. According to Ayurveda, stress is a state where the mind is imbalanced. The mind is considered to be balanced when it is not agitated, and is firm and stable. When the mind is in a stable state, the individual has the maximum potential to act or behave in ways that continue to keep the mind in a balanced state.

Mental disorders or imbalances are caused when "sattva" decreases and "rajas" and "tamas" increase. As "sattva" decreases, mental strength, determination, and the power to distinguish right from wrong also decrease. When such a state is prolonged, the mind becomes stressed. This may then lead to other mental disorders like anxiety, depression, fear, and nervous debility.

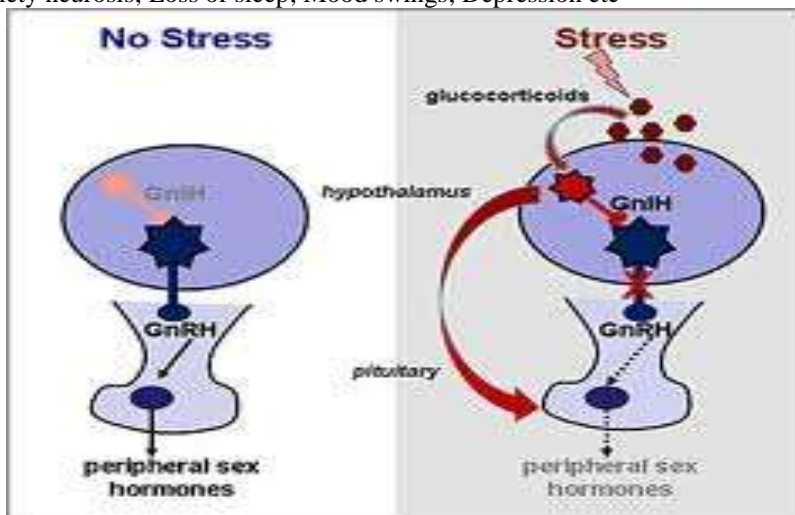
In this jet age, each one of us is exposed to some amount of stress. Some of us can handle stress in a better way than others. In our own lives we come across situations when we can efficiently deal with high amount of stress. When situated in a state of high "sattva" a person is calm, thoughtful, patient, tolerant and demonstrates a high positive attitude. On the other hand, high level of "rajas" and "tamas" leads to a state of hopelessness, despair, impatience, fear, and anxiety. In such a situation, a person becomes confused, lazy and weak in mental power.

Stress is a state of tension that is created when a person responds to the demands and pressures that come from work, family and other external sources, as well as those that are internally generated from self imposed demands, obligations and self-criticism.

Stress is both additive and cumulative. It adds up over time until a state of crisis is reached and symptoms appear. These symptoms may manifest themselves psychologically as irritability, anxiety, impaired concentration, mental confusion, poor judgment, frustration and anger. They may appear as physical symptoms. Common physical symptoms of stress include: muscle tension, headaches, low back pain, insomnia and high blood pressure. Untreated, these symptoms may lead to physical illness and sometimes death.

The changes in the body during “F and F response” occur as the need of the hour. But if this continues then body tries to return back to homeostasis through the stage of resistance. If this resistance continues for too long then the body gets exhausted and falls sick.

Our actions, moods, thoughts are all play of A.N.S and hypothalamus. Stress directly hampers these two systems of the body, which might lead to: Anxiety neurosis; Loss of sleep; Mood swings; Depression etc



The stress pathology does not just stop here these events will trigger a series of other pathological events, which later on take an independent name and course. So it is also difficult to pinpoint etiology of stress on many such disorders.

### **Stress Reaction**

Excess physical, chemical or emotional pressure causes a 'stress reaction' in the body. The stress reaction is a state of 'overdrive' where our organs work overtime to enable us to keep functioning when under pressure - our fight-or flight response. During prolonged stress, the body is forced to maintain higher levels of these natural chemicals which eventually results in burnout. This is where the term 'adrenal fatigue' comes from - the adrenal system literally becomes fatigued from having to operate in overdrive for long periods. How long we can operate under this stress reaction all depends on our tolerance for stress or our 'stress threshold'.

### **The Stress Threshold**

When does stress turn into illness?

Each person has a different tolerance level for stress. Some people handle stress well while others don't - it all comes down to individual make-up. When we reach our threshold for stress, some form of breakdown occurs, either physically, emotionally or both. It all depends on how much stress we endure and for how long - the effects eventually manifest in our physical health...

Purity of the body and mind is another prerequisite for concentration of mind and proper meditation.

Stress management through mantra chanting

Mantra is a mystic syllable with esoteric meaning. It is extremely efficacious when it is pronounced properly with clear awareness of its meaning. It produces certain vibrations which alter the organic & mental states of an individual. It is also capable of altering the organic and mental states of other person. It is even capable of producing changes in the environment. Patanjali in Yoga Sutra 1.29 speaks that mantra leads to awareness of the indwelling spirit.

According to Swami Prabhavananda, repetition of the mantra is directed to the five senses ---eyes, ears, nostrils, tongue & skin--these organs become refined and the corresponding five perceptions----sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch ----become purified. Sense objects constantly draw the mind outward causing distractions, agitations& suffering. When the sense organs become more imbued with Sattva---- purity and calmness---- this state of things changes. Then, whatever we experience through our senses”ll no longer agitate the mind.

Swami Vishnu Devanandas states that mantras are Sanskrit invocations of the Supreme Being. Reinforced and propelled by japa, meditation; they pass from the verbal level through the mental & telepathic states and onto pure thought energy.

Swami Rama states that mantra is a syllable, a sound, a word, or set of words found in the deep state of meditation by the great sages. Those sounds which are received from the super conscious state lead the seeker higher and higher until he reaches the perfect silence. It makes one aware of higher dimensions of consciousness.

## **II. GLORY OF GAYATRI MANTRA**

OM is the primordial spanda (vibration). All mantras have emerged out of it. OM is nature of pure light. All other mantras are also of the nature of light waves. “GAYATRI – MANTRA” is called as supreme medicine (manashadhi) because it heals all diseases. Any sick person may be cured of his disease by just regularly reciting Gayatri mantra.

OM is the first syllable of gayatri mantra which the ancient Vedic seers used to recite. Pure consciousness is the source of gayatri mantra. Gayatri mantra symbolizes the sun. Anybody who habitually recites the gayatri mantra gets purified in his mind and body because the radiant energy of the mantra burns all the blemishes in his personality.

The Gayatri mantra chanting is a form of meditation to protect one from all human sins, physical dissipation and to bestow knowledge, health and longevity. The performance of Gayatri mantra chanting serves as a primary route for self purification (increasing satva guna and decreasing rajas and tamas). It enhances the, Atma Shakti and protects them from the devastating effects of sins. This mantra is supercharged with power and has been suggested to mankind under the Vedas. Gayatri mantra has a dynamic force and enjoins the brahmachari (bachelor), the grahasthas (house holder) and the vanaprastha (forest dweller), all to repeat this sanctified mantra at least 108 times a day. Gayatri Mantra is the first mantra to be taught in schools in the olden days as it enabled the students attain righteous and far sighted wisdom and energized them to absorb the studies ahead of them. The Gayatri Mantra is a part of the Rig Veda Samhita, Mandala III, 62 – 10. The Maithrayani Upanisad explains the meaning and importance of meditation of Gayatri mantra.

Mantra chanting is a scientific process of inward orientation of mind. The vibrations induced by the repeated chanting of mantra generate specific pulsation of prana. The chanting of Gayatri Mantra activates the network of nerves in the mouth and stimulates specific glands. This modifies the individual's personality out of the rajas and tamas pradhan prakruti towards satva pradhan prakruti (It removes ignorance from the subconscious and thus helps in the emergence of light of spirit within the individual soul). A Vedic symphony is created which spreads in the ether, takes a round of the entire universe, coming back to the source with its energy augmented manifold, capable of fulfilling the desired purpose.

### III. SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF GAYATRI MEDITATION

The syllables of gayatri mantra are uttered by different parts of the mouth such as throat (larynx), tongue, teeth, lips and the root of the tongue. During speech, the nerve-fibres of the particular parts of the mouth from which sound emits stretch up to various parts of the body and exert pressure on the corresponding glands. There are various large, small, visible and invisible glands in the body. Uttering of different words has its impact on different glands and by such impact the energy of these glands gets stimulated.

The twenty-four letters in Gayatri-Mantra which are related to twenty-four such glands located in the body which, on getting stimulated, activate and awaken the powers of mind for righteous wisdom (satva guna).

### IV. CONCLUSION

This shows chanting of Gayatri mantra can modify individual's manas prakruti from rajas pradhan and tamas pradhan prakruti to satva pradhan prakruti. Thus, it is significant that the chanting of the Gayatri mantra has a cumulative effect on our body and our mind. Mind becomes sharper and immune system is stronger. Our energy centers, including our main Chakras, are activated by the vibrations of the Gayatri mantra and this has a positive and healing effect on our mind and life (Prana). Thus, it enables the individual to follow the path of satva guna and hence least affected by ill-effects of stress.

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