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Unit 1: Indian Psychology through Social & Philosophical Lens

Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss the caselet given at the beginning of this unit (Unit 2) by identifying with themes and real life relevance to Indian psychological perspective on them?

2. Describe what you understand by Indian Psychology vis a vis western psychology.

3. Explain the core concepts and terminologies of Indian Psychology, like Self (Atman), Consciousness (Chetana) and Liberation (Moksha)?

4. Explain the philosophical and sociocultural contributions that influence indianamerican psychology.

5. Explain the historical development and growth of psychology as a discipline in India, emphasizing important personalities and movements.

6. Apply conceptual understanding to practical contexts through a case study or experiential activity related to Indian Psychology.

7. Summarize and review key terms, concepts, and reflective questions to reinforce learning and encourage deeper inquiry.

Content:

1.0 Introductory Caselet

“The Mirror Within.”

The 22-year-old postgraduate student of psychology, Ananya, had always been good at her studies. She could spout Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, Skinner’s behaviorism and not miss a beat on wandering the maze of cognitive models. But while doing her internship at a wellness center in Rishikesh, she found something she didn’t expect. The center adhered to holistic model based on Indian philosophical traditions — daily yoga, mindfulness through pranayama, reflective journaling and discussing Bhagavad Gita were a part of therapy as well as way of life.

The young man disclosed during a client session one day that he did not consider anxiety to be "disorder," but dis-alignment between his inner self (Atman) and his task in the world (his Dharma). Ananya (whose arms and legs are entrenched in academia) had no easy answer. None of her textbooks ever linked the ideas of Atman, Karma or Moksha to psychological themes.

She approached her mentor, an Indian psychologist by profession, who informed her that Indian Psychology does not only work with mental illness but with inner transformation, self-realization and well as harmonizing with one's environment. It comes from experiential knowing, after spending years teaching myself to meditate and do yoga. Distinct from these western models based mainly on symptom resolution, and change in behavior, Indian psychologies conceive the mind as a tool destined to transcend suffering and achieve higher levels of consciousness.

Ananya’s academic worldview was profoundly rattled by this experience. She started to read Indian texts not just as philosophy, but also as psychology in their own right. 1 The question that once felt abstract — “What is the self? — somehow just took center stage in how she made sense of mental well-being.

Critical Thinking Question:

How could a reference to Atman and Dharma challenge the commonly held assumptions about psychology in Western conventional frameworks, or even open up further possibilities for psychological practice?

1.1 Introduction to Indian Psychology

1.1.1 Meaning and Scope of Indian Psychology

Indian Psychology refers to the branch of Psychology native to the Indian subcontinent, and includes all schools of psychological thought that are established on its philosophical ideas and influenced by its spiritual traditions. It's not just a form of psychology practiced in India, but an entire way of perceiving the human mind, behavior and awareness from Indian held beliefs. Indian Psychology is deeply rooted in the Indian Scripture/Texts like Vedas and Upanishadas and the texts like Bhagwadgita, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Buddhist Philosophy and Jainism. At the heart of Indian Psychology is experience related, introspective and oriented towards self-development (Atma-Jnana), liberation (Moksha), and transformation.

Metaphysics and Ethics: The Core of Indian Psychology Indian psychology is, thus in adequate fashion, inherently related to the metaphysical as well as ethical aspect of human life. It does not stop at the behavior observation over the processes of mind, it proceeds down into much subtler territories -- consciousness (Chitta), self (Atman), ego (Ahamkara) and mind (Manas). It views man holistically — body and mind, intellect and soul. In the end, what it ought to look like is not only adaptation to the world (which most western models aim for), but overcoming suffering, and reaching the true potential of a person.

The broad and the deep view of Indian Psychology. It encompasses:

• Theoretical information: The theory of e.g., the 3 gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas), panchakosha (five sheaths) and stages of consciousness provides a very neat framework of human nature which can be wrapped up in a nutshell.

• Applied Indian Psychology: IP provides several applied self-regulating and integrative techniques like meditation, pranayama, dhayana, and pratyahara.

• Technology and Environment: Indigenous therapy that include elements of Yoga, Ayurveda and Buddhist's mindfulness based interventions are some of the aspects found in this psychological tradition.

• Ethical and Moral Dimension: ideography – Indian Psychology is value oriented whereas the western tradition is value free. It highlights the necessity of virtuous living, discipline and dharma (right conduct) for mental health.

• Application to Learning & Development: The 'Traditional Indian Education System' had emphasis on holistic development (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth) though in the gurukula context it was learning by doing too.

• Guiding Investigative Questions: The orientation of the approach is subjective and phenomenological, self-directed and direct experience is valued over measuring externals.

Indian Psychology is revolutionizing psychology in multiple senses as we understand it today. For example, Western psychology defines self-actualization in terms of acquisition or individual growth; Indian Psychology believes that the realization of Absoluteness —the dissolution of mind and consciousness into the this reality consciousness--is the ultimate goal. Emotions, moreover, are not merely responses to stimuli; rather they are taken to be inner states whose character is determined by the gunas (virtues which dissolve the ego), karma and mental imprints left over from past experience (samskaras).

Indian Psychology looks both back and forward upon the mind — to its past karmic evolutes, present operations, and future prospects round an ageless wheel. This model disseminates a fuller view of psychological disorders: one in which certain difficulties are acknowledged not to be account for solely on the basis of what is currently happening in someone's life.

Based on the vast resources of Indian philosophical and religious tradition, Indian Psychology offers a comprehensive model that incorporates ethics, spirituality, praxis and cognition. Unlike fragmented, mechanical models of mind, it presents an integrated approach to understanding and transforming the human mind based on a unified value and experiential perspective.

1.1.2 Psychology in the Context of Indian Culture and Traditions

Indian culture is enriched with spiritual and philosophical tradition that has deeply influenced Indian perception of human mind and behavior. Indian Psychology Life in its entire contents, minute or massive as that may be', SUBPYCHology of and not in the natural order (55)* psychology 6 It is an attempt to elaborate a sc^f';atherine'). According to Indian thinking, mind is a source of bondage and at the same time can pave the foundation for freedom hence fostering of mind occupies center stage in bills and cultures.

Indian cultural moorings Rituals of celebration, family constellation Orality And the narrative tradition that perhaps has the power to add greatly in shaping one’s sense of self > emotional vocabulary and mental resilience towards life.getPortrayed realistically without being melodramatic. The extended family system for example, promotes Social co-dependence in the payoff of the highly individualized societies found across most parts of western America. This embeddedness has relevance for our understanding and realization of psychological ideation (self, ego, morality; guilt, responsibility).

The concept of suffering and its alleviation under # DharmaTraditions Theconcept of sufferingand its are also prevalent in #DharmicReligions like

Hinduism,Buddhism,JainismandSikhism.5 Such religions provide actual models which map on to psychological constructs of suffering, & desire and liberation. Syllable yoga, meditation, chanting and seva (selfless service) are more than spiritual rituals, they actually have deep psychological meanings. They are to cleanse and clear the mind, to balance emotions and to create a life that is in harmony with higher ideals.

The cyclical view of time, life (birth, death and rebirth) also influences how one views events in life as well as psychological suffering in the Indian traditions. The doctrine of karma suggests that the condition in which we find ourselves now is a result of what has gone before, and as such it adds a spiritual dimension to responsibility beyond mere justiciability or morality.

Comparison There are four pramanas: perception (pratyaksha), infer ence (anumana), comparison (upam ana), and auditory testimony (shabda) that apply not only to philosophical reflection but also psychological understanding. This contrasts with the Western reliance on empiricism and experimentation.

Finally, the rituals, and symbols themselves lighting a lamp or applying a tilak; intoning mantras are all agents of psychological conditioning. They provide order and rhythm in our daily lives, connection to soil, emotional self-regulation and sociability. That is followed by application which spans generations and conveys a fluency that gives culture and peace of mind.

12 Folk and fairy elements to which these epics have provided a setting, are in the first instance reifications of types of human behaviour, of emotional ambivalence, choice; or alternatively this. They are figures in a mythological epic less as sirens than as psychological templates — ideals of valor, despair, detachment and loyalty or people made stronger by the infamy heaped on them.

Another distinctive aspect is the language and metaphors which we find in Indian tradition. Maya, and lila and bhakti are names of most sophisticated psychological abstractions. These are metaphors that give us even stronger symbols, with which to read life and human emotions: even stronger than an analytic language.

There, mental health is not no illness, but it is manash shuddhi (purity of mind), chitta vritti nirodha (check on fluctuations) and travelling in dharma. Consequently, they are inextricably associated with mental health.

Did You Know?

“Indian traditions recognize not just five but six senses, the sixth being the mind (manas) itself. Unlike in Western psychology, where the mind is often studied in isolation, Indian thought integrates the mind as both a sensory and a cognitive organ — making it central to both perception and inner transformation.”

1.1.3 Differences Between Indian and Western Perspectives

The differences have both structure and function, influencing not only what psychology investigates but how it is approached, modeled and measured.

THESE DIFFERENCES are a result of the contrastive paradigms that constitute modern Western psychology, based on that which is materialistic and empirical, and Indian one, based on spiritual and introspective lines.

Ontology and Identity of the Self:

Western psychology tends to view a person in materialistic or a mechanical way. “The self is generally conceived to be composed of various sets or clusters of personality traits, cognitive sets, emotional features: all these things that have developed from the organism’s experiences with its environment and its own genetic endowment. Indian psychology, however, sees the self (i.e., Atman) as eternal, changeless and divine. The ego (ahamkara) is an illusion of individuality that covers up the true self. Western psychology speaks of self-construction and self-esteem; Indian psychology talks of self-realization and ego-transcendence.

Goals of Psychology:

In Western models, the goal is adaptation, mental health or self-actualization (like in Maslow’s model). The objective is to have a working role in society. But Indian psychology goes further — it aims to free itself from suffering by advancing spiritually. Ideas as those of Moksha, Nirvana and Kaivalya represent this focus of transcendence.

Methods of Inquiry:

Western psychology is predominantly empirical and quantitative, based on experiments, surveys and standardized tests. Objectivity and replicability are central. The inner world is not rejected, but instead is investigated with all the rigor of meditative and yogic disciplines. Experience trumps generalize to statistics more often than not.

Emotions and Cognition:

In Western belief, emotions are typically considered states of mind that arise as a result of the situation we are in or in response to an external stimulus and aren’t usually delineated between. The few Indian Psychologists include moral and spiritual dimensions (emotions are seen as expressive of gunas and their successful regulation is thought to depend on self-discipline, devotion, wisdom). Negative feelings are not repressed, but rather sublimated through means like bhakti (devotion), gyana (knowledge) and karma (doing the right thing).

Healing and Therapy:

In the West, healing methods tend to include spoken catharsis (psychoanalysis), behaviour modification or cognitive reprogramming. Indian models include silence, prayer, controlled breathing and body-mind harmony.

Healing is described not only as the relief of symptoms but also as a return to balance between the doshas (in Ayurveda) or purity of mind chitta shuddhi.

Ethics and Values:

Western psychology typically presents itself as value-free. Indian psychology is value-laden. Terms like dharma, ahimsa, satya and brahmacharya are not merely moral precepts but psychological imperatives for mental health. Without Transcendence there can be no such thing as theodicy, however: without ethics, inner peace is thought of as not seemly.

Cultural Foundations:

Modern Western psychology emerged amidst industrialization, individualism, and scientific rationalism. Indian psychology originates from an agrarian, community-based spiritualistic heritage that esteems intra-individual development more than inter-personal success.

View of Time and Causality:

Western models tend to conceptualize causality in behavior as linear, from the present back into the individual's life. In Indian psychology, there is the rationale that karma and samskara are carried over to affect present behavior and mental states from the past lives. These distinctions are not academic; they have practical consequences. Knowing them facilitates psychologists to be culturally informed in their praxis and also extends the range of theories represented within the psychological science from the objective world to subjective world.

1.2 Definition and Nature of Indian Psychology

1.2.1 Defining Indian Psychology

We have already developed ‘Indian Psychology’ as a complete indigenous system of psychological knowledge based on the spiritual, philosophical and cultural approaches in India. Unlike Western psychology which tends to confine its investigation to observable behavior and mental functions by empirical means, Indian Psychology extends its scope to Consciousness, Self and transcendent aspects of human being. It is not just Indian and Indianised psychology, but a kind of tradition that has been

specific to human condition grounded against the backdrop of ancient Indian philosophical systems.

Essentially, Indian Psychology aims at knowing the inner universe of the individual– mental states, emotions, thoughts and consciousness by introscopic and experiential procedures. Its principal emphasis is on transforming the self, not merely curing psychological disorders. This involves developing moral virtues, such as compassion, non-attachment, discipline and equanimity that are considered fundamental to the human experience.

The phrase Indian Psychology has only recently come into use in academic literature in the latter part of the 20th century, as academicians began to realise that psychological concepts and practices were not absolute and thus could not be generalised from one culture to another. Indian thinkers like Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, and Mahatma Gandhi contributed in a very seminal manner Indian thought has suggested to early theorising with reference to the centrality of one's spiritual development, moral values and inner experience were central in explaining human psychology.

Indian Psychology posits a multi-sheet (layered) model of the human being. It models human existence in five layers of self (the koshas), which it terms the physical, vital, mental and intellectual sheaths or facets of atman. All these layers are interconnected and mental well-being leads to coordination of all these layers.

Mind (manas) in Indian Psychology is not independent or separate. It is interconnected with mind (buddhi), ego ([[ahamkara] and self ([[atman), all of which underpin its response to stimuli and experiences. The goal of life is considered to be transcendence opening up at least one's ego into self-realization and the self into union with Supreme or Brahman in traditions such as Shaivism.

It is a value-laden (that is, axiological) and ethically based definition. The concepts of dharma, karma and satya (truth) are not adjuncts but basic in the psychological structure. Inner equilibrium is achieved not by external restriction, but rather through fusion with one's higher Self.

Secondly, even in Indian psychology, the human being is not alienated from the universe. The physical (brahmanda) and microcosm (pindanda), as seen in each other, create a resonance between human consciousness and cosmic consciousness. In that sense, Indian Psychology is cosmocentric rather than anthropocentric.

In the final analysis, to define Indian Psychology is to recognize its non-dualistic grounding, its spiritualist intentions and requirements, and that it is indigenous.

1.2.2 Key Features of Indian Psychological Thought

The Indian School of psychology is unique in that it has a strong foundation on the metaphysical, ethical and religious issues. Alfred AdlerAllgemein Its face could not be more different from the gloomy and value-less shapes of a mechanics, reductionist modern psychology as we find it in most strains of contemporary Western psychology. This has three main components: a holistic treatment of mind and consciousness blending philosophy and spirituality, an emphasis on self realization or liberation.

Global View of Mind and Consciousness

Indian Psychology believes in generating a holistic view which regards man as a many sided entity. The mind is not disconnected from the body, feelings, intellect or spirit. Instead, it is one aspect of an interdependent whole that supports a person's mental/emotional and spiritual growth.

The view is graphically presented in the Panchakosha model in the Taittiriya Upanishad. It suggests that there are five layers of human life:

• Annamaya kosha (physical body)

• Pranamaya kosha (vital energy)

• Manomaya kosha (mental body)

• Vijnanamaya kosha (intellect)

• Anandamaya kosha (bliss sheath)

Each layer influences the other. Any imbalance in one of these layers may result in psychological illness, and healing must be on all of these sheaths. Consciousness (chit) is not an epiphenomenon of the brain, as commonly believed in neurology, but a timeless truth that permeates the universe.

Integration of Philosophy and Spirituality

As opposed to the Western habit of disassociating Psychology from Philosophy and Religion, IP does integrate these. Vedanta, Sankhya and Yoga are all philosophical schools which provide the structure of psychology. These perspectives are complex teachings of mind, heart and practice with a great focus on Spirit.

Religious rites and rituals like dhyana (meditation), pranayama (controlling the breath) and mantra repetition are not mere religious activities, but means for cognitive reorganization.Also it helps in regulating ones emotions. The spiritual ideal of moksha is both a philosophical and psychological description, wherein the ultimate goal is to be released from the chains of the ego and suffering.

This fusion ensures our psychological growth is parallel with moral and ethical development. In Indian Psychology, emotional health and spiritual growth are not two separate things which have to be cultivated separately; rather each promotes the other.

Emphasis on Self-Realization and Liberation

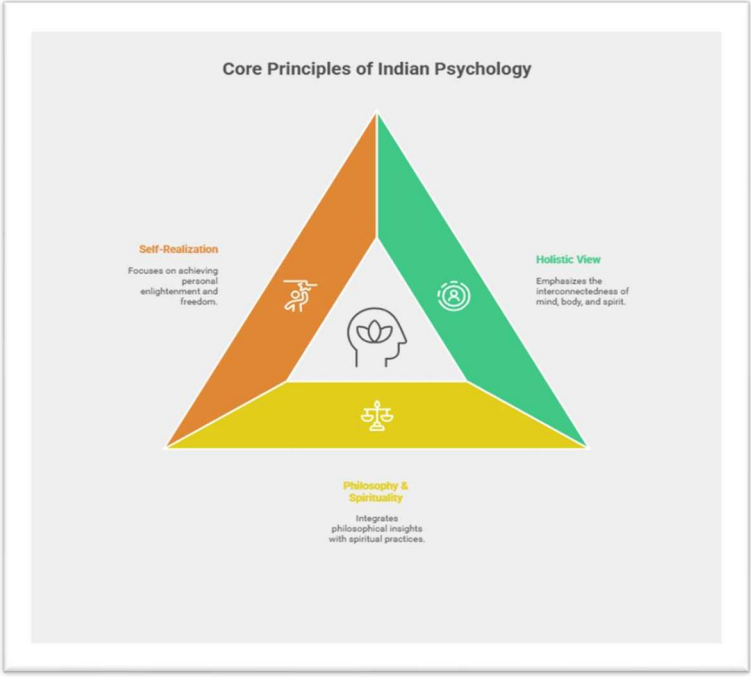
The most unique aspect of Indian Psychology is probably the focus on self-realisation and freedom. Self-realization is the witnessing or clear realisation/understanding of who you are, without all of the limiting identity and beliefs that we consciously or unconsciously accumulate.

The goal is liberation (moksha), which represents release from suffering, ignorance and samsara.

The way to salvation requires a practice of yoga, bhakti (devotion), karma (unselfish action) and gyana (knowledge). These are not abstractions, they are specific psychological operations of personality and consciousness transformation.

Unlike the modern psychology which deals with negative aspects of mind like diseases, anomalies etc, Indian psychology is concerned more with positive transformation. There is an emphasis on sattva (purity, balance), master of the gunas (basic nature tendencies) and destruction of ego as a therapeutic need.

In conclusion, these characteristics locate Indian Psychology within a consciousness based, values oriented and spiritual persuasion, as that which is both science of the mind as well as an ascendency path to inner transformation.



1.1 Principles of Indian Psychological Thought

1.2.3 Sources of Indian Psychological Knowledge

Centuries of a gigantic classical heritage in India -classical texts that were guidelines for philosophical and ethical and spiritual how to do it right for thousand of years. The

scriptures of Hinduism have been classified into two broad categories: Shruti and Smriti, where Smriti is concerned with secondary texts which includes the Itihasas, Puranas among others. These scriptures do not regard psychology as a subject in itself, but they are based on psychological observations and incorporated into their general teachings about life, consciousness, freedom.

Vedas

The Vedas are at the foundation of all Indian Dharma. While mere incantations they may be, hymns and formulas, there is yet also profound human truth in them symbolically clothed. Rita, *Satya and Manas are the spiritual substances reported by Vehicular Hands; which are referred to in a material shape by tite letter of^the Veda. The stress is on self-control, prayer, and inner purity as means of achieving communion with the cosmic order.

The Rigveda describes man as manas, or thought (also consciousness), and this-everything that is described in the pair speech-man looks over their nature together, even if everything there is known as Vak, it is evidence of being a Manas. getParameter. sinh. Source#Footnote_11" class="reference"/>

(mind). It points to the power of intentionality, the power of mind over matter.

Upanishads

From Ritualistic to Spiritual View The Upanishads mark the transition from ritualism to spiritual reasoning. (These are the four great texts of consciousness, self and highest reality, which is philosophical discourses) The strata of human existence through metaphor, conversation and meditative reflection.

Some of the primary psychological reflections found in the Upanishads include;

• The ego self duality

• Illusion of individual self (maya)

• The technique of questioning self (atma-vichara).

•The four stages of consciousness: waking (jagrat), dream (svapna), deep sleep (sushupti) and transcendental or turiya

These ideas comprise the metaphysical basis of Indian Psychology's understanding of mind.

Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the most psychologically relevant texts in all literature. As it was narrated as a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna, this great epic deals with the dilemma we face in life, despair of existence, moral crisis and psychological

problems. Gita describes three main paths to psychological and spiritual development :

• Karma Yoga (selfless action)

• Bhakti Yoga (devotion)

• Jnana Yoga (knowledge)

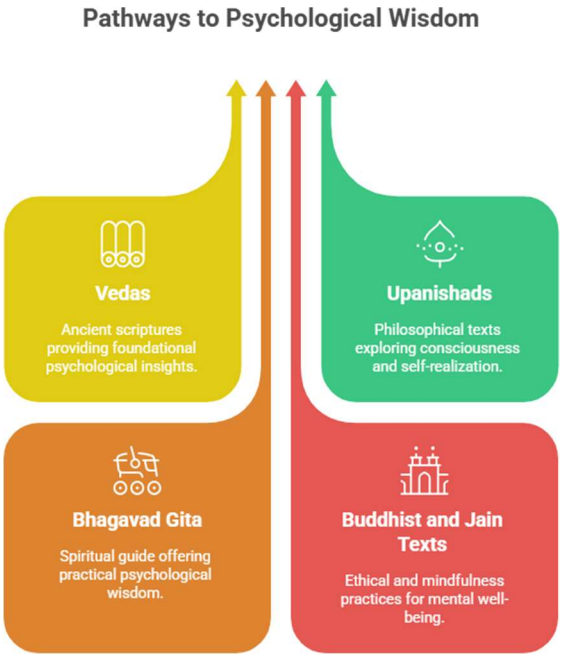
It also frames the sthita-prajna (the one with steady wisdom) as an example of emotional resilience and psychological fitness. The Gita says that freedom does not lie in renunciation, rather freedom lies in non-attachment and yet acting amidst the world.

Buddhist and Jain Texts

In Buddhist psychology they are included among the unwholesome roots (maula). The Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path offers, then, a graduated path towards psychological health through mindfulness and an experiential ethical system. 'Meditation' techniques such as vipassana and samatha are highly developed systems for reprogramming the mind and controlling emotions.

The psychological canons contained in the Jain Scriptures centered around Ahimsa (non-aggression), Aparigraha (non-possession) and Satya (truth). A significant chunk of Jain epistemology revolves around the notion of anekantavada (multiple viewpoints), a concept that is related to openness and cognitive flexibility.

Together these books present a rich, nuanced and deep intellectual base for Indian Psychology. They stress formation of the mind, purification of emotions and realization of a deeper self than that identified with our ego.



1.2 Pathway to Psychological Knowledge

“Activity: Exploring the Self through Text and Reflection”

Ask students to choose one passage from either the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, or Dhammapada that discusses the self, mind, or consciousness. After reading the passage, students should write a reflective response connecting the ideas in the text to their own experience of thought, emotion, or inner conflict. Encourage them to draw parallels between ancient insights and modern psychological concerns such as stress, identity, or moral choice. This activity helps students bridge philosophical texts and lived experience through introspective analysis.

1.3 Important Concepts in Indian Psychology

1.3.1 Concept of Atman (Self)

Atman, then, is a central construct of Indian Psychology by which the dynamics of human cognition as well as the goal of psychological development are to be understood. Atman is the eternal, unchanging essence of a being and the soul or spirit in Vedanta philosophy, while non-being (Shūnyatā) is its impermanent foil within and conditioned by empirical human experience. It is not a personality, or psychological construct alone but pure consciousness itself which is even freer of the mind, body and ego.

From the Sanskrit root “an” signifying “to breathe,” Atman is commonly identified with the soul or self. Unlike the ahamkara (ego-self) which is partly based on external perceptions – on what we think others see in ourselves, Atman (the universal self) being universal underpins this individual "self-concept", and therefore is devoid of any experiential basis. The Indian psychology view is that it is ignorance (avidya) of this true self, as well as an excessive or exclusive attachment to transient mental states and external factor identities, which creates suffering.

The Upanishads, the major texts of Indian spiritual and psychological thought, emphasize again and again the difference between Atman and the mortal body or transient mind. The Chandogya Upanishad declares: "Tat Tvam Asi" (That Thou Art), which means that the individual soul is in essence Brahman. Hence, Indian wisdom perceives psychological healing and maturation as not just a change of action or symptom removal but the slow revealing or actualization of Atman.

In therapeutic terms, the recognition of Atman entails a change in self-identification - from being identified with a collection of thoughts, etc., to identifying oneself as the witness (sakshi) of those mental states. It diminishes attachment, fear and ego battles, which leads to equanimity instead of compassion and detachment.

The Indian Psychology concept of Atman is also relevant for interpersonal relations and morality. The experience of Atman in others breeds empathy, non-violence and mutual respect as it accents the fact that they too possess a common spiritual genesis despite appearances.

To develop awareness of the Âtman, Indian psychological techniques focus on introspection, meditation, learning from scriptures and living an ethical life. These are practices to calm the mind (chitta vritti nirodha), in which we start to experience deeper levels of self-awareness. While the West seems to be concerned with constructing or improving the self, Indian Psychology suggests that it is best to overcome this by "transcending" and realizing liberation (moksha) in which Atman= Brahman.

Hence, Atman in Indian Psychology is not a concept but an existential reality to be realized through prescribed method of self-realization and self-analysis. It shifts what psychological exploration is all about: from controlling the mind to transcending it, and from healing oneself to realizing the Self.

1.3.2 Concept of Manas, Buddhi, and Chitta

Indian psychology articulates internal formations of human through a sophisticated structure called Antahkarana along with its parts and sub-parts viz Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta or the memory, subconscious storehouse Ahamkara (the ego). Each of these parts serve separate but interconnected functions in mental function, emotional regulation, thinking and spiritual development.

Manas (Mind)

Manas is the sensory-perceptual and emotional sense-organ. It receives and organizes sensory information, creates wants, responds to stimuli. It is the throne of feeling, desire, doubt and decision. Manas is naturally restless and unsteady as per the Bhagavad Gita, needs discipline and training by like of meditation to achieve peace and clarity.

In psychological terms, Manas is linked with affective and sensory systems of processing. These are automatic thoughts, desires and emotions. An uneducated manas is the source of fear, incoherence and conflict.

Buddhi (Intellect)

Buddhi refers to the discriminative or deciding faculty (Viveka). It’s the place of reason, understanding and wisdom. A trained Buddhi is one which can lead the Manas by differentiation between right and wrong, real and unreal, permanent and impermanent.

In counseling or self growth, buddhi is essential to all cognitive reframing, value and belief clarification, and conscious decision making. " * By the culture of Buddhi, people act not from momentary impulses but according to (Dharma) right doing.

Buddhi is the faculty which is the reflector of the higher self, when subjected to spiritual disciplines. It is like a mirror, it will reflect that which is Atman when cleared of the dissymmetry of inverted ego and of the emotional perturbations.

Chitta (Memory/Subconscious)

Chitta is the storehouse of all past impressions, memories, samskaras (mechanical impression) and habits or latent tendencies. This is even both conscious memory and subconscious patterns, developed by how we games though over time.

Chitta plays a huge role in how we respond to our present and the issue is, 90% of times it does this subconsciously. In modern psychological terms, it would be the unconscious mind or deep memory system. Unresolved samskaras that are recorded in the Chitta (one of the four functions of mind) can become habits, fears or other obstacles.

In Indian psychology, it means purification of the Chitta by Introspection (Swadhyaya), ethical living and spiritual discipline to weaken the power of harmful samskaras and develop higher tendencies or sattvic ones. These three — Manas, Buddhi and Chitta not only are simple things but they each interact with related Units of the Antahkarana. A healthy psychological life is attained when Buddhi controls Manas, and the Chitta has been purified from perturbing impressions. The function of the ego (ahankara) is to integrate these faculties, however, left to its own devices it creates mis-identification and suffering in a being out of tune with Atman.

1.3.3 Karma and Its Psychological Implications

The word Karma is derived from the Sanskrit Kri, which means to do. As Defined in Indian Psychology Karma is not only the spiritual or metaphysical law of causation but also a psychological principle that is responsible (a) for experiences.that continue from one life to another and (b) for the formation of personal traits. The Law of karma functions on an individual, inter-personal and on a collective level as well; all these four major realms are stamped at the depth of unconscious which subtly but forcefully determines not only the mental constitution, emotional disposition and patterns but also hard fastedly outlines the broader spectrum of the outer life.

Karma is generally classified into:

- Sanchita Karma: Untouched Karmas of all the past birthsces and other fetuses that had died before “Nimita-Mrityu”.

• Prarabdha Karma: Thet portion of that karma which is already bringing results in the present life.

• Agami Karma – Acts which come to fruition later.

Psychologically Speaking Karma can be thought of as the sum total of your conscious acts (thought, deeds and emotions) that has left imprints (Samskaras) in the Chitta (mental/psychic sub-strait). These imprints greatly influence subsequent action, reaction and tendency – some are so powerful as to make their presence known even in the next life.

Karma theory encourages personal responsibility. People are viewed as powerful actors who are capable of creating their fate through rational decision making. Unlike deterministic frameworks, it considers Karma as mutable – with conscientious living, sincere ethicality and committed spirituality one could purge the old Karma and inscribe new felicitous grooves. Karma also shows how the mind causes the suffering. And it's not always attached to today; it might have to do with things you have done in the past. This expands healing awareness to be able to see as vibrational cause underlying reasons for emotional wounds and patterns in life. Acts of meditation, self-enquiry and selfless labour (karma yoga) are intended to eliminate such karmic complexes9.58 thereby forming liberative-oriented conduct on the part of skandha-constituted persons".

Further, Karma is inseparable from intention (bhava) and not detachable as action. Same karma results in different karmic facing when the intention with which it is done is different. Hence, Indian Psychology does not just value mindfulness of intention; it links intent with higher values such as compassion, truthfulness and non violence.

Karma is also the basis of attraction and the therapy notion "Reinforcement". Actions that are positive and done with purity of intention strengthen positive samskaras, while negative actions steepen emotional and cognitive grooves.

Karma is thus not some form of fatalistic belief, but a psychological principle for understanding ourselves, our growth as humans and also any potential transformation. It provides a moral psychological plan in which ethical action and self-awareness are the principal means of healing and liberation.

1.3.4 Dharma and Ethical Living

Dharma is that which maintains the natural order of things, the duty of all people to perform their duties inherent in, and appropriate to, their situation. In personal relations, Dharma is one's obligation to self, family and society and by extension the cosmos (Satya) in truthfulness.

According to Indian Psychology, living life according to Dharma is necessary for sound mental health, as it>(()It) guarante() es the.

congruence between one's internal values and outer behaviour. When people act against the Dharma—out of greed or self-seeking; by harming others-they bring about inner conflict, guilt and karmic results. On the other hand, a life according to Dharma promotes inner-peace, understanding and emotional balance.

Dharma is contextual, not rigid. Dharma for one individual in life or circumstances might not be that of another. For instance- the Dharma of a student is discipline & learning, and that of a teacher is guidance & integrity! The Indian scriptures have described four types of Dharma:

• Sva-Dharma: Duty based on one's nature and stage in life

• Samanya-Dharma: General duties including truthfulness, non-violence

• Vishesha-Dharma: Special, contextual duties relating to specialization or place in society

• Yuga-Dharma: Responsibilities in accordance to age or social order

From a mental viewpoint, Dharma acts as an internal "guiding star. Engagement in activities consistent with Dharma improves

respect, self-control and mental fortitude; Adharma disrupts it.

From Self-Examination to Scriptural Study We are encouraged in our spiritual tradition to ask ourselves profound questions about the nature of Dharma, and this inquiry includes both study of scripture Details Written by Swami Nirmalananda Category: I AM Wearing Footsteps Published: 30 July 2020 and even more powerful is the guidance we receive from enlightened teachers. The Bhagavad Gita insists that doing one's own Dharma partially is better than doing another's Dharma perfectly. This would imply the significance of authenticity and moral virtue in psychological health.

Did You Know?

"The concept of Dharma in Indian thought is not based on externally imposed rules but is seen as an individual's inner law, discovered through introspection and guided by conscience. It is dynamic, evolving with self-awareness, making it a psychological process of inner moral discernment."

1.4 Emergence of Psychology in India

1.4.1 Early Philosophical Roots of Psychology in India

Origins of Indian Psychology The origins of psychology thought in India can be found in the philosophical and spiritual systems that developed over several millennia. It was the case, unlike western psychology that emerged as a result of experimental science and empirical observation, Indian psychology formed a package within broader philosophical systems such as Vedanta, Sankhya, Yoga, Buddhism and Jainism. These systems provided very developed conceptions of mind, consciousness, and human behavior well in advance of the founding of psychology as a discipline.

The sage Kapila is regarded as the founder of this philosophy. Sankhya: Sankhya provides a dualist perspective of creation rooted in two primary entities: Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (matter). Human mind is a part of Prakriti and constitutes Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara. That which brings pain: Suffering is the result of our mind identifying with an identity that is not true, or more positively, arising when the Purusha drifts into confusion and accepts some modification to itself as real (the illusion of). Govinda Rāma Press.

The Yoga school, as expounded in the Yoga Sutras by Patanjali, developed from the monist Samkhya system and an integrative model of psychology. Yoga considers psychology to be the inhibition of chitta vrtti (the fluctuations of the mind), and offer practical techniques such as ethical discipline, concentration, meditation and absorption (samadhi) for developing tranquility and clarity in our inner life.

The Upanishads explore the human condition as manifest in philosophy and in consciousness this is not merely a philosophical exercise, but one that sets forth the spiritual vision of reality. For example, the panchakosha (five sheathes of being), turiya (fourth state of consciousness) are concepts that reflect profound psychological insight into the strata of man's existence.

Buddhist philosophy elaborated a dynamic and cyclical model of the mind (as part of the cycle), with theory of impermanence, theory of "no-self"; and the concept that human beings are interdependent interconnected parts within infinite whole. It emphasized the origin of suffering (dukkha) and how to overcome it through mindfulness, morality, or insight meditation. Jaina philosophy also focused on purification of the soul, and freedom through good conduct, detachment from material things and cultivation of mental discipline.

These were not doctrinal systems they were experiential, pheonomenological based, value-oriented that focused on inner-change rather than outer behaviour. Though they did not distinguish psychology from either metaphysics or religion, their work contributed to the development of both psychotherapy and clinical psychology.

Indeed, the first Indian philosophical traditions are a treasure trove of psychological insight. They tackled concerns that psychologists focused on in our time - identity, emotion, suffering, behavior, motivation and mental training - and placed them within a

larger spiritual-ethical frame. This historical base would then influence the progress of Indian Psychology in modern times, albeit amidst Western models.

1.4.2 Colonial Influence and Introduction of Western Psychology

Western psychology was introduced in India during the colonial era and especially through the second half of 19th and first half of 20th century following British rule. This period was characterized by a radical departure from the philosophical framework of classical approaches and an increasing emphasis on scientific and empirical orientation based on Western models of psychology.

Western psychology was introduced into India mainly through British educational institutions, like the Calcutta, Madras and Bombay universities. The interjection of Western concepts brought forth when English education and Western scientific paradigms poured in, let to the addition of psychology as a subject in India. But this psychology was primarily a science that had been carried along, and imitated after European and American thought, giving scant consideration to the native intellectual heritage.

Early landmarks with respect to Indian psychology was the setting up of the first psychological laboratory in India in 1915 at University of Calcutta by Dr. Narendra Nath Sen Gupta, among others who is considered as one of the key persons in early history of Indian psychology. He helped to set up the foundations of experimental psychology in India, including perception, reaction time and psychophysics with G.S. Bose.

During this time, Indian psychology evolved in two directions:

• Experimental Psychology, which followed the lead of Wilhelm Wundt and other European psychologists.

Clinical Psychology and Psychoanalysis, borrowed from Freud, Jung and Adler, As it partly developed even among the Indian psychiatrists and clinician.

However, even with this growth, Western psychology continued to be the prevailing theoretical and methodological framework. > native ideas, religious beliefs and philosophical systems were either not taken seriously or regarded as unscientific or irrelevant. Psychology was being taught as an empirical, value-free science and there was no place for psychological topics specific to Indian culture or spirit.

It was the colonial mentality that promoted Western rationalism and empiricism. Indian students were taught to reproduce Western experiments and methodologies without pondering on their cultural soundness. This resulted in a split between the discipline and lived experiences of Indian people who still practiced traditional healing, yoga, and meditation outside academia.

Some people started to question this dominance. There was a need for a psychology that was Indian and that included the cultural aspects of India. Scholars like Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore talked about the importance of psychology. Even though Indian psychology was not yet a field of study these early thinkers helped create a foundation for the psychology that would come after India gained independence. This new psychology would be more aware of culture. Indian psychology would be the focus of this field of study and Indian psychology would be more sensitive, to the needs of Indian people.

So the colonial heritage came to India. It brought with it the way of doing science and psychology became a subject that people studied in schools and colleges in India. This way of doing things created a difference between the ideas that came from Western countries and the way people in India thought about psychology. Indian psychologists wanted to fill this gap, between these two ways of thinking and this became a very important thing for them to do after India became independent.

1.4.3 Post-Independence Growth of Indian Psychology

The post independence period from 1947 onwards ushered in a new era of Indian psychology with institutional growth, indigenization attempts and intellectual controversies on the applicability of Western paradigms. Released from the colonial shackles, Indian scholars started trying to build up a psychology grounded in the culture and societal life of India with due regard to spiritual factors.

A major development was the fast expansion of psychology departments in Indian universities. Universities such as University of Delhi, Banaras Hindu University and the University of Mysore also became centres for research in psychology. Academic training grew, professional organisations formed, and psychology was defined as a social science in the national curriculum.

Nevertheless, the early post-independence psychological studies continued to be constrained by Western theoretical frames. Indian psychologists followed the gradual Western trend, and began using behavioralist,, psycho-analysis, and cognitive ideas, except most of the concepts were not context based. It was termed: The challenge against psychology in India is that it becomes a cultural alien, incapable of coping with the socio-spiritual realities of Indian life.

In reaction, there was a rise of indigenous indigenization in the 70s and 80s. Indian psychoanalysts and others such as Girindrasekhar Bose, Durganand Sinha, Ajit K. Dalal, and Ashis Nandy began to convey the need for integrating Indian culture's spiritual ideas, languages and conceptual frameworks into the larger psychological understandings of humankind's identity in individual suffering. This involved both:

• Indigenization from Below Drawing from Indian traditions, texts and practices to build new psychological theories.

• Indigenization from outside: The transplantation of Western models to Indian sociocultural context.

There was also an increasing interest in cross-cultural psychology as Indian research focused on psychological phenomena which differed across cultures, undermining the assumption of universal methodology in Western psychology.

Sri Aurobindo's works became especially popular at the time. His Integral Yoga psychology conceptualised a series of stages in the development of psyche that included physical, vital-emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions. Offering an alternative to reductive Western models, this stressed transformation over simple adjustment.

A number of conferences, workshops and journals [iv] began to take Indian Psychology as a separate discipline, which later became a more concerted attempt to reappropriate indigenous systems. The Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) contributed significantly to facilitating the research and promoting it within these traditions.

It was similarly a period characterised by some level of continuity and change in the years after independence. Western psychology provided the vehicle and method, but Indian thinkers were criticising for a more holistic and integrated, culturally-themed psychology as befitting of Indian society.

1.4.4 Contemporary Trends and Research in Indian Psychology

Recent Indian psychology is characterized by a vibrant development of old ideas and their maturation in modern scientific method. It is only in the last half century that serious attention has again been paid to Indian psychological thought, primarily due to scholarly and applied concerns about the inadequacies of universalist Western psychology.

The emergence of Indian Psychology as a separate discipline is one significant trend. Initiated by K. Ramakrishna Rao, Cornelissen, and others, this movement seeks to investigate Indian notions of mind, selfhood, consciousness, well-being through the lens of research methodologies available in the modern era. Efforts toward it have been insitutionalized with networks such as Indian Psychology Institute, which organize conferences, publish material and provide trainings.

The Study of Indian Psychology Today Research on Indian psychology today includes:

• Consciousness Studies: Altered States, Meditation & Yogic perspectives on Awareness.

• Spiritual Psychology: Exploring the psychological benefits of spiritual techniques, devotion (bhakti), and self-transcendence.

• Well-being and Positive Psychology, investigating indigenous concepts such as ananda (bliss), sattva (purity) and samadhana (contentment) as constituents of mental health.

• Yoga and Meditation Research: Investigating the effects of yogic practices on stress, attention and emotional regulation through neuropsychological and psychophysiological measures.

People do research using statistical methods but some people who use traditional Indian methods prefer to keep to themselves and do not like to try new things. The thing about psychology research is that it uses personal experiences, real life examples and studies of old scripts. This shows that Indian psychology is more about what people experience and the process they go through than just the end result. Indian psychology research is experiential and process-oriented which means it is, about the experience and the process not the outcome. The people who do this kind of research they use first person experiences, case studies and scriptural analysis which is a traditional Indian method of research.

Indian Psychology is really interesting because it looks at what people think and feel in India and other places. Modern Indian Psychology also looks at what people think and feel in countries like the United States and Europe. This is done by talking to academics and writing articles in journals that people all around the world can read.

Nowadays people think that Indian viewpoints are very important to make psychology more about everyone, not people, from Europe and America. This means that Indian Psychology is helping to make the field of psychology more diverse and interesting.

There are still roadblocks, such as the lack of institutional backing, limitations on funding and academic opposition. But the evidence accumulating from a work-stream stirred by scholars such as Sangha suggests a lively renaissance of contextual, ethical, spiritual and transformative psychology — in keeping with Indian intellectual traditions even as it meets modern science head-on.

1.5 Summary

The roots of Indian Psychology are situations in philosophical and spiritual traditions of India that emphasize self-realization, ethical living, and exploration of consciousness.

It also departs from Western psychology by taking into account the inner-self (Atman), combining spiritual \ PHILOSOPHY, and seeks liberation (moksha) than just ADJUSTMENT.

Classical works such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Buddhist and Jain literature are deeply influential for this discipline.

Key faculties of the mind in Indian thought: Manas (Mind), Buddh(i) (Intellect), Chitt(a)na Sattwa-M isa(Higher Self), Ahanakaar(Ego-consciousness). (memory/subconscious), and Ahamkara (ego).

They also helps us to understand behavior, personality and mental tendencies that kara a e an the ba sexy ♣ hings s ch asThe concepts of karma, dharma, gunas and samskaras provide the logical frame work.

call it science of self-regulation, purification of mind and methods for ascent to higher levels of consciousness.

Indian psychology acknowledges different states of consciousness: waking, dreaming, dreamless sleep and the transcendent state (turiya).

The discipline dates back to ancient schools of thought such as Sankhya and Vedanta, but developed through experience-based and introspective approaches. (Please answer objective item No.

Colonization period brought Western psychology to India at the cost of its native psychological traditions.

Indigenization of psychology after independence occurred by incorporation of Indian cultural and spiritual perspectives.

Modern Indian psychology seeks to unite ancient concepts with contemporary research practices, in order to achieve overall well-being.

The cutting edge involves studies related to consciousness, yoga psychology, spiritual psychology and culturally adapted therapy.

1.6 Key Terms

Atman – The self or soul, which is immutable and eternal.

Manas – The mind, which is responsible for sensory processing and some emotional response.

Buddhi – Intellect, Power to discriminate and reason.

Chitta – The conditioned mind with its patterns and contents.

Ahamkara- Ego, or the I sense that causes individuality.

Karma – The principle of Cause and Effect which forms one's world.

Dharma' is essentially, the righteous duty or moral obligation according to universal order.

The samskaras – The latent imprints residing in the mental subconscious caused by past experiences and actions.

Gunas – The three aspects of nature (sattva, rajas, tamas) that shape our personality.

Mokasha – Free from the cycle of birth and death, self realization.

1.7 Descriptive Questions

Define what is Indian Psychology? How is it different from the Western Psychology?

Explain the idea Atman in Indian Psychology and to explain how it can contribute to ones psychological health. 3.

Explain the anatomy and functions of Manas, Buddhi, and Chitta.

Karma-how does it influence and mould character or behavior in Indian psychological thought?

Explain the meaning of Dharma and its significance in ethical and psychological life.

Operationally define the significance of Yoga and meditation practices in Indian Psychology.

Discuss the history of psychology in India from ancient times to post independence phase.

Discuss the major contemporary trends in Indian psychology?

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1.9 Case Study

"Using Indian Psychological Concepts in Practice – An Overview through Cases".

Introduction

This paper is a case study, showing how Indian psychological principles can be used to solve contemporary emotional issues. It's about Meera, a schoolteacher who experiences anxiety, identity crisis and dissatisfaction despite professional achievements. An encounter with Atman, Dharma, Karma and everything that is the Indian way of life in a yoga and meditation retreat. Her path shows how ancient wisdom can offer answers to self-discovery, emotional healing, and being in tune with inner values.

Background Context

Meera is a 35 year old schoolteacher who works in one of the metro cities. She is constantly in a state of anxiety, unhappy with the job and has lost sight of why she's living. Even at the top of her career she is emotionally deplete and disconnected from herself. On the recommendation of a friend, she goes for a 10-day yoga and meditation retreat, rooted in Indian psychological ideals. There, she learns about Atman, Dharma, and Karma; and is taught meditation on breath, reflection on scriptures as well introspective practices like the process of self-inquiry.

Throughout the retreat, Meera has to face her own demons: She is dependent on external affirmation and feels guilty for past choices – and in short, she can not live in the here and now. Employing Indian Psychological tools, the facilitators assist her to regain a sense of self and bring her lifestyle in tune with her inner core.

Problem Statements and Solutions:

Issue 1: The Battle of the Ego and the Identity Crisis

Meera is finding difficult to distinguish who she's supposed to be (teacher, daughter, friend) and her true identity. It makes her feel like she is a not good enough.

Solution:

She is directed to investigate the truth of Atman using meditation and reading from scriptural texts. By practicing

Sakshi bhava (witness attitude) she is trained to simply watch her thoughts and feelings, unattached. That helps her understand that she is not a social role, not an outcome, but a deeper, unchanging self.

Issue 2: Guilt Over the Past

Meera gets caught in her head and often replays past decisions she regrets.

Solution:

Open with the introduction of Karma and how, past actions have implications but at current times can change future? She uncovers negative samskaras, or deep mental grooves, through journaling and reflective praxis, and she starts to practice karma yoga—acting without attachment to the results. This is moving her out of guilt and into responsibility.

Issue 3: Clash Of Professional Life With Inner Values

Meera is dissatisfied by her current job, with a sense that there was a conflict between her values and the demands of an institution.

Solution:

In her quest for Dharma, she is inspired to discover or define her own svadharma (personal duty). Meera learns where her heart is; mentoring students, not the bureaucracy. She starts transitioning her work to mentorship and community teaching, closer to the core of what she is called for.

Reflective Questions

How did the idea of Atman help Meera to realize her identity?

How did Karma influence the way Meera's feelings for past incidents change?

How did knowing Dharma influence Meera's decisions?

How does meditative and contemplative introspection help us heal psychologically?

Is Indian Psychology applicable in secular/mundane life? Justify your answer.

Conclusion

This case study highlights the applicability of Indian psychological concepts in resolving the contemporary issues related to feelings, and existential predicaments. Therapy itself and self-inquiry can be rooted in principles like Atman, Karma or Dharma that create profound shifts of consciousness or modify behavior. Indian Psychology provides, as a direct and living experience, not just a theoretical system but a path to inner harmony, ethical orientation and integrated health.

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Unit 2: Understanding Self and Identity: Western Psychology and Indian Thought

Learning Outcomes:

1. Define the concepts of self and identity from both psychological and Indian philosophical perspectives.

2. Differentiate between the Western and Indian models of identity formation and self-understanding.

3. Explain the concept of Ahaṁkāra (ego) within Indian psychological thought and its role in shaping the individual's perception of self.

4. Analyze the dynamics between the ego (Ahaṁkāra) and the true self (Ātman), highlighting the sources of inner conflict and suffering.

5. Apply Indian psychological principles to understand and address ego-driven behavior in practical life situations.

6. Reflect on personal experiences and inner conflicts using frameworks from Indian psychology, such as witness consciousness and self-inquiry.

7. Integrate key philosophical teachings into psychological inquiry, fostering a holistic approach to identity, well-being, and personal growth.

Content

2.0 Introductory Caselet

"Who Am I, Really?"

Ravi, a 28-year-old corporate worker in Bengaluru had always identified with his achievements — his job title and the amount of money he earned, the way people looked at him. A student who had gone abroad to study and launched a fast-growing career, he was admired for his self-confidence and charm. But in moments of quiet, Ravi was restless. Despite professional success, he would often be plagued by anxiety, self-doubt and a general sense of emptiness he could never quite put his finger on.

Dr. Kripal swore he would put the books on a tabula rasa shelf known in his family as “El Blanco” — and away from academics and the demands of scholarly reading — until one day his favorite philosophy professor invited him to teach on Columbia’s extension campus in Connecticut, and through some act of Kantsian causality, Dr. Kripal was able to start over with his books at age 32. One weekend there he wandered into a retreat on Indian philosophical psychology for fun, seeking an escape from academic reality while sharpening his understanding of Heidegger and Nietzsche. The session began with a question: “Are you your name, your job, your thoughts or something more?” The participants were given a brief overview on the Indian idea of self (Ātman) as opposed to ego and Mind. The facilitator described how identity based on social roles and exterior acquisitions frequently leads to an abstract self that causes psychological conflict.

Ravi was inspired by the notion that Ahaṁkāra, or ego-identity, functions as a mask leading people to identify too much with temporary status symbols, belongings, and roles. For the first time, he was starting to wonder if this sense of self he thought it was rooted in something real—or just a need for validation and societal approval.

During the retreat, Ravi followed self-enquiry (atma-vichara) and mindfulness practices, leading him to observe his thoughts but not be attached to them. On some riffs he would suddenly feel relaxed, free to break out of the need to play for approval. There were no quick answers to be found in these experiences, but they did prompt a deep-seated question about who he really was on the inside.

Ravi’s journey was only beginning, but he left the retreat with a new question: not how to succeed in life, but how to understand the self that was living that life.

Critical Thinking Question:

In what way does the Indian distinction between Ātman and Ahaṁkāra call into question the modern conception of identity resulting from personal and social accomplishment?

2.1 Introduction to Self and Identity

2.1.1 Concept of Self in Western Psychology

The meaning of self in Western psychology has changed over the years, and different theoretical perspectives often have promoted contrasting elements of the concept. In general, in the Western tradition of psychology the self is conceived as a cognitive, affective and social template that regulates how we view ourselves, interact with others and navigate the world. We currently think of the self as subject and object of experience—self-as-seer and self-as-seen.

Early psychological thinking associated the self with introspection. The father of American psychology, William James, made a distinction between the "I" (the self as the knower) and the "Me" (the self as known). He suggested the self can be comprehended in its material, social as well as spiritual dimensions, since identity is constructed simultaneously through a dialogue between what is internal and that which lies external to our interior.

In psychoanalytic theory, Sigmund Freud depicted the self as a play within the dynamics of id, ego, and superego. The ego is the logical negotiating entity between the primal drives and society's expectations, very much a part of the self-identity. But a great deal of it--in Freud's model, most of what is the self--is unconscious, with internal struggles at its core for human psychology.

Behaviorist theories, like that promoted by B.F. Skinner, reduced the significance of internal processes and saw the self as a generative effect of trained responses. In this perspective, the self is formed through reward, punishment, and learned response patterns.

Overt humanistic-existentialism, promoted by thinkers like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, recentered the self. Rogers coined the term "self-concept"—an awareness of who we are. In the terms of Rogers, psychic health occurs when the self-concept and actual experience are such that all the sensory and visceral experiences of the organism are consistent with (congruent with) the being of the organism. Maslow put the idea of self-actualization at the top of human needs, with a'fully self-expressed self’.

Social psychology further describes who we are as formed through group affiliation, social roles and cultural influence. Theories such as social identity theory (Tajfel) and

self-categorization theory (Turner) have looked into how people define themselves in terms of belonging to different social groups.

Today's cognitive theories view the self as a literary construction— a story that we tell ourselves about who and what we cross the street to observe. This self is flexible and context-dependent, and shaped by memory, attention and future ruminations.

Within those various models, there are some common themes - the self is complex; it is influenced by internal processes and external feedback; and ...it is a crucial part of our psychological life. In contrast, Western models tend to bring the self within the psychological and biological realms of the individual with little space for metaphysical or transcendental concerns.

2.1.2 Concept of Self in Indian Thought

The Indian traditions of philosophy of mind and Self (collated under ātmavidyā) differ fundamentally from their Western counterparts, insofar as the self is understood as a metaphysical reality beyond personhood. The Indian concept of the self is highly metaphysical though based on belief that behind the changing personalities there exists an eternal, unchanging Ātman. This Ātman is not simply the inner self, but in reality it is identical with Brahman, the cosmic consciousness itself, a truth expressed in Upanishadic Mahāvākyas such as Tat Tvam Asi ("Thou art That").

In The Indian conception of the self has been predominantly non-dualistic, in conformity with the Advaita Vedānta tradition, though that does not mean there have been no other philosophical or religious accounts: (see Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Buddhism). Vedānta follows the teaching, that there is no distinction, but absolute identity between the true self and reality. Sāṃkhya draws a distinction between Puruṣa (consciousness) and Prakṛti (nature), and claims that this difference is what allows for a condition of freedom. Notably, Buddhism rejects a permanent self (Anattā) and provides instead a processual view which regards the self as an ever-changing bundle of elements (skandhas).

The ego (Ahaṁkāra) has its function in producing the wrong identification with body, mind or vocation, and unknowingly hides the knowledge of real self. Liberation (Mokṣa) leads to the diminution of ego and the realization that self is identical with universal consciousness, devoid of attachments, fears and ignorance.

Self-realization in Indian psychology is also a practical, not just a theoretical pursuit, achieved through various means including meditation (Dhyāna) and spiritual practices like self-inquiry (Ātma-vicāra), ethical conduct (Yama–Niyama), and devotion of truth to god or gods (Bhakti). The self is not made, but found, because it's already complete.

Hence Indian thought views the 'self' and its development as spiritual, not psychological or social. This perspective does give a new valence to the aim of human life from external good to internal realization, moving us not just from identity-formation but also leadinmg beyond the limits of our egos.

2.1.3 Comparative Insights: Western vs. Indian Perspectives

Self in Western and Indian traditions present basic philosophical, psychological and existential differences in human identity. Although both recognize the elusive nature of self and its centrality in human life, they radically differ with regard to their orientation, aim and methodology.

One of the central dif- ferences,, is on ontology. Western psychology tends to consider the self as a product of construction—the result of experience, culture and thinking. It is mutable, it changes through time, and it manifests as an inner story or machinery. Indian philosophy, on the other hand, sees the self (ātman) as eternal and unalterable—no more created than constructed. It is the base of being, being-consciousness beyond name, shape, or individual taste.

The reason for self intoxication is not the same either. In Western models the aim is frequently self-knowledge, self-worth, and self-realization—where the internal concept of oneself matches one's actual existence. Indian psychology on the other hand stresses self-realisation and liberation (Mokṣa) i.e. transcending ego and realising non-dual unity with self/cosmos.

Methodology: Western psychology is based on empirical observation and experimentation as well as cognitive analysis. Indian psychology uses introspection, meditative absorption, ethical purification and the insights of first-person practical-experiential understanding. They are both reflective in terms of value, but the Indian tradition tends to emphasize subjective inner disorder rather than external objective measurement.

Emotion regulation in the West is controlled by treatment strategies concentrating on adaptation and response to stresses. In Indian psychology, emotions are harnessed and cultivated via practices such as yoga, prāṇāyāma, bhakti — techniques that serve to transform rather than suppress them towards a more exalted consciousness.

and the state of the ego. Western psychology and the ego The ego is frequently regarded in Western psychology as an indispensable structure for adaptation and agency. Ego (Ahaṁkāra) in Indian psychology is the delusive verifier, covering up real cognition about self.

These various standpoints also influence conceptions of mental health. Western approaches tend to focus on pathology and diagnoses. Indian psychology is concerned with inward peace, ethical orientation and spiritual unfoldment.

Despite these contrasts, the two systems can be complementary. If Western Psychology brings certain postulates on behaviour, cognition and therapy, Indian Psychology concerns itself not only with deep metaphysical foundation but also offers transformative practices that broadens the gamut of psychological inquiry.

Did You Know?

“In Indian thought, the self (Ātman) is considered not a product of the mind but its witness. It is consciousness itself, distinct from thought, emotion, or memory. This distinction allows for a profound approach to self-inquiry—where one observes the mind rather than identifies with it.”

2.2 Identity and Self in Indian Thought

2.2.1 Ātman (True Self) and Its Characteristics

The idea of Ātman (True Self, Self with a capital S) is the focus of numerous Indian philosophical and psychological systems. While the psychological self is used interchangeably for cognition, personality and social roles; Ātman as a person's true self or essence has not received as much attention in Western philosophy. It's the ultimate truth of man and is transcendent to body, senses and mind; it's same as ultimate reality (Brahman) in Advaita Vedānta.

It is eternal, pure, conscious-AkirakAra Brahman in worldly language — free (mukta) Upaniṣadas which are the foundation of indian philosophy hold that according to Ishavasya upanishads(verse 8), the Ātman is nitya (eternal), śuddha (pure), buddha and mukta. It is this other presence that observes thoughts, feelings, perceptions and body sensations without becoming identified with them. In this light, the mind, ego and body were instruments or coverings (kośas), but not the self.

The characteristics of Ātman include:

• Immutable: Unlike the mind and body which are subject to change, the Ātman does not Change. It is not born; It does not grow nor decay; It has no death.

• Non-dual: Ātman is not distinct from Brahman. The great saying (वाक्य, vākya) of "Tat Tvam Asi" (तत् त्वम् असि) "(That Thou art)" proclaims the essential identity of individual-being and universal-reality.

• Infinite: There is no space or time for Ātman. It has no abode but penetrates all existence.

• Unaffected—The Ātman remains unaffected by pain or pleasure, merit or sin. These are qualities of the body and mind, not the self.

• Self-luminous (Self illuminated): It is the cause of knowing and consciousness. The intellect knows objects by means of the Ātman

illuminates it, even as a lamp discovers figures in famine.

The discovery of the Ātman is the one and only end to be reached through Indian psychological and spiritual discipline. This is not a concept, it has to be felt and experienced - in meditation, through moral living of life, by shedding our self-important ego or by the questioning our own identity. Techniques like Neti-Neti (not this, not this) are used to negate the non-self elements from identification and discover what is left.

Of crucial significance here is the fact that Indian psychology does not conceive of the self as something to develop or build up, but as something to unveil. The true self is not absent but hidden, veiled by ignorance (avidyā). Removal of this veil is Liberation (mokṣa) where one dwells in the knowledge of the Self as pure awareness.

This realization changes one's identity at its core – from some constructed self that is fearfully made and may change or be lost, to a steady borderless knowing that stays the same no matter what. This is fundamental to the Indian psychological thought of identity and self.

2.2.2 The Distinction Between Self (Ātman) and Non-Self

Indian philosophy has a very clear and unambiguous distinction between the Self (Ātman) and the non-Self (Anātman). This difference is perhaps the most fundamental principle of Indian psychology, metaphysics and spiritual practice. It is the foundation for an inner development and true Self beyond temporary roles and changing experiences.

Anātman (non-Self) From ANU, 178 : all that is impermanent, all that is changeable; and all perishing is Anātman. This includes the physical body, the mind, sense organs (eyes, tongue etc.), thoughts and feelings as well as memory or ego. What these amounts to are prerequisites for the world, not reflections of who we are. The Ātman in contraposition, is:

• Beyond properties: It is neither black nor white, has no shape or sex, and isn't a substance of any kind.

• The seer, not the seen: It is one who sees (drasṭā), it witnesses all cognitions, but is not itself an object of cognition.

• Thoughts: They are not objects of consciousness but the very ground of being.

To understand this difference, the Indian philosophers use a metaphor of a chariot from the Kaṭha Upaniṣad:

• The body is the chariot.

• The senses are the horses.

• The mind is the reins.

• The intellect is the charioteer.

• Self (Ā(t)man) is the traveler.

This imagery illustrates that while body, mind and intellect are very useful for moving around in the world, they are tools - not the self. When self is in control and the charioteer (intellect) is wise, all goes well. When the horses (the senses) are not restrained disaster comes.

Neti-Neti is another method of distinguishing self from non-self in Vedānta. When you eliminate the concept of your body, when you have negated your identification with the mind and emotions (“I am not my body”), removing such layers of apparent identity merely leaves something deeper which is ... pure consciousness.

This division also explains the nature of pain in Indian psychology. The world is not suffering, but the identification with what is temporary within us does. If, for instance we identify with the body it is fear of disease and death that plague us; if we identify with the mind its anxiety and craving; if is the ego that captures our attention then conceit and a lack of confidence surface.

Viveka (right discrimination) is developed to distinguish between the true and the untrue, the self and non-self. Discrimination is the foundation of wisdom and necessary for psychological healing—as it lessens attachment, fear, and emotional reactivity.

Indian psychology therefore, brings a holistic model that makes sense to identity as being what it is not or being anchored in nothing else but that which one truly "is".

2.2.3 Dharma and Identity Formation

The idea of Dharma is a central aspect of identity in Indian philosophy. Though contemporary identity theories revolve around sense of self, roles and other affiliations, in Indian tradition synchronization with the Dharma – moral and ethical order of the

universe –wins primary slot as a means to find out one ´ true purpose- finding stability inside. The term "Dharma" is difficult to translate into English, and includes duty, righteousness, moral law, and even one's own personal obligation. It is not enforced from the outside but found through introspection, comparison with peers and life stage. One's Svadharma—existential Dharma is decides based on one's nature (svabhāva), capabilities, social responsibilities, and the stage of life (āśrama).

There are four stages of life in Indian tradition:

Brahmacharya – Student life

Grahasta – Householder life

Vānaprastha – Retirement into reflection

Sanyāsa – Renunciation and the life of asceticism

Each stage has its own Dharma, which forms identity at different levels more or less — educational, familial, societal and spiritual. There are certain expectations for a person to behave in the way that is consistent with his or her Dharma and there is psychological harmony when it happens, and inner conflict, guilt when it does not.

Dharma also affects identity by giving it an ethical foundation, as opposed to desire or worldly success. This refocus is a move away from self-oriented ambition to responsibility-oriented behavior. The Gītā, for instance, exhorts Arjuna to do his Dharma as a warrior not for the sake of personal profit but in observance of righteousness.

Furthermore, Dharma is context-sensitive. One man's meat and another man's poison. It creates a reflective process in identity construction in which individuals need to discover their individual route. It also makes possible the living identity—one shaped not by fashion, but rather by a deeper self-understanding and relatedness.

Crucially, while identity and Dharma are perfectly in sync:

• There is clarity of purpose

• Actions are ethically guided

• The person becomes psychologically more whole and stronger.

Thus Dharma refigures moral action to include a reflective conscience that leads to greater self-awareness.

2.2.4 The Role of Karma in Shaping Identity

Karma (the law of cause and effect) is one of the basic tenets in Indian philosophy that forms destiny. Karma is not just external actions; it includes intentions, ideas, expressions of desire and emotional propensity. Every action has an effect at the subtle level (saṃskāra) and influences the imprint on future actions, likes and dislikes, or sense of self.

Karma is seen to span several lifetimes so that ones present identity is influenced partly by the actions (Prārabdha Karma) and multiple impressions (Saṃcita Karma) one has accumulated during a prior existence. Although it purports to provide "for the idea of an inherited proclivity (Sanskar) determining and influencing how the human mind reacts," according to Indian thought, a person's own decision to act in the present is still free – simply preferential and thereby highly involving since a bad choice has repercussions for all future identities or incarnations.

Identity of Karma imparts as follows:

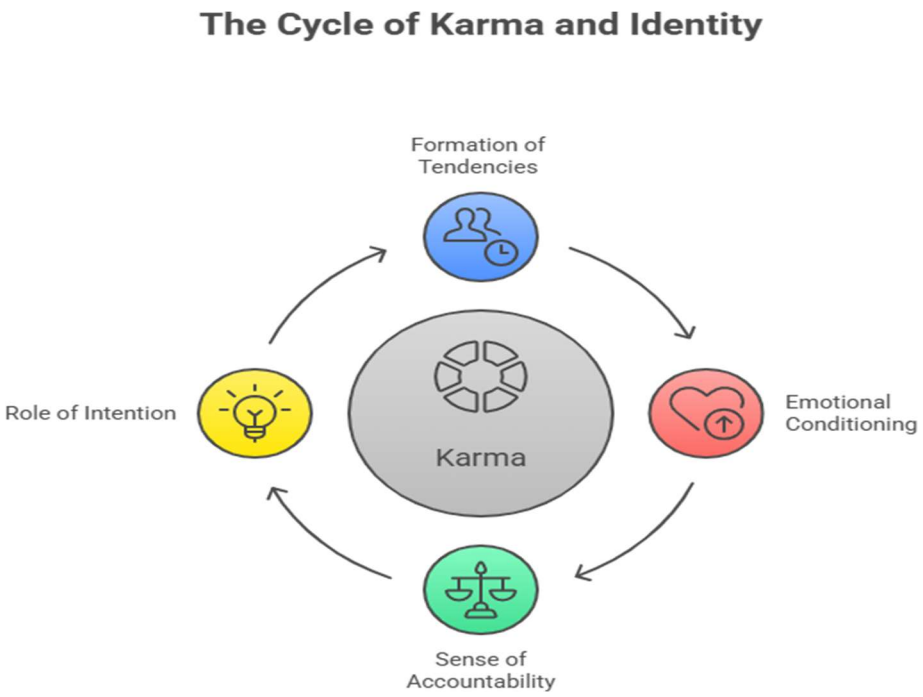

Figure 2.1

• Tendencies are built: Through repeated actions, deep grooves are written into the mind which determines our character. For example, over time a dedicated do-gooder might eventually establish an identity as a compassionate person."

• Emotional programming: Karma is the reason people react differently in a given situation. One's responses are based on past experiences and karmic instincts.

• Responsibility: Karma brings in the concept of personal accountabililty. Your identity is not static or fate determined, but what you become through action and moral choice.

• Factor of intention (bhava): Not only must the natural action/karma, but also the intention behind the action be good, which leads to karmic results. This ties who we are to our internal motives, and turns it into an inner truth above something the world merely says about us.

Karma thus supplies a moral-psychological universe in which identity is neither fixed nor capricious, conditioned and still transformable. Acts such as selfless service (karma yoga), righteous living and inner transformation are considered acts to challenge karmic residues and help achieve a transition from lower self to higher Self.

In contradistinction to deterministic perspectives, Indian psychology suggests a malleable identity that can be cultivated through conscious activity and self-reflection and detachment. Karma is then not a fatalistic law but a transmutative principle by means of which man may be the master builder of his destiny.

"Activity: Exploring Self and Identity through the Lens of Dharma and Ātman"

Ask students to reflect on a significant decision or role they currently hold (e.g., student, employee, sibling). They should write a short reflection identifying whether their engagement in this role is aligned with their personal Dharma or based on societal pressure or ego (Ahaṁkāra). Then, through introspective journaling, they will explore how they might act differently if they were rooted in the awareness of their true self (Ātman) rather than external expectations. This activity fosters self-inquiry, value alignment, and deeper understanding of identity in the Indian context.

2.3 Ahaṁkāra and Ego

2.3.1 Meaning and Definition of Ahaṁkāra

The Indian philosophical and psychological tradition have called "I-ness" or ego as Ahaṁkāra, the principle of 'I'-identity engendered when consciousness identifies with its body-mind and external functions. The Sanskrit word ahaṁkāra is formed from the root words kāra (making or doing) and aham (I), meaning literally "I-maker. It is the dimension of the antaḥkaraṇa responsible for generating the perceived self as related to our experiences, actions and identity.

In Sāṅkhya and other Indian philosophies, Ahaṁkāra refers to the ego: one of the four parts of internal psychological system (antahkarana).

• Manaha (mind) – tries to analyze sensation and doubt

• Buddhi (intellect) – differentiate and decide

• Chitta (memory) – stores impressions

• Ahaṁkāra – makes its own (this is a trick, the ego gets involved)

Ahaṁkāra is important for the embodied self. It represents a principle of coordination which enables the experiencing self to find its way in an experienced world, characterized by a degree of coherence and unity. We have the "I" that generates expressions such as '(I) know,' 'think,' or even 'feel' or better still 'act', and which can therefore be taken as the psychological core of such an expression. Essentially, without Ahaṁkāra's co-ordination, the mind would be divided and acting division.

But Indian thought also cautions that Ahaṁkāra is not the self (Ātman). Useful for operating in the empirical world but a construct, created by identifying with non-self, body-minds and their contents — thoughts and feelings. As it is believed to be the obstacle for the realization of pure consciousness which drives Ātman wrongly into its identification with the limited body-mind complex, so it is a product of avidyā.

The Bhagavad Gītā repeatedly discusses the nature of Ahaṁkāra; its impersonal associations and disconnections, its function and various pitfalls. "Ego" Lord Krishna explains: "when that ego is there an inclination arises in the mind for the fruits of work," and thus human beings fall into circles of desire and pain. By contrast the prudent do not have Ahaṁkāra; they act as but instruments of destiny.

Psychologically, Ahaṁkāra is the individualized self.[3] It is this I-maker that makes one feel separate from the world around them and manifests itself as ego though it appears to be distinct from Manas. However, Indian psychology does not aim to bolster but to go beyond Ahaṁkāra instead using viveka (discrimination), vairāgya (dispassion) and self-inquiry.

Therefore, Ahaṁkāra is both a sine qua non of worldly life and an obstacle to spiritual awareness. It is to be witnessed, known, and eventually dissolved — not oppressed but realized for what it truly is so that one can discover through this superficial form a deeper, timeless self.

2.3.2 Difference Between Ahaṁkāra and Western Ego Concept

Although the Indian and Western psychological models both acknowledge a central organising structure through which the individual experiences identity and functioning, Ahaṁkāra is essentially dissimilar to the Western concept of ego in its origins, function and intentions. Comprehending these differences is fundamental to an appreciation of the varying philosophical roots of self and mental health in each tradition.

In the Western tradition of psychology (largely the Freudian model) The Ego is one of 3 parts of psychic entity, with id and superego. The ego serves as a bridge between the id, the superego, and reality. It functions by the reality principle, attempting to harmonize

personal desire with social expectation. Negative by itself, it shaped the mind as executive power to organize thoughts, prepare action and adapt socially.

The ego in humanistic psychology (see for example the work of Carl Rogers) is identified with the self-concept (i.e. how a person thinks of him or herself). Psychological well-being is conceptualized as congruence between the actual self and the ideal self. Similarly, in cognitive-behavioral modalities, the ego is thought of as self-representations and belief systems that impact emotion and behavior.

In Indian psychology, on the other hand, Ahaṁkāra is not an executive sense function to be balanced or enhanced but a mistaken self-identification with one's body-mind complex. It is not considered an impaired state of mind, it being what is referred to as one that lacks enlightenment (an obstruction to the realization of the Ātman). Its first and foremost process is that of appropriation—attaching the I-sense to experiences, roles, ideas and acts. Unlike Freudian or humanistics ego, Ahaṁkāra is not about adaptation and self concept as much as subject ీck identifier.

Some key distinctions include:

• Ontology: The occidental ego is understood as a structural contra part of the psyche. Ahaṁkāra is a byproduct of ignorance and is not an ultimate entity in itself, nor does it have separate reality.

• Blocker: It blocks the leakage from id to ego and stops it at superego level. Ahaṁkāra creates false identities by identifying itself with the doer and enjoyer in actions.

• Psychological goal: Western psychology seeks to develop and integrate the ego. Indian psychology.... diagnoses by means of its insight beyond and behind Ahaṁkāra.

• The healing process: Western therapy has typically aimed at building a coherent, resilient ego. Indian traditions such as yoga meditation, and self-enquiry have been developed to reveal the ego-less self that is always present, unaffected.

• Pain: In Western culture pain can lead to neurosis or low self-esteem through an ego conflict. In Indian thought,

Ahaṁkāra is the cause of suffering, for it breeds disunity, craving and attachment.

But despite these contrasts, there is a growing conversation between the two traditions. In recent years, some integral and transpersonal psychology models are coming to incorporate Indian perspectives, for they are starting on the premise that we have to go beyond ego towards higher consciousness and well-being.

2.3.3 Positive and Negative Aspects of Ahaṁkāra

While Ahaṁkāra is generally conceived of as a “veil,” “mask” or “illusion” in Indian philosophy (concealing the true self), it has been recognized to have functional or adaptive significance within worldly life. Ahaṁkāra, as other parts of the mind, has a positive and negative pole. That, in short, is where the secret of success lies whether or not we are on track with wisdom and Dharma; otherwise ignorance and attachment continue to lead us astray.

Positive Aspects of Ahaṁkāra:

Functional definition: Ahaṁkāra is an internally coherent feeling of “I am” based on which one can act in the world. It would not be possible to differentiate self from other, or even to maintain healthy personal boundaries without a sense of ego.

Social roles and duty: Ahaṁkāra helps perform social roles (a parent, a teacher, citizen) by connecting actions to an attachment for a certain role(action performed with the feeling of 'it is my duty').

Motivation and Drive: Ahaṁkāra, when transformed can foster motivation to purposeful action, responsibility and accountability. It helps to reach goals and personal best at the direction of Buddhi (intellect).

Survival and Adaptation: On a fundamental level, the ego is one of our deepest defenses as it’s designed to ensure self-preservation, identity and fears etc.

Platform for Self-Enquiry: In the absence of Ahaṁkāra, self-enquiry is not possible. It is only when the “I”

its own journals that the way to true knowledge starts.

Negative Aspects of Ahaṁkāra:

False Identification: Ahaṁkāra's first and most harmful role is that of mistaken identity with body, mind, feelings, ego, and society. This results in attachment, fear and wanting.

Egoistic Behavior: When inflated, Ahaṁkāra manifests as conceit, egotism, self-importance and blocking of concern for others or feelings of compassion.

Emotional Pain: Much emotional suffering such as jealousy, guilt, and insecurity stems from Ahaṁkāra. It responds to praise and blame, holds onto success; runs away from failure.

The Resistance to Growth: Ahaṁkāra rejects that which changes, refuses self-examination, and tenaciously grips onto a fixed sense of who you are in order to protect itself and prevent spiritual or psychological growth.

The Unified and the Divided: Most importantly of all, Ahaṁkāra gives rise to separation — “I am different from others,” “I am distinct from the world,” ultimately even “I am

distinct from the divine." This is the core of Indian philosophical thinking on existential suffering.

Hence, Indian psychology does not propose to exterminate Ahaṁkāra but sublimate and surpass it. By means of discrimination (viveka), humility, meditations, devotion,...less ...Ahaṁkāra can be brought into line with higher principles until it is quite dissolved in the realization of the true self.

Did You Know?

"In Indian philosophy, Ahaṁkāra is not categorically condemned. Texts like the Bhagavad Gītā acknowledge a "Sāttvic Ahaṁkāra"—a purified ego that performs duties without attachment or pride. Such an ego is seen as a stepping stone to transcendence, not a final identity."

2.4 Understanding Ahaṁkāra in Practice

2.4.1 Ahaṁkāra in Bhagavad Gītā and Other Indian Texts

The notion of Ahaṁkāra (ego) is well documented in Hindu scriptures like the Bhagavad Gītā, The Upaniṣads and the Yoga Sūtras. These scriptures do not take the Ahaṁkāra to be only a psychological trait, but a metaphysical curtain that hides real vision and obstructs liberation.

The Bhagavad Gītā describes Ahaṁkāra as one of the main impediments to self-realization and knowledge, one which ultimately lead to entrapment in the cycle of samsara. For example, in 3.27, Krishna declares:"Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ,Ahaṁkāra-vimūdhaṯma kartā haham iti manyate."

"All actions are done by the gunas (dependent factors), but he whose mind is confused by egoism thinks 'I am the doer.' " This verse philosophically questions the false sense of agency and personality that Ahaṁkāra brings. The ego falsely ascribes actions to the self, without taking into account nature and cosmic factors.

In the Gītā Krishna is all for action without personal attachment, which means Karma Yoga. Those who are enlightened relinquish the fruits of action and discharge their responsibilities without pride or under the delusion of personal control. In verse 66 of Chapter 18 the Gītā speaks of surrendering the ahaṁ and all dharma to the divine Self, which may be considered as symbolizing the final extinction of Ahaṁkāra.

In the Upaniṣads Ahaṁkāra is also discussed indirectly through : teachings of Ātman, more explicitly in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Chāndogya Upaniṣads. These texts lead

aspirants to ask “Who am I? not of features, but of a question that discloses the Trans-egoic, undying witness-consciousness.

The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali refer to Ahaṁkāra as one of the five kleśas (afflictions): avidyā (ignorance), asmitā (egoism), rāga (attachment), dveṣa (aversion) and abhiniveśa. Asmitā, the ego-sense, is a form of Ahaṁkāra that occurs when the seer misidentifies itself with what it sees: body and mind. Yoga is an instrument developed for this purpose — to wrench away from a false identification.

These scriptural statements emphasize the overall operation of Ahaṁkāra in perpetuating ignorance, enslavement and misery. The ego is depicted as the primary illusion, which later has to be transcended by discipline of self and knowledge and devotion. From Karma Yoga, Jñāna Yoga or Bhakti Yoga the eradication of the ego is repeatedly advocated as a condition for self-realization.

A common theme throughout all these texts is the importance of discrimination (viveka) in distinguishing the ego-self from true Self. This phenomenon is not a product of intellectual effort but comes from inner work striving for detachment, humility and surrender.

2.4.2 Role of Ahaṁkāra in Human Suffering

Ahaṁkāra (the ego-identity) is one of the principal sources of psychological, emotional, and existential suffering in Indian psychology and spirituality. Suffering is not conceived as being caused by an outer circumstance; rather the latter is held to be eventually the effect of one's false identification with the non-Self, which is a task performed by Ahaṁkāra.

Ahaṁkāra is above all what causes suffering because of misidentification. If the self is coupled with the body, the psyche, status, esteem and possession as well it should also be affected by their changing. The ego clings to these impermanent parts and experiences fear, anxiety, jealousy, grief and pride - all transient feelings which are often accompanied by the same antipode.

For example, attachment to the body could result in the fear of aging; attachment to being a professional can lead to fear of failures; pride tied up with social identity culminates in resentment when questioned about its status. Each of the above cases shows that Ahaṁkāra is: fickle, reactive.

Ahaṁkāra translates literally to "the thought of I" and in Indian philosophy it is ego as well as the cause-and-effect sequence—cause and effect are equivalent representations of each other in Hindu philosophy—which then form our emotions conforming to pattern (samskara). There is a perpetual interest, displayed as validation

seeking behavior, exerting control and wanting recognition above God (ego), in the cycle of desire (kāma) and moksha. These emotional powers hold the soul to karma and recurring pain. As Ahaṁkāra wants to assert itself as the “doer”, it resists surrender and self analysis, which perpetuates craving cycles and terror loops.

Internal conflict is another source of suffering resultant from Ahaṁkāra. The ego is self-conscious and often has a self-image that doesn't match the deeper reality of what you are or why you are here. This leads to detachment, dissatisfaction and emptiness even when people are successful with respect to materialism.

Furthermore it prevents the individual from seeing life as something interconnected. It prevents empathy, cooperation and compassion by building walls of “I am different,” “I am better” or even “I am worse. The idea of ego and hierachy that resorts to comparison and competition breeds tension in our inner selves as well as the world we inhabit.

Indian psychology holds that suffering begins to ease when one starts seeing Ahaṁkāra for what it is, namely a creation rather than an essence. Through practice of viveka and vairāgya, one starts to witness the Ego, rather than operate from it. This transition from identification to observation is a key stage of pain management.

Thus, it is not just a psychological tool but is the foundation of delusion that keeps one in bondage to suffering. Conquering it means not preventing oneself from being who one is, but freeing one from false identity.

2.4.3 Overcoming Ahaṁkāra Through Yoga and Meditation

There are several Indian systems of psychology that have different ways to go beyond Ahaṁkāra such as yoga and meditation which can be some timeless proven gadgets to do so. These are not merely to silence the mind or increase concentration, they are meant to break down the identification of the ego with consciousness itself and awaken Ātman.

The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali delineate an eight-limbed path (aṣṭāṅga yoga) to cleanse the mind.

and relax the identification with Ahaṁkāra. The stages include:

Yama – ethical restraints

Niyama – personal disciplines

Āsana – physical postures

Prāṇāyāma – breath control

Pratyahara – control of the senses

Dhāraṇā – concentration

Dhyāna – meditation

Samādhi: absorption in pure awareness

Along this path, the seeker slowly diverts attention from the ego-mind to the witnessing consciousness. In the case of dhyāna (meditation) and pratyāhāra, in particular, reflective time reduces inner chatter in the mind and bluntness of emotional reaction. These are states that will put space between thought and awareness, so you can watch rather than be caught by the ego.

Sheer (mantra) meditation and self-inquiry are powerful as well. In Advaita Vedānta, the query "Who am I? it is not designed to produce intellectual responses rather it strips down the ego by shedding itself of an false identification. The full refusal, the pure "not-I," and what is left over is pure awareness.

Ahaṁkāra can also be transcended through devotion as in Bhakti yoga - the path of love. In Bhakti, the ego is offered to the divine. By directing attention towards a loftier truth, and developing humility, one diminishes the ego's hold and exposes the heart to love devoid of self.

The practice of acting without attachment, without a need to be attached to the results is known as Karma Yoga or selfless action. Desire for a name and fame results in Ahaṁkāra, "I am the doer."

Ultimately, mastering Ahaṁkāra requires gradual practice, ethical cleansing and sustained self-observation. It is not an end in itself but something that we must work at our entire lives to displace one's identity as ego-centre with self-awareness.

2.4.4 Self-Realization Beyond Ego

The convergence point of Indian psychology and spiritual practice is self-realization – the knowledge by experience that one's true Self (Ātman) lies beyond ego (Ahaṁkāra). This recognition is not the aggrandizement of, or boosting up of ego self, but the realization of its transcendence. Abiding in it is to not cling to any partial identity and simply acknowledge that one is fundamental, unalloyed consciousness.

Mokṣa is commonly translated as liberation, though the literal and etymological connotation of the term mokṣa is to let free, let go, release, liberate; it also simply means freedom. It is the eclipse of the ego as center of consciousness, and the appearance — not as an object of thought but as the ground of being —>of its true nature.

Advaita (non-duality) In Advaita Vedānta, this experience is non-dual (advaita). The searcher realises that Ātman and Brahman are one. The separate figure we have seen Ahaṁkāra to have pretended is borne, has its pretence ripped off, and in the end it stands exposed not as any kind of a form or thing at all, but as that timeless, formless and changeless something which is reality itself—consciousness.

Self-realization is not just a different state of consciousness, but a difference in realization of identity. The awakened person does not say, "I did it," or "It happened to me." There is no longer grasping for status, identity, more praise or less blame. Spontaneous living in it, where ego is absent.

The signs of self-realization include:

• Equanimity in success and failure

• Compassion without personal agenda

• Freedom from fear and desire

• Happiness outside circumstance

Getting to this condition does not mean sitting on the ego, but instead realizing and freeing oneself from the ego. It is not about transforming into something else, but discovering what has always been there, just unseen.

This is healing in the Indian psychology sense—not just coping with mental suffering, but waking up to one's unchanging reality.

2.5 Summary

The Ātman or Self in Indian Psychology is considered as eternal, unchanging and transcending the physical or psychological aspects of any identity.

Ahaṁkāra is defined as the identification of the Self with individual body, mind, states and social orders with an extreme form of suffering and ignorance.

In western psychology, ego is a necessary psychological construction; the Indian psychology speaks of transcending it through an inner transformation.

The Upaniṣads and Bhagavad-Gītā emphasize the non-duality of both being and consciousness as the reality of the self, which must be known in ones experience to rid oneself from illusion produced through realization of egoism and religious observance.

In Indian thinking identity is not made or constructed but found through stripping away false identifications and apprehending the intrinsic unity with universal consciousness (p.28-132).

Identity in a true sense, for dharma is the key determinant for identity formation and it tells us who we are inside actually and what is our larger cosmic responsibility.

Karma affects identity: It moulds tendencies and habits by how we act; present identity represents the sum of past actions.

Ego adds to suffering by holding on to results, misidentifying with impermanence and resisting change or humility.

Yoga, meditation, self-enquiry and devotion are the recommended means to transcend Ahaṁkāra and reconnect to Self.

Self-realisation in Indian psychology is not the development of the ego, but the transcendence of egoic awareness and realisation of non-egoic being.

Indian psychology facilitates inner quest and demands self observation, moral discipline, and realization of the Self.

An end to Ahaṁkāra, result- ing in calmness/ stability (ekagrata), clear con- sciousness and freedom from kāma (including emotional reactivity [vaśanā] and fear/desire).

2.6 Key Terms

Ātman – The real, eternal self; pure consciousness beyond mind and body.

Ahaṁkāra – The ego, that is the non-existent "I" which relates to perceived matters.

Dharma – Righteous duty based on nature, position and stage of life.

Karma - Action and its reactions of cause and effect.

Viveka - The discrimination between the real (or Self) and the unreal (or non-Self).

Viveka – Discrimination between what is real/eternal and what is unreal/temporal.

Neti-Neti – Meditative method of self-enquiry, where it is used to negate the five sheaths leading to a realization of the Self ("not this not this").

Kleśas:The four "afflictions" of the mind, which are: egoism, attachment (raga), hatred/aversion (dvesha), and fear.

Bhakti Yoga – The yoga of devotion where the ego is completely submitted to the Divine.

Ātma-vicāra – Self-inquiry to clearly understand the essence of the True Self.

2.7 Descriptive Questions

Describe the idea of Ātman and its relevance in Indian psychology.

Contrast the idea of Ahaṁkāra in Indian psychology with the ego in Western psychology.

What does the Ahaṁkāra mean in Bhagavad Gītā and how does it approach to transcend?

Explain the implications of karma and samskāras in identity formation according to Indian Psychology.

In what ways can Dharma influence one's psychosocial evolution and grading of identity?

Explain how yoga and meditation help one overcomes Ahaṁkāra and attain self-realisation.

How does Ahaṁkāra contribute to suffering of man and how can its sway be diminished?

Examine the utility of Indian notions of self and ego in contemporary psychological practice.

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2.9 Case Study

The Illusion of Self: Ahuskara and Self-Inquiry

Introduction

The following case is highlighting the inner turmoil of Ritika; a successful architect who despites being highly accomplished was going under, feeling empty, hollow and had literally lost her ability to let happiness find place in that hallowed cranium. The control by Ahaṁkāra on her identity was evidenced through identification with roles, achievements and public face. With Indian psychological understanding about Ātman and detachment guiding her, Ritika embarked on a transformative process of meditation, self-enquiry and introspection. Her experience shows how an age-old practice can help in the moments of modern test and trial of the ego, self-worth and emotional sanity.

Background

Ritika, 32 and an architect, was seen as extremely accomplished. She was poised and articulate, a perfectionist. But under this shiny surface, a deep sense of insecurity. She always felt the need for external validation, cowered from criticism and crumbled under slight setbacks. Ritika said she had a repeating sense of being "hollow inside" even though she was so successful. She began to question the meaning of her accomplishments and who she really was.

At the suggestion of a therapist trained in Indian psychology, she started to investigate notions of Ahaṁkāra and Ātman by practising meditation and self-inquiry. Her journey across the course of half a year uncovered levels of her built-up self and what it meant to carry around such an ego attachment.

Problem 1: Relevance of the Self on Roles and Achievements

Self-identity of Ritika rested substantially on professional lines. Her self-worth was coming from awards, recognition and the success of her projects. And any criticism "was almost like a personal attack," she said, living with chronic anxiety about losing status.

Solution:

Ritika started to dis-intertwine her being and doing with the help of self-inquiry (Ātma-vicāra) and journaling. She learned to distinguish between the self inside her and her various roles. She read aloud from the Upaniṣads, contemplating the fact that "you are not your thoughts, job, or achievements." Gradually, she realized the difference between Ātman and Ahaṁkāra, and took solace in that there was an inner identity that success or failure could never touch.

Problem 2: Emotional Reactivity and Attachment

Ritika says that she battled with her emotional swings. Praise sent her soaring, criticism made her feel worthless. It appeared that she is in complete control of what emotions she would show.

Solution:

She was taught about mindfulness meditation and how to observe her emotions with detachment. With daily practice she started to see her emotional ups and downs instead of reacting out of them. The Bhagavad Gītā, with its teachings on equanimity, encouraged her to act without attachment to results. She became less reactive and she felt more balanced inwardly.

Problem 3 Fear of losing control and identity

Ritika would have been concerned about her public image. She was resistant to changes, unwilling to engage in spiritual inquiry and she felt threatened by ideas suggesting that her identity was not fixed.

Solution:

On the path of Karma Yoga, Ritika was attempting to offer her action without attachment towards the fruit. In therapy, she explored the transitory nature of external identity and had talks about letting go for a control freak. As she played with surrender and humility, she discovered a parallel inner confidence growing — a deeper, quieter one that wasn't about comparison at all but self-knowledge.

Reflective Questions

In what way did Ritika's identity with her profession build Ahaṁkāra?

Which tools made it possible for her to transform ego-reaction into self-awareness?

How did the instructions of the Bhagavad Gītā help her in her evolution?

What difference does knowing Ātman make about how one responds to praise and blame?

Is being professionally ambitious and spiritually aspirational possible? Why or why not?

Conclusion

Case of Ritika serves as an example to demonstrate the applicability and profundity of Indian psychological ideas in the present day predicaments. And her journey also proves that freeing oneself from Ahaṁkāra doesn't mean retreating from the world, but

transforming the relationship with it on the inside. By differentiating ego and Self, and by self-observation in yoga meditation inquiryTo move from a life of emotional dependency FearAnd live an authentic resilient inner freedom.

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Unit 3: Integral Psychology: Bridging Self, Personality, and Psychology

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the fundamental ideas of Integral Psychology, including its focus on the overall development of identity across body, emotions, mind and spirit.
2. Explain the Advaita Vedāntic theory of personality Point out its metaphysical perspective and differentiation between two planes: I and layers of experience (kośas).
3. Discuss the model of personality in Sri Aurobindo and its various planes of consciousness; the aim is evolution with outer-layer of personality having to be integrally worked upon with psychic being.
4. Compare the idea of mind in Indian psychology as made up of several layers—sensory-mind (manas), discriminative-intellect (buddhi), ego (ahaṁkāra), inner consciousness (citta).
5. Compare Western and Indian views on personality growth, self-actualization, and consciousness.
6. Use the Indic models of personality to make sense of personal development, inner struggle and enlightenment in practical life.
7. There is a need to consider Indian and Western models in light of their ultimate goals and contrasting understanding of the self and psychological health.

Content

3.0 Introductory Caselet

"Beyond the Surface: Ramesh's Inner Quest"

Ramesh, 40, a clinical psychologist based in Pune, was raised on Western therapeutic models — cognitive behavioral therapy, psychodynamic theory and humanistic approaches. He established an enthusiastic following and was noted for his astute diagnostic skills. But over time, he says, he began to notice a gap in his work. Many clients — and not just those who walked in the door with more existential distress (ie: issues around purpose, meaning, identity), which my department usually focused on — also did not respond well to traditional approaches. They were feeling "better" but not yet "whole." They would frequently tell me, "I understand my patterns and yet I still feel like something is missing."

It was in a professional development workshop that Ramesh first became acquainted with Integral Psychology — a model that is derived from India's philosophical tradition and not only includes personality as behaviour tendencies or mental formations but also the body, vital energy, mind, intellectual faculties, psychic being and spiritual self. This multidimensional view intrigued him.

He began to study Advaita Vedanta, which holds that personality is not who you are but merely what you temporarily manifest. True individuality, it is maintained by this view, lay in the Ātman and transcended personality and its fluctuations. In his late 20s, he also delved into Integral Yoga Psychology, written by Sri Aurobindo, which had a model of personality evolution (the development of consciousness from the physical to vital to mental and beyond, up to the supramental). The human being was viewed, in contrast to static personality "types", as a field of becoming and not only adaptation.

What bowled Ramesh over was the emphasis on inner integration. The Western models treat challenges and behaviors, while the Indian model of personality strives to align these relatively superficial layers of being with our psychic center—the essence of who we are at our core, directly connected to honesty and truth.

This inspired Ramesh to introduce reflective methods into therapy: breath awareness, meditative self-observation and philosophical inquiry into the nature of the self. The clients offered richer impressions: several reported that they had shifted from managing to transforming.

This taught Ramesh to challenge his received conception of personality — not as a fixed constellation of traits, but a process of ever-refracted becoming, one shaped by what is inside, by the consciousness one has cultivated and spun from nothingness, but also what is outside. He knew that Indian models did not dismiss psychological theory so much as Solidify it — but in a world that includes the soul, mind and the journey of consciousness.

Critical Thinking Question

How can Indian models of personality (ie Advaita Vedānta, Integral Psychology) undermine the Western psychological conception of personality as a fixed array of traits or behaviors?

3.1 Introduction to Integral Psychology

3.1.1 Concept and Scope of Integral Psychology

I think Integral Psychology is a way of looking at psychology that's really complete and looks at all the different parts of a person. It is about understanding the person, including their personality, their thoughts and feelings and how they grow and change. This approach tries to bring all the different aspects of human life like the body, emotions, mind and spirit. It is, like trying to combine all the pieces of a puzzle to get a complete picture. I believe this method gets a lot of ideas from thinkers, especially Sri Aurobindo. It tries to find a way to combine spiritual ideas with what we know about psychology today. Integral Psychology is a way to understand people that's holistic and multidimensional and it looks at all the different parts of Integral Psychology to get a complete understanding of human personality, consciousness and development.

The central tenet of Integral Psychology is that we are not simply physical or mental creatures, but spiritual beings who develop through multiple levels of consciousness. It doesn’t see psychological growth as an end point, but as a chapter on the way to soul. In this model, personality is not that fixed thing determined by temperment and traits but rather results from a process of self-creation involving the possibility of inner change.

Integral Psychology posits a number of different planes or layers or levels in human existence, which include:

- Physical: The body and its automatic reactions.
- Vital: The plane of the emotions, desires and life forces.
- Intellectual: The plane of mind, reason, and will.

- Psychic Being; self or true essence: The inmost soul within.
- Spiritual/Supramental: The highest universal 'self', beyond the personal ego.

Unlike the conventional focus of psychology on illness, disease, alienation and such (and also excellence in a less totalizing way), integral psychology focuses on health, healing, wholeness, integration & higher realizations. The therapeutic objective is not merely control of conflict or proper behaviour but a harmonising, bringing together into changed relationship the multiple parts of the being—body, vital and mental selves—with the inner spiritual self. Such an inner alignment is thought to be fundamental to mental stability and spiritual satisfaction.

Integral Psychology also maintains that for a real healing and growth, it is necessary to move beyond the egoic consciousness and changing with the deeper soul-self. From this point of view, numerous psychological problems are considered to be expressions (symptoms) of the lack of harmony between the outer personality and the inner psychic being. The practice of being a person includes things like thinking about your own thoughts and actions paying attention to what you do and sitting quietly to calm your mind. This practice also includes mindfulness training to help you become more aware of things. People do these things because they want to reach states of consciousness. The practice is about using techniques like meditation to quiet the mind and become more mindful. Mindfulness training is a part of this practice. The goal of this practice is to help people reach states of consciousness through things, like introspection and self-observation and meditation and mindfulness training.

Integral Psychology is not about helping one person at a time. It affects how we teach how we build communities and how we take care of our well being and how our culture grows. This is a call to change the way we think about psychology. Integral Psychology does not say that you are just feeling tired or emotional or that you are being rational or irrational and that any spiritual experience you have is a coincidence. Integral Psychology helps to fix the problem of people feeling disconnected from themselves which's a big issue in modern psychology. Integral Psychology is about making people whole again. That is what Integral Psychology is all, about. By marrying the psychological and spiritual perspectives, it brings in a potent new element into any understanding of selfwork and human growth.

3.1.2 Western Perspectives on Personality and Self

Western psychology has provided a spectrum of theories and models to account for personality and self. These ideas are informed, above all, by empirical study and clinical observation of human life-worlds and by philosophical traditions that have had a special regard for individual uniqueness, rationality, and adaptation to the environment.

In Western psychology, the self is predominantly considered as a psychological construct and is influenced by genetic, raising, social experience as well as cognitive development.

One of the earliest theoretical models is Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theory which states that personality consists of three systems: id, ego and superego. The ego operates as a check on the instinctual life of the id, and monitors its impulses in an effort to maintain the balance between it and the moralizing Superego. Freud placed an emphasis on unconscious motives behind people's behavior, childhood experiences, and internal conflicts as aspects that explains personality.

Carl Jung expanded the scope of this perspective, introducing his concept of collective unconscious, archetypal images and individuation (Jung, 1913-1930), by which he meant a process of integrating the total psyche in order to build up one single integrated self. Jung's concept of the Self transcends ego and involves the whole psyche, but in a psychological context rather than spiritual one.

The humanistic psychologists—most notably Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow—have focused instead on the self-concept, personal growth, and self-actualization. Psychological health, according Rogers occurs when an individual's perception of self matches his/her experiences with the world around them. Maslow included self-actualization at the top of his hierarchy, when he described it as to become the most one can be.

These structures have had significant impact in personality measurement and research but do not include spiritual or transpersonal dimensions.

Social and cognitive psychology see the self as a construct of social relation, memory, and cognitive script. The self is seen as mutable, water, and context-specific. For instance, self-schema theory and social identity theory account for the ways in which individuals create their sense of themselves via group membership and internal scripts.

Recent trends in positive psychology centred around strengths, resilience and flourishing. But even here, the self is usually taken as a unified psychological system rather than a spiritual truth.

Western models, in all their contributions to knowledge of behavioral phenomena and cognitive organization as well as emotional responses, have enhanced the grasp of psychological wellbeing and malfunction. But many skim deeper metaphysical queries altogether: What am I, beyond mind and body? Are there part of identity that are immaterial? What is the final goal of growing? These are rarely discussed openly, which the integral as well as Indian psychological models try to address.

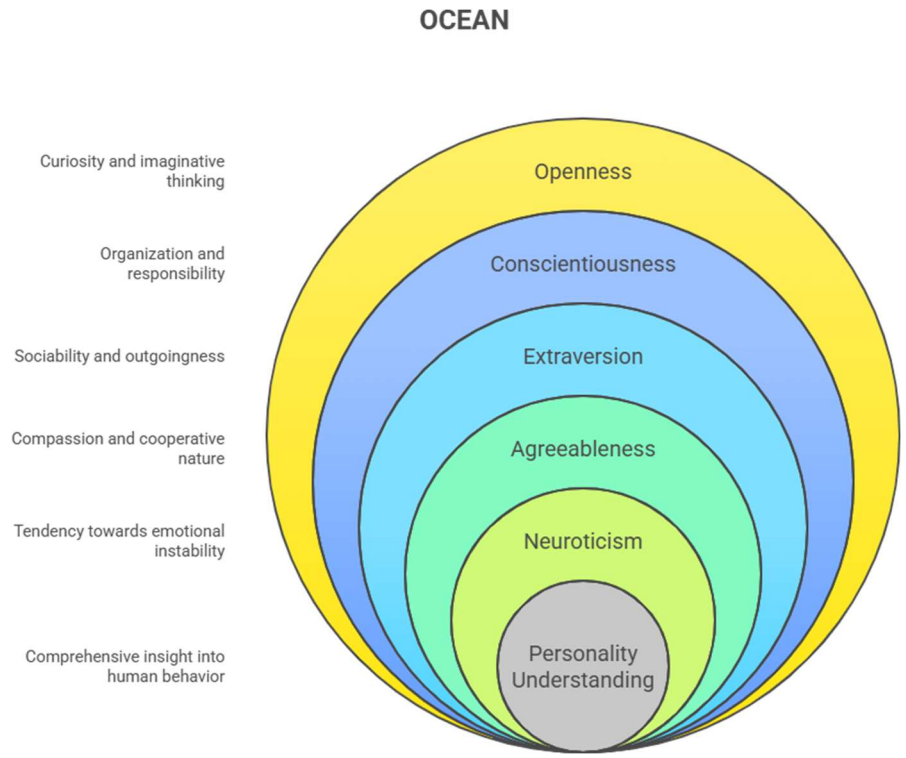


Figure 3.1

3.1.3 Indian Perspectives on Personality and Self

Indian views on personality and self are rooted in the profound philosophical traditions like Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, and Integral Yoga and provide a multileveled spiritual conception of man. Such views do not analyse the self into psychological functions but interpret personality in terms of more profound ontological truths particularly the Ātman—the changeless, timeless Self.

Personality is also viewed through the prism of Pañcakośa or "Five Sheaths" in Advaita Vedānta tradition:

Annamaya Kośa – It is the physical sheath or physical body which is associated with the material aspect of living.

Prāṇamaya Kośa –The vital body, controls the breath, vitality and physiological functions.

Manomaya Kośa- The Khosha itself corresponding to the mind, thoughts and emotions and sensory processing.

Vijñānamaya Kośa – The layer of intellect, associated with rational and critical thinking, decision making.

Ānandamaya Kośa – The bliss sheath, innermost of all, is only one made and consists the true Self.

Beyond all these dresses stands the Ātman, the unconditioned Self which is absolutely free from personal characteristics, life-history and mental states. The aim of human life is to know and achieve this Self, which is the pinnacle of psychological and spiritual development.

According to Sāṅkhya and Yoga, self is Puruṣa (pure consciousness), different from Prakṛti (nature or matter). Character is derived from the interaction of the three gunas (sattva, rajasic, and tamas) of Prakṛti which incline individuals to act in a certain way. Though these tendencies (or vāsanās) condition character and behavior, they are not the self. Yoga The goal of yoga is to still the mind, (chitta vritti nirodha) and#ae energies can flow naturally.

Puruṣa can be realized.

The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo elaborates on classical formations by positing supraphysical levels of consciousness:

• Sub-conscious: Base of instincts and conditioning.

• Physical: The surface bodily consciousness.

• The center of desires, feelings and energies."

• Mind: The mental faculties or the realm of thought and intellect.

Psychic Being -The soul in the process of its development which links the outer personality with the Divine.pp.

• Supramental: The plane of truth-consciousness above the mind.

This stratified concept of self suggests that people can evolve from functioning out of the ego to living in the soul.

The Indian viewpoint highlights the fact that mental health does not arise just from balance within the mind, but from an attunement to our True Self, right living (Dharma) and aspiration towards spiritual growth. This pain originates from avidyā (the lack of self-awareness); and the cure consists in turning inward to gain self-knowledge, detachment, and inner discipline().

Opposed to Western models, which tend to concentrate mostly on behavior and cognition modification, the process of Indian psychology is consciousness transformation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moksha Liberation from the Cycle of birth and Death is not freedom that comes as an end in itself but is passage C This fulfillment itself does not remain an end, it allows one a passageway.

3.2 Advaita Vedāntic Model of Personality

3.2.1 Concept of Ātman (True Self)

Advaita Vedānta poses Ātman as the centre of man's personality, the very basis of consciousness. Ātman is the eternal, unchanging, pure consciousness; in it is held all experience. Yet it is not in the mind, body or senses, but rather the mute."Sir" of all that takes place in them. Unlike experiential selves or āham-identities, the Ātman is neither born nor does it ever die; it transcends time, space and causation.

In Advaita Vedānta, based on the Upaniṣadic trends that perceive human suffering as a result of forgetting what one is in essence (one with Ātman), and confusing oneself with merely the body, mind and intellect. This misidentification with what one is not, called by such terms as avidyā or ignorance, produces bondage (bandha), pain (dukkha), and error. The purpose of life is not, therefore, to build or improve the personality but to go beyond it in self-realisation.

Ātman is characterized by sat-cit-ānanda: existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). It is one, radiant and free by nature. The secret of the knowledge of the Ātman is purity within, detachment from ephemeral personality, and profound meditation. The method of neti-neti (“not this, not this”) is to nullify everything that is not the self—body, feelings, thoughts, perceptions—until nothing but pure awareness is left.

Contrast this to the Western models which tend to conceptualize the self as a developing psychological being, while in Advaita Self is pre-existent reality; not made but disclosed. So spiritual maturity is not about building a stronger or more stable false self but about laying down the layers which hide the truth.

Nor too is Ātman individual. It is one and the same with Brahman, the cosmic consciousness. This is the core philosophical statement of Advaita: “Āham Brahmāsmi.” – I am Brahman. This experience of oneness is the end result of all spiritual and psychological development in this tradition. So, if knowing the personality by this standpoint is to note its ever changing nature and to look within into that which does not change, i.e. relating to the ‘Self’.

3.2.2 Five Koshas (Sheaths) of Personality

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad describes five koshas (sheaths) that cover up the Ātman. These koshas are aspects of the human experience—from the gross to the more subtle—taken together, they create a framework for personality in Advaita Vedānta. The spiritual path is traversed inward through these strata, and establishes the Ātman beyond it all.

Annamaya Kosha (Physical Sheath)

This is the car or some vehicle which drives on a road. It is kept alive by food (anna) so that's what it's called. That means muscles, bones, skin and every other bodily system. It is essential for survival, but it is not the inner self. Attachment with this layer creates materialistic and body-conscious self. Aim of physical yoga or physical discipline is to purify this sheath and make ready the aspirant for inner work and tapas.

Prānamaya Kosha (Vital Sheath)

This sheath is made of the essential life energy or prāṇa; it regulates respiration, circulation, digestion etc.. opening apparatus. It is more subtle than the physical body but nonetheless impermanent. Emotional swings and energy-of-motion lability are created when one takes on an identification with this sheath. Regulating the breath and managing life energy in techniques such as prāṇāyāma serves to equilibrium this layer.

Manomaya Kosha (Mental Sheath)

This is the mind-stuff (manas) responsible for thought, feeling, recollection and perception. It never sleeps, churning all sensory input and producing responses in terms of likes and dislikes. This sheath is the sphere of ego and identity. Attachment, neurosis and wants work even more strongly there. Acquiring this sheath involves mastery and practice—of mental discipline, awareness of emotional processes, and ethical living.

Vijñānamaya Kosha (Intellectual Sheath)

It is related to the buddhi, or higher understanding/discrimination. It carries the functions of judgment, comprehension and decision making. It means "I know" and is often used to assert authority over the other.

identity. However, it is still more subtle than the manomaya kosha and cannot get to Ātman straight without a surrender of egoic control or self-inquiry. When led by wisdom and discrimination (viveka), this sheet can stimulate spiritual development.

Ānandamaya Kosha (Bliss Sheath)

The most intimate sheath is the state of bliss and satisfaction. It is felt in states of meditative absorption or dreamless sleep. Although it reveals the Ātman with its ananda (bliss), yet it is only a kosha, subtle and perishable. Unfortunately, many seekers get off at this station, thinking it's the last stop of self. But real freedom it is only when one goes beyond even this fine veil and gets at its conclusion the ever-free Ātman.

Each kosha is like a veiling for the real Self. Spiritual practice is a process of 'going inward': by that motion, one refines and transmutes these sheaths; ultimately finds the source of consciousness which imparts light to all these. Kosha Model As much as a

metaphysical construct, the kosha model works as a practical map of individual and spiritual development.

Did You Know?

“In Advaita Vedānta, the five koshas are compared to the layers of an onion. As each layer is peeled away through practice and introspection, one moves closer to the core—Ātman—just as peeling an onion leads inward to the center, where no further layer remains to be removed.”

3.2.3 Implications for Understanding Human Personality

The Advaita Vedāntic perspective cosmically changes our vision of personality as the indwelling subject rather than reflecting on its objectivity in terms of social patterns, conventions and modes. Western psychological theories by contrast define personality as a set of habitual patterns/thoughts/behaviours, whereas the Vedāntic perspective describes personality as layers of coverings over the Self—each necessary but none essential to our true identity.

A key implication of this model is that personality is not set in stone. It is an impermanent form moulded by the physical, prāṇic, mental and intellectual. These layers can be shifted and purified and finally transcended through the yogic path. Growth, then, isn’t just about adaptation or self-management, but rather an act of self-overcoming.

Another consequence is the non-pathological frame for suffering. In this view, suffering is not just a disorder that must be cured, but the result of false identification with the non-self. Mental afflictions and mental suffering are usually derived from attachment to a bodily concept, and additionally from attachment to wishful thinking or identity as well as ego-oriented desire-thinking. Healing is the process of de-identifying what has appeared in these momentary layers and coming back to the serenity of Self.

This theory also includes a multidimensional view to the assessment and development of personality. Therapists or teachers trained in the five kosha model can also be more responsive to the entire spectrum of human experience—body, energy, emotion, cognition and existential yearning. This enables more comprehensive, integrated interventions.

Ethically and behaviorally, to comprehend the koshas is to strive towards behaving from higher levels of consciousness. We do not follow blindly because of habit or conformity but under the light of discrimination and intuitive insight. Actions that arise from

deeper layers of consciousness are naturally more dharmic (righteous) and not so reactive or ego based.

From an educational point of view, the kosha model implies that real learning means to enliven every sheath. Physical education feeds the annamaya kosha; emotional intelligence instruction builds the manomaya kosha; intellectual critical thinking hones the vijñānamaya kosha; and reflective or meditative pedagogy awakens the anandamaya kosha. The ultimate is to bring awareness of Self beyond anything.

Finally, the most radical point is that liberation (mokṣa)—the cessation of psychological suffering—is realizable. Unlike most psychological hypothesizes that provide at best a balance or normality theory, the Advaita Vedāntic model at least offers theoretical freedom from fear, delusion and an ego driven existence.

3.3 Sri Aurobindo's Model of Personality

3.3.1 The Concept of Integral Yoga Psychology

The Integral Yoga Psychology of Sri Aurobindo is a deep subject. It brings together growth and the complex things about human psychology. Most psychology methods only look at how we think or behave.. Integral Yoga Psychology of Sri Aurobindo looks at the deeper parts of our existence. It considers our energy, emotions, intuition and aspirations. The Integral Yoga Psychology of Sri Aurobindo tries to balance these things as we change and grow inside. This helps us to transform in a way. The Integral Yoga Psychology of Sri Aurobindo is about changing who we are, on the inside.

Integral Yoga is really about something simple. At the heart of Integral Yoga is this idea that people have levels of consciousness. This is something that all types of yoga believe in. Each level of consciousness has its special powers and its own way of growing. These levels are not separate from each other. They are all. Affect one another. The goal of Integral Yoga is to help people live in a way that is guided by their self, their psyche. This is different, from living a life that is controlled by your ego or your mind. Integral Yoga wants to show you how to live a life that is guided by your psyche, not your ego or mind. This is the idea of Integral Yoga.

From a healing perspective Integral Yoga Psychology does not focus on solving problems or managing symptoms. It looks at things differently. When we suffer it is often because we think we are our bodies, our emotions or our thoughts.. This is not really who we are. To truly heal we need to look inside ourselves. This means we have to go beyond what's on the surface. The goal of Integral Yoga Psychology is not just to make us feel okay again. It is to help us discover things about ourselves and to connect with something bigger than ourselves, the divine. This is what it means to awaken and be

alive. Integral Yoga Psychology is about helping us to do this to wake up and be in touch, with the divine.

Integral Yoga Psychology combines a lot of things. It is about the mind. How we think. Integral Yoga Psychology looks at how people feel and what they do. It is, like a study of people and what makes them tick. Integral Yoga Psychology combines ideas to help us understand people better.

• Inward Observation: Attainment of Consciousness at all Levels

• Aspiration: on things far beyond the egoistic wants.

• Capitulation: submorningrgation of the one harping to low horny impulses in favoring lhuthic Being.

• Transformation: gradual transformation by higher consciousness of the lower physical, vital and mental layers.

This idea of psychology says that the way people grow and change is not a line. Human development is like a journey that moves from the outside in. It starts with making life more complicated. Then moves towards finding balance and being true to who you are. The more that people let their inner self guide them the more their actions and decisions will show a sense of peace. According to this psychology when men let their inner self be in charge their choices and experiences will be more in tune with what's really important. This psychology holds that human development is evolutionary meaning it is a movement from the parts of life, towards an inner coherence and a way of expressing the divine self.

3.3.2 The Levels of Human Being

Sri Aurobindos template says there are five planes of human existence. Each of the Sri Aurobindos template planes has its setup and its own puzzle and there are also opportunities, for growth in each of the Sri Aurobindos template planes.

Physical

The grossest level is our body. This is about our bodys structure and our health and habits and instincts. Our body is what we use every day. Over time our body becomes a vessel for awakenings. We can use things like yoga and the food we eat. How we stand and being aware of things to fill our body and help it be open to spiritual things. This is better than using our body to survive. We want our body to be in service of receptivity. The body is very important for this. We use tools like yoga and food and posture and awareness to help our body be ready, for things.

Vital

The realm of energy is a place of emotion, passion and desire. Energy is a force that pulses and vibrates. However when energy is left uncontrolled it is often very chaotic. Integral Yoga tries to change the life force of energy into a way of living. It does this by taking desire and turning it into something bringing joy to people and helping the energy inside of us work well with the values that are important to us. Integral Yoga is about making energy work, for us in a way.

Mental

The mind is what we use for thought and reasoning and memory and imagination and belief. It helps us think about things. Remember things. The mind can also help us see things in a way or it can keep us from seeing things clearly because of the way we were taught to think.

The mind is, like this because of what we learn and the things that happen to us. Integrative Yoga is a way to change the mind and make it clearer and more open. It helps us understand things in a way without just thinking about what we have learned. This can make our minds more open. Help us understand things in a more natural way like we just know them. Integrative Yoga can stimulate the mind. Help us see things in a new light, which is really nice.

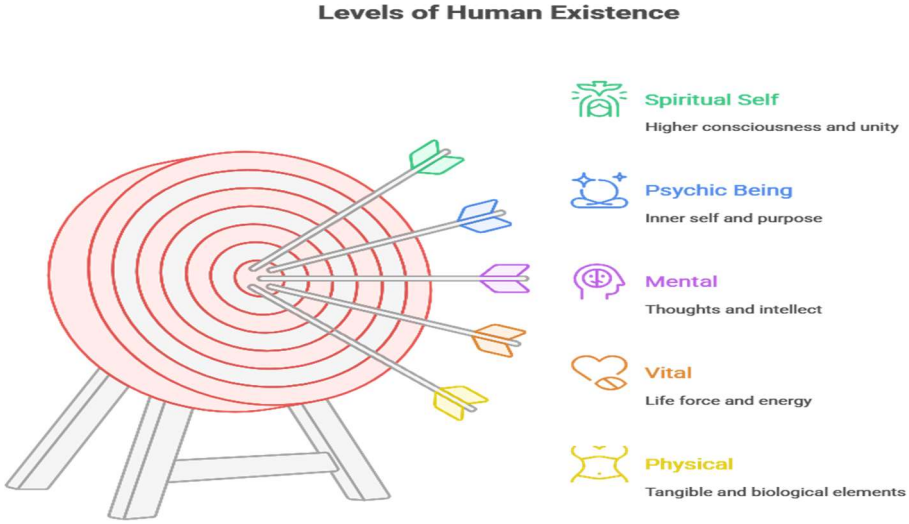
Psychic Being

The soul, if it really exists or the part of us that is always changing and becoming more than our ego is what truly matters. This soul bears our special way of living our dharma, which is the real guide for our personality. When we have an awakening it is like being silent listening and allowing our psychic being to make our outer life match our inner dharma. This psychic being helps our life and inner dharma to be in harmony. The psychic awakening is, about silence and listening to our psychic being so it can align our outer life with our inner dharma, the real guide of our personality our special dharma.

Spiritual Self

This includes the higher intuitional planes–overmind, illumined mind and supramental consciousness–where divine consciousness does work of transformation. The spiritual Ego is that which offers all real power, true peace and unity. Where consciousness submits itself to this reality, personality becomes an instrument of the Divine will.

3.2 Level of Human Existence



3.3.3 Goal of Integral Development and Transformation

Self-fulfillment would be the final goal of not the Sri Aurobindo model, but integral transformation or spiritual evolution. The goal is not merely to rid oneself of psychological flaws, but to access the divine that exists within us and let it come forth into matter.

Key implications include:

• Integralization : The unification of the physical, vital and mental aspects in their right subordination to the psychic. This melting of inner conflict results from the work of a personality with more integration.

• Conscious Evolution: Humans are the expression of evolution and a self-reflective aspect of an evolving process. Personal transformation must precede collective evolution as we awaken to our collective being.

• Center to periphery: As the psychic is aroused it becomes the focus of all activity. Choices and behavior are also more compatible with reflections than reflecting upon stimuli.

• Spiritual Body-Incarnation: In conclusion, Integral Yoga 92 aims at incarnating a higher consciousness in the body-mind. It is to live not as hungry questers outside of life but as enchanted agents within it.

• New Human Paradigm: Transformation ushering in a new form of human expression that the spiritual energy is brought into relationship with our “worldly” forms such as educators, leaders, creatives and hearted individuals.

The belief in seeing the soul as not separate from the mind or body is what informs this. When all levels are intentionally directed by the psychic core, does personality fall away?Yes and no, in the sense it becomes transparently more luminous, unified, and functional—and reveals a consciousness both human and divine.

“Activity: Experiencing the Inner Planes”

Invite students to observe one prominent activity—such as eating, conversing, or resting—and afterwards write a brief reflection on how their experience unfolded across the physical, vital, mental, psychic, and spiritual levels. Encourage them to note shifts in sensations, feelings, thoughts, intuitive insights, or feelings of connectedness. Conclude by prompting them to identify which level felt most engaged and what aspirations or internal request arose regarding deeper alignment—this helps experiential integration of Sri Aurobindo’s multidimensional model.

3.4 Concept of Mind in Indian Psychology

3.4.1 Manas, Buddhi, Chitta, and Ahaṁkāra

Manas、Buddhi、Chitta Ahaṁkāra. This model is an advanced running map of thoughts which fundamentally describe human thought, identity, memory and judgment.

• Manas is the perceptive and receptive mind. It records impressions, receives input from the senses and determines attention and skepticism. Manas is the comprehensive mind along with Manah, integrating experience; it tends to read experience linearly and in a binary fashion so that object of pursuit/attraction and object of avoidance get enmeshed into attraction/aversion-reactions.

• Buddhi-- the discriminative faculty which enables perception, judging and understanding. It judges with its own scale, and makes a distinction between what is true and false. Though slight, the pendulum of discrimination will swing in proportion with the clearness of Buddhi- if this be clouded by Alapat or weeping, even proper reasoning may go wrong.

• Chitta: this is inclusive of memory, recall and the reservoir of impressions (Sanskars). ‘It is not just individual memory but a field of consciousness in which the accumulated

past-experience is contained. Chitta can impact current thought and actions, whether it is consciously or not.

• Ahaṁkāra, or the ego-sense, structures experience into an identity: "I am this. Ahaṁkāra: I-centre, which takes imprints as being 'mine', ensures that there is a sense of centredness and separation, identity and sited-ness for the ego. It governs and and it delegates orientation: remembrances (Chitta), thoughts (Manas) & decisions (Buddhi).

These four operate as a co-ordinated system: sensory input (Manas) is processed by intellect (Buddhi), coloured by identity (Ahaṁkāra) and given form by memory pictures or impressions of an earlier experience in the mind-chatterer — Chitta. A lack of balance among them—whether it is emotional Manas or stern Buddhi—results in psychological upset. By meditative practices one can purify these: Quieting Manas, sharpening Buddhi, cleaning Chitta and loosening the shackles of Ahaṁkāra, enabling the seeker to achieve Asamprajñāta (unsurpassable) Samādhi for the equilibrium or higher awareness.

Did You Know?

"In Indian thought, Chitta is more than personal memory—it is seen as cosmic intelligence, continuously active even when intellect rests. It sustains life through unceasing awareness, bridging the individual consciousness with universal mind."

3.4.2 Comparison with Western Models of Mind

Western psychological theories tend to divide the mind into personality categories or cognitive abilities. For instance, Freud's tripartite id-ego-superego accounts for drives, mediation and moralisation; humanistic theories emphasize self-concept; cognitive theories chart out memory, perception and cognition processing; neuroscience looks at the neural correlates of consciousness.

The Indian Antahkarana model differs in that it is both psychological and metaphysical. But instead of accommodating layers in therapeutic diagnosis, it charts functionalities of mind with spiritual accuracy. Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahaṁkāra are not four psychic faculties--but four aspects of the one consciousness in terms of its organizational modification-function as sensation (manas), cognition (buddhi), affection-memory-field-generalized sense-mind-history [chitta] and person-objectification-identification-ego [Ahaṁ kāra]. This integral lens blurs the lines of thought and emotion, self and perception, conscious to unconscious.

Another difference is in what you're intending: Western psychology frequently focuses on symptom reduction, behavior management or adaptation. Indian psychology seeks

the transformation of consciousness itself, liberation from entrapment in mental strata and a cognition of Self (Ātman).

3.4.3 Integration of Cognitive, Emotional, and Spiritual Dimensions

Indian syncretism of mind The Antahkarana is a thoroughly integrated view of the faculties for cognition, emotion and spiritual apprehension" syncretic Indian model of Mind which "accepts that cognition and affective process are not separate faculties but interacting functions flowing from the AntahkaraNa.

• Mental Co-ordination : Manas and Buddhi co-ordinate to form percepts, judgment. A Clear Buddhi also assists in differentiating thought out from emotion, so that I can think straight and with balance.

• Sentimentalization: Emotional streams. with sprout in Manas depend, on memory formulations in Chitta and spread sense of (Sentimentalisation).

colored by Ahaṁkāra's ego. Through purification then, feeling is joined with awareness and love.

• Spiritual Enlightenment: With the spiritual vehicle of mind (Manas), thinking and feeling (Buddhi) ego/I am-ness/identity/will to self agency -Ahamkara, and me-ness--interest in objects of the life-world/mind-stuff/memory -- Citta suitably clean clear or transparentened my experience as seen through those lenses becomes a vehicle for higher consciousness. The spiritual condition or the intuition follows after when these faculties are stilled in proper order.

These ways could lead through meditation, self-enquiry, devotion and other disciplined actions – all with the goal of integrating one's inner fragments. So, little by little, the mind is acting more as one clear mirror reflecting consciousness and not so much distorting it.

This integration is not only of one's own personal brain stuff (and it is that), but also comes down to the ways we relate to one another and our world, interweaving cognitive clarity, emotional maturity and spiritual integrity into a seamless life.

3.5 Bridging Western and Indian Perspectives

3.5.1 Convergences Between Western and Indian Personality Theories

For one, both agree that personality is a function of more than one influence. Western models, including the Big Five, include dimensions such as openness to experience, conscientiousness and neuroticism that are useful for describing enduring traits. Indian models highlight entities such as guṇas (sattva, rajas, tamas) or the triguna that

are said to characterize human nature according to its relative harmony, activity or inertia. These correspondences reflect Western conceptions of the characteristics and lend support to the idea that personality can be understood in terms of the interplay between these characteristic qualities, whether Western or Jyotiṣa. This commonality implies that personality is multidimensional under both systems.

Second, each aims to account for psychological change. In Western theories of development, from Erikson's stages of psychological growth to Rogers's notions of self-actualization, development is thought of as progression towards greater maturity and fulfillment. Similarly, Indian spiritual theories discuss evolution as movement from ego-attached consciousness to higher states—arising out of yoga disciplines, meditation and ethical conduct. Personality as a flowing thing, while being differently portrayed in each perspective, is regarded from both for its dynamic developmental motion leading the person toward greater integration.

Trilogy, memory and conditioning are key in both traditions. Western psychology focuses on how early experiences, secure attachment and behavioral conditioning form patterns that persist through life.

Both traditions recognize the significance of self-knowledge. Western humanistic approaches promote introspective reflection through methods such as journaling, therapy, and client-centered conversation. The Indian psychology, on the other hand, fosters internal search through self-enquiry and meditation and discrimination between the Self and non-Self. However, the methods may vary but in both cases it is assumed that conscious insight is necessary for personality integration.

Finally, both systems seek balance. Western psychotherapy tends to seek mental health, resilience and adaptive functioning. The Indian dhyana would integrate mind, will and spirit, and personality would be harmonised through levels of being. They both desire well-being, but they're pointed toward two very different ends — functioning adaptively versus self-actualization.

In effect, Western and Indian theories overlap on common aspects of multidimensional expansion, conditioning, and self-knowing—despite different mechanisms, endgames, and cosmological ground.

3.5.2 Complementarities in Understanding Self and Growth

Though there are convergences, possibilities lie in convergence of two world view – one from the West and the other from India.

And, for one especially effective compliment, consider the marriage of empirical rigor and spiritual depth. In Western psychology, the emphasis is placed on observation, standard procedures and measurable results. The treasure of Indian psychology

illumines, how much growth the soul has made for consciousness and transformation. When they are thoughtfully integrated, Western modalities can serve to authorize as well as interpret experiential data saturating Indian practices, including meditation and ethical training." This gives it a broader research context.

Two, where Western thought is more about diagnosing and intervening in dysfunction – Indian approaches speaks the language of prevention, purification and soul evolution. Matching those approaches can also offer care that eases symptoms and nurtures an individual's inner wisdom. For instance, psychotherapy can be based on philosophical and moral principles (like those of karmayoga or mindfulness-based awareness) that promote mental health and spiritual welfare.

Third, Indian models, on the other hand, consider personality to be malleable. Combining the two yields a dynamic measure of personality that 'looks at what people are and how much they can change. For instance, you can be tested of Big Five traits and receive also spiritual practices to help you grow beyond the restrictive patterns.

Western attention is extremely individualistic; Indian psychology stresses interconnectiveness with self, other and cosmos. Incorporating both promotes balanced self-aware identity focused in the social context. Western affirmations such as "I am enough" could be paired with Indian focus on self-realization as unity — "I am a part of all."

Lastly, Indian psychology emphasizes on end-states of transformation such as self-realization and moksa. Western psychology can contribute to this organisation through offering conceptual direction, research tools and institutional support. A better model might be that of an integrate life approach there therapy, coaching and spiritual direction are integrated in one-system-of-care to produce whole persons.

Indeed West and East - empiricism versus spirituality, individualism versus cosmic scale, fixed qualities vs developmental process all lend to a deeper more integrated vision of self and personality.

3.5.3 Towards a Holistic Psychology of Personality

Perhaps the future of psychology will be in a truly holistic model – A Psychology of Personality which includes body, mind, society and spirit. Combining Western empiricism with India depth, such an integral psychology would provide the possibility for transformation.

Such a model would include:

• Multidimensionl Measures: Including trait-based inventories (e.g.,Big Five) and measures of guṇa

value and moral alignment.

• Integrated Therapies: The integration of CBT, meditation and pranayama, ethical perception and value-based living.

• Developmental Model: Basing the Plan on developmental stages of Western (e.g., identity formation) and Indian spiritual psycho-social development (e.g., psychic awakening), allowing for "tailoring" a plan to meet further growth.

• Expanding Research: Recording trance, meditation or ego loss experiences using a qualitative phenomenological method in addition to quantitative measures.

• Cross-Cultural Humility: the openness to adapt models and measures for non-WEIRD samples, affirming constructs such as collectivism, spirituality, and dharma in personality science.

This psychology of wholeness would transcends the phony and oppositions—spirit v matter, ego v soul, pathology v growth—and understand that personality itself might be a dance among capacities, conditions, states of consciousness. It would orient therapy and education toward self-awareness, ethical living and the collective evolutionary project.

It is well recognized that such integration also serves global mental health. It gives individuals Western strengths (diagnosis, evidence-based methods) and Indian gifts (mind purification, spiritual discipline). In the end, this transpersonal psychology respects both the wholeness of mind and the depth of being – a psychology suited to the entire human possibility."

3.6 Summary

Integral Psychology: It is a comprehensive view of the different aspects that constitute total personality such as physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual.

According to Indian psychological systems, the human being is seen as evolving towards the final goal of attaining its true Self or Ātman.

The Advaita Vedāntic model describes the five koshas/shells which are identified as covering of human consciousness – these predicaments portraying different strata of individual psyche personality that veil the Ātman.

According to Sri Aurobindo's scheme of things, there is integral transformation where the personality grows and develops with the psychic being as a guide.

Integral Yoga Psychology provides tools such as observing self, aspiration, surrender and transformation for human development and spiritual transcendence.

The model of Antaḥkaraṇa described functions of the internal organ manas, buddhi, chitta and aha.ṁkāra—areexplained. all contributing some special aspect of human cognition and humanity.

Indian thoughts suggests personality is a dynamic, complex and metamorphic and not fixed or trait determined.

The Indian model is such that it makes a continuum acting from the interior with cognitive dimension, emotional mode, ethic comportment and spiritual way.

While the two major views of the West, behavioristic and cognitive, center on empirical studies and external action, Indian psychology focuses upon subjective data with self-awareness at independence (as one ' time understandings grow to enlightenment).

3.7 Key Terms

Ātman -The inner Self in Indian philosophy, pure consciousness which is eternal and unchanging.

Integral Psychology – A multidimensional view, it includes body-mind-soul-spirit.

Manas – The sense organ, the mind that receives the impressions of experience and creates thoughts.

Buddhi – The faculty of discriminative judgment, capable of reasoning.

Chitta – Memory-bank that stores impressions, thoughts, and experiences.

Ahaṁkāra – The feeling of individuality or "I".

Kosha – Layer or Sheath that shrouds true self; viz., physical, vital, mental, intellectual and bliss layers.

Psychic Being– The evolving consciousness and inner self that directs personal development in Sri Aurobindo's scheme.

Guṇas – Basic factors in Indian psychology: sattva (purity), rajas (activity), tamas (inertia).

נשמ״ת – Samskaras: impressions which are sown in a person’s mind, influencing their behavior.

Self-generation – The awakening to one’s true nature beyond ego and mind.

Wholistic Psychology – The study of the whole person, integrating mind, body, feelings and values.

3.8 Descriptive Questions

Discuss the notion of Integral Psychology and its implications for personality growth.

Explain the concept of the five koshas in the Advaita Vedāntic scheme and their practical significance in comprehending human nature.

Explain the meaning of and importance to human personality evolution, according to Sri Aurobindo, of psychic being.

Discuss the roles of manas, buddhi, chitta, and ahaṁkāra in Indian psychology.

What makes Indian personality different from Western concepts of personality?

How do Western psychological models meet with Indian ones, and how can they be merged?

How do the guṇas determine personality in Indian thought?

What are the implications for contemporary mental health service practice of a psychology-focused on wholeness?

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3.10 Case Study

“Re-orienting the Self – a Case Study in continued evolution”

Introduction

This is the case of Rohan*, a successful professional who fought through anxiety, poor self-esteem and an abyss of vacuity while excelling in life. Traditional methods of treatment provided some relief, but I never got to the bottom of who I was or why I was

here. In his study with a concern for Indian psychology, Rohan encountered the ideas of Ahaṁkāra, guṇas and the psychic being to name a few, which were facilitated by reflective and contemplative exercises. His story demonstrates how utilizing these constructs can heal dichotomies within ourselves, resolve internal conflicts, and bring us into greater alignment with our own true nature.

Background:

Rohan is a 27 year old young professional who presents with symptoms of anxiety, low worthlessness and affects in his personal life as well as professional life. Despite his professional success, he writes of a "sense of inner emptiness" and increasing irritability. Conventional cognitive therapy did address negative thought patterns, but the effects were only temporary.

He is introduced to Indian psychological concepts through a seminar on Integral Psychology and starts his investigation into such ideas as the psychic being, guṇas and the koshas. With the mentor's guidance, he starts incorporating practices of reflection and contemplation into his life.

Problem 1: Discrepancy Freed from Authenticity "Feel They Are the Real Person"

Rohan was all about maintaining social pressures and extrinsic success and fear of failing. He was very identified with his achievement and the way others saw him.

Solution:

He was instructed to meditate on Ahaṁkāra (ego consciousness) and to differentiate between the constructed self-identity and the deeper inner awareness. By beginning to observe himself through journaling and meditation, Rohan realized that his self-image was reactive as well as temporary. And with the practice of neti-neti (not this, not this), he had begun disidentifying from roles and labels, allowing a more solid self to appear.

Problem 2: Overbalance of Guṇas Causing Agitation.

Rohan was experiencing patterns of rajas (restlessness, ambition, and emotional reactivity) that led to burnout and agitation.

Solution:

Ātma vicāra Reply A reflective analysis of his inner tendencies in the light of the guṇa model helped Rohan to identify an excess of rajas and a lack of sattva. He added sattvic activities – walks in nature, ethical contemplation and awareness, mindful eating

and service (seva) to slowly balance his inner energies. Pranayama and devotional practices were presented to pacify the Pranic sheath and calm Vibration.

Observation 3: Not getting connected with Psychic Being.

Intellectually he was inclined, but emotionally in a fluster, and spiritually scattered. He had no access to motivation, or purpose.

Solution:

Rohan was taught how Sri Aurobindo illuminated the concept of psychic being as our inner guide. He developed a practice of turning to an inner Source for major decision making, through silence, inward listening and reflection. When stepping free of ego-based urges, he says, he started to experience a quiet, intuitive clarity. His behavior unfolded over time in ways that were more congruent with his true values and inner guidance, which facilitated a growing sense of peace and purpose.

Reflective Questions

How was ego-identity (ahaṁkāra) a factor in Rohan's emotional struggles?

Can you now explain how the guṇa model was a guide for understanding and resolving his emotional disorder?

How does acknowledging the psychic being change one's sense of self?

How would we perceive Rohan's experience if viewed through a Western therapeutic framework?

What are some of the Indian psychologies practices that one can adapt for Self-Integration in 1s own life.

Conclusion

The case vignette demonstrates that Indian psychological systems offer tools for deep self-interrogation and transformation. Rohan's experience is a reminder that if we work at listening for what lies below the surface — heart, mind, memory, ego and spirit — then real peace and contentment can be ours. Adding the wisdom of India to all these personal development technologies is more than simply helping you keep a clear head and find your spiritual path/life purpose. Reflection, righteousness and religious aspiration intermingle in a dynamic that constitutes a more balanced model of human growth.

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Unit 4: Emotions & Psychology

Learning Outcomes:

1. Present the basic themes of emotions as defined in psychology, with their biological, cognitive and social aspects.
2. Evaluate key psychological theories of emotion, including James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schachter-Singer and appraisal-based models.
3. Discuss the Indian perspective of emotions as expressed in classical texts and traditions – rasa, bhava, gunas in emotional life.
4. Compare the Western and Indian conceptions of emotion, with similarities/dissimilarities/possible harmonization.
5. Categorize emotions by making use of taxonomies in Western affective science and Indian Aesthetic theory, acknowledging that emotions can be classified as ‘primary’, ‘secondary’ and 'moral'.
6. Learn about Indian Philosophies for emotional regulation and transformation: Yoga, Ayurveda, Vedānta.
7. These provide a comprehensive overview of how emotions can be both understood and managed in personal and applied settings.

Content

4.0 Introductory Caselet

“The Mirror of Emotion”

Ananya, a 32-year-old classical dancer and wellness coach, was always proud of how emotionally expressive she could be. She told me she tried to be “true to her feelings” on and off stage. But then she had a quarrel with her co-worker and felt angry and resentful. She knew about emotional intelligence, of course, but she couldn’t stop replaying that argument in her head. She’d attempted to keep a journal, vent to friends, even download some mindfulness apps — but could not keep those feelings from bubbling underneath the surface.

A few days later, while she was researching for a dance performance taking place on the Navarasa (the nine archetypal aesthetic emotional states in Indian classic art), Ananya halted. She knew that she had learned from her dance training the art on stage of consciously embodying karuṇa (compassion) which turns to raudra (anger) and śānta (peace), but also with awareness. But in her life she was overwhelmed by emotions, rather than their master.

This insight inspired her to ask: What if feelings are not problems to be moved through or pushed away, but energies to track and nourish? Not only did she study Western theories of psychology of emotion, but she also delved into ancient Indian ideas — especially how rasa and bhava and the play of gunas present emotional life as a tableau that spills forth in abundant expression while also standing as an analogue for spiritual transformation.

The deeper Ananya dived, the more she found that these Western models were both reasons and results of why people did things (the causes and effects), but also strategies for how to regulate oneself; they were neurobiological pathways. And yet, Indian thought for its part often portrayed emotions as windows to deeper -- and liberating or enslaving -- truths depending on whether you felt them in a certain way.

went on to answer each set of questions using Ananya’s personal quest as a teachable moment. Rather than simply respond reflexively, she started to observe what was going on in her and track the origins of her emotional reactions.

Critical Thinking Question:

How can the combining of aesthetics and the spiritual from Indian traditions with scientific western psychology add to our understanding of emotions?

4.1 Introduction to Emotions

4.1.1 The Lived Reality of Emotions

Emotions are not metaphysical abstractions, floating out there somewhere; they are as much a part of our embodied existence as our skin and the blood running through us. You feel them physically, and mentally, and behaviorally. From the chill of fear to the heat of joy, emotions are hard and fast — strict C.I.A. agents for your cranium — but also absolutely individual. They condition how we see things, steer our choices, and ruin friendships. The existential texture of what it feels like is wider than any one's personal experience, it's everyone and everything.

Feelings are the horses that get away from us with little or no conscious effort. They may be induced by thought, memory, or a sensory stimulus. For instance, sight of a lover may be linked to happiness and love while threat be associated with fear or anger. They're really quite corporeal, and they come before cognition often. The racing heart, the constricting chest, the hot cheeks or those elasticized tear-swollen eyes— they all shout THIS IS THE TRUTH ABOUT LIFE within you.

Importantly, emotions are also context-dependent. Emotion is expressed and perceived in the context of sociocultural, individual and population level determinants. One culture's mode of grief may appear as being repressed; for the other, it amounts to wailing or cultural form. And yet, if the same feeling can grow - in its psychological sense -, there must be a universal human condition (even though it has different expressions).

Ambivalence Emotions are not the only things that can have a lived ambivalence. One can be both happy and sad at the same time, such is the case when you have to say goodbye to a beloved friend. The pinch of feeling is seldom solitary, you see; it's complicated stuff, multilayered and slippery. Besides, emotions don't always turn out to be ethical or social principles. You might be jealous of a friend's good luck, feel guilty for feeling angry with a parent, or instantly overjoyed that you have something difficult to deal with too. It's that ambivalence that suggests how complex and cross-cultural emotional life it.

The reality of the lived emotions is indispensable for artistic form and spiritual experience, moral life and psychic health. Music, lit and drama have no place to start but in the invocation of emotional states - they're above rational language a kind of shared vocabulary Communal languages typically. On the other hand, feelings are fundamental for the spiritual journey — which is why devotion, surrender and intense yearning and awe are all things that cause feeling to be intensified as a seeker moves inward.

IF we consider emotions in terms of the life actually lived, however, then we have to accept the fact of them -- and the puzzles they represent. They are not just annoyances or the jangling background noise of the psyche; they are positive forces that both reflect and shape inner life. In many ways, they can be considered as messengers of the self — bringing our focus to needs, desires, values and truths that essentially live under the surface.

4.1.2 Importance of Emotions in Human Experience

His reasoning runs something like this: Emotions are what it means to be human. They are involved in cognition, motivation, action and social interaction. Far from being sent madness or a brake on the operation of the mind, emotions are evolved fucntions that enable to make our way through complex social worlds so that we do not die.

One of the fundamental functions of emotions is to respond. Emotion is how you know something is good or bad for you, going well or poorly, in harmony with your goals or not. So, fear stands for danger and means avoidance or defense; pleasure refers to repeating, reinacting things that are pleasurable.

Emotions are also motivational. They are what power most of what humans do. Love brings care and connection to life; anger, resistance to obstacles or unfairness; grief, an acknowledgment of the weight of what has been lost and felt. These emotions drive humans to either act on, think about, adapt to, or withdraw from situations.

We also need our emotions to connect and communicate with people in the human world. Feelings, feelings The Sunline Once transmitted through facial metaphors, voice timbre, body language and other non-verbal signs are perhaps most eloquent in the mode of feeling rather than word. Emotional empathy, or the ability to understand and feel the emotions of others, is critical for cooperation, compassion and moral behavior. Recently, some critical social skills such as emotional intelligence has been identified as very important character traits of man's ability to identity and manage his emotions.

Emotional response is also a great part of the decision making. So, there is this huge distinction between the rational and emotional side - also still in the law for example- but data tell something different,, that emotions are actually crucial to making good decisions. Feelings allow us to prioritize choices, make decisions and set intentions; they inform us if we’re on the right track or not. “If there are no modulations in the emotions, as is sometimes observable in certain neurological diseases, ambivalence or wrong decisions are made.

Construction of emotion Conceptually, it could be that while structurally sexy pranks for teens, the progression of this experience is important structurally in an identity organization and emotional growth sense. Examples of emotional transactions between

children and caregivers that help children learn to decode their own emotions, and those of others.

Teenagers are both extreme because they are trying to figure out who they are. What is it about us that we all have to go through those emotional obstacles, in dating and our careers and the quest for meaning, with so many chances at every turn to grow?

Also, emotions are the intermediary between the inside and outside world. They are not just individually isolated occurrences, but responsive to the social and environmental world. At the same time, they mirror what resides inside of us - our values, beliefs and psychological architectures. That is why the

ability to understand, recognize and deal with our emotions is key in ensuring good mental health and overall well-being.

Emotions also shape cultural expressions. Fetish, ritual, art, literature: They are all forms of very emotional kinds of creative acts that share values and histories. And many religious traditions do also focus on purifying and alchemizing emotions to attain higher states of consciousness.

Thus feelings are not a random phenomenon, rather they are an integral part of our life for humans. They straddle the organic and cultural, personal and social, line between the psychological and spiritual.

4.1.3 The Changing Contours of the Emotional World

The conceptions of emotions and emotional expression are not static; they adapt to history, culture, technology and other people. In the postmodern world changes are taking place in the emotional landscape because of changes in social relations, digital and new media communication patterns, global identity shifts.

Among the most obvious differences is digital mediation of emotion. As the mediums to both socialize and curate our experiences, thoughts and feelings publicly continue proliferating online so too are emotions being increasingly curated for special presentation. Instagram or Twitter is especially conducive to the display of particular emotional states — happiness, outrage, sympathy — while discouraging to invisiblizing others — vulnerability, quiet introspection. This can lead to emotional dissonance, making you feel that you have have to fake how you feel.

Technology also alters emotional intimacy. Digital communication enables us to stay connected around the clock but it can also lead to shallower, in-person emotional sharing. Emojis are lost on the author here. Further, the instantaneous feedback of digital (likes, shares, comments) may help whom to develop an addiction-like dependence on external validation.

From a cultural perspective, the ascendancy of the individual and self-expression has prompted more widespread openness about emotions – particularly in cultures that valued emotional restraint. Simultaneously, there is increasing anxiety about emotional dysregulation, burnout and stress- related disorders, particularly in high-stress, performance-oriented contexts. Mental health is being increasingly emphasized in places of employment, education and care.

There has also been a globalisation of the norms of how one ought to feel. Individuals

canaccommodate contradictory demands- the aggressiveness that is rewardedelsewhere

does not particularly regard as aggression; suppressing emotion will be tolerated in

one culture and can be prosecuted cause here. VALIDITY: DEFININITIONSTYPE

GUTTMAN S LECTURE13C OF CRITICALTHINKINGPERCENTLIMITED TO THEIR EVALUATION 20%-40% STOPPING AT TEXT13.

as coldness in another. With any cross-cultural shift, we have to learn how to read again.

and respond to emotional signals.

The world of curing and the world of \health condition as another place in 20._~ffective.

transformation. Emotions are now things for sale, on apps and as

programs and pledged by self-help books. This may potentially help raise

awareness and increased opportunity, but it also threatens to transform emotional life into a mere

higher order aims and productivity targets whilst simultaneously loosing its deeper existential

and relational dimensions.

Changes in the topography of the emotions do as well. Mental health and emotional

Literacy are becoming increasingly relevant in education, leadership and community

development. Feelings are no longer swept under the rug as private, irrational business but

known to be essential for moral thinking, particularly for empathy and social justice.

It would appear that spiritual traditions are being revisited not only for transcendence, however,

now as a way of emotionally healing, as well. and types of , meditation and mindfulness

devotional practices — those are the sorts of things that people are trying to develop as a way to foster

a peace and sympathy within the split-asunder world today.

The form of emotional life is already becoming new. Traveling it well depends on cultures

and individuals, towards deeper understanding, some critical consciousness and integrative

practices that honour a diversity of emotional experience.

4.2 Psychological Perspectives on Emotions

4.2.1 The Euro-American Tradition

In the Western or European American tradition, scientific theories of emotions have developed several theories for understanding the bodily, psychological and cognitive processes related to feeling. These theories underlie core knowledge about how emotions occur, what they mean, and how they may be recognized or controlled.

The James–Lange theory is one of the first theories of emotion, in which emotions are credited as a product of an individuals physiological reactions to a stimulus. This is the theory which states that feelings are as a result of physiological changes n the body. The idea here is that we tremble and therefore feel afraid, rather than trembling because we are afraid. Emotion is the mind's understanding of bodily responses to extrinsic stimuli. The theory proposes that emotional experience does not lead to physiological arousal, but rather the opposite — without physical reactions there would be no emotion.

In contrast to the James–Lange theory, the Cannon–Bard theory was created by Walter Cannon and Philip Bard. They argued that emotional and physiological responses happen simultaneously, rather than in sequence. For instance, when it perceives a threat, the brain sends simultaneous messages to the body (to raise heart rate) and the conscious mind (to feel fear). According to this theory, the thalamus and thought processes of the brain were involved in emotional experience.

To this, the Schachter–Singer Two-Factor Theory introduced cognitive interpretation as an essential element. According to this model, explanatory style and self-efficacy are both considered part of the cognitive labeling processes described in the dual factor approach to emotion. If you feel your heart pounding, for example, how you interpret that arousal as being either good or bad— joyful or fearful —depends on the context in

which it's happening. This model emphasizes the role of cognitive interpretation in emotional experiences.

Subsequent theories were even more explicit concerning the role of thinking. Cognitive Appraisal Theories, like those by Richard Lazarus and his colleagues, hold that feelings do not occur until after an individual assesses or appraises a situation. Under this view, we feel an emotion depending on how relevant we judge event to our welfare. If something is believed to be good, then we feel happy; if it is believed to be bad or rather threatening, negative emotions would ensue.

These each provide a different theory. The James–Lange and Cannon–Bard are more physiological explanations for emotions, while Schachter–Singer and cognitive appraisal are more psychological. Together they span a range of the Euro-American tradition, from emotion as reflex bodily response to emotion as conditioned by processes of meaning.

These theories have had an impact within clinical psychology, education, organization behavior and interpersonal communication by offering a model for understanding how emotions develop and can be controlled or managed. They have also paved the way for models of emotional intelligence and treatments that involve affective awareness, labeling, and control.

Did You Know?

"The James–Lange Theory was among the first to propose that emotions are not purely mental but rooted in bodily sensations. This challenged earlier philosophical views that saw emotions as irrational or purely subjective."

4.2.2 Culture-Specific Patterns of Emotions

Although emotions are a world-wide phenomenon, the expression, regulation and interpretation of them are highly influenced by cultural differences. Normative emotional patterns are learned during socialization and transmitted through generations so that they may determine how emotions are expressed, experienced and valued.

Different cultures have different emotional norms — social guidelines that dictate which feelings one may express, in what context and to what degree. These are display rules, and they're critical to maintaining harmony and coherence in a culture. Imagine how many East Asian cultures are generally repressive and bashful when in the open for example. Emotional depth Of course people are supposed to regulate their emotions — particularly those that challenge social harmony or provoke distractions from

desired ways people want the meditation retreat to go. In the West, and in North America in particular, we don't believe that emotions are allowable; they are also a sign of emotional honesty.

Emphasis is also placed on different kinds of emotions. Culture of individualism Feeling the need to succeed on one's own JMO 50 and over-expression internalization Success as well as self-expression for experiencing high-arousal emotions, such as pride, enthusiasm or excitement. Collectivist cultures, in contrast, are orientated towards interdependence with a priority placed on maintaining harmonious relationships and staff in these settings may promote low arousal states linked to feelings of well-being or respect or calmness.

Culture is a factor in emotional lexicon — the words people are able to use to describe emotions. There are certain emotions in some languages that don't really have a direct analog in another language. One German term, Schadenfreude, describes the pleasure in another's misfortune, and certain words from some Indigenous cultures express communal emotions — collective joy or common sorrow. These linguistic variations reflect the emotional pecking order and customs in diverse communities.

In some traditional cultures, emotions are not really considered private feelings so much as socialised objects. Emotions are understood to come from relations and duties between persons, rather than merely from personal or subjective experience. For these environments, the actual experience or expression of an emotion may be considered to be a moral or social action as well as a state.

Beliefs about religion and spirituality also undergird emotional norms. Some level of emotion is sanctioned in most religious traditions (such as compassion, devotion, or forgiveness) while other kinds of emotions (envy, rage and pride) are discouraged; some even termed as sinful. These moral judgments of feelings influence how people interact with their emotions and how they regulate them.

Culture-specific patterns of emotion need to be taken into account, not only in the field of cross-cultural psychology but also in the areas of global mental health intervention (e.g., psychological support for people confronting tsunamis or major accidents), international relations and education on multiculturalism. Emotional practices and expectations differ greatly, so misreading a person's emotions can lead to confusion or conflict among individuals in private life or incorrect diagnoses by psychiatrists.

4.2.3 Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Emotional Expression

The experience of having and expressing emotions may be universal in humans, but how it occurs varies greatly depending on one's culture. The primary purpose of comparative investigation of emotion is to elucidate those features that are common

and those that are unique in emotional expression -the question as to what there is in common, tnd what not, between different cultures and societies.

The universality of basic emotional expressions is among the most significant findings in this area. Studies have demonstrated that specific facial expressions—including happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust—are identified with good accuracy across cultures. This indicates biological underpinning of emotional expressions across cultures.

There are of course cultural display rules that govern when and how it is appropriate to show one's emotions. For instance, in some societies it may be forbidden to openly express sadness or affection in public, whereas in others such expressions are allowed or even expected. So, someone who is raised in a culture that values remaining calm-emotional restraint will see expressive behavior as immature or undignified while the opposite is also true- another person brought up in an emotionally expressive culture perceives restraint as coldness or detachment. These people are able to hold-in feelings of their own in order to maintain group cohesiveness in a collectivist society. If angry, should pattern control it so as not to alienate the contact. In individualistic cultures, however, the right to express oneself is frequently reinforced and emotions could be considered integral to identity and personal truth. Those differences can lead to cultural misunderstandings, often in multicultural work places or therapeutic environments.

Culture also influences the understanding of emotional signals. For example, a smile can mean happiness, politeness, embarrassment, or discomfort according to the culture. Body language and body gestures (eye contact, tone of voice, posture) are emotionally charged signs that have various and sometimes even opposite meanings according to individual cultures.

Furthermore, what is recognized as a desirable or undesirable emotion is also culturally driven. In cultures that focus on assertiveness, emotions such as pride and enthusiasm are regarded as positive. In modest or otherworld religions, these kinds of emotions may be considered egotistical or childish. Just as feelings of shame, guilt, or awe are amplified depending on whether religious cuts come from the home or from a people's history.

The significance of both universality and cultural variability is agreed on by cross-cultural emotion researchers. Understanding both aids in developing empathy, minimizing ethnocentrism and facilitating more successful interaction throughout a range of social and professional situations.

4.3 Emotions in Indian Thought

4.3.1 Concept of Emotions in Classical Indian Texts

Traditional Indian philosophy and literature also provide a subtle picture of emotions. In contrast to the psychological interpretative attitude we have today, emotions are some sort of existential dimension of human experience in Indian texts that closely relate to cognition, ethics, aesthetics and spirituality.

Emotions are considered, in the Upaniṣads and Vedāntic text, as being grounded in desire, attachment and ignorance when these are conditioned by ego-identity and worldly identifications. Feelings are in this perspective something that we must come to know, purify and, ultimately when liberated, transmuted. Feelings of love, fear, enjoyment and grief are interpreted as temporary states whose source is a combination of conditioned habits (samskāras) or mental impressions.

Tantric and Bhakti traditions, on the other hand, treat emotions as spiritual energies. Bhakti, Viraha and Sarana are not distractive but potent forces that turn the mind inwards for realization. For example, in Vaishnava Bhakti the emotions of love and devotion are transformative to the vedantist seeking moksha or "mukta jiva" seeking Jivan Mukti.

Emotional work in Jain and Buddhist traditions In keeping with their anti-affective agenda, both Jainism and Buddhism involve elaborate reflection on emotion, frequently classifying emotion as an attachment or passionate thinking to be monitored and eventually purged. The Buddhist and early Buddhist texts present the model, including vedanā (feeling-tone), taking an emotional tone (pleasant, unpleasant, neutral) as an existential factor connecting experience to craving and eventually dukkha. Feelings, in this sense, are not intrinsically good or bad; they get "sticky" when we compulsively grasp onto them and identify with them. The way is awareness and the dissolving, over time, of gripping emotion.

Schools of dharma such as Nyāya and Sāṅkhya treat emotion as the effect that ensues from an interplay of cognition with temperament. Thus anger proceeds from wrong judgment and ill-considered perception; fear, on the other hand, comes from error and lack of sound judgment. Emotional control is therefore a matter of perception and awareness.

They also dramatize and refine emotions in a way that confers ethical depth on human dramas, whether of love or ambition. Emotions in these settings are didactic symbols demonstrating conflicts about right and wrong, spiritual longings, and the essentially conflicted nature of being human.

And so throughout classical Indian texts, emotions are neither demonized nor idealized, but understood as a bedrock dimension — sources of bondage when unrefined; gateways to depth and transcendence when mastered and cultivated.

4.3.2 The Role of Rasa in Indian Aesthetics (Nāṭya Śāstra)

The idea of Rasa appears in the Nāṭya Śāstra, an ancient work on performance art and drama. Rasa refers to the "flavor" or tasting of the musical motif in an audience's emotional mind when one hears art. It is not merely "a feeling" or an expression of it, but a sophisticated artistic manifestation that mellows the performer as well as the spectator and elevates one to the state of emotional sublimity in perception.

Bharata Muni describes Rasa as the combination of determinants, transitory emotional states and consequential mood. At the centre is the sthāyibhāva—the enduring, dominant emotion that, when skilfully evinced, is seasoned into Rasa—a flavoured emotional experience to be savoured in common.

There are eight basic Rasas: love, mirth, compassion, anger, energy, fear, disgust and astonishment. The later traditions included serenity as one of the ninth Rasa. Sense of Rasa is described as liberation—aesthetic awakening enlightening the awareness and liberating it from the shackles of egoism. The availability of the spectator to savour Rasa percolaés universal emotion which is not purely subjective or expressionistic.

Rasa is not only a dramatic technique; it’s a psychological technology. It helps to cultivate empathy, increases emotional awareness and provides a safe space to navigate strong feelings. In the structured "crucible" of their contained, live environment – be it dance or theatre-the actant learns to approach emotions with consciousness rather than reactiveness -- through an aesthetic discipline.

Furthermore, Rasa has philosophical implications. It proposes that if the feelings in such poems are transformed in art they may result in an opening inward—an aesthetic consciousness parallel to moral sense. The aesthetic act will be an initiation whose result is the purification (refinement) of emotions, their sublimation, and liberation from automatism.

4.3.3 Emotions as States of Mind (Bhavas)

The word Bhava in Indian psychology and aesthetics refers to the mental or emotional state: not passing emotion, but mood-bhava is a stable situation of mind underlying the feelings or emotions that arises out of our interaction with objects. Bhavas are of a twofold nature, lasting attitudes (permanent emotional states) and transitory emotion frames.

The bhavas are categorised based on their permanence and orientation. The sthāyibhāva is a steady emotion, mood or feeling that a character holds; it may be heroism, love or courage. Vyabhicāri bhāva, on the other hand, are transitory colors—

suggestions of feeling that augment or support the dominant emotion. A third category, sattvik bhāva, has more to do with involuntary physiological responses — tears or tremors that may come when emotional depth enters the picture.

Storytelling and performance Bhāvas are at the heart of storytelling in Indian traditions, maintaining narrative coherence as well as motivating characters. They are also instruments of internal reflection. In contemplative or meditative practice, identifying internal Bhavas (attachment, pride and fear for example) can lead to deep introspection as you are drawn towards tracing the arising of those habits and the possibility of dealing with them.

Bhavas are neither good not bad, they simply reveal the nature of consciousness. They build such Bhavas as equanimity, compassion, or devotion- transforming states of mind borne out of the mental purity and spiritual orientation.

4.3.4 Emotions in Yogic and Buddhist Psychology

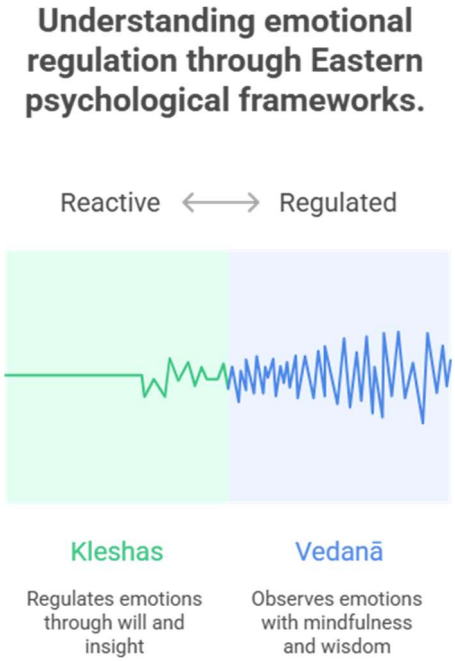
In yogic and Buddhist frameworks emotions are to be treated as systems — not just experiences but mechanisms that should be understood, regulated, ultimately transcended.

In yoga psychology, especially in the Yoga Sutras, these are referred to as kleshas — blemishes that obscure awareness and lead to pain. They are: Lust, rage, greed, illusion and envy. Attachment and aversion are two great obstacles to enlightenment and freedom. Similarly with practices of pratyahara dhyana and samadhi, the yogic path aims to reduce emotional reactivity, and break the identification with transient states.

It is the will, understanding and mindfulness that then controls our emotions.

Vedanā (feeling-tone) is one of the primary mental factors in Buddhist Psychology. Vedanā can be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, and arises simultaneously with an object or thought by way of contact. It is the uncooked affect that underpins subsequent craving or aversion. Through the practice of mindfulness and insight, one is able to observe vedanā without being caught up in reactivity and thereby ultimately break free from the cycle of craving and suffering. The more profound mental pollutions

— kilesas are gradually dissolved by mindfulness (sati), wisdom (pañña) and merit accumulation, eventually leading to liberation.



4.1 Yogic and Buddhist Psychology

Both traditions treat emotions not as enemies to be suppressed but as encountered, observed, and transformed through disciplined awareness. Emotional purification is a key preparation for deeper states of consciousness— leading toward tranquility, insight, and freedom.

“Activity: Rasa and Bhava in Practice”

Invite learners to watch a short clip of classical Indian performance—such as a Kathakali or Bharatanatyam sequence—and then identify the dominant sthāyibhāva (stable emotion) and supporting vyabhicāri bhāvas (transient states). Ask them to write a short reflection describing how the performer’s movements, expression, and emotional tone evoked Rasa within them. Encourage them to consider whether the experience lifted them emotionally and what inner shifts occurred. This activity helps bridge theoretical understanding with lived emotional resonance.

4.4 Typology of Emotions

4.4.1 Basic Emotions (Ekman’s Model)

Psychologist Paul Ekman identified six primary emotions that are believed to hold true across all human cultures. These simplest emotions are assumed to be biologically

basic, evolutionarily prespecified and characterized by discrete facial muscle configurations. Ekman initially proposed six: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust. He then piled insult on to the injury.

The smile, along with relaxed face muscles and sometimes laughter , is a sign of happiness. It is supposed to reinforce positive social behaviors and facilitate bonding. People express sadness by gestures of posture, facial grimacing, visualized tears. It signals a loss or need, and thereby invokes empathy and social support. Frowning, scowling eyes and tense muscles imply anger (that emotion either in reaction to unfairness or threat, involving preparing for assaulting a provoke there and then). Fear opens the eyes wide and parts the lips; it livens briefly on danger and primes us for life-or-death action. A little surprise is a jolt of shock with raised eyebrows and dropped jaw: It gets attention. Disgust is accompanied by a wrinkled nose and raised upper lip; it usually serves to prevent contamination or moral disgust. Proneness to smarm, though sometimes an influencer, becomes a subtle asymmetrical dropping of one side of the mouth; it reads as superiority or moral judgment.

Ekman's theory emphasized universality — that people in distant cultures with little or no exposure to Western culture would recognize emotions from facial expressions. It is also consistent with the idea that some affective expressions are rather inborn.THE ROLE OF NDT IN THE THERAPY Neuropsychotherapy of PD, together with other neuropsychological disorders accompanying the syndrome (eg.

Furthermore, those primal emotions are also the foundation of more complex feelings. Envy, for instance, could be a mixture of anger and heartache or fear; yearning may mean experiencing both joy and sadness. When we are in a contr area, visualization of basic emotion is a precondition to sympathize with the other party, even if two people are not speaking the same language.

Ekman Theory Model • There are also certain drawbacks of Ekman model. It's all but entirely about the "outside," albeit in specific terms of emotional coloring and cultural modulation. It can force some of the most emotional experiences in life into a series of pinched-off alternatives rather than allowing them to exist on an unbroken spectrum. It also minimizes the influence of cognition and social context on emotional experience. But it's still a fundamental construct in emotion science, due to its simplicity and, we argue here, cross- cultural truth.

4.4.2 Complex Emotions (Social & Moral Emotions)

Alongside the basic task of making sense of emotion, human emotions are characterized by other more complex affective processes that arise through social exchange and moral appraising as well as cultural taste. These social and moral emotions are: pride, guilt, shame & ewha/uh embarrassment envy/jealousy

compassion awe These evaluations often entail some level of self-reflective functioning, social comparison and moral reasoning.

Pride is getting told you are recognized or has adapted the points that he planned. A dose of it is ego-extolling, and thus can drive attainment — all in moderation, but in excess this all becomes hubristic strutting. SHAME, on the other hand, stems from breaking moral or social rules and carries with it concern for its victims and a desire to make things right.

Contrastingly, shame is the gulf landing of self, and experience of exposed failure and it can feel isolating or change-informing based upon cultural milieu and succoring.

AI Embarrassment is ultimately a more intense, and lingering sense of discomfort, it's something that's associated with social gaffs. That is a perlocutionary action; it accomplishes its work of restoring social balance by announcing possession and regret of a social error. Jealousy is a cocktail of fear on separation, anger and low self-esteem; it's an alarm system that reminds us how much we value others and ourselves. Compassion is acknowledging the suffering of others, and with it a desire to help alleviate that suffering — the basis for altruism and ethical community. Awe, which is so frequently called forth by scale or beauty out of the reach the now-ready frameworks of understanding can process, loosens mundane judgment and opens a space to step outside your habitual look at things.

These ambivalent emotions are inextricably bound to complexity of cognition and social learning: They grow out of understanding norms, predicting social outcomes and entertaining the idea that other people are agents. They are opposites, culture by culture: in the hunter-gatherer band, you are shamed for your laziness; but if most people around you act sad when you act like an asshole, shame will make everyone fit in.

The last years have seen growing interest for social and moral emotions in psychological research as potential processes of self-control, cooperation and bonding. They are implicated in all sorts of important life skills, including the development of morality (e.g., guilt promoting prosociality), relationship functioning (e.g., jealousy signaling commitment) and leadership (e.g., compassion displaying while caring about others).

A better appreciation for mixed emotions broadens our understanding of emotional life beyond the rote physiology.

They are a relating of the one and the many, and speak to both ethical and relational dimensions of being human.

4.4.3 Typology in Indian Thought

Types of Emotions articulated in Indian Aesthetic and Psychological Traditions The Indian aesthetic and psychological traditions articulate a rich typology of emotions known as Rasas which corresponds to the distilled essence of a feeling experienced within the context of art, performance, and inner life. The classical nine Rasas include:

• Śṛṅgāra (Love/Attraction)– viz Aesthetic sense and Love (Mere appearance of the other sex is capable of arousing emotions in the mind preoccupied with love, which are perceived as an 'erotic feeling').

• Hāsya: Laughter/Humour, comic jokes or funny stories; Eases tension in an otherwise serious situation and introduces warmth to the mental atmosphere.

• Karuṇā (Compassion/Sorrow) — wish for others to be free from suffering; active sympathy or empathy for others' suffering.

• Raudra (Anger/Intensity) : The agni inside your belly, what makes you act, react towards the unjust.

• Vīra (Courage/Heroism): Courageous striving and heroism in the human pursuit of truth and salvation.

• Bhayanaka (Fear/Dread): Awe inspired by something that is not terrifying per se, but that could induce fear or caution.

• Bībhatsa (Disgust or disdain) – aversion associated with loathing and disgust for something revolting.

• Adbhuta (Wonder/Awe): Let yourself be inspired by the presence of beauty, mystery or deep mystery.

• Śāntav: Inner Peace or Tranquility, a stillness of mind which is undisturbed.

They operate on an aesthetic one and a psychological one. In theatre, for instanc e, Rasa first passes from the performer to the beholder with gestures ARNU and movement of body as well ~s face. PROYESI JANA Then it has its impact on the listener with pleasing and moving speech, but one must not forget instrumental sounds that are used in dramatic context including music). Draven (1990) In a psychological approach, each Rasa is perceived when one of the eight Sthāyibhāvas associated with it brings forth the Anubhāva produced by the other or sthāyibhavasses.

The Rasas are more than just categories; they contain the power of transformation (Sakti), that which makes emotions pure by reforming them into a structured form. This is to insure that the consciousness can feel deeply without being overwhelmed. “Śānta Rasa is the perfection... the crescendo to which all emotional harmonisation leads and for which it’s ultimately a preparation: where emotion becomes tranquil awareness.”

Did You Know?

“In Indian aesthetic theory, experiencing Rasa is considered a subtle form of spiritual purification—when an audience Savors an emotion without personal attachment, the emotional state functions as a mirror, fostering inner clarity rather than disturbance.”

4.5 Bridging Traditions

4.5.1 Integrating Western Theories with Indian Perspectives

Emotion research has developed in both Western psychology and Indian philosophical and spiritual traditions. These two traditions are usually considered separate, but they provide compatible ideas that may be fruitfully combined to provide a richer picture of emotional life.

Western Psychology, is a science of mind curing emotions empirically. It emphasizes classification, mechanisms of action and cognition or behavior after intake of these compounds. The James–Lange,Cannon–Bard, and Schachter–Singer theories attempt to explain the relationship between emotions and the body; one of these attempts can be summarized as follows: Stimulus (perceived by an individual) Emotional experience Arousal (the result of the stimulus) 1. Processed by Cognitive Appraisal Theories Cognitive appraisal theories emphasize the role of appraisals in guiding emotionall/thoughts and judgments about emotion-inducing stimuli. Furthermore, social and cultural psychology has contributed to an understanding of how norms and values shape emotional display and management.

In the Indian instances, however, I feel that emotions are understood from an internalist way of seeing and in a first personal expereintial as well transcedental sense. Our emotions are not just our feelings; they’re spiritual energies that can be purified and transformed with practice and awareness. There are works such as Upaniṣads, Bhagavad Gītā, Nāṭya Śāstra among others in which emotions are discussed along with the sensation- Khana, experiencing other factors of consciousness like morality (ethical life) and freedom (emancipation), as well. Generating Integration means respecting the integrity of empirical inquiry and that of contemplative introspective inquiry. To provide one obvious example, and as pathology and disease of the soul, anger can be understood through two very different therapeutic prisms if we make use of the theories and practices found in Yoga. So if the penny finally drops for you that Western psychology is mainly only a science of condiitoning, then the pattern anger as arousal which gets interfaced with perception of threat that's all klesha in Indian language- and it's at bottom an innocuous thing what makes everything we want to get out of or hope or fear from how meet goes into timeless space, as easily as when you put pills in your mouth they dissolve in water. And as happiness in positive psychology is associated

with either hedonic well-being or 'life satisfaction', Indian traditions have cast their eye on a more exuberant joy (ānanda) and its reducibility to self-knowledge, to freedom from temporary desire.

Integrating these viewpoints gives rise to a multi-perspective approach. Western ways will offer proof, boundries and cures for the sick spiral of emotions. Indian practices such as yoga give us an education in ethical values, a means of emotional resilience and a way out of our suffering. "The bridge between one and two is a tough one to build.

This broader model should be especially relevant to mental health workers, educators and researchers working across varied contexts. Additionally it has potential impact in therapeutic practices like mindfulness-based interventions, emotion-focused therapy and even contemplative education – all of which are already based on Indian ideas but within a western clinical context.

4.5.2 Contemporary Research on Emotions Across Cultures

Cross-cultural and historical studies of emotion have, for some time now, made us aware that while we attend to the universality of emotions in a cultural specific way. Here, I argue that this cannot be the case, and that emotions are learned in a culture-specific manner - Like all aspects of human lives of which there may be some universal features to affective states and expressions in the body, emotional experiences, regulation strategies and values are culturally specific - cultures bound the nature of emotion. These fact need to be considered when applying Western models in other societies and indicate that there is no "one model fits all".

One linchpin of the literature in this area has focused on display rules—socially learned norms around expressing emotion. Smiling is one; it's a universal signal of happiness across the globe, but how much and even if people do smile can vary enormously between cultures. Harmony-emphasizing emotions (e.g., being grateful or respectful) might be found more in collectivist cultures, while those that pay attention to distinctiveness (e.g., pride or assertion) could be stressed in individualist ones.

Another possible research direction is the measurement of emotions. While high-arousal positive emotions, like elation, are regarded as most beneficial in Western cultures, other cultures (e.g., East Asian and Indian) may favor low-arousal states such as calm and content. These cycles play into the emotional socialisation and even well-being judgements, and diagnoses of mental health, that we make as a society.

Emotion regulation strategies The differences in emotion regulation are also observed at the culture level. In the East, for example, suppression is associated to small degree with low levels of wellbeing but in collectivistic societies; it tends to be an adaptive behavior that facilitates relationships among group members.

but may look different depending on the relational norm.

Further, research on indigenous psychological constructs (e.g., Indian Rasas or Buddhist Vedanā) is gaining momentum on different ways to categorize and function of emotion. Such systems contain emotional states not typically catalogued in Western taxonomies, such as Śānta (tranquility), Viraha (spirituality longing), or Upekṣā (equanimity). These ideas serve to deepen our understanding of the emotional life in their spiritual and aesthetic aspects.

Methodologically, scholars are constructing culturally appropriate tools to measure emotions without imposing Western categories. Mixed-methods approaches, which involve combining quantitative measures with qualitative narratives, are employed to learn about the emotional significance within context.

Indeed, recent research confirms the necessity of pluralistic models that acknowledge common biologicalalties and cultural differences. It also emphasizes the necessity of incorporating indigenous systems of knowledge in global psychology discussions.

4.5.3 Emotions as Tools for Well-being and Transformation

Western psychology and Indian traditions advocate for emotional well-being but by different means. Recently, a growing swell of consensus seems to be building that emotions are not obstacles but can be aids in self- construction, self-understanding and mental health.

Emotions are a crucial aspect of subjective well-being as defined in modern Western positive psychology. Emotions such as joy, gratitude, hope and compassion contribute to resilience; to social support in times of great distress; and, not least as a side effect, inspire action that it's clearly best for everyone to do without. In fact, emotion regulation strategies, like mindfulness, reappraisal, and acceptance all have support for lowering anxiety and depression and boosting life satisfaction.

In Indian culture, emotions are often viewed as outward expressions of internal experiences and karmic tendencies. There are (improperly speaking) unhealthy emotions – they are the ones of debate and arise from ignorance and ego-identification, while healthy emotions spring from moral life and spiritual practice. Not to repress feelings, but to refine and raise them up for a higher place of consciousness.

In Indian psychology, transformation is of emotion where dhyāna (meditation), svādhyāya (ethical self-observation) and bhakti Devotion are emotional transformation. Those methods transform confusion into clarity, imbalance/resistance into balance and inner peace.

One other similarity in the two languages is the focus on emotional intelligence. Feelings are messages of unmet need, value, or aspiration. They become aware of the way we think and relate when they are consciously attended to. Emotions are

intelligent building a healthy mind of its own through self-awareness, empathy, and regulation is the road to growth; there is nothing crazy with it!

There's also a growing number of models that are bridges between these two perspectives." Both e.g. mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and compassion-focused therapy combine meditative attention with affective processing. Yogic counseling and indian contemplative psychotherapy also, like all the Indian traditions, focus on emotional transformation.

And in the end, feelings can be doors not walls. Rightly understood, practices reveal hidden strata of the self, provoke moral deliberation, and act as a kind of anachoresis from reactive postures to a more aware existence.

4.6 Summary

Emotions are part of human life,which impact on thinking,action, relation and decision.

Western psychology has formulated different theories about emotions including psychological, cognitive, and social element.

Ekman's model: Has the basic universal Emotion Has social and moral a complex emotion Ethnopragmatics, and –social practices Exercise: Politeness principles in class room discourse dimensions shaped by context.

Indian culture regards emotions as psychospiritual forces that affect psychological awakening, and moral action.

Nāṭya Śāstra divides emotions into nine Rasas, which are further developed through the experience ofpresentation and perception conscious cultivation.

The Indian Yogic as well as Buddhist systems have interpreted emotions in the form of afflictions and mental configurations, which can be transmuted through mindfulness and dis-identification.

Emotions are expressed, valued, and regulated in ways that reflects cultural patterns in society.

Western and Indian contributions are integrated for a holistic view of emotional life that draws on both scientific perspective and spiritual understanding.

Emotional regulation techniques in Indian systems are concerned with self-awareness, moral conduct and spiritual realization.

Current cross-cultural studies point to the necessity of culturally competent models of emotion and comprehensive theories of psychology.

Emotions can be intentional instruments utilized for the purpose of personal health, transformation and social reconciliation.

Interweaving traditions can be used for therapeutic and educational purposes, as well as personal growth aiming at clarity within the self and connection to others.

4.7 Key Terms

Affect – Multifaceted psychological state that includes subjective experience, physiological response and behavioral expression.

Rasa – The emotional quality or flavor of feelings produced from a work of art or drama, an Indian tradition.

Bhava – A feeling or emotion conditions the emotional reaction called 'Rasa'.

Klesha - in Yoga philosophy, craziness here called emoitonal afflctions (vaisayas), which create blur to clarity of mind thus long life suffering.

Vedanā: Feeling tone In Buddhist psychology, classified as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.

Appraisal – The cognitive assessment of an event to determine how to feel about it.

Display Rules – Guideline of what is the acceptable and unacceptable way to express emotions.

ER – to control, modify or express emotions as needed.

Basic Emotions – Those emotions that are universally accepted such as happiness, sadness, fear and anger.

Complex Emotions – Emotions which exhibit elements of morality or social action, (ex: guilt, pride, shame).

4.8 Descriptive Questions

Outline the main Western theories of emotions and assess their limitations and strengths.

How Indian tradition explains emotions in terms of Rasa and Bhava?

Comparison between simple and complex emotions with examples.

How does culture affect emotional expression and regulation citing the existence of display rules?

Explain the function of emotions in Yogic and Buddhist psychology, particularly with regard to metamorphosis.

Can Indian and Western perspective add a value to emotional intelligence?

Discuss the role of comparative research in creating holistic emotional frameworks.

What does emotion have to do with happiness and spiritual development?

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4.10 Case Study

“Emotional Integration in All Levels of Culture.”

Introduction

This is a case study exploring emotional difficulties of an Indian expat in Europe and other intercultural challenges. His emotional command was a mark of discipline in his culture, but co-workers mistook it for disinterest and the workplace grew tense. Ravi’s path underscores the struggle between two different cultural standards of emotional openness and the internal pressure of repression. Through a combination of Western emotional intelligence techniques and Indian contemplative practices, he learned how to be genuine, balanced and adapted across cultures.

Background

Ravi Ravi, 28 A. Indian Professional at a Europe based MNC My family is against it since I am away from home, in another country! By nature, he’s a hard worker making many

of his colleagues easily misunderstand him due to his conspicuous lack of emotionalism. He's mellow in group settings, never outwardly disagreeing with the band except when it comes to the fact that they appear to care in any way at all.

As time goes by, Ravi grows lonelier. What his European partners detect in his act is withdrawal or indifference. Ravi, meanwhile, is put off by what he calls office emotionalism — people shouting in open areas, high fives if you have a good job performance and spontaneous feedback.

When his boss suggests that he needs emotional training to build camaraderie among the team, Ravi balks. He takes pride in his emotional self-control. But after a series of stilted conversations and the tearful outburst of one teammate who tells him that he is unapproachable, Ravi decides to accept the program.

The program combines western psychotherapeutic models with indigenous Indian contemplative systems. Ravi is educated in sessions about the differences in cultural expression of emotions, emotional intelligence, and frameworks for mindfulness-based work.

Problem Statements and Solutions:

Issue 1: Not Understanding the Emotional Functions of Behavior

Problem: Ravi's quiet presence is mistaken for a chilly one.

Answer: Training them how to address differences in the way people from a specific culture express emotions would help build better relationships/unit moral. Ravi Do, who himself learned how to nod ever so gently in the past year through quiet verbal affirmations, where we could hear engaged but very real.

Issue 2: Emotional Repression Causing The Turmoil Within You

Issue: Ravi pent up his emotions causing inner pressure.

Solution: In the series, Indian contemplative practices were used in the form of mindfulness and journaling to enable Ravi to consciously observe his emotions and release them, which are a precursor for health altitude positioning inside him and helped reducing stress.

Issue 3: Traversing Emotional Expectations in Cultures_STRUCT. Anything from cultures.

Problem: Ravi found it difficult to get used with an open show of emotions at work.

Solution: In the process of practicing emotional flexibility and self-reflection, Ravi learned to engage empathetically while grounding his actions in his values, eventually gaining his teem's trust.

Reflective Questions

What role do cultural norms play in influencing the way we think about and demonstrate our feelings?

How can Bringing together Indian and Western models of emotion foster increased levels of self-awareness?

What are internal or external mechanisms people can use to manage their emotions and be professional in a racially diverse workplace?

How do, what your emotional inclinations are help with professional growth?

How can emotions go from being disrupters of, to contributors to cooperation?

Conclusion

As we see in this case study, emotional misconceptions are often the result of cultural and psychological disparities rather than malicious intent. Integrating a Western approach to emotional intelligence training with traditional Indian contemplative practices, Ravi turned his inner battle into a practice of self-discovery, better relationships and career growth. This integration stands to provide emotional intelligent spaces that not only include but also value diversity.

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Unit 5: Exploring Psychotherapy in Indian thought

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the fundamentals of psychotherapy in Indian thinking, focusing on spiritual, ethical, and holistic approach.
2. Examine the evolutionary purpose of life and its relation to psychological development and in methods of healing as discussed in Indian philosophy.
3. Look at Indian insights into psychological pain, including kleshas, karma and the potential of awareness to be a force for change.
4. Assess the importance of body-mind balance in Indian therapy, combining physical training, control over breathing and meditation.
5. Explain Indian thought in relation to psychiatry with special reference to similarities as well as differences including characteristics of Western clinical concepts.
6. Explain the therapist–client relationship in Indian culture with respect to empathy, guideance, ethical behavior and spiritual harmony.
7. Consider the end point of psychotherapy in Indian tradition—not psychology being reducible to reducing symptoms but self-discovery, freedom from suffering and emancipation.

Content

5.12 Case Study

5.0 Introductory Caselet

"Healing Beyond the Mind"

Arjun, 35 An IT professional, Arjun fought against consistent anxiety and inability to sleep. His professional life was high-pressure, with long hours, tight deadlines and constant digital engagement. He had seen a psychiatrist and was on medication, but the restlessness continued. There were cognitive behavior sessions that identified distorted thought patterns and taught management techniques that he attended. The activity that followed transformed his everyday, yes, but it felt like there was this thing deeper down gnawing on him — and his life wasn't imbued with a sense of calling.

Back home, Arjun reached out to his uncle, a retired philosophy professor, who introduced him to Indian thinking on healing and well-being. In Indian psychology, his uncle explained, mental suffering is not simply a consequence of toxic thinking or brain chemistry gone awry; it's a result of losing contact with your true nature. He spoke of kleshas (the "afflictions" based on ignorance, attachment and aversions) and the imbalances of gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas), how they must be in sync with each other — body, mind and spirit.

Arjun was intrigued and he began researching the practices of Yoga, and Ayurveda. Instead of just thinking about these ideas, he started rising early and training to practise mindfulness breathing and physical postures in order to balance the body–mind.

Meditation let him witness his emotions instead of being consumed by them; devotional practices led to experiences of surrender and trust. Gradually, he came to notice he was less anxious than before and, far more significantly, that he was standing on a different sense of meaning. His pain came to feel less like a random frustration and more like part of his larger journey toward growth.

When Arjun returned to work, it was still a struggle for him — but he wasn't the same. It was no longer about easing symptoms, in his mind, it was about the possibility of transformation. His experiences raised new questions: Was psychotherapy simply a matter of relieving suffering, or could it also help lead one to self- realization and liberation? Would integration of Indian philosophy with modern psychiatry lead to holistic treatment?

Critical Thinking Question

In what way does the Indian view of psychotherapy-centered on self-realization, harmony and transformation-differ from or complement the Western model which tends toward symptom reduction and values behavior change?

5.1 Introduction to Psychotherapy in Indian Thought

5.1.1 Meaning and Relevance of Psychotherapy in Indian Context

Psychotherapy in the Indian perspective is not a symptomatic treatment of mind, but has its base done through body and spirit. Unlike the medical or behavioristic strictures we are used to, Indian healing traditions have always seen psychological suffering as rooted in existential dilemmas of ethical living and spiritual naïveté. At its heart, Indian psychotherapy is about re-establishing a sense of balance — within ourselves, between us and our society, and ultimately between the self and cosmic order.

Pain and suffering are thought to result, for the Buddhists, from kleshas (‘afflictions’) occasioned by ignorance, both of ignorance leading to attachment (raga) / aversion (dvesha), and finally clinging on to life as oneself. This defines suffering as not an accident but arising from the incorrect modes of reacting to reality. Psychotherapy here is the act of getting down on one’s knees and learning to eat these suffering strains, methodically. It combines cognitive change — coming to see what the self is really like — with practical disciplines like meditation, ethical behavior and devotion.

In these latter days of Science the value of this method cannot be over-estimated. As we wrestle with mounting stress, anxiety and existential malaise, Indian insights can remind us it’s not just a lack of illness but a vibrant presence of balance and meaning. The modalities of meditation, yoga and mindfulness are some of them that have traditionally used Indian psychology for stress management purposes for healthy living professionals.

And not just Indian psychotherapy but the evolutionary end of life. Mental healing isn't complete until one knows their Atman (soul) and lives dharma, the right way. Therapy in this case is not an exercise in adaptation, but a process of transformation; it's about liberating someone from suffering that’s become cyclical and for them to experience freedom.

In the Indian context, psychotherapy is viewed as part of a cultural and spiritual milieu which underscores the importance of moral taboos on behavior, social duties and religious orientation in the maintenance of mental hygiene. It's relevance now lies in offering a more holistic, integrated approach- the one that is treating not only the symptoms but the whole patient.

5.1.2 Comparison with Western Psychotherapy Approaches

Western psychotherapy has evolved in a naturalistic, empiricist tradition that emphasizes diagnosis, the reduction of symptoms, and behavior change. Psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT), humanistic psychology and existential psychotherapies all posit models of how the mind operates. The common factors that these approaches share are evidence-based techniques, therapeutic alliances and measurable results. These models primarily understand mental illness as a disorder of cognition, emotion or behaviour.

By comparison, in Indian psycho-therapy psychological distress is seen as a symptom of an overarching existential-spiritual context. Whereas Western therapies aim at recovering the prior functionality of life in the world, Indian traditions may be more concerned to transcend this worldly involvement entirely. Goal is not merely better adaptation but realization, inner peace and freedom (moksha) of one's deepest Self.

There are shared qualities, however. Western humanistic/existential psychology is similar to Indian thought, which treasures authenticity, meaningfulness, and self-transcendence. Mindfulness-based interventions, directly derived from Buddhist practices, have been renownedly incorporated in Western clinical settings. This is proof that the dialogue between traditions can serve to enhance them both.

Key distinctions include:

Key distinctions include:

• View towards Self: In the western psychology self is usually molded through experiences and relationships whereas in Indian Psychology, self (Atman) thought to be unchangable or eternal.

• Goality of Therapy: Western therapy has the goal to make a well-adjusted, resilient and functional individual; Indian therapy shifts emphasis to transcendence, purification and ultimate freedom.

• Method: Western therapies draw on talk, behavior scene setting and staged interventions; Indian ones are derived from meditation, ethical disciplines including rules for living well with others, yogic exercises and philosophical inquiry.

• Timing: Western modalities usually focus on immediate therapeutic victories; Indian attitudes see therapy as a lifelong practice that blends in with spiritual practice.

However, self-awareness and relational support as well as transformation of patterns are acknowledged in both perspectives. They are two sides of a coin, the Socratic model reinforcing disciplinary boundaries providing structure and Western forms of mastery (efficiency multiplied by effectiveness), while the Indian way of learning attends to ways

in which tradition/trust has been bolstered with purpose, depth and spiritual significance.

5.1.3 The Two Approaches in Indian Psychotherapy

Indian psychotherapy is articulated more or less through two ways spiritual–philosophical approach and the pope-ethical pragmatic way. Both spring from the same holistic vision in which mental anguish is born of unbalance and ignorance but are easier to express and practice; they are distinguished by an emphasis and a methodology.

Spiritual–Philosophical Approach

This is a method based strongly on the Upanishads, vedanta, yoga sutras and buddhist abhidhamma. It sees psychological pain as coming from ignorance of the true self. Therapy, then, is not fixing what's wrong but awakening to something that infinitely truer than ego or mind.

Here the stress is on self-realization. Practices include meditation, self-enquiry (atma-vichara) and detachment (vairagya). The person concerned is being directed from being identified with fleeting thoughts and feelings to be one who's being identified with pure consciousness. In doing so, emotions are not repressed but rather witnessed and transcended. (e.g., fear or anger), comes from attachment and mistaken identity, but if one is aware of these, then the emotions have no power.

The spiritual–philosophical school views the therapist or guide as far more than an adviser: often considered to be a guru, mentor, or spiritual friend, he affords illumination, discipline and motivation. The path of relating is the experience of compassion, which in turn is based on discipline, devotion and surrender to truth.

Psycho-Ethical and Practical Approach

This "spiritual" approach deals with ultimate liberation, while the psycho-ethical and practical approach deal only with day-day- suffering and adjustment in the worln They are not mutually exclusive but alternate methods of bringing man to his final goal. Based in systems such as Ayurveda, Yoga and ethics philosophy, this model promotes the balance of gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas) and the cultivation of virtues like compassion, non- violence, truthfulness and moderation.

Therapy here is in practical practices such as breath control (pranayama), regulation of lifestyle (ahara-vihara), right association with good people, and introspection (svadhyaya). Passions are tempered by the exercise of virtues: anger by compassion, greed by moderation, fear by courage. The objective is to develop a sattvic (harmonious) mind that is conducive to clarity, resilience and wisdom.

Such a method is identical to what would be now termed as mood regulation, behavior modification and life style change in contemporary psychology. It is especially appropriate for people who are more interested in mental health than liberation.

Both approaches complement each other. The psycho-ethical and pragmatic approach provides us with the direct instruments to balance ourselves and adapt, while the spiritual–philosophical way leads us through a deeper journey of transformation and transcendence. Together, they comprise a distinctive model of psychotherapy that is Indian in character, with practical solutions to human problems based on the vision of ultimate liberation.

5.2 The Evolutionary Aim of Life

5.2.1 Indian Philosophical View of Human Development

In the philosophy of India human life is not seen as simply a biological or psychophysical process but as an aspect in the grand evolutionary course of consciousness. Man was considered the microcosm of the universe, in him lied the possibility of reflecting and realizing the highest truth. The development of man, thus, exceeds the physical or mental to include the ethical, spiritual, and cosmic.

Vedas and Upanishads consider human life as only a stage in the soul's career. Contrary to the materialistic philosophies of development that terminate in death, therefore, according to Indian philosophical tradition, the soul (jiva) "aprakrita"22 evolves through numerous births and exposures hence realize its ontological identity with the Absolute (Brahman). So there is no end to development; it goes life after life and is governed by the law of karma. Opportunities for growht, character development and spiritual maturation exist in every life.

Key distinctions include:

• View of Self: In the western psychology a self is to be formed by the experiences and relationships, on other hand in Indian Psychology is it considered not changing or unchanging/Self (Atman) as eternal.

• Goality of Therapy: Western therapy aims at making a well-adjusted, strong and functional person; Indian therapy moves to transcendence, purification and ultimate freedom.

• Method: Western therapies employ talk, scene setting and staged interventions; Indian ones practice meditation, ethical disciplines such as rules for living well with others, yogic exercises and philosophical inquiry.

• Timing: Western modalities tend to target an immediate therapeutic win; Indian perspectives incorporate therapy as part of a lifelong practice that falls under the umbrella of “spiritual practice.”

In Buddhism new man refers to attaining enlightenment by understanding the transitory nature and non-existence of self. It is the cultivation of wisdom, virtue (sila), and meditation to develop the path into its full eightfold depth. Likewise, Jain philosophy insists on conquest of passions and purification of soul from within and without (by means of the doctrine of non-violence).

Within these traditions, the implication is straightforward: As humans develop, it is fundamentally a spiritual maturation. Being endowed with wealth or brilliance is no end in itself; rather it is the state of transcending ego to perceive the Self and attune oneself with cosmic design.

5.2.2 Concept of Self-Realization and Liberation (Moksha)

Self-realization and liberation (moksha) are held to be the supreme goal of life in the Indian ethos. Whereas temporary pursuits such as wealth, power, or pleasure are fleeting when compared to moksha, the latter represents a total liberation from ignorance and suffering, an end to the cycle of birth and rebirth (samsara). It is the end point of life’s evolutionary purpose.

Self realised is the realisation of one’s true self as the world Atman— eternal, unchanging consciousness separate from body, mind and ego. The Upanishads sum up this experience in the Mahavakyas (great sayings), “Tat Tvam Asi” (Thou art That) and Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman). To know that one’s own self is no other than the infinite reality, Brahman. This perception, dissolves the delusion of self in separation, breaking the bondage of fear.llusioil desire and attachment.

Moksha is what is achieved when this concept becomes clear. It is not just something you know; it is something that happen to you, with the soul being completely released from karmic debts. Nirvana is commonly described in terms of ananda (bliss), shanti (peace), and union with the Absolute. It's usually considered as the supreme end of life, far surpassing dharma, artha and kama.

Moksha is a concept associated with many schools of Indian philosophy. In Advaita Vedanta, moksha is attained through jnana, realization of the identity of Atman and Brahman. In Yoga, it is discipline and meditation that still the mind to visiblize the purusha’s independence from prakriti. Aspects of surrender, devotion to the God and connecting with the divine is found in Bhakti traditions. In Buddhism liberation (nirvana) is release from craving and ignorance, an awakening to impermanence and non-self. In

Jainism, soteriological goals are met through the liberation of the soul (Jiva) while still alive through elevating oneself to new forms of existence.

Ethical preparation is the way to self-realisation and liberation. Virtues, such as truthfulness, non violence compassion and dispassion cleanse the mind and make it ready for higher knowledge. Activities such as meditation, reflection, chanting and service act as tools that can be used to go beyond the ego. Without morality, there is no liberation: for a mind agitated by passion and selfishness cannot understand truth.

But Moksha is not an escape from life, but a fulfilling of its deepest purpose. Material aspirations are for the temporary, but moksha for permanent salvation. It is the finalization of human yearnings, the end of existential pain and indeed it's living to one's infinite potential that each person has within them.

5.1 Self-Realization and Liberation

5.2.3 Psychological Growth as Spiritual Progress

In Indian conception there is no mental unfoldment apart from the spiritual unfoldment. The human consciousness is regarded not merely as a tool for survival and reason, but also as the basis of self-realization. The value of emotional and cognitive development is based not so much on their direct worth, but in how they prepare the individual for higher consciousness.

The mind is considered to have four parts, manas (the sensory mind), buddhi (intellect), chitta (memory) and ahamkara (ego). The mind is uncultivated when dominated by desires, fears and attachments, it makes one confused and anxious. Growth means sublimating these faculties: training manas, sharpening buddhi, purifying chitta and going beyond ahamkara. This purification grounds the person in sattva guna leading to clarity, tremendous harmony as well as equanimity.

Emotional growth is equally important. In the texts apparently anger, greed envy and pride are seen as disturbances that overcloud consciousness. Indian psychology recommends their conversion into positive emotions namely compassion, contentment, humility and love. For instance, the generation of karuna (compassion) means creating positive states of mind in place of negative emotions resulting in happiness, both individual and universal. This control of emotions is what modern psychology calls emotional intelligence, though the same was always seen in India as a spiritual endeavor.

But at the real level of progress in spiritual life is self knowledge and self discipline. With practices like mindfulness, meditation and svadhyaya (self-study), people are trained to look at their mental patterns without identifying with them. It is this very lack of subjectivity that enables them to grow mature, rather than being driven by feelings. And as you can see psychological maturity eventually morphs into internal stability and resiliency, the ability to keep center in a storm.

Indian tradition recognises that mental growth is not just a private matter. It also goes into trust and social peace. And only when one is mentally sound, spritually healthy call it 'twisted / not twisted' (I am not talking in terms of religion) can he do anything for his family the community or society. Thus, individual growth turns to outer action without mediation - which reflects the holistic view that inner and outer change are two aspects of the same process.

Finally, in the Indian thought psychological growth stands for preparing oneself for liberation. Wherever thoughts, emotions and actions have been purified, the mind becomes a clear switchboard through which the Self operates. Spiritual growth takes place in tiny steps of living right, train the emotions, discipline of the mind to the big leap of your own nature as reality. Thus, the process of psychological growth is a spiritual path; it’s how we evolve spiritually up to life’s ultimate goal: freedom and oneness with God.

5.3 Approaches to Psychological Suffering

5.3.1 The Negative Māyāvādin Solution

Indian philosophy acknowledges that the life of every human being is inextricably linked to pain—whether it be from desire, loss or attachment—or through fear. Among the different approaches, Advaita Vedānta presents a meaningful interpretation with Māyāvādin solution stating causes for sufferance is due to ignorance and illusion (Māyā). The path does not consider suffering to be an irreducable fact of life, but a delusional perception.

Concept of Māyā (Illusion)

Māyā, in Advaita, is the cosmic illusion that conceals the reality of Brahman. It reflects the universe of multiplicity and change, thereby causing the eternal Self (ātman) to erroneously look limited, bound and subject to pleasure and pain. In the grip of Māyā people identify with the body, mind and individual ego-sense, believing them to be the true self. Therefore, pain, loss and limitation give rise to suffering when these temporary aspects come into contact with it.

From this point of view, the world is not really real at all; it is only relatively real—like a dream. Although for the purpose of practice it exists, its final status is illusory in contrast to Brahman being eternal reality. Therefore, all our psychological suffering—fear, anger, jealousy, grieving—is a result of being identified with this illusion.

Detachment as the Answer to Suffering

Detachment (vairāgya) is the Māyāvādin's ultimate answer to suffering. If the world is not real in the ultimate sense, emotional attachments to worldly experiences are non-sensical. Detachment doesn't imply heartlessness or repression of emotions, but rather consciously realizing that pleasure and pain are not permanent conditions for the self.

By discrimination (vivéka), one must learn how to separate the true from the false. Confronted with loss, the sadhika reasons: “This pain is of the body or mind, let me not confuse it with my real Self.” And inter alia that detachment mitigates the hold of pain over time. Techniques such as meditation, self-enquiry (atma-vichara) and study of scriptures aid in the dissolution of ignorance and realization of the Self as transcending all change.

In this view, mental pain is superfluous and can be transcended by wisdom. One frees oneself from suffering by recognizing that one's true self is unaffected by joy or pain. This is known as a “negative” solution because it seeks to negate the apparent facticity of the world and suffering, rather than facing them. But, it is also one of the deepest insights into psychological distress from Indian thought.

Did You Know?

“In Advaita Vedānta, the term Mithyā is used to describe the world—it is neither absolutely real nor absolutely unreal, but dependent on perception. This nuanced view allows for practical engagement with life while still affirming that ultimate freedom comes only from transcending illusion.”

5.3.2 Other Indian Perspectives on Suffering

Whereas the Māyāvādin resolution concentrates on negating suffering by insight into its fleetingness, other Indian schools suggests alternate schemas that confront and

grapple with suffering—suggesting how to extirpate it. TWO OF THE MOST Powerful: BUDDHIST AND YOGIC SPECULATIONS.

Buddhist Four Noble Truths

The Buddha's doctrine starts with the recognition of all suffering (dukkha). Unlike Advaita, which is illusionist for suffering as a fact of life, Buddhism admits it. The Four Noble Truths are a psychological map:

Truth of Suffering (also): Pain, disease, death4~23; neither one desires nor rejects suffering Unblockable pain: perceptible and imperceptible True as the ultimate essence everywhere for all worlds, true cause, etc.

Truth of the Cause (Samudaya): The cause of suffering is desire or craving (tanha) compounded by ignorance (avidya). " Humans suffer because we attach to the temporary and falsely identify it as a source of permanent happiness.

Truth of Cessation (Nirodha): There is a cessation of suffering brought on by the end of craving and aversion. This cessation is nirvana, the final release.

Truth of the Path (Magga): The path to end suffering is the Eightfold Path—right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort and mindfulness, and right concentration.

This way of looking at suffering sees it as a teacher and not an illusion. They realize the transient and interdependent aspect of life when they meditate over their suffering and its causes. Mind-training practices (eg, mindfulness, meditation, and ethical living) teach the mind to observe without grasping and lead to less distress.

Yogic Management of Common Diseases (Cā:rvya): 141 Yog Philosophy-11 Disturbance of psychic equilibrium by mental afflictions (Kleśas)

The Yogic tradition, as described in Patañjali's Yoga Sutras, explains pain (dukha) by the notion of mental afflictions (pañcabhedaparipakavam).

Avidyā: (Ignorance) is to mistake the impermanent for permanent, impure for pure.

Asmitā (Egoism): Identification of the Self with body or mind.

Rāga: Clinging on to that which is agreeable.

Dveṣa (Aversion): Rejecting unpleasant experiences.

Abhiniveśa (Fear of Death): Clinging to existence out of fear of annihilation.

These kleśas generate mental disturbance by binding that person into karmic cycles of pain. The answer lies in the systematic method of Yoga – ethical behaviour (yamas and niyamas), physical postures (āsanas), breath control devices (prāṇāyāma), sense withdrawal / concentration on inner psychic sound (pratyāhāra) and, attention/

concentration (dhāraṇa) meditation (dhyana), and finally total absorption—integration through sleep/Avoidance or immunity towards Cosmic echo-CD of yoga Nidra–(samadhi). Each subsequent level weakens the kleśas and reinforces mental clarity.

But instead of Advaitic negation of suffering, Yoga prescribes the means to deal with it and change it. Through purification of their mind and dispassion developing equanimity, resilience and inner freedom in the yogin.

According to both Buddhist and Yogic thought, suffering is a condition of existence, which is real rather than illusory. Still, they side with Advaita in asserting that through discipline, awareness and transformation it is possible to become liberated from suffering. These techniques are formal ways of working with the mind, so they are obviously appropriate for psychological healing even in modern times.

5.4 The Harmony of Body and Mind

5.4.1 Psychosomatic Unity in Indian Psychology

The close interdependence of body (śarīra) and mind (manas) is a core teaching in Indian psychology. Unlike some dualistic proclivities of Western thought that divide mind and body functions, Indian systems maintain a psychosomatic integrity where both are co-dependent. The body sways the mind, and the mind sways the body. This maturational principle is crucial to Ayurveda, Yoga, and other such world views that regard humans as holistic entities.

By this Upanishadic model, human existence comprises five layers or sheaths - the physical body, which is essentially the transparent shell; The vital energy-body; The mental sheath; The intellectual sheath; and the blissful self. These layers are interacted, such that a perturbation in one has its effect over the others. For example, negative thoughts in the manomaya kośa can lead to overproduction of stress hormones that affect the annamaya kośa and result in psychosomatic disease. On the other hand a fit and healthy body promotes mental clarity and emotional balance.

This also exhibits the psychosomatic unity through the gunas: sattva (clarity), rajas (activity), tamas (inertia). Too much rajasic energy can lead to mental anxiety and physical hyperactivity as well. Correspondingly, tamas can also lead to lethargy... both physical and mental. Correcting an imbalance in the gunas requires working at both levels at once: lifestyle, diet, rules of ethical conduct and meditation.

Health in the Indian view, which I share above, is not only the opposite of disease — it's a harmony among body, mind, senses and spirit. A head full of stress or negativity lowers the immune system, resulting in imbalances in the body. In the same way, unhealthy diet and lifestyle can cloud the mind. And this psychosomatic knowledge is

not something at a remove — it's down-and-dirty wisdom in medical care that treats the mind with the body.

Increasingly in recent times, modern psychology and medicine are recognising these vital connections in their research on stress-related diseases, psychosomatic illness and the mind-body link. But the Indian psychology have known since time immemorial that body and mind or body-mind are two faces of one coin, co-dependent as we strive for our health and balance.

5.4.2 Role of Yoga, Pranayama, and Meditation

Yoga, pranayama and meditation are primary interventions according to Indian psychological principles for integrating the physical and psychophysical. Verso: All three of these disciplines are not exercises per se, but systems to purify our bodily functions, control energy flows and stabilize the processess of the mind.

Patañjali's Yoga The yoga as a system has been codified by the sage Patanjali in his work Yoga Sūtras, enumerating 8 limbs (aṣṭāṅga yoga): yama (ethical restraints), niyama (disciplines), āsana (posture), prāṇāyāma (breath regulation), pratyāhāra (withdrawal of senses), dhāraṇā (concentration), dhyāna(meditation) and samadhi(absorption). Each phase helps heal the mind-body connection. For instance, āsanas have bearing on flexibility, poise and flow of blood circulation that in turn lower mental agitation. Ethical practices like ahiṃsā and satya clean up relationships, thoughts, hence the mind.

Pranayama, or breath management, is the connection between the body and mind. Breath is the connection between body and mind. Pranayama controls the flow of prāṇa (life force) in the body and regulates the inhalation, exhalation, and retention of breath; nāḍīs account for this. Practices such as nadi shodhana (breathing from alternate nostrils) help to cleanse these channels, lessen stress and create emotional harmony. Scientific research also supports that pranayama has an effect on the autonomic nervous system, which decreases heart rate, increases oxygen intake and decrease release of stress hormones.

Meditation (dhyāna) is to be understood as the concentrating of the mind on an inner state in which no thought or image may intrude. It calms the fluctuation in the mind and leads to clarity. Whether you can see the correlation or not, meditation helps to alleviate your emotions and increase your focus so that you do not react in harmful ways. Regular meditation also has physical health effects such as decreased blood pressure, boosted immune system function and greater resistance to stress.

Yoga, pranayama and meditation form a complete system where the body is utilised as an instrument of mental strength and the mind in turn helps to sustain and maintain

physical health. The exercises are supposed to be not only medicinal but transformative, taking the ordinary man of health to states of extraordinary consciousness.

5.4.3 Ayurveda and Mental Health

One of the most elaborate systems for understanding our psychophysical integration is described in the ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda. It considers health as a condition of equilibrium between the three doshas — vāta (air & space), pitta (fire & water) and kapha (water & earth) — with the mind, soul and senses. Any discrepancy in the doshas causes various disorientations of the body as well as mind.

According to Ayurveda, mental health A map of our state of sattva (balanced), rajas (agitated) and tamas (dull). A sattvic mind is quiet, bright and full of joy. A rajasic mind is always agitated, ambitious and disturbed. Thus here we see that this puffy brain of a man who appears sleepy, isn't really healthy for him because sluggishness, dullness and depression can be caused due to a tamasic nature. The treatment goal is to enhance sattva, which by its nature encourages resiliency, emotional stability and mental clarity.

Ayurveda remedies to overcome mental agony by specifying, diet, herbs, lifestyle, yoga practices and usage of physical therapies. For instance, ADHD/ADD is treated with such herbs as ashwagandha and brahmi which also help memory improvement and anxiety reduction. Panchakarma treatments also purify the body, soothe your nerves and cleanse your mind.

Diet plays a crucial role. Foods are categorized as sattvic (pure, light, and calming), rajasic (stimulating) or tamasic (stale, heavy and dulling). A sattvic diet of fresh produce, whole grains, and milk creates mental clarity and calmness. Spicy food suck as chili or rancid meat are thought to unbalance the mind (tamasic, rajasic). Therefore, Ayurveda connects nutrition and life style to the mental happiness.

Ayurveda also recommends daily (dinacharya) and seasonal routines (ritucharya). And following natures' schedule helps maintain balance of the doshas, both precluding and treating disorders. Meditation, service (Seva), chanting and other mental exercises are suggested to purify emotions and foster resilience.

Fundamentally, Ayurveda regards mental well-being as a integral part of the balance between body, mind and world. It focuses on preventing diseases, maintaining equilibrium and promoting well-being It treats the causes and not only symptoms of a problem. This renders it very useful for contemporary psychosomatic medicine and integrative health services.

“Activity: Experiencing Body–Mind Harmony”

Students can be led in a mini-experiential lesson that includes basic āsanas, five minutes of pranayama (hearing the breath alternate between nostrils) and ten minutes of silent meditation. Following the practice itself, students consider how their physical sensations and emotional states have changed, as well as any changes in mental clarity that they may be experiencing. They go on to talk about how these actions exemplify the principle of psychosomatic integration. This exercises connects cognitive knowledge to praxis and zest, showing how the harmony of body and mind can be consciously produced.

5.5 Indian Thought and Psychiatry

5.5.1 Historical Interactions Between Indian Thought and Modern Psychiatry

The confluence of Indian thought with modern psychiatry dates back to the colonial period when Western medicine was introduced in India. Before that mental pain was largely addressed through indigenous systems like Ayurveda, Yoga, Buddhist psychology and numerous spiritual practices. In these cultures, dissociative disorders were not understood as distinct patholgies, but rather to represent a disturbance of the emotion and the other psycho-spiritual levels which make up the human being.

Western psychiatry supported the asylum and medical model of mental illness in colonialism. There were always snobs who disparaged Indian tradition as unscientific or superstitious. But then at some point the two paradigms began to converse. The culture of asylums and the new psychiatric treatments provided a counter-reality to traditional modes. Yet a number of Indian doctors also recognised the importance of spiritual healing, rituals and community responses, indicating a disjuncture between indigenous and Western orientations.

In the early 20th century, some Indian scholars and reformers sought to integrate Western psychiatry with Indian concepts. What they had been saying, after all, was that it wasn’t possible to cure psychological distress without considering culture and spiritual values. Earlier figures such as Girindrasekhar Bose, who founded the Indian Psychoanalytic Society, also incorporated elements of Freudian psychoanalysis and Vedanta. He Indianised psychoanalytic techniques in order to demonstrate that the psychological universals were also culturally fixed.

After independence, psychiatry in India came to recognize the value of cultural and spiritual aspects in healing. Ancient practices like yoga and meditation were becoming experimental for their potential as medicines. Community psychiatry programs understood that healing typically took place not just in clinics but in families, religious settings and community rituals.

Accordingly, the relationship between Indian thought and modern psychiatry has been an ambivalent one: first domination, followed by accommodation and assimilation. This history highlights that mental health can not be alienated from cultural, spiritual and philosophical moorings especially in India which is still under the influence of traditional systems that have determined how our people look at and respond to psychological suffering.

5.5.2 Integrative Models Combining Indian Practices with Modern Therapy

The appreciation of the limitation of a purely biomedical psychiatry resulted in proposed integrated models that contains both worlds (western therapies along with the Indian psychological concepts and spiritual practices). These attempts try to integrate the best of both traditions and provide a full spectrum model for mental health in biological, psychological, social, and spiritual perspectives.

One such model is yoga-based psychotherapy. Including āsanas, pranayama, and meditation, yoga is practised not just for physical fitness but as a proprioceptive tool in managing stress, anxiety, depression and trauma. Yoga protocols are now being implemented in clinical settings as adjuncts to cognitive-behavior therapy or medication, with observed improvements in emotional regulation, attention and resilience.

Meditation-based techniques, which originate from Buddhism but have become widely accepted in modern psychiatry lately. The practices of mindful breathing, body scanning and noticing thoughts are now part of standard treatments for depression, substance abuse and even some chronic pain. These kinds of practices help cultivate a non-evaluative stance of attention and acceptance that diminishes emotional reactivity and enhances well-being.

Another is psychiatry rooted in Ayurveda, which incorporates dietary patterns, herbs and lifestyle routines as part of therapy. For example, Ayurvedic herbs like brahmi and ashwagandha are studied to see if they work against anxiety or cognitive impairments.

Patients are also encouraged to adhere sattvic diets and regulated daily routines, followed by pharmacological or psychotherapeutic intervention.

Indian moral and philosophical ideas have been included in spiritual counseling and values based therapy. Meditation or when we are pursuing the practices of Bhakti Yoga (the Practice of love and devotion) or even Svadhyaya [self study] in order to quiet our mind so that we can listen. This is not to supplant scientific therapy, but to culturally animate it for patients who already draw sustenance from meditation.

These integrative models are potent because they can be flexed in the cultural sense. In countries such as India, where many patients consult spiritual leaders or traditional

healers before psychiatrists, combining modern psychotherapy with customary practices enhances access and reduces stigma. The contribution of these models as opposed to the Western models for world psychiatry is that they discuss existentialist themes, which can be ignored.

Integrative therapies also support a more humanistic style of care, where the aim of treatment is less to eliminate symptoms and more about creating balance and resilience, self awareness and self realization. This is the Indian concept of health that is balance which now encompassed psychiatric.

5.5.3 Contemporary Research on Indian Healing Systems

The leading studies today have been attempting very successfully to prove through science the systems of healing in India. The interest in examining such systems arises from two considerations: the huge scale on which they are utilized in India and their growing acceptance around the world as a form of alternative or adjunct therapies.

Yoga therapy is one large area of study. Studies show that yoga can be useful for reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress in those who practice it regularly. Clinical studies highlight its support of stress hormones, better quality sleep and the cognition-balance connection.

Neuroimaging studies suggest that yoga and meditation influence brain systems associated with attention, emotional regulation, and self-awareness.

Research into meditation, particularly mindfulness and transcendent mediation, has had fair results in terms of the reduction of likelihood for relapse in depressive episodes prevention against depression altogether and prolonging attention spans. Studies have also found that long-term practitioners of meditation had structural differences in their brains, including increased gray matter density in regions known to be important for memory and learning.”

Some ayurvedic interventions are evaluated for their psychopharmacological potential. Plants such as brahmi, jatamansi and ashwagandha are explored for their anxiolytic, antidepressant and neuroprotective activities. Despite early evidence, normalization and clinical trials are required for greater uptake.

Studies are ongoing in psychosocial dimensions of Indian systems of medicine. The significance of rituals, community practices and spiritual direction for the development of resilience and social support is analyzed. Group chanting or satsangs, for example, gives a sense of collective healing by fostering common meaning and decreasing isolation.

The question remains, however, as to whether modern science can confirm traditional Indian practices. The nature of holistic systems makes them hard to incorporate into scientific, reductionist paradigms. In addition, cultural variations in the perception of

mental health may impact study findings. For all these challenges, the tide is turning in favour of recognising Indian healing systems as important adjuncts to modern psychiatry.

Did You Know?

“Recent clinical studies have shown that yoga and meditation practices can positively influence gene expression related to stress and inflammation, suggesting that these ancient practices not only affect the mind and brain but also create changes at the molecular level.”

5.6 The Counsellor–Client Relationship in Indian Thought

5.6.1 Guru–Śiṣya Tradition as a Model for Counselling

The relationship between the counsellor and client in Indian thought is well expressed through the tradition of Guru –Sisay (teacher-disciple) model, which has been one of India’s oldest and most enduring pedagogical and psychological frameworks. This relationship is not just to explain the tradition, but rather to shape the disciple intellectually, morally and spiritually. It is what trust, surrender, respect and individual support look like - all very compatible elements from the principles of contemporary counselling.

In this concept, the guru is more than a transmitter of knowledge – he is a wise and moral leader. The Sisay is a disciple, who humbly approaches the guru and asks for guidance regarding his duty as well as religious instructions. It echoes the strong alliance in therapy and counselling, which is built on trust and rapport. The disciple was to reveal everything, no less than a client might confide inner turmoil in seeking professional help from a therapist.

This practice involves some of the following:

• Personal teaching: The guru sees the nature of his disciple, strengths and weaknesses and advises him accordingly. This is congruent with the role of counsellor in tailoring interventions to suit client personality and need.

• Translatability across Languages: In Indian tradition, learning through words is complemented by learning from experience. The voice, quiet and act of the guru convey nonpareil lessons. Similarly, in a counselling setting, non-verbal

“Eye contact and expression of empathy and interest can be just as impactful, if not more so, than verbal responses.

5.6.2 Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of Guidance

In Indian tradition, guidance is not just about solving problem or emotional solace; its ethical and spiritual ethos are strong. Counselling is considered a sacred duty; the counsellor assists clients not only in attaining psychological health but also in aligning with dharma (righteous living) and spiritual consciousness.

Ethics plays a central role. The counselor should be Â not a truth-seeker (satyasādhaka), but one who is already established in truth (satya), non-violent (ahiṃsa), compassionate (karuṇākara) and having discipline of body, mind and speech(brahmacharya, meaning detailed above). So the guidance provided is responsible, non-exploitative and aimed at the overall well-being of the client. As in the case of the physician who holds ethical considerations about curing, so also the counsellor is expected to regard his/her activity as an act of service (seva) and not just a profession having its exclusive motive only material gain.

What differentiates Indian direction from pure secular paradigms is the spiritual element. A counsellor is not only a spiritual and intellectual guide, but also the midwife of the soul. The aim is simply to enable those who have been confined in limited ego centric identifications to identify with their higher or true Self (Ātman). Consider, for instance, the Bhagavad Gita: Krishna here guides Arjuna out of his sorrow and into a discovery of dharma and a realization of what the Western tradition's callous concept "the timeless truth" of the Atman. This demonstrates that the ethics-

model conflict with spiritual renewal in Indian counseling.

Some important features include:

• Dharma Integration: The counsellor is a Dharma integrated one who leads the client to act on decisions which are moral rather than selfish or socially irresponsible.

• Spiritual orientation: In this model, the work of direction is simply to remind our clients of their fullness and true knowing ("To put our hands on people's head…and say 'You don't need me'"). Such inner-wisdom may be facilitated by practices such as meditation or chanting for trusted 'inner-knowing'.

• WholeGoal: The goal is to do more than relieve symptoms — it's to create a state of harmony, physically, mentally and spiritually that makes you feel content.

• Service vs Authority: Counsel is rendered humbly and as a service of the person, not in an authoritative hierarchical manner.

This ethical–spiritual orientation ensures that counselling is not depersonalized as mechanical procedure, but is seen as deeply humane and caring – transformative therefore. It makes the relation of counsellor and client much richer, if it can be used as a tool for moral and spiritual development, as well as for mental health.

5.6.3 Empathy, Compassion, and Detachment in Counsellor–Client Dynamics

Three inter-related qualities—empathy, compassion and detachment—are conceptualised in the Indian perspective of counselling as essential to a well-balanced counsellor–client relationship.

Empathy (sahridayata) is the ability to share in another's feelings, to "share the heart." In counseling, empathy means listening carefully to the worries and feelings of the client and experiencing their inner world without judging. For Indian ethics empathy follows from the recognition of oneness—every being is essentially same (Ātman) as me. So to know the pain of another is to understand suffering as a part of being human.

Compassion (karuṇā) goes beyond empathy. It isn't just the acknowledgment of suffering but the desire to mitigate it. In psychological Buddhism, the quality of healing is compassion and a counsellor embodies this through kindness, patience and acceptance. Indian forms of compassion is based upon valuing ahiṃsā (non-harm), it seeks that which uplifts and does not judge or condemn. It's the love that drives the counsellor to keep showing up for the client when growth is slow coming or problems don't go away.

5.7 The Goal of Psychotherapy in Indian Thought

5.7.1 Restoration of Inner Harmony

Restoration of inner harmony The word for therapy (and one might add also for the health therapist) is a word which is immensely broad in meaning and scope.and here the sense here must be grasped as therapy or treatments reflex to what we have lost, that would bring us out= be ayurveda- Intensive treatment Indian Psychotherapy and Ayurveda ONE OF THE prime goals of psychotherapy in India has been understood as restoration of inner harmony. Contemporary psychotherapies that may focus, for example, on symptomatic relief or behavioral change are foreign to Indian traditions."5 Instead of perceiving psychological distress as a matter of disintegration or alienation in the self due to ignorance, unregulated desires and passion, or domination by particular gunas ---thereby necessitating therapy rooted in such understanding -- mental suffering is often seen as deriving from imbalance.

The qualities (gunas)—sattva (clarity and purity), rajas (motion and dynamism) and tamas (inertia, darkness)—are considered particularly important when determining a person's psychological state. Too much rajas can result in anxiety, anger or flightiness, and tamas can make you lazy, apathetic or disoriented. In India, psychotherapy is designed to bring in sattva, providing mental clarity and bringing peace and self-control.

This re-establishment of balance is facilitated through ethical conduct, meditation, self-awareness and adherence to lifestyle disciplines including diet, exercise and sleep.

Conflict of desires and duties Conflict between what he wants to do, and what obligation demands, constitutes another aspect of inner unity. The Bhagavad Gita Arjuna's conflict is a classic situation — he was psychologically paralyzed from doing what was right. Krishna's counsel restored his peace of mind by harmonizing his individual feelings with the demands of dharma. And so does Indian psychotherapy, which aims to calm the emotions and reconnect the self with higher values and meaning. Balance can also be restored emotionally. In Buddhism, anger (kodha), greed (lobha), and delusion (moha) are the three poisons that are considered to be at the root of all kleshas. This is where the other such practices like pranayama (breathing), dhyana (observing) etc come into picture which in turn control emotions and keeps our emotions at an equilibrium.

What that means is, building back your inner calm isn't a matter of feeling — "operating" — better; it's about building resilience and moral clarity, not to mention peace. It's a gateway to more expansive territory of growth, such as self-awareness and change.

5.7.2 Attainment of Self-Knowledge

Psychology Self-knowledge (ātma-jñāna) Being not only psychotherapy, but the philosophy of life-affirmation, it goes one step further than soothing or harmony: as a deeper goal, Indian psychology sees self-apprehension. This refers to the

appreciation that the Self (ātman) is not body, mind or ego but the eternal unchanging self. From the Indian point of view, ignorance (avidyā) is at the base of suffering and gives rise to identification with transient experiences and objects. Self-knowledge is the solvent of this ignorance, it sets one totally free from fear, from craving and from sorrow.

Self-knowledge figures prominently in Vedantic thought, and is conveyed through mahāvākyas or "great sayings" such as tat tvam asi ("Thou art That") and aham brahmāsmi ("I am Brahman"). The psychotherapeutic point is that cure comes when we recognize with our whole be- ing the Self behind roles, names and fights. Rather than being characterised by anxiety, depression and trauma they now understand themselves as having these as superficial ripples in the light of who they are.

Self-knowledge comes through self-enquiry (ātma-vichāra), meditation and philosophical study. The client is lead by the counsellor or guide to wonder: Who am I? What is the cause of my suffering? What doesn't change in the midst of changing

experiences? This program moves the focus of attention from the outside to the inside, from identification with ego to recognising Self.

Crucially, self-understanding also means the knowledge of one's own psychological profile and tendencies. You need to understand how mind works– desire, fear and reaction patterns in order to surpass them. So, there is a narrative aspect to self-awareness that is psychological (knowing one's own mind) and spiritual (realising the Self).

When you have knowledge of yourself everything else changes. Pain is no longer the enemy but rather a teacher, pointing to truths below the surface. As the Self is known, there exists a fountain of inner stability unaffected by external sources of ISIS generation, leading to liberation (moksha).

5.7.3 Transformation of Consciousness

And the ultimate goal of this psychotherapy is furnishing methods designed to effect a transformation of consciousness—from ordinary, self-centered minds to more advanced forms of being characterized by freedom from self-deception, empathic insight into others, and a sense of oneness with all existence. Whereas western therapy tends to be toward more functional fine-tuning, in Indian psychology, getting therapy itself was growing inwardly toward the state of being conscious.

It is only that inner transformation which starts from the purification of the mind. Mental impressions (samskaras) are cleansed, attachments grow weaker as a result of things like meditation and mantra chanting, and ethical living is strengthened. With the passage of time, consciousness is no longer the slave of lower instincts (fear, desire or anger), but controlled by higher attributes (equanimity, devotion or wisdom). It's not linear but gradual process and one has to have lot of patience and continue the practice.

This transformation is the end result of yogic psychology, at samādhi, or awareness passing over into pure consciousness. Here, there is no longer any subject or object, only pure consciousness as witnessing. In Buddhist teachings, metamorphosis refers to a clear understanding of the nature of impermanence and non-self, which will grant freedom after abandonment sap (craving) and dukkha (sorrow). In bhakti traditions, it appears as surrender to god, where the ego melts into love and devotion.

The shift in consciousness carries psychological rewards too. It allows individuals to break the cycles of reactivity and compulsion, so that they can choose freely how they will respond to whatever life gives them. It promotes empathy as the wall between self and others falls. The move is also a build up of resiliency as the sense of identity moves from these fragile ego formations to that deeper Self.

This revolutionary goal is what sets Indian psychotherapy apart. It does not come just to be temporarily relieved, but it desires utter transformation at the most profound level of consciousness. The therapist is thus an enlightened being who helps the client to increase his level of consciousness and become free in the end.

5.8 Summary

Psychotherapy in Indian view is based on all the holistic approach into human living where mind, body and soul are interlinked.

Western psychotherapy is concerned with adaptation and symptom reduction while Indian traditions about liberation (moksha) and self-realization.

Personality development is defined in conjunction with spiritual growth to the harmony of life as per puruṣārthas- dharma, artha, kāma. and moksha.

Psychological Pain studied through different systems: Vaedas,Avaita Vedānta perceives it in the form of māyā, Yoga connects pain with kleśas and Buddhism associates pain with craving ad ignorance.

Restoration of balance between body and mind is the main objective which is brought about through yoga, mediation, pranayama and sattvic way of living.

Ayurveda to understand mental health, balance of dosha and psychosomatic unity.

Indian thought and psychiatry have over centuries shared a relation that has evolved from one of colonial confrontation to present-day cohabitation.

New integrative models weave Western therapy together with yoga, meditation, Ayurveda and mindfulness.

The various indian healing systems have been researched and their benefits for mental health – yoga, meditation, ayurvedic remedies – are now confirmed.

The therapist-client relationship is conceptualized as a guruśiṣya relationship and highlights the importance of trust, humility, moral character and the spiritual development.

Essential characteristics of a counsellor involve empathy, sympathy and detachment such that the care being given does not suffer from over- identification.

The end, finally in view by psychotherapy from Indian perspective is the transformation of consciousness to bring self- knowledge, harmony and release.

5.9 Key Terms

Māyā – Illusion that covers the reality and results in misidentification with the body and mind.

Kleśa – Afflictions of the mind such as ignorance, ego, attachment, aversion and fear of death.

Sattva – Quality of purity, clarity and harmony in the mind.

Rajas – The nature of restlessness, passion and activity.

Tamás – The quality characterized by inertia, dullness, or ignorance.

Ātman – The transcendent self (distinct from ego) which is eternal and unchangable.

Moksha – Freedom from life and death; absolute freedom.

Āyurveda – Traditional Indian medical system leaning on the balance of body, mind and spirit.

Guru–Śiṣya relationship between the teacher and his or her disciple as a divine covenant in good faith and with earnest expectations for transformation.

Vairāgya – Dispassion towards ephemerals and dualities for emotional equinimity.

Ātma-jñāna – Self-realization, knowledge of one's own nature as consciousness.

Samādhi – State of absorption where the mind dissolves into pure consciousness.

5.10 Descriptive Questions

Discuss the implications and importance of psychotherapy in India.

Compare and contrast the Indian and Western systems of psychotherapy.

Talk about māyā, and detachment as a reaction to psychic pain.

Discuss Buddhist and Yogic perspectives on suffering and its psychological aspects.

Discuss yoga, pranayama and meditation for balancing the body–mind system.

The role of Ayurveda in mental health and psychosomatic balance.

Explain the moral and spiritual aspects of the relation between counsellor and client in Indian philosophies.

What are the end points of psychotherapy in Indian psychology and how is it different from Western ideations?

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5.12 Case Study

"The Quest for Balance and Liberation"

Introduction

This paper is a case study of internal conflicts in Meera, a school teacher having professional satisfaction and social support who visited sex clinic with complaint of anxiety repeatedly with sense of emptiness. Traditional therapy had been a band-aid for a deeper existential angst. She began to turn to Indian approaches: yoga, Ayurveda, spiritual inquiry and slowly discovered the root of her restlessness. Her story is a testimony to how and body, mind & spirit beautifully merges in Indian psychology for moulding a holistic way of healing and self-discovery.

Background

Meera, a schoolteacher in her late 40s, who experienced repeated 'dips' of anxiety and emptiness despite successive achievements on the surface. Her family life was solid, and she had a good circle of friends — but there was still something gnawing at her inside. Modern medicine did much to control her anxiety, but it was unsatisfied. A colleague introduced her to Indian styles of healing. She began navigating her inner world through yoga classes, Ayurvedic consultations and spiritual conversations. But over time she grew to realize that her anxiety wasn't just caused by external pressures; it stemmed from a deep sense of existential malaise: Who was I? What is the purpose of life?

Problem Statements and Solutions

Problem 1: Psychological Imbalance

Problem: Meera was experiencing mood swings, erratic sleep and physical restlessness.

Solution: With the combination of yoga postures and pranayama psychosomatic equilibriums were developed. By doing this alternate nostril breathing and another new-to-her practice, mindfulness meditation each day (Leamas didn't know How To Be before all of this), Leamas saw a decrease in her anxiousness and sleep had gotten better. It reconciled the opposite tendencies by harmonizing the gunas.

Problem 2: Lack of Self-Knowledge

Problem: Meera derived her identity from what she did professionally to the extent of being critically concerned of failure and disapproval.

Solution: Guided self-inquiry (ātma-vichāra) helped her to examine the deeper nature of her identity beyond work.

As she read Vedantic texts and journalled, she learned that her essence was not limited to her roles. This acknowledgment minimized her need for external validation.

Issue 3: Failure in Spiritual Integration

Issue: Meera didn't find anything purposeful in her life despite of being materially successful.

Solution: Bhakti rituals like chanting and devotional reading connected her to something greater. This was a spiritual transaction that turned her mind from lack of peace and fulfillment to lasting peace, calm and comfort.

Reflective Questions

What is the origin of human suffering as explained by Indian thought and how does it contrast with western explanations?

What sadhana tools did Meera use to harmonize body and mind, and how was it effective?

In what manner does self-inquiry help to manage a state of anxiety and an identity crisis?

What is the contribution of spiritual teaching to the conversion of human consciousness as per Indian psychology?

How could this be integrated into contemporary counselling practice?

Conclusion

Meera's instance highlights that psychotherapy in Indian thought does not get confined to symptom relief alone but surging towards the transmutation at deeper planes of existence. The Indian models of psychotherapy offer holistic approaches by dealing with psychosomatic disequilibrium, helping to build self-knowledge and towards spiritual integration. Her path is a reminder that anxiety can be reinterpreted not as a deficiency but as a signpost toward growth and emancipation. This case further illustrates that therapy in Indian psychology is not just about adjustment but about Self-realization and transformation of consciousness.

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Unit 6: An Indian model & Methodology in Resolving social conflicts

Learning Outcomes:

1. What is the significance of indigenous models of knowledge for Indian psychology?
2. Investigate the methodology within the indigenous model with emphasis on cultural contexts, experience of life and holistic views.
3. Take the case of Chipko Andolan and see how a community act gets into environmental, social and then psychological meaning.
4. An approach to development is holistic, compared with conventional Western frames that are focused on material growth.
5. Assess the relevance of indigenous and holistic views for contemporary psychology, particularly in relation to community health, sustainability, and ecological consciousness.
6. Develop and utilize indigenous psychological knowledge for concrete problems in life, including the interplay of self, community and ecology.
7. Integrate traditional and contemporary wisdom to form a more inclusive psychology that honors cultural diversity and ecological sustainability.

Content

6.0 Introductory Caselet

“Learning from the Roots”

In an obscure Himalayan village, villagers had been coexisting with their surrounding forests. The trees provided firewood, fodder and medicinal herbs, the rivers watered their fields. For generations, the forest had represented not so much a resource as a living being that connected them with their existence and sense of self.

Decades afterward, this calm was shattered in the 1970s when contractors arrived with licenses to clear thousands of trees for profit. For the villagers, it was also a matter of life and death. Without forests, landslides would multiply, sources of water would turn to dust and millions of livelihoods would wither.

The community — mostly women — did not respond with violence; in an indigenous form of resistance they hugged trees, overlapping their bodies to make a shield

These kinds of movements pose difficult questions to psychology. How does culture tradition and traditional wisdom influence human response to a crisis?

What role do social emotions of attachment, awe, and responsibility play in fostering well-being for individuals and community resilience? What ever can PSYCHOLOGY learn from indigenous prototypes of development such that it too enlarges the horizon of its vision beyond the boundaries of individuals, into ecologic and cultural context?

Critical Thinking Question

In what ways can indigenous knowledge systems, like the ones summarized by Chipko Movement case studies, reconstruct psychological theories and practices that tend towards a narrow individual focus as opposed to a collective orientation or an environmental context?

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Understanding Social Conflicts in Indian Context

Social conflicts can be found in all societies; however, the nature, reasons, and solutions for these conflicts differ from society to society dependent upon its historical, cultural and political underpinnings. In India, social contradictions are based on a number of factors: caste and communal identities, regional inequality, gender role division, class struggles as well as environmental problems. Unlike in some cultures where disputes are perceived as simply the difference of opinionbetween individuals or groups, in India most conflicts are often also multilayered with historical,cultural and religious overtones.

I: Interconnectedness of identity and tradition What is most fascinating about Indian conflicts is that it are entangled between identity and tradition. For instance, Caste-based Babus are not about money or resources or opportunities as much, as they are about first hitting the self and then the other fellow over the head with hierarchy and power play that got laid down over centuries. But, simultaneously [...] 'riots' are not only or even primarily politics but are also experienced as cultural memory and symbolic identificatory processes. To understand these conflicts is not just to solve short-term causes, but also the ideational dynamics of social order.

There is the collectivist weave of Indian society, too. We are as is our group — family, caste, religion or community. Therefore, battles are generally felt and fought as a group. It can be resolved when community leaders, religious and elders intervene between conflicting parties, which once again suggests that conflict resolution utilises social networks (Hassan, 1999).

Additionally, Indian confrontation is often characterized by the asymmetry in power. The oppressed communities — that is, the so-called lower castes, tribal people and women — suffer at the hands of institutionalized injustices which characterize the character of violence. Read Also: Here peace reconciliation is notjust the work of peacemaking or peacebuilding onlyNot just about making peace.Migrations (2018) it is a strategy to address injustice.

"And ultimately, Indian wars are entwined with ecological issues. Disputes over land, water and forests reveal the intersectionality of economic-environmental concerns with what is social-cultural. And movements like Chipko and Narmada Bachao Andolan show that in India, but not only in India, conflict is never just about material dispute; it is moral and cultural as much as ecological.

It is therefore impossible to understand India's social conflicts without an integrated history, identity, culture and ecology. It refuses to be boiled down to manifest quarrels and operates in the realm of social and psychic entanglements.

6.1.2 Need for Indigenous Models of Conflict Resolution

Although ideas of conflict resolution, as they pertain to contemporary challenges, have been drawn from Western academic perspectives by many theorists, these may not necessarily be representative of the Indian situational reality. India's socio-cultural ethos needs inbred models of conflict-management based on local traditions, practices and values.

One reason for this necessity is the disjunction between Western individualism and Indian collectivism. In Western terms conflicts are interpreted as confrontations

between free individuals who wish to negotiate in a rational way. In India, disputes are part of a web of family and caste and community; where power goes to the collective over the individual. Indigenous models consider communities, collective responsibilities, and cultural symbols, providing contextually appropriate responses.

Second, indigenous paradigms place emphasis on spiritual and ethical values. There is no division in Indian tradition between psychology, ethics and spirituality. Conflict resolution then is not a matter of compromise but one of re-establishing dharma and harmony. Mediation by elders, panchayat (village council) dialogues and solicitations of advice from holy texts are examples of ways in which moral frameworks shape the resolution of conflict.

Thirdly, native traditions acknowledge that conflicts have transformative possibilities. Indian religions have not usually considered conflict simply as destructive, but as also an occasion for meditation and ethical reorientation- including the transformation of relationships at the level of society. The resolution is not simply external (resolving disputes) but internal (building detachment, compassion and self-discipline). Thus the Gandhian satyagraha, for instance, presents conflict as a moment of moral recognition for opponent and challenger alike.

Fourthly, indigenous models are integrated and ecological. They do not divorce conflicts from their cultural and ecological settings. If there is contention about resources, it's not just a disagreement over economic matters, but concerns collective survival, ecological harmony and cultural identity. Western theories of conflict lack this ecological consciousness.

As such, indigenous models are needed not only for cultural reasons but also to include the ethical, social, spiritual- and ecological-based components of conflict resolution. They speak to lived realities of Indian communities in a more profound way, and as such are practical and meaningful.

6.1.3 Distinctiveness of Indian Approaches vs Western Approaches

Indian conflict resolution is fundamentally different from Western models in several very important respects. Though both traditions share a concern for the elimination of suffering and an interest in establishing order, they are grounded in vastly different suppositions, strategies, values.

For one thing, identity helps explain this gap. Western models often begin with an autonomous reason-driven self whose interests can be determined from negotiation and contracts. But there are Indian approaches that, based on philosophies like Vedanta, Buddhism and Yoga, look at the self as relational or interrelated. Conflicts are not only the result of opposing interests but also due to ignorance (avidyā), attachment

(rāga) and ego (ahaṁkāra). The solution therefore lies in self-transformation through culturing the virtues of compassion, detachment and humility.

Second, there is a great emphasis in Indian models on the part played by the community. Whereas Western methods tend to lean on legal systems, arbitration or professional mediators, traditions in India often use community elders, spiritual leaders or collective discussions. But people are not thinking of individual success, they just want to be part of the society again. The panchayat system, for instance, aims for consensus rather than adversarial judgment.

Then, thirdly, nonviolence and moral force have a use of their own as special features of Indian technique. Satyagraha, as practiced by Gandhi, demonstrated that moral pressure underpinned by truth and nonviolence could be a means of resolving conflict without resorting to force. Western model in which too much rides on the power of bargaining, pleading or forcing; Indian one works through appeal to conscience and common humanity.

The fourth parameter is the holistic coherence, present in Indian modalities. Problems are not separable breaks with the rest of life, but rather conditioned in a mandala of dharma and karma along with ecological balance. Western attitudes toward conflict as law and policy or psychodriving forces are the opposite.

Finally, the ultimate aim differs. The Western method of problem-solving is to treat a problem as a real-life thing, to look for practical work-arounds and accommodations that are at least justifiable because they respect the rights of individuals. For the aspiration at the heart of Indian thought is not merely that of resolution but transforming — transforming self and community into more ethically and spiritually mature versions of themselves. That's a war, you fight that with love compassion." is alike a fact and possibility or potentiality of the whole human race in all aftertime.

It is in these integrated, ethicizing and transformative aspect that Indian approaches are different. Their Western equivalents are both complemented, and their inadequacies exposed through the presentation of more sophisticated models that integrate psychology, social processes and spirituality.

6.2 The Indigenous Model: Methodology

6.2.1 Philosophical Foundations of Indigenous Methods

to some traditional/native theories of conflict resolution based on mystical symbolisms that highlight harmony, unitariness and good conduct. Moving beyond Western understandings

where the very search of conciliation means finding of a balance between conflicting interests, Indian religious traditions employ their ideas and beliefs about human nature under conflict as an occasion for moral-psychological regeneration.

The first and most fundamental is the doctrine of dharma (duty) as seen in social cosmic order. This is because not only does dharma come to see that what is right could fail to be context-independent (and in calling for judgment comes on good sense and sensitivity when it comes to both sides, while enacting evidence ad refutandum of the charge that we are “lords over” the environment) — this move is also tagged upon rsa. That is certainly not to say that dharma is all about compromise; it’s about embracing conflict—owing as per his higher code of conduct, the result for which he strives being one that is good and beneficial!

The second is that all life goes together. Indian philosophies like Vedanta and Buddhism especially emphasize the point that human beings are not islands; we are connected in a vast, intricate network of relationships: with family, friends, community, society, nature and cosmos. Accordingly whatever smites one person or party will smite all. Resolution is thus a matter of returning harmony to the systemic whole rather than effecting some kind of local peace.

Indigenous paradigms, Karma and Systems The concept of karma also contributes to instill local ways of thinking. What goes around, karma says, comes around. War, then, is not just a matter of being but also of recognizing destructive patterns behind the suffering of men. In this native-worldview perspective, individuals are moved to act with conscious awareness they do so under the karmic indebtedness (moral duty) and by taking in mind long-term reciprocity and harmony, over temporally limited gains.

It is the emphasis on shaping the self that makes Indian practices distinctive. Religion such as Yoga and Buddhism places ignorance (avidya), attachment (raga) and egoism (ahamkara) to be the root cause of friction. The engines of reconciliation, therefore, are the virtues (and hence “theos” in) patience, forgiveness, detachment and compassion. There isn't just a focus on settlement from without, but purification from within.

These bases are well represented in rural India’s panchayat system. The point is that disagreements are resolved, not simply through bargaining, but by appealing to standards of fairness and social responsibility or moral redemption. Narratives, proverbs and moral lessons from holy texts are used as moral imperatives by elders to point the way to morally defensible settlements of conflicts.

Thus, the indigenous perspective and process based on dharma, connectedness, karma and self- transformation offer an holistic philosophy of conflict resolution that is ethical, spiritual and pragmatic.

6.2.2 Key Features of Indian Methodology

Indian approach to solving conflict is formed by unique characteristics which represent its philosophical base and cultural environment. These are the principles of nonviolence, dialogue and consensus as well as community solutions.

Non-violence (Ahimsa):

Ahimsa – non-violence is at the core of Indian philosophy to resolution. The concept of "ahimsa" is essentially a Jain and Buddhist teaching, but later came to be part of Hinduism as well; it's not merely the absence of physical violence, but non- violence in thought, word and deed. It's just about not taking life, compassion on all and with your hands behind your back. Satyagraha—truth-force in action Gandhi's theory of satyagraha (truthforce) enabled the application of ahimsa to politics, or at least intimate how agonistic antagonisms could be resolved by appeal to conscience, not coercion. In social situations ahimsa also includes all that is implied by it i.e., patien~e, tolerance and readiness to have the matter discussed so as not to aggravate aggressiveness in society.

Dialogue and Consensus-Building:

A discussion (samvāda) is, likewise, characteristic of Indian methods. Traditional systems do not promote fighting over opponents, rather talking and discussion among all, they are not characterised by adversarial wise-views attitude nor legal relativism but by open wise-views dialogue for all. The win is not the dialogue — it's the understanding. In the panchayat system, for example, fights happen together — dialogue thrown across, also in collective discussion times stories or moral parables that script the crossing of swords. Consensus is arrived at rather than majority rule and consensus works the best when it's inclusive, harmonious and respectful. This fosters low-bitterness, longer- term cooperation.

Community-Centric Solutions:

In \("ecological"\) arguments, it makes sense to us for the following reason as well. The movements kan the Chipkos also indicates that indigenous modes think of nature as part of te village. Preserving the forest cover was not an economic or financial issue but a moral responsibility for the future.There are more reasons to conserve forests.

The inclusiveness and ahimsa, dialogue, and community orientation along with these three Indian processes are the essence of this approach; which makes the latter so profound and sustainable. It is not won by force or guile; it is won through solidarity, moral authority and the sacrifice of self-interest.

Did You Know?

"The word samvāda in Sanskrit, it's more than dialogue; it means conversation that seeks a common truth rather than just to win by one side. In ancient Indian culture, the

concept forms a part of practice that leads into the social preference for consensus-building processes in handling conflicts.

6.2.3 Role of Spirituality and Values in Conflict Resolution

References to spirituality, and values are integral part of the Indian traditional mechanism of conflict resolution – much differentiated. But Indian thought does not dichotomise the question of conflict as Western secular discourses do, at least outside ethics or religion; it can be a means to social concord and spiritual progress.

In this sense, what is spirituality: Not only rituals and ceremonies; it is the acceptance of a reality or truth that universal, more than true in every time and every space.

Values Attending factors that influence conflicts are values, and these can shape how we perceive and manage conflicts: 1. _PRIORITY Conflicts must be held in such complex attitude since to them of being involved and engage avoidance leaving always open relationships, so not exaggerated a reaction when 2 closure is put. Killed play conficts may have positive or ne gative valence; even if they aren't seeking to better providing always something bet ter;) ELEMENTS IMPLICATED IN PLAY PPLY Through all his life man plays vh en straight compensation [compensat i on] ppal].”3;d>£oa ith, and when compensatives out weigh the situation atmospherically. So also do we see that discussion should be open and frank through truth, but as such no rude or severe judgment has a place in love, however worthy of blame. The ego-entreated requests, however, are surmountable also through detachment, due to a reaction of the opening for reconciliation.

Even Indian customs, which advocate a change of heart in response to conflict. The Bhagavad Gita provides that a person with inward clarity and detachment can remain composed amidst adversity. Similarly, Buddhist practices focus on mindfulness and nonattachment as a means of reducing craving and stimulant use.

aversive which both typically produce conflicts. Forgiveness, humility, and tolerance are values that grow while resolving conflicts.

The structure of spirituality, in the way that it is practised (such as through mediation) is one example. Conflicts are settled by a council of older or religious people who quote parables, verses and ethical precepts. For example, the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata are frequently referred to in order to illustrate principles of dharma (duty), vairagya (detachment) and adharmic justice. This kind of ethical underpinning would also dovetail with the very solutions; they won’t just be pragmatic, but contribute to ethical ends.

Furthermore, spirituality fosters a sense of the universality of humans and connectedness. If they can realise that all creatures are connected, then humans

could lift their eyes from the spotlight of self-interest. That will take the sting out of frustration and create a sense of empathy. In this context of ecological struggles, spirituality dignifies the sacred marriage between humanity and nature, favoring sustainable and responsible settlements.

The emphasis on spirituality also prevents the reduction of conflicts to simply 'agreements'. Instead it provides a morals of peace, moral development/confederacy and community stability. "By emphasizing at the same time both outer peace and inner change, spirituality makes 'peacemaking' a matter of healing wholeness."

6.3 Case Study: The Chipko Movement

6.3.1 Historical Background of the Movement

It was a movement that began in the early 1970s by people from Uttarakhand (then part of Uttar Pradesh) of the Himalayas. One of the most famous and inspiring grassroots environmental movements in the world, GEF unites an ecological consciousness with a social justice framework that is also grounded within ancient indigenous wisdom. Chipko is a term that refers to "hugging" or to "embrace", and the name derived from the fact that people—mostly villagers, most of them women—embraced trees so logging companies could not act.

But the movement has even deeper roots. In 1730, the villagers of the Bishnoi sect in Rajasthan threw themselves before woodcutters' axes to try to stop trees ordered by a Maharaja logger friend with British overlords from being felled for construction 280 miles away. This ecological fidelity set the historical and spiritual precedent for the Chipko Movement that was to follow some hundreds of years later. The harvesting of Himalayan forest resources in 20th century was so large by commercial contractors (for felling trees to supply wood and resin, for industrial use) that the natural equilibrium became an extraordinarily mighty distortion. The directly or indirectly RUBBER a) rubber 1) The dried exudates from wounds There are two sources of natural banners lancifying soils got shrivelled worid. from rainforests of South America.

water sources and joblessness for rural communities that limbs into the ground." had relied on the forests for a livelihood.

By the '60s and '70s, it was apparent that these environmental impacts were catastrophic. These rights of the villagers enjoyed traditionally were sought to be overridden by the Government and its servant/appointees. Villages were helpless witnesses to the alienation of resources and destruction of ecology; they had turned into cradles of armed resistance. Began in 1973, from the

village of Mandal, in the Chamoli district, when the ash trees plummeted — yet another precious resource for farming and daily household needs.

The roots of Chipko actions can be found in the history of economy, ecology and culture. It was not a “only a trees” protestion in fact is a fight to resist death, insult and injustice. The forests of the Himalaya were not a commodity that could be traded, but an existential one — for oh!.. yes prosperity (wood and fodder and such other food inputs) or identity. These are also the voice of place which has raised by chenko Movement against state centric exploitative process of industrial extraction for ecological equilibrium.

The tale of the Chipko Movement is an example of a historic cultural memory’s suffusing with contemporary environmental activism to create a technologically non-violent but historically potent opposition to what has since become one of India’s most defining moments in climate activism.

6.3.2 Role of Grassroots Leadership and Communities

Grassroot Character of Chipko Movement One prominent difference in this movement compared to other movements, was the grass root character. That was not a top-down, policy-supported intervention (it’s community-led and the women members work it themselves), and the women in that village who are doing this largely understand what forests mean for their own survival. Their leaders kept their sense in touch with the daily realities and basic values of countrified folks.

Women were engaged as their user group which is the most direct users of forests, they are using it for fuelwood, fodder and water. The bell of truth on environmental rape and its consequences, was tolling in their faces daily as they engaged the fight with nature. When tree fellers tried to get in, women drew circles of resistance around them, declaring they would die before there was more taking from the forest. This perverse combination of the least symbolic and most literal tree hug turned our entire notion of ecological activism on its head.

Community leaders — among them Gaura Devi, a homemaker from Reni village — took over. She also took part in the Reni action with Chipko to hug trees that had been cut down in 1974.

threatened with culling echoed through India’s conservation story. And there were other such souls, who had enlisted themselves in the struggle, local activists such as Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Sundarlal Bahuguna.

and "the ecology of peace movement".

Nor was it as though the communities did nothing — they actually did things that undermined themselves. Villagers were defending their community forests, planting new trees and advocating for the sustainable use of natural resources. They stressed joint obligations and

aid. It was a lesson in how collective identity, solidarity and local knowledge can translate into serious social change.

Celluloid ancestors of Chipko, too, were insurrection against hierarchies.

They suggested how lowly villagers — neglected women in hamlets — could shape policy on environment and society.

As they claimed their voices, they also pushed back not only against contractors, but also against centralized policies that had marginalized people from resource management. As the power of grassroots models of leadership show, if environmental activism and dispute resolution is to have place the best way to secure that is help allow communities to orient agenda and method. Gradually the Chipko movement transformed into an environmental and social revolution from below.

6.3.3 Methods of Protest and Non-Violent Resistance

6.3.3 Forms of Protest and Non-Violent Action

satyagraha) and today, the Chipko movement has become an international term. These were the guerrilla tactics of antibiodiversity exploitation which, based on the precepts of agasti (nonviolence) and satyagraha or truth-force made use of symbolic action and moral suasion includes pragmatic movements counter these ecologocal desecrations.

One of the most well known methods was to hug the trees, and villagers — especially women — literally latched themselves on to trees to physically prevent contractors from cutting them. In practical terms, because they formed a human shield and at the same time, symbolically, because they expressed their emotional and cultural relationship to trees. It transformed the tree from a utilitarian object into a totemic one, necessary for its preservation.

Protests were also expressed in music, singing and cultural symbols. Villagers composed folk songs that emphasized the relationship between forests and water, soil and life. Songs like that, they help build awareness of course, but they also bring communities together and contribute to this kind of really strong sound of emotional resistance. And since it was expressed in the language of culture, Chipko could reach illiterate and dispossessed people as well.

Community members also practiced nonviolent civil disobedience, showing up in person to contractors and government officials to call them out on the floor for doing

wrong. They were not about violence as such, but about projecting group presence, group persuasion and 'repression".

appeals to duty. Their soul would be a life-force around the rustics, and prevent the trees from wasting away.

Helical Arm itself was used for both self-defense and offensive tactics. Activists began reforestation efforts, or lobbied for them; and work to promote more sustainable types of agriculture, or other forms of employment less destructive of forests. Linking the protest to positive proposals, one need not let Chipko mean 'chipka de' but can project a sense of hopeful greening alternatives.

These non-violent forms of protest were not simply ad-hoc responses, but rooted in Indian culture and the spirit of living to a large degree emanating from Gandhi's philosophy. The protesters had made clear that durable change could not be constructed out of force, but instead rested on imagination, moral risk and collective solidarity.

6.3.4 Lessons for Social and Environmental Psychology

The importance of the Chipko Movement in relation to social and environmental psychology cannot be denied. Well, as a social psychologist it's the most vivid case study that brings to the fore what identity is and leadership, and local mobilisation in the face of violent oppression. The struggle also demonstrates that low down the social ladder — and in particular, as women — we can fight structural injustices with a fierce sense of solidarity but even more ferociously from the position of moral high ground.

Songs, rituals, tree-hugging: Common cultural symbols help to bind separate individuals into a collective enterprise of resilience and perhaps even long-term sustainability of the entire human ridge niche.

Environmental psychology :psychological relationship between man (mass) and nature.

here chipko explains that this relationship is deep. Trending People go out and hug trees A human social behaviour is too the common binding of the relationship we have with everything environment. Returning to human-nature indefinity, it also confronts a financial notion of value on nature and re-inscribes the relationship with identity, purpose and existence.

It also is a testament to the potency of values-based activism. A long way from the present development model which will maximisation of profit, Chipko talked about values such as sustainability and equity. These were not just values that shaped behaviour, but let people stand up and say no – even if to the full force of state or corporation.

Psychology Definitions The Chipko movement illustrates crucial point that in theories of behavior ecology and culture are equally important. It demonstrates the inextricability of individual health from planetary health and

social justice. Resource conflicts are not only material but moral and existential, and they demand models that can express them both.

In this sense Chipko is also an example of critical psychology – a critical psychology that values the potential for transformation through community organizing, cultural politics and environmental meaning upon individual life satisfaction as well as collective justice.

“Activity: Experiencing Collective Action”

Divide students into small groups and assign each group a mock environmental conflict, such as a proposed deforestation project or industrial pollution affecting a village. Ask each group to design a non-violent campaign to resist the threat, drawing inspiration from Chipko’s methods such as symbolic acts, songs, or community mobilization. After presentations, hold a reflection session on how cultural values and collective action influence conflict resolution and ecological psychology.

6.4 The Holistic Model of Development

6.4.1 Integration of Ecology, Society, and Economy

The development model covering ecology together with society and economy, that developed by Ban described above, takes an unified attitude to devel-opment, and is against the simplified view on development. In the Indian case, this model embodies ancient philosophical traditions and modern ecological movements that view development as a balancing act between human requirements, social equity and environmental sustainability.

The connection of man to nature is not in conflict as consistent with classical Indian philosophy. Forrests, rivers and animals are regarded as sacred with embedded values in worshipping, rituals and life style. The devastation of nature is a desecration of everything that sustains culture and spirit. But contemporary models of development generally merely exploit nature and society, putting production for profit over ecological and social health. Towards a holistic model The anthropocentrism of existing models is redressed by the holistic nature of this model which asserts that economy must work within ecological limits and be accountable to society.

The system's ecology is oriented towards resource conservation and sustainability. Forests provide much more than just timber, including water and soil stability and

biodiversity. It is with rivers which are seen as mothers, not just conduits of industrial effluents. Ecosystem integrity is believed to be indispensable for long-term persistence.

In the social sphere, terms like equity, empowerment and community well-being describe development. Participation from the grassroots level ensures that indigenous knowledge, local culture and traditional values influence choices. 18 Initial endowment here does not refer to literacy or healthcare, but rather to dignity, cultural identity and the right to be heard.

At the ecnomic level they stress self-sufficiency, local economy and livelihood security. Rather than centralized industrialization, what the moon model promotes is bottom-up economies where communities are sustainable with their own resources. The result is durability and reduced reliance on exploitative market models.

The combination of ecology, society and economy generates a scheme in which the development is not fragmented but follows natural periods and community requirements. It argues that economic growth is not possible at the expense of environment destruction or social exclusion. Fusing these, the model offers an alternative path of development – ethical and sustainable and inclusive.

6.4.2 Sustainable Development through Indigenous Practices

Mohan As some instances from traditional practices of India, we may indicate here the spirit of sustainable development in an integrated eco-wisdom and social responsibility. They represent an oral tradition that embodies millennia of wisdom and deep insight into the local landscape. Unlike western development models enforced through industrialization, local practices preserve the long-term equilibrium between human need and environmental wellbeing.

For example community forestry, where villages manage forests for the benefit of everyone. Instead of clear-cutting, communities log and collect forage and medicinal plants in a way that enables them to regenerate. It is the policy which consciously intervene to conserve biodiversity and promote community collaboration,sharing and self reliance.

Rainwater Harvesting: It is another technique of collection of rain water used in semi arid areas adopted by our country and it is also being done in my neighborhood as well. Ancient structures, such as stepwells (baolis) and tanks or kunds store rainwater from the monsoon and act as a defense against airtime collective helplessness.

in times of drought. These methods are a step toward an ecologically based water management compatible with sustainable development.

Where farming is involvedThere are the old school things – organic growing and crop rotation. Indigenous management and soil fertility Lessons from indigenous soil calcium studies in early-seventh century – the Andes and their relevance to them, use an irrigation management system of interest have so far Nor are experienced applications decline only are an issue to consider application except one area of systematic organic pesticide S use when tapping cropping DiversificATIOns systems implemented that Practice between Indigenous outward by farmers. What a contrast from the treadmill of chemical applications and planted crops on welfare-just-barely-able to have its investment totally overexploited until there is no return–to actually growing food instead of trashing ecosystems.

And since, for most of the less fantastical visitors at any rate, the conservational setting is as much about the rituals we perform with them on a daily basis. Those spoke on crops or orchards of the holy kind Now handcuffing (no pun intended) our devotions to nature are becoming our organic daily practices. Melding spirituality and ecology, practices like these promote a feeling of shared stewardship."These are our forests," explains Anwaruddin Choudhury, who has spent three decades studying Asian wildlife.

The curious thing about all such practices is that they are dynamic, not static. The cultures have different methods of dealing with changes to their surroundings, but they all share what he calls “an ethic of balance and consideration. Indigenous models of success are about knowledge (rather than information), ethics (rather than rules) and ecology (rather than economy) — and are inimical to the extractive industrial mindset.

What is also an established truth today, that the pathway to sustainable should lead through local. They show the compatibility of economy and ecology, shaping man’s activity and respectful treatment of it, moderation towards nature.

6.4.3 Psychological Implications of Holistic Development

But that model of development isn’t fundamentally ecological, or economic for that matter — it’s deeply psychological. It expands the meaning of thriving as a human, and places an emphasis on balance and purpose over material achievement.

Implications of industrial growth Out of self-preservation you avoid being sucked into something subhuman C and so fulfil yourself. In the west, the further on in our evolution we get, the more disconnected from nature and society and spirit (deity – whatever that means to you) we get.

purpose that can create a sensation of stress, anxiety and disconnection to the life we are living on planet earth.

But models that are native or next-hearted, counteract that disconnection from these places and communities. It creates a sense of belonging and psychological safety.

This generates a feeling of belonging and psychological safety.

Holistic development is also promoting shared identity and cooperation. By promoting community activism, it decreases competitive individualism and increases collaboration. This fosters the de-escalation of conflict, social bonding, and empathy. Such settings lead to a psychological resilience as they offer common meaning and networks of support.

There is also another psychological level, that of the spiritual dimension in development. Moral values such as love, peace and responsibility prompt people to control their wanton desires, refrain from exploitation and enable others. It lessens conflict, greed-driven wars and inspires inner peace.

Holistic models also provide a solution for addressing a new and emerging mental health issue, 'ecological anxiety' in an increasingly urbanised world. In an age when many people feel helpless in the face of climate change and environmental crises, indigenous traditions also demonstrate that communities can take responsibility for their actions and work to lessen harm. Engaging in sustainable action is a source of strength and not hopelessness!

And the focus on balance and sustainability dovetails with psychological theories of well-being, which emphasize the role of autonomy, mastery and relatedness. From the outside and inside good life vibrates, as sustainable styles of culture, energy, and justice are provided to guarantee that development is culturally grounded, ecologically sound (rooted) and socially just. At the heart, then, of the psychological sense of holism' is the possibility for bringing about a whole way of being in which human beings as individuals and collectively are more at ease with other people, groups and the natural order around'. Materialist is, of course, about more than just bread — it's about having basic physical and financial security too — but Bread is the foundation on which so much of an individual's sense of security (in whatever esteem) rests: It offers food; resiliency in difficult circumstances; a means by which humans can judge whether they're doing right based on how those around them fare.

6.5 Implications for Psychology

6.5.1 Role of Indigenous Knowledge in Social Psychology

Indigenous traditions of knowledge have had a deep bearing on the development of social psychology, in particularly as it stands in India, which is inflected by cultural, religious and community practices. Contrast this with Western, abstractionist and cognitivist theories that generally attempt to explain "universal patterns of behaviour and thought without taking into account the particular cultural history".

An important contribution to social psychology of indigenous knowledge is its emphasis on collectivism instead of individualism. Indian subcontinent culture emphasizes on relationships, dependency and share responsibility- concerning of self among people. People's social identity is closely tied to family, caste, community and ecology in ways that are impossible to understand without reference to the indigenous world view.

This process is closely related to the moral and social aspects of conduct in Indigenous thought. Dharma (moral, social and righteous duty), ahimsa (non-violence) and seva (good deeds or altruism) among other concepts are value-contents of this preaching. These cultural norms generate shared anticipations about cooperation, conflict resolution, leadership, and group decision making. This social psychology, deepened by

these concept can enhance how trust phenomenon and altruism in general, and community-capital specifically for Indian society.

A second apparent association between the aboriginal tool and mental resiliency as a model for recovery. Ritual behavior

— meditation, storytelling, cultural practices and rites — are the binding principles of our collective memories in moments of crisis. They have developed emotional capital to deal with individual and collective stress, loss and conflict.

He has also been a major force in making social psychology spiritual. For Native communities, it's not like mental wellness and spiritual health are these separate compartments." We see that community rituals, festivals and practices are psychic transactions not only as they mean cultural events which integrate communities and mould the emotions of communal identity.

In involving indigenous knowledge in the conversation, social psychology is stronger and more ethnographically complete as a reflection on what it means to be human. It does away with naïve universalism - the incapacity of non-specialist theories to deal with non-Western complexity, and instead recognises that culture, values and history condition behaviour.

6.5.2 Community Participation and Collective Identity

Community participation and common identity are also basic principles in indigenous psychology where human life is described to be interdependent and collectively responsible. "In the West, it is that we are primarily about autonomy," Hughes said. "The sense of self here is key to the dynamic, interconnection — that we are in relationship; I belong as part of a family, as part of community, ecology."

Group identity can be a massively powerful controller of what actions and motivations seem reasonable. Meaning and identity, as well as self-worth, are in Indian communities not just a product of what you achieve but also of where your position is nested within them. This commonality fosters cooperation, strength and communal accountability. In the Chipko Movement, for example, people's common identity (in this case as "huggers") predisposes us towards creating shared consensus through group dialogue This principle of participation is operative in the old traditional systems such as the panchayat and its system of settling disputes, which considers the comedians among those having a say. This does not include or alienate others, it fosters a sense of solidarity.

Community participation also confers psychological advantage since it leads to social support networks, that modulate skills in coping with stress and adversity. Rituals, celebrations and co-operative activities are held in common, serving to maintain collective resilience. These

affective well-being is promoted through shared family responsibilities and social support.

There are all kinds of relevance we can attribute to the "we community" beyond the responsibility related moral capacity and prosocial behaviour, lastly. So when people have an experience of "us" as one in which they are deeply and widely included, they are more likely to be encouraged to act in the interest of others or the group, even if it is a hardship.

That's why such pre-existing tribal practices as group farming, community-based forest conservation-regeneration and-community controlled water management have become tooakespeexeó weBus.

On a psychological level, it is hard for models that frame conflict or cooperation as the choice of individuals to explain when those peoples see themselves as involved and having an identity in common. It harks on the significance of groups, cultural norms and shared meaning-making in the constructs that influence us.

6.5.3 Applications for Conflict Resolution in Modern Contexts

Traditional, indigenous conflict ministry is informed by some very relevant and significant insights that are transferable to contemporary conflicts - whether between peoples, individuals or ecosystems. The conflicts of the present era are currently characterized by polarization, rivalry and overreliance on legalistic or coercive tactics. While Indigenous traditions are more emphasised on dialogue, consensus and moral accountability: a valuable consideration regarding contemporary issues.

One of the most powerful uses is for personal and community conflict. The model conceives of samvāda (dialogue) and consensus as opposed to adversarial confrontation, which is well established in indigenous tradition. And unlike legal settlements, in which there are winners and losers, the community-led mediation that Yi has in mind is focused on reconciliation, trust and long-term harmony.

Another is by environment, where the expansion of industry and environmental protection intersect. Protests like Chipko are proof that non- violent resistance, driven by community-led action on the ground marshalled around the needs of communities can reverse exploitative structures. In this apocalypse model, here is the sort of catastrophe at which we can aim only in climate disaster and ecological ruin.

came out of the blue.") But they can fight something together — that is, cooperatively, and under a sense of collective belonging.

Indigenous approaches may be appropriate in post conflict and peacebuilding contexts. They are reparative, not retributive. In particular, Gandhi's philosophy of ahimsa (non-violence) and satyagraha (commitment to truth) has a bearing on non-violent action and negotiation under situations of political oppression for instance.

Psychologically the indigenous ways are not so much of ending external warfare, but inner awareness. They get to rise above egocentric battles by practicing compassion, patience and detachment. This is what peace-building

sounds like Temporarily grounded at least from the outside, so that it only vibrates itself free (when checked for compliance).

Applied to contemporary diversity, inequality and ecological degradation of the modern world, indigenous conflict-resolution processes can offer a contribution to the fields of psychology and social policy. It provides moral, integrated and sustainable principles with respect to the values of the human being and ecological balance.

6.5.4 Relevance to Peace and Environmental Psychology

2 New Research Areas Peace and Environment psychology Laliveld (1985) pointed it out that peace and environmental psychology are two new areas of research where the indigenous knowledge could be po sitively utilized. Both, however, say human behavior could indeed contribute to ushering in a period of sustainable peace and ecological balance — some of it gleaned from the wisdom of indigenous traditions.

aowhaoo latj (Tucson talk): in peace psychology, See also Nativenon- violence, forgiveness and reconciliation Indigenous visions -thinking and practice assumes these as the cornerstones of holistic peace. As the Indian traditions teach, peace is not just the absence of conflict but the presence of justice and moral responsibility. This re-

imagines peacebuilding as something that takes place both out there and in here — the resolution of conflict while birthing compassion and equanimity.

The real native, to literature on environmental psychology underscores man nature relationship at the psychological level. The cult of trees, groves and fertility ceremonies probably reflects the high level of ecological consciousness. These practices run counter to the overwhelming attitude of the exploitation of nature and the sense that it is there to be used for profit and instead encourage reverence and care. Culturally, it soothes eco-anxiety and promotes pro-environmental behaviour by assimilating environmental concern to cultural identity. Local indigenous models also emphasize the role of intergenerational responsibility. They secure the ecological basis of life as part of culture, so that the ethic to preserve the environment is handed down from one generation to another. For global environmental issues this long-term perspective is important since behavior needs to be changed for a longer time.

With regard to psychology, what is needed here would be the inclusion of planet values, spirituality and ecological sensitivity as factors in peace and environment theories.

Our native traditions remind us that peace as sustainability and ecology may be both one-n but only accessible through an internal transformation, by our personal and collective re-possibility.

In this respect there is a crucial realm of native knowledge which needs peace and environmental psychology, for it becomes ever more culturally embedded – and ethically charged.

6.6 Summary

Social tensions in India are expressed in terms of caste and community, ecologies and identities; so they are very much embedded in different elements of culture and history.

The indigenous methods of conflict resolution reflect upon dharma, connectivity and that conflict can be transformative.

A few of the most significant Indian methodology principles are non-violence (ahimsa), dialogue (Samaveda) and communitarian solutions.

The solution ... is anchored in what are spiritual, compassionate, truthful and detached calculations. ... Anything that is ethical and good for oneself."

The Chipko Movement was an example of popular protest against the exploitation of environment with significant participation from women in rural areas.

Chipko's form of protest (hugging the trees, songs, and non-violent resistance) illustrated the potency of cultural symbols and collective action has lessons for the

social and environmental psychologists of today demonstrating collective identity and the ecological consciousness.

Instead, the environmentally-friendly harmony model sees ecology, society and economy as one whole system rather than focusing on economic growth.

Local practices like community forestry, water harvesting and organic farming are models for sustainable development.

Social psychological dimension of integral development are decrease in alienation, group resilience and environmental empowerment.

Native knowledge contributes to social psychology by focusing on community identity, ethics and spirituality.

Psychology of peace and environment gets its density from Indian traditions on non-violence, jointness, intergenerational duty to maintain earth.

6.7 Key Terms

Ahimsa – The principle of non violence in thought, word and action.

ARVISION Samvāda – A dialogue process leading to search for truth and consensus-building.

Dharma – Duty you were born for to keep social and cosmic balance.

Chipko Movement – Indian grassroots movement in environmentalism involving the hugging of trees.

Panchayat System: Traditional village council model of community governance.

Integrated Development – The linkage between ecological development, social development and economic growth.

Sacred Groves – A stand of trees preserved by local communities for ecological and religious reasons.

Collective Identity – The shared belief that one belongs to a certain group, thereby influencing behaviour and motivation.

Satyagraha – A form of non-violent resistance developed by Gandhi that performs an appeal to the truth and moral power.

Karma – The concept of cause and effect connecting an act with results in future.

Sustainable – Conserving resources without depleting or harm to the earth's ecology (Native Ways).

Environmental Psychology – Research human behaviour in natural and fake environments.

6.8 Descriptive Questions

Describe the social conflicts and their characteristics in India with references.

Examine the philosophical background of traditional indigenous approaches to resolving conflict.

Examine the position of women and grassroots leadership in Chipko Movement.

To what extent and under what conditions can non-violent resistance positively impact long-term conflict?

Explain the role of ecology, society and economy in the comprehensive development model.

Explain with the help of indigenous practices like sacred groves and rainwater harvesting putting these in a context.

What are the psychological dimensions of integrated development for well-being at individual and collective levels?

Evaluate the significance of indigenous knowledge for peace and environmental psychology.

6.9 References

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6.10 Case Study

“Conflict, Community, and Development”

Introduction

This article is a case study of conflict arising in a remote tribal village in Central India that was subjected to government sanctioned mining as part of JFM – a developmental process, promising development but threatening displacement, ecological loss and cultural erosion. For villagers whose identity and income were inextricable from the forest, that was not just an economic dilemma, but an existential one. Their resistance uncovered the contradiction between industrial development and indigenous world views of living in harmony with nature. The case shows that relations, non-violence and ethical dimensions can provide an alternative to the destructive capitalist model of development.

Background

The Government has cleared a big mining project in the tribal village of central India. For all the jobs and infrastructure the project might bring, it also stirred fears of displacement, deforestation and cultural erosion. Villagers, whose lives and identity are deeply intertwined with the forests, fought the project. Tensions between locals, contractors and officials intensified over what the line represented more generally for development, justice and sustainability.

Issue 1: Forced Out of Home and Work

Issue:

The mining project would also force villagers off of ancestral lands, and away from farming, foraging and forest-based livelihoods. Government recompense was insufficient, and promised jobs were uncertain.

Solution:

Setting an example, community leaders used samvāda (sam-eval + vākya-dispute-free dialogue) to engage all parties. They called for community controlled development options-focussed on eco-tourism and forest-based industries- that provided long-term job security without displacement. It was an embodiment of the synthesis of ecosystem, society and economy.

Problem 2: Ecological Destruction

Issue:

Large-scale deforestation produced by mining would lead to erosion of rich and fragile soils, water pollution and depletion, as well as dislocation of water supplies and biodiversity. Villagers worried that their descendants would receive desolate land.

Solution:

Inspired by the Chipko Movement, the villagers in turn decided upon a form of non-violent resistance, surrounding forests with human chains. They combined protest with constructive programs to plant trees, create organic farms and catalog biodiversity. This non-violent activism attracted national attention and made authorities reconsider the environmental cost of the project.

Issue 3: Distrust Between Government and Community

Issue:

Suspicion had been sown through decades of neglect and exploitation. Villagers believed that government policies ranked corporations ahead of local inhabitants, and officials regarded the villagers as “obstructing objects” to “progress.”

Solution:

Religious and moral values were also used to restore trust. They invoked dharma (duties) and nyaya (justice), to remind officials to protect both citizens’ lives and nature. Dialogue se ssions moderated by the local N GOs helped to promote transparency and participatory decision making. This at least established some measure of confidence and created paths for compromises.

Reflective Questions

In what manner might indigenous processes of consensus building and non-violence provoke alternatives to industrial models of development?

How does collective identity function as a resource of resistance against ecological overdestruction?

How is this related to the fact that the conflict in Israel-Palestine has brought us some interesting insights into human mental health, and how on earth could psychological well-being correlate with ecological sustainability of troubled areas?

What are the lessons of Chipko Movement for environmental struggles today?

How would modern psychology broaden its horizons to include the ecological and spiritual aspects of conflict?

Conclusion

It is a case that proves the world that indigenous conflict resolution and comprehensive development are sustainable alternatives to industrial projects that put profit before people and ecology. The answers show that real development must balance economic demands with ecological conservation and ethnic identity. Drawing on non-violence, local self-interest and morality, the villagers fought against displacement and ecological destruction while developing positive alternatives. From a psychological perspective, the case highlights the need for further development of theories of conflict and well-being to account for collective identity, ecological concern and spiritual values.