

Understanding Agantuja Unmada w.s.r. to Dissociative Disorders


Sarveshchandra SC^{1*}, Jaiswal RT², Ram M³

DOI:10.21760/jaims.10.3.44

- ^{1*} Shukla Chandankumar Sarveshchandra, Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Samhita Evum Siddhanta, Rajkiya Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- ² Ramnihor Tapsi Jaiswal, Associate Professor, Department of Samhita Evum Siddhanta, Rajkiya Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- ³ Manohar Ram, Associate Professor and HOD, Department of Samhita Evum Siddhanta, Rajkiya Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Dissociative disorders are mental health conditions where there's a disconnect or breakdown in memory, identity, emotions, or perception of reality, often as a way to cope with trauma or stress. It ranges from depersonalization to dissociative identity disorder i.e., dissociating from one original self and switching into the another or alter character, according to the way of perceive, think and feelings. In Ayurveda texts, it can be correlated with Agantuja Unmada, which states that one occupies new or altered unwanted character according to Devadi Prakopaja Unmada i.e., Deva, Rishi, Pishacha etc. possess one's body. This results from Pragyapardha - performing righteous duty in an irrelevant or improper manner.

Keywords: Dissociative Disorder, Agantuja Unmada, Devadi Prakopaja Unmada, Pragyapardha

Corresponding Author	How to Cite this Article	To Browse
Shukla Chandankumar Sarveshchandra, Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Samhita Evum Siddhanta, Rajkiya Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India. Email: shuklachandan2461997@gmail.com	Sarveshchandra SC, Jaiswal RT, Ram M, Understanding Agantuja Unmada w.s.r. to Dissociative Disorders. J Ayu Int Med Sci. 2025;10(3):289-292. Available From https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4204/	

Manuscript Received
2025-02-12

Review Round 1
2025-02-26

Review Round 2
2025-03-06

Review Round 3
2025-03-15

Accepted
2025-03-26

Conflict of Interest
None

Funding
Nil

Ethical Approval
Not required

Plagiarism X-checker
12.64

Note



© 2025 by Sarveshchandra SC, Jaiswal RT, Ram M and Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization. This is an Open Access article licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> unported [CC BY 4.0].



Introduction

Presently, irrelevantly following daily routines leads to major psychosomatic disorders.

One major psychic-related disorder is Dissociative Disorder, a mental health condition involving disconnection between thoughts, memories, feelings, surroundings, behaviour, and identity. These conditions include escape from reality in ways that are not wanted and not healthy. This causes problems in managing everyday life.[1]

Classical texts like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridayam* mention *Agantuja Unmada*, caused by past life activities. Lord Atreya cites *Pragyaparadha* (intellectual errors) as the root cause. This leads to disrespect towards:

- Gods
- Ascetics
- Ancestors
- Gandharvas
- Yakshas
- Rakshasas
- Pishachas
- Preceptors
- Elders
- Teachers

And adoption of blasphemous activities, prompting divine retribution: madness (*Unmada*) induced by those disrespected.[3]

Causes of Agantuja Unmada

तस्य च हेतुः प्रज्ञापराध एवेति भगवान् पुनर्वसुरात्रेयः।

ज्ञापराधाद्धयं देवर्षिपितृगन्धर्वयक्षराक्षसपिशाच
गुरुवृद्धसिद्धाचार्यपूज्यानवमत्याहितान्याचरति, अन्यद्वा किञ्चिदेवंविधं
कर्माप्रशस्तमारभते; तमात्मना हतमुपघ्नन्तो देवादयःकुर्वन्त्युन्मत्तम्।।
(Ch.Ni.7/10)

The main cause behind *Agantuja Unmada* formation is *Pragyaparadha* - Intellectual errors, meaning:

- Inability to distinguish between right (*Dharma*) and wrong (*Dharma*) duties
- Confusion between beneficial and harmful actions
- Lack of discernment between proper and improper conduct"[3]

Premonitory symptoms of Agantuja Unmada

The premonitory symptoms of *Agantuja Unmada* are as follows:

- Desire for inflicting injury upon the gods, cows, *Brahmins* and ascetics;
- Anger
- Desire for inflicting cruel acts, torture, etc. On living beings
- Restlessness
- Impairment of *Ojasa*, colour, complexion and physical strength
- Abuse and incitement of the gods etc. In dreams.
- *Unmada* manifests soon after the occurrence of these premonitory symptoms.[2]

The various divine entities unleash their wrath on the individual as follows :

- Godly spirits cause *Devonmada* (divine *Unmada*)
- Preceptors, elders, adepts and ascetics cause *Unmada* by their curse
- Ancestors by manifesting themselves;
- *Gandharvas* by their touch;
- *Yakshas* by entering the host;
- *Rakshasas* by making the person inhale the odor of their bodies,
- *Pishachas* by seizing and riding the host.[4]

Agents behind causing Agantuja Unmada

विधिं तु खलु उन्मादकराणां भूतानामुन्मादने प्रयोजनं भवति; तद्यथा-
हिंसा, रतिः, अभ्यर्चनं चेति तेषां तं प्रयोजनविशेषमुन्मत्ताचार
विशेषलक्षणैर्विद्यात्। हिंसा, अप्सु वा स्थलाच्छुभ्रे निमज्जति, पतति,
शस्त्रकशाकाश्लोष्टमुष्टिभिर्हन्त्यात्मानम्, अन्यच्च प्राणवधार्थमारभते
किञ्चित्, विद्यात्; तमसाध्यं साध्यौ पुनर्द्विवितरौ।। (Ch.Ni.7/15)

Unmada is caused by the above mentioned agents with the following objectives:

- *Himsa* e., As a consequence of one's sinful acts
- *Ratie.*, Affection/love/pleasure and
- *Abhyarchana* e., To make the individual pay obeisance to Gods

The prognosis of *Unmada* can be judged from the characteristic features of the patient. When the intention of the afflicted agents is to inflict injury, then the patient enters into fire,

Sinks into water, falls into a pit, provokes others to hurt him, strikes himself with weapons, whips, sticks, brick bats, his own fist etc. He may also adopt to such other means of killing himself. This type of *Unmada* is incurable. The other two types of intentions i.e., *Rati* and *Abhyarchana Unmada* that are curable.[5]

Dissociative disorder

Dissociative disorders are a range of conditions characterized by significant disruptions or fragmentation “in normal integra. of consciousness, memory, identity, emotion, perception, body representation, motor control, and behaviour.”

Causes

Dissociative disorders are often linked to traumatic experiences, espec. during childhood, though they can also be triggered by severe stress or abuse.

Symptoms

Symptoms can vary depending on the specific disorder, but may include:

- Feeling disconnected from oneself or the world
- Memory loss, especially of personal events or information
- Experiencing altered perceptions of reality
- Feeling like you are watching yourself from outside your body
- Significant distress or difficulty functioning in daily life

Types of Dissociative Disorders

1. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID):

Formerly known as multiple personality disorder, DID involves the presence of two or more distinct and relatively enduring personality states.

2. Dissociative Amnesia:

This involves an inability to recall important personal information, often of a traumatic or stressful nature.

3. Depersonalization/Derealization Disorder:

This involves persistent or recurrent feelings of detachment or being outside of one's body (depersonalization) or the world around them (derealization).[6]

Treatment options for Dissociative Disorders aligned with both Modern Psychiatry and Ayurvedic principles:

Modern Psychiatry

1. Psychotherapy: Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)
2. Medications: Antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications
3. Family Therapy: Education and support for loved ones.[6]

Ayurvedic Principles

1. *Manas Shuddhi*: Mind purification therapies like meditation, yoga
2. *Panchakarma*: Detoxification procedures to balance *Tridosha*
3. *Rasayana*: Rejuvenating herbs like *Ashwagandha*, *Brahmi* to calm mind
4. *Pragyaparadha* correction: Counselling to correct intellectual errors

References

1. Mayo Clinic. Dissociative disorders—Symptoms & causes [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2025 May 7]. Available from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dissociative-disorders/symptoms-causes/syc-20355215> [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
2. Tewari PV. Charak Samhita Nidana Sthana Chapter 7/11. In: Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Cakrapani Datta. Varanasi: Vishvabharati; 2020. p. 629 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
3. Tewari PV. Charak Samhita Nidana Sthana Chapter 7/10. In: Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Cakrapani Datta. Varanasi: Vishvabharati; 2020. p. 629 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
4. Tewari PV. Charak Samhita Nidana Sthana Chapter 7/12. In: Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Cakrapani Datta. Varanasi: Vishvabharati; 2020. p. 630 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
5. Tewari PV. Charak Samhita Nidana Sthana Chapter 7/15. In: Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Cakrapani Datta. Varanasi: Vishvabharati; 2020. p. 631 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]

6. American Psychiatric Association. What are dissociative disorders? [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2025 May 7]. Available from: [https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/dissociative-disorders/what-are-dissociative-disorders#:~:text=Dissociative%20disorders%20involve%20problems%20with,\"epersonalization/derealization%20disorder](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/dissociative-disorders/what-are-dissociative-disorders#:~:text=Dissociative%20disorders%20involve%20problems%20with,\) [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]

Disclaimer / Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Journals and/or the editor(s). Journals and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.