

## Integrating Moral Conduct with Holistic Health in Ayurveda

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Sadvritta, a fundamental concept in Ayurveda, refers to ethical and moral conduct essential for maintaining overall health, particularly mental well-being. Health is not a single entity, it is multidimensional which includes physical, mental, social and spiritual aspect of life in equilibrium. Sadvritta is one of the principles of Ayurveda which keeps all the aspects of health in equilibrium. Sadvritta plays a crucial role in emotional stability, stress management and psychological resilience. Sadvritta encompasses Daihika (physical), Vachika (verbal), Manasika (mental), and Samajika (social) ethics, which collectively aid in preventing mental disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression. This article explores the connection between Ayurvedic ethics and mental health, highlighting classical references and their relevance in modern psychology well-being. By integrating Sadvritta into daily life, individuals can achieve inner harmony, emotional intelligence and a balanced state of mind.

**Keywords:** Sadvritta, Ayurveda, stress management, mental health

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## Introduction

*Ayurveda* provides a preventive and holistic approach to maintaining psychological balance through lifestyle, diet, and ethical conduct. One of the key concepts in *Ayurveda* that contributes to mental health is *Sadvritta*, a set of ethical and moral guidelines that promote righteous living. The term *Sadvritta* is derived from *Sanskrit*, where 'Sat' means good or virtuous, and "Vritta" refers to conduct or behaviour. It encompasses physical, verbal, mental, and social ethics, which together help in maintaining mental stability, emotional resilience, and overall psychological well-being.

*Ayurveda* emphasises that mental health is influenced by the three *Gunas* - *Satva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. An imbalance in these qualities can lead to stress, anxiety, and emotional disturbances. Practicing *Sadvritta* helps enhance *Satva* (clarity, wisdom and depression).

*Acharya Charak* highlights the importance of ethical conduct (*Aachara*) is its foundation. Therefore, by adhering to *Sadvritta*, one can maintain both physical and mental health.

The *Ashtanga Hridaya* reinforces importance of *Sadvritta* attains harmony in body, senses, and mind, which acts as a shield against disease. The *Sushruta Samhita* emphasizes mental discipline as conquering mind through *Satva* (self discipline and ethical behaviour) helps pacify mental disturbances.

## Materials and Methods

This is conceptual type of research. All sorts of references has been collected and compiled from various available *Ayurvedic* texts like *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtang Haridyam* and available commentaries on it. Research articles are also searched from various websites related to similar matter. All matter is analyzed for the discussion and attempt has been made to draw some conclusions.

### Types of *Sadvritta*

These codes of conduct are classified in to following groups:-

1. *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* (Ethical codes of conduct)
2. *Samajika Sadvritta* (Social codes of conduct)
3. *Manasika Sadvritta* (Mental codes of conduct)

4. *Dharmika Sadvritta* (Moral codes of conduct)
5. *Sharirika Sadvritta* (Physical codes of conduct)

### 1. *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* (Ethical codes of conduct)

The word "*Vyavaharika*" means "related to behaviour, social interaction, and conduct".

The concept of *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* helps enhance is deeply rooted in *Ayurveda* and is considered essential for maintaining mental stability, emotional well-being, and a balanced social life.

*Ayurveda* believes that ethical conduct directly influences physical health, mental peace, desires. *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* includes several ethical and moral values that ensures healthy relationships and social stability. These includes:

- Speaking truth in a way that does not harm others.
- Avoiding falsehood, exaggeration, and deceit.
- Maintaining personal cleanliness and hygiene.
- Whenever going outside from home always carry an umbrella, a stick and head must be covered from a headwear like
- Umbrella will protect us from sunny weather and also from rainy season and *Turban* will protect our hairs from getting dusty and also protect us skin complexion.
- Stick will helpful in slippery conditions and also helpful if we will chased by any animal like dogs or bu alo it also invokes good mind, enthusiasm, confidence, stability, courage and valiance. It gives support to the body and removes fear.
- One should not be in a habit of postponing things at the time of action.
- Refrain from causing harm to others in thoughts, word or actions.
- Do not take what is not yours.
- Demonstrate respect to elders, teachers and those worthies of honor.
- Foster a sense of thankful for what one possesses and towards others who assist.

### 2. *Samajika Sadvritta* ( Social codes of conduct)

These codes teach us how a person should behave in his society.

It refers to good conducts which are beneficial in improving the social health.

- Actively participating in social welfare activities.
- Helping the needy, supporting society, and engaging in charitable acts.
- One should avoid unnecessary arguments and maintain harmony in relationship.
- One should always respectful towards elders, teachers, and guests and treat everyone with kindness.
- Collaborate harmoniously with others, promoting teamwork and cooperation for common objectives.
- Host guest and show hospitality. Be first to greet and start conversation.
- Avoid harming any living being physically, Verbally, or Mentally.

### 3. *Manasika Sadvritta* (Mental Codes of conduct)

*Ayurveda* recognises that the mind (*Manas*) plays a crucial role in health and disease.

- Always think and speak truthfully. Avoid falsehood, deceit and manipulation as they disturb mental peace.
- Develop patience in stressful situations.
- Focus on positive and meaningful thoughts. Avoid overthinking, anxiety, and unnecessary worries.
- Accept success and failure with a balanced mind. Avoid extreme emotional reactions to external situations.
- Be kind and empathetic towards others. Compassion fosters inner happiness and mental well-being.
- Regular self- reflection and studying wisdom texts help in mental growth and clarity of thought.
- Do not let sensory pleasure control the mind. Practicing self- restraint helps maintain focus and inner peace.
- Avoid negative thoughts about oneself and others. Mental violence, such as jealousy, hatred, and is as harmful as physical violence.

- *Manasika Sadvritta* is an essential practice in *Ayurveda* for maintaining *Swastha Manas* (a healthy mind) and achieving *Ayu* (long life), *Bala* (strength), and *Sukha* (happiness).

### 4. *Dharmika Sadvritta* (moral codes of conduct)

Everyone should pay respect to the Gods, cows, teachers (preceptors) elderly people and those who have accomplished spiritual perfection.

- Helps in building good *Karma* and spiritual growth.
- Avoidance of *Adharma* - Refraining from activities like cheating, stealing, lying, or any unethical behaviour that harms others.
- Every task you perform should either satisfy the purpose of *Dharma* (duty), *Artha* (finance, profit), or *Kaam* (desire, interests).
- It refers to the good conducts which promotes spiritual health.
- One should not perform spells, worship of sacred trees and superiors, and studies while remaining impure.
- One should not worship the fire by offering cow ghee, *Akshata*, *Tila*, *Kushagrass* and

### 5. *Sharirika Sadvritta* (physical codes of conduct)

- Following a disciplined daily routine, including:
  - Waking up early (*Brahma Muhurta*), Brushing everyday both times, having a bath and *Abhyanga* (oil massage).
  - One should always wear untorn clothes, should be cheerful, and use flowers and fragrance.
  - Adapting lifestyle and diet according to seasonal variations to maintain health.
  - Engaging in moderate physical activity daily.
  - Cutting of hair, shaving and nail cutting should be done thrice a fortnight.
  - Following a regular sleep schedule, Avoiding day sleep (except in *Grisham Ritu*) and late - night awakenings.
  - One should not take contaminated meal or food which has been served by enemies or opponents.

- One should not be engaged in other works while urge for the natural urges. One should pass natural urge first and then do other works.
- Footwear should be wearied as per physical structure, season and type of job. Footwear should be selected as per our physical structure, geographic conditions.
- One should not spit out sputum, pass faeces and urine in front of the winds, fire, the moon, the sun, Brahmins and the preceptors.
- *Sharirika Sadvritta* promotes physical health, prevents diseases, and enhances longevity.

#### Codes regarding study

- One should not study without being initiated by a teacher (preceptor).
- One should not study, if there is unseasonal lighting, during an outbreak of fire, nor during earthquake, nor during important festivals, during the solar or lunar eclipse and during *Sandhyas* (dawn and dusk).
- One should use *Medhya Rasayanas* like *Brahmi*, *Shankhpushpi*, and *Guduchi* in diet for enhance intellect and memory.
- One should avoid unhealthy habits, excessive sleep and indulgences to keep the mind sharp.
- While studying one should not recite words incomplete in sounds nor in high voice nor in hoarse voice nor without proper accents nor without proper morphological symmetry, neither too fast, nor too slowly nor with excessive delay, nor with too high nor too low pitch.
- These codes of study help students maintain discipline, mental clarity, and ethical behaviour.

#### Codes towards women and copulation

- Always avoid sexual intercourse with women at the time of her menstrual period, because person copulating with menstruating woman loses his vision, life span and valiance.
- One should not indulge in sexual intercourse with a woman who is not friendly or has no passionate or is passionately attached to somebody else or is married to somebody else.
- Avoid the sexual intercourse with woman who is impure, a woman with an ugly appearance, with bad conducts or manner and also with the women who is suffering from disease,

- because these types of sexual activity products loss of semen and aggravation of *Vata Dosha*.
- Copulation should not be done in any organ other than the genital organ and not in the places which are not vagina like mouth, axilla, groin and rectum. One should not also indulge in sexual intercourse with animals, because these types of sexual activity give rise to syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Sexual activities are also prohibited under holy (religious) tree, near meeting places of four roads, in a garden and at slaughter house.
- No sexual acts should be performed in morning and in the evening time, because copulation during early morning and midnight aggravates *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*.
- Sex should not be done with a woman without aphrodisiacs medicine, without intense desire and without erection.
- Sex should not be done with women without taking meals or with excessive intake of food.
- Sex should not be done at the place where there is no privacy.

#### Codes of regarding partaking food

- Eat food first distributing to other peoples who need it.
- One should take food without talking, without laughing, and with concentration. Because this type of food becomes wholesome for a person.
- Do not eat food in an improper place, a crowded place and without offering it to fire first. One should not take food which is dirty and which is served by unfriendly person or opponents.
- One should not take food without wearing precious stones in hand, without taking bath and with torn apparel. Do not eat food without washing hands, mouth, feet and face.
- Curd is good for health, but intake of curd at night is strictly prohibited, because it blocks the *Srotas* which produced various types of diseases. It has a bad effect on the impairment of sleep and disturbances in mobilisation especially for patients who are suffering from asthma, bronchitis and rheumatism.
- Do not attend any other work or activities while under the pressure of natural urges of the body,

- Because *Ayurveda* has explained that almost all diseases are created due to stopping (not attending) to these urges or by enforcing them.

## Discussion

Following *Sadvritta* referring to good conducts not only helps in treating diseases but also promotes good physical and mental health.

The *Manasika Sadvritta* helps to have control over sense organs so that the individual will be able to make judicious decisions at appropriate time.

One who follows the code of good conduct for the maintenance of positive health lives for a hundred years without any abnormality. Such persons, praised by the noble ones, earn fame all over the world, attain virtue and wealth, friendship of all living beings and at the end, with holy acts, attains the excellent abode (virtuous world) of good souls after the death.

The *Sharirika Sadvritta* helps in detoxify the physical body externally as well as internally.

There by helps in proper absorption of nutrients and leads to proper nourishment of the body.

The *Samajika Sadvritta* helps and *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* helps to build confidence in one self to cop up with the challenges of society and lead a better-quality life.

*Dharmika Sadvritta* helps the individual to become stronger from within by understanding purpose of life. Hence this code of conduct should be followed by everybody.

## Conclusion

Principles of *Sadvritta* laid down in *Ayurveda* highlights the importance of sociocultural factors in the maintenance of mental and social health.

A stable and harmonious equilibrium between *Mana* (mind) and his environment is needed to reduce man's vulnerability to mental disease and to lead a more productive and satisfying life.

By following the *Sadvritta* that is the code of good conducts, one can prevent the occurrence of diseases through promotion of positive health lives.

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