



The Anomalous Conduct And Psychiatric Disorders In The Atharva Veda

Pahi Baishya Research scholar, (Psychology), Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University, Meghalaya.

ABSTRACT

The Atharva Veda demonstrates how to understand one's own psyche or self and acquire authority in the world. In the context of a worldview, it offers a comprehensive intellectual framework for comprehending human nature. It offers theories about the mind, including its typical and abnormal states, as well as a variety of psychotherapy methods for integrating personalities and overcoming mental illnesses.

INTRODUCTION

Atharva veda uses a psychological or mental approach as its foundation. But medications are always given together with a mantra or other mental content. Also, there are facilities for digging, grinding, prodding of medicinal plants, and separate mantra. Practical guidance abounds throughout the Atharva Veda. The approach of Atharva Veda is also integrative in the sense that it treats body, mind and soul as an integrated total entity. The same techniques, used to build up the body also build up the intellect. The poets of the Atharva Veda, according to Henry Lefever¹, "tend to linger more upon the psychological attributes necessary in the sacrifice" in contrast to the Rig Veda poets, who "liked to dwell upon the wonders and beauties and the magnificence of the gods who created and supported the natural universe."

ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR IN ATHARVA VEDA:

There are a few things to consider before discussing deviant behaviour in the Atharva Veda. The treatments are just one of the many topics that the Atharva Veda discusses. One of the numerous topics is the therapy of abnormal behaviour. Because of how briefly it is treated, occasionally only clues are provided. One must consult additional sources of information for further clarification and expansion of the topic. In this regard, Sayanacharaya's comments is really helpful. He said that the benefit of humanity is the stated goal of the Atharva Veda. It aids man towards achieving Brahma after living a rich and long life for up to 100 years. Consequently, guidelines are provided for leading a full, healthy life; in this context, ailments and herbal remedies are advised. Therapeutics fall under the purview of the Atharva Veda in this sense. Of course, the way that matter was approached and handled thousands of years ago was different. It must be expressed in as many contemporary terms as possible to make it more understandable. There should be room for contemporary terminology and ideas without distorting the original context. The Atharva Veda provides several fundamental ideas that Ayurveda adopted and that

are still practised by vaidyas today. These ideas are: The Atharva Veda states that the human body is made up of the three main gunas (elements) of vata (wind), pitta (bile), and kaph (phlegm). Every human body contains these components from birth in a balanced manner. During life, the balance of the elements must be maintained. In other words, the gunas (equilibrium) denotes normalcy (the absence of disease or disorder), whereas any disruption or disequilibrium in the gunas (equilibrium) results in an aberrant condition or disease. Mental illness and general well-being, similar to the physical body is made up of three components, or gunas. Sattva (true/pure), rajas (erotic), and tamas are the names for these (the black) three components. These are the mental gunas, which are also present during equilibrium. And if there is any disturbance in these numbers of gunas, a mental disease emerges. Sattva is the only one of these three gunas that is unadulterated and uncorrupted. Rajas, according to Freud's second law of psychoanalysis, is a sign of pleasure, sexuality, and other pleasant feelings. It denotes "Eros" in Freud's terminology. Having solely sattva-vritti (gunas) is also abnormal, despite the fact that sattva is pure or real. It is possible for Rajas and Tamas to get better or worse. When either of these two vrittis is excessive or lacking, a person develops abnormality. The three vrittis must be present in a balanced manner to be considered normal. Rajas and Tamas Vrittis must exist in a typical individual, but they must be balanced across the person's entire personality. For instance, although Krodh (anger) is a tamasik vritti, a normal person needs to feel some level of wrath in order to fight for what is just and establish his rights. According to the Atharva Veda³, the corruption or disruptions of the rajas and tamas doshas, which cause mental illnesses, must be removed.

ATHARVA VEDIC CLASSIFICATION OF ANOMALIES:

Several categories can be used to categorise the abnormalities listed in the Atharva Veda. The Atharva Veda's discussion of mental illnesses has been divided into two groups by P. Arsh (1999)⁶. The first category includes severe disruptions like unmad, while the second category includes flaws in mental function like krodh (anger), moh (attachment), shok (depression), and dushswapna (bad dreams). Dr. H.G. Singh (1977)⁷ offers a more logical classification and thinks it is more practical to divide the mental diseases listed in the Atharva Veda into three categories. The mild condition of category 1: This type of disease, which is a deviation from normal mental functioning, is known today as a neurosis. They exhibit normal behaviour, however to a greater extent in anomalous situations, like in the case of Krodh. They could also be personality flaws like sexuality, moh, or emotional outbursts. The diseases that fall into group 2: These categories include disorders that are wildly out of the ordinary. Psychoses and neurosis are current terms for this category of disease. Hysteria (Grahi), epilepsy (Apasmar), schizophrenia (Manastap), phobia (Bhaya), and other mental illnesses are included. Singh's classification's final category, which is focused on methods for enhancing mental and personal well-being, is about constructive ways to do so. Both Paustikarni and Samansayani suktas have given these. They are focused on memory and learning enhancement, Atmabal or invigorating ego unification, and internal harmony. Giving

greater weight to the positive side than the negative side, or sicknesses and ailments, is a distinguishing characteristic of the Atharva Veda and all other Hindu systems. As can be inferred from the explanation above, the Atharva Veda's purpose is synthesis. This synthesis is made up of the Atma and Parmatma, which are different parts of the mind, the psyche, and cosmic energy (Brahma). The Atharva Veda method is therapeutic in nature. It doesn't have a diagnostic focus. The wise authors of the Atharva Veda overlooked symptoms and diagnosis. The two Shakhas, Piplad and Shaunk, that are currently available, at the very least, deal with the signs and diagnosis of mental illnesses in a very hazy manner despite being highly rich in therapy. It's possible that the unavailable shakhas contain symptoms and symptoms in greater depth.

ATHARVA VEDA'S PSYCHOTHERAPIES:

From the Vedic era, psychotherapeutic techniques have been used. The Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, and Sama Veda all discuss the magnificence of the gods and the afterlife, whereas Atharva Veda discusses how to understand one's own psychology and acquire power in the world, particularly in relation to atman and manas. The Atharva Veda views psychic energy as almighty, capable of achieving siddhi, and able to integrate the mind. The literature on ayurveda and yoga has enlarged on the psychological components of the Atharva Veda. It has demonstrated treatments for disease as well as for psychological health and wellbeing. The Atharva Veda provides a thorough account of typical behaviours, mental diseases, and effective treatment options. Both mild and severe instances of abnormalities are described. Additionally, it addresses mental wellness, psychic integration, and personality enhancement. Some Atharva Veda proponents, like Max Müller (1964)⁸, Shende (1952), and others, have provided explanations of therapy for mental diseases. According to Swami Akilananda (1952)¹⁰, because Indian psychology has therapeutic potential for mental integration, it can contribute to the field of psychotherapy. It is a fact that the Atharva Veda, from which Ayurveda and Yoga derived their teachings, is where Indian psychotherapy ideas first appeared. The Atharva veda concepts also rely on prayer, rituals and penance. Collins (1980)¹¹ calls these 'intrapsychic methods'; Marks and others have referred to these as 'faith healing'. Lovinger (1984)¹², Stern (1985)¹³ and Rangaswami (1995, 1996)¹⁴ have suggested that it is possible to utilize traditional spiritual involvements in psychotherapy. The practice of sacrifice, rituals, confession, surrender, prayer, faith etc. is commonly used religious practices in almost all religions. The Atharva Veda contains the first recorded account of mental illness and its treatments in history. The welfare of all humans is the Atharva Veda's overarching goal, which is now abundantly obvious. It offers answers to issues and needs that arise on a daily basis. Gaining authority in the world and understanding one's own self-psyche are its goals. Satavalekar¹⁶ (1927) asserted that Atharva Veda is particularly connected to Atma and Mana (psyche). Using the power of Mana, it demonstrates how to achieve everything, including curing disease and winning wars (psyche).

THERE IS A TONE OF PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN THE ATHARVA VEDA:

Humanity's well-being is its primary goal. It seeks to assist man in becoming Brahma and living a complete life of 100 years (The supreme energy). The topic of abnormal behavior and therapies falls under its purview because it deals with human existence. So, in the field of psychotherapy too its object is to achieve sound mental health and for this objective, the measures it applies are mainly psychological. Shende(1952) has rightly said, "The Atharvanic ideology aims at securing full enjoyment of life, for a period of hundred years and becoming free from all disease, distress, sin and hostile witchcraft, which shorten the life of a person." Weigel (1958) 17 says-"Two interpretations of the word psychotherapy are possible-(1) the psychotherapy that uses exclusively the psychic means of personal contact, we can call identical psychotherapy. In its broadest sense, psychotherapy is frequently considered to refer to all the techniques employed to treat maladjusted people, according to Richard (1946)18. The psychological or manas approach is used by the Atharva Veda to address all of man's issues. The Atharvenik system is distinctive for its manas approach. While we are primarily concerned with Atharva Vedic manas-chikitsa, or psychotherapy, the core Atharvenik approach to the treatment of mental illnesses in mind also occasionally relies on the physical system of psychotherapy, (2) the psychotherapy that uses every method in order to cure the psychic cause of disturbance, we can call non-identical psychotherapy."

Classification of the Atharva Vedic Psychotherapies: In the Atharva Veda, there is no rigid categorization or separation of therapies. One condition can be treated with multiple types of therapies, and many different disorders can be treated with one form of therapy. The treatments do not compete with one another. Its characteristics, such as the Havana prayer, frequently coincide. In the Atharva Veda, re-education and suggestion are a part of every therapy. A thorough categorization of therapeutic approaches for mental illness is provided in the Atharva Veda. The following treatments are the most frequently used by therapists to enhance the human mind and treat sickness: Animist Manas Chikitsa (Psychogenic or Identical) Mantra vidya, Sankalpa (auto-suggestion or self-determination), Sandesh (suggestion), Samvashikaran (hypnosis), Rituals (drama and demonization), Brahma Kavach (psychological defensive belief), Utarna (transfer), Ashwasana and Upchar (assurance, desensitisation, and reeducation), Davaiya havan chikitsa, and Prayashchit Sweekarokti (a) (confession) (b) Tapa (penance) Balidan/Tyag (c) (sacrifice). Manas-chikitsa, which means that the therapy originates from within the patient rather than from external causes, is the term used when the therapy is based mostly on psychological elements.

The Atharva Veda always takes a psychological or psychosomatic approach; it never takes a merely somatic one. In the Atharva Veda, mana, manas, atma, buddhi, and chitta are topics that are directly addressed. Gopath Brahman and Aitreya Brahman are cited by Satavalekar as saying that "Vani and manas are two sides of man." Whereas the Atharva Veda purifies and energises the manas, knowledge of the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur, and Sam) energises and purifies the vani. According to Satavalekar, mantras and the power of the psyche are primarily utilised in the manas chikitsa, an Atharvadic system of medicine, to treat illnesses.

METHODS OR BRANCHES OF ATHARVANIC MANAS CHIKITSA:

The main technique of manas chikitsa is mantra, says Mantra Vidya. Mantra is concealed, silent communication. Kapali Shashtri (1951)¹⁹, claims that, mantra, as is well known, is not merely a letter or a combination of letters with some meaning. It is the sound body of power imbued with the powerful spiritual vibrations of the creator or mantra seer. The mantra is an always existing incarnation of the power and truth that have found expression in it via the rishis or yogis who have given it that form. A coherent phrase or a single letter organised in a specific order can both be used as the mantra.

THE USE OF MANTRAS FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY:

Using mantras does not require any rigour. They accomplish various goals in various ways. One can apply the same mantra in several contexts and methods. Mantras have a relationship to particular therapy. Below, we'll discuss five different types of therapies.

- (a) Sankalpa (auto-suggestion)- Sankalpa actually means atma-bal or will power. In terms of psychology it means the strength of ego. It is a sort of therapy by which the person tries to cure himself. According to Satavalekar, "In Atharva Veda it is expressed that the patient is himself the best physician, because he that caused the disease shall perform the cure." It can be used as individual therapy as well as group therapy. By the method of sankalpa, the ego can be made strong and energetic and able to deal with its problems. With a strong ego, there cannot be any disintegration in the psychic personality.
- (b) Sandesh (Suggestion) – As there was no therapist present in Sankalpa, the patient instructed or suggested himself. But, in this case, a third party, such as a guru, priest, or therapist, is making the advice. In sandesh, the patient takes on the passive character of a follower or a recipient while the therapist plays a directed role. The person doing therapy, or manas chikitsak, must be a Brahma-gyani, or someone who understands and works with Brahma's energy. The chikitsak must, in P.Arsh's opinion, be serious, truthful, self-restrained, and compassionate. As a result, he has a greater impact on his patients. It can be utilised in the treatment of phobias, grahi, apasmar, and pap
- (c) A unique form of suggestion is samvashikaran (hypnosis). "When suggestion is really effective, it becomes samvashikaran," claims P.Arsh²⁰. It is the advanced effective stage of suggestibility, where the main influences are the therapist's personality and psychic ability. The therapist will urge to the patient to "relax, let yourself go, listen exclusively to my voice, relax and go to sleep" during this very suggestive process. Close your eyes if they feel heavy or tired. You're now asleep, etc." The therapist might then make other recommendations. In reality, the therapist controls and directs the patient's charioteer's thoughts during samvashikaran. Samvashikaran methods come in many forms, but Atharva Veda mostly employs enhanced verbal persuasion.
- (d) Dharma and demonstration in the form of rituals create a clear and persuasive technique that can be employed as a supplement to or as an independent

treatment strategy in ritualistic therapy (Dharma and Demonstration). It is designed to be utilised with people who are illiterate, demented, and children who are unable to fully comprehend their own mental processes. Most often, it is utilised as an additional teaching method for sandesh since teaching a kid requires the teacher to dramatise and perform, just as it does with rituals. Many Atharva Vedic interpreters, like Max Müller (1964) and Karambelkar (1959)²¹, are in favour of the application of symbolism in ceremonial healing. The exaggeration and symbolism have a psychological impact that helps to treat or modify the maladaptive behaviour.

(e) Brahma Kawach (Defensive Belief): The Atharva Veda and contemporary psychotherapies are somewhat comparable to the therapies covered thus far. But only the Atharva Veda contains the brahma Kawach. Brahma Kawach is a precaution. In the Atharva Veda, there are two different types of kawach: Bhautik Kawach, a covering worn over dress armour. It is tangible; one can see and touch it.

Brahma Kawach: Psychology, which supports self-confidence and self-belief.

(f) They are both irrational and external. It gives someone self-assurance and the conviction that they are their own best defence. According to the Atharva Veda, Brahma Kawach dispersed a psychic invisible power across the environment that served as a defence against any potential destructive forces.

(g) Utarna (Traference): Utarna is a Sanskrit word that signifies to shed. It is a method of removing disease-related signs or the actual sickness itself. Even now, practitioners (ojhas) still use elements of this Atharvenic technique. This behaviour has been described by Arsh. He has demonstrated that it is not based on simple magic or witchcraft but rather on a psychosomatic approach.

(h) Types of Utarna: This technique has been applied in two ways in the Atharva Veda-

causing plants and animals to experience disease's bodily symptoms.

the spread of psychological problems to all living things, including people, animals, and plants.

SYMPTOMS OF THE BODY:

P.Arsh has addressed the physical side of utarna. He claims it is based on the uniformity of the substances and components that make them up. It has been demonstrated scientifically and biologically that some substances that are harmful to or waste products of the human body may be beneficial to some plants or animals. For example, the carbon dioxide we exhale with each breath is absorbed by plants and beneficial to them, and oxygen, which is a waste product of plants and trees, is beneficial to humans. This type of reciprocal link between man and nature is emphasised in the Atharva Veda. Another illustration is how TB germs, which are harmful to humans, are beneficial to cheer trees, goats, and monkeys.

The Atharva Veda uses the same transference approach to treat physical and mental disorders. Both animate and inanimate objects get them. The Atharva Veda does not employ transference as a stand-alone or self-sufficient form of therapy. It is always employed as an additional or supportive kind of therapy. Typically, it is accompanied with drama, suggestion, demonstration, and medication. Persuasion and desensitisation, also known as ashvasan and upchar, are crucial preparatory exercises that are also utilised as a supplement to upcoming treatments for mental disorders in the Atharva Veda. P.Arsh (1981) 24 has provided a detailed description of ashvasan and upchar as atharvedic therapeutic tools. According to Arsh Ashvasan, upchar is to reroute and re-educate the patient's behaviour. Upchar represents certainty, hope, confidence, and satisfaction. They are both prerequisites or fundamental conditions for any form of therapy. The effectiveness of the therapy cannot be guaranteed if these prerequisites are missing and the patient is not secure, hopeful, confident, and satisfied. The patient develops a desire to be healed as a result. His false sense of helplessness and anxiety are eliminated by Ashvasan, and his ego is strengthened. Havan chikitsa and Daiviya (spiritual therapy)chikitsa is carried on by invoking the blessings of several gods and goddesses to treat mental illnesses. This pattern was established by the Rig Veda and developed by the Atharva Veda. The issue is actually one of spiritual healing. This is a priest-led religious counselling session. All of the ceremonies and puja are performed by the priest known as Brahma. Havana may or may not be present during the rituals. Offerings and prayers are made to the gods specifically in Havan. As sacrifices, ghee, agni, and aromatic herbs are poured into the fire. Atharvedic Havan Chikitsa has been thoroughly examined by Satavalekar. The therapist, who is typically a religious priest, serves as Brahma, the senior managing priest in the sacred rite for treating mental aberrations, according to him. The patient and the priest both offer prayers, and occasionally family members and other people also participate. Havan is frequently used in conjunction with this religious therapy, while it can also be used without it. Several people, including Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Carl Jung, and William James, understood the power of religion and how it affected people. The significance of spiritual and religious elements in human growth and values has been acknowledged by a number of personality theorists. Spirituality plays a significant role in psychotherapy, according to psychologists like Scaffer and Lazarus. Given that the Atharva Veda is connected to spirituality and psychotherapy, all of the Atharva Veda's acts and deeds are carried out using manas' capacity and attention, according to Satavalekar (1958)26. In Praayashchitani, the Atharva Veda's distinctive psychogenic approach is demonstrated. Prayashchitani consist of some specific songs or mantras. The psychological foundation of praayashchitani is that it purifies the ego in order to boost its power (Atma bal). When the ego goes down the route of Deviation, rejecting the super ego's authority, defying societal conventions, etc., it loses strength. When the ego rejects the super ego, it experiences pap-bhavna (guilt), inferiority, and pressure. Some sort of voluntary act of self-mortification is performed to get rid of these feelings and to energise the ego. It must be something that the self decides to do on its own and cannot come from any outside sources. In Sweakarokti, the patient acknowledges his transgression, makes a pledge not to repeat it in the future, and asks

for forgiveness. The inhibited act is released in this manner, and the ego is freed from the responsibility. Although making such a public confession appears to be extremely embarrassing from the outside, it actually takes a lot of moral strength and self-assurance. But, after this difficult journey, all the suppressed material is released, and following the catharsis, the ego feels clean, unburdened, and full of energy once more. Sweakarokti is performed by the individual although occasionally a guru or a priest may serve as a guide in the confessional procedure.

The punishment known as tapa is one that the ego promises to bear. Penalties can be either physical or mental in nature. The physical manifestations of tapa include fasting, one-legged standing, rolling down a particular distance, tolerating extremes of heat and cold, or inflicting agony and misery on the body in other ways. The mental tapa might appear as tight restraint and abstinence, as well as controlling one's motivational mantras. The act is performed both negatively to atone for previous transgressions and positively to boost ego energy. In the Atharva Veda, the tapa has variably been stressed as an energy-producing mechanism.

Tyag: Tyag is more worldly or material possession oriented, whereas Sweakarokti was social-mental and Tapa was physical-mental. It entails renunciation of material goods like money, jewellery, and other treasures. The victim or patient, in this case, promises to devote some or all of his valuables, wealth or property, land, house, livestock (mostly cow), etc. as atonement for his wrongdoings. In this type of sacrifice, also known as a tyag, the ego is freed from the burden of guilt and returns to normal. To improve one's health, riches, and prosperity, one can employ tyag.

CONCLUSION

The Atharva Veda's methods are quite pragmatic and psychological in character. The usefulness of psychic energy over matter has been proposed. The topic of abnormal behaviour and treatment falls under its purview because it deals with human existence. Nonetheless, the information is dispersed and jumbled. It aims to gain control and understand each person's innermost thoughts. As previously said, psychotherapy in the Atharva Veda aims to return a person's conduct to normal in terms of his or her own personality, environment, and interpersonal interactions. When a person's actions and reactions deviate from the accepted social norms, in general, it is assumed that they are abnormal and require psychotherapy. The components of several modern psychotherapy techniques are also present in some of the Atharva Vedic techniques listed in this study. Unity of existence is the cornerstone of Indian psychotherapy. Everyone who believes they have a unique personality with a separate existence is deemed abnormal and requires counseling. For the mind to function normally, this connection must be made.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adityanjee, G.S. Raju and S.K Khandelwal 1989. Current status of multiple personality disorder in India. American journal of psychiatry 146: 1607-1610
Agarwal, A.K. 1988. The forgotten millions. Indian journal of Psychiatry 40: 103-119

Alexander, P.J and J.S Das 1997. Limited utility of ICD-10 and DSM-IV classification of dissociative and conversion disorders in India.

Arora A.A, Avasthi, and P. Kulhara 1997. Sub syndromes of Chronic schizophrenia: a phenomenological study.

Balodhi, J.P. 1986a. Logical Structure of a sentence as a tool for the assessment of thought disorder (Ancient Indian View). *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 28:253-257.

Banerjee, B. 1981. Historical and Sociocultural foundations of healthservices systems. In: G.R Gupta (ed). *The Social and Cultural Context of Medicine in India*: 1-29. New York, NY: Vikas Publishing House.

Bergin, A. E. (1988). *Behavior therapy and religion*. Sage Publications, New Delhi

Henery, L. (1935) *The Vedic Ideas of sin*, London Mission Press, Nagarcovil

Freud, S. (1904) *Freud's Psychoanalytic Procedure*, S.E. 7-(249-254)

Müller, M. (1964). *Secret books of the East, Hymns of atharvaveda*. Motilal Banarsi Das: Delhi. Shende, N.J, 1952, *The Religion of Philosophy of AtharvaVeda*. Oriental Research Institute, Pune

Swami Akilanda (1952) *Mental health and Hindu psychology*. George Allen and Unwin Ltd London

Rangaswami, K. (1995). *Spirituality and psychotherapy*. *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology* 23-1