

**Ayurvedic Inheritance of India**  
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**Module - 3**  
**Healthy Living**  
**Lecture - 8**  
**Code for Healthy Living**

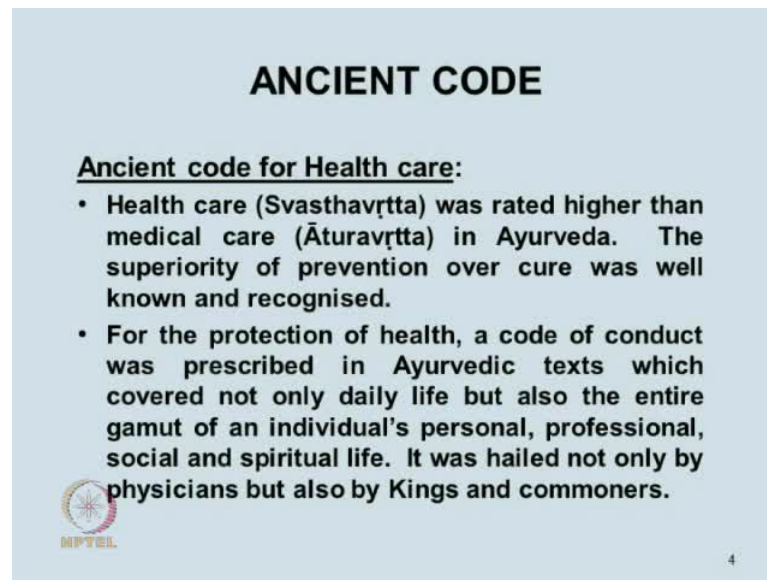
We have to repeat some of the things we have heard earlier, because code for a healthy living, this we have touched upon in many contexts earlier; because dealing with diseases or history, medicine in Buddhist time, everywhere this subject will keep coming. So, today, when we deal with the subject of living in good health, we have to bring these different treatments done in a patchy manner here and there, we will be bringing it together, so, there will be some repetition which is inevitable in this.

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That is a code for healthy living; that is the subject that we will be dealing with. And, in this, we will, these are the subjects that we will touch; one is the ancient code, starting with the old Ayurvedic text, a code for daily life, personal conduct, code for living in harmony with changing seasons, righteous conduct for healthy living, unrighteous conduct as a cause of disease; these we have not dealt with, unrighteous conduct as a cause of epidemics and code for healthy and happy living. These are the subjects that we will deal with today.


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**ANCIENT CODE**

**Ancient code for Health care:**

- Health care (Svasthavṛtta) was rated higher than medical care (Āturavṛtta) in Ayurveda. The superiority of prevention over cure was well known and recognised.
- For the protection of health, a code of conduct was prescribed in Ayurvedic texts which covered not only daily life but also the entire gamut of an individual's personal, professional, social and spiritual life. It was hailed not only by physicians but also by Kings and commoners.

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Now, when we talk about the ancient code, we come back to the concept of Svasthavṛtta; that is, Svasthavṛtta dominates Ayurveda more than Āturavṛtta, we have said this before. That is, health care, which is not the same thing as patient care, they are two different things. Health care is essentially about the prevention of disease, how to stay away from trouble, whereas, patient care is how to get out of trouble; when you are already in trouble and we have to get out of it, which is much more difficult than health care; much more expensive.

So, health care got the dominant position in Ayurveda and superiority of prevention over cure was well recognized. And, for protection of health a code of conduct was prescribed in Ayurvedic text which covered not only daily life, but personal conduct, but practically, every aspect of life; whether it is personal, whether it is professional, whether social, spiritual; there is nothing that it did not touch. And, it was hailed not only by the physicians, by ordinary people, by the kings; they all respected this.


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### CODE FOR DAILY LIFE

- On waking up at Brāhmamuhūrta (3 hours before sunrise), one should start the day on an introspective note “How am I spending my days and nights? Am I treading the righteous path shown by my forefathers?” This should be followed by paying attention to mundane chores and others listed below:

**Care of the Body:**

- **Teeth and oral hygiene:** Cleaning of teeth should be done by crushed twigs of trees with bitter, astringent, pungent, sweet taste; powdered medicinal plants mixed with salt, honey etc., could also be used for cleaning teeth. Tongue should be scraped and gargling done.

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The code for daily life, this is the most elaborate detail, dinacharya. In some way or the other, all over India, you will find some influence this has exerted; this old concept on waking up for example. Brahmanuhurta; that is, three hours before sunrise, that is Brahmanuhurta, when a good person, wanting to live a healthy life should try to get up. And Vagbhata says, when you get up, the very first thing that you should do, is to do a little bit of introspection; how am I spending my days and nights, which keep on rolling endlessly; have I been treading the path of righteousness, which my forefathers have shown. Now, this kind of an introspective moment, that is the way to start your day. And, if a person has this introspective habit, then, he is likely to have a healthy and happy life; that is a good start for the day. And also, it will show how we have deviated from this righteous path, so that we have a chance to correct it.

Next is the teeth and oral hygiene; cleaning of the teeth, how the crushed twigs, twigs of the trees are also mentioned; they all have a bitter, astringent, pungent taste. They are crushed at one end; they were used as a tooth brush; with detailed instruction; you should not hurt your gum; to that extent, details are given. And, the tongue should be scraped. For the kings, a silver, or gold can be used for, as a tongue scraper; for ordinary people, it will be from a plant; all these are mentioned in very great detail.

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### CODE FOR DAILY LIFE

- **Face care:** Face and eyes should be rinsed with a decoction of fig tree juice and milk; and collyrium applied to the eyes.
- **Betel:** chewing of betel with camphor, clove etc. cleanses the mouth and makes it fragrant.
- **Head Massage:** Head massage with medicated oil softens scalp, strengthens and blackens hair; hair should be combed. Ear should be cleansed with oil.


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Face care, rinsed with a decoction of fig tree juice, and collyrium juice was encouraged, for protecting the eye. Betel chewing, not the pawn chewing of today, but this has an astringent taste, so that the sliminess in the mouth goes away; so, that was encouraged; camphor, cloves we all do the same thing; essentially, an astringent effect. Head massage with medicated oil softens the scalp, strengthens and blackens the hair, etcetera. Ear should be cleansed with oil.

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### CODE FOR DAILY LIFE

- **Oil massage of body and bath:** Eliminates fatigue and has positive effects on treating bone and joint disorders. Oils to be used, massage, indications and contraindications are described in detail.
- **Physical activity:** Exercise of the whole body highly beneficial: benefits described in great detail including strong digestion, warding off corpulence, fatigue and easiness. To be useful, "it should result in sweating". Contraindications are noted.

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Oil massage of the body and bath eliminates fatigue, the positive effects of treating bone and joint disorders. Oils are used to massage, indications; all these are given in very great detail. Physical activity; exercise of the whole body, highly beneficial and whether it is adequate is determined by having sweat. If you are doing whole body exercise, if your body is sweating, that means, you have done enough physical exercise; excess physical activity was not encouraged.

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**CODE FOR DAILY LIFE**

- **Massage:** Dry massage of the body is recommended to settle vāta, loosen kapha, firm up the body and impart a glow to the skin. Oil massage is superior to dry massage.
- **Adornments:** Following bath, fragrant pastes should be applied on the body; comfortable clothes should be worn; sporting flowers and jewelry urged.
- **Worship:** Of gods, guests and Brāhmaṇas; long life, prosperity and a place in heaven after death as rewards. No mention of rituals, temples or meditation.

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Massage - dry massage is also recommended, not as effective as oil massage; it gives a glow to the skin. Adornments; Ayurveda has, we have seen repeatedly, recommends enjoyment of life; it is not just meeting our biological needs, it is much more than that. So, wearing ornaments, garlands, paste to be applied, fragrant paste, like sandal paste; these were all encouraged in Ayurveda. Sporting flowers, jewelry, worship of Gods, guests, Brahmins; long life, prosperity and a place for heaven, these are assured by these habits. But there is no mention of any rituals, going to temples, these are not mentioned. In other words, say, many of these are adherence to prevailing customs; that is the way, when you read it, later on also, you will see the attitude to tradition, which we will see in one of this later on. If there is a long standing tradition, and you do not find any merit in that, instead of condemning that, carrying on a campaign against it, Ayurveda's point is, as long as it is not doing any harm to anybody, does not create a nuisance to anybody, there is no reason for you to mount a campaign. You should even subscribe to it; that is the impression you get; many of these, like, I will give that example, Charaka, for

example, is the, his text is the foundation of text of Ayurveda. He says this very specifically, attitude to tradition should be an iconoclast, hammer and tongs against tradition, fighting. His attitude is, as long as it is not doing any harm to anybody, it is not hurting anybody, lots of people subscribe to it, there is no reason for you to mount a campaign.

He showed this, because Adharvaveda and he recommends that, those who wish to learn Ayurveda should be loyal to Adharvaveda; they should have bhakthi, devotion. But Adharvaveda as we saw, the whole treatment of diseases was based on mantras. We have to propitiate the God who is angered, whose punishment is the diseases. So, therefore, mantras were an integral part of patient care, or treating diseases in Adharvavedic time; but Charaka as you saw, he does not practice at all.

In his treatment of jaundice as you saw, there is no mantra; there is no ritual; but he never condemns Adharvaveda anywhere. He has deviated from that, from Daivavyapasraya, he changed the medicine to Yukthivyapasraya; he changed all that, but there is not a word of condemnation. So, there is a lesson for that; lot of people get pleasure out of just attacking, but that is not encouraged here.


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**SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)**

- Suppressing natural, physical urges was believed to have harmful effects.
- Examples are given in Tables 1 – 5.

**TABLE 1 : CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPRESSED URGES**

| Suppressed urge | Clinical signs and consequences                                       | Elements of therapy   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Urine           | Pain in the bladder region and groins; difficult urination; headache. | Fomentation, massage, tub-bath, enema: urethral intubation. |

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So, some of these rituals, etcetera, it is a, a concession being made to a local tradition; that is the, that kind of liberal attitude is part of this. Then, we come to suppression of a



natural urges; that is also part of life; like many of these urges like urinating, defecation, many of these urges, which are called vegas, they should not be suppressed.

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| <b>SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)</b>        |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>TABLE 2 : CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPRESSED URGES</b> |  |   |
| <b>Suppressed urge</b>                            | <b>Clinical signs and consequences</b>   | <b>Elements of therapy</b>  |
| <b>Feces</b>                                      | Colic: retention of stools and wind, leg cramps.                                 | Fomentation, massage, tub-bath, suppositories and enemas.         |
| <b>Semen</b>                                      | Pain in the genitalia, body ache, urinary obstruction, pain in the heart region. | Massage, tub-bath, wine, non-lubricant enema, sexual intercourse. |
| <b>Wind</b>                                       | Retention of stools, urine, abdominal distension; vāta disturbances.             | Lubricant therapy, fomentation; food and drinks, enemas.          |

This is something unique in Ayurveda; we do not find it in modern medicine, or any other system; and, this is an extremely important subject, suppression of natural urges. And, if you suppressed the natural urges, the clinical signs and consequences are mentioned here, and the elements of therapy. It is a long section, I should spend a couple of minutes, why it is being said. Many of this in today, we find it very difficult to understand; that seriousness of the consequences. Of course, there is a very great discomfort, that is obvious; but it goes, pain in the bladder region, at the urine, at groin, difficult urination, etcetera, colic retention of stools; but you go on, you will find semen, pain in genitalia, body ache, urinary obstruction, wind, retention of stools; you keep on reading, a whole lot of, loss appetite, swelling, pallor, fever, cellulitis; so many things are mentioned, like vomiting, look at that.

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| SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)        |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| TABLE 3 : CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPRESSED URGES |   |  |
| Suppressed urge                            | Clinical signs and consequences   | Elements of therapy  |
| Vomiting                                   | Skin rash, itching, loss of appetite, swelling, pallor, fever, cellulitis.                      | Emesis after fasting or rough diet, physical activity; purgation.                                |
| Sneezing                                   | Neck rigidity, headache, facial weakness, weakness of sense organ.                              | Massage of head and neck, fomentation, smoking, vāta-relieving diet; nasal application of drugs. |
| Eructation                                 | Hiccups, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, tremor, oppressive feeling in the heart region. | Similar to the management of hiccups described elsewhere.  |

So, the wide spread nature of these (( )), if you suppress, what is the basis? What could have been the basis for this? Was there any basis at all? Now, that is something which a couple of minutes, like here, I have given the whole list here, like sneezing, neck rigidity, headache, facial weakness, weakness of sense organs, eructation, hiccups, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, tremors, oppressive feeling in the heart region, yawning, doubling of the body, seizures, tremors, hunger, debility, weakness; some of them make sense, many of them do not.

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| SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)       |   |                                |
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| TABLE 4: CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPRESSED URGES |   |                                |
| Suppressed urge                           | Clinical signs and consequences                                       | Elements of therapy            |
| Yawning                                   | Doubling of the body, seizures, tremors.                              | vāta-relieving measures.       |
| Hunger                                    | Debility, weakness, poor complexion, loss of appetite, dizziness.     | Warm, light and unctuous diet. |
| Thirst                                    | Dry mouth and throat; deafness; exhaustion; pain in the heart region. | Cold and rich drinks.          |



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| SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)       |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| TABLE 5: CONSEQUENCES OF SUPPRESSED URGES |   |                                |
| Suppressed urge                           | Clinical signs and consequences                                   | Elements of therapy            |
| Tears                                     | Nasal congestion, eye disease, loss of appetite; heart disorders. | Sleep, wine, cheerful company. |
| Sleep                                     | Yawning, body ache, drowsiness, heaviness in the eyes.            | Gentle massage of the body.    |
| Rapid breathing following activity        | Gaseous distension of abdomen, heart disorders; fainting.         | Rest; vāta-relieving measures. |

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Now what is the reason, which could have been and the whole thing I have given here; thirst, tears, sleep, rapid breathing following activity. So, you find all these natural urges, you should not, physical urges, you should not suppress. In fact, the description goes on; people, there are occupations, where they have to suppress. For example, a priest in a temple, or an officer of the king, he is in his majesty's presence and he cannot go to empty himself; he has to stay there. And, he has to do it many times a day, or many times a week. So, these are occupational hazards; they have occupational diseases. Some of these things they get; it goes to that extent; they take it very seriously.

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### SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)

- The importance of not resisting natural urges arose from the Ayurvedic concept of equilibrium between the interior and exterior of the body.
- The urges to eliminate or fill in are body's signals to maintain equilibrium. Eg. Eliminating urine; drinking water etc.
- The urges of the mind were altogether different, where control is the norm.


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So, why did they say that and the importance of not resisting the natural urges arose. This is my own understanding from the Ayurvedic concept of equilibrium between the interior and exterior of body, because we have, in the last two or three lectures, we have talked about samya. Samya is the equivalent of well being, or good health. So, that samya consists of many samyas, samyas of the dhatu, samyas of the agni, samya of the dosas; so, they should all be in equilibrium. One of them, the samya, the body and the outside, if that is broken, that is as good as ill health; that is mentioned.

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**SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES (VEGA)**

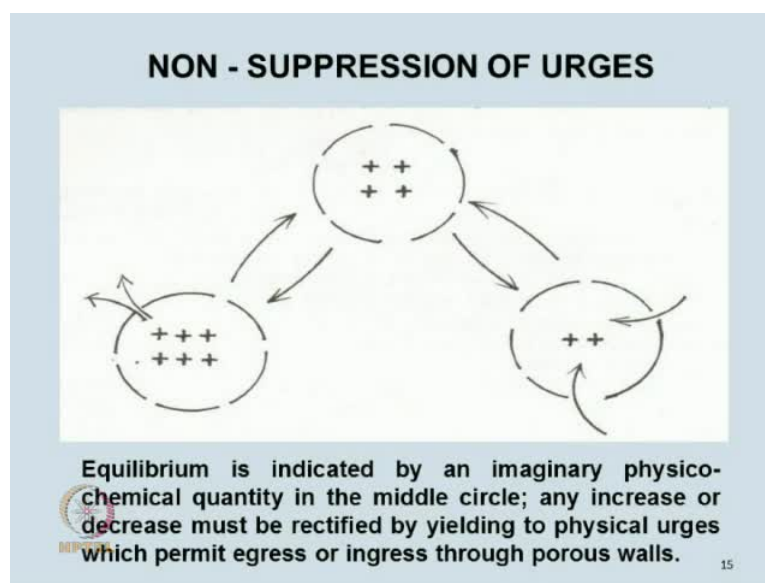
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Now, this, to maintain that, that is where this suppression of natural urges becomes important. The urges to eliminate or fill; most of these urges are either to eliminate or to fill; the one or the other, ingress or egress. These are body's signals to maintain that equilibrium; eliminating, example is urine; drinking water is ingress. Urges of the mind is in the same listing; they say, that is the very different category altogether; they need to be suppressed, because the mind has a way of going after so many things. There control is necessary, whereas physical urges, it is entirely different.

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Now, if you look at this, I have given a diagram here. If you can imagine that central circle, that those four signals that you see there, the plus points, imagine they are physical chemical quantities, unnamed; there are so many in the body. Now, that has to be maintained, that is the equilibrium, that four. Now, you suppose that, it becomes less; that four is equivalence of health, and if that becomes two, then, you have to have to bring it in. So, that is what you see on the right hand side; the two, that is ingress, suppose that is water, that physical chemical quantity is water; that normal quantity is a four plus, and that has dropped to two, then, you will find it has to be taken; water has to be taken to bring it back to four.

On the other hand, on the left hand side, suppose it has become excess, instead of four you have six, then, you have got to eliminate two there. Therefore, to maintain that physical chemical equilibrium of the body, it is necessary to have this provision for ingress or egress. This is the only way you could explain the wide spread consequences, the listing that is given, and why the physical urges should not be suppressed.

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## **PERSONAL CONDUCT**

- **Scrupulous attention to the quantity and quality of food and drinks was enjoined.**
- **Care of the feet by cleaning, oiling and massage: use of foot wear.**
- **Regular hair cuts and paring of nails; wearing a cloak, turban and use of an umbrella.**
- **Carrying a stick was recommended to ward off stray dogs, snakes and predators.**

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Now, personal conduct, there is a long list, you will see that, nothing is exempted; scrupulous attention to the quantity and quality of food, care of the feet, regular haircuts and paring of nails every 15 days. It goes to such great, wearing a cloak, turban, use of an umbrella, carrying a stick to ward off dogs, snakes, etcetera; walking and physical activity, personal furniture; then, chairs should be comfortable, fans made of hair, desirable, exposure to gentle wind is wholesome; so, it goes on like that.

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## **PERSONAL CONDUCT**

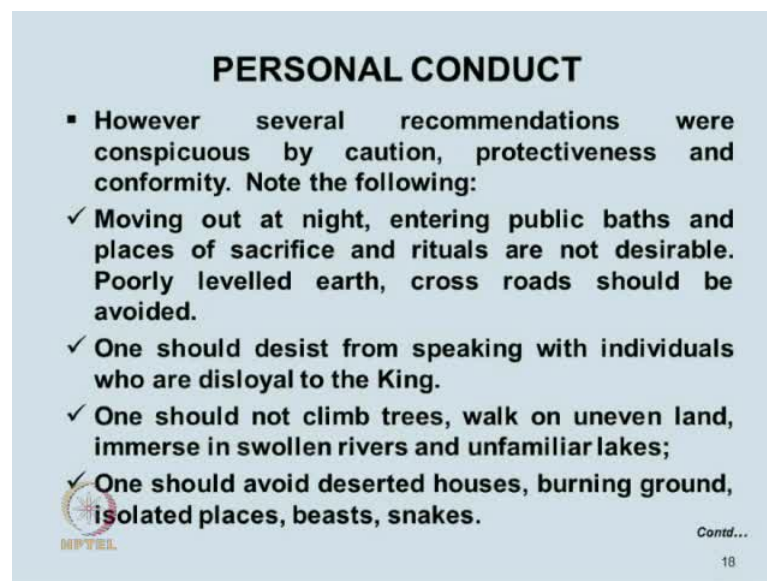
- **Walking and physical activity urged without carrying it to extremes.**
- **Personal furniture – bed and chairs should be comfortable; fans made of hair desirable to drive away flies and give breeze. Exposure to gentle wind is wholesome but strong wind may coarsen skin and impair digestion.**
- **Many noble guidelines on using pleasant language, not speaking ill of people, showing no disrespect to gods and forefathers, avoiding depraved individuals and adherence to truthfulness.**

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Continuous, many noble guidelines about using pleasant language, how to talk to people, how to talk to strangers, not to speak ill of people, showing no disrespect to Gods or forefathers, avoiding depraved individuals, adherence to truthfulness under all circumstances. There are several recommendations, however, it goes on like this, but then, you find many recommendations are conspicuous, by great concern for protectiveness, or conformity; that also you will find.

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### PERSONAL CONDUCT

- However several recommendations were conspicuous by caution, protectiveness and conformity. Note the following:
- ✓ Moving out at night, entering public baths and places of sacrifice and rituals are not desirable. Poorly levelled earth, cross roads should be avoided.
- ✓ One should desist from speaking with individuals who are disloyal to the King.
- ✓ One should not climb trees, walk on uneven land, immerse in swollen rivers and unfamiliar lakes;
- ✓ One should avoid deserted houses, burning ground, isolated places, beasts, snakes.

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I have given some examples; moving out at night, public baths, places of sacrifice, rituals, we should not go to those places. Poorly leveled earth, crossing roads, all those should be avoided. One should desist from speaking with individuals who are disloyal to the king. One should not climb trees, walk on uneven land, immerse in swollen rivers, or unfamiliar lakes; one should avoid deserted houses, cremation ground, isolated places, beasts, snakes.

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**PERSONAL CONDUCT**

- Unlike Charaka, Suśruta Samhita has innumerable “don'ts” in addition to those shown previously:
  - Facing, exposing oneself to wind or sun
  - Sitting on a small, wooden stool
  - Sitting next to fire after meals
  - Sleeping, walking, sitting, lying down in a carriage
  - Lying in prone position
  - Eating in a cracked vessel
  - Drinking water with cupped hands
  - Drinking milk from which fat has been removed

The rational basis for many of the restrictions when SS was redacted is not clear today.



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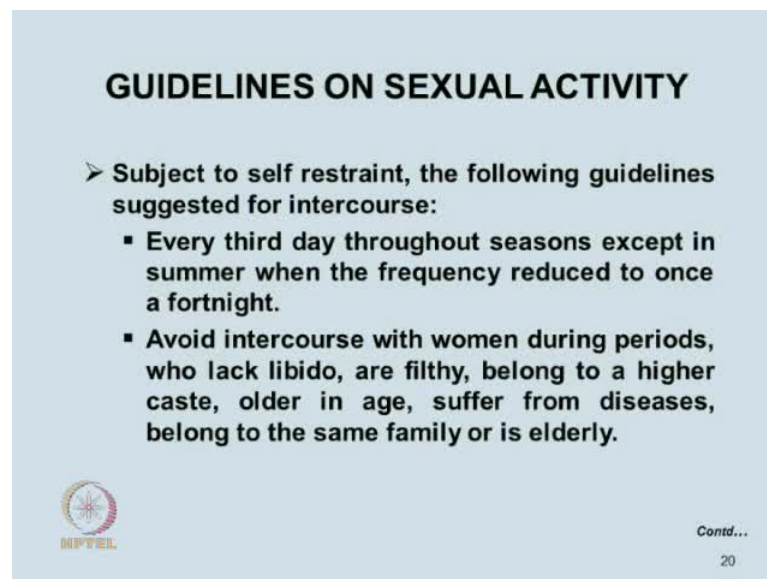
And, when it comes to Susruta, that was redacted later than Charaka, it becomes even more. You look at these, facing and exposing oneself to wind or sun, sitting on small wooden stool, sitting next to fire after meals, sleeping, walking, sitting, lying down in a carriage, lying in prone position, eating in a cracked vessel, drinking water with cupped hands, drinking milk from which fat had been removed; there are many others. Now, this, it is difficult to understand many of these rational for these, but it gives you an impression, an unduly cautious, unduly protected type of life. There is no love of any adventure; sometimes, a little bit of violation is necessary; otherwise, the, this is not in conformity with the life, the attitude of Ayurveda to life. Ayurveda is a cheerful attitude; this is unduly protective.

What is happening here, Susruta Samhita is redaction. It took place at a time when there was a great social transformation going on in India. If you look at Charaka which was done in the first century, for example, initiation of the students into medical studies; and there, Charaka says, initially, there will prefer Brahmins; Kshatriyas are accepted; Vaishyas are accepted; Sudras are accepted with some difficulty; if they are very bright, they could be accepted, but he does accept. But when it comes to Susruta, the restriction is much more severe. He is totally against this; but if at all grudgingly he takes an extraordinarily bright Sudra, he says, he should be taken, but that initiation ceremony, no mantras should be chanted.



So, many places you will find, in Susruta, like snakes being classified on the basis of caste. So, society had become much more bound by prejudices; it was a regressive society. That is why all these restrictions, you should not do this, you should not do that; what is the problem? So therefore, it does not conform with the earlier traditions, when society was much more open, much more confident. Uneven ground, why should not anybody walk? All we have to be, you have to be careful. Therefore, there is a certain regressive attitude in many of these, which you see here.


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**GUIDELINES ON SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

➤ Subject to self restraint, the following guidelines suggested for intercourse:

- Every third day throughout seasons except in summer when the frequency reduced to once a fortnight.
- Avoid intercourse with women during periods, who lack libido, are filthy, belong to a higher caste, older in age, suffer from diseases, belong to the same family or is elderly.

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Sexual activity, every third day, all these details are given here; forbidden three twilights, auspicious days; forbidden with animals; all these things, (( )) it was there at that time.

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**GUIDELINES ON SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

- Forbidden in three twilights, auspicious days, open and dirty locations, in the presence of natural urges to evacuate.
- Forbidden with animals, non vaginal routes in women.
- Discharge of semen should not be suppressed.

**Violations were attended by dire consequences.**




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Therefore, all these are, on the whole a liberal type of outline, nothing like the, renouncing all these activities, which we find a world renouncing type of philosophy, that you do not see in Ayurveda.

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**LIVING IN HARMONY  
WITH CHANGING SEASONS**

- The code for daily life had to be modified to suit the changes in season.
- A year was divided into six seasons of two months each. Ayurveda grouped the six seasons into two equal halves of the year. The first half (śiśira, vasanta, grīṣma) was termed ādāna, when sun drew away moisture from earth and tended to dry up the land and roughen the bodies of all life forms. During ādāna, body strength would wane and bitter, astringent and pungent tastes would dominate the body fluids.



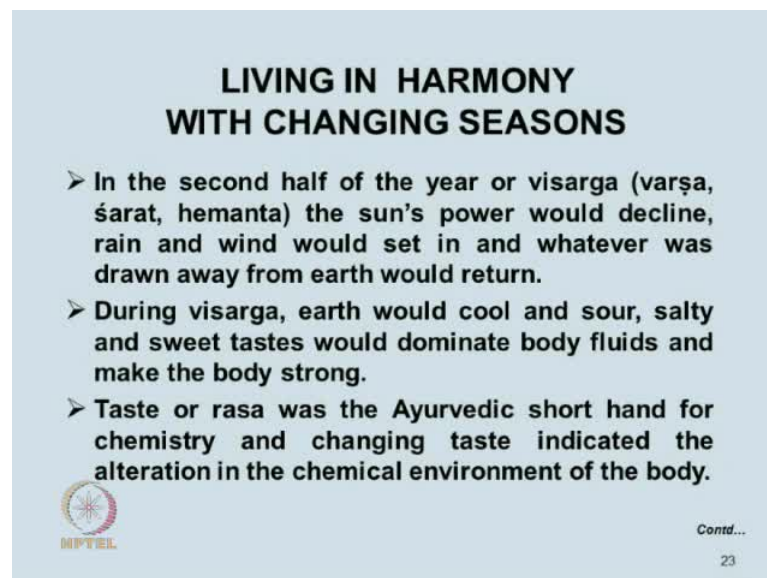
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Now, living in harmony with changing seasons, this is an important subject; earlier on, it was dinacharya; now, we are talking about ritucharya. And, all these texts, Ayurvedic texts, they were written in North India, where there were extremes of weather, very severe heat and very severe cold. So, there, the adjustment was very, very important and

the code of life had to be modified, the daily life which we saw earlier. There had to be a complete modification to suit the environment. Now, here, the year was divided into six seasons, 2 months each in a, in traditionally, but Ayurveda grouped these into two halves.


The first half sisira, vasantha and grisma, this is the hot part of the year, that was termed adana, because during this time, just like the sun desiccates the trees, the trees shut their leaves, the sun, earth becomes dry, almost baked, it is very, very hot; plants, animals, they all suffer; at that time, heat, moisture is taken away from the body also. So, the body also is being desiccated. Ayurveda believed, during that half, along with this desiccation, there is also a change in the chemical environment within.

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**LIVING IN HARMONY  
WITH CHANGING SEASONS**

- In the second half of the year or visarga (varṣa, śarat, hemanta) the sun's power would decline, rain and wind would set in and whatever was drawn away from earth would return.
- During visarga, earth would cool and sour, salty and sweet tastes would dominate body fluids and make the body strong.
- Taste or rasa was the Ayurvedic short hand for chemistry and changing taste indicated the alteration in the chemical environment of the body.

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In the second half of the year, visarga, which is the opposite of this, that is varsa, sarat and hemanta, two, there are three seasons in that half, there sun's power would decline, and what was taken away from the earth, moisture, that is returned, the clouds come back. Now, during this visarga, earth would cool; sour, salty and sweet taste, this is the point, we will see that again, they will dominate the body fluids and make the body strong.


The taste, this word rasa, is the chemical, it is the short hand for body chemistry. There was no chemistry as a subject at that time. Rasa was the short hand for chemistry and rasa shastra, it came like that. So, it is common observation, if you have a glass of water,

a salty, salt water, and if water is evaporating, then, it will become more concentrated; the taste becomes enhanced. So, similarly, they must have had many, many observations. So, during the adana, the process of drying, heating, the body, that chemical environment in the body, which was called taste, that would change.

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**LIVING IN HARMONY  
WITH CHANGING SEASONS**

➤ **Bodily responses in terms of appetite, sleep, energy, physical activity and libido would change during the change of seasons. These were carefully noted and a code of conduct appropriate to each season was prescribed. This code covered diet, bath, clothes, massage, mode of travel, sexual activity, application of cooling paste on the body, enjoyment of wine and other aspects of daily life.**




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That half, in the second half, the taste changes; so, the change in the chemical environment that would require a complete change in the, our lifestyle itself; this is what we mean by ritucharya. It is not simply turning on an air conditioner; it is much more than that, because there is a talk of chemical environment; we will touch upon that. Bodily responses in terms of appetite, sleep, energy, physical activity and libido would change during these two halves, and these are given in very great detail. These are carefully noted and a code of conduct appropriate to each half was prescribed.

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### LIVING IN HARMONY WITH CHANGING SEASONS

- The changing tastes (chemical environment in the body) and the dominance of certain tastes during each half of the year were believed to perturb specific doṣas and these were to be countered by diet and life style with qualities opposed to those of the perturbed doṣas.
- The doṣa perturbations associated with seasonal changes and corrective measures are outlined in Tables 6 and 7.



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The change of taste and the dominance of certain taste during each half were believed to perturb specific dosas, and these were to be countered by diet and life style; that is essentially what ritucharya means. The dosa perturbations are shown here.

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### RATIONALE FOR CHANGE IN CONDUCT DURING CHANGE OF SEASONS

DOṢAS AND SEASONAL CHANGES: TABLE 6

| Season                  | Doṣa Status                      | Diet/other measures   |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Śiśira<br>(Late winter) | Kapha<br>accumulates.            | Same style of food and<br>activity as for early winter<br>(hemanta).                |
| Vasanthā<br>(Spring)    | Kapha to be<br>evacuated.        | Spicy, rough, pungent,<br>alkaline, astringent food<br>articles; vigorous exercise. |
| Grīṣma<br>(Summer)      | Vāta<br>accumulates<br>perturbs. | Sour, sweet, salty articles,<br>ghee, milk, sugar: light<br>activity and clothes.   |

Ādāna



Contd...  
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Like, if you take, this is adana, the first half, sisira, the late winter, vasantha, spring and grisma, summer. Now, if you take this adana, dosa status and what should be done in an outline, that is given in that last column. Now, the dosa status, in this late winter is, kapha accumulates; and vasantha, kapha is to be evacuated, because all these, during that

sisira's 2 months, it is collecting. So, between that and the start of vasantha, there is a gap of something like 2 weeks, when they, weather extreme is not much. That is, that is the time recommended for getting rid of this accumulated kapha. The grisma, vata accumulates, perturbs is very hot and the diet and other measures are, you can read them on the last column.

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| <b>RATIONALE FOR CHANGE IN CONDUCT<br/>DURING CHANGE OF SEASONS</b> |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>DOṢAS AND SEASONAL CHANGES: TABLE 7</b>                          |  |   |
| Season  | doṣa Status  | Diet/other measures   |
| <b>Visarga</b><br>Varṣa<br>(Rain)                                   | Vāta perturbed to be evacuated; pitta accumulates. | Astringent, bitter, pungent articles; sleep in a dry place; avoid travel.                     |
|   | Śarat<br>(Autumn)                                  | Pitta to be evacuated. Astringent sweet, bitter articles; light clothes.                      |
|   | Hemanta<br>(Early winter)                          | Kapha accumulates. Salty, alkaline, bitter, sour pungent articles; warm clothes; heated room. |

*The details of the outline in tables are given in the Suśruta Samhita.*

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Then, the visarga, the cold half of the year, rains come and there, vata perturb, which has been perturbed earlier, that is to be evacuated and pitta accumulates. The next, autumn; that pitta accumulated is to be evacuated and kapha accumulates. Therefore, the chemical environment, this kapha, pitta, these are all chemical environment, that requires to be dealt with by evacuative measures in between these seasons. That is the time recommended for doing this. And, diet of course, appropriate for these are mentioned here. So, both by evacuative procedures and by appropriate dietary measures, you acclimatize yourself, or adjust yourself for the change of seasons.



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**SEASONAL HARMONY TO SUIT  
GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS**

- However in large parts of India, the Ayurvedic classification of a year into six seasons is inappropriate. In Kerala, for example, the only reasonable classification would be four approximate quarters; moderately cool, moderately hot, rains, light rain + moderate heat.
- In hot, humid regions of India, life in accord with seasons would not call for major adjustments in food or life style including clothing and activities. Personal hygiene would remain highly important.



Contd...  
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Now, seasonal harmony, this is all right when you say, two halves of the year; that was written in north India; but what about the place like Chennai, or even place like Kerala; this is, it does not really apply; we do not have these extremes. So, that, therefore, if you look at that, these, all these books, when we talk about the adana and visarga, which does not really apply to, say a place like Kerala or Tamilnadu; we do not have such extremes.

Therefore, this was based on climatic conditions in India, but it is not true all over India; that is something which we have to take note of, that this particular observation, that, it does not apply in many parts of India, including where we live. In hot humid regions of India, like Kerala, which I am familiar with, life in accord with seasons, would not call for major adjustments; in food, or life style, including clothing and activities. We do not need winter clothes ever in Kerala, or in Tamilnadu. So, personal hygiene would be highly important; but this kind of adjustments, about clothes and heating and so on, they simply do not apply.

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### SEASONAL HARMONY TO SUIT GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS

- However a challenge to the maintenance of seasonal harmony has been posed by air travel and the annihilation of distance. When an individual travels from a location in north during severe winter and lodges in the hot, humid south in four hours, quick changes in clothing and manipulation of environment by air-conditioning etc., would be necessary for adjustment. Food articles would be determined by cultural preferences. The old concept of a code for seasonal harmony needs a re-look in this context.



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A challenge to the maintenance of seasonal harmony has been posed by air travel, these are the new realities. Suppose, in the height of winter, somebody from Delhi, within a matter of 3 hours, he can land in Trivandrum, where it is hot; 32 degrees. Therefore, some of these requires a rethinking; that is, what is true in a particular region, need not be true in another.

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### SEASONAL HARMONY TO SUIT GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS

- This was pointed out, among others, by the late Sri Raghavan Thirumulpad – a renowned Ayurvedic Acharya of Kerala.



*A master physician, scholar – extra - ordinary,  
and teacher – par-excellence*

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Now, this was pointed out, not by me, by a very eminent Acharya, under whom I learned Charaka Samhita; he was in his 80s; a great scholar, great physician and a great teacher,

and he was very revolutionary in his thinking. You will think that, he would implicitly abide by every letter written in the classic; no, he was not like that. He was the one who pointed out, perhaps, many others might have done, that, it has to be interpreted in, in tune with reality; you do not implicitly follow what is written in the text.

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## **RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT (SADVṚTTI)**

- **While care of the body and a code for daily life received major attention, Ayurveda always regarded righteous conduct as the key to a healthy and happy life.**
- **In defining “rasayana” (rejuvenation), Vāgbhaṭa proclaimed:**


Contd...32

Now, then we come to righteous conduct Sadvrtti, while the care for the body and a code for daily life received major attention, Ayurveda always regarded righteous conduct as the key to a healthy and happy life. This is not like the adjustment to the weather; this is something which is uncompromising. In defining rasayana, Vagbhata wrote, truthfulness, freedom from anger, contemplation on the unity of existence, tranquility and good words are the essence of rejuvenation.

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**RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT (SADVṚTTI)**

- “Truthfulness, freedom from anger, contemplation on the unity of existence, tranquility, and good works are the essence of rejuvenation”. That sums up righteous conduct, which would ensure the welfare of the individual and the society.
- Life in harmony with fellow beings is essential because harmony is rooted in the belief that an individual’s well-being is inseparable from the society’s well-being.



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He is defining rasayana; “satyavadinam achrodam, adyatma pravanayendriyum, shantham sadvrtti meradam, vidya nithya rasayanam”, this is his famous words. So, sadvrtti, that is no local region of adjustments, that is universal everywhere. The samsud variety is conduct, which will ensure the welfare of the individual, and the society, because it was recognized, life in harmony with fellow beings is essential, because harmony is rooted in the belief that an individual’s well-being is inseparable from the society’s well-being.

In fact, all the others, Vagbhata says in a another place, we should treat everyone else as ourselves, as our own children, as our own brothers and sisters, something like that he writes; if you do not do that...So, there are, we are not capable of hurting anybody else, they are all ours. And now, with the advances in molecular biology, even the worms are our brothers. 30 percent of our DNA, we share with the humble worms; so, how can you, they are ours; we cannot hurt ourselves.

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### CONDUCT BEYOND DAILY ROUTINE

- Vāgbhaṭa's eloquent statement on rejuvenation was an echo of Charaka who had much to say on one's life beyond daily conduct. Listen to the following precepts of Charaka:
- One should never tell a lie or covet another's property or woman; pry into their secrets or speak of their defects, or be inimical to anyone.



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Now, conduct beyond daily routine, Vagbhata's statement on rejuvenation was an echo, what, what Charaka had said much earlier. Listen to the following precepts of Charaka, one should never tell a lie, or covet or another's property, or women; pry into their secrets, or speak of their defects, or be inimical to anyone.

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### CONDUCT BEYOND DAILY ROUTINE

- The company of the wicked, the abortionists, the insane and those guilty of treason should be shunned.
- Rashness and the company of the disgraced predispose to harm: so does making friends with boys, the senile, fools and eunuchs.
- Guard against the temptations of wine, gambling and the danger of conceit and jealousy.



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35

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making friends with boys, the senile, fools and eunuchs. Guard against the temptations of wine, gambling and the danger of conceit and jealousy.

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**CONDUCT BEYOND DAILY ROUTINE**

- Insulting Brāhmaṇas, flogging a cow, abusing a preceptor, speaking out of turn and throwing out relatives who stood by one in adversity are reprehensible.
- One should be generous to kin and servants without confiding too much or being too suspicious.
- Procrastination is as objectionable as making rash decisions.

*Contd...*



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Insulting Brahmanas, flogging a cow, abusing a preceptor, speaking out of turn and throwing out relatives who stood by one in adversity are reprehensible. One should be generous to kin and servants, without confiding too much, or being too suspicious. Procrastination is as objectionable as making rash decisions.

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**CONDUCT BEYOND DAILY ROUTINE**

- Rectitude, virtue, insistence on hard work unmindful of results, modesty, courage, forgiveness and faith should be the sovereign guides to one's conduct.
- Kinship to all forms of life, help for the poor, conciliation of the angry, truthfulness and a state of equanimity instead of oscillation between jubilation in success and dejection in failure will ensure that an individual is at peace.

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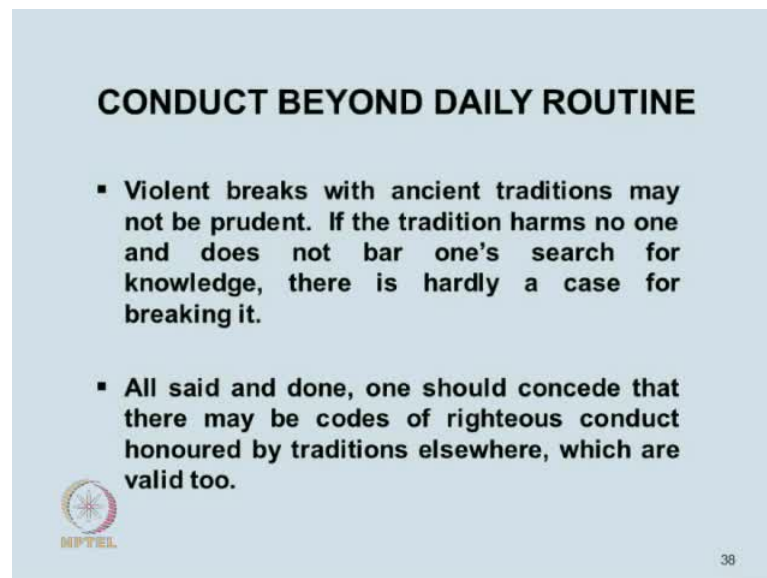
37



Rectitude, virtue, insistence on hard work unmindful of results, modesty, courage, forgiveness and faith should be the sovereign guides to one's conduct. These are Charakas. Again, it goes, kinship to all forms of life; this is the thing which comes again and again, especially in Charka and Vagbhata. Help for the poor, conciliation of the angry, truthfulness and a state of equanimity, instead of oscillation between jubilation in success, and dejection in failure, will ensure that an individual is at peace.


This equanimity, I had mentioned earlier also, that is again, Vagbhata also mentions this. It is, I think, it is also in, in western literature, because I referred to it, William Osler, one of the greatest physicians of, in the western tradition. I mentioned, as he was a professor of medicine in four great universities in the west, both United States and Britain and when he has leaving the United States, he gave a lecture; he was a great orator. He was addressing a class, when he was leaving the United States and the title was Aequanimitas. There, he says very much the same thing, a state of mind of equanimity. You do not oscillate between great joy in success and severe depression in failure; so, you take it as you go along, that equanimity which he recommends very strongly.

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**CONDUCT BEYOND DAILY ROUTINE**

- Violent breaks with ancient traditions may not be prudent. If the tradition harms no one and does not bar one's search for knowledge, there is hardly a case for breaking it.
- All said and done, one should concede that there may be codes of righteous conduct honoured by traditions elsewhere, which are valid too.

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Now, here also, you find that equanimity being praised very highly. All said and done, one should concede, there may be codes of righteous conduct honored by traditions elsewhere, they are valid too. So, that liberality which is a characteristic of Ayurveda, I mentioned it earlier here, the only place in the entire Ayurvedic text where you find

commands; you shall do this, there is only one place. That is when the young student is being accepted for studentship, he is being accepted, admitted for medical studies; then, there is a ceremony; a learned assembly is there and the teacher, he administers an oath; and there, these are all commands, you shall always tell the truth, you shall do this.

There he has to say, yes I do, yes I do; that is the only place, but throughout this entire text of medicine, it is always you may do this, the ling in Sanskrit that we all know the lakara; you may do this, you may do that. It never says you shall give this medicine, never. So, there is always a possibility that something else may be better, that is what it says, the code of conduct. Someone else living in another country, used to a different life style, that is acceptable too. So, this liberality of outlook is a characteristic of Ayurveda.

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Unrighteous conduct as a cause of disease; so far, we have dealt with conduct at various levels; daily conduct, conduct at personal level and so on. But we should remember, another type of conduct, that is righteous and unrighteous conduct. Unrighteous conduct can have ill effects at the personal level, individual level, or it can have at the population level, these are two distinct entities. At personal level, we are really talking about, in Ayurveda, what is prajnaparadha? Prajnaparadha is an old concept. What it really means is, a person does things harmful to himself knowingly; he knows that it is harmful to him, but he cannot help doing it. This dilemma was classically expressed by Dhritarashtra in the Mahabharata, a very painful admission by this blind king who says,

[FL]; I know what I should do, but I cannot do it; I know what I should not do, but I cannot help doing it. This was a painful admission of a great human dilemma.

So, in prajnaparadha which is given as a cause for a large number of diseases, this is precisely what happens. A person knows that something is harmful to him, but he cannot help doing it. The modern version of this is what we would call, lifestyle diseases. Some 30 years ago, we used to call them non-communicable diseases, like coronary artery disease, etcetera; but today, we know something more, something better; so, they are called lifestyle diseases, because we have learnt that, these diseases like coronary artery disease, they have a lot to do with lifestyle, which is well within our control.

So, these lifestyle disease, they are prajnaparadha induced. In other words, knowing very well that these are harmful, people become obese, susceptible to diseases like coronary artery disease; they take to alcohol, substance abuse, knowing very well that these will lead them to ruin and destruction. And that whole class of diseases, it is a serious problem, affecting many, many individuals. And, the remedy here, is at the level of the mind, they have got to learn to control their mind. It may be by adoption of virtuous conduct, as explained by the Ayurvedic masters, or they may take to Yoga, or ultimately, they may go to deaddiction centers to achieve the same purpose, however inadequately.

Now, what about conduct, - unrighteous conduct affecting large numbers of people? That is a different disaster of a kind, different disaster of a different kind and I can only give one particular example, which is a vivid demonstration of what happens, when unrighteous conduct leads to epidemics and disasters of that kind. This illustration comes from the 19th century; it relates to pneumonic plague which affected China, Manchuria in China. It was a frightful disaster; a million people died in that; how did they die? If you did the autopsy on these patients, they found yersinia pestis, the dangerous organism which produces plague, that was shown; but was that really the cause?

And when you go into it, you find a strange series of happenings; because in 19th century, Europe was flush with money; colonial rule brought in a lot of money into Europe. People loved luxury and the women in Europe, they wanted shawls, dresses, all made of a particular type of fine wool, which came from a Chinese animal called (( )). Now, this animal, is something with a large rodent with a very soft, nice wool, which is

very popular, but very expensive. When there was so much money, there was great demand for this wool from China. And, traders were busy; they came and offered fancy prices, but these (( )), if you wanted to harvest the wool, there were very strict traditional rules in China. Small, young (( )), you should not take their wool; similarly old senile animals, you should not touch them, or animals which looked inactive, which looked sick, you should not take their wool.

These were all their traditional restrictions. And, they obey these restrictions, but when so much money was on offer, these restrictions were forgotten. They started collecting wool indiscriminately; all (( )) were taken, whatever they could get, regardless of age, regardless of apparent illness, they would take the wool. Now, in taking this wool and exporting this to Europe, what happened in China was something nobody expected; because these inactive looking animals, (( )), they were actually carriers of yersinia pestis. This organism was not producing any diseases in those animals, but the animals were carriers. So, indiscriminate handling of these animals, this bacterium was released, because some of these animals died. This bacterium was released and it is pneumonic plague, so, it spreads through the nose, through droplets.

So, these Chinese who were working in these farms collecting wool, they were the first who get this disease. Nobody knew what this disease was. It was quickly fatal and it started spreading in no time. One would cough and ten would be infected. And before they knew, in less than a year, a million Chinese died. Now, here, what would you say is the cause of this disease? Is it the yersinia pestis, or the greedy traders, the luxury, or the greedy Chinese, or the luxury loving women in Europe; all these people, essentially, it is unrighteous conduct, that is what led to this major epidemic in the 19th century. Another type of unrighteous conduct leading to mass, illness, epidemics, that is the collapse of governance; colonial rule in India, for example; total neglect of governance. The only aim of East India Company's rule was to make profit at any cost, with the result in Bengal presidency, which was the rich presidency. What happened was a series of epidemics of cholera; hundreds of thousands of people died; starvation and famine.

Now, this is another example; unrighteous conduct on the part of rulers, that leading to similar type of disaster. Therefore, this code of conduct, which Ayurveda talks about, it is not only applicable to you and me, to everybody in our daily lives, adjustment to seasons and so on. It has to be seen in a much wider context, at the level of individuals,

at the level of nations, at the level of rulers, because there is no alternative, the alternative to good conduct is ruin and extinction.