

## **An Investigation of Psychotherapeutic Methods in Āyurveda and Buddhism (A Comparative Study with Sadvṛtta and Metta Sutta)**

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### **Introduction**

Ayurveda, a medical system that is more than 5000 years old in the world, is emphasized not only for health preservation and cure of diseases but also for the four virtues of Dharma, Artha, Kāma, Mokṣa. It consists of a large number of treatises such as Brahma samhitā, Bhela samhitā, Caraka samhiā, Suśruta samhitā, Vṛddhajīvākīya tantra, Nāvanītaka. Ayurveda specifically points out that there is a psychological connection to many physical diseases. It emphasizes that not only physical but also mental health is important for maintaining good health. Some examples of the priority given to mental health in Ayurveda are mentioned as follows. According to Carakasamhitā, suffering diseases are of four types namely, Abnormal, Physical, Mental, and Natural. Of those four types, mental diseases are anger, grief, fear, pleasure, depression, jealousy, fury, wretchedness, malice, lust, greed, etc. Furthermore, it is stated in the Carakasamhitā that for the healing of these mental diseases, the intelligent person should understand the harmful things and give up greed, anger, and lust, and try not to associate with harmful three kinds of Dharma, Artha, and Kāma as well as should practice with benevolent virtues. The importance of mental health is well emphasized in the section called Sadvṛtta belonging to Carakasamhitā.

According to Buddhism, the human body is divided into four parts: Karaja Kāya, Karmaja Kāya, Chittaja Kāya, and Utuja Kāya. Karaja Kāya means the physical body and other Karmaja, Chittaja, Utuja parts are the collection of our mental body. There are also four types of foods: Kabalinkāra (edible food), Phassāhāra (sense-impression food), Manosanchetanā (volitional food), and Viññānāhāra (consciousness). The existence of Karaja Kāya is dependent on Kabalinkāra food. The other three kinds of foods are directly connected with the mental body. Therefore, it is clear that these four kinds of foods influence the physical and psychological health of our bodies.

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In this research, I will mainly focus on the part of Sadvṛtta in Āyurveda and Metta Sutta in Buddhist literature. Comparing these two literary genres, I will investigate the similarities of both parts of the literature and analyze them to find out the connection between psychotherapeutic concepts of Āyurveda and Buddhism. Even though the studies of philosophical, psychological and epistemological concepts of Āyurveda and Buddhism have been concerned, the research with Sadvṛtta and Metta Sutta in perspective of psychotherapeutic methods has not paid attention adequately. Therefore, our main purpose is to fill up this vacuum.

## **Methodology**

Analytical and comparative methods will be primarily used in this research. For this, the research will be conducted by referring to the relevant primary and secondary sources, involved in the literary survey. Hence, mainly the Carakasamhitā and Metta Sutta will be considered as primary sources. In addition, the commentaries, treatises and articles of relevant primary sources would be taken into consideration to compare and analyze the psychotherapeutic methods in Āyurveda and Buddhism.

## **Results and Discussion**

The part of Sadvṛtta in Carakasamhitā, mentions that one who behaves virtuously results to become a good-minded person (Sumanāh) as well as he can free from malicious thoughts (Niśchintah). Moreover, such kind of person acts like a friend (Sarvaprāṇiṣu Bandhubhūtah) towards all living beings. The main purpose of the Metta Sutta is to maintain compassionate thoughts for others. It has been shown that an infinite mind spreading compassion to all beings should increase (Mettaṃ ca sabba lokasmin - Mānasaṃ bhāvaye aparimāṇaṃ) and it is also indicated that compassion should be developed by thinking ‘may all living beings be healed-minded persons’ (Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā).

According to Buddhism, anger, hatred, fear, and delusion are demerit mental factors. It has been pointed out in the Carakasamhitā that if one wants to be better in this world and the after-world, he should tolerate greed, envy, jealousy and lust along with the senses he has won. In the part of Sadvṛtta in Carakasamhitā, the importance of subduing these negative thoughts is shown by the attention to comforting those who are afraid (Bhītānāmāśvāsayitā), helping those who came to the disaster to be rescued from it (Durgeṣvabhhyupapattā), the annihilation of the causes of lust and anger (Rāgadveṣahetūnāṃ hantā), also not to cause excessive anger or excessive happiness (Na Krodhaharṣānuvidhyāt). In the same way, in Metta Sutta, the importance of not being angry (Byārosanā), not conflicting with others (Pathighasaññā), not hating all beings (Averaṃ), being

eliminated enemies, (Asapattam) not wanting to see anyone's suffering has been pointed out (Nāññamaññassa dukkhamiccheyya).

Verbal mis-control is also a cause of mental misbehaviour. In Sadvrta, the importance of maintaining verbal control is shown by not blaming others (Nānyadoṣān brūyāt), not falsely slandering good men and teachers (Na sato na gurūn parivadeth), speaking at the appropriate time, doing enough, and useful speech (Kāle hitamitamadhurārvādī), doing first talking with guests, dignitaries and respected persons (Pūrvābhibhāṣī) has been mentioned. The Metta Sutta states that none of the others should be despised (Nātimaññetha). A similar idea of that is to be a person of low conceit or humble (Anatimānī). Being honest (Uju ca sūju ca) and not cheating not only in words but also in the heart is a high virtue (Na paro Paraṃ nikubbetha).

It is said that one who behaves virtuously under the advice of Sadvrta will be a person of good appearance (Sādhuveśah), a person who has a face of pleasing to all beings (Sumukhah), having conquered senses (Vaśyātmā) and not being a slave to the senses (Nendriyavaśagah). This implies that the controlling senses afford physical discipline and provide mental health. In the Metta Sutta, not behaving even the smallest of mistakes is despised by the prudent persons, and the word 'Santindriya' indicates the necessity of the awareness of a sense of discipline in the growth of compassion.

The importance of righteous living has also been emphasized in Sadvrta. It is pointed out that one can maintain good mental health by living a religious life such as being a righteous person (Dharmātmā, Dhārmikah), a believer in action and retribution (Āstikah), and not committing sinful deeds (Kalim nārabheta). In Metta Sutta, detachment from personality-belief (Ditthim ca anupagamma), Becoming a virtuous person (Sīlavā) and having removed the gratification of material lust and become a state of unborn in the mother's womb.

Considering the above analytical discussion, it is perspicuous that the elaboration of the psychotherapeutic concepts in the portion of Sadvrta and Metta Sutta are similar.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, an important conclusion is that one branch of religion in India is making significant improvements to some Āyurvedic concepts, particularly Buddhism. This truth is common for Sadvrta and Metta Sutta comparing with psychotherapeutic concepts expounded by both authorities. In this manner, it is evident that the Buddhist psychotherapeutic concepts in Metta Sutta have influenced the portion of Sadvrta in Carakasamhitā.

**Keywords:** Āyurveda, Carakasamhitā, Metta Sutta, Psychotherapy, Sadvritta

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