

SIGNIFICANCE OF YOGA IN THE CONTEXT OF NIDAN PARIVARJANA AND AS A THERAPEUTIC MODALITY IN MENTAL HEALTH: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Nidan Parivarjana, or the deliberate avoidance of causative factors, is acknowledged as the primary therapy approach in the field of *Vikriti Vigyan*. The prevalence of mental health disorders is rising worldwide, making *Yoga's* potential as a therapeutic and preventative tool all the more important. In this article, the scientific and *Ayurvedic* relationship between *Yogic* interventions and *Nidan Parivarjana* is examined, with a focus on psychosomatic and *Manasika* disorders. It focuses on how *Yoga* regulates the *Doshas*, *Manas* and *Srotas* to manage mental health in an evidence-based manner, providing a distinctive and comprehensive strategy for illness prevention and health promotion.

KEYWORDS: *Nidan Parivarjana*, *Yoga*, Mental Health, *Vikriti Vigyan*, *Manovaha Srotas*, *Pragyaaparadha*.

INTRODUCTION

As a fundamental therapeutic principle, the ancient Indian system of medicine known as *Ayurveda* places a strong emphasis on disease prevention.

According to the *Charaka Samhita*,

"प्रथमं हि चिकित्सा प्रयोज्यते निदानपरिवर्जनं ।." (Cha Su. 1/126)

Globally, mental health disorders are on the rise, with lifestyle-related psychosomatic disorders, stress, anxiety and depression being the main causes. Both the *Sharirika* and *Manasika* components are taken into account in *Ayurvedic* diagnosis and treatment, which acknowledges *Manasika Vikara* as a result of *Manodosha* vitiation (primarily *Rajas* and *Tamas*). *Nidan Parivarjana*, or avoiding the causes of harm, is a distinctive *Ayurvedic* idea in the prevention and treatment of illness. By halting the *Samprapti* of mental diseases, *Yoga* acts as a preventative and therapeutic tactic in this regard.

The removal of the causes is the first and most important step in the treatment process. This theory, called *Nidan Parivarjana*, is crucial to *Vikriti Vigyan* because it prevents the progression of disease by stopping pathogenic factors at the causative level. In the current era of increasing psychological morbidity, *Yoga*, which has its roots in Indian philosophy, shows promise as a treatment that not only reverses stress-mediated pathologies but also prevents disease through behavioral and neurophysiological modification.

1. Concept of *Nidan Parivarjana* in *Ayurveda*

In *Roga Samprapti*, every disease begins with exposure to *Nidan* which leads to *Dosha Vaishamy*, eventually resulting in *Dhatu Dushti* and *Vyadhi Utpatti*. Mental disorders are no exception.

निदानपरिवर्जनं सर्वरोगाणां चिकित्सायाम् । – (चरक संहिता, सूत्रस्थान 1/24)

In *Manas Roga*, *Nidan* includes

- ❖ *Pragyaaparadha* – misuse of intellect.
- ❖ *Asatmyendriyarth Samyoga* – improper contact of sense organs.
- ❖ *Parinama* – effects of time and environment.

These create disturbances in *Manodoshas*: *Rajas* and *Tamas*, leading to conditions like anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc.

2. *Nidan Parivarjana* and Its Role in Mental Health

Definition

"निदानपरिवर्जनं हि पथ्यस्यैव प्रधानम्।" – चरक संहिता, सूत्रस्थान ३०/२६

Nidan Parivarjana is the foremost principle in *Ayurveda* where identification and removal of *Nidan* prevent further progression of disease.

Common *Nidans* for *Manasika Rogas*

- *Abhighata*
- *Pragyaparadha*
- *Asatmya Indriyarthasamyoga*
- *Vega Avarodha/Vega Dharana*
- *Aahara-Vihara Dosha*

2. *Samprapti* of Mental Illness

AYURVEDIC CONCEPT	DESCRIPTION
<i>Dosha</i>	Mainly <i>Rajo</i> and <i>Tamo Guna</i> of mind, with the involvement of <i>Vata</i> & <i>Pitta</i>
<i>Dushya</i>	<i>Manas, Hridaya, Sattva, Majja, Ojas</i>
<i>Srotas</i>	<i>Manovaha Srotas, Pranavaha, Rasavaha</i>
<i>Adhithana</i>	<i>Hridaya</i>
<i>Udbhava Sthana</i>	<i>Mana</i> and <i>Hridaya</i>

3. *Ayurvedic* Understanding of Mental Disorders

According to *Charaka Samhita* and *Madhava Nidan*, mental illnesses (*Unmada, Apasmara, Chittodvega*, etc.) originate from:

- ❖ *Agni Mandya*
- ❖ *Manovaha Srotodushti*
- ❖ *Rasa Dushti*
- ❖ *Oja Kshaya*

These lead to

- ❖ *Chinta*
- ❖ *Bhaya*
- ❖ *Shoka*
- ❖ *Vishada*

Yoga intercepts the *Samprapti* at multiple stages by

- Pacifying vitiated *Doshas* through calming practices.
- Purifying *Manovaha Srotas* via breath regulation.

- Stabilizing *Manas* by strengthening *Sattva Guna*.

4. Scientific Relevance to Mental Health

Psychoneuroimmunological imbalances are becoming more widely recognized as the cause of mental health disorders. *Yoga* has been demonstrated to enhance parasympathetic function, lower cortisol levels, alter neurotransmitters such as serotonin and GABA and encourage neuroplasticity. These outcomes support *Yoga* as a therapeutic intervention and are consistent with the *Ayurvedic* understanding of *Manasika Vikara*.

5. Yoga and Srotodushti Reversal

Ayurveda's understanding of pathology is based on *Srotodushti* or the vitiation of *Srotas*. *Manovaha Srotas* suffers the most from mental illnesses. *Yoga* reverses these pathologies through *Dhyana*, *Asana* and *Pranayama*. *Acharya Charaka's* description of *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*, or *Ayurvedic* psychotherapy, is consistent with this.

6. Yoga's Role in Nidan Parivarjana

- ❖ *Yama* and *Niyama* prevent *Pragyaaparadha*.
- ❖ *Asana* & *Pranayama* reduce sensory overload and calm hyperarousal states.
- ❖ *Dhyana* prevents cognitive distortions and promotes introspection.
- ❖ *Sadvritta* aligns with *Nidan Parivarjana* for psychosocial harmony.

Yoga, as described in *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras* and other classical texts, systematically trains the *Manas* and *Indriyas*. It addresses *Pragyaparadha*, helps in *Indriya Nigraha* and balances *Trigunas* (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*).

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध ॥

– Yoga Sutra 1.2

Thus, regular *Yoga* practice

Restores *Sattva Guna*, calming mental hyperactivity (*Rajas*) and inertia (*Tamas*)

Promotes mindfulness, enhancing introspection to identify and avoid mental *Nidans*

Encourages a disciplined lifestyle (*Dinacharya* and *Sadvritta*)—key for *Nidan Parivarjana*.

7. Scientific Evidence of Yoga in Mental Health Disorders.

Mental Health Condition	Yogic Intervention	Evidence/Outcome
Depression	<i>Sudarshan Kriya</i> , Meditation	Decreases cortisol and increases BDNF and serotonin.

Anxiety Disorders	<i>Pranayama, Dhyana</i>	It enhances the parasympathetic tone and reduces amygdala overactivity.
Schizophrenia	<i>Yoga</i> therapy with medication	Improves cognitive and social functioning.
PTSD	Meditation, Trauma-sensitive <i>Yoga</i>	Modulates the HPA axis and improves emotional regulation.
ADHD	<i>Asana</i> and breath awareness	Improves attention span and reduces hyperactivity.

8. Yoga as a Therapeutic Tool (*Chikitsa Siddhanta*)

Ayurveda categorizes *Chikitsa* into:

- ❖ *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* – spiritual/faith-based healing
- ❖ *Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa* – rational/logical therapy
- ❖ *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* – psychotherapy, mind training

Yoga is an integral part of *Sattvavajaya*, which includes:

- ❖ *Dhairya*
- ❖ *Smriti*
- ❖ *Samadhi*
- ❖ *Jnana*

□ *Yoga* bridges the gap between rational therapy and psychological well-being through:

- ❖ Reducing *Rajo-Tamasic* impulses
- ❖ Strengthening *satvik's* mind qualities
- ❖ Establishing self-restraint and emotional resilience

9. Therapeutic Role of *Yoga* in Mental Health

A) *Yogic* Components and Their Scientific Mental Health Effects.

<i>Yogic</i> Practice	<i>Ayurvedic</i> Effect	Modern Scientific Benefit
<i>Asana</i>	Balances <i>Vata</i> , stabilizes body-mind.	Reduces stress hormones (e.g. cortisol)
<i>Pranayama</i>	Enhances <i>Prana</i> and clears <i>Manovaha Srotas</i> .	Improves autonomic balance, lowers anxiety
<i>Dhyana</i>	Enhances <i>Sattva</i> and clears mental clutter.	Boosts prefrontal cortex reduces rumination
<i>Yama/Niyama</i>	Corrects <i>Pragyaaparadha</i>	Promotes ethical and mental discipline

शमं च यान्ति तस्येन्द्रियाणि यस्य मनः प्रसादमुपैति नित्यं । – (*Manu Smriti*)

B) Scientific Evidence on *Yoga* in Mental Illness

Modern research supports *Yoga* in mental health as

- ❖ **Anxiolytic:** *Yoga* reduces sympathetic overdrive and enhances GABA activity.
- ❖ **Antidepressant:** Meditation increases serotonin and dopamine regulation.
- ❖ **Neuroplastic:** MRI studies show increased gray matter density in the hippocampus and frontal cortex.
- ❖ **Psychoneuroimmunological:** Regular *Yoga* practice boosts immunity and reduces inflammatory cytokines.

10. Integration of *Yoga* in Ayurvedic Mental Health Protocols

Yogic Interventions Recommended

Practice	Dosha/Guna Action	Mental Benefit
<i>Trataka</i>	Enhances focus (<i>Vata</i> -pacifying)	Improves concentration in anxiety and ADHD
<i>Bhramari Pranayama</i>	Pacifies <i>Vata</i> and <i>Pitta</i>	Reduces irritability, enhances calmness
<i>Nadi Shodhana</i>	Balances <i>Ida</i> & <i>Pingala</i> (left/right channels)	Regulates emotional Fluctuation
<i>Yoga Nidra</i>	Deep conscious relaxation	Alleviates insomnia, trauma-related stress

11. Integration of *Yoga* and Ayurveda in Mental Health Management.

STEP	AYURVEDIC APPROACH	YOGA INTEGRATION
1. <i>Nidan Parivarjana</i>	Avoiding stress, poor diet, overthinking	Self-awareness through meditation, <i>Ashtanga Yoga</i>
2. <i>Samprapti Vighatana</i>	Removing root causes, <i>Dosha</i> balancing	<i>Asanas</i> and <i>Pranayama</i> for <i>Tridosha</i> regulation
3. <i>Rasayana Therapy</i>	Use of <i>Medhya Rasayana</i> (<i>Brahmi</i> , <i>Shankhpushpi</i>)	Enhances effect of <i>Yogic</i> mindfulness
4. <i>Sattvavajaya Chikitsa</i>	Mental discipline, emotional regulation	Through <i>Dharana</i> , <i>Dhyana</i> and <i>Yama-Niyama</i>

12. *Yogic* Lifestyle (*Achara Rasayana*) for Mental Health Prevention

Ahimsa, *Satya*, *Asteya*, *Brahmacharya*, *Aparigraha* – stabilize social and emotional health.

Ishwar Pranidhana, *Tapas* and *Swadhyaya* – support spiritual grounding.

Sadvritta – enhances mental hygiene.

सत्त्वस्य शुद्धिस्सौम्यत्वमात्मदर्शनं यथाभूतज्ञानं च ॥ (*Bhagavad Gita* 6.27)

Through *Yoga*, the mind becomes tranquil and one attains inner vision and true knowledge.

DISCUSSION

Integrating *Yoga* into clinical *Ayurvedic* practice is an example of a holistic approach to healthcare. It is in line with the diagnosis and treatment guidelines of *Ayurveda's Trisutra*, which focuses on *Hetu*. From *Nidan Avastha* to *Vyakti Avastha*, *Yoga* addresses every stage of *Samprapti*, providing a preventative and restorative route to mental health care.

CONCLUSION

With its roots in *Vedic* knowledge and current research, *Yoga* is a complete, non-pharmacological treatment. In contemporary mental health care, its alignment with *Nidan Parivarjana* and *Vikriti Vigyan* offers a novel therapeutic approach.

By Sushruta Samhita (Su. Su. 15/41)

"समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः।" "प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते॥"

A balanced *Dosha*, *Dhatus*, *Agni* and a happy mind and soul are characteristics of health.

From an *Ayurvedic* lens, mental health disorders emerge due to multidimensional imbalances in *Doshas*, *Gunas*, *Srotas* and *Manas*. *Yoga*, when integrated with *Nidan Parivarjana* and *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*, becomes a scientifically validated and philosophically rich modality to prevent and reverse mental disorders. Thus, *Yoga* is not merely an add-on but an essential therapeutic pillar in holistic mental health management.

Yoga, rooted in the same philosophical ground as *Ayurveda* offers both a preventive (*Nidan Parivarjana*) and a therapeutic path for mental health. Its scientific validation further enhances its credibility as an integrative approach in psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine. In the *Ayurvedic* framework, *Yoga* serves to break the chain of *Samprapti*, purify *Manovaha Srotas* and uplift *Sattva Guna*, leading to long-term mental well-being.

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