

The optimization of human life with the principles of Ayurveda

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Abstract.

Ayurveda is a life principle which can help to maintain and bring back balance in one's life and strengthen a person in order to be able to overcome obstacles. This paper will give some insight information about Ayurveda and what this life principle is about. It will also give an idea how to optimize one's life according to the Ayurveda life principle.

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1 Introduction

This paper is an assignment of the module “scientific history” with the topic “causality” which is lectured at the University of Leiden. In this paper the general approach of Ayurveda will be discussed.

I have chosen this subject because I wanted to know more about Ayurveda now it is growing in popularity. From my own background I have learned a few things but I almost forgot everything. The only aspect I have remembered is that Ayurveda has in general a focus on food. But that was before I studied this subject. Now I know there is more to it therefore I will try to explain in this paper what the principles of Ayurveda are and how they can contribute in optimizing human life.

To get the answer to the question “how to optimize human life with the principles of Ayurveda”, several other questions do need to be answered. The questions are:

- what is Ayurveda;
- how old is Ayurveda;
- does Ayurveda have different principles and what will be the focus for this paper;
- what is the main goal of Ayurveda;
- what are the fundamentals of Ayurveda;
- how is Ayurveda facing life;
- can Ayurveda be practiced by everyone;
- what is meant by the term optimization of life regarding Ayurveda.

In the first chapter the focus of this paper will be described. After outlining the content of this paper the history and philosophy of Ayurveda will be described. When it has been made clear what Ayurveda stands for, the fundamentals of this life principle will be discussed. Because Ayurveda has a certain view on nature and especially on the consumption of food, a closer look will be taken at this subject. Finally the main question will be answered of this paper in how to optimize human life with the principles of Ayurveda.

2 The scope of this paper

Indian naturopathy has been practiced for more than 5000 years in India and it has become a way of life for people living there. Nowadays Ayurveda is gaining in familiarity in the western part of world. Because Ayurveda evolves, there are several moments when an addition was made to the life principle. Roughly there are seven movements during time.

1. Caraka's compendium
2. Susruta's compendium
3. The Bower manuscript
4. Kaspyapa's compendium
5. Vagbhata's Heart of Medicine
6. Sarngadhara's compendium
7. New age approach

For describing this paper, parts of Caraka's compendium and parts of Vagbhata's heart of medicine were used. Also some new age influences of the Ayurveda life principles was analysed and used. The intention of this paper is just to give a short oversight what Ayurveda is and how it can be used to optimize human life. The term optimization is used to state that the life of a person can be enhanced with the attributes derived from the Ayurveda principle. This means that information is shared in order to give a person more insight in how to use routines, constitutions, tastes, herbs, metals, (gem) stones and colours in order to get balanced with its environment according to Ayurveda. This paper is not meant as a manual how to improve a person's life. For this purpose it is better to consult an ayurvedic doctor. It is also not the purpose of this paper to determine if the holistically approach of Ayurveda is better than the scientifically approach for practicing medicine. The information shared is also not meant for experimentation, but just to give an idea of what Ayurveda is and what the benefits can be for a person.

3 The background of Ayurveda

3.1 The history and philosophy of Ayurveda

Ayurveda is the oldest scientific approach of life as we know today. Its roots lie in India and this system of medical science has been practiced by Indians for more than 5000 years in order to enhance human life. Ayurveda can be best described as a holistically¹ medical system which has been used by natives. The word “Ayurveda” is derived from the ancient Indian language Sanskrit. Ayurveda is a contraction of the two Sanskrit words “Ayus” which can be best translated as “life-span” and “Veda” which can be best translated as “knowledge”.

The medical, philosophical and historical background of Ayurveda can be reduced to the four classical vedas, the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda. The almost 4500 years old Rig Veda and the almost 3200 years old Atharva Veda are the important writings regarding medical science. The Rig Veda is a set of 1028 hymns where several surgeries are presented and an impressive list of 290 herbal plants are described with curative powers. Also a collection of therapies are discussed in order to cure several diseases. Punarvasu Atreya can be seen as the founder of the first medical school and in this medical school the Agnivesu Samhita² was founded. This work was later the foundation of the work of guru Caraka³. Dridhabala revised the work of guru Caraka and gave it the title “Caraka Samhita” which can be seen as the first pillar of the classical Ayurveda.

¹ The term holistic outlines the fact that Ayurveda is a non-medical philosophy of well-being that considers the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of life as closely interconnected and balanced (source: “http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holistic_approach”).

² The Agnivesu Samhita has comprehensive descriptions of medical knowledge as they were known in that era.

³ Caraka was a teacher at the medical department of the university of Taxila in Punjab around 700 B.C..

The second pillar of the classical principles of Ayurveda is the Susruta Samhita⁴. This work consists of medical knowledge where the emphasis lies on surgery. This work was composed nearly hundred years after Caraka's work. The third classic work regarding Ayurveda exists of two series. One is called the Astanga Sangraha and the other one is called the Astanga Hridaya. They are both syntheses of the works of Caraka and Susrata and it summarizes in eight parts the Ayurveda medical knowledge in prose. The Bhava Prakasa is the last classic Ayurveda publication. It was written by Bhavamisra who was an important physician from Benares. He added several new herbs to the Ayurveda library which were unknown to the earlier writers of the Ayurveda.

Of the six conventional philosophical systems which were derived from the Upanishads⁵ only two have some importance regarding Ayurveda. The first one is the Nyaya-Vaiseka and the second one is the Samkhya. The Nyaya-Vaiseka can be seen as a categorical doctrine where the truthfulness of different objects of knowledge is discussed. The Samkhya is founded on the oldest sources and explains the erection of the world based on the transformation principle. This is probably the oldest attempt to explain the world without the involvement of a creator.

Ayurveda is just like Yoga and Tantra a very old principle of life which has been practiced for several centuries. They are mentioned in the Veda's and Upanishads. Yoga means "uniting" and it is the science of the unification with the divine truth. Tantra means "weave" and is the most direct method to control energy which can also lead to the ultimate unification with truth. Ayurveda can be best translated as the science of life. These three life principles have the same goal which is to improve and extend life. The difference between Yoga, Tantra and Ayurveda is that Yoga and Tantra have set the main focus to get freedom which is for most people very difficult to accomplish while Ayurveda wants people to have a long and healthy life and is applicable for almost everyone.

⁴ Susruta was a student of Divosa. Divosa was the king of Kasi, which is now known as the city Benares in India. Divosa was able to combine politics with science. This and the examination of his war injuries did influence Susruta to focus on surgery while writing the Susruta Samhita.

⁵ Upanishads are the prudence and mystical parts of the wholly writings of the Hindu culture. They are the foundations of the Hindu religion and later developed Buddhism.

The basic concept of Ayurveda is to live in harmony with nature. This means that it is important to use human sensory information properly. The human sensory is able to give information when the balance with nature has been disrupted. When this will occur it is important to regain the balance because imbalanced ways of living will invite deceases. This is the principle thought of Ayurveda.

According to Ayurveda there are three main functions which are operative in the human body. These are called vata, pitta and kapha. In the next chapter these main functions and the other fundaments of Ayurveda will be further explained.

4 The fundamentals of Ayurveda

4.1 The constitutions

According to Ayurveda all matter is formed by *mahabuta*'s. These are the basic elements of existence. Only in living matter there is something else which can be classified as the *tri dosas*. The *tri dosas* are the forces which control all the biological processes. There is a harmonic and balanced relation between the three energetic principles and the mental and physical health. The *tri dosas* are influenced by the external factors like sensory perceptions and dietary habits. The *tri dosas* are: vata, pitta and kapha. What they stand for will be explained in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1 The vata constitution

The vata constitution is the principle of movement. Because the other constitutions are using the vata principle, the vata principle can be seen as the most important one. Vata is originated from the elements air (*vayu*) and ether (*akash*). Keywords for the vata constitution are: dry, cold, light, rough, mobile, subtle, respiration, circulation, excretion, movement, sexual activity, brain activity, sensation and foetus growth.

Vata controls feelings and movement processes. Perception, processing and react are all subject of the vata principle. Vata transposes every sensory impulse to psychosomatic reactions and therefore it is often compared to life force or life energy. Basic properties belonging to the vata type are:

- ruksa: dry, rough, harrowing;
- sita: cold, refreshing;
- laghu: light;
- suksma: subtle, delicate, penetrating;
- sara: fluent, agile;
- visada: clear, transparent, non-sticky;
- khara: rough, loose.

Dry and cool are the two most powerful properties of vata. Because vata controls the neural processes regarding movement, feeling, food en fluid consumption and metabolism, a possible disruption can have a big impact. Too much vata can be noticed by the following symptoms:

- the skin is dry, rough and dark;
- the patient suffers from chills;
- there is a need for hot and warm meals;
- the person suffers from insomnia and is feeling weak;
- there are some stool problems.

When there is less vata, the following symptoms are applicable:

- the person is feeling very tired and is exhausted;
- there is a short of breathe;
- the person is listless and not concentrated.

In order to determine if the vata constitution is applicable for someone, the characteristics in appendix A can be used to get a good classification.

4.1.2 The pitta constitution

The pitta principle is based on energy, which arise during chemical and biochemical processes. According to the classical approach of Ayurveda the most important functions of pitta are digestion, oxidation, eyesight, the control of body temperature, the coloration of blood and skin and metabolism. In a psychological way subjects like intelligence, a good memory, enthusiasm, a clear mind, courage and idealism can be assigned to the pitta constitution. Basic properties belonging to the pita type are:

- usna: hot;
- tiksna: fiery;
- drava: liquid;
- sara: agile;
- snigdha: greasy.

Pitta can be seen as the power of fire. The root of the pitta lies in the small intestine. This is important to know because from here other related body parts can be influenced. In general pitta has five different variances. The first one is the alocaka. This is situated in the eyes. The alocaka stipulates the eyesight. The second one is pacaka. Pacaka determines the biochemical processes regarding digestion and metabolism. It is situated around the stomach and the duodenum. The third variance is the ranjaka. Ranjaka arises

in the liver and is active in the stomach. It is perceptible during tension and it is associated with aggression. The fourth variance is sadhaka. Sadhaka can be related to mental and physical state. And finally the last variance is bhrajaka. Bhrajaka contributes in having a fresh appearance and forming our expressions. The pitta principle is dominating in the middle stage of life. Signs of less pitta can be noticed by:

- descending temperature;
- lack of appetite;
- unhealthy appearance;
- loss of effluvium.

In order to determine if the pitta constitution is applicable for someone, the characteristics in appendix A can be used to get a good classification.

4.1.3 The kapha constitution

The basic elements of the kapha principle are earth and water. Kapha contributes against deterioration and it helps to build up the defence system. Kapha also has 5 variances. The first one is avalambaka. This is situated around the chest region and it enforces the heart, the sacrum and pharynx. It makes the spine flexible and is in general corrective. The second variance of kapha is kledaka. Kledaka makes everything wet. It is mostly active in the stomach and the duodenum. Its main contribution is to help the digestion system in the human body. Bodhka is the third variance. It is responsible for the gustatory organ. Bodhka is situated in the mouth and there it regulates saliva. The fourth variance of kapha is tarpaka. This is situated in the head and it feeds and enhanced the brain and the nervous system. Tarpaka regulates the fluid exchange between prana vata and alocaka pitta. The last variance is slesaka. Slesaka contributes in increasing the flexibility of the joints and the ligament. Childhood and youth are typically periods which can be assigned to the kapha principle. When there is less kapha the following symptoms can be noticed:

- disruptions regarding the bronchial tubes;
- an increase of urination and bowel movement;
- disruption of the digestion system;
- diabetes;
- an decrease of intelligence;
- sudden change of taste.

In order to determine if the kapha constitution is applicable for someone, the characteristics in appendix A can be used to get a good classification.

4.1.4 The spiritual constitution

On the mental and astral level there are three fundamental attributes active for balancing live. These three fundamental attributes (goena's) are: satva, rajas and tamas. Satva expresses understanding, pureness, clearness, compassion and love. Persons with a satva temperament have in general a healthy body and they are often religious. Goals are easy set and achieved. The raja temperament is expressed by indifference, laziness, heaviness and dullness. People with the raja temperament are often very interested in business, power, prestige, and (social) position. They like wealth and live most of the time extravert. They are a bit religious, but can change their spiritual believes. Raja temperament related persons are also very interested in politics. Persons with a tamas temperament are often lazy and selfish. They like to destroy others and they do not have a lot of respect towards other living beings. They are often not religious and all action are self-centred. These three goena's can be altered by practising other spiritual disciplines like yoga. In order to change from one goena to another an ayurvedic doctor (viadya) can be consulted. The doctor can help in establishing a behavioural change by determining what attributes are applicable to someone.

4.2 The six tastes of Ayurveda

4.2.1 Introduction to the six tastes

There are 6 taste variances which exist of two primal elements according to Ayurveda. Each of these tastes exists of their own substance from a chemical point of view. In table 1 these taste are described with their elements and substances.

Taste	Elements	Substance
Madhur (sweet)	Prithvi & Jal (earth & water)	Carbohydrate , Sugar, Fats, Amino Acid
Amla (sour)	Prithvi & Teja (earth & fire)	Organic Acid
Lavana (salty)	Jal & Teja (water & fire)	Salt
Katu (pungent)	Vayu & Teja (air & fire)	Ethereal oils
Tikta (hot & bitter)	Vayu & Akash (air & space)	Bitter substances, Alkaloids
Kasaya (astringent)	Vayu & Prithvi (air & earth)	Tanning extracts

Table 1: Six tastes of Ayurveda

Every taste has a unique place regarding the principles of Ayurveda. In the next section the taste and their position will be described in more detail.

4.2.1.1 Madhur

Madhur is the sweet taste. It makes the strengths and body tissues very powerful. The sweet taste is good for the complexion, the hair, the sense organs and for energy. It increases the length of life and vitality. Sweet is also often seen as an antidote. Persons, who can classify themselves as kapha, should not eat a lot of sweet food because it will enhance the amount of water in the body. Sweet food is excellent for vata persons and good for pitta persons.

The sweet taste can be related to early winter. In this period the sun is mild and the moon becomes very strong. This will have an affect on the vata person. In order to keep the balance, a vata person should take proper actions in order to be protected from cold. Also basking in the sun, long sleeping hours and a good amount of sexual activity are advantageous for vata persons. Good examples of sweet food are ghee (Indian butter), walnut, bananas, coconut, wild asparagus, 'milk flour', giant potato, datura (devil's weed), milk, honey, sugarcane, white teak and grapes. In order to keep a balanced environment it is important not to over consume sweet foods, because this can lead to other problems. Examples of these problems are overweight, a low digestive fire, lassitude, urinary disorder, goitre and lumps.

4.2.1.2 Amla

Amla is the sour taste. It makes the digestive burn with fire. It is good for the heart, digestion and appetite. Persons who can relate themselves to the kapha and pitta constitution should not consume a lot of sour food.

The sour taste can be related to the rainy season. The dampness in the atmosphere affects the body's digestive powers and metabolism. In this period the number of diseases exceed all the other seasons. Since the digestive power is weak one should have a light diet with the predominance of salt and sour food. Good examples of sour food are tamarind, citron, buttermilk, vinegar, curds, mango, wood apple and jasmine-flowered carissa. Too much of sour food can lead to anomalies in blood, muscle sickness and dropsy. But sour food is excellent for vata persons. The over consumption of sour taste

makes the body slack and causes blindness. Also itching, the spread of rashes, swellings, thirst and fever may occur when the sour taste is over consumed.

4.2.1.3 Lavana

Lavana is the salty taste. Minerals are very important for all vital life functions. Without salt there would be no life. In general salt will stimulate the absorption of fluid and digestion. Persons with a kapha and pitta constitution should avoid over consumption of salt food.

Lavana can be related to autumn. The digestive powers which are weakened by the rainy season do not become strong immediately. One should therefore not fill the stomach completely and only eat when one is hungry. Examples of salts are caustic soda, sea salt⁶ and black salt. Although salt is essential for life one should be very careful with it. Too much salt consumption can lead to baldness, grey hair, wrinkles. It also causes thirst, poisoning and it spread rashes. In some cases it destroys one's strength.

4.2.1.4 Katu

Katu is the pungent taste. A typical characteristic of this taste is the tingling sensation on the tongue. From a chemical point of view the katu taste is derived from ethereal oils. Persons with a vata constitution should avoid the over consumption of the pungent taste because the pungent taste can increase the amount of air which will stimulate the gas production.

Katu can be related to summer. During this season the sun reduces the element of water and the body becomes rough and weak. One should be careful with the pungent taste because when it is over consumed it can cause thirst, disruption of seed and strength, fainting, pain in the waist and back, cramps and trembling. Examples of pungent items are black pepper, sweet basil, embelia, marking-nut, and bile.

⁶ Sea salt has besides its healing features also a very important symbolic aspect. While India was ruled by the British Empire, it was Mahatma Gandhi who used sea water to demonstrate the habitants of India how to use the sun to form salt crystals to break the power of the monopoly of the British Empire on salt without the use of force.

4.2.1.5 Tikta

Tikta is the bitter taste. Although it is an unpleasant taste, the bitter taste purifies the mouth and stimulates the desire for food. It is also anti-toxic and it helps to reduce fever. The bitter taste strengthens the vata and reduces the pitta and kapha. Therefore persons with a vata constitution should avoid too much of the bitter taste.

Tikta can be related to late winter. The sun is gaining in strength and it is heading northwards. Because tikta has a drying effect on the body one should be careful by ingesting this taste. Over consumption can make the body tissues shrivel and it can cause diseases of the wind. Normal consumption at the other hand can help skin against disease, fever, phlegm, thirst, fainting and a burning feeling. Some examples of tikta items are sandalwood, nutgrass, white teak, bitter apple, atis root, aloes root and Indian rosebay.

4.2.1.6 Kasaya

Kasaya is the astringent taste. It causes stiffness and reduces the saliva. It gives the mouth a heavy feeling and according to the ancient writings it clears up the mind. The astringent taste also purifies the blood and removes phlegm. Pitta persons should be careful because too much of the astringent taste can cause constipation, heartburn, hunger, thinness and loss of manhood.

Kasaya can be related to spring. The sun is warm and it gradually gains in strength. The digestive fire is slowing down and the body becomes susceptible to many diseases and discomforts. Some examples of the astringent items are wood apple, honey, ochre and water lily.

4.3 The role of the ayurvedic doctor

In the western part of the world it is common to determine what is wrong with a person after a certain disease has developed itself. This approach differs from the ayurvedic way. From the ayurvedic point of view the diagnostic aspect is continuous. According to Ayurveda a certain disease can only emerge because there is an imbalance regarding the vata, pitta and kapha. Therefore it is important to investigate what is causing this imbalance and how can it be balanced again.

The ayurvedic doctor can contribute in finding the cause of the imbalance. The doctor can also advise in how to get back in balance. The ayurvedic doctor will analyse the complete environment of a patient in order to help a person to get control of his life. Because of this individuality it is possible that two persons with the same physical problem can receive different measures to encounter the problem. That is because there are several factors which can have an impact on someone's life. Because Ayurveda is a life principle it is meant to help someone to live in harmony with itself and its surroundings. The ayurvedic doctor will help to make this possible.

Some treatments which an ayurvedic doctor can prescribe can be found using the link <http://www.raj.be/ayurveda/eigenkeuze.htm>.

5 Establishing a balanced health with herbs

5.1 Illness according to Ayurveda

The identity (samanya), nature (prakrti) and human (purusa) are the fundamental principals of Ayurveda. If health means order than sickness can be seen as chaos. In the human body there is a continuous change in order to overcome sickness. The body reacts on what is happening in its surroundings. That's why there has to be a balance between nature and the person. In order to understand sickness one should know what health means. Health is the state where three constitutions (vata, pitta, kapha), the waste products (mala's) and the biologic fire (agni) are in balance and the senses are functioning normal. But when one of aspect mentioned above is in any way out of balance than sickness will emerge.

Ayurveda classifies three elements regarding sickness. The elements are physical, spiritual and psychological. Depending on someone's constitution the person is more liable to sickness. Persons who are related to the kapha constitution will be more viable to tonsillitis, bronchitis and long congestion. Persons related to the vata constitution will be more viable to gasification, arthritis and paralysis. Persons related to the pitta constitution will be more viable to rash, stomach ulcer and hives. That's why it is important to know how your constitution is composed. Appendix A can be used to get a general idea what someone's constitution is.

5.2 Helpful herbs

According to Ayurveda our food is the most valuable medicine because our physical body is nothing more than DNA which is weaved with our food. If our food consumption is balanced with the six tasted, which were mentioned earlier, it is possible to enhance our diet with herbs. Herbs can influence our body and mind in several ways. According to Ayurveda there are three primary ways to approach this. First we have to analyse the ratio of the elements expressed in the taste of the herb. After that the herb has to be analysed in its ability to be heated and cooled. Finally the specific medicinal property of the herb has to be determined in order to use it properly. The herb

can have an impact on ones body and mind. In appendix B an overview is given of the forty most important herbs⁷ which can be used to influence someone's mind and body.

5.3 Helpful metals, (gem) stones and colours

Besides medicinal herbs Ayurveda also uses the healing characteristics of metals and (gem) stones. According to Ayurveda everything was created from the energy of the universal consciousness. Metals and (gem) stones are also forms of energy. Because of this energy the metals and stones can be used to neutralize other energy patterns which exist in the human body by creating electromagnetic fields. Depending on the type of purification a certain metal can be used. In appendix c an overview is given of the commonly used metals and their healing characteristics. Just like metals (gem) stones and colours have the same healing characteristics. Just like metal the (gem) stones have a positive effect when they make contact with the body. It is also possible to put them in water or oil to extract the energy and use it on the skin or consume it. The positive or negative vibration activates the energy centres of the body and helps a person in the development of their sensitivity. In appendix D an overview is given of the several colours and (gem) stones and their usage.

⁷ The list is derived from the Chopra-centre. They use these herbs in their centre. Each herb has been analysed scientifically and is selected from the ayurvedic point of view.

6 Optimization of life according to Ayurveda

6.1 Lifestyles and routines

According to Ayurveda there are a lot of major cyclic phenomena around us. There is the cyclic motion of the earth, the sun, the moon, influences in and out of our body. In order to be in control of your life it is important to have routines build in the life pattern. This will help in balancing and controlling your body within its environment. In order to build in a routine, certain cyclic moments are important to keep in mind. Every cycle will be outlined in the following sections.

6.2 Cycles

The day starts with waking up in the morning. The biological clock synchronises itself with the sun. The average time to wake up is between 4:00 am to 6:00 am. The body can at this time absorb the subtleness of nature. It is advisable to wake up at the same time every day. This is not only good for civic routines but also good for the body. The body will get used to activate all the processes at a specific moment and eventually the awakening and standing up will get easier every time. Changes in the wake up process are not harmful if one should go back to the consistent wakening time. The wake up time is seen as the best time to stand still at the fact that you are a part of the universe and should be respectful to everything what is surrounding you.

After waking it is advisable to wash the face and rinse the mouth. For cleaning the mouth Ayurveda advises to use astringent or pungent taste teeth cleaners in stead of teeth cleaners with a sweet taste because this can influence the growth of bacteria. A simple twig crushed at the end can be chewed to brush and clean the teeth. After cleaning the teeth it is important to clean the tongue. According to Ayurveda, the accumulation of waste at the root of the tongue obstructs respiration and as a consequence it will give rise to foul smelling breath. To clean the tongue a tongue scraper can be used. Just gently scrape the tongue and rinse it with water. After that one should clear the throat by gargling. This will also help against smelling breath. Then one should take a moment to clear the nose ears and eyes. To clear the nose one should blow the nose a few times. It is advisable to put some drops of

sesame oil in the nose, which will help cleaning it. After this activity one can wash the ears and put some drops of sesame oil in the ear. This will sharpen the hearing sense and it will help cleaning the ear from the inside. To clean the eyes, just sprinkle a little bit of water on the eyes. It is also possible to use an eyeglass filled with water and blink a few time in it.

To help the bowel movement it is best to drink two glasses of water. Other liquids than water will stress the digestive system, which is off course not desirable in the morning. The water will also help to remove toxins through urination. After drinking the water one has to wait a little in order to clear the bladder and the bowels. It is best to do this at the same time every morning. It is important to have a regular bowel movement, because this will have a direct effect on one's physical and psychological well being. At night during sleeping time the body is occupied with restructuring, recouping, nurturing and correcting itself. Therefore it is important to eliminate the night waste properly. If there is a change in the bowel movement, one should pay attention and analyzing what is causing the change. Perhaps an adjustment of diet can help bring back the routine.

Bathing is also a daily routine. It is seen as purifying and life-giving. It stimulates the body, removes the fatigue, sweat and dirt. Because the skin is the largest human sense organ, bathing is the best way to clean it. To keep the skin in form, it is also important to use massage as a method to keep it smooth.

During the day it is advisable to schedule some pauses. In these reserved moments one can meditate and practice pranayama. Pranayama is the art of observing and controlling breath. Meditation is can be seen as the bath for the mind. To do some exercises during the pause one can use the art of Yoga. Yoga can on an easy way vitalize the body so new energy is absorbed to resume.

There are three important moments to nurture the body. These moments are breakfast, lunch and dinner. Breakfast is just the first time to take food and give nutrition to the body. It should not be too heavy so the body can gently process the food taken. The lunch is very important. It should be the main and largest meal of the day. Ideally one should have the six flavors in the meal. It is advisable to have warm and fresh cooked meals, because it would otherwise have a negative effect on the digestive fire. At night it is best to have a light dinner. The digestive power is not optimal at night and therefore large dinners should be avoided. After dinner it is best to do some strolling

(minimum 100 steps). This will contribute in the relaxing process and it will be more conducive to a restful sleep.

The rest cycle starts at night. At that time the body has an innate ability to heal and correct its imbalances. This process should not be tempered with.

The week cycle has the same aspects as the day cycle with some additions. One of the additions is an enema. An enema is a cleaning therapy. When it is applied properly, there is no other therapy which can equal its efficiency in balancing disorders of the body. An enema can be taken without any help, but it is wise to consult a physician before practicing alone. The massage part can also be extended. Weekly a massage for the head and the full body is recommended. Taking once a year a more thorough therapy is advisable. The following therapies can be taken into consideration.

- Induced vomiting; this helps to treat conditions ranging from chest congestion and asthma to imbalances like hyperacidity.
- Therapeutic purgation; it cleanses the small intestine, kidney, lungs, sweat glands, liver and the gall bladder.
- Medicated enema; it cleanses the body wastes, provides nourishment to bodily tissues and raises immunity.
- Nasal medication; it alleviates sinusitis, migraines, headaches, epilepsy and other imbalances of the neck and head region.
- Blood letting⁸; it can help to treat diseases like eczema, herpes and gout.

6.3 Extending life

It is not the main goal of Ayurveda to extend life. It helps to extend life but it also teaches that according to karma⁹ everything will come to an end. Ayurveda respects life and death and therefore one should not fear death. Because Ayurveda can be practiced by almost everyone, it can be seen as a friend of humans. To be free of everything one should live in harmony with its surroundings. This means one should optimize its life according to the rules of Ayurveda. It is not necessary to use everything. One is free to use what is best

⁸ This is more in the area of Susrata's compendium, which focuses on the surgery part and is not in the scope of this paper.

⁹ Karma is a sum of all that an individual has done, is currently doing and will do. The effects of all deeds actively create present and future experiences, thus making one responsible for one's own life, and the pain in others.

to be used. With a good amount of discipline of the body, mind and soul one will be able to get peace and to come closer to universal energy. The important aspect in that is that one knows his own flaws and strengths (vata, pitta and kapha). This will help to get balanced. Besides Ayurveda, it is also wise to use Yoga, Tantra and Pranayama. This will help to gain spiritual knowledge.

Appendix A: constitutions

Feature	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Body structure	Thin & Slim physique	Tall, medium, moderately developed physique	Stout, big and well developed physique
Chest	Narrow	Barrel shaped	Square and well formed
Bone structure	Low, prominent bones	Moderate bones, good muscles	Heavy bones, tendency towards obesity
Weight	Hard to gain and easy to lose	Easy to gain and easy to lose	Easy to gain and hard to lose
Skin texture	Thin, dry, cold, rough, cracked skin	Warm, moist, skin often with moles and prone to acne	White, oily, smooth and soft skin
Hair texture	Scanty, coarse, dry, wavy hair	Fine, soft, red or grey hair often balding in early age	Dark, thick oily, lustrous hair
Forehead shape	Small forehead	Medium sized forehead	Broad forehead
Face	sharp features, masked appearance	Gentle features, warm appearance	Broad features
Eyes	Small, often brown eyes	Medium size, piercing eyes	White, attractive, large eyes with thick eyelashes
Lips	Thin, small dry lips	Medium, soft, red lips	Thick, moist lips
Teeth & gums	Irregular sized teeth, dark gums	Medium sized teeth, spongy gums	Shiny straight smooth teeth, pink gums
Nails	Small, thin, dry nails	Soft, pink, medium nails	Large, white nails
Stools	Prone to constipation	Regular	Moderate
Sweat	Scanty sweat	Profuse	Moderate cold sweat
Appetite	Appetite is variable	Strong appetite, irritable if mail is missed	Can skip meals easily
Sexuality	Variable	Hot and intense	Warm and enduring

Feature	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Voice	Low, weak, hoarse voice	High pitched, sharp voice	Deep tone, pleasant voice
Speech	Speech talkative, talk fast	Convincing speech, argumentative	Slow, definite speech, not very talkative
Intellect	Quick, adaptable, indecisive mental nature	Intelligent, critical mental nature	Slow, steady, dull mental nature
Memory	Good observation, but poor memory	Sharp, clear memory	Slow to take notice but will not forget easily
Nature	Fearful, anxious	Angry and irritable	Calm, sentimental
Sleep	Light disturbed sleep, tends toward insomnia	Moderate sleep, wakes at the smallest sound	Heavy sleep, difficulty in waking up
Type of dreams	Flying, moving, restless in dreams	Colourful (especially red), passionate	Few, sentimental and romantic dreams
Climatic preference	Prefer warm climate, sunshine and moisture	Prefer cool and well ventilated place	Any climate is fine as long as it is not humid
Financial matters	Spends money quickly	Spend money on luxuries	Saves money
Tastes	Likes sweet, sour and salty tastes	Likes sweet, bitter and stringent tastes	Likes pungent, bitter and astringent tastes
Tendency to types of diseases	Nervous system diseases, pain arthritis, mental disorder	Fevers, infections and inflammatory diseases	Respiratory system diseases
Type of pulse	Rapid, irregular and weak pulse	Strong pulse	Steady, rhythmic pulse

Formula:

- If vata > 20 then root constitution is vata
- If pitta > 20 then root constitution is pitta
- If kapha > 20 then root constitution is kapha
- If vata > 12 and pitta > 12 then root constitution is vata
- If pitta > 12 and kapha > 12 then root constitution is pitta
- If vata > 12 and kapha > 12 then root constitution is kapha
- If $8 < \text{vata} < 12$ and $8 < \text{pitta} < 12$ and $8 < \text{kapha} < 12$ then mixed root constitution

Appendix B herbs

Herbs (latin)	Blood circulations/ bronchial tubes	Purifying (toxic)	Digestive	Immune enhancer	Health man	Metabolism	Nervous system	Anti-aging	Anti-rheumatism	Health woman
Allium sativum	X		X			X		X	X	
Aloe vera		X	X							X
Andrographis paniculata	X	X	X	X				X		
Asparagus racemosus			X	X				X		X
Astragalus membranaceus	X			X				X		
Azadirachta indica		X		X		X			X	
Bowellia serrata	X		X						X	
Camellia sinensis	X			X		X				
Cassia angustifolia		X	X							
Centalla asiatica		X					X	X		

Herbs (latin)	Blood circulations/ bronchial tubes	Purifying (toxic)	Digestive	Immune enhancer	Health man	Metabolism	Nervous system	Anti-aging	Anti-rheumatism	Health woman
Cimicifuga racemosa									X	X
Coleus forskohlii	X									
Commiphora mukul	X	X				X			X	
Crataegus oxyacantha	X									
Curcuma longa		X	X						X	
Echinacea purpurea		X		X						
Eletteria cardamomum	X		X					X	X	
Emblica officinalis	X		X	X	X			X	X	
Ginkgo biloba	X						X			X
Glycyrhiza glabra	X		X	X					X	

Herbs (latin)	Blood circulations/ bronchial tubes	Purifying (toxic)	Digestive	Immune enhancer	Health man	Metabolism	Nervous system	Anti-aging	Anti-rheumatism	Health woman
Gymnema sylvestre						X				
Hypericum perforatum							X			
Lavandula angustifolia			X				X			X
Linum usitatissimum	X		X						X	
Melaleuca alternifolia		X								X
Mucuna pruriens					X		X	X		
Ocimum sanctum	X		X	X		X				
Phyllanthus niruri		X								
Picrorhiza kurroa	X	X	X							
Piper methysticum							X			

Herbs (latin)	Blood circulations/ bronchial tubes	Purifying (toxic)	Digestive	Immune enhancer	Health man	Metabolism	Nervous system	Anti-aging	Anti-rheumatism	Health woman
Serenoa repens					X					
Silybum marianum		X								
Tanacetum parthenium							X		X?	
Terminalia arjuna	X	X	X							
Tinospora cordifolia		X		X				X		
Trigonella foenum graecum	X		X			X		X		
Ulmus rubra	X		X					X		
Valeriana officinalis							X			
Withania somnifera				X	X		X	X		
Zingiber officinale	X	X	X			X	X		X	

Appendix C healing metals

Metal	Characteristics
Gold	Enhanced the nervous system, stimulates memory and intelligence, enforces the heart and increases endurance
Iron	Excellent for bone marrow, bone tissue, liver and the spleen
Copper	Tonic for liver, spleen and lymph system
Mercury	Stimulates the enzyme system, transforms tissue and stimulates intelligence
Lead	Excellent for skin diseases, vaginal flow, gonorrhoea and syphilis
Tin	A natural anti aging product, good for diabetes, skin diseases, constipation of the lymph system and asthma
Silver	Helpful against fevers, acid stomach, hyperactive gall bladder and heavy menstruation

Appendix D healing (gem) stones and colours

(gem) stone	Characteristics
Agate	Protections for children against fear, enhances spiritual conscience
Amethyst	Contributes in controlling emotions
Beryl	Stimulates intelligence, power, prestige and social relations
Bloodstone	Enhances spiritual education of children
Diamond	Contributes in anti aging, strengthens the hart
Almandine	Contribute in warmth
Lapis Lazuli	Contributes in enhancing sensitivity for spiritual vibrations
Lapis Linguis	The same characteristics as Lapis Lazuli but is also stimulates meditation and draws luck
Moonstone	Calms the spirit
Opal	Stimulates good feelings and friendship
Pearl	Purifies the blood and helps with jaundice and gallstones
Ruby	Strengthens the heart
Red coral	Purifies blood, helps controlling anger, hatred and jealousy
Safire	Relives diseases like rheumatism, nervous pain, epilepsy and hysteria
Topaz	Relives fear and stimulates passion

Colours	Characteristics
Blue	Helps correcting liver problems
Yellow	Stimulates understanding and intelligence
Yellow-green	Has a calming effect on sense
Green	Calms emotions and stimulates energy flows toward the heart
Orange	Enforces the sexual organs and helps congestions
Purple	Creates lightness in the body en opens perception
Red	Stimulates the production of red blood corpuscle and gives energy to bone marrow and nerve tissue

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