



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HAPPINESS IN AYURVEDA AND WESTERN PERSPECTIVES- REVIEW

Pradeep, H L N. R^{1*}, Wickramasinghe, MRM², Dissanayaka WDN³
¹BAMS (Hons.), Colombo, PG Dip, Clinical Biochemistry, PhD scholar, Lecturer (Probationary) Department of Basic principles, Ayurveda Anatomy and Physiology, Faculty of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka
²MD (Ayu), India Senior Lecturer, Department of Basic principles, Ayurveda Anatomy and Physiology, Faculty of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka
³MBBS(Colombo), PhD (Neuroscience, Queens' Medical school) Professor. W.D.N. Dissanayake Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70057/ijaar.2024.60901>

ABSTRACT

Happiness, or "*Sukha*," in Ayurveda, is a state of balance involving physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Ayurveda, an ancient system of medicine, emphasizes the importance of balancing the three doshas—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—which govern bodily functions and processes. This article aims to explore how happiness is conceptualized in Ayurvedic philosophy and the measures suggested to achieve it. The primary sources utilized for this work include ancient Ayurvedic texts such as the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Astanga Hridaya Samhita, which provide a comprehensive understanding of happiness from an Ayurvedic perspective. The study highlights that achieving happiness requires maintaining good digestion and excretion, a clear mind, and a clean heart, all of which can be supported by a harmonious lifestyle. Key practices, including daily regimens (*Dinacharya*) like early rising, oral hygiene, medicated oil massage (*Abhyanga*), exercise or *yoga* (*Vyayama*), and meditation, are essential for sustaining well-being. Additionally, a *Sattvic* mindset (purity and knowledge) and a life aligned with *Dharma* (righteous living) contribute to meaningful happiness. The final outcome suggests that adherence to Ayurvedic principles can enhance happiness and promote long-term well-being in all aspects of life.

Key words- *Sukha*, *Ayurveda*, *Dinacharya*, Happiness, *Dosha*

INTRODUCTION: In Ayurveda, Happiness (*Sukha*) is considered complete if the readable of Physical Well-being, Mental Health & Emotional Equilibrium.

^[1] While modern values often place more emphasis on fleeting, momentary emotions when it comes to happiness, ^[2] according to Ayurveda happiness is actually a state of balance that can last provided we lead an authentic and balanced life. At the heart of this age-old science, lies a symmetrical structure created by the three *Doshas*—

Vata, *Pitta* and *Kapha* which are responsible for governances within body ^[3]. Good digestion and excretion, stable mindset, emotional balance and a balanced life style are basic to this harmonious state of health ^[4]. *Dinacharya*, or a daily routine, is important for health and happiness. Tasks on this routine embrace early riser, oral hygiene, self-massage and train common follow of *yoga* or any form of exercise; aware consuming food plan leading to stable wellbeing whereas

include psychological actions in morning *Sadhana* as quick walking with deep respiration.

In Search of Happiness, [5] Next is happiness: long term lasting happiness can only be achieved by following true *dharma* ("Righteousness," or "Ethical conduct.") while operating at the level of a *Sattvic* mind (i. e: with pure thoughts and wisdom). Based on the teachings of classical Ayurvedic texts, this review draws a comprehensive picture of what happiness constitutes in the philosophy and practice of Ayurveda taking into account physical health along with intellectual clarity and emotional maturity. Western psychologists typically associate happiness with subjective well-being, which is based on the presence of positive and negative feelings; stable or frequent aspects include directional life satisfaction, repeated satisfying experiences at work etc.[6] According to positive psychology, which uses scientific understanding and effective intervention to aid in the achievement of a satisfactory life experience or personal fulfillment [7], Happiness is characterized by the frequent experience of positive emotions such as joy, contentment, and love, along with the infrequent occurrence of negative emotions like sadness and anger.

The PERMA model, as defined by Martin Seligman, is centered on five basic blocks to a good life: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment [8]. These are important in order for one to lead an enriching and happy life. Furthermore, studies done in neuroscience have suggested the role of neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine in regulating mood and emotional well-being [9] The Western

approach also emphasizes the importance of lifestyle factors such as regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and sufficient sleep-in promoting happiness [10] By integrating these ideas with traditional Ayurvedic practices we can gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be happy and well.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The analysis draws heavily from classical Ayurvedic texts and recent scientific research to discuss the concept of happiness from the perspectives of both Ayurveda and westerners. The major classical Ayurvedic texts that were reviewed include Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya; these texts provide foundational principles on *Sukha* (happiness), balance of *Doshas*, and *Dincharya*. Specifically, certain verses as well as ideas related to *Sukha* or happiness were identified, examined in order to obtain a clear understanding of how happiness is conceptualized in Ayurveda.

On the other hand, a comparative study between the Western and Ayurvedic approaches towards happiness concentrating on physiological, psychological and lifestyle influences was conducted by this review.

Selection Criteria for Sources:

- 1. Relevance to Happiness:** The selected verses and sections from the classical texts were chosen based on their direct discussion of *Sukha* (happiness) and related concepts such as mental and physical balance, lifestyle recommendations (*Dincharya*), and the role of *doshas*.
- 2. Authenticity and Authority:** Only the primary and most authoritative classical texts were reviewed to ensure a

reliable interpretation of Ayurvedic concepts. These texts were chosen because they form the foundational framework of Ayurvedic knowledge and are widely recognized in the field of traditional medicine.

3. Integration of Ancient and Modern Perspectives:

The selection of recent scientific research was guided by the need to draw parallels between ancient Ayurvedic teachings and modern scientific understandings of happiness. Studies were chosen based on their alignment with Ayurvedic principles, such as balance, mind-body connection, and holistic health. **Charaka Samhita:** This is one of the oldest and most authoritative texts in Ayurveda, focusing extensively on the philosophy of life, health, and disease. It discusses *Sukha* (happiness) in relation to the balance of mind, body, and spirit, and provides guidance on maintaining health through lifestyle and dietary practices. **Sushruta Samhita:** This text emphasizes surgical procedures and anatomy, but also delves into broader concepts of health and well-being, including *Sukha*, with an emphasis on balance and the avoidance of extremes. **Ashtanga Hridaya:** Known for its practical approach to Ayurvedic principles, this text combines the teachings of Charaka and Sushruta, emphasizing daily routines (*Dinacharya*) and lifestyle management as key factors in achieving happiness and balance.

Results;

Table 1.1 Ayurvedic Perspective on Happiness.

Concept	Key Finding	Evidence
Balance of <i>Doshas</i>	Happiness (<i>Sukha</i>) in Ayurveda is achieved through the balance of the three doshas: <i>Vata</i> , <i>Pitta</i> , and <i>Kapha</i> .	Charaka Samhita [3] emphasizes that health and happiness result from balanced <i>doshas</i> , proper functioning of digestive fire (<i>Agni</i>), and a state of contentment of the soul, mind, and senses.
<i>Dinacharya</i> (Daily)	Following a structured	Ashtanga Hridaya [11] outlines practices

It is worth noting that these two perspectives on happiness Ayurveda and the Western world emphasizes on the wholeness of life focusing on the well-being of body, soul and mind.

* From Ayurvedic point of view, happiness (*Sukha*) is a long-lasting state that appear only when three *doshas* are in harmony, there is disciplined daily routine (*Dinacharya*), as well as practices for clearing mental fog and stabilizing emotions.

In contrast to this, positive psychology within western context explains that joy is about satisfaction with one's own existence and the presence of favorable feelings which are backed by brain chemicals moderation and healthy habits.

Both systems acknowledge the significance of daily rhythm, stress management and living with a sense of purpose. Therefore, when it comes to neurotransmitters or gut-brain axis researches done from a Western perspective they seem to be similar to what 'Ayurveda' describes regarding balanced *dosha's* as well as digestive health.

The combination of Ayurvedic practices such as meditation, yoga and good nutrition along with Western methods for instance regular training exercises plus mindfulness techniques provides an all-inclusive framework towards enduring satisfaction and general wellbeing among individuals (Table 1.1,1.2 and 1.3).

Routine):	daily routine is crucial for maintaining health and happiness.	such as early rising, self-massage (<i>Abhyanga</i>), regular exercise, and mindful eating to promote physical and mental well-being.
Mental and Spiritual Practices	Practices like meditation, yoga, and <i>pranayama</i> are essential for mental clarity and emotional stability.	These practices are recommended in Ayurvedic texts to balance the mind and emotions, contributing to a state of <i>Sukha</i> . ^[3]
Ethical and Purposeful Living (<i>Dharma</i>):	Living in accordance with one's <i>Dharma</i> , or life purpose, is essential for lasting happiness.	The concept of <i>Dharma</i> emphasizes ethical living and fulfilling one's duties, leading to a deep sense of fulfillment and joy.

Table 1.2 Western Perspective on Happiness

Concept	Key Finding	Evidence
Positive Psychology	Happiness is defined by life satisfaction, positive emotions, and the absence of negative emotions.	Well-being is made up of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. (Meyers & ^[12,13] .
Neurotransmitters and Brain Health	The regulation of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine is crucial for mood and emotional well-being.	In addition to mood regulation, they also contribute to happiness feelings. ^[14] .
Lifestyle Factors	Regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and sufficient sleep are essential for promoting happiness.	Ratey & Hagerman's (2008) <i>Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain</i> explains how exercise positively affects mental wellness and personal well-being. ^[15] .
Stress Management and Relaxation	Techniques such as mindfulness meditation and relaxation exercises are effective in reducing stress and enhancing happiness.	For mental health and happiness maintenance western psychology stresses on stress management.

Table 1.3 Comparative Analysis

Holistic Approach	Both Ayurveda and Western perspectives recognize the importance of a holistic approach to happiness that integrates physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
Daily Routines and Lifestyle	Ayurveda's <i>Dinacharya</i> and Western lifestyle medicine both emphasize the importance of daily routines and healthy lifestyle practices for maintaining balance and promoting happiness.
Mental and Emotional Health	Both systems highlight the significance of mental clarity and emotional stability. Ayurvedic practices like meditation and <i>pranayama</i> have parallels in Western mindfulness and relaxation techniques.
Physiological Basis	Ayurveda's emphasis on balancing <i>doshas</i> and digestive health can be correlated with Western understanding of the gut-brain axis and the role of neurotransmitters in mood.

	regulation.
Purpose and meaning	The concept of <i>Dharma</i> in Ayurveda and the focus on meaning and accomplishment in Western positive psychology both underscore the importance of living a purposeful life for achieving lasting happiness.

The regulation of neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine are critical for mood and emotional well-being. Serotonin, often referred to as the "feel-good" neurotransmitter, helps regulate mood, appetite, and sleep, while dopamine is associated with pleasure, motivation, and reward. Imbalances in these neurotransmitters can lead to mood disorders such as depression and anxiety [16]. Interventions that increase the availability of these neurotransmitters, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) for serotonin, or engaging in activities that boost dopamine levels, like exercise, can significantly improve mental health and promote happiness [17] [18] [19][20]. Both Ayurvedic practices and modern Western treatments aim to improve emotional stability and overall well-being by focusing on regulating neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine. Ayurveda uses natural methods such as diet, herbs, and lifestyle adjustments, while Western medicine often employs medications and therapies, both working towards the common goal of enhancing mood and emotional balance.

DISCUSSION: The integration of Ayurvedic principles and Western scientific insights offers a comprehensive approach to understanding and achieving happiness. Ayurveda emphasizes maintaining balance among the doshas (*Vata, Pitta, and Kapha*) by following a well-structured daily regimen known as *Dinacharya*. and mental practices like meditation, which aligns with Western findings on the importance of lifestyle

factors and neurotransmitter regulation for mental health.

For example, practices such as yoga and mindfulness, emphasized in Ayurveda, are known to increase serotonin and dopamine levels, thereby improving mood and emotional well-being [21]. Similarly, the emphasis on proper digestion in Ayurveda, which impacts overall health and mental clarity, can be related to the Western concept of the gut-brain axis, where gut health significantly affects mental health [22] [23]. The holistic approach of Ayurveda, which includes physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, complements the multifaceted strategies of positive psychology and lifestyle medicine in the West. By integrating these practices, individuals can benefit from a more nuanced and effective strategy for achieving sustained happiness and overall well-being. This synthesis highlights the value of cross-cultural insights in developing a more holistic understanding

CONCLUSION: The results of this comparative analysis show that Ayurvedic and Western perspectives on happiness are similar. Both emphasize the importance of taking care of our bodies, having a clear mind, and finding emotional balance. This holistic approach recognizes that all these aspects are interconnected and contribute to our overall well-being.

The methods used are: Review of Literature: This involves systematic reviewing of classical Ayurvedic texts and modern scientific literature. Identification and analysis of key concepts involved in promoting happiness. Synthesis

Conceptual: It integrates principles from Ayurveda with results found through western scientific research. A holistic structure for appreciating joyfulness and health: Development Practical Implications: That section discusses how one can use their own daily practices based on ancient Indian medicine along with those given by contemporary society to ensure better living conditions which are rich with joyfulness. Applications for maintaining balance while ensuring continuous happiness were also explored. By combining ideas from Ayurveda and Western philosophy, we can develop a better understanding of what it means to be truly happy. It's not just about temporary pleasures or external circumstances, but rather a state of being that is sustainable and fulfilling in the long run. This integrated approach to happiness can guide us in making choices that support our physical health, nourish our minds, and cultivate positive emotions. It reminds us that true well-being is not limited to one area of life but encompasses our entire being.

REFERENCES:

1. Baumeister RF, Vohs KD, Aaker JL, Garbinsky EN. Some key differences between a happy life and a meaningful life. *J Posit Psychol.* 2013;8(6):505-16.
2. Sharma RK, Dash B. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesa: Text with English Translation & Critical Exposition Based on Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2009.
3. Sharma PV. Caraka Samhita. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Orientalia; 2014. Sutrasthana 1-41. Dirghanjivitiya Adhyaya.p. 31-233.
4. Sharma P. Susruta Samhitha. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Orientalia; Sutrasthana 15-41. Dravyasangrahaniya Adhyaya, p. 105-113.
5. Srikantha Murthy KK. Ashtangha Hridayam. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy; 2004. Sutrasthana 1-3. p. 14.
6. Diener E, Suh EM, Lucas RE, Smith HL. Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychol Bull.* 1999;125(2):276-302.
7. Seligman ME. Positive feeling and positive character. *Authent Happiness.* 2002;3. 14.
8. Seligman ME. Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being. New York: Simon and Schuster; 2011.
9. Nutt DJ. Relationship of neurotransmitters to the symptoms of major depressive disorder. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 2008;69(Suppl E1):4-7.
10. Ratey JJ. Spark: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain. New York: Hachette Digital; 2008.
11. Srikantha Murthy KK. Ashtangha Hridayam. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy; 2004. Sutrasthana 1-3. Ayushkamiyam Adhyaya. p. 14.
12. Seligman ME. Positive feeling and positive character. *Authent Happiness.* 2002;3. 14.
13. Seligman ME. Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being. New York: Simon and Schuster; 2011.
14. Nutt DJ. Relationship of neurotransmitters to the symptoms of major depressive disorder. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 2008;69(Suppl E1):4-7.

15. Ratey JJ. Spark: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain. New York: Hachette Digital; 2008.
16. Berger M, Gray JA, Roth BL. The expanded biology of serotonin. *Annu Rev Med.* 2009;60(1):355-66.
17. Berger M, Gray JA, Roth BL. The expanded biology of serotonin. *Annu Rev Med.* 2009;60(1):355-66.
18. Stahl SM. Basic psychopharmacology of antidepressants, part 1: Antidepressants have seven distinct mechanisms of action. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 1998;59(4):5-14.
19. Dishman RK, Hales DP, Pfeiffer KA, Felton GA, Saunders R, Ward DS, et al. Physical self-concept and self-esteem mediate cross-sectional relations of physical activity and sport participation with depression symptoms among adolescent girls. *Health Psychol.* 2006;25(3):396.
20. Ratey JJ, Loehr JE. The positive impact of physical activity on cognition during adulthood: a review of underlying mechanisms, evidence and recommendations.
21. Berger M, Gray JA, Roth BL. The expanded biology of serotonin. *Annu Rev Med.* 2009;60(1):355-66.
22. Mayer EA, Knight R, Mazmanian SK, Cryan JF, Tillisch K. Gut microbes and the brain: Paradigm shift in neuroscience. *J Neurosci.* 2014;34(46):15490-6.
23. Feldman RS, Knudsen HK. Serotonin and its effects on mood and emotion. *Pharmacol Rev.* 2005;57(3):317-34.

Corresponding Author: Dr. H L N. R. Pradeep, Department of Basic principles, Ayurveda Anatomy and Physiology, Faculty of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka.

Email:ranganapradeep202114@gmail.com

Source of support: Nil Conflict of interest:
None Declared

Cite this Article as : [H L N. R. Pradeep et al :Comparative Analysis of Happiness in Ayurveda and Western Perspectives-Review] www.ijaar.in : IJAAR VOL VI ISSUE IX JULY - AUG 2024 Page No: - 393-399