

A SHORT REVIEW ON MANA: A KRIYASHARIR PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, the concept of *Mana* (mind) is not merely psychological but fundamentally physiological. It serves as the bridge between the *Atma* (soul) and the *Indriyas* (senses). This review explores the *Kriyasharir* (physiological) aspects of *Mana*, including its origin, location, properties, and its pivotal role in *Gyanotpatti* (the process of perception). Understanding *Mana* is essential for a holistic grasp of human physiology and the maintenance of health.

KEYWORDS: *Mana*, *Kriyasharir*, *Ayurved*.

INTRODUCTION

The word "*Mana*" is derived from the root "*Man*" which means "to think" or "to perceive."^[1] In *Kriyasharir*, *Mana* is classified as an *Ubhayendriya* (dual organ)^[2], acting as both a sensory and a motor faculty. It is the entity responsible for the coordination of various bodily functions and the regulation of mental states. Without the involvement of *Mana*, even the most functional sense organs cannot perceive their objects.

Anatomical and Physiological Seat (Adhishtana)

There are varied opinions in classical texts regarding the seat of *Mana*:

- **Hridaya (Heart):** Most Acharyas, including Maharshi *Charaka*^[3] and maharshi *Sushruta*^[4], consider the heart as the primary seat of consciousness (*Chetana*) and *Mana*.
- **Shir (Head/Brain):** Acharya *Bhela* suggests the head^[5] as the seat of *Mana*, aligning more closely with contemporary neurophysiology.
- **Sarva Sharir (Universal)^[6]:** Since perception happens throughout the body, *Mana* is also considered to pervade the entire body via the *Manovaha Srotas* (channels of mental faculty).

Properties of Mana (Manas Guna)^[7]

Ayurveda defines two unique qualities that characterize the physiology of *Mana*:

- **Anutva** (Atomicity): *Mana* is extremely subtle and minute. This allows it to move with incredible speed.
- **Ekatva** (Oneness): Only one *Mana* exists in an individual at a time. Although it seems like we perceive many things at once, it is the rapid movement (*Anutva*) of a single mind between different senses that creates the illusion of simultaneous perception.

The Functional Trigunas^[8]

Mana is governed by three functional attributes known as *Mahagunas*:

- **Sattva**: Represents purity, clarity, and balance. It is the only "pure" quality of the mind.
- **Rajas**: Represents activity, passion, and movement. It is considered a *Manas Dosha* when in excess.
- **Tamas**: Represents inertia, darkness, and sleep. It is also a *Manas Dosha* when imbalanced.

Functions of Mana (Manas Karma)^[9]

According to *Charaka Samhita (Sharira Sthana)*, the physiological functions of *Mana* include:

- **Indriyabhigraha**: Directing and controlling the sense organs toward their objects.
- **Svasya Nigraha**: Self-control or restraining the mind from unwholesome objects.
- **Uha** (Hypothesis): The ability to debate or speculate.
- **Vichara** (Consideration): Deliberation and analytical thinking.

The Process of Perception (Gyanotpatti)^[10]

The *Kriyasharir* perspective emphasizes that knowledge is an outcome of a specific chain of contact:

Atma (Soul) → Mana (Mind) → Indriya (Sense Organ) → Artha (Object)

If any link in this chain is broken—most often the *Mana* being distracted—perception does not occur. This explains why one might "look but not see" when deep in thought.

Manovaha Srotas (The Channels of Mind)^[11]

In *Kriyasharir*, every functional entity requires a channel for its operation. *Manovaha Srotas* are the pathways through which mental impulses and thoughts circulate.

- **Moola (Origin)**: The primary seats are the *Hridaya* (Heart) and the *Dashadhamanis* (ten great vessels).
- **Physiological Significance**: When these channels are clear, the individual experiences mental clarity and balanced emotions. If these channels are obstructed by *Doshas* (specifically *Raja* and *Tama*), it leads to various psychiatric and psychosomatic disorders (*Unmada*, *Apasmara*).

Relationship Between Mana and Deha Prakriti^[12]

The physiological makeup of an individual (*Deha Prakriti*) is deeply influenced by the mental temperament (*Manas Prakriti*).

- **Vata Dosha**: Tends to make the *Mana* unstable, quick to perceive but quick to forget (*Anutva* is highly active).
- **Pitta Dosha**: Enhances the *Medha* (intelligence) and *Agni* (digestive fire) of the mind, leading to sharp perception and determination.
- **Kapha Dosha**: Provides stability and patience to the *Mana*, though the process of *Gyanotpatti* may be slower.

DISCUSSION

Mana is a vital physiological entity in Ayurveda that governs both cognitive and motor functions. From a *Kriyasharir* viewpoint, it is the coordinator of the body-mind-spirit complex. Its qualities of *Anutva* and *Ekatva* allow for the seamless processing of vast sensory data, while the balance of *Trigunas* dictates psychological health. A stable *Mana* is the cornerstone of *Swastha* (health).

CONCLUSION

Mana is one of the important *evdiya* described in ayurved. It's called as *ubhayindira*. There is brief description of *mana* in Ayurvedic samhita. Its play major role in health also, that why WHO included mental health in latest definition of health.

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