HOLISTIC THERAPY TO ENHANCE HEALTH - FOR CARDIAC PATIENTS

Baby Shari

The concern for health development and primary health care in India date to the Vedic period. In the Indus Valley Civilization as far back as 3000 B.C. one finds evidence of well developed environmental sanitation programmes such as under ground drains, public bath in the cities etc. ‘Arogya’ or health was given high priority in daily life and this concept of health included physical, mental, social and spiritual well being. This cherished value regarding health is also enshrined in an ancient Sanskrit verse, ‘Sarve Santu Niramyaha’, which means ‘let all be free from disease let all be healthy, which often used to express good wishes (Warrier, 1998).

The Alma Ata Declaration of 1978 to which India was significantly aimed at ‘Health for all by 2000 AD, layed great emphasis on achieving the aim by primary health care, that is the primary prevention of disease. Our traditional system of Ayurveda primarily believed in prevention as the basis of health care. Aachar (character), Vichar (thoughts), Vyavahaar (interpersonal dealings) and ahar (diet) are the basic pillars for maintaining a healthy body and healthy heart.

While talking about health, now it becomes inevitable to talk about disease, healing system, alternative contemporary therapies and its history. Allopathy had received the credit as modern medicine and Hippocrates is considered as the father of Medicine. But the system of medicine followed in India earlier was mainly Ayurveda. Then usual experts in Ayurveda were not used to treat some special cases like mental disorders, venomous snake bite etc. They were dealt by specialised experts. Training in such systems was also not extremely available to everybody and limited to certain caste too. They used to mix their intervention techniques to religious rituals, ‘pooja’ or other ‘manthras’. They were using Astrology along with Ayurvedic medicines. The belief system of the patients were also utilised during the treatment. In kerala tradition, ‘Theyyam’ (Theyyam is a popular ritual dance of nation Kerala, especially performed by Hindus) has to be studied extensively in this regard.
When Allopathy was extended to our country, people began to adopt that method too much. Psychiatry also developed much, so that those Ayurveda specialists in mental disorder, could treat less number of severe mental disorder cases compared to earlier. Now a days people who had ancestral history of above mentioned experts are limiting their area of intervention to astrological predictions and manthras for the vulnerable. The bundle of knowledge they had in herbal medicine and Ayurveda is ignored by the scientific world. That has to be recapped alongwith the system of intervention they had adopted for treating mild mental disorders, atleast with a research interest in analysing the history of treatment. When western as well as eastern Psychology had extended much and Psychology began to develop as a profession. Those who need psychological therapies are addressed by them.

When professionalism is developed too much, a methodology adopted by one branch of medicine, is not provided for others to get expertise or to implement. Ayurveda has got their own techniques of diagnosis. Still when science is developed, recent techniques became the monopoly of Allopathy. Why can’t science come out of professional restrictions? Even then, the system of Ayurveda has got a well developed branch to treat mental disorders.

Allopathy had undergone drastic changes and enhancements, each time by the invention of microscope, vaccines, antibodies and antibiotics. The system, which is well known today, is very highly supported by Biomedical Engineering and Pharmacology. Much of the diagnosis and intervention in Allopathy is possible only with the support of Engineering and Microbiology.

Even while having wide developed etiology, diagnosis and intervention techniques, Allopathy professionals suggests Ayurvedic interventions in rheumatic disease, rehabilitation after surgery, obesity etc.. Homeopaths always do not guarantee a speedy recovery, but treat many chronic cases very effectively. All these systems support the healthy living style suggested by Naturopaths and indicate the relevance of interdisciplinary approach in the healing.

**Psychosomatic Concept**

The word psychosomatic means mind-body. It described the effect of mind on body and body on mind (Otto, Julian, & Tether, 1976). The term psychosomatic (Greek words, Psyche & Soma) was coined by Heinroth in 1818, to emphasise, that both mind and body are important in medicine, but was popularised after the first world war. After second world war many researches had progressed in Britain in the area of psychosomatic illness. (Laden, 1983).

**Bio-Psychosocial Model**

The biopsychosocial model of health has got several implications in clinical practices. The model was accepted by W.H.O., takes into concern the interacting role of the biological, psychological and social factors in assessing an individual’s health or illness, so that an interdisciplinary team approach may be the best way to make a diagnosis. (Schwartz, 1982). Recently spiritual aspects are also included in the definition which is not that much explored like other factors. A therapy which examines all three sets of factors with a team approach may be
appropriate. It points out the importance of understanding the social and psychological factors that contribute to an illness in order to treat appropriately along with biochemical factors. The health habits of healthy individuals should also be evaluated in their psychosocial contexts. These contexts maintain a poor health habit and with appropriate modification, which can facilitate the development of healthy ones. The model gives importance to heredity, environment, health care and lifestyle as the determinants of health.

There are a number of health problems which may have a genetic link. It is clear evidence that environmental factors contribute heavily to morbidity, mortality and overall health. Researchers in Health Psychology are interested in finding out the psychological factors affecting health. A healthy life-style can be purchased or bartered. It must be lived by each and every individual. A healthy life style is the single most important determinant of health.

Recent Indian healing systems as well as the WHO gives an equal importance to four dimensions of health, viz., physical, mental, social and spiritual.

**Physical Health:** Healthy life demands fresh food, pure air, water and non-volatile behaviour. Eating seasonal vegetables, fresh fruits and maintaining a daily balanced diet have been mentioned in every system of medicine. According to Chinese concept also ‘prana’ or ‘vital energy’ has been accepted as a key factor for maintaining good physical health.

**Mental Health:** ‘A glad heart makes a good healthy man’, pointed out by the book of proverbs. Healthy mind in healthy body is to be aimed by everybody. A relaxed and well-balanced mind is more productive than an agitated and tensed mind. Methods of relaxation like yoga, prayer, meditation and music provides relaxation by relieving stress.

**Social Health:** Absence of code of conduct, deterioration in basic human values, greed, wealth violence etc., increase stress and strain in life. Vagbhata had emphasised the importance of helping fellow beings according to one’s capacity. Astangahridaya by Vagbhata explains the need to keep the company of good persons. To have the best health and peace of mind in life, Vagbhata advises, to have pleasant attitudes and courteous behaviour and try to build good rapport with every body.

**Spiritual Health:** The concept of spiritual health is more important in procuring good mental healthy attitudes in life. Bodily actions like violence, killing, stealing, bad works like scolding, speaking ill of others, mental attitude to insult others, desire for the wealth of others, lack of faith in God etc. are acts one should avoid, for peace of mind and good spiritual and mental health.

The diverse effects of behaviour or aspects of health and illness, ranging from etiology and prevention to rehabilitation may be considered in this frame.

**Healthy Life Style Behaviour**

Health is experienced moment by moment. It is nourishing our body with food when we feel a pang of hunger. When we are hurt, it is being able to express that hurt and to restore balance
and harmony to our body. When we are angry, anxious, fearful or in love, it is having the resources to meet those needs, as they arise. Health consists of maintaining a balance, or what the physiologists call, homeostasis. Health, then, becomes a matter of behaviour, as it is satisfying needs in a balanced, fulfilling way instead of temporarily palliating them or suppressing their momentary symptoms.

In order to change an unhealthy life pattern, we must be able to recognise the body imbalances and create a supportive environment that promotes balance. We have to be motivated by internal support systems instead of external factors. The most important aspect of good health is knowing that one is the creator of his own reality, environment and life style.

**Concept and Causes of Disease**

Health is a word that can not be easily defined. For a better definition, it often holds to mean the absence of disease. The more conditions that considered to diseases the less likely is anyone to have good health. To further complicate matters, there is the problem of our own perception of disease and how this affects whether or not a diagnosis is made. If we feel well, that is, if one do not perceive the existence of disease and consequently do not seek the attention of a physician, we are for practical purposes, ‘healthy’, despite the fact that some undiagnosed disease state may exist. Even while having the symptoms, the self confidence and boldness of the patients do a lot in the severity or experience of illness.

During the Middle Ages, in particular, advances in knowledge on human anatomy and physiology were frustrated because of religious opposition to autopsies as well as to the scientific methods necessary for clinical investigations in man. Even in modern world the belief that diseases can be cured by religious conviction persists among various people around the world.

Medical men and bacteriologists are declaring that germs can not secure a foothold in a healthy body, but that a ‘suitable soil’ is necessary. A person with a high degree of vitality is immune to germs. The natural immunity to disease must be broken down for germs to gain a foothold, then the germs are not the primary causes.

The prevailing medical systems have entirely different viewpoints regarding the causation of illness. Allopathy says nothing about the man except in connection with his tissues; they characterise the changes in the tissues as the disease and all there is of the disease, its beginning and its end. According to Ayurveda, disease is technically contradiction of incompatible elements. As cited in *Chikistsavijnana Kosam*, 1991 the biological functions taking place in the body can be divided into three and when these functions fail there occurs the contradiction of incompatible elements. This is disease or illness. Homeopathy sees that symptoms are positive signs of the body, reacting against the disease, as it attempts to overcome it and seeks to stimulate rather than suppress this reaction.

Apart from the three major medical systems, many other branches explain idea regarding the cause of diseases. The concept of illness in Nature Cure is entirely different. According to this
branch of knowledge, disease is caused by violation of nature laws, by deviating from the natural
habitat of the organisms. The worst from of this violation has taken place in the food habits of
modern man. Any foreign substance, which is not required for the functioning of the body, or
which cannot be absorbed by the body; is a toxin. Accumulation of toxins in the body leads to
disease. Disease is the body’s attempt to eliminate toxins and the eliminatory processes are called
disease symptoms (Taylor, 1990).

**Healing Systems**

There are numerous methods to arrive at a diagnosis in Allopathy. Acute emergency situations
are effectively handled by Allopathy. Since it is the mind that controls the body, if mind is not
included in the preventive aspect, the body cannot be healthy. Homeopathy can be safely tried in
many cases. Some systems like Ayurveda, Unani, Nature Cure etc. recommend avoidance of
sour food, heavy food, fried food, cold drinks etc. The same system recommend another kind of
diet. Allopathy also make dietary recommendations, they are based mostly on the nature of
biochemical constituents. Currently it seems ignoring a lot of knowledge. If other systems
recommend or prohibit certain foods, it labels the idea as unscientific (Jaggi, 1998). On the basis
of availability of healing system, publicity of a practitioner and their own evaluation about the
rationality of the curative capacity of the system, people follow different systems of healing. But
when interdisciplinary approaches are facilitated even Allopathy experts recommend life style
changes and dietary habits for many disorders. ‘We are what we eat’, observed Charaka, Susrutha
and Hippocrates (Leverty, 1965).

**Allopathy – A Scientific Approach**

Allopathy is developed in the west and based on scientifically verifiable concepts, it is able to
diagnose and treat many health disorders. Today it is an answer in many life threatening situations
and acute conditions. Surgical remedies are available only in Allopathy. Many miraculous surgical
innovations such as organ transplantations, surgery, micro surgery etc. are witnessed in the last
century. This system treats a disease with drugs having opposite effects to existing symptoms.
Stressing both prevention and cure of disease, on giving and well documented research Allopathy
ensures continuous feedback and improvement. Allopathy is highly supported by Pharmacology
as well as Bio medical Engineering.

**Homeopathy: Gentle, Long Term Benefits**

Coined from the Greek words ‘homois’ meaning ‘similar’ and ‘pathi’ meaning sickness,
homeopathy received its name from its German founder Samuel Hahneman. Through the basic
principles of ‘Similia Similibus Eurentur’ (like cures like) homeopathy proves that the agents
that bring about symptoms of sickness can cure the cause of those very symptoms when used in
extremely diluted form. This phenomenon, though originally scotted at by practitioners of modern
medicine, is more and more, being accepted as credible due to the continuing success of laboratory
experiments.
Ayurveda – Fundamentals of Healthy Living

Developed over the past 4000 years Ayurvedam (Ayur means life and veda means knowledge) a traditional health care system of India and a science, of healthy long living, encompasses many branches of medicines. Everything in the world is ultimately composed by 5 bhutas (elements) - Prithvi (earth), apa (water) teja (fire) vayu (air) and akasha (ether). This concept, called the 'panchabutha theory' is strictly adhered to by Ayurveda. Kapha, pitta and vata, collectively known as the doshas or tridoshas are equivalent to the four humours in Greek medicine: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile.

In the treatment of disease, the Ayurvedic physician tries to correct the diagnosis imbalances through appropriate diet and drugs. Ayurvedic medicines are mostly derived from vegetable sources, through mineral compounds and sometimes drugs of animal origin are also used. Ayurveda teaches healthy living style too. Analysing the patients’ family history, examining the entire body, categorising the patient’s temperament, analysing his digestion, and reading the pulse, Ayurveda physician concludes which of the doshas is imbalanced.

Nature Cure – Healing from Within

The term Naturopathy was coined by a nineteenth century German homeopath John H.H. Schael. Gandhiji was one of the greatest proponents Nature Cure methods. Nature Cure-also earlier known as naturopathy-is a combination of a variety of natural therapeutic and methods of healing. The curative properties of Nature’s elements the sun, air, earth and water are employed as natural cures. The primary cause of all diseases, according to Nature Cure, is the conscious or unconscious violation of Nature’s laws, and disease in reality is a self-purifying effort by the body to heal itself. This may be thinking, breathing, eating, drinking, dressing, working, resting, as also in moral, social and sexual conduct (Gerald, 1965). It is not the germs that initiate disease, they appear and flourish only where there is a morbid accumulation of waste matter (toxin). With will power and perseverance, it provides effective and holistic healing.

Nature Cure professes that what affects one part affects the entire body, no matter by what name the disease is called. The body is a complete entity and reacts to disease in to, it must therefore, be treated as a whole and not in parts. All healing comes from within the body itself. There are self curative forces inherent in the human body working towards health and healing, the physicians through their nature cure techniques, lends only in intelligent assistance. The basic principle of Nature Cure is that all healing comes from within the body itself as it strives to maintain a human body equilibrium. Since the body is considered to be a complete entity which reacts to a disease as a whole, treatment is geared towards the body as a whole too. However there must be sufficient inherent vitality left in the patient for the body to react towards a cure (Madhavankutty, 1995).

Orthopathy

Orthopathy is the term used to denote that disease symptom itself is the cure process. The concepts of Orthopathy was published by Jennings, in 1960, at Ohio. Modern medical doctors like
Trall, Shelton, Tilden, Clements and Dodds have later associated with Jennings in this scientific movement in America. Earlier Naturopathy has mostly concerned on suppression of symptoms by natural means and Naturopathy also sought remedial measures, but through natural means. They have identified toxemia in the body is the major cause of all diseases, toxins, mostly of destructive chemical in nature. Rectification of health is possible through correct nutrients. Orthopathy believes that cure is generated by the body itself. They did not believe in drugs, as they suppress symptoms, which is not cure in its real sense and the symptoms get further complicated by drugs. The Germ theory and Calorie estimate theory also were not acceptable to nature cure experts. They dwelled on the restoration of bio energy for the elimination of any disease symptoms. Any symptom is sign of depletion of bio energy and so there is no point in suppressing or arresting a symptom.

Though the above mentioned are the major healing systems, in Indian set up there are more than 64 other alternative systems which were used to treat both physical and mental illnesses.

A patient will be living not in isolation, but alongwith his family, immediate relatives and near by society. He is directly influenced by his surroundings, mental set up and other internal functions. So if a therapist is going to consider a patient holistically- the body, mind, social and spiritual factors together- it will be more scientific. Such an approach was attempted by the author.

Because of a preoccupation with technology and science we shouldn’t forget the psychological and emotional facts of our personality. Today we have a kalido scopic variety of therapeutic tools. Let the new century bring a more humane system of medical relief in which human being will be seen as a total organism, with a very heavy premium on the emotional and psychological aspects of his personality. Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides-says vedas.

Vagbhada gives nine commandments for good health like “eat wholesome food, engage in enjoyments, act circumspectly, non indulgent in sexual pleasure, be generous equally consider everybody, be truthful, be patient and be trust worthy”. The same idea is expressed in Bhagawad Geetha. “If you eat and enjoy moderately, if you are engaged in good deeds, if you can realise yourself and consider life as a duty, you will never suffer sorrow.”

Experts in Health Psychology had proved that psychological factors do play a very significant role in the health as well as in healing. New researchers are trying to find out the role of such specific factors in the etiology and healing. The author had conducted a doctoral study among cardiac patients, in which they are found to be more hostile and stressed than normals. Cardiac patients also possess more activation and stability (rajo guna and satwa guna, in eastern language) (Baby Shari, 2004).

As the victimisation of psychological factors increases, the recent researchers propose and experiment on different methods of interventions. Natural method of identifying and reducing stressors are highlighted by Agarwal (1994). Sharma (1999) had put forwarded an intervention which can be implemented in the personal, institutional and community levels. Non pharmacological psychological stress reduction techniques were found to be effective in cardiac responses by Parsternak and Janzzi (2002). Yardley et. al.(2001), conducted a long term study in this area.
Counselling was given much importance by Rejeskei et al. (2001) in their intervention studies. George et al. (1998) had found out a cognitive behavioural programme as effective where as Latha (1998) had examined the effectiveness of self monitoring and change in dietary habits. Dath et al. (1997) had used relaxation and behavioural counselling to reduce anxiety related symptoms in Coronary Heat Disease which had compared the different types of relaxation techniques, Broota et al. (1995) had found that savarana was the most effective one. Multidisciplinary approaches were used as intervention by Agrawal and Dalal (1993), Kishida et al. (1990), Niven (1976) and Baby (2004). Ornish (1996) had conducted outstanding studies, even to blockages in the arteries and to avoid bye pass surgeries. His intervention includes a package, like a yogic life style. Some researchers like Girden et al. (1999), had concentrated in hostility reduction where as other like Frasune – Smith and Prince (1989) tried to effectively cope with stressors and Smith et al. (1995) tried for life style correction through this methods of intervention. Effective adjustment (Ockene et al. 1992), information relaxation and counselling (Oldenburg et al. 1985), type A behaviour modification (Allan and Scheidt 1996), stress management (Bundy et al. 1994), cardiology counselling (Friedman et al. 1986) etc. were the other intervention techniques used in the cardiac patients by different researchers.

The author had tested a biopsychosocial intervention programme for, 10 cardiac patients of a particular category [patients who experienced angina (Angina pectoris-severe chest pain experienced by heart patients) during severe and moderate exertions only] which was scientifically proved to decrease stress as well as hostility. In a holistic point of view the intervention package was based up on various arena of the patients, namely biological, psychological and social. The package was administered as treatment camps. It included diet control, yoga, natural living, psycho educational and relaxing self-expression programmes, as well as psychological counseling. The details of the intervention programme are as follows.

1. **Natural Diet**

Unboiled fruits, vegetables, nuts, sprouts, grains, germinated seeds were provided in the camp, for the participants to eat. Enough varieties of food of this type were provided, so that they can select this food according to their taste preferences. More over, watery fruits and nuts, like, watermelon, sugar cane juice and tender coconut etc. were also provided. Food was not supplied, but they were allowed to select and have. Vegetables and fruit salad without milks, sugar, salt or other condiments, were also provided. Fresh unboiled, untreated (with chlorine/alum) water were provided, so that they can drink as they want. The participants were advised to eat or drink only when they feel hungry or thirsty. They were allowed to take rest, where they felt tired.

Morning and afternoon, according to the availability and convenience of experts, classes were given about the relevance of diet control in healing heart ailments, relevance of a healthy life style etc. Even during classes by experts, the participants were allowed to be in the posture, as they like. Classes were mainly according to the need of the participants, however content of such classes usually include Health-Disease, Symptoms of disease, Etiology, Cure process, Theoretical foundations of Natural Diet and Yogasanas, Role of Psychological factors like Personality, Stress
and Hostility in heart diseases etc. These classes help the participants to get a cognitive support for their treatment.

Most of the time the participants are allowed to take rest. Newspaper, radio, and television such medias are not used or played. More than classes, leisure is preferred in the camps. These were no completion or torture of any kind. Even if a subject was experienced severe craving for cooked food that was provided with minimum salt or condiments but their data was not included in the study. The food, which is unboiled, contains maximum ‘Pranavayu’ (oxygen), like unboilded fruits, nuts, vegetables, pulses and grain. They are satvic food, which are living cells and most appropriate nutrients for living bodies.

2. Panchabhuta Upasana

The living body, evolved or created out of the physical elements (Panchabhutas), is to be in constant interaction with its constituent elements in order to sustain life. So keeping away from panchabutas will make us ill. We cannot live with out breathing, more than one or two minutes, as we have inseparable relation with vayu, which we need not only through nose or mouth, but also through water, food and through skin. Experts’ classes will include topics of this sort, so that the participants can clarify their doubts and can practice these steps, during the free time in the camp and also when they went back home. All these things were taught to the participants and they were allowed, for drinking plain water, breathing fresh air, wear nonsynthetic or cotton dress, do water bath, swimming etc. as camps were organised in places with such facilities and in a less polluted area.

Living body can accept the organic nutrients in the plants, which had already absorbed, nutrients and minerals from the soil. Tactile contract to earth is needed for the efficient functioning of the brain, heart, pancreas etc. Shoes, synthetic flooring etc. prevents own contact with the earth. Perhaps the brain and such organs may need some kind of earthing, similar to that of electronic equipments (Baby, 2004). So the participants were allowed to walk bare footedly through terrain or on grass, at times during free time in the camp. Direct reception of moderate sunlight or diffused sunlight also is necessary for life. It is highly unhygienic to live in dark rooms. So chances are provided in the camp for sunbath. Upasana of akasha, the need of space inside the body, is essential for health, which was accomplished by fasting. Fasting was not compulsory in the camp, but if the participants do not want food or feel it as not tasty, they were allowed to fast and as the desire for food or craving comes back, they can come back to the natural diet. The participants were taught about fasting, so that they could do this, when they were at home, Akasha is believed to be ether. The proportionate combination of the bodily elements (panchabhootam) is health and the excess or deficiency of any of such elements leads to disease.

3. Yogasanas and Meditation

Yoga is not basically a method of treating disease, but different yogic practices have curative and prophylactic (preventing disease) values. Yogic meditation cures mental stress and strain as well as the disease caused by them (Hassanagas, et al., 1998). In combination with Nature Cure,
Yogasana can take care of common ailments and chronic diseases, even for cardiovascular disease (Hassanagas, et. al., 1998).

Yoga is intended for expediting the human evolution, but here the purpose is limited to bring back health, as health also is related to aim of yoga. Health is not different from enlightenment, happiness or nirandarananda. Yoga has got therapeutic effects also. Here along with yoga participants are advised to attend to their breathing, which gives a meditation effect. It is different from concentration. These yoga postures are specially designed to be practiced even by patients cured after open heart surgery, still patients are instructed not to do yoga, if they are not capable of doing it.

The salient features of the basic yoga course practiced in the study were:

There is no specific rule for breathing. Observing breathing is practiced during asanas, which is a buddhist type of meditation. Whole session is done in silence, as the purpose of yoga is bringing internal silence, which is visranathi (relaxation), opposite of stress. Exercises are not mixed with asanas, as exercises are predominantly rajasic where as yoga is satvic. Yoga activates the Central Nervous System - brain and other parts of nervous system while exercises activates muscles. Yoga is for calming down where as exercises are for warming up.

In the intervention, 23 postures basic course was taught to the participants. There were brief ‘Savasana’ in between, in which a buddhist meditation technique, of observing breath was merged. With the help of trained yoga teachers this basic course was taught. These postures’ course was scientifically developed on the system followed by Lonavilla School of Yoga at Kaivallydham, Pune and can be practiced by all kinds of patients, including people with heath ailment. ‘A self help manual for therapists’ by Dr. J. Baby (2000) was used for giving instructions for each posture.

Before starting Yogasana postures the participants were asked to be in padmasanam, (cross legged sitting posture) or in a comfortable even position, and do a meditation, by closing eyes and observing breathing for three minutes. They were allowed to attend the body movements results from the inhalation and exhalation.

The basic course of yoga was held for eleven continuous sessions as morning and evening of five days in the camp. Twenty three postures were taught in the first six sessions and the next five sessions were used for corrections of postures. First session-postures was kept from one to six, second session postures was kept from one to eight, third session was kept from one to twelve, fourth session was kept from one to sixteen, fifth session was kept from one to eighteen and sixth session was kept from one to twenty three. Before closing each session savasana was given for five minutes followed by a meditation for three minutes which was done in the beginning and then reciting a manthra, as a breathing exercise (For e.g., Aum, Allahu, Halleluyah etc.). The first session of yoga was in the 2nd day morning and the last session was in the 7th day morning during the camp. During the first two-three sessions each asana was repeated twice or three times. But by the third session, learnt asanas needed be done only once, in order to keep up time.
Yoga sessions were arranged in a calm, airy and safety feeling place where all the participants were visible to the instructor. As yoga were practiced as a group in the camp there is a very good effect of group dynamics.

4. Self Expression Programmes

Usually intervention programmes were organised in a less polluted area and assistance of artistic experts was sought for the camps, especially during the evening or night. When the participants were free after supper and before their sleep (usually between 8p.m and 9p.m). There will be classical music presentations by the experts in music. The participants were taught some music for community singing. Later they were invited for their own artistic expression. Though there was no compulsion, many could take part and do presentations, like singing, doing short skits etc. These kinds of activities helped to decrease the participants stress, feel the social support, feel happy, self-sufficient, get intimacy with other camp members etc. These entertainment programmes and group games helped to improve their communication and self expressiveness.

These programmes were made as liberal as possible. No participant was forced to do anything, but they automatically get involved in the activities. The artistic expressions were not much structured, but musicians and artists were making performances in which the participants were allowed to participate.

5. Psychological Counselling

The role of counsellor in the health settings is normally two-fold: First to course the participants and their relatives either individually or in groups and secondly to work with health professionals and staff involved.

When patients get to know that he has heart disease, their concerns preoccupations and worries have been shown to change dramatically, focusing around the illness and its effect may have on their daily activities, their work and their family life. Distress and anxiety is common among patients and their relatives, which will negatively affect the recovery. Distress and anxiety can be reduced, by providing information about illness, causal factors and treatment. However, providing information is not always straightforward. It often needs to be given in a sensitive manner after exploring what the individual already understands, wants to hear, and can cope with at that particular time (Maguine, 1991). Medical staffs do not always have the time or the skills for counseling and the role of counseling psychologist could be valuable in this regard either in understanding the role themselves or in educating and advising others.

One of the aims of counseling in the study was to give information and support to participants and relatives. Done well, it had improved compliance and recovery and save lives. This strategy had focused on actively involving the patient in the intervention, and encouraging them to talk freely about their problems.

Usually general counseling was given to the participants to help them develop awareness regarding the nature and causes of their difficulties and coping strategies. Counseling had aimed
Health and Well-Being: Emerging Trends

at changing their attitude towards illness, develop confidence in their problems, change their lifestyle, to decrease distress and anxiety, provide support etc. Most of the counseling was given indirectly and an eclectic approach counseling was adopted for this.

Health counseling is an approach that recognises the interactions of psychosocial and physical factors. Here the counselor had used psycho educational methods to impart information and develop skills that help clients to maintain and improve health. Through counseling, it was aimed that the participants had received an idea that health can be improved and lives can be extended by changing their lifestyle behaviour. This was given as health education and prevention programme. The sessions of counseling ranged from two to five, for different participants. The rationales for the other strategies in the intervention were also explained during counseling session.

Initial camping was for seven days, where participants, experts in different levels of intervention and bye standers stayed together. Later they practiced the lifestyle at home. Family support was also sought for the intervention, especially from spouse. On twenty first day the group met together for doubt clarification. Before and after comparison was done with an intervention for forty one days. The psychological factors like hostility and stress were significantly decreased where as stability (satwa guna) was significantly increases after the intervention. The participants also reported relief in symptoms.

Conclusion

Health as well as healing is given much importance by mankind for a long time, thus developed different systems of medicines. Though professionalism was developed later on, more and more recent approaches consider inter disciplinary view points as more scientific. Through a holistic approach in Health Psychology the author had attempted for an explorative and intervention study among cardiac patients. The patients had experienced more hostility and stress in comparison to normals. They had a specific kind of personality, (i.e., activation and stability characteristics.) The intervention given was found to be effective in changing the psychological factors studied significantly. Whichever may be the healing system adopted, the efficacy will be on the basis of vital power of the patient and severity of the illness.

REFERENCES


