

Indian Knowledge Systems And Mental Health: Traditional Approaches To Emotional Well-Being

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Abstract:

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), encompassing traditions such as Yoga, Ayurveda, Vedanta, and classical texts like the Bhagavad Gita, offer holistic frameworks for understanding and nurturing mental health and emotional well-being. This chapter examines how this indigenous knowledge traditions conceptualize the mind, emotions, and consciousness through interconnected dimensions of body, ethics, society, and spirituality. Drawing on concepts such as manas, buddhi, chitta, sattva-rajas-tamas, samatva (equanimity), and svadhyaya (self-study), it highlights traditional practices—including the eight limbs of Yoga, pranayama techniques, dhyana (meditation), dinacharya (daily regimens), and ethical observances (yamas and niyamas)—as resources for emotion regulation, stress resilience, and preventive mental health. The analysis positions IKS not as an alternative to but as a complementary approach within contemporary mental health discourse, supporting prevention, lifestyle modification, emotional literacy, and community-based support. Evidence from modern research on yoga, meditation, and breathwork is integrated to demonstrate physiological and psychological benefits, while critical considerations address diversity within IKS, potential limitations, ethical integration, and the necessity of professional clinical intervention for severe conditions. By bridging ancient wisdom with present-day challenges such as urbanization, digital stress, and social disconnection, this framework advocates for culturally grounded, integrative strategies that enhance self-awareness, compassion, and purposeful living. The chapter concludes that responsible incorporation of IKS into education, workplaces, and public health initiatives can enrich global mental health paradigms, fostering resilience through balanced, ethically informed lifestyles.

Key Word: Indian Knowledge Systems, mental health, emotional well-being, Yoga psychology, Ayurveda, pranayama, meditation, Bhagavad Gita, holistic health, cultural psychology

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I. Introduction

Nowadays, mental health has been one of the biggest issues in today's society. The growing pressures of rapid urbanisation, academic stress, work stress, social comparison, loneliness, family disturbances, digital overstress, economic uncertainty and identity struggle have put a greater emphasis on practical and culturally relevant support systems for emotional care. According to the World Health Organisation (2025), mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness, but it is a state of well-being in which people are able to function effectively in relation to life, realise their abilities, adapt to new situations, learn and work, and contribute to the community. This definition is significant in that it acknowledges the importance of resilience, self-awareness, social functioning, meaning and emotional balance in mental health.

Indian Knowledge Systems provide a deep set of knowledge that can be used to understand and promote mental health. The knowledge systems in India is termed as Indian Knowledge Systems (also known as Bharatiya Jnana Parampara) which are the knowledge traditions in India that have developed in various aspects of philosophical knowledge and medical knowledge, psychology-based knowledge, ethical knowledge, spiritual knowledge, artistic and community-based knowledge developed over various centuries. They involve Yoga, the Ayurvedic system of medicine, Vedanta, the Buddhist philosophy, the Jain philosophy, classical aesthetic principles, folk medicine, communal rituals, meditation, breathing regimens, moral guidelines and way of life advice. The traditional knowledge systems have seen a renewed interest in education as they are now promoted in education through various policies and guidelines under Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020 and University Grants Commission, 2023.

It is not to be interpreted as a rejection of modern psychology, psychiatry, counselling or medicine; rather, Indian Knowledge Systems is a means of gaining better access to it. Instead, IKS can offer alternative

methods of knowing emotional wellness. These include clinical cases like severe depression, anxiety disorders, traumatic responses, psychosis, drug and alcohol reliance and suicidal crises that all require modern mental healthcare. Meanwhile, traditional Indian practices provide preventive, lifestyle-based, reflective and community-oriented measures which may aid to maintain emotional balance. They enable people to comprehend the mind, control their emotions, develop self-discipline, create compassion, and live with significance.

This chapter delves into Indian knowledge systems and identifies its traditional methods of emotional well-being. It highlights Indian concept of mind and self, the importance of Yoga, meditation, pranayama, ayurveda, morals, mental health and importance of living in a community setting, aesthetics and spiritual importance. It suggests that IKS can contribute to the contemporary mental health discourse by providing a conceptual framework that sees humans as a continuum of body, mind, emotion, society, ethics, and consciousness.

A Holistic View Of Mental Health And Emotional Well-Being

The field of mental health has recently begun to see a move toward acknowledging individuals' emotional health as having multiple dimensions to it. It incorporates the skills of handling stress, sustaining relationships, feeling meaningful, regulating emotions and being constructively responsive to challenging events. This wider perspective is not far from many of the knowledge traditions in India, which tend not to separate the mind from the body, from the conduct from the food, from the breath from society, from the spiritual orientation. Emotional distress does not exist exclusively in the private realm of the individual in IKS. This can at the same time indicate that there is a lack of balance in lifestyle, attachment, desire, ignorance, social disharmony, ethical conflict, lack of self-understanding, etc.

Many of the words that are used in Indian tradition to deal with the inner life are manas, chitta, buddhi, ahamkara, samskara, atman, etc. Some of these terms used in Indian traditions to discuss the inner life are manas, chitta, buddhi, ahamkara, samskara, atman, etc. Manas is considered to be the acting upon mind that receives perceptions and responds instantly. Buddhi signifies discrimination, intellect or the faculty of faire judgment. The single sense that is impacted by samskaras is the sense of I (ahamkara), or the sense of the I-maker. Chitta is sometimes referred to as the mind-field or "storehouse" of mental impressions. These are abstract concepts that are not necessarily analogous to the modern psychological ones, but instead provide a complex language to describe thoughts, emotions, memories, habits, identity and self-awareness (Rao & Paranjpe, 2016).

A key piece of IKS is that mental health is considered balanced instead of symptom-management only. In Ayurveda it is talked about the balance in the body and mind. In yoga, one talks about the ebb and flow of the mind or the ups and downs. In the Bhagavad gita it is said of what is called equanimity and disciplined action. In Buddhist teachings, one speaks of the elimination of desire and animosity and the elimination of ignorance. The Jain principles are a focus on Non-violence, Control and purification of Action. They all have an underlying assumption that suffering of the emotions can be minimized by awareness, discipline, righteous living and habituation.

Now such a holistic model is well relevant. People are looking to get rid of mental peace, but they lead their lifestyles which keeps the mind from attaining peace – erratic sleeping pattern, overuse of screens, unhealthy competition, ill diet, not reflecting, isolation, anger, and over consumption: IKS Emotional Wellness encourages a person to question the pattern of life. It drives them to ask themselves not only How can I quickly reduce my stress? but also What kind of life creates this stress? One of the best contributions made by traditional Indian approaches is this change of symptoms to lifestyle.

Yoga Psychology And Management Of The Mind

One of the greatest mental health gifts that India has given to the world is yoga. When everyone normally hears the word yoga, people think of physical exercise; however, classical yoga is a holistic approach to Yoga that incorporates ethics, posture, breath, sense regulation, concentration, meditation, and achieving Self-realisation. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras view "yoga" as the cessation of mental fluctuations or mental chatter, where suffering is generally caused by thoughts, emotions, memories, desires and fears that are not controlled. (Bryant, 2009).

Mental disturbance is known in the yoga psychology as bubneesha, or the causes of suffering, and is recognised by various concepts. They consist of ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion and fear of death. In contemporary understanding, they are aspects of lack of awareness, maladaptive cognition, desire, fear and insecurities. Yogic办法 is not repression of feeling, but the disciplined awareness. Practicing abhyasa (repetition) and vairagya (true detachment), the one learns how to observe the mind without it ruling the individual, without every impulse. (Bryant, 2009)

The Eightfold Path of Yoga is a very life-saving system of emotional health and sustenance. The Yama/Niyama are ethical and personal discipline. Asana calms down the body. Pranayama controls breath and energy. Pratyahara helps to minimize excess sensory stimulation. Dharana trains concentration. Dhyana deepens meditation. Samadhi is the state of absorption & integration. This concept is particularly applicable to mental well-being as it acknowledges that living a healthy life is not just about positive thinking. It doesn't require anything except a disciplined attitude, body balance, breath control, focalization of focus, and the ability to look inwards.

Current research backs the mental health connection of yoga but should be interpreted with caution. A systematic review and meta-analysis revealed that yoga/mindfulness practices can decrease stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms among various population groups (Breedvelt et al., 2019) and (Goyal et al., 2014). Pascoe et al. (2017) reported associations between yoga and Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and the physiological changes related to stress. Streeter et al. (2012) suggested that yoga could affect the balance of autonomic nervous system and the pathways associated with GABA, which are related to stress related illnesses. However, the results presented here are not meant to imply that yoga is a cure-all for mental illness, but rather provide assistance for yoga as a complementary therapy to manage and relieve emotional turmoil.

Pranayama & Emotion Regulation Through Breathing

Yogic regulation of breath known as Pranayama is one of the main traditional methods used in achieving emotional wellness. Thus, Pranayama is deeply related to the prana (vital energy) and the mind's state in Indian thought. BREATH PACING: Airbreathing is affected by anger, anxiety, fear or loss. As the breath slows, deepens and becomes conscious, the mind tends to get peacefully juggled. This makes Pranayama easily accessible as a bridge between the body and the emotion.

New pieces of associated research in modern psychology and neuroscience also attest to the linkage between respiration and the system of the autonomic nerves. Slow, controlled breathing can facilitate parasympathetic processes, de-arousal, and facilitate emotional regulation. This can be quite useful in everyday life as much of the mental health related issues are exacerbated by body responses. The student who is preparing for an examination, the employee who is in front of an audience, or the individual being in a disagreement can have racing thoughts, rapid breathing and a rapid heartbeat before the event. Maintaining this awareness towards the breath can provide a moment before responding.

Some of the most popular traditional pranayamas are nadi shodhana, bhramari, ujjayi, kapalabhati and deep breathing using the diaphragm. All practices aren't for everyone though. Breathing exercises can be strong or forceful, and this might be unsuitable for those who have medical conditions, panic symptoms, or are not supervised. Thus, it is necessary to work out pranayama gently and gradually. Simple slow breathing, alternate nostril breathing and humming breath can be four safer methods to begin from for general emotional stability when accompanied by skilled breathing teachers.

Then the psychological effects of Prana Yama are not only relaxation but self-control. Someone discovers the emotional sensations are not fully commandable. The individual can alter their emotional state with the change in breath, posture, and attention. This lifts and melts through confidence and resilience. In terms of IKS, breath discipline has the function of calming the mind, while today, it also supports stress regulation and interoceptive awareness.

Meditation, Dhyana And Inner Observation

One of the most important Indian strategies of promoting mental well-being and emotional balance is meditation. Meditation, or dhyana, is a discipline which teaches the mind to be aware, calm and less reactive. There are numerous meditation practices in India, such as breath meditation, mantra meditation, self-inquiry, loving-kindness, devotional meditation, visualisation, and witness-consciousness practices. The methods vary but have the same goal of calming down the mind and developing clear mindedness.

Recent studies show that meditation can have a positive effect on the outcomes of stress, particularly anxiety, depression, and psychological distress, but with effects that vary depending on the type of meditation practiced, the population studied, the duration of the meditation programs, and the scrutiny in which the study is conducted (Goyal et al., 2014). Additionally, Hölzel et al., (2011) found that mindfulness practice is linked with alterations in brain areas associated with learning, memory, emotion regulation and self-referential processing. Studies like these advocate that meditation is not a religious exercise, but is a mental practice that can be learned and has psychological significance.

Meditation assists people from the IKS point of view since it changes the dynamic in between them and their mind. The vast majority of emotional suffering is amplified because people in their thoughts, feelings are totally their own. Someone states, "I'm anxious," or "I'm angry," or "I am worthless." Meditation is a place where one can make room to become aware of experiences: "Anxiety is present," "Anger is arising," "A painful thought is passing through the mind. The change lessens the emotional connection and thereby enhances the availability for response.

It is of great importance to practice witness attitude (sakshi bhava). It is the lesson to learn that you can watch your thoughts, sensations, and feelings without being immediately blown away by them. Such an apparent mindfulness is a close approximation to the modern mindfulness, but it has been grounded in the contemplative tradition of India. Sakshi bhava can teach people to behave more wisely in the event of anger, jealousy, fear, shame, and grief. It isn't about NO emotion; it's about non-reactive awareness. This over time can help in fostering emotional maturity and resilience.

Spiritual And Mental Balance

The other important part of Indian Knowledge Systems, which is relevant to mental health is Ayurveda. The term Ayurveda translates as the science of life, and it recognises the interconnectedness of body, mind, environment, food, sleep, behaviour and consciousness. Ayurveda is not only about disease-free living, it is about balance, prevention, daily routine, seasonality, and harmony in living (Frawley, 1997).

According to Ayurvedic principles, mental health is determined by mental and physical health. Properties of the mind are described with the use of terms like sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva is related with clarity, harmony, balance and wisdom. Rajas is linked to restlessness, agitation, passion and excessiveness. Tamas is linked with laziness, confusion, weightiness and dullness. These notions can serve as categories of reflection. For instance, the individual might observe that too much stimulation, anger, competition and screen time leads to rajasic agitation, whereas oversleeping, lethargy, and avoidance leads to tamasic dullness. The Sattvic living promotes clarity, moderation, discipline, compassion and balance.

The daily routine (dinacharya) is also important in Ayurveda. Emotional stability is promoted with proper sleeping habits, diet, hygiene, exercise, meditation and good habits. This is very much applicable for contemporary psychological issues, as numerous emotional problems are exacerbated via irregular lifestyle. Low sleep, high caffeine, junk food, no exercise and constant stimulation from digital devices can raise anxiety, irritability and low mood. Ayurvedic lifestyle knowledge can thus help prevent mental health issues by promoting rhythm and moderation.

But there is a need to use the Ayurvedic mental health methods in a responsible manner. For those who regularly use psychiatric medication or suffer from serious mental illnesses, herbal medicines, detoxification methods and special treatments should not be undertaken without expert guidance. Ayurveda offers a few main guidelines for overall emotional health—balance, routine, mindful eating, sleep hygiene, seasonal living, self-care, and ethical behavior.

II. Stress Management: The Bhagavad Gita And Emotional Resilience

The Bhagavad Gita is among the crucial Indian documents to gain an understanding of emotional crisis and resilience. It does not start with abstract philosophy; it starts with psychological breakdown. Arjuna is on the battlefield, distraught and confused with grief, fear, attachment and powerlessness. He is shaking, his mind is confused and he cannot act. This scene is very pertinent to mental health as it depicts that when people become emotionally overwhelmed, it is a natural part of life, even for those who are capable and respected (Easwaran, 2007).

The answer to crisis of the Gita is not in easy negations. It provides self-awareness, self-discipline, detachment, devotion, meditation and ethical accountability. The unity of samatva (equanimity) is one of its key concepts. Samatva means balance in success and failure, pleasure and pain, gain and loss. In contemporary language, it is similar to emotional control and adaptability. It is the doctrine that should be taught, describing the person who acts sincerely, but should not let external matters completely rule over him.

Another important concept is that of KARMA YOGA, which is the Yoga of doing without over-attachment. This is helpful in terms of emotional health. If you are overly identified with the outcome, you will experience a lot of anxiety – exam results, job success, social acceptance, wealth, status, or recognition. Karma yoga does not ask anyone to cease and desist from working. Instead, it shows full effort, along with a freedom from obsessive result-dependence. This can alleviate performance anxiety and aid recovery from failure.

Buddhi, wisdom discernment is also important as taught by the Gita. Emotional health depends on being able to think about what needs to be done in the short term versus the longer term. Emotional excitement does not resolve Arjuna's dilemma; it is resolved by clearer understanding. This indicates mental health is a feeling and a wisdom. The individual has to grasp the emotions without letting them take over.

Ethics, Character And Emotional Health

Indian Knowledge Systems have a strong sense of mental health and ethics of life. This is a significant contrast to those methods that see emotional health simply as a subjective inner state. The mind is affected by the manner in which a person speaks, acts, eats, relates and carries out responsibilities in IKS. Inner world is disturbed by untruth, greed, violence, jealousy, exploitation, selfishness. Emotional balance is supported by truthfulness, compassion, restraint, gratitude, service and self-discipline.

The yamas and niyamas of Yoga have a great relevance to mental health education. Ahimsa or Non-violence makes the heart soft and curbs the waves of anger and ill speech. Satya (truthfulness) helps to sustain authenticity and trust. Non-stealing (Asteya) helps to minimise envy and exploitation. Wisdom and moderation in energy usage are all that is meant by Brahmacharya, and these qualities aid in the avoidance of excess and impulsiveness. Not to possess is to eliminate the urge for comparison and greed (aprigraha). The niyamas include saucha (cleanliness), santosha (contentment), tapas (discipline), svadhyaya (self-study), and ishvara pranidhana (surrender to a higher power), which all foster cleanliness, contentment, discipline, self-study, and a higher power (Bryant, 2009).

These principles are directly related to emotional wellbeing. For instance, in the case of santosha, it assists individuals in minimising the suffering resulting from the constant comparison. Tapas fosters discipline, a needed tool against unhealthy behaviors. Svadhyaya develops self-awareness. Aparigraha can aid to minimize consumerist anxiety and possessive relationships. Ahimsa brings harmony into relationships as it diminishes the harshness of thought, word and action.

These ethical concepts can be applied to modern mental health education. The majority of emotional issues that affect youth fall under the categories of comparison, bullying, lying, digital aggression, peer pressure and lack of self-control. The students can meditate on the effect of behaviour upon the mind by using the principles of IKS ethics. But this teaching should be non-exclusionary and non-coercive. The goal should be character development and not moral policing.

The Community, Family, Seva And Social Well-Being

Mental health is personal AND social. Emotional well-being can be affected by loneliness, isolation, discrimination, family conflict and lack of belonging. Community, family, interdependence, and service are often a part of Indian Knowledge Systems. Traditional family and community structures can sometimes be oppressive but can also offer support, identity, continuity and care. A balance needs to take into account strengths as well as weaknesses.

Seva is important for mental health because it generates meaning and connection. Service to others can lessen too much thinking about oneself and cultivate compassion. It can also help to reinforce social cohesion and community resilience. In many Indian cultures, service is not charity, it is a discipline to curb self and develop a sense of responsibility. In the context of contemporary contexts, seva may manifest as volunteer work, peer support, community health work, mentoring, environmental services, and services for vulnerable groups.

The welfare of the world, 'loka-sangraha' also promotes social responsibility. The greater the individual's emotional well-being, the stronger the sense of belonging to a greater cause than just success. This is relevant to young people who might feel empty even if they have achieved. Psychological factors that protect mental health are meaning, contribution, and belonging.

But the community-based approach needs to be managed well. Social expectations also can create stress, shame, stigma, and silence about mental illness. For individuals who are feeling depressed, anxious, traumatic, or suicidal, there could be judgment rather than support in some communities. Thus, the necessary elements of community care, such as mental health literacy, compassion, confidentiality and professional referral pathways, need to be integrated with an IKS approach. Community support and awareness of mental health are not the best models for blind dependence on tradition.

Indian Aesthetics, Storytelling And Emotional Expression

Literature, music, drama, dance, storytelling, and aesthetics are also a part of Indian Knowledge Systems. These are traditions of emotional wellbeing because emotions require expression, interpretation and refinement. In Indian aesthetics, the theory of rasa helps understand how art heightens and alters the emotional experience. Emotions like love, sorrow, courage, anger, fear, wonder, humour, compassion and peace are not just private disturbances anymore; they are the artful experiences of emotions (Pollock, 2016).

Storytelling is a practice that's been followed in the Indian culture for emotional education for ages. Grief, loyalty, courage, jealousy, forgiveness, attachment and moral conflict are explored in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Jataka tales, Panchatantra, Puranic narratives, bhakti poetry and folk songs. These stories provide indirect experiences of emotions. A character can embody a person's anger, a song their grief, a moral dilemma their moral confusion.

Collective song, devotional singing, chanting, and music may also help to promote emotional health. For example, intense emotions like love, surrender, longing and trust are acceptable in the context of the bhakti traditions. Devotional music can offer comfort and a release of emotion to some people. Embodied expression is the way that classical dance and drama process emotion. Folk practices and communal events can alleviate solitude and contribute to the development of a communal rhythm of affect.

These traditions offer a glimpse into the importance of culturally-informed expressive therapies in contemporary mental health settings. Use of art, music, storytelling, theatre or poetry in schools, counselling, community programmes and rehabilitation. While these are not substitutes for clinical care, they can help build emotional literacy and healing. Beauty, rhythm, narrative, and shared cultural meaning is an important way to achieve emotional well-being, notes IKS, which is not just about analysis.

Incorporate IKS Into Contemporary Mental Health Practice

The adaptation of Indian Knowledge Systems into the practice of modern mental health should be done with caution, ethics and evidence. Traditional methods can be used to aid in prevention, emotional education, stress reduction, lifestyle balance, and community care. They should not, however, be used to minimize the impact of mental health and/or to discourage professional assistance. Depression, trauma, psychosis, addiction, self-harm and suicidal thoughts are severe and need trained mental health professionals and, in many cases, medical intervention.

There can be four levels of an integrative model. The first is preventive well-being, which includes yoga, breathing, meditation, routine, sleep, ethical reflection, healthy food and community connection. The second level of emotional education is teaching the students to be aware of themselves and their emotions, to regulate them, to feel compassion and to be resilient while applying IKS concepts like *svadhyaya*, *samatva*, *ahimsa*, and *santosha*. Complementary care, using yoga, meditation and lifestyle support in addition to counselling or medical treatment, is the third level. The fourth level is referral/crisis care: identifying when professional intervention is required.

The role of educational institutions is important. Simple breathing exercises, reflective journaling, yoga-based movement, mindfulness, value education, peer support and community service can be added to the school or university environment. These practices should be non-dogmatic, optional as required and reflect religious and cultural diversity. The goal must be for mental health and not religious education.

Well-being programmes based on IKS can also be applied in the workplace. Emotional climate can be enhanced through short breathing breaks, yoga sessions, reflective leadership, ethical communication, and stress awareness workshops. But it is important to ensure that wellness programmes do not become a substitute for a fair workload, adequate wages, respectful management or working conditions. Emotional health needs are personal and organizational.

Acknowledging Limitations And Critical Considerations

There is a need to acknowledge the constraints in a responsible chapter on IKS and mental health. First, Indian Knowledge Systems are diverse. They are Sanskritic traditions, regional traditions, folk traditions, tribal traditions, Buddhist traditions, Jain traditions, Sikh traditions, Islamic traditions, and community traditions. It would be incorrect to give the impression that IKS is a single system. Practices around mental health are different for different communities, languages and history.

Second, the traditional knowledge should not be glorified. Some traditional practices may be useful; others may be exclusionary and/or harmful. Some things like stigma on mental illness, superstition, gender limitations, caste discrimination and blaming the person for suffering can have a negative impact on mental health. IKS needs to be critically reviewed and ethically used.

Third, evidence matters. Yoga, meditation and breathing exercises have some evidence to support their use, but not all the practices that are offered on the basis of tradition are supported by science. Any interventions to improve mental health should be rigorously researched; they should have evidence to back them up, clinical outcomes, safety, accessibility and cultural relevance. Traditional practices must be carefully modified to suit various age groups, health statuses and social settings.

Fourth, boundaries are key for professionals. Yoga teachers, teachers, spiritual leaders, and community leaders should never be seen as substitutes for psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors or physicians without training and license. Integration should be about partnership, NOT mashing up! Seek immediate professional help if a person is thinking about taking their own life, has extreme anxiety, hallucinations, trauma symptoms or cannot function.

Last but not least, mental health based on IKS should be inclusive. It should be inclusive with people of various religions, castes, gender, class and identities. No exclusion or moral judgement can help build emotional well-being. The most profound aspect of Indian knowledge systems is the awareness of self, compassion, balance and freedom from suffering. These values need to be maintained for any modern application.

III. Conclusion

Indian Knowledge Systems are important traditional mental health and emotional care practices. They are strong because they have a holistic concept of the human being, which includes the body, the mind, emotions, behaviour, society, ethics and consciousness. Yoga offers techniques to soothe the mind and bring the body into balance. In Pranayama, breathing is used to control emotions. Meditation is the cultivation of awareness and non-reactivity. The ayurveda philosophy encourages lifestyle harmony, rituals and preventative treatment. Resilience is given through equanimity, discipline of action and self-knowledge in the Bhagavad Gita. Emotional maturity is assisted by ethical principles, namely ahimsa, satya, santosha, tapas, svadhyaya and aparigraha. Community practices like seva and storytelling add to connection, meaning and social well-being.

The meaning of IKS in the contemporary times does not lie in reverting to the past but in the innovation of old wisdom with modern mental health science. Evidence-based interventions, social support, public health systems and professional care are needed to address mental health challenges. At the same time, people also require culturally appropriate practices that facilitate living in awareness, discipline, compassion, and purpose. When used critically, inclusively and responsibly, Indian Knowledge Systems can play a role in addressing this need.

Finally, emotional health isn't just the lack of distress. It is the power to grasp the mind, to control emotions, to act sagaciously, to show kindness to others, and to live with purpose. The Indian Knowledge Systems remind us that mental health is personal, collective, more on the practical, ethical, bodily and spiritual plane. They can contribute to the modern mental health by enriching its vision with their traditional knowledge and practices; they can provide a balanced vision of the human body.

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