



Can Meditation be a Remedy for Psychosomatic Disorder?

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Abstract— *The practice of meditation has been associated with a wide range of positive physiological and psychological effects, such as reduced stress, improved emotional regulation, and increased overall well-being. In this research, the procedure of meditation that eliminates psychosomatic disorders is investigated. Psychosomatic disorders impact the mind and body. Mental disorders like stress and anxiety can lead to physical diseases like chronic pain and muscle dysfunction. This article investigates the possibility of meditation being used as a remedy for psychosomatic disorders. Examining existing literature on the topic reveals that meditation has been demonstrated to reduce stress and anxiety levels, enhance immune system functioning, and promote emotional regulation. The evidence suggests that meditation could be a possible alternative treatment for psychosomatic problems. This study discusses the mechanisms of Vipassanā and Yoga meditation techniques. The paper further highlights the necessity of seeking medical counsel and treatment and utilising meditation as an element of a comprehensive care approach instead of a stand-alone remedy. Overall, the paper indicates that meditation may be a helpful aid for controlling the symptoms of psychosomatic disorder, and it emphasises the need for additional research on the subject.*

Keywords— *Psychosomatic Disorder, Mind-body, Anxiety, Vipassanā, Mental Purification, Yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Meditation has been around for generations, but the health benefits it may provide have only recently increased its popularity. Psychosomatic disorders are those in which mental states like worry or anxiousness directly cause or exacerbate physical symptoms. The potential of meditation as a treatment for psychological conditions is being increasingly recognised. Stress and worry, two common causes of psychological symptoms, can be alleviated through meditation. Pain and exhaustion, among other complaints, may be lessened due to possible immune system enhancement and inflammatory reduction. Studies have shown that practising meditation can help people develop to control their emotions, reducing their tension and boosting their well-being. In this paper, an attempt is made to investigate the mechanism of meditation responsible for eliminating psychosomatic disorders. The mind and body are affected when someone has a psychosomatic condition. The body suffers from mental dysfunctions such as anxiety and stress, which can contribute to some physical diseases

such as chronic pain and muscle dysfunction. An individual's mental state can influence their physical health to some degree. Concern with one's body, bodily sensations, and the effect that one's emotions have on one's internal systems are some of the many risk factors that can lead to psychosomatic disorders.

Meditation is a technique that can be used to move from the body to the mind, eliminate impurities, and purify the mind, all of which can help alleviate various somatic symptoms. When a person becomes angry, there is a strong possibility that their blood pressure will rise, along with their heartbeat and breathing rate. When the feeling of anger subsides, the usually elevated physiological processes typically return to normal. It demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between meditation and mental impurity and the direct association between the body and the mind. In any case, focusing on impure things can assist in achieving an equilibrium between the psyche and the soma. At the beginning of the meditation process, the meditator should focus on an "object of meditation," such as their respiration or a sensation

without responding to it. Because of this continuation, awareness is developed, concentration is evolved over extended periods, and the mind is helped to settle down, which helps the body relax.

At a higher state of awareness, consciousness develops so that the subject-object duality ceases to exist. Additionally, the mind becomes free of its impurities, and a clean mind, by its very nature, is once again full of love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. There is a pathway in *Vipassanā* that can transform the habit pattern of the mind, and the mind can be made pure by washing away the negativities and defilements; then, one who follows it automatically emerges out of misery. In the yogic system, the *pañcakōṣa* (five sheaths) represents the psychological and spiritual levels of existence. The first four of these sheaths, known as *kōṣa*, range from the gross to the subtle at the transcendent dimension. A psychosomatic disorder is present at the gross level when the mind is distracted, impure, or otherwise out of equilibrium. When a practitioner moves from one level to another and reaches *ānandamayakoṣa*, they experience a purification of the mind, leading to a healthy collaboration between the mind and the body.

Psyche-soma and Psychosomatic Disorder

To begin, one must have a solid understanding of the components of psychosomatic disease. It is a disorder in the way the mind and body communicate with one another. Psychosomatic disorders may follow from stress to take into tension, including anxiety, headaches, hypertension, migraines, respiratory ailments, pelvic discomfort, gastrointestinal disturbances, impotence, frigidity, dermatitis, and ulcers. Psychosomatic disorders can also be caused by prolonged exposure to high-stress levels. When something occurs in mind, one can easily observe that its consequences manifest in the body. It is something that anyone can do. Let's look at the large structure of what it means to be human. When we talk about how the entire structure works, we are referring to how it appears to be a body to the extent that our senses can distinguish it. However, there is also a concealed component, which is the mind. It is not only the mind or the body in isolation; philosophy constantly challenges us to know what aspects of the mind-body problem still need to be acknowledged. According to psychophysiology, the mind and the body are not separate entities but are connected to and communicate. It is debatable whether psychosomatic illnesses are "pure medical diseases" or merely an irregularity that alters the function of a particular pattern of mind-body collaboration. Even though they are most commonly found in systems not subject to the person's voluntary control, psychosomatic illnesses can affect any part of the body.

The research conducted by Franz Alexander and his associates at the Chicago Institute of Psychoanalysis suggested that particular personality characteristics and specific conflicts may be the cause of particular psychosomatic illnesses. However, it is generally accepted that a condition's shape is due to an individual's predispositions and vulnerabilities. Emotional tension is thought to make pre-existing conditions worse, and there is some evidence that it may even cause illnesses that are not typically considered to be psychosomatic (such as diabetes or cancer) in people who are genetically susceptible to developing those conditions. We can make a few assumptions regarding the psychogenic origins of physical disorders. It is no longer thought that disorder results from an organ psychically communicating something; rather, it is now understood that disorder is a particular way of being inherent in the sick individual. From this angle, a sick individual is entirely different from a healthy person.

Human beings do exist and take on various positions and roles in the world, but the world and its roles are what they make of themselves. When considered in this light, psychosomatics is undeniably influenced by contemporary schools of thought in psychology, most notably the Dasein analysis developed by Heidegger and the existentialism developed by Sartre. Both of them point to the fact that they disagree with the Cartesian distinction, which is one way in which they are similar. Existence means human as they appear, body-mind, with its rational and irrational relationships, with their age, corporeality, affectivity, disposition, decision, sexuality, and with their being connected to everything essential in being human. The disease is not an accident; instead, it is a consequence of an interaction, a reaction to an "inclination," or a response to a demand that touches man as he stands in the world. Even though, if observed from a different perspective, this reaction would be considered a disease, We can't help but appreciate it. As a result, We cannot protect our patients from their illnesses and symptoms.

When conducting psychosomatic research, it is necessary to consider the interconnected nature of the psyche and body. This demonstrates that illness characterised by the psychosomatic trait is, in fact, a specific psychological condition. Being ill is not a casual event taking place in what's present, nor is it a troubled function or an altered structure; we are frequently struck by deviations from usual in structure and function without the subject being adverse, but being adverse restricts the progression of our lives, it requires a Psychological clarification, it is a datum that has been interlinked with the whole life. When a practitioner assists a patient, he is not helping the patient's body or mind; instead, he is attending to a human composed of both the body and the mind. Sometimes the doctor will use physical-

chemical methods, and other times they will help through psychotherapeutic means; however, they will not always do this because they believe that the cause of the patient's suffering is either psychological or physiological. We are unaware of the process by which the innermost life generates all of those somatic forms and reactions, nor can we determine how the determination works when we open or close a physical instrument such as a hand or a limb. Our way of thinking makes it inevitable that we will never fully comprehend the fundamental connection between the body and the psyche. We can only investigate its possibilities and breadth and the relationship's usefulness.

Still, the essential component of the connection between somatic and psychic processes will always remain a problem, no matter how much we learn about it. The so-called "mind-body problem" in philosophy, which is at the core of the psychosomatic challenge, is a fabrication. Since the beginning of time, when man first began to contemplate his unique being, the connection between the mental and the physical, sense and substance, has been a central topic of discussion in philosophy. Though, when the disorder was first hypothesised in terms of dysfunction in the body, the link between the mind and the body in terms of disorder became an issue. For instance, in ancient Greece and China, the concepts of health and disease were viewed holistically. In these cultures, maintaining healthy relationships with one's peers and the environment was regarded as being on par with maintaining a healthy diet and regular exercise. However, when the causes of sickness and health are narrowed down to a single aspect of the whole (such as the physical), our comprehension of illness and health becomes restricted to a reductionist framework. When viewed in this light, it is not difficult to understand how elevated glucose levels impact a person with diabetes or how a fractured bone can cause pain. We have a medical dilemma due to the emphasis placed on the somatic (the corporeal aspect of the body) as the origin of the disease. Not only is the primary focus of health care on the physical body, but a patient who suffers from a psychosomatic condition also has a pre-existing comprehension of health issues in somatic terms. We must not continue this way to find a solution to the age-old dilemma of the body and spirit. It is impossible to locate within the autonomic nervous system; the soul does not reside within the diencephalon any more than it resided within the cerebral cortex or the pineal region during the period of Descartes. When we investigate human behaviour in the context of illness, we are confronted with a typical challenge posed by Descartes's dualism of the body and the mind. Anatomical and physiological techniques broaden our perspective and are essential to clinical research. Such a rationalising work mode frequently accompanies significant advancement, and we benefit from both. Psychosomatics

can be seen as akin to the psycho-existential study of thinkers like Sartre and Heidegger. Even though it can't remove patients' symptoms and avoid being held accountable for actions, illness is not a random occurrence but rather a response to a pattern in life. Although we appreciate this pattern, we also recognize that our involvement allows us to influence it. The mode of existence in psychosomatics may be an attempt at rehabilitation or at least at establishing a possibility of releasing the self from its relationship and consolidation. According to psychosomatic theory, a person is the cause of their suffering and the pattern they follow throughout their lives.

A Meditative approach to Psychosomatic Disorder

Through meditation, one can move from a state of suffering to one of contentment, from a state of bondage to one of liberation, from impure to pure, and from distraction to concentration. Given that psychological disorders originate in the mind and manifest physically, it only makes sense to treat the mind to achieve a healthy body. The psyche is the place from which actions emerge. However, not every thought in one's head necessarily results in verbal or physical action. Mental volitions can give rise to very different physical actions, even when those physical actions look very identical. At the physical level, medical science has developed some treatments and cures. Still, at the mental level, an approach to meditation is essential because medicine fails to fix the imbalance or mental dysfunction. It directly connects to the emotional and passionate aspects of the psyche. *Vipassanā*, *Yoga*, and *Tantra* are some examples of meditation techniques that can help a person transcend restricted consciousness and rest the mind so that the body can become relaxed, tension and stress can be released, and the mind and body can be filled with joy.

***Vipassanā* Meditation deals with Psychosomatic Disorder**

Making a conscious attempt to focus on a specific target is central to many meditation techniques. *Vipassanā* is a form of meditation first discovered and taught by the Buddha, also known as the "Great Physician" (*Bhaiṣajyaguru* in *Mahāyāna*). Seeing reality for what it is and remaining detached while doing so is at the heart of the *Vipassanā* meditation practice. In addition to being a method for increasing attentiveness, this is also an inquiry into the relationship between the mind and the material world. *Vipassanā* meditation is a scientific method for investigating the whole phenomenon of mind and matter. Psychiatrists can only study the human mind in a roundabout way, and even then, only to the degree that it can be deduced from a patient's outward verbal and physical behaviour as a reflection of their mental state. Direct investigation of the mind is at the core of the investigation

of meditation as an order. This kind of unmediated, individual observation has a long history in Asia and has been extensively practised there. The body, the sensations that occur within the body, and the influence that one's feelings have on one's internal organs are of interest to medical practitioners. Within the field of psychology, there are a few different treatments that work their way from the body up to the psyche. Jacobson's method of deep muscle relaxation, along with other modified muscle relaxation techniques and biofeedback treatment, are all instances of tried-and-true methods. Similarly, behaviour therapy addresses the body and its behaviours or reactions first and then addresses the client's feelings, either later or not. On the other hand,

Vipassanā has more in common with these other treatments than with psychotherapies. Although psychoanalysis focuses primarily on the mind and feelings at the outset rather than immediately on the body, it can still alleviate the physical symptoms being experienced. The Enlightened One, Gautama the Buddha, used the word *bhāvanā* to describe practices of mental development. Although meditation is a common meaning for this term, the word's precise meaning is "development" or "training." It is a term that alludes to particular mental activities and specific methods for concentrating and cleansing the mind. When we talk about "meditation" in this context, we refer to it in this specific way. Because India has a long history of various forms of spiritual practice, nearly all of the country's languages have their terms for the various meditation techniques practised there. Such terms as *dhyāna*, *japa*, *trāṭaka*, *sādhanā*, *vipassanā* (*vidarshanā*), *bhāvanā*, etc., allude to different types of mental practices. In the broadest sense, meditation is a practice that involves training one's mind to concentrate on various subjects. The ability to concentrate one's thoughts, which is required to complete any endeavour, is a significant component in investigating the mind-matter phenomenon. An extensive range of things can serve as focal points for concentration, including visual and auditory stimuli, as well as imaginations and verbalizations. According to the teachings of the Buddha, his primary mission was not to find a way to make everyone completely happy but rather to find a way for everyone to find a way to achieve a condition in which they are permanently free from the suffering that they have been experiencing. He asserted that alleviating suffering could not be achieved through conviction or rational reasoning alone. He suggested mindfulness as a "direct way" to confront suffering by transcending it, and he did this by focusing on the present moment. Interestingly, the Buddha

did not intend to establish a formalised structure for disseminating his insights, such as a religion or a group, and he did not do so. His dedication to the self-reliance and self-dependence of each individual exemplifies the very substance of mindfulness, as does the following quote from him: "Do not believe in anything just because it is claimed and spoken by many."¹ He argued that the only thing that should be considered valid is that which one has evaluated through instantaneous and direct experience. On this basis, awareness can be characterised by its two interconnected aspects, which are as follows: (1) the ability to perceive the current instant with objectivity and (2) an attitude that is non-judgmental and accepting of one's surroundings as they are. Mindfulness,

on the other hand, is experienced in the subjective and instantaneous "first-person perspective," or through the means of direct and impartial contemplation, in contrast to the contemporary practice of medicine, which can be seen as "objective" and a mediated "third-person perspective." The purpose of cultivating mindfulness is to get one's mind into a state of readiness to tolerate previously uncomfortable emotions more easily. To illustrate, anxiety does not have to be a problem if it is approached with the correct frame of mind and accepted. If a person can tolerate anxiety, it eventually loses its effect simply because it can be controlled; ultimately, the level of dread will diminish due to decreased emotional impact. Therefore, mindfulness refers to being aware of one's experience while embracing it calmly and collectedly. There are two potential explanations for the discovery that practising mindfulness can decrease the prevalence of psychosomatic symptoms. To begin, a symptom of discomfort, such as anxiety, can be made to feel less frightening by the person experiencing it by accepting and embracing it rather than fighting against it. This is most likely why individuals who participate in mindfulness interventions report experiencing lower discomfort, anxiety, and melancholy.

Yoga and Tantra approach

According to the yogic system and Tantric tradition, "*Kuṇḍalinī*" ascends from the *Mūlādhāra* chakra, travels through the central *Nadi* (called *sushumna*), and arrives at the crown of the cranium. It is believed that an individual can accomplish various degrees of awakening as well as a mystical experience by having Kundalini travel through the various chakras until *Kuṇḍalinī* eventually reaches the top of the brain, also known as the *Sahasrara* or crown chakra, which triggers a highly profound transformation of

¹ AN 3.65 Kesamuttisuttaṃ (Kālāma Sutta):

<https://tipitaka.app/?a=dc6-55-ro>

consciousness that results in a joyful mind and a relaxed body. In these systems, the *pañcakōṣa* (five sheaths) represents the psychological and spiritual levels of existence, with the first four of each *kōṣa* ranging from the most obvious to the most delicate manifestations of the transcendent dimension. Psychosomatic disorder is present at the gross level whenever the mind is distracted, impure, or out of equilibrium. When meditators can transition to another level and arrive at *ānandamayakoṣa*, they can cleanse their minds, resulting in a healthy mind-body connection.

CONCLUSION

The psychosomatic disorder gets eradicated when the mind ascends to higher consciousness; the human being is not only a body but also a spiritual entity in which different bodies, such as gross body, mental body, energetic body, astral body, and *ānandamaya* body, exist as suggested by Yoga and Tantra, Meanwhile Buddhist path to explore the mind-body pattern and use particular faculty of the mind to purify itself and transform into well-being.

Meditation has been seen as a means, and well-being has been seen as the pathway to the ultimate objective of self-transcendence or liberation in most conventional approaches. Accordingly, scientific research findings lend credence to the assertion that meditation results in improved well-being, the growth of latent capabilities, the development of cognitive reserve capacities, and favourable shifts in states of consciousness.

The capacity of *Vipassanā* to settle the human mind, transforming its turmoil into calmness with increased vivacity, gives it a positive outlook on mental health and excellent human potential development. The meditator eventually attains the freedom to live for ironic objectives and moral ideals such as loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and serenity of mind. Because of this, *Vipassanā* guides humanity away from narcissism and toward mature, societal love and a life of selflessness. This personal transformation serves as the stimulus for the modification and development of society. On the other hand, it is essential to emphasise that meditating is not intended to replace conventional medical treatment or psychotherapy. It is recommended to be used as an adjunct to more conventional forms of medical treatment. Discussing the possibilities for treatment with a qualified medical professional before commencing any new type of therapy is essential. In light of this, the practice of meditation as part of a comprehensive treatment plan has the potential to be an effective treatment for those who are afflicted with psychosomatic disorders.

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