

Ayurvedic Secrets To Good Health from Charaka Samhita

by Dr. Rekha Radhamony





Class 1: The Basic Principles

My 2 cents for the course!

- Module 1: First 4 classes – Basic Principles, Routine and Lifestyle Recommendations
- Module 2: Last 4 classes – Ayurvedic Nutrition
- To fully understand Module 2, it is essential to thoroughly learn Module 1
- Please complete the worksheets (homework 😊) given after each class before the next session. This practice helps gauge your understanding of the material taught and allows you (and me) to review your progress and reinforce the learnings effectively.
- To qualify for the certificate of completion, 8 completed worksheets must be submitted.
- Ask questions, you shall receive the answers! Use ONLY the dedicated email id for asking your questions and clearing your doubts: courses@adirekhaayurveda.com
- Take the course seriously & be committed; do not miss any classes!



Books for reference

Main textbook:

Charaka Samhita

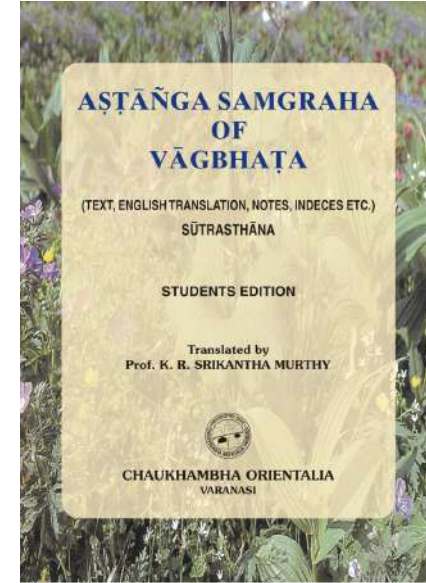
Volume 1 (Sutra Sthana) by Dr. Sasirekha

For additional reading:

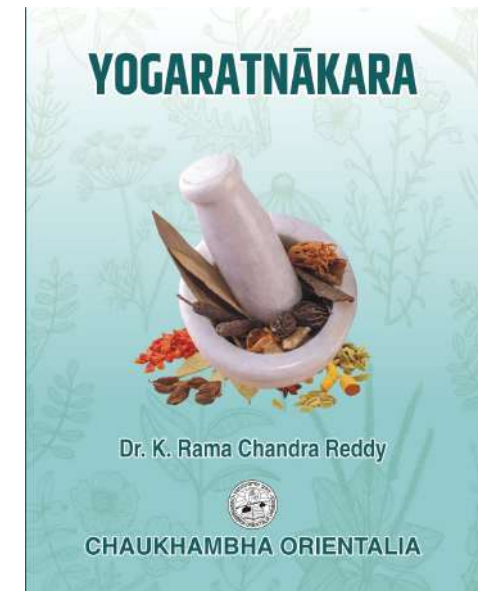
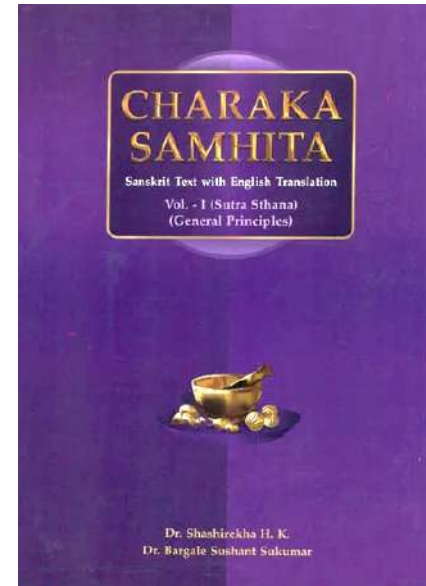
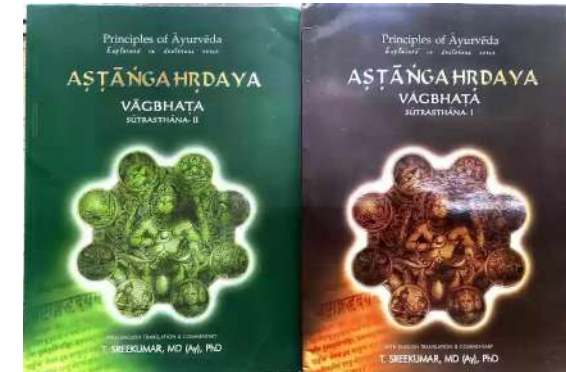
Ashtanga Samgraha of Vagbhata by
Prof. Sreekanth Murthy

Yogaratanakara by Dr. K. Rama Chandra
Reddy

Principles of Ayurveda – Ashtanga
Hridaya Sutrasthana – Volume 1 and 2



ADIREKHA
AYURVEDA
By Dr. Rekha Radhamony

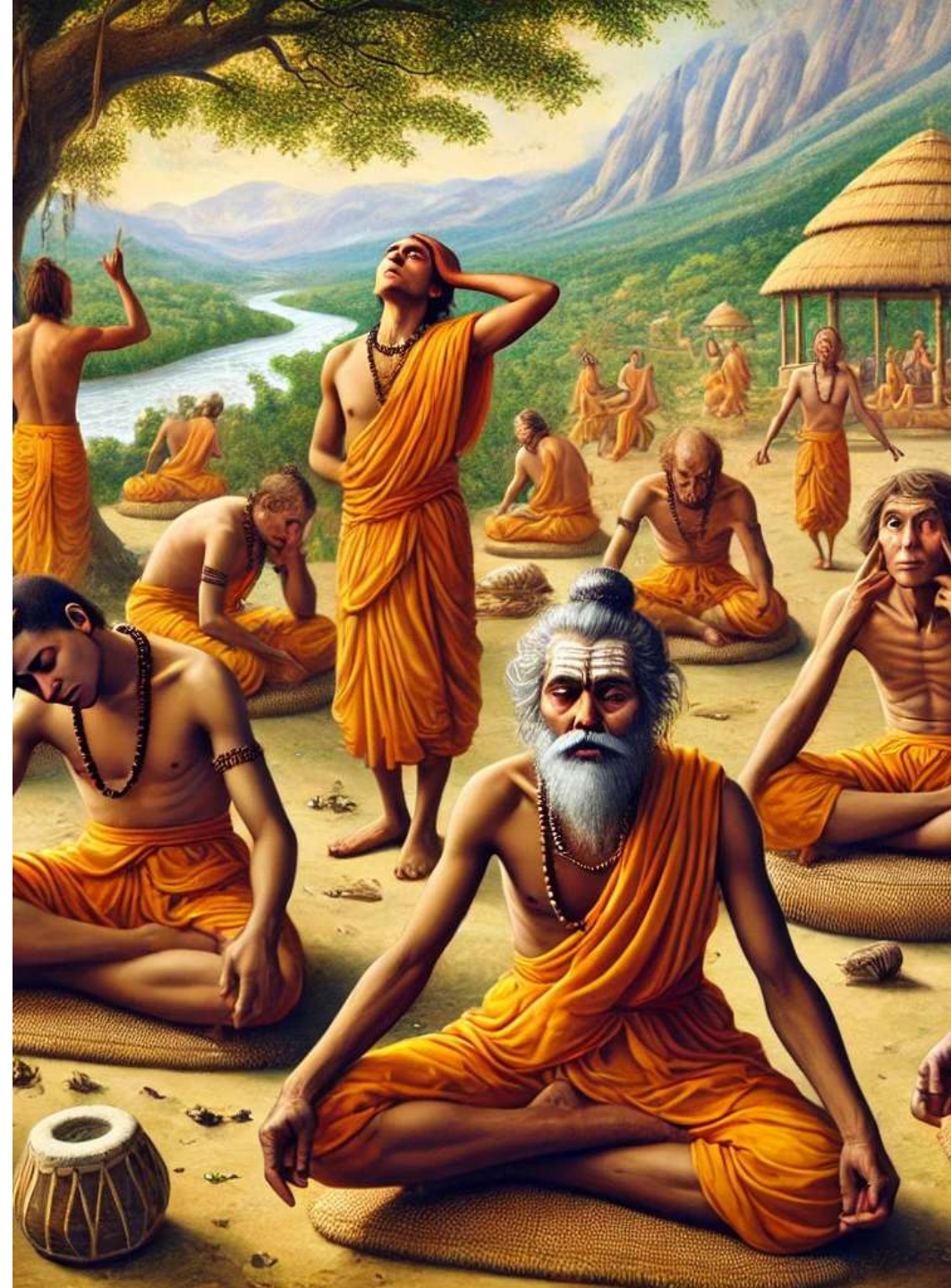




The Origin of Ayurveda

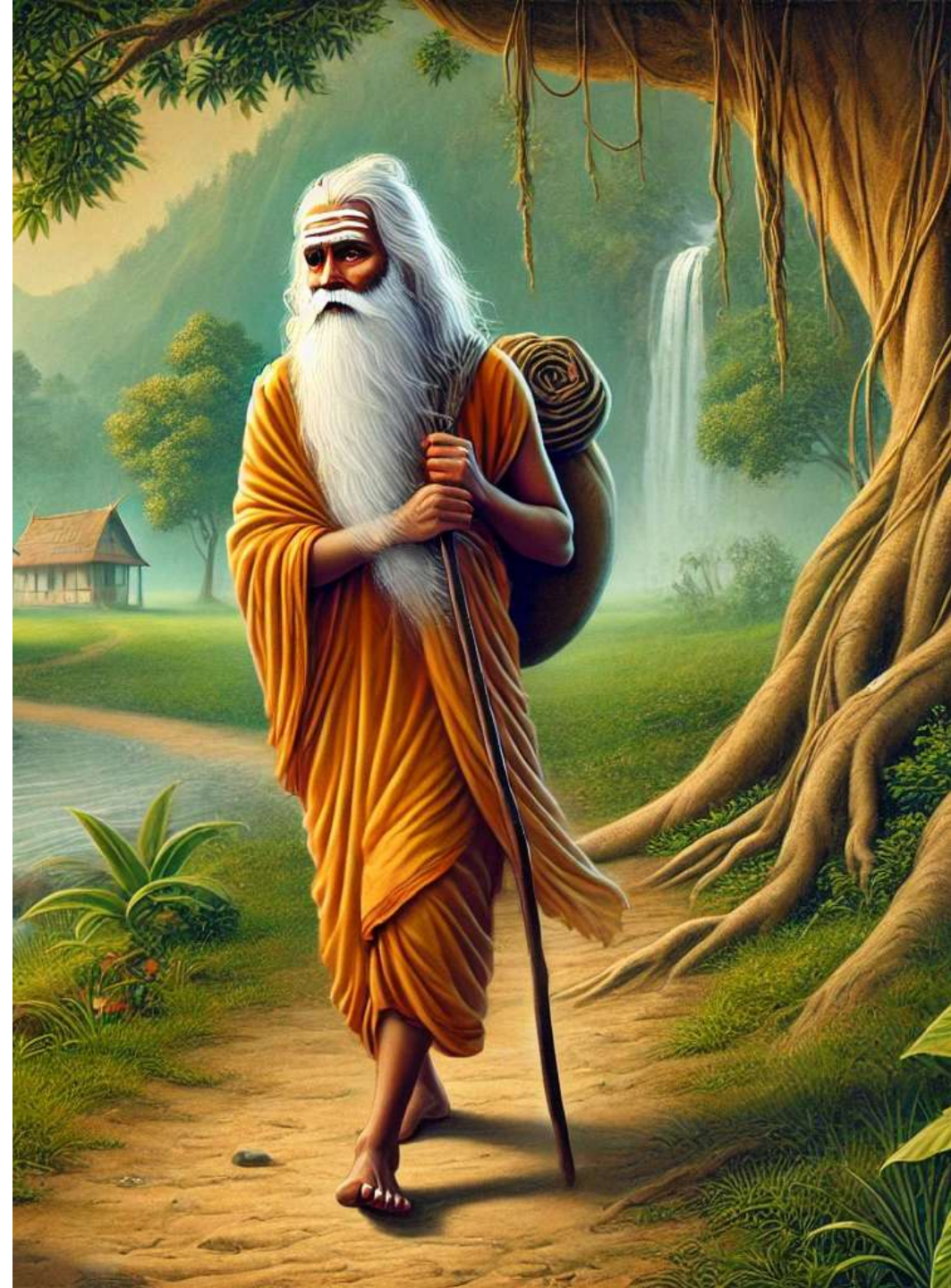
The sages meet at the Himalayas!

- Due to the prevalence of rogas (diseases), men were unable to focus on their sacred duties like tapa (devotion), fasting, studying, brahmacharya (abstinence), and performing rituals.
- The disruption caused by diseases affected both physical and spiritual well-being.
- Witnessing this suffering, a group of wise and compassionate sages decided to take action.
- These sages journeyed to the Himalayas, seeking a solution
- Around fifty sages, including the renowned sage Charaka, gathered in the Himalayas and engaged in intense discussions.



Bharadwaja sets off to meet Indra

- What is the ultimate aim of human life?
- Purushartha – Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha
- Only a healthy body and mind could attain this.
- The diseases caused the destruction of prosperity and health.
- The sages practiced Dhyana (meditation) and decided they should meet Indra to learn Ayurveda from him.
- They believed Indra could help them as he had fully learned Ayurveda.
- Sage Bharadwaja volunteered to go and meet Indra



Bharadwaja Meets Indra...

- Bharadwaja visited Indra at his abode.
- Indra appeared as attractive as a flame of fire.
- Bharadwaja requested Indra for advice on preventing & treating diseases.
- Indra, pleased with the request, concisely taught Ayurveda to Bharadwaja, focusing on three foundations.



What did Indra teach Bharadwaja?

1. How to Treat Diseases?

- Hetu: Cause of diseases
- Linga: Symptoms of diseases
- Oushadha: Knowledge of medicines

2. How to Preserve the Health of Healthy People?

3. How to use Ayurveda everyday?

Nitya: Daily practices for maintaining good health

Punya: For reaching/ attaining higher consciousness

How did Indra learn Ayurveda?

- Brahma
- Daksha Prajapati
- Ashwini Kumaras
- Indra

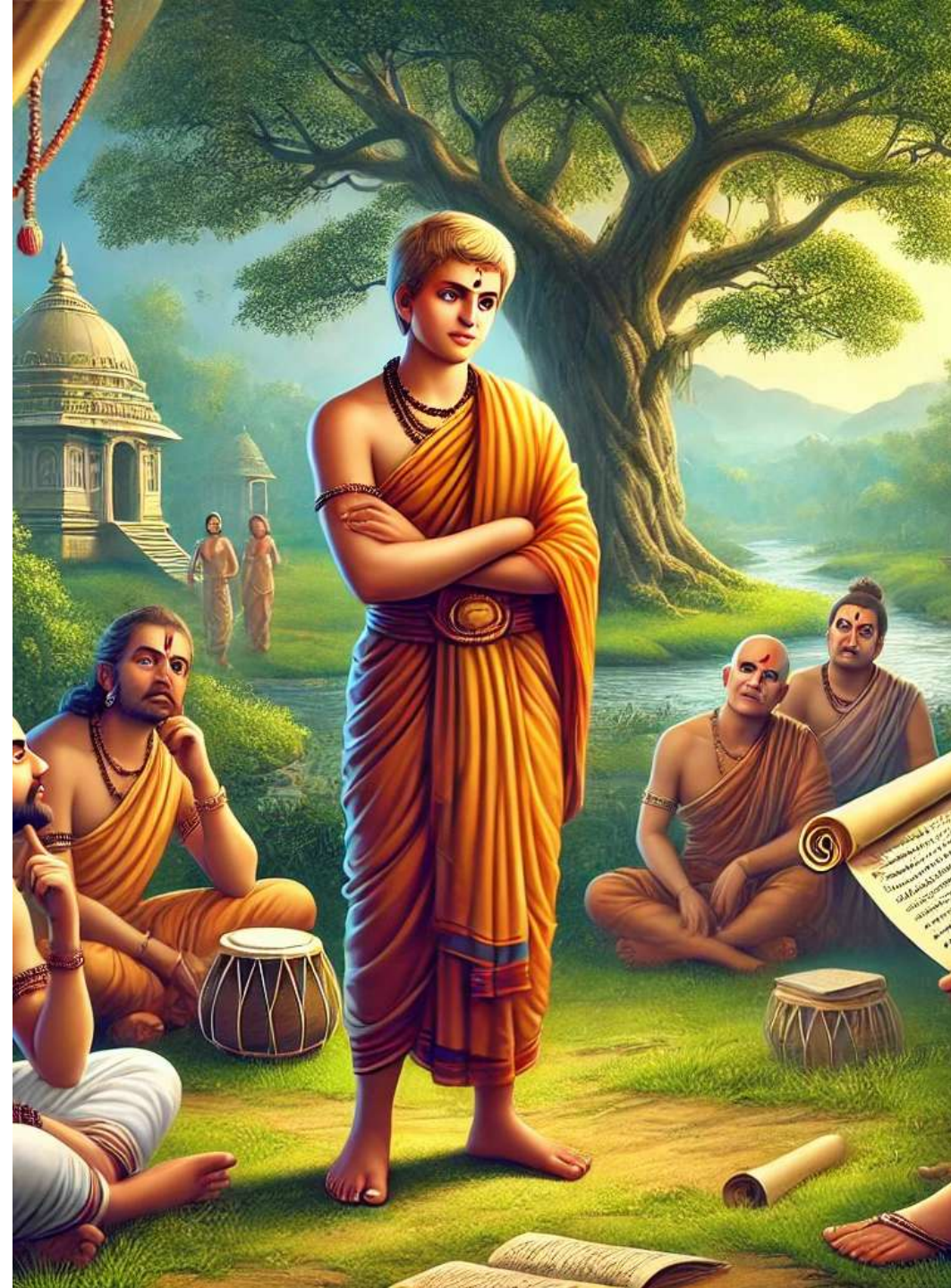


Atreya to Agnivesa..

- The intelligent Bharadwaja learned all that Indra taught in a short time.
- Bharadwaja returned to the Himalayas and taught Ayurveda to the other sages.
- Among the sages, there was a kind-hearted sage who wished to help the whole mankind suffering from diseases – Atreya!
- Atreya taught Ayurveda to his six disciples: Agnivesha, Bhela, Jatukarna, Parasara, Hareeta, and Ksharapani. Agnivesa was the smartest. He wrote the first book of Ayurveda, Agnivesha Samhita
- Later each of the sages, wrote their own books

Who was Caraka?

- The first known medical text-book in the world is Agnivesa Samhita
- Caraka was the disciple of Agnivesa
- Caraka rewrote Agnivesa Samhita and named it Caraka Samhita
- Written in 2nd century BC, near Kashmir
- Today, Caraka is known as the 'Father of Indian Medicine'
- His specialty was General Medicine
- Though the book is largely about general medicine, it also has a lot of influence of Indian philosophy



Definition of Ayurveda





Definition of Ayurveda

“Hitahitam sukham duḥkham āyus tasya hitāhitam |
Mānam cha tacha yatroktam āyurvedaḥ sa ucyate” | |

Word Meaning:

- **Hita:** Favorable
- **Ahita:** Unfavorable
- **Sukham:** Happiness
- **Duḥkham:** Sadness
- **Āyuh:** Life
- **Mānam:** Quantity
- **Yatra uktam:** Where it is mentioned
- **Ucyate:** Called as

Translation: Life has 4 aspects

- **Hita āyu:** Favorable
- **Ahita āyu:** Unfavorable
- **Sukha āyu:** Happy
- **Duḥkha āyu:** Sad

That which describes each of these four aspects of life is called Ayurveda.

Synonyms of Ayu: (Life)

“Sareera indriya satwa atma samyogo dhari jeevitam |
Nityagashcha anubandhashcha paryayair ayuruchyate” | |

Ayu: (life) is the connection of body, senses, mind, and the soul

Dhari = (wear), one which wears the body (holds up the body)

Nityaga : flows, goes on for long

Anubandha : Connects the body and the mind



The first shloka of Charaka Samhita

*“Adhato deerkhanjeevitheeyam adhyayam
vyakhyasyama:”*

Itiha smaha bhagavan atreya”

- Adhato (Literal meaning: after this, implied meaning - here is the title). Adha also means auspicious
- “I am going to explain the chapter about long life”
- All chapters start with Adhato
- All ancient books were written in Taliyola (palm-leaf manuscripts)
- Hence there was no name for specific volume or chapter



The first shloka of Charaka Samhita (contd.)

- Charaka Samhita is written as a dialogue between Agnivesa and his teacher Atreya
- Agnivesa asks questions Atreya and Atreya answers them.
- The chapters are not named based on their contents.
- Instead, chapters are named using the first 2-3 words of the first shloka.
- Other disciples of Atreya like Chakrapani and Bhela, are also present in some dialogues in Charaka Samhita
- The disciples later wrote their own Samhitas.



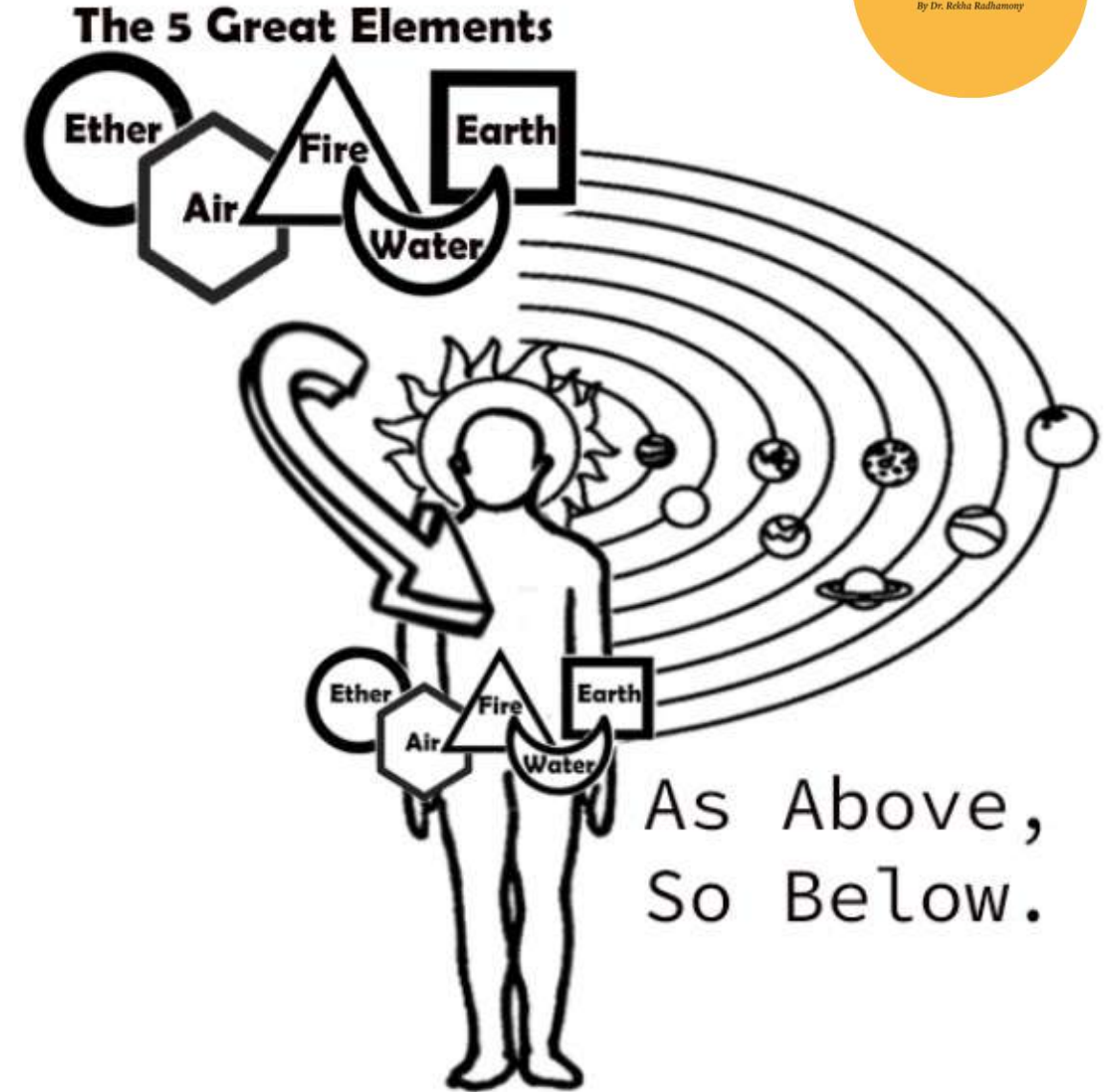
*Before we go deep into
Caraka Samhita,
some basics...*

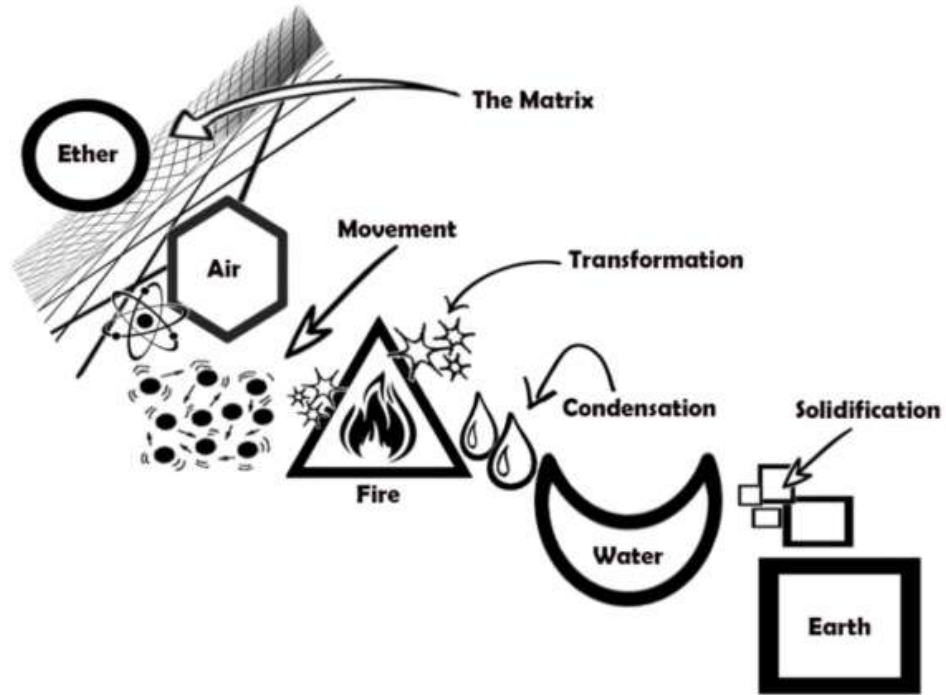


The Panchamahabhutas

The individual is the epitome of the universe as all the material and spiritual phenomena of the universe are present in the individual and all those present in the individual are also present in the universe.”

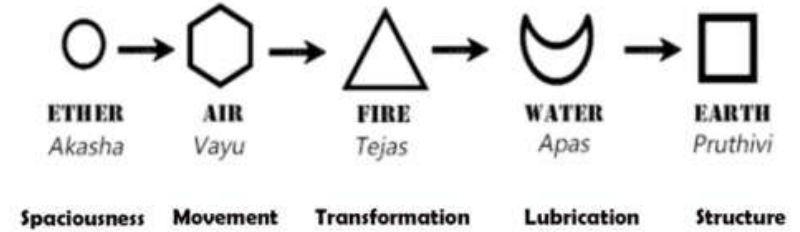
(Charaka Samhita Sarirasthana Chapter 5 Verse 4)





THE 5 GREAT ELEMENTS

[Panchamahabhutas]



Vata, Pitta, Kapha

- Subtle body (sukshma) : Invisible. Made of Panchamahabhutas
- Gross body (stula): Visible. Made of tissues & organs
- Body – creation, maintenance, destruction
- The gross body is perishable.
- But stays put together due to the presence of a “shaktivishesha” (energy)
- V, P, K - creation, maintenance, destruction
- Order – significance - strength
- Doshas – vikrita – diseases
- Doshas – avikrita - health

Vata



Space + Air

- Kinetic energy, movement
 - Nervous system
 - Circulates blood
- Controls elimination of waste
- Responsible for child birth
- When balanced, can foster enthusiasm, creativity, and positivity

Pitta



Fire + Water

- Kinetic and potential energy
- Digestion, metabolism
- Transformation of food and ideas
- Responsible for visual perception and analytical thought
- When balanced, can create a sense of confidence, ambition, and decisiveness

Kapha



Water + Earth

- Potential energy
 - Stability
 - Source of immunity
- Lubricates joints and produce salivary secretion
- Supports, holds emotions
- Can be nurturing, patient, compassionate, and loving

Vata is the hero, & the villain :-)

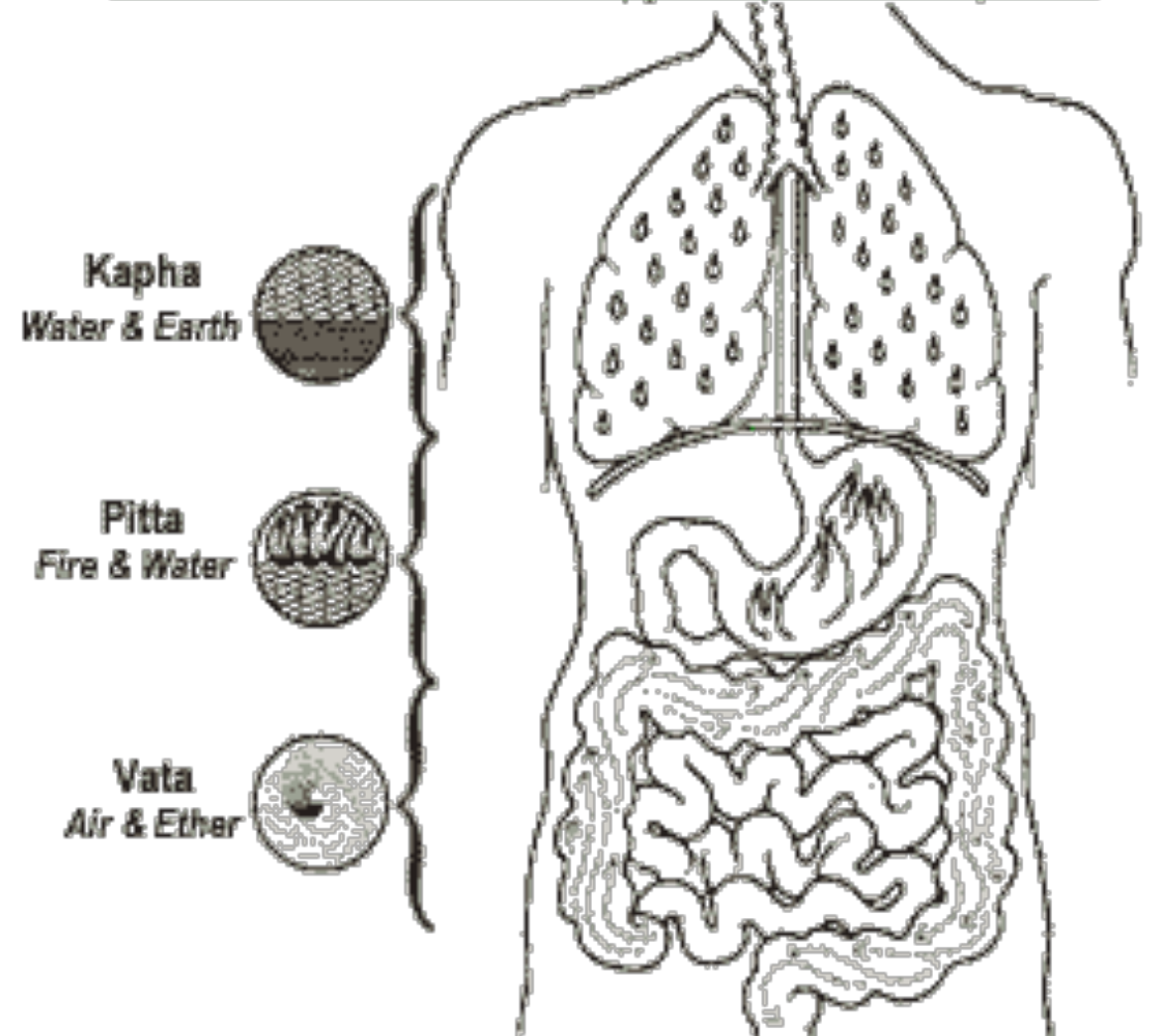
“Pittam pangu (pitta is crippled) **kapham pangu** (kapha is crippled) **pangavo mala dhatava:** (even malas & dhatus are crippled) | **vayuna yatra neeyanthe, tatra gachchanti meghavat”**

- (Ref – Sharangadhara Purva Khanda 5/43)
- Vata is the strongest
- Vata moves pitta & kapha
- Vata even moves the clouds!

The seats of VPK

- **te vyapino** (they are spread)
hrinnabhyoradho
madhyordhwa samsraya |
- Even if they are spread all over the body, the ashraya (seat) of vata, pitta, kapha are as below:
- Vata – below navel
- Pitta – between heart and navel
- Kapha – above the heart

The Seats of Vata, Pitta, Kapha



The upside down tree

- Our body is like a tree upside down!
- **urdhwa** (top) **moolam** (root) **ata shaakham** (branches) **rishaya** (wise sages) **purusham vidu** (calls man) | |
- Roots above, branches below.
- VPK – creation, maintenance, destruction.



*VPK based
on age*

Kapha



Pitta



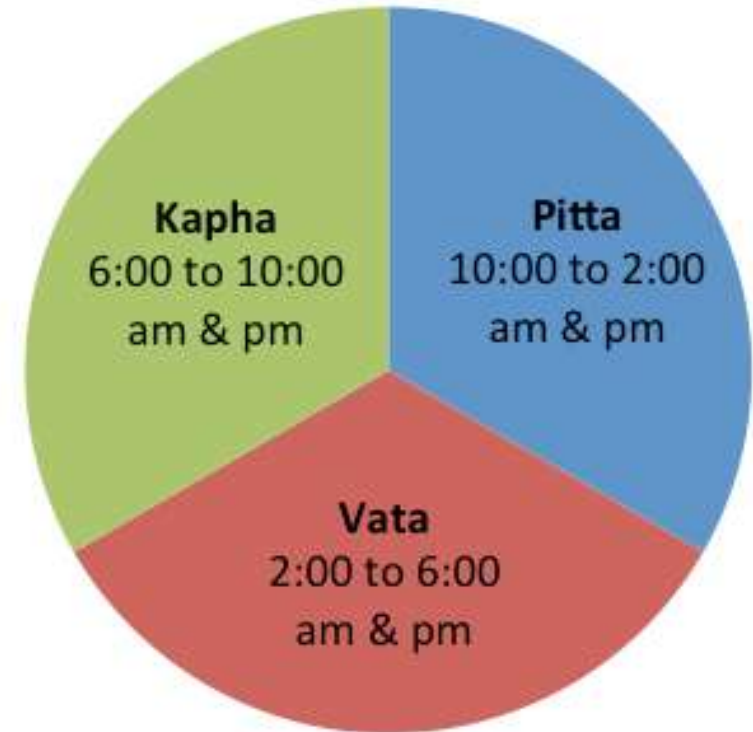
Vata



VPK based on the time of the day

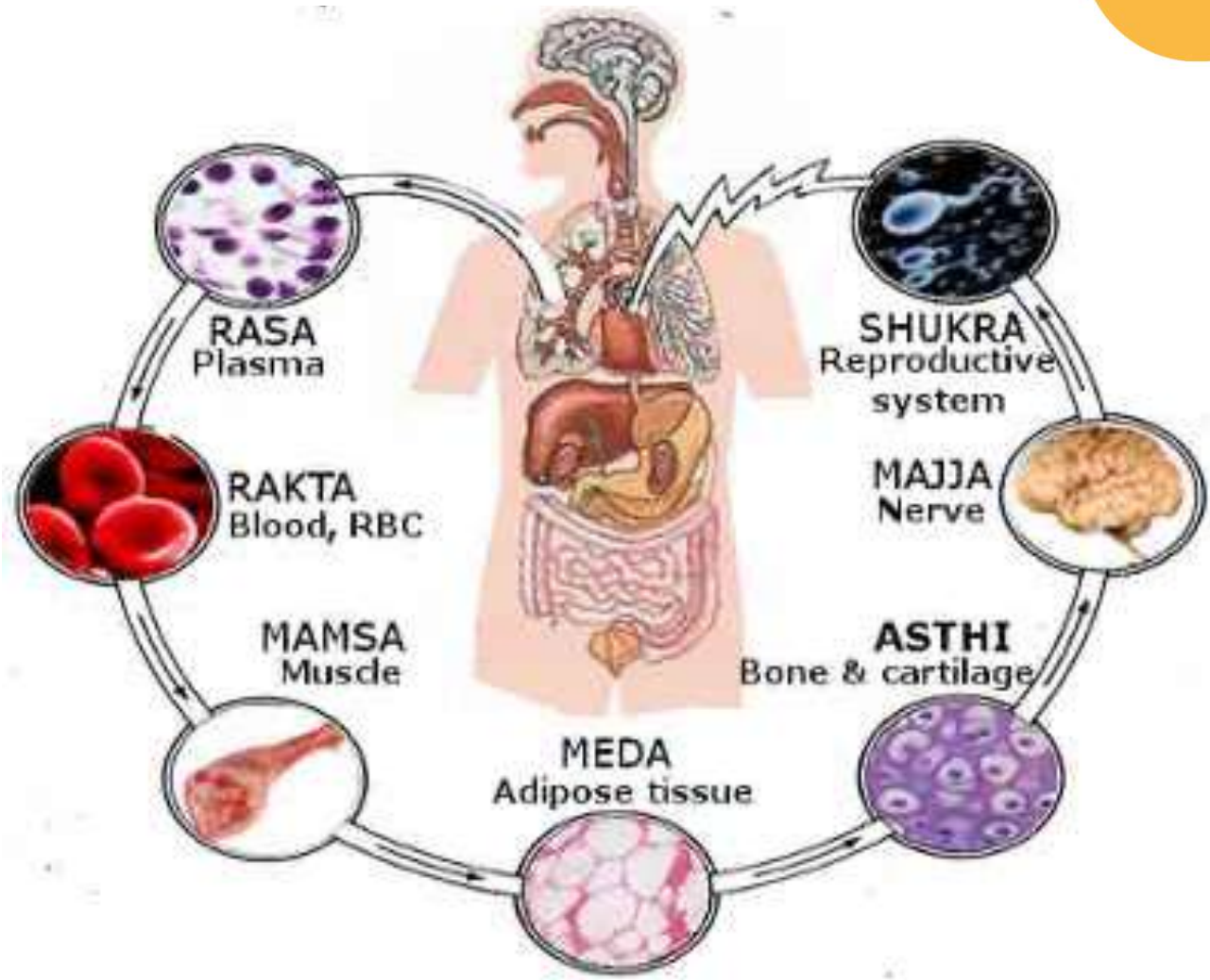
- If the hours of the day divided into three
- 8 Hours – Vata
- 8 Hours - Pitta
- 8 Hours - Kapha

Times of Day



The 7 Dhatus (tissue systems)

RASA RAKTA MAMSA MEDO
ASTHI MAJJA SUKLANI



*The 3 Malas
(waste
products)*

Sweat (swedam)

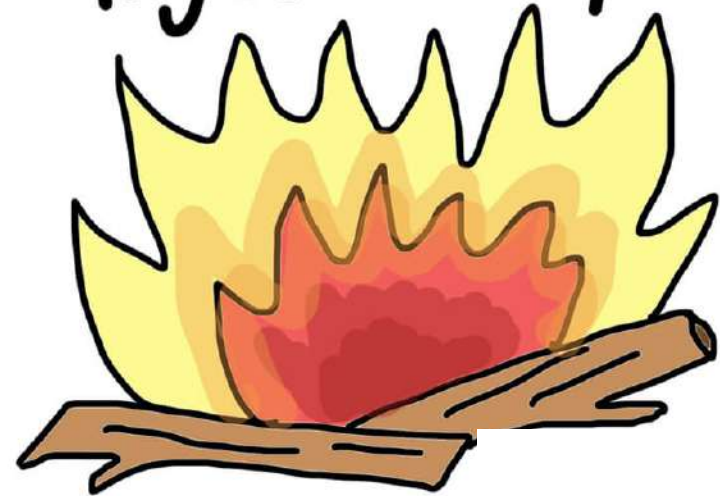
Urine (mutram)

Feces (pureesham)

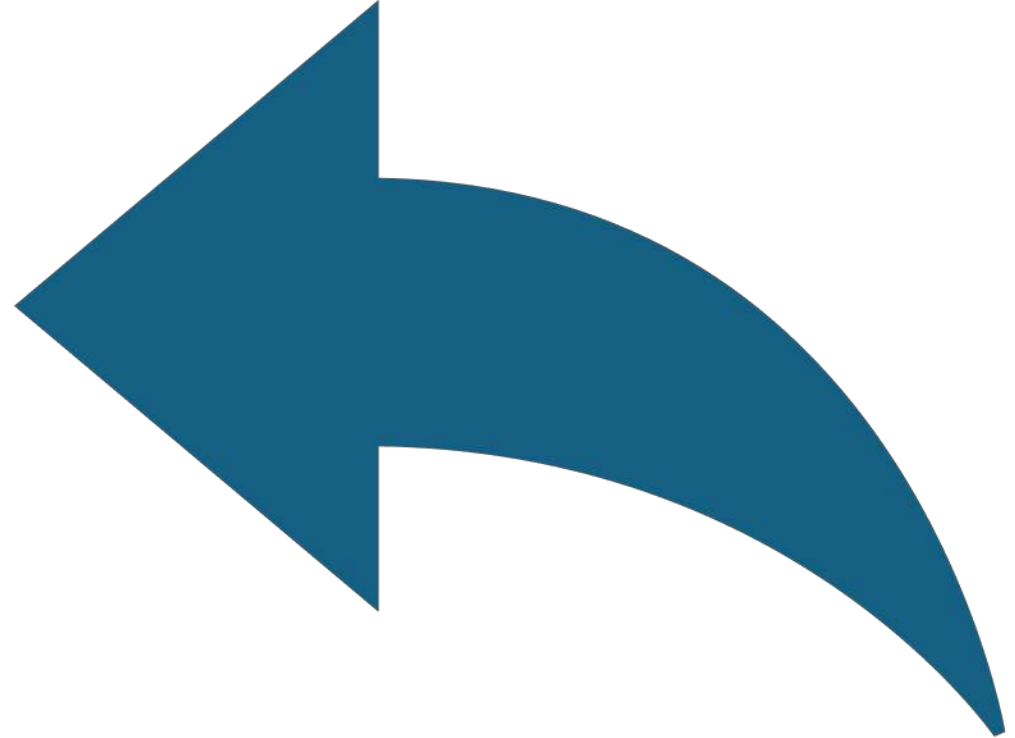
Types of Agni (digestive fire) based on VPK

- Due to VPK, Agni is of 3 types
- Vishama – Vata (Sometimes high sometimes low agni)
- Teekshna – Pitta (Sharp agni)
- Manda – Kapha (Slow/ low agni)

AGNI
fueling the
digestive fire



*Back to
Charaka Samhita...*



Indriya Upakramaneeyam

- The role of sense organs
- The mind
- Importance of good conduct



Pancha panchaka (the five fives)

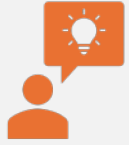
- 5 Indriyas – 5 senses
- 5 Indriya dravya – 5 elements
- 5 Indriya adhishtana - 5 seats/
locations
- 5 Indriyarthas – 5 actions
- 5 Indriya buddhi
(nischayatmika budhi) – 5
knowledge

Sense organ	Element (Indriya dravya)	Seat (Indriya adhishtana)	Action (Indriya arthas)	Knowledge (Indriya buddhi)
(Chakshu Indriya) Vision	Fire	Eyes	Sight	Knowledge of sight
(Shrotra Indriya) Hearing	Ether/ Space	Ears	Sound	Knowledge of sound
(Ghrana Indriya) Olfaction	Earth	Nose	Smell	Knowledge of smell
(Rasana Indriya) Taste	Water	Tongue	Taste	Knowledge of taste
(Sparsana Indriya) Touch	Air	Skin	Touch	Knowledge of touch



The importance of sense organs

- As human beings we constantly interact with the outside world.
- How do we do that? Through our sense organs! Known as Indriya!
- The sense organs connect the individual to the universe!
- The whole world is made of 5 elements (Panchamahabhutas).
- So are human beings.
- So, for each sense organ, there is a specific element assigned.
- In modern science, all these senses are registered in the cerebral cortex, in Ayurveda, it is said to be in the mind!



How does one remember what the mind has registered?
Through the soul (Atma)



In modern science, it is the thalamus or limbic system that helps with memory



Memory is attributed to physical body in modern science. But physical body is perishable



But Ayurveda attributes memory to Atma, which is non- perishable

The mind does not belong in sense organs

But mind excels (better than) all the other sense organs

Mind controls all sense organs

Mind is always busy working when it is involved in the actions of sense organs

So the mind is called a superior sense organ "atindriya mana"

Mind is also called 'Satwa' or 'Cheta:'

Mind joins with the soul and does its actions

Actions of the sense organs is due to the actions of the mind

The mind controls the sense organs like a commander leading his soldiers

Karma (actions) of the mind



Chintyam - Thinking



Vicharyam - Expansion of thoughts



Oohyam - Imagination



Dhyeyam - Concentration



Sankalpam - Planning

The functions of the mind

1. To perform its actions (chintyam, vicharyam, oohyam, etc)
2. To help sense organs perform their actions
3. To stop its own action. ('Indriyabhigrah: karma manasa: swasya nigraha').
4. The mind can do all its functions only when it is associated with the soul



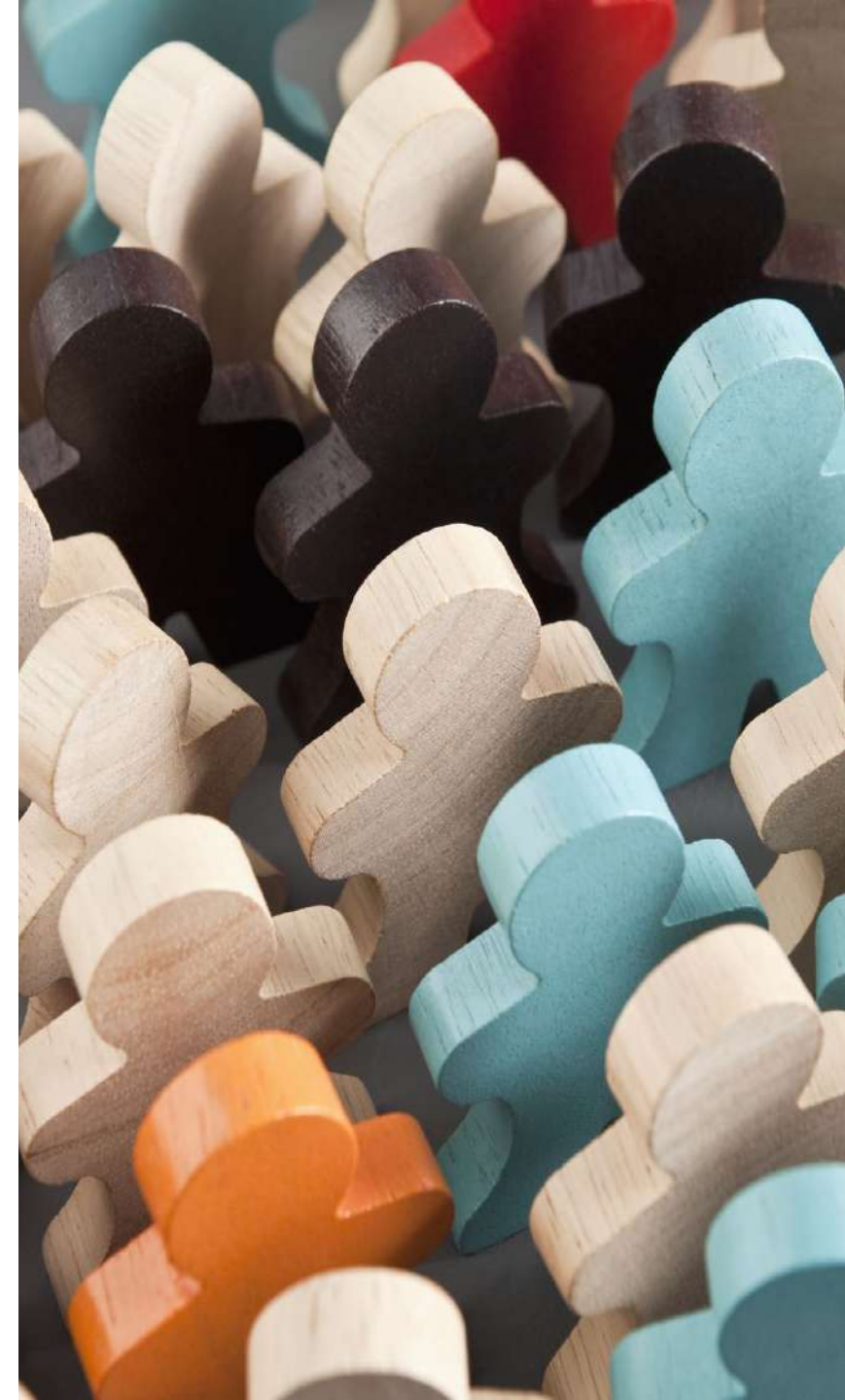
The characteristics of the mind

- Anu : Minute (subtle)
- Eka : Only one
- Think of seeing food in front of you.
- You see, hear, smell and taste the food.
- You feel the mind is into all of these thoughts at the same time.
- It is not.
- Even if we feel the mind is invested in multiple sense organs at a time it doesn't.
- Just like *ulpala shatadala soochi vedha nyayam*



Satwa, Rajas, Tamas

- Every individual has 3 mental states
- The intensity of each of these vary based on life circumstances, body type (prakriti), genetic predisposition etc.
- But we indentify people with the qualities (rajas, tamas, satwa) they have the most.



Adhyatma Dravya Guna Samgraham

- Mind
- Actions of the mind (thoughts, etc)
- Budhhi – intellect, ability to differentiate right & wrong
- Soul (Atma)



What happens when you over-use your sense organs?

- Sense organs + mind leads to actions
- Over use of sense organs (eg. taste) + mind leads to disturbances in the knowledge (of taste) = diseases
- Normal use of sense organs + mind = right knowledge & health





Sadvrittam
(The Good Conduct)



- One must be interested in Brahmacharya (abstincence), gaining knowledge, helping the poor, good friendships, kindness, happiness, detachment and peace.
- Anyone who does service and helps people and has a good conduct, he will achieve great heights in his life and will be acceptable to all living beings around him.
- When one who does good deeds dies, he will be remembered for his good deeds.
- Hence everyone should follow Sad Vrittam

The social good conduct





- If you observe social good conduct, you can gain health & control your sense organs
- Respect the teachers, elderly and enlightened beings
- Take shower twice a day
- Always clean the feet and wash after elimination
- Every 5 days, one should trim hair, moustashe and nails
- Everyday wear fresh clean clothes



- Start everyday with a happy mind
- One should smell good everyday
- Hair should be kept well and combed
- Everyday apply oil on the head, ears, nose and feet
- Do dhumapana (medicated smoking) everyday
- When you meet someone, greet him and talk politely
- Help the underprivileged



- One should give money, offerings to the poor (dhanam)
- Respect and treat well and equally, the guests who come to your house
- Offer prayers, last rites and rituals to the departed souls
- Talk sweetly even if unfavourable
- Talk hita (favourable)
- Talk less
- Talk only at the right time
- Perform one's duties with righteousness (dharma)

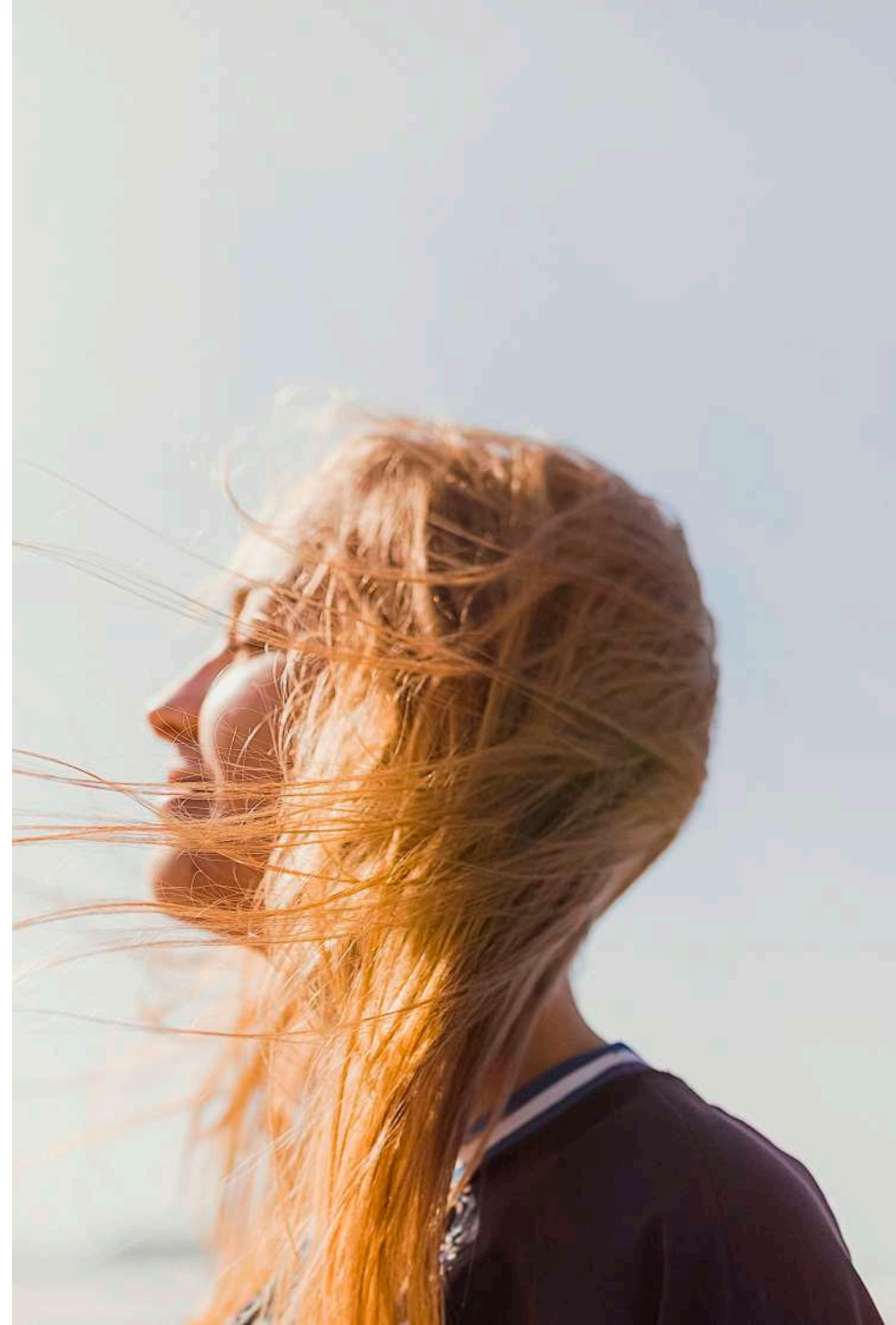


- If faced with a bad situation, do not get scared, face it bravely
- Do not look sad or depressed all the time. Look happy!
- One should respect people with more intelligence, humility, knowledge or age
- One should carry an umbrella, cover the head, and wear a footwear while going out
- One should look far when walking on the road
- Stop exercise before you start feel tired
- Treat all plants and animals around us with love
- Be truthful.
- Do not react to harsh words by others in the same way. Be kind.
- Do not hit animals with a stick
- Hold close friendships with relatives, people who love you, who has helped you when you needed the most, and who knows all secrets about you 😊
- Do not enjoy all by yourself. Share the joys!
- Trust people who are close to you; do not trust everyone; do not doubt everyone



- Do the right thing at the right time
- Do not get into anything before testing the waters first
- Do not let the mind hover around like a directionless kite
- Do not take decisions when you are overjoyed or angry
- Do not hold on to sadness for a long time
- Always believe in this – the results will be based on what you work hard for
- Let go of feelings of hatred

The personal good conduct





- Do not lie, gossip, talk about someone else's faults or disrespect others
- Do not accept money and property from others
- Do not wish for other men/women (other than your wife/ husband)
- Do not wish for someone else's wealth
- Do not hold grudge or carry baggage
- Do not travel in an unmaintained vehicles
- Do not sit on chairs which are not as high as knees
- Do not walk on uneven roads, or sleep on uneven surfaces
- Always cover the mouth when yawning
- Do not look at the sun directly
- Do not take shower when tired or wear the same clothes after shower
- Maintain good posture while sneezing, eating and sleeping
- Don't hold the natural urges
- Do not break traditions & rules
- At dusk – do not eat, study, have sex or sleep
- Do not engage in drinking excessively, gambling and prostitution

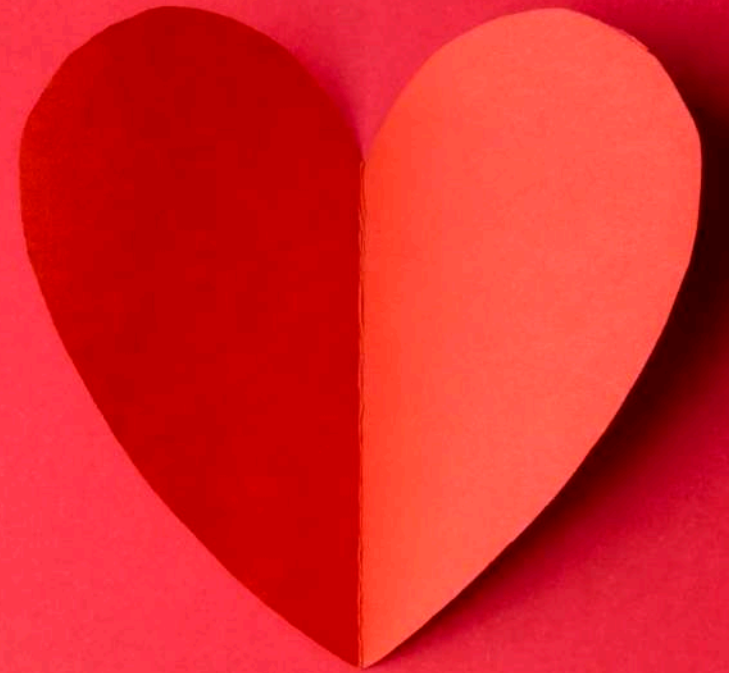
Good conduct – eating habits





- Eat food after taking shower, wearing good clothes
- Eat after washing mouth, hands and feet
- Give food to the guests, parents and servants first
- Do not eat facing North
- Do not eat food served by servants who are hungry, unclean and without love
- Do not eat curd in the night

Good conduct – sex life





- Respect your partner
- Do not have sex with women other than wife
- Do not have sex in unnatural ways
- Do not have sex at during sunset
- Do not have sex during full moon and new moon days
- Do not have sex in public

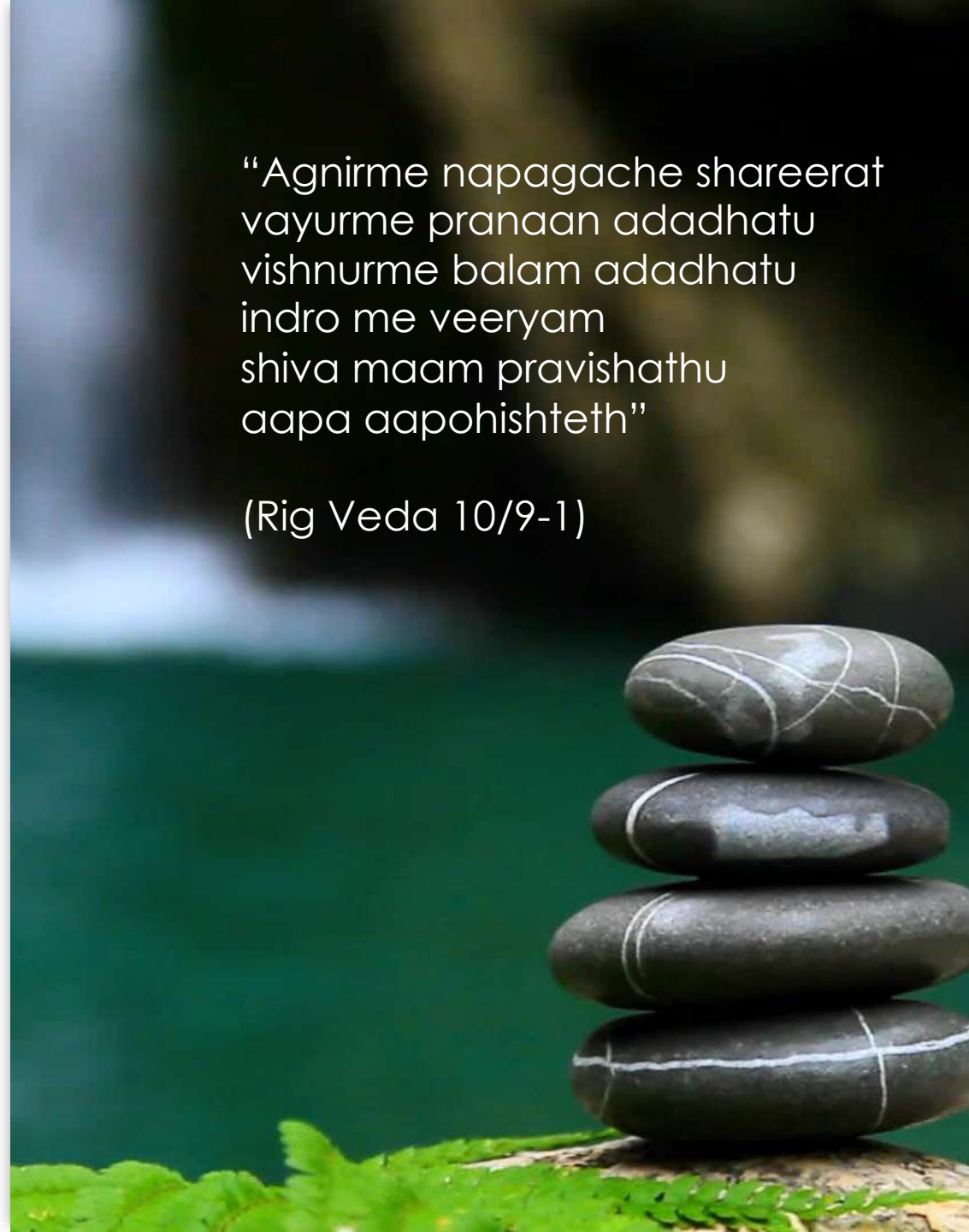
(Ayurveda does not support Kamasutra)

How to take shower?

- Always recite snana mantra before shower
 - Agni should not leave from my body
 - Let Vayu (air) give me Prana
 - Let Vishnu give me bala (strength)
 - Let Indra give me virya (potency)
 - Let the water that falls on me be good for me
- Touch the water only after reciting the mantra
- First wash the mouth and feet, then the orifices of the head
- Then wash the chest and head & then the rest of the body

“Agnirme napagache shareerat
vayurme pranaan adadhatu
vishnurme balam adadhatu
indro me veeryam
shiva maam pravishathu
aapa aapohishteth”

(Rig Veda 10/9-1)





In a nutshell...

- Evil and suffering, in the ultimate analysis – result from errors of judgement and imprudent conduct (Prajnaparadha)
- Good conduct in Caraka's view, implied the avoidance of overuse and underuse and misuse of the senses and the mind.
- A healthy life, in Caraka's view, has be a righteous life.

Q+A

