

HUMANITARIAN CONTRIBUTIONS MEDICO SOCIAL LIFE ALTERING ENDEAVORS

SOCIAL SERVICES HAS A DEEP - ROOTED CONNECTION IN INDIA

The link between “[KARMA](#)” as supported by sacred Indian texts and initiatives attaching responsible citizens has been amply evident in India since early days. The essence of altruism is self-sacrifice; an individual committing a selfless act with no self-benefit. It corresponds to that being narrated in Bhagvad Gita: Chapter 2, Verse 47.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदा चन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गो ऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ २-४७ ॥

karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadā cana ।
mā karmaphalāhetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmani ॥2-47॥

MY PRAYERS TO



कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥



According to various Ayurvedic literatures, Brahma (the creator) was the divine source of this science. The knowledge of Ayurveda was recalled by Lord Brahma. He transfers his noble knowledge of Ayurveda to God Daksha Prajapati who, in turn, passed it totally to twin brothers (Ashwini Kumars) who were the physician of the Gods. The then proffered this knowledge to the king of gods i.e. Lord Indra. From Indra, the knowledge of Ayurveda descended to earth in two different ways

Atreya was a famous rishi who taught in the famous Takshashila University during the Buddhist Era, however, he also travelled extensively and held symposia in different parts of the country.

Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Vagbhata samhita are considered as the most important Samhita of Kritayuga, Dwaparyuga and Kaliyuga respectively

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As also mentioned in the English translation of Sushruta Samhita,

Origin of A'yurvedic Surgery :—In India, as in all other countries, curative spells and healing mantras preceded medicine (1) ; and the first man of medicine in India was a priest, a Bhisag Atharvan. who held a superior position to a surgeon in society. The first Aryan settlements in the Punjáb were often assailed by the dark aborigines of the country, and in the wars that ensued surgeons had frequently to attend to the Aryan chiefs and soldiery.

Nay we have reasons to believe that many difficult surgical operations were successfully performed, though some of them sound almost incredible. But although the aid of surgery was constantly sought for, surgeons were not often allowed to mix in the Bráhmanic society of Vedic India. This is hinted at by our author when he says that it was during the wars between the gods and demons that the Ashvins, the surgeons of heaven, did not become entitled to any sacrificial oblation till they had made themselves eligible for it by uniting the head of the god of sacrifice to his decapitated body.

The origin of the plastic surgery had his roots more than 4000 years old in India, back to the Indus River Civilization. The mythical-religious shlokas (hymns) associated with this civilization were compiled in Sanskrit language between 3000 and 1000 B.C. in the form of Vedas, the oldest sacred books of the Hindu religion.

This era is referred to as the Vedic period (5000 years B.C) in Indian history during which the four Vedas, namely the Rigveda, the Samaveda, the Yajurveda, and the Atharvaveda were compiled. All the four Vedas are in the form of shlokas (hymns), verses, incantations and rites in Sanskrit.

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**As per the 4 Vedas (ancient Indian texts):
Vaidyas (Physicians) are devoted to Atharva Veda,
'Sushruta Samhita' is believed to be part of it.**

In its directive narrations, it has also defined The Teacher:

Qualities of the Teacher:

- Should have clear idea of the subject,
- Should have seen the practical applications, skilful, amicable, pure
- Having practical experience, well-equipped,
- Possessing all the senses in normal condition,
- Acquainted with human constitutions,
- Well-versed in courses of actions, having his knowledge uncensored,
- Free from conceit, envy, anger, forbearing,
- Fatherly to disciples, having qualities of a good teacher and
- Capable of infusing understanding.

Definition of Authority (Professor / Maharishi):

- Those who are free from rajas and tamas, endowed with strength of penance and knowledge, and whose knowledge is defect less
- Those who are always un-contradicted and true universally in past, present and future
- Those who's words are free from doubt and are true because, being devoid of Rajas and Tamas, they cannot speak a lie.

**Such people are known as apta (who have acquired all the knowledge),
sista (expert in the discipline) and vibuddha (enlightened).**

Even though you are learned enough, you should not boast too much for your knowledge because mostly the people become irritated for the excessive boasting even if it comes from an authority. There is no end to Ayurveda, hence one should devote himself to it constantly and without any negligence. This is worth doing. One should learn without jealousy excellence of conduct even from the enemies because for the wise the world is teacher while for the unwise it is enemy.

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It was also mentioned in the famous Charak Samhita that the prime motive and aim of this noble profession is alleviation of the suffering and a global outlook. The same is beautifully described in the following shloka:

नाथर्तःनापिकामार्थमभूतदयाप्रती
वर्ततेयक्षिकित्शयनससर्वमतिवर्ततेय्

The physician may not aspire to have his own benefits and financial gains in his mind, but extend the total medical care with full devotion and dedication. These physicians are considered as the humble and ideal physician.

Contrary to the above, those who indulge in the treatment primarily for the financial gains in the mind, they are considered as undesirable physicians.

कुर्वर्तेयेयतुव्रत्थर्तःचिकित्सपन्यविक्रयम्
तेहित्वाकाज्यचनराशिपान्शुराशिमुपासतेय्

भिष्गप्यातुरानसर्वानेस्वशुतानिवयत्रवान
आबाश्रेभ्योहिसरक्षेदिह्नधर्ममनुत्तमम्

The physician should treat all the troubled people like his own son and treat them following the fundamentals of humanitarian services and treat all equally with full dedication to medicine. Then how the physician would earn his livelihood? To clarify the above concern, it is stated that:

क्काचिदर्थःक्वचिन्मैत्रीक्वचिन्धर्मक्वचिद्यश
कर्मभ्याशक्वचिच्चैषाचिकित्शानास्तीनिशफला

The physician while undertaking such professional work, gets the monetary gains from somewhere, friendship from somewhere, honors from somewhere and experience from somewhere, thereby he always gains something. Hence the medical services can never be selfless or without any fruits.

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मैत्रीकारुन्यामातैर्षुशक्येयप्रितिरुपेक्षनमम्
प्रकृतिस्थेयूभुतेशूवैद्यव्रतिखचतुर्विध्या

The physician should keep friendliness while treating underprivileged and troubled people, affection while treating privileged, humbleness while treating disabled and people with intractable conditions.

नदेशोमनुजैहीनोनमनुष्यानिरामया
ततःसर्वत्रवैद्यानासुषिद्धाअवंव्रतयः

There is no country where people are not residing and they are not suffering from any disease, hence, the physician make a decent living anywhere. The most respectful and poise person is a Physician and he should always make efforts to maintain such a faith and respect.

“Although, country’s progress depends on its growing economy, at the same time, the caregivers should have an ethical value system, that’s where philanthropy and altruism comes into play”. The essence of altruism is self-sacrifice; an individual committing a selfless act with no self-benefit. Every individual with the little or some resources and know-how has an obligation to help his / her fellow countrymen. Reaching out and transforming lives of others who deserve it most.

The followers of Sushruta were called as Sushruta. The new student was expected to study for at least 6 years. Before starting his training he had to take a solemn oath, which can be compared to that of Hippocrates.

He taught the surgical skills to his students on various experimental modules, for instance, incision on vegetables (like watermelon, gourd, cucumber etc.), probing on worm eaten wood, and preceding present day workshops by more than 2600 years. Sushruta took surgery in medieval India to admirable heights and that era was later regarded as The Golden Age of Surgery in ancient India .Because of his numerous seminal contributions to the science and art of surgery in India, he is regarded as the 'Father of Indian Surgery' and the 'Father of Indian Plastic Surgery'.

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The Vedic period, the spirituality and philosophy of ancient India recognised a degree of divinity in all beings, hence the sanctity of all life; Selfless service to fellow beings was seen as a pathway leading to the highest spiritual culmination of life – to God.

The concept of Dharma (right behaviour) constituted the bedrock of ancient Indian society; dharma required a man to live in society as a civilised being, subordinating his selfish urges to the interest of others. Through inculcation of dharma, a high standard of ethics and a defined code of conduct were achieved. In addition, there was widespread acceptance of non-material values being more virtuous than material pursuits.

Surgical training in ancient India Almost 2 000 years before the traditions of the barber surgeon, surgical apprenticeship and residency, clear guidelines existed for the training, evaluation and registration of surgeons. In the Shusruta Samhita, it is stated that ‘... practice can be started only after having read and thoroughly studied the science of medicine; having seen and performed the operations himself; having passed the appropriate tests and thence obtained the permission of the governing authority’.

Being fundamentally a surgical treatise, the Shusruta Samhita lays more emphasis on practical training. Shusruta insisted that the enormous amount of oral training should be balanced by practical efficiency. He thus stated, in colourful and poetic language, that ‘... he who knows theory only but is not so good in practical work, gets bewildered on being confronted with a patient, in the same way as a coward feels on the battlefield’.

The special qualities of the surgeon are emphasised: ‘Boldness, swiftness, sharpness of instruments, no sweating or trembling of hands and confidence are the qualities of a surgeon at the time of operation’.

India, the 2nd largest populated Country of the World, has a large population, which suffers from Congenital Defects, Deformities caused by Accidents, Disease, and Burn Injuries etc. Unfortunately most belong to the economically deprived class, which cannot afford the expensive medical facilities. Many doctors and NGOs have taken an initiative in this direction including **Dr. Ashok Gupta**. There is a large tribal population in these States. People here are very poor; it is difficult for them to make both ends meet. Thus even thinking of approaching a specialist doctor for reconstructive surgery is beyond their means and imagination.

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Priority is given to children and to the problems interfering with day to day life. Indifference towards their sufferings on the part of the society and the social ostracism due to deformities, has forced them to suffer in isolation. Some of them are so helpless and are in such miserable condition that they had attempted suicide.

When the serial bombs exploded and shook the whole of Mumbai in 1993, Dr. Gupta decided helped the victims and operated upon the victims free of charge. When the post Babri Masjid episode riots shook the whole of Nation and Mumbai in 1996, Dr. Gupta helped the victims and operated upon the victims free of charge.

When the earthquake in Gujarat on 26th Jan 2001 shook the whole nation and the earthquake in Nepal 26th Jan 2015, shook the whole World, Dr. Gupta helped the victims and operated upon the victims free of charge.

When the serial bombs exploded and shook the whole of Mumbai in 2003, 2004, 2008, Dr. Gupta helped the victims and operated upon the victims free of charge.

I must also thank my teachers and patients' Family who actually allowed me to reach out to the people and helping them with the skill that I have acquired. I am thankful to the Government Medical College, Nagpur, Grant Medical College in Bombay and the Bombay Hospital Institute of Medical Sciences, Mumbai, which allowed me to mature as a plastic surgeon first and as a specialized micro-surgeon later.

"Ability to see through the invisible is the key to success" and I thought there can't be any other better phrase than this for re-constructive micro-surgery. I am so obliged that my teachers gave the best of the training facility, shared with me their skill, thoughts and encouraged me to go further and further.

"Donation of time for the service of the people is much more valuable or even invaluable, against the donation of Money.

The Money, we have donated can be earned back, but the time so spent for the people, can be regained back".

Service to the people is "SERVICE TO GOD"