



Teachings of Bhagwad Gita In Dealing with Stress During Pandemic Times (Covid-19): A Perspective

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Abstract:

At present the whole world is dealing with (corona virus) COVID-19. This was declared as a public health emergency on January 30, 2020 and WHO declared it as a pandemic on March 11, 2020, which means COVID-19 has spread worldwide. During this pandemic, the routine life of one and all has been disturbed. Dealing with the corona virus is the biggest challenge for everyone these days and this in turn results in increasing anxiety, depression, nervousness, dilemmas etc. The terms like social distancing, lockdown, quarantine etc. negatively affect every human in one way or the other. What then is the way to cope with, rather emerge out unscathed from this negativity? The solution for this, is the teachings of Bhagwad Gita. Keeping in view the stress levels prevalent due to the spread of COVID-19, and a probable recourse from the negativity in the Bhagwad Gita, the authors felt a need to write this paper. The Bhagwad Gita is a philosophical text which enlightens us on ways to cope up with the adverse situations. In this paper, the discussion is on the pandemic times, stress, and how the teachings of Bhagwad Gita helps everyone to cope up with stress in this pandemic situation.

Keywords: *Stress, Pandemic times (COVID-19), Bhagwad Gita, teachings of Bhagwad Gita in dealing with stress during COVID-19*

1. Introduction

It is a very common phenomena to get stressed. This was prevalent from time immemorial. The life style we had been leading had changed a lot when we compare it with that of our forefathers, as it was so fast and the time spans were so narrow for us that we did not have time for our loved ones. We worked like machines and ended up getting tired and not in the mood of communicating and spending quality time at home with family. Neither were we performing our professional duties with 100% dedication. Our life was disturbed and we had no clue to balance it. This situation eventually gave us stress which, invariably gives rise to lots of diseases like High blood pressure, Heart-stroke, Diabetes, and many more.

2. Pandemic times (COVID-19)

These days, we are passing through the most critical juncture of this millennium. Our existence is being challenged by the emergence of the novel coronavirus. On January 30, 2020, World Health organization has declared COVID 19 as an international public health emergency.

Adverse psychosomatic outcomes, along with the disease itself, are very prevalent these days and are expected to increase significantly among common people. The rapid increase of patients of COVID 19 may affects the psychological problems of the people all around the world. Prior studies elucidated that mental well-being has been greatly affected in this global pandemic. Hence, it is imperative to look for the various possible ways which facilitate the possible cure of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the world's mental health. The members of the society have a gr4eat impact on their mind with the coming of this disease and take care of public health measure implemented to contain its spread:

- There is high risk of psychological distress and trauma in the people with existing mental health conditions
- This isolation period makes older adults more anxious, angry, stressed, agitated and withdrawn in pandemic times. What they need is the emotional support through family members and health professionals.
- Children may feel fear and sadness. As they are the one who are very sensitive and emotional as even do not know what is happening outside in the world. So, to see the lockdown situations, and also seen their schools shut downs, they are not allowed to go to the park for playing, this will hamper their mental growth and development.
- Our hero's doctors, nurses, and even staff of hospitals are facing suffers a lot in this pandemic situation as they are working in a very unique circumstances, sometimes feel stress, anxiety and also worried about the transmission of COVID 19.
- Students who were looking forward to placements in the near future are facing an ennui

3. Stress

The meaning of stress is that when our body is responding to any kind of demand or threat. It is a state of physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. We get stress from the external environment, psychological, or social situations or from internal sources also like illness etc.

In the present contemporary society this stress is very common as our life style has totally changed and we are living a mechanical life which in turn gives rise to the problem of stress. Some of the psychological and emotional signs of stress which affects our personality and behavior too are;

- Depression or anxiety.
- Anger or restlessness.
- Feeling overwhelmed, unmotivated, or unfocused.
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much.
- Racing thoughts or constant worry.
- Problems with your memory or concentration.
- Making bad decisions.

Today we are facing a global problem of COVID-19 and we know that this pandemic is causing people to feel anxious, distressed or worried, fear of contracting the virus; stress and anxiety related to isolation and quarantine measures; distress about separation with family members etc. People are more prone to psychological problems during this pandemic time, as feelings of isolation, loneliness, social distancing somehow changes the way of living style of human all around the world. So, it is advisable that during this pandemic time it is better to involve oneself in positive activities, keep oneself busy in doing the work or the hobby which makes one happy and blissful. Some researchers have shown that reading of philosophical texts can give us the way how to deal with stress and cope with the emotions in the pandemic times for leading a balanced life. For that in the paper we have focused on one of the texts i.e. Bhagwad Gita; somehow teachings of Bhagwad Gita explains the ways to deal with stress and live a peaceful life and also shows us the path how to calm our mind during tough times.

4. Bhagwad Gita: the panacea to all

People are living stress ridden lives, be it stress arising from what will happen after COVID-19, fear of getting fired from jobs, what happen to our occupations, career, relationships or finance. Thus, people are suffering from various psychosomatic problems because of increasing stressors in life. With the advancement of psychological treatment and planning, there are number of therapies available such as psychotherapy, behavior therapy, cognitive behavior therapy etc. But, the teachings of Bhagwad Gita describes the ways to deal with the way in which our human day to day worries should be tackled. The Bhagwad Gita is a text which works on reducing and tackling with all worries and anxieties of our

lives. The text which gives us practical solution to cope up with daily life stressors and in present situation of COVID 19.

The Bhagwad Gita consists of 700 shlokas/ verses which have solution to all worries and anxieties spoken by Lord Krishna in the battle of Kurukshetra- Mahabharat. Bhagwad Gita is a philosophical text which gives us the solution of each and every problem of life and by reading this text one should know the reality of life. The shlokas /verses of Gita provide a definitive guide to the science of self-realization. No other philosophical or religious work reveals in such a lucid and profound way, the nature of consciousness, the self, the universe and the supreme (Bhawuk, 2011).

Arjuna's bewilderment of memory (cognitive functions deteriorate). When our memory is lost, we become imbalance and do not know what to do, how to do, in that situation we are helpless. Lord Krishna seems to regard the whole thing as a form of stress. In other words, Lord Krishna said that Arjuna's speech is the product of emotional turmoil rather than logical analysis & it is the same situation of the doctors who are in need of psychotherapy and for that Bhagwad Gita offers them exactly the same.

What does Bhagwad Gita teach--three things: Brahma –Vidyayam Yoga- sastre srikrishnaarjuna-samvade. It means Theory, Practice, and Realization. Bhagwad Gita explained the concept of understanding of theory, practice and realization which lead an individual to cope with day to day stressors of life. So, the philosophy of Bhagwad Gita teaches us how to cope up with stress and remain calm in the pandemic or tough times of our lives. It teaches us many lessons how to deal with stress, maintain healthy relations, leadership skills, cope up with emotions, managing skills etc. Here in this paper we discussed the teachings of Bhagwad Gita in resolving stress in pandemic times COVID-19. They are as follows:

5. Teachings of Bhagwad Gita in resolving stress during pandemic times (COVID-19)

1. Be the source of our own self: Bhagwad Gita teaches us to do our karmas, realize our own self, think about our own goal to reach the destination of life, without stressing what others think about this.
2. Perform the duties: In Gita Lord Krishna told Arjuna that one should perform one's duties without attachment and accept the results gratefully. Without thinking about what will happen in future, one should do one's duty and live in the present then only one should lead a stress free life.
3. Do meditation: The third teaching of Bhagwad Gita in resolving stress is to do meditation and spend sometimes on doing prayanam. Meditation calm down and relax the mind and stress has somewhere gone while practicing meditation.
4. Sound sleep: Moderation in sleep eliminates stress which is the need of the hour. To be relaxed and stress-free life one should sleep at least 6-8 hours at night.
5. Positive Attitude: One should build positive attitude. Lord Krishan explained Arjuna whatever is the situation; one should always be positive and trust on God that everything will be going in a right track. One should not take stress of anything, leave everything on the Almighty.
6. Believe in God: For leading a peaceful and blissful life one should have firm belief in the existence of God. For every problems of life solution is in the hands of the God. What we have to do is , to perform our duties rest all we should give to God.
7. Develop purity in feelings, let go negatives. Bhagwad Gita teaches us its better to let go negatives from our lives as they are not of any use, but only to create chaos in our lives. Similarly, like in present COVID-19 situation, we all are taking too much stress which disturbs us mentally and emotionally too instead of this we have to do pray for the better life. Prayers fill purity in our life which in turn relieves our stress and makes our life peaceful.
8. Integrate the heart, head and hands together which results in satisfaction and on the other hand disintegrate causes stress: During pandemic times we sit idle and think negatives which in turn

causes stress. So Bhagwad Gita teaches that one should utilize one's time in a proper way for making life satisfied and happy. For this proper use of head, heart and hands be there in other words we say in the period of isolation, one should indulge oneself in some productive work so that no stress and tension affects one's personality.

6. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic gives us the insight that VIRUS can alone have a negative even in the globalized and digitalized world and simultaneously made us realize that the greatest assets of mankind are health, peace, love, solidarity, ingenuity, and knowledge. Conclude the aim of this paper is not to discard any Western psychological therapies for the effective management of stress but it's an attempt to throw light on a practical text: The Bhagwad Gita which has been forgotten by young generations. With a rise in the number of psychotherapeutic techniques, coping stress management skills technique models embedded in the wisdom of the Gita which may add an additional content to western psychotherapies (Bhatia et al., 2013; Holmes & Gen, 2012; Kalra et al., 2012; Mascaro, 1962 & 2003). One can get positive results from the Bhagwad Gita according to the level of understanding and faith. This paper is an attempt to provide basic understanding of Gita in a simplified manner which helps all of us in coping with stress during this pandemic times COVID-19. Application and understanding of the shlokas/ verses in day to day hassles can surely lead to happy, healthy and stress-free life and can be helpful as a coping mechanism for stressors of life.

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