Chapter - 3

Modern Living and Mental Health
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Modern living is typically characterized by feeling of insecurity, restlessness and stress. It will not be an exaggeration if I say every one today, irrespective of his position and place is under stress. The stress of modern living is blamed for a host of illnesses. Population explosion compounded with diminishing resources has led to cut-throat competition in all spheres of life. Ethics, morality of leaders and society as whole are on the decline over the past few decades and has resulted in growing intolerance among people of all ages. The society today is divided on the basis of caste, creed & religion. Regionalism has surpassed nationalism and conflicts, violence, deaths of innocents have become a day-to-day phenomena.

Though liberalization of economy has boosted the economic growth in many developing countries, and earning/purchasing power of people has increased over the past decade, a large section of the population is still under mal-nutrition and has to struggle for daily bread & butter. This unequal economic growth combined with vested socio-political interests in many parts of the world can be said as the root cause of terrorism and mass violence. Almost one third of the Indian states today are facing naxalite problems due to similar reasons and needless to say the basic democratic structure in these states is some how under threat.

Now a days, ideas are often vociferously expressed, and members of different groups are increasingly demanding what they consider a fair share of resources and benefits. Tolerance for inequity is diminishing among the less privileged, even as inequity is increasing in both rural and urban areas. As competition for scarce
resources and benefits grows, some political leaders have been encouraging the populace to blame these problems on religious differences.

Prosperity is available to many, and access to education and an expanding range of consumer goods is possible for an ever-increasing number of people. At the same time, the sheer numbers of the poor and less privileged are increasing as they are left behind, inadequately educated, and forced by circumstance to labor under insecure conditions. Class and gender justice, widely sought by a significant number of people, remains an elusive goal.

Nuclear family setup, On-the-job pressure, fierce competition in school, inadequate infrastructure facilities and civic amenities in rural as well as urban areas combined together with increased expectations have lead to a high stress conditions of the society as a whole.

Stress affects our mental health and in turn physical health. Stress lead to psychosomatic disorders, which is the root cause of many of the diseases of modern living. Mental health is fundamental to overall health and productivity. It is the basis for successful contributions to family, community, and society. Throughout the lifespan, mental health is the wellspring of thinking, communication skills, learning, resilience and self-esteem. It is all too easy to dismiss the value of mental health until problems appear. Mental health problems and illnesses are real and disabling conditions that are experienced by many people now a days. Left untreated, mental illnesses can result in disability and despair for families, schools, communities, and the workplace. This toll is more than any society can afford. In this chapter we will look into
different aspects of modern living contributing to stress and affecting mental health.

Addictions positively thrive on the stress, anxiety and personal upsets of modern living. Alcohol and drug abuse can lead to dementia and hallucinosis, while on the other hand, disturbed and distressed individuals may seek relief in addictive anodynes. In either case, many people wind up in "double trouble," living in a nightmarish world of both addiction and mental disease; or "triple trouble" if they are homeless as well.¹

Addictions of drug and particularly gambling lead to suicidal tendencies and mental health problems. Much of the increase in suicide rates in recent years has been among younger people. It has become the second most common cause of death, after accidents, among younger people.

In Indian thinking, a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource, which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care, coupled with dynamism. Majority of them are under stress and need to be liberated from it so than each can contribute towards nation building since it is well said that an Ounce of prevention is worth a Pound of cure.

The different aspects of modern living leading to stress and affecting mental health are:

a. Nuclear System of Family  
b. Population Pressure  
c. Divided Society on the basis of caste, creed and religion  
d. Cultural encroachment through multimedia  
e. Psychosomatic disorders
Studies and surveys carried out by various medical groups in the past have established the relationships between stress & mental health status. The aspects mentioned above are typical of modern day society and are responsible for living in stress. Each of the aspect above, its affect on mental health and the extent/seriousness of the problem are detailed below.

a. Nuclear System of Family

Modern living is characterized by Nuclear system of family, also, which apart from having advantages such as freedom, isolation, privacy etc. has a major disadvantage as well, i.e. difficulty to cope up with stress. To have a detail preview of nuclear family system of modern living in relation to stress & mental health we need to understand the family structure and its role in the modern society.

**Overview of family structure:** A family is a domestic group of people, or a number of domestic groups linked through descent (demonstrated or stipulated) from a common ancestor, marriage or adoption. Families have some degree of kinship. Kinship consists of genetic ties or ties resulting from marriage. Members of a family may be affiliated by blood or by legal ties such as marriage or adoption. Many anthropologists argue that the notion of "blood" must be understood metaphorically; some argue that there are many non-Western societies where family is understood through other concepts rather than "blood."²

The members of a family are linked to each other by kinship. The elder members the families take responsibility for care of the younger. Marriage is a socially acknowledged and approved sexual
union between two adults. In Western societies, marriage, and therefore the family, is associated with monogamy (a culturally approved sexual relationship between one man and one woman). Many other cultures tolerate or encourage polygamy (a person may be married to two or more spouses at the same time). There are two types of polygamies: (i) Polygamy—a man may marry more than one wife & (ii) Polyandry—a woman may have more than one husband.³

**Theoretical Perspectives on the Family:** According to the *functionalist perspective*, the family performs important tasks that contribute to society's basic needs and help perpetuate social order. The family performs two main functions: (i) primary socialization and (ii) personality development and stabilization. *Primary socialization* is the process by which children learn the cultural norms of the society in which they are born. *Personality stabilization* refers to the role that the family plays in assisting adult family members emotionally.⁴

According to the feminist perspective, presence of unequal power relationships with the family means that certain family members tend to benefit more than others. The focus is on three issues: domestic division of labor, unequal power relationship, and caring activities.

Primary function of a family include reproduction of the society biologically as well as socially. The new members are trained and taught to adhere to societal norms. The family is a centre of orientation for the children. Family serves to locate children socially and plays a major role in their culturisation and socialization. For parents, the family is a centre of procreation the
goal of which is to produce and enculturate and socialize children. However, producing children is not the only function of the family. In societies with a sexual division of labor, marriage, and the resulting relationship between a husband and wife, it is necessary to form an economically productive household. In modern societies marriage entails particular rights and privilege that encourage the formation of new families even when there is no intention of having children.

Family is the first and most important component of psychological environment for most children. Since families differ in many respects, so does their influence imprinting upon their children. An old observation says: "If you want to know the future of any society, look on the ways how their children are raised, and you will know the future." Psychologists and sociologists thus have great responsibility to revise their doctrines regarding the proven impact of family culture on the society as whole. Often sociologists analyse, classify and describe societies but they avoid to attribute any moral values to them. This seems to be a sound scientific approach, but problems begin when those theories find their way into practice, which often happens through the influence of teachers, of the media, and through changes in laws.

The structure of families traditionally hinges on relations between parents and children, between spouses, or both. Consequently, there are three major types of family: matrifocal, consanguineal and conjugal. (Note: these are ideal families. In all societies there are acceptable deviations from the ideal or statistical norm, owing either to incidental circumstances, such as the death of a member of the family, infertility or personal preferences).
A matrifocal family consists of a mother and her children. Generally, these children are her biological offspring, although adoption of children is a practice in nearly every society. This kind of family is common where women have the resources to rear their children by themselves, or where men are more mobile than women.

A consanguineal family consists of a mother and her children, and other people — usually the family of the mother. This kind of family is common where mothers do not have the resources to rear their children on their own, and especially where property is inherited. When important property is owned by men, consanguineal families commonly consist of a husband and wife, their children and other members of the husband's family.

A conjugal family consists of one or more mothers and their children, and/or one or more spouses (usually husbands). This kind of family is common where men desire to assert control over children, or where there is a sexual division of labor requiring the participation of both men and women, and where families are relatively mobile.

**Family in the West:** Different types of families exist in different types of settings in the west. Their specific functions and meanings depend largely on their relationship to other social institutions. The individual members of a family seem to be more independent and have lesser emotional attachment. They are more objective oriented in life.

The term "nuclear family" refer to conjugal families. Sociologists distinguish between conjugal families that are relatively independent of the kindreds of the parents and of other families in
general, and nuclear families which maintain relatively close ties with their kindreds. The term "extended family" has two distinct meanings. First, it is used synonymously with consanguinal family. Second, in societies dominated by the conjugal family, it is used to refer to kindred (an egocentric network of relatives that extends beyond the domestic group) who do not belong to the conjugal family.\\n
**Family in India:** In India people of many races, ethnic groups, religions, classes, castes and creeds live together and since time immemorial, the Indian culture believed in the spirit of the 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. It is the realization of the ideal of universal brotherhood of man, actualization of 'Learning to live together'.

Socio-cultural situation in India has changed a lot over the past one century and is expected to continue to remain in this dynamic state in the coming future. A major evidence of change observed and typical of a country in social transition is the change in family structure. From being a predominantly joint or extended family, the Indian family is rapidly becoming nuclear. This is particularly predominant in the urban and semi-urban areas. In the rural areas however, families still continue to be joint or extended. Nuclearization of families in the urban areas is mainly due to lack of space, housing and high cost of living etc.

In pre-industrialization period before 1950s, people used to live in joint families. Individual freedom of choice in marriage and other matters of family life were subordinated to the interests of parents, other relatives, or the community. In the transitional phase i.e. during 1950s & early 60s there was increased emphasis on the importance of marital and parental love, although
The authoritarian power of fathers also increased. In post industrialized phase male members started moving out from the joint family and started living as small nuclear families. The members of the nuclear family though are tied by close emotional bonds with rest of the members of the big joint family; they enjoy a high degree of domestic privacy and are preoccupied with rearing children. Marriage is based on personal selection, guided by sexual attraction or romantic love.

In joint family system of early, there was a larger group of people available to support morally or to attend to any problem of an individual member at the time of need. However, in the present nuclear family system, which lives apart and away from the original joint family, the same advantage is missing because of geographical as well as mental separation.

Fraternity is the extension and propagation of family feeling towards others and it calls for treating them as brothers in spite of differences.\textsuperscript{8} Feeling of fraternity is good for the society. Recognition of the worth of a person as an individual, without any distinction and feeling of fraternity are the basis of harmony among diverse set of people in a society. However, there are men who still believe in their own superiority, which has led to the clash between individuals, families and communities.

Despite the twin objectives of five year plannings, viz, economic growth with social justice, the fast changing socio-economic scenario in the country in the last few decades has had far reaching consequences on socio-economic-medical and psychological growth and development of the most marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of our society.\textsuperscript{9} Rapidly
growing industrialization, migration of rural population to urban/suburban areas has resulted in overcrowding of urban settlements, emergence of pavement dwellers and slum dwellings, unemployment and poverty. People living in these conditions have to face the accompanied stress and strains of the modern life. These groups have to contend with some of the major unhygienic and poor economic conditions. There is growth of violence in these areas. Individual as well as collective violence especially towards the women and the girl child has already assumed a national dimension. The negative influence of the electronic media programmes on the illiterate and the ignorant has caused increase in problems like vagrancy, juvenile delinquency, kidnapping etc.

These factors have led to a rift in the social and traditional fabric of the country. The joint family system has been weakened and the traditional forms of checks and balances which regulated social behavior has been loosened. These factors on the one hand have exposed the vulnerable groups to the increasing incidence of destitution, exploitation, deprivation, neglect and on the other hand to various forms of physical and mental abuse, new forms of social deviance, anti social behaviour and a drift into criminogenic culture.

**Family Ideals in Indian context:** In the Indian context, people learn the essential themes of cultural life within the bosom of a family. The basic units of society are the patrilineal family unit and wider kinship groupings in most part of the country. The most widely desired and popular residential unit is the joint family system. It ideally consists of three or four patrilineally related generations, all living under one roof, working, eating, worshiping, and cooperating each other in mutually beneficial social and economic activities. Patrilineal joint families include men related
through the male line, along with their wives and children. Most young women live with their husband's relatives after marriage, though they retain important bonds with their natal families.

The traditional joint household, both in ideal and in practice, remains the primary social force in the lives of most Indians despite negative and continuously growing impact of urbanization, secularization and westernization. Loyalty to family is a deeply held ideal for almost everyone.

Large families tend to be flexible and well-suited to modern Indian life, especially for the 67 percent of Indians who are farmers or agricultural workers or work in related activities. Few individuals can hope to have economic security without being part of the cooperating group of kinsmen, like in most of the primarily agricultural societies. Joint family system does exist in cities especially where kinship ties can be crucial for success in business or for obtaining scarce jobs and financial assistance.

The joint family system of India is an ancient institution. However, it has undergone certain changes in the late twentieth century. Although several generations living together is the ideal condition, actual living arrangements today vary widely depending on region, social status, and economic circumstances. Many Indians today live in joint families that deviate in various ways from the ideal, and many live in nuclear families e.g. a couple with their unmarried children as is the most common pattern in the West. However, even where the ideal joint family is seldom found (as, for example, in certain regions and among impoverished agricultural laborers and urban squatters), there are often strong networks of kinship ties through which economic assistance and other benefits are obtained. Not infrequently, clusters of relatives live very near
each other, easily available to respond to the give and take of kinship obligations. Even where relatives do not actually live in close proximity, they mingle on regular intervals i.e. during festive occasions or birth/death of a member and they typically maintain strong bonds of kinship and attempt to provide each other with economic help, emotional support, and other benefits.

As joint families grow larger with passage of time, they inevitably divide into smaller units, passing through a predictable cycle. The breakup of a joint family into smaller units does not necessarily represent the rejection of the joint family ideal. Rather, it is usually a response to a variety of conditions, including the need for some members to move from village to city, or from one city to another to take advantage of employment opportunities and for economic development of the family. Splitting of the family is often blamed on quarrelling women--typically, the wives of co-resident brothers. Although women's disputes may, in fact, lead to family division, men's disagreements do so as well. Despite cultural ideals of brotherly harmony, adult brothers sometimes quarrel over land and other matters, leading them to decide to live under separate roofs and divide their property. Quite often, a large joint family divides after the demise of elderly parents, when there is no longer a single authority figure to hold the family factions together. After division, each new residential unit, in its turn, usually becomes joint when sons of the family marry and bring their wives to live in the family home.

The structure and functions of family in India, which were stable for a very long time, are now rapidly disintegrating due to various reasons, chief among these being industrialization, migration, unemployment and modernization. India's joint family provided not only social security to and ensured welfare of the old, the
invalid and the unemployed but also served as an effective means of socialization, education, value inculcation and character formation. But joint family system is breaking down fastly and being replaced by nuclear family. Besides, the influence of primary groups is rapidly declining and that of the secondary groups is increasing. Family and caste vocations are no longer considered attractive by the vast majority. ¹¹

However, help and guidance of senior members like that in a joint family is strongly missing in the nuclear family setup today. Young parents are too busy with jobs or business and they have little time to discharge duties towards their children for their character formation, value inculcation, socialization and developing need-based vocational skills. Emotional satisfaction of children in many families is lacking.

To some extent, education has also proved to be an alienating factor for joint family set up in Indian society, by transforming the nature and character of the educated youth. ¹² Further, the media has also made its contribution in this process. Most of the literate youth today have developed the tendency to get alienated from their parents, family and background.

Disintegration of joint family system has given rise to many problems. The young generation in rural areas is fleeing to urban settlements. Migration of youth from rural to urban areas gives rise to a number of problems e.g. unemployment, transport, accommodation, sanitation, health and hygiene, adjustment, acceptability, crime and corruption. In the new set-up, the migrant becomes emotionally starved, and marginalized from his own group. Soon he becomes maladjusted in his social
environment. If timely action is not taken it becomes a serious social problem and cause of anxiety and stress.

Changes in Family Patterns Worldwide: Changes in family patterns are generated by such factors as the development being done by government, the expansion of towns and cities and employment within organizations outside family influence.

These changes are producing a worldwide movement toward nuclear-family systems, eroding extended-family forms and other types of kinship groups. The most important changes occurring worldwide are the following:

- Clans and other kin groups are declining in influence.
- There is a general trend toward the free choice of a spouse.
- The rights of women are becoming more widely recognized, with respect to both initiating marriage and making decisions within the family.
- Kin marriages are becoming less common.
- Higher levels of sexual freedom are developing in societies that were very restrictive.
- There is a general trend toward the extension of children's rights.

The family structure has changed in past few decades. Rates of divorce are rising, and substantial numbers of children live either in single-parent households or with stepfamilies. People divorce and remarry because of a hunger for love. Cohabitation has become increasingly common in many industrial countries. Alternative forms of social and sexual relationship are likely to flourish in the future. Yet marriage and the family remain firmly established institutions.
The average age at marriage has been rising. A number of theories have been proposed to account for this change. First, more and more young people are cohabitating. This will delay age at marriage. Others argue that increases in postsecondary school enrollment (especially among women) and women's increased participation in the work force decrease the need to find a male breadwinner in the home. Finally, some researchers believe that modernization and secular change in attitudes promote individualism and make marriage less important than it once was.

Divorce & separation, a common feature of the western society and family culture, has been on the rise in Indian scenario as well. There are several reasons to account for the rising divorce rate over the last few decades.

- Changes in the law have made the divorce process easier.
- Except for the wealthy, marriage has little to do with handing down property and status from generation to generation today. As women become more economically independent, marriage is less of an economic necessity for them.
- The fact that little stigma now attaches to divorce adds momentum to divorce.
- Increasingly, marriage is evaluated in terms of the personal satisfaction it offers.
- The fact that more people are engaging in premarital cohabitation also increases the divorce rate.

Marriage breakup is almost always emotionally stressful and may create financial hardship, especially for women. Before the actual physical parting, a "social separation" occurs. The general effects of divorce on children are the following:
Almost all children experience an initial period of intense emotional upset after their parents separate.

A minority of children experiences some long-term problems as a result of the breakup, and these may persist into adulthood.

Substantial numbers of children live in single-parent households or with stepfamilies. It has been observed that both children and the single parent pass through a lot of hardship and stress is deep rooted in them.

Family life is by no means always a picture of harmony and happiness. Family violence (child abuse and spousal abuse) is the dark side of the family. Spousal abuse is more common among low-income couples. The high levels of stress induced by poverty and unemployment may lead to more violence within families.

Cohabitation and gay parent families have become increasingly common in many industrial countries in the west. Same-sex couples are forming families with children. Alternative forms of social and sexual relationships are likely to flourish in the future. Yet marriage and the family remain firmly established and in most part of the world "breadwinner-father and child-rearing mother" family is still considered as the "modern family."

**Nuclear Family; Advantages & disadvantages:** Typically a nuclear family can be defined as a unit, which consists of a father, mother and their children if any. This structure is found now a days in almost all societies.

Right from the beginning, Indian culture has promoted large family system. But, in the modern days, more and more nuclear families can be seen. The shift has resulted in debate on pros and cons for
advantages and disadvantages of large and nuclear family system. The advantages of being a member of a joint family are many folds. Still many people oppose this system of living. Joint families are like big institutions where so much can be learned within the family itself. At one side, the grandparents teach about moral, respect etc and on the other side, brothers and sisters help in games and studies. A child is cared and nursed very nicely in a joint family. He feels much secured. He learns from the experience of others. But, joint family system has its own disadvantages. The children living in nuclear families become self-reliant faster than the children of joint families. They can handle responsibilities better. There are merits and demerits of both joint and nuclear families.

Balaji Thiagarajan a student from Oxford, once asked President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam; 'One of India's strengths has been its spirituality. What is your advice of retaining spirituality as India progresses and becomes more materialistic?' The president replied: 'One of our strengths is our joint family system. In this system a problem is no problem. In a nuclear family a problem can destroy a family. Indian joint family system is a bulwark and helps people handle many a problem effortlessly, whereas, in nuclear families problems often tend to become a tragedy'.

The health impacts of nuclear families have its advantages as well as disadvantages. For instance, studies suggest that while the nuclear family promotes maternal health, child survival is better in extended families. Changes in the family structure are often a reflection of people's responses to and coping mechanisms with regard to the prevailing socio-economic pressures. For instance, apart from the high cost of housing as well as the inherent lack of it, the cost of living in the urban sector is often much higher as
compared to the rural areas. This precludes couples from bringing their parents and other dependents from the rural areas to live in the cities.

Apart from living in a nuclear or joint family, some people in the society live alone or live in cohabitation i.e. with others. The effect on mental health of such living arrangements and some other family status are as described below.

**Living Alone, Social Integration, and Mental Health:** Living alone has great effect on mental health, mental well-being, and maladaptive behaviors. Persons living alone show a slight tendency to be more likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors such as drug and alcohol use than persons living with others. Findings of various studies have implications for our thinking about the effects of social integration on mental health; the results raise the possibility that socially integrated relationships provide not only (1) direct social rewards through reinforcement and increased meaning in life but also (2) regulation of behavior through mechanisms of social constraint, obligation, and responsibility. For persons who live in socially integrated relationships, if the decrements to mental health produced by social regulation are not balanced by social rewards through some as yet unknown process, such social integration may help create psychological distress.\(^{14}\)

**Cohabitation and mental health:** Cohabiting men, report significantly more alcohol problems than both married and single men and cohabiting women report more alcohol problems than married women.\(^{15}\)
Effects of Parental Divorce on the Mental Health of Young Adults: Parental divorce has a long-term effect during childhood and adolescence on the mental health of young adults. Serious emotional disorders increases in the aftermath of divorce & the negative effects operate indirectly through higher emotional problems in adulthood and lower levels of school achievements.16

Homelessness & Mental Health: Homelessness is the condition of those people who are without a permanent place to live. Homeless persons have severe chronic problems including mental illness, alcoholism, physical disabilities, and poor health. A significant number have criminal histories. Many are raised in foster care situations. All suffer from economic deprivation, and many have experienced long-term unemployment. The homeless thus are continuously under stress.
b. Population Pressure

Under this topic we will look into the concept of 'population pressure', effects of overpopulation on earth's resources and see how it is contributing to stress and affecting mental health in modern living.

Global Population Growth:

As long as the human population was very small, during the hunter-gatherer and the early settled land use phase of Homo sapiens, it remained integrated well within the boundaries of the ecosystem/landscape. With settlements appearing with the advent of agriculture about 10,000 yrs ago, the exploitative phase of the human population started growing rapidly. The rapid growth of the world's population over the past one hundred years results from a difference between the rate of birth and the rate of death. The human population will increase by 1 billion people in the next decade. This is like adding the whole population of China or India to the world's population. Rapid growth of global population is becoming a threat on the resources and environment. It is also going to affect the economy and become a burden to human well-being.

Until about the 18th century, the world population was kept under check through war, famines and diseases. The steady rise in the world population which started off at a modest rate of under 0.5% rose to about 1% during the first half of the twentieth century. After 1950, the population growth rate, particularly in developing countries, rose to over 2%, arising largely out of improved living standards and medical facilities. With advances in the field of medical science, many deadly diseases have been controlled. Inventions in the field of science and technology have helped reduce death toll due to natural disasters and calamities. All these
factors have led to increased growth rate world population, which has now reached an alarming stage.

The increase in world population is projected to continue overwhelmingly in the developing world. About three-fourths of the 3.2 billion increase in world population through 2025 is expected to be in the developing world. About half of the population growth during this period is expected to be in Asia, with two of the most populous countries being China and India. Repercussions of this scenario, from the economic and environmental point of view are going to be negative and very much disturbing for a country like India. The rate of urbanization in developing countries is not different from those in the developed part of the world. What is disturbing however, is the absolute size of the cities involved and the rate at which they are growing. The urban/ rural population growth differential suggests that the gap in numbers between the two is becoming wider over a period of time. Besides, increase in the number of mega cities in the developing countries is becoming alarming.

The World Population Bomb

Overpopulation is generally thought of as overcrowding, i.e. too many people in a given area or high density of population. Density is generally irrelevant to questions of overpopulation. The key to understand overpopulation is not population density but the numbers of people in an area relative to its resources and the capacity of the environment to sustain human activities; that is, to the area's carrying capacity. The area can be said to be overpopulated when its population can't be maintained without rapidly depleting nonrenewable resources (or converting renewable resources into nonrenewable ones) and without degrading the capacity of the environment to support the population. In short, if the long-term carrying capacity of an area is clearly being degraded by its current human occupants, that area is overpopulated.

By this standard, the entire planet and virtually every nation is already vastly overpopulated because, among other indications, the soils, forests and water resources are rapidly being depleted—and that implies that the carrying capacity for human beings will be lower in the future than it is now. Many nations have become overpopulated because of their massive contributions to the carbon dioxide buildup in the atmosphere, among many other reasons. Almost all the rich nations are overpopulated because they are rapidly drawing down stocks of resources around the world. They don't live solely on the land in their own nations. They are spending their resource capital with no thought for the future.

**The Population Explosion In India:**

With the growing economic divide between the developing and the developed world, a situation has arisen where a small section of the global population of a few developed nations have a hold over the global natural resource base supporting over-consumption and
in the process has marginalized a substantial section of the human population living in the developing world. India with its intense population pressure is one of the worst affected.

India is one of the most populous countries of the world, next only to China. It however ranks seventh in the world in terms of area. India has 1027 million persons (in 2001), which is 16.7 per cent of the world population, but it has only 2.4 per cent of the world land area. How large is India's population can be gauged from the fact that it is more than the total population of North America, South America and Australia put together. The huge population size and the alarming growth rate has become threat for the narrow resource base. Thus it carries a wide range of social, political and economic implications.

One of the major problems the country faces these days is the explosion of population, which is multiplying, in geometrical progression while our resources are increasing at best in arithmetical progression. Its population growth is neutralizing the gains of development. The number of non-earning people is posing a danger to social security. Also, the number of out of school-child population is a challenge not being fully met by the education system. Youth unrest and inter-generation conflicts are also serious problems. The quality of life in family and society is declining. Unemployment has become a major concern for the nation and its economy. All these are happening due to overwhelming burden of population.

Rapid and uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, deforestation for agriculture, and recent accelerated deforestation done in the name of industrialization and developmental activities, have all led to the rapid depletion of the biological resources of the land. Large size of population means heavy pressure on resources
- natural as well as human-made. Poverty, unrest and stress of people have much to do with population size.

**Figure-1: Population in India**

![Graph showing population growth in millions over time](image)

Source: Census of India - Technical Committee on Population

**Figure-2: Birth and death rates in India (1901–11 to 2000).**

![Graph showing birth and death rates](image)

Source: Census of India - RGI

India’s population has been the subject of worldwide debate for over half a century. From a meagre 238.4 million in 1901, the population has nearly quadrupled and presently rests at over a
staggering 1.2 billion, accounting for over 1/6th of the world’s population. The fall in the population between the years 1911 and 1921 (figure-1) are attributable largely to sharp increases in mortality with the Crude Death Rate (CDR) rising from 42.6/1000 in 1911 to 47.2/1000 in 1921. This rise was mainly due to high mortality caused by the third major epidemic of plague (1898–1908), a minor epidemic of smallpox (1897–1908), and deaths due to famine.²²

Before 1921 the increase in population was sporadic, irregular and slow. After 1921 it has increased steadily and rapidly. Hence, the year 1921 is called demographic divide in the population study of India.²³ During 1921-51, the population increased steadily with the development in medical facilities which reduced deaths caused by epidemics like plague, cholera and malaria. The population of India nearly doubled during 1951 to 1981. The trends in birth and death rates discernible from figure-2 seem characteristic of all societies moving through the various stages of the demographic cycle. Since 1981, there has been a slow but steady decline indicating that the country is progressing towards demographic transition.²⁴

The Consequences Of Rapid Population Growth:

In the context of over-consumption of natural resources in the name of development and rapid industrialization by a small section of the human population that is rapidly growing, the world is currently faced with a variety of uncertainties with regard to rapidly depleting biodiversity and natural resources on which they are dependant for their livelihood. Rapid human population growth has a variety of consequences some of which are as enumerated below;
Problems of Modern Living and Need of Yoga

➢ Shrinking area of forests
➢ Rising global temperature
➢ Increase in energy consumption rate
➢ Increase in pollution
➢ Shrinking amount of cropland per person.
➢ Decline in amount of wheat and rice grown per person.
➢ Decreasing oceanic fish harvest per person.
➢ Decline in availability of fresh water for drinking
➢ Increase in per capita expenditure in health & sanitation
➢ Increase in per capita expenditure in education & infrastructure
➢ Growing gap between rich and poor
➢ Increase in unemployed rate
➢ Increase in social unrest
➢ Increasing number of people dying of AIDS & other diseases.

Population growth is faster in the poorer countries of the world. High fertility rates have historically been strongly correlated with poverty, and high childhood mortality rates. Falling fertility rates are generally associated with improved standards of living, increased life expectancy, and lowered infant mortality. Overpopulation and poverty have long been associated with increased death, and disease. People tightly packed into unsanitary housing are inordinately vulnerable to natural disasters and health problems.

Most of the world’s poor people, live in less developed countries. Poverty exists even in most developed countries. One in five Soviet citizens reportedly lives below the country's official poverty line. In the United States, one in eight are below the official poverty line. The rapid expansion of population size observed since
the end of World War II in the world's poorest nations has been a cause of their poverty.\textsuperscript{25} Poverty is a condition of chronic deprivation and need at the family level. Poverty is a major concern of humankind, because poverty everywhere reduces human beings to a low level of existence. It not only affects physical health but also to a great extent the mental well being of the people. Poor people lack access to enough land and income to meet basic needs. A lack of basic needs results in physical weakness and poor health. Poor health decreases the ability of the poor to work and put them deeper into poverty.\textsuperscript{26}

To get rid of the poverty situations, it is important to limit our numbers because in densely populated areas it is not possible always to provide adequate food, water, shelter, education and employment to all because of scarcity of natural resources. High fertility, which has been traditionally associated with prosperity, prestige, and security for the future, now jeopardizes chances for many to achieve health and security.

The exponential growth of population size has become a problem for the rich as well as poor countries. Of course, the population of industrialized countries is growing more slowly than those of developing one. The world's current and projected population growth calls for an increase in efforts to meet the needs for food, water, health care, technology and education. In the poorest countries, massive efforts are needed to keep social and economic conditions from deteriorating further; any real advances in well being and the quality of life are negated by further population growth. Even today many countries lack adequate supplies of basic materials needed to support their current population. Rapid growth
of population can affect both the overall quality of life and the
degree of human suffering on Earth.

Many of the natural resources essential for life support system, are
non-renewable and are limited. Over extraction of these resources
and destruction of earth's life support systems due to over-
population and increased demand may lead to a serious crisis
situation in future. More public awareness is therefore needed
about population issues. Facts like the size or the growth rate of
the human population should be a matter of concern for everyone
on earth.

It is essential to achieve a balance between demand of the
population growth and the availability of resources. Rapid
population growth limits chances for meeting basic needs. Literacy
and empowerment of women may help the situation make better.
Collective vision about health care, family planning and women's
education at the community level will form a basis for action to
tackle the problem. Free and equal access to health care, family
planning and education are desirable in their own right. Individual
choice, human rights and collective responsibility are key to
allowing families to plan the size and spacing of their children.
c. Divided Society on the basis of Caste, Creed and Religion

A remarkable division in today's society on the basis of caste, creed and religion can be seen as one of the underlying causes of stress in modern living. Regional, racial, caste and community differences generate serious conflict in our society. Due to various reasons this plurality or diversity, which was a means of enriching the quality of life, is now threatened. Social harmony and brotherhood, the feelings of cooperative living and neighborhood have received a setback. Erosion of social solidarity and cohesion can lead to a fractured society. If unchecked, caste identities may lead to caste conflicts. From a social category, caste has now become a potent political force. Some leaders instead of helping the real needy have been using the issue for gaining vote banks & meager political advantage. This is not a phenomenon confined only to Hindu society only. The way the opportunistic combination of castes, religious and regional groups are emerging simply for the sake of grabbing political power raises a big question: whether our political leaders are adhering to the basic features of Indian constitution or taking the nation further to a chaotic condition? Mushrooiming of caste associations has now become the bane of Indian politics but our political rulers instead of taking a lesson from the history continue to play communal/caste politics. The unity shown by our people during Kargil operations is proof enough that the Indians are basically patriotic.

Communal tension is another social problem that calls for urgent attention. In the past it was a rare urban phenomenon but it is now spreading to rural areas as well. Various sub-groups of the same community and believers of the same faith are developing suspicion and distrust about each other. Religious or communal
intolerance has increased and created conflicts between the followers of different faiths. The deed of few miscreants with vested interests sometimes lead to rejection of the entire community and their faith by others. Few power hungry people have been using the psychological rift between communities to gain political advantage and sometimes the poorer section of the society with low literacy levels gets easily carried away in such situations. Inter-faith harmony has to be developed for the essential unity of religions for promoting the important national cause.

Despite all efforts, rural-urban disparity still persists in the society. Education has made only marginal contribution towards its elimination because its model is also urban and hence it fails to address the rural-urban divide. The rural-urban disparity persists in every sphere. Larger the city, better its educational facilities; smaller the village, greater is its educational disadvantage. Various administrative, economic and developmental measures adopted by the state have failed to make substantial achievement in this direction.

We should objectively discuss and identify the causes of violence, terrorism and turmoil in their expository presentations. Students should be convinced that use of violence, terrorism, subversive activities have no place in a civil society.

**The Indian Society during British legacy:**

Even though division in the Indian society existed in the lines of caste & religion, much before Britishers came to India, the real rift was induced during the British rule. The British rulers devised a system of separate electorates based on religion, caste and race (Indian Council Act of 1909 and Government of India Act 1919) in
order to intensify the division of Indian society and weaken the Independence movement. Britishers believed in the divide and rule policy. In view of the multi-faceted structure of Indian society, the framers of the Indian constitution did away with these Acts after Independence. Unity, integrity of the nation and secularism were incorporated as basic features of the Constitution, for governance of the country. But even after governing ourselves for more than half a century we are yet to overcome the hang over of divisive designs of the Britishers. The problems relating to caste and religion have become so acute that no political leader or party dare to contest the election without maneuvering a combination of caste and religious groups in the constituencies.

Though the use of religion or caste as a vote catching device during elections is a corrupt practice under the Representation of the People Act 1951, the fact remains that these factors have been playing an important role over the years in deciding the fate of the candidates and their political parties in elections. The low rate of urbanization linked with the low literacy rate, unemployment and under-employment made the political parties realize that the political ideology alone cannot mobilize the voters and thus religion, caste, region and sect became handy tools for their exploitation during elections. It is a matter of sorrow that these social evils are increasing faster than economic growth of the country, which may culminate in to worst situation.

The Indian Society: India is famous for its complex social systems. Indian society is multifaceted to an extent perhaps unknown in any other of the world's great civilizations. Virtually no generalization made about Indian society is valid for all of the nation's multifarious groups. Comprehending the complexities of
Indian social structure has challenged scholars and other observers over many decades.

**Religions in India:**

India is a land of many religions and cultures. Given below is a brief look at the religions in India.

The word Hindu originally signified or denoted people living on the banks of the river Sindhu. Now the word Hindu has become significant for many religious and philosophical connotations. The Hindu Philosophy has its roots in the ideas of the Vedas. The Vedas are basically knowledge & experiences of sages that have been passed down orally to disciples. This system is rational and systematic in its approach.

Though the religion Christianity did not originate in India, the Christian communities in Kerala have lived there almost since the founding of the religion by Jesus Christ. Christians believe in a trinity. This trinity consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Holy Scripture of the Christians is the Bible. The Bible is divided into two sections: the Old Testament, which corresponds to the Bible of Judaism and the New Testament which is entirely based on Christ's messages.

The Sikh religion is comparatively younger, indigenous, and monotheistic philosophy. Guru Nanak founded the Sikh religious order. The word Sikh has been derived from the Sanskrit word shishya or disciple. The Sikh philosophy is has been developed by ten gurus or teachers. It has been passed on to their shishyas or disciples. This philosophy conceives of God as formless and also perceives God as one. The Sikh philosophy retains certain Hindu
ideas, such as those of the immortality of the soul, and of transmigration and karma.

Islam, like Christianity has had its genesis outside India. The people who follow this faith are called Muslims. Islam was propagated by prophet Mohammad. However the basic belief of Islam is that Adam brought Islam to the world. The belief also claims that God sent a number of messengers since then to preach this lesson and Mohammad was the one who came last in this list of messengers. Islam is also a monotheistic faith. It propagates the acceptance of Allah as the one God, and Mohammad as his prophet. The Muslims worship at Masjids or mosques.

Jainism is an ancient religion that was born on the Indian soil. It dates back to Vedic times. The prescriptions or rules of Jainism preach the ways to achieve liberation. These rules apply to both ascetics and householders.

Buddhism is a religion that originated from the teachings of Gautama Buddha. He was a prince until he relinquished his life at the palace for a life of meditation and spiritual upliftment. The Buddhist philosophy propagates the Middle Path, which requires one to avoid the extremes of getting addicted to worldly pleasures and subjecting oneself to unnecessary rigours.

The Zoroastrian religion had its genesis in Iran. The Parsis hail from Pars in southwest Iran. Most Zoroastrians were forcibly converted to Islam. Some of the others fled the country.

**Caste System in India:**

Out of all of the differences in region, language, wealth, status, religion, urbanity and gender, the special feature of Indian society that has received most attention from observers is the caste
system. The people of India belong to many castes and castelike groups- hierarchically ordered, named groups into which members are born. Belief in caste system in India is so strong that the members are expected to marry within the same caste group and follow caste rules pertaining to diet, avoidance of ritual pollution, and many other aspects of life. Any member violating the caste rules faces dejection from the group and many a times even lead to violent situations.

Indian society is pluralistic with underlying threads of unity. Hierarchy in the caste system of India has been in existence since Vedic ages and this prejudice still continues. The division of society along caste lines was embedded in the social fabric of India as a way of ordering social roles and occupations. Though the Hindus were basically divided in to four castes viz. Brahman, Kshyatriya, Vaishya & Sudra further subdivisions existed within a caste based on Vansha and Gotra.

India is a hierarchical society. Within Indian culture, whether in the north or the south, Hindu or Muslim, urban or village, virtually all things, people, and groups of people are ranked according to various castes. Castes and castelike groups with which almost all Indians are associated are ranked. Within most villages or towns, everyone knows the relative rankings of each locally represented caste, and people’s behavior toward one another have been shaped by this knowledge.

Many status differences in Indian society were earlier expressed in terms of ritual purity and pollution expressed in terms of ‘touch-ability’ or otherwise. Notions of purity and pollution were extremely complex and they did vary greatly among different castes, religious groups, and regions. Broadly speaking, high status was associated with purity and low status with pollution.
During her menstrual period, a woman was often considered polluted and was refrained from cooking or worshiping. During her period, a Muslim woman refrained from touching the Quran. At the end of the period, purity was supposed to be restored with a complete bath.

If a Brahman happened to come into bodily contact with a polluting substance, he could remove the pollution by bathing and changing his clothing. However, if he were to eat meat or commit other transgressions of the rigid dietary codes of his particular caste, he would be considered more deeply polluted and would have to undergo various purifying rites and payment of fines imposed by his caste council in order to restore his inherent purity.

Maintenance of purity was associated with the intake of food and drink, not only in terms of the nature of the food itself, but also in terms of who had prepared it or touched it. This was especially true for Hindus, but other religious groups hold to these principles to varying degrees. Generally, cooked foods from the hands of people of lower caste status were not acceptable. Usually, for an observant upper caste Hindu to accept cooked food from a Muslim or Christian was regarded as highly polluting. Any one violating these rules used to face rejection from the same and upper caste groups who would refuse food touched by him and would abstain from the usual social interaction with him.

These and a great many other traditional rules pertaining to different castes and ranks in India may seem irrational and bizarre but they are accepted part of life. However, there are many Indians, who do not follow traditional caste rules and practices. But even among these people there is often a reluctance to completely abolish consciousness of caste feelings. Politics in
recent years to gain vote and power has widened the gap between different castes, which once seemed to fade away.

**Other dividing factors:**

Apart from religion and caste considerations of Indian society division also exists in the form of regionalism, language and class i.e. Upper class, Middle class & Lower class. There is no single set of criteria to define the class system. However, it is mainly based on economic considerations. Major socioeconomic differences are much on display in cities/urban areas. The fine homes—often a walled compound with a garden, servants' quarters, and garage and gleaming automobiles of the super wealthy stand in stark contrast to the straw-covered huts of the barefoot poor in slums.

The ethnic and linguistic diversity of Indian civilization is more like the diversity of an area as variable as Europe than like that of any other single nation-state. Living within the embrace of the Indian nation are vast numbers of different regional, social, and economic groups, each with different cultural practices. Particularly noteworthy are differences between social structures in the north and the south, especially in the realm of kinship systems. Throughout the country, religious differences are significant, especially between the Hindus and the Muslims as compared to other Indian groups such as Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Jews, Parsis and practitioners of tribal religions.

Vast differences in socioeconomic status are evident everywhere. The poor and the wealthy live side by side in urban and rural areas. It is common in city life to see a prosperous, well-fed man or woman chauffeured in a fine car pass street dwellers huddled beneath mud & straw shelters along the roadway. In many
villages, solid cement houses of landowners rise not far from the flimsy thatched shacks of landless laborers.

Urban-rural differences are also immense in the Indian peninsula. Majority of India's population dwells in villages, with agriculture providing support for most of these rural residents. Mud-plastered walls ornamented with traditional designs, dusty lanes, herds of grazing cattle, and the songs of birds at sunset provide typical settings for the social lives of most rural Indians. In India's great cities, however, millions of people live amidst cacophony, roaring vehicles, surging crowds, jammed apartment buildings, busy commercial establishments and loudspeakers blaring movie tunes while breathing the poisons of industrial and automobile pollution.

Gender distinctions are pronounced. The behavior expected of men and women can be quite different, especially in villages, but also in urban centers. Prescribed ideal gender roles help shape the actions of both sexes as they move between family and the world outside the home.

**Exposure to Mass Violence, Terrorism & related Mental Health:**

Over the last decade, innocent citizens of many countries have increasingly been the targets of mass violence and terrorism. These have resulted in thousands of fatalities and many more people whose lives have been changed forever. Numbers of victims of rape, sexual and physical abuse, domestic violence, hate crimes, naxalism and homicide are on the rise. It takes a lot of time and effort to recover from the resulting trauma and mental stress.
Mass violence is defined as an intentional violent criminal act that results in physical, emotional, or psychological injury to a sufficiently large number of people. Terrorism is defined as activities that involve violent or life-threatening acts that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State and... appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping.

Each tragic event affects the country as a whole, touches those residing in the affected communities, and alters the lives of those directly victimized. Growing evidence suggests that terrorism and mass violence places victims, bereaved family members, and emergency response personnel at risk for long-term physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. Each criminal act of mass violence generates its own sequence of criminal justice activities potentially including investigations, arrests, trials, sentencing, and appeals each step bringing related challenges for families and victims.

Practicing yoga can be effective in relieving stress & mental health recovery for the victims of man made or natural disasters, including floods, tornadoes; hurricanes, earthquakes, and wildfires. Efforts of all should aim to respond effectively to the mental health needs of individuals and communities affected by mass violence and terrorism and to protect the rights of victims and families.

Study conducted in areas where people face frequent terrorist attacks reveal that traumatic stress-related (TSR), posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) symptoms are common. In these areas people feel depressed and
express a low sense of safety with respect to themselves and their relatives. People restore to use of tranquilizers, alcohol and cigarettes to cope with TSR symptoms and symptom criteria for PTSD. Among the people affected by any such incidence, most prevalent coping mechanisms are active information search about loved ones and social support. Considering the nature and length of the traumatic experience, the psychological impact may be considered moderate. Although participants show distress and lowered sense of safety, normally they do not develop high levels of psychiatric distress, which may be related to a habituation process and to coping mechanisms.

Impact of wars on Mental Health:

The wars in Kargil, Afghanistan and Iraq have produced a new generation of veterans with chronic mental health problems associated with participation in combat. Many of the challenges facing local people and the soldiers of war are great mental stress due to fear for own life & witness or participation in killing. These new wars also present challenges that impact the mental health problems facing veterans of these wars.

Frequent and intense involvement in combat operations increases the risk of developing chronic PTSD and associated mental health problems. Participation in combat activities is not the only cause of stress in a war zone. The stress and trauma is also due to associated sexual assault and sexual harassment in war zones. In addition, a variety of environmental factors specific to each mission may contribute to the risk of mental health problems in veterans as well as their relatives and friends. The lasting mental health toll of the wars may increase over time.
Human Responses to Mass Violence and Terrorism:

Violent incidents resulting in mass casualties and victimization send waves of shock and trauma throughout the community, the State, and often across the Nation. We will focus on the physical and psychological effects of these tragic events and how they are expressed among different groups. Because the impact of mass violence is typically widespread, a population exposure model\textsuperscript{34} portrays the victim, family, responder, and community groups that may be affected. This model may help people to identify priority groups for mental health services. Table below details the attributes and effects of mass violent victimization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mass Violent Victimization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>• Mass riots</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hostage taking</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Arson</td>
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<td>• Terrorist bomb blasts</td>
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<td>• Mass shooting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Bioterrorism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Aircraft hijacking</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Causation</strong></td>
<td>• Include evil human intent, deliberate sociopolitical act, human cruelty, revenge,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hate or bias against a group, mental illness.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Appraisal of Event</strong></td>
<td>• Event seems incomprehensible, senseless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some view as uncontrollable and unpredictable, others view as preventable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social order has been violated.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Psychological Impact                                      | • Life threat, mass casualties, exposure to trauma, and prolonged recovery effort result in significant physical and emotional effects.  
|                                                        | • There are higher rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety and traumatic bereavement that can last for a longer period of time. |
| Subjective Experience                                   | • Victims are suddenly caught unaware in a dangerous, life-threatening situation. May experience terror, fear, horror, helplessness, and sense of betrayal and violation.  
|                                                        | • Resulting distrust, fear of people, or being "out in the world" may cause withdrawal and isolation.  
|                                                        | • Outrage, blaming the individual or group responsible, desire for revenge, and demand for justice are common  |
| World View/ Basic Assumptions                           | • Assumptions about humanity are shattered; individuals no longer feel that the world is secure, just, and orderly.  
|                                                        | • Survivors confronted with the reality that evil things can happen to good people.  
|                                                        | • People lose their illusion of invulnerability; anyone can be in the wrong place at the wrong time  |
| Stigmatization of Victims                               | • Some victims may come to feel humiliation, responsibility for others' deaths, survivor guilt, self-blame, and unworthy of assistance, thus assigning stigma to themselves. |
- The larger community, associates, friends, and even family may distance themselves to avoid confronting the idea that crime victimization can happen to anyone.
- Well-meaning loved ones may urge victims and bereaved to "move on," causing them to feel rejected and wrong for continuing to suffer.
- Hate crimes reinforce the discrimination and stigma that targeted groups already experience.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phases of Response and Reconstruction</th>
<th>Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disbelief, shock, and denial</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction with criminal justice system</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Working-through process</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coming to terms with realities and losses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
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<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>The media shows more interest in events of greater horror and psychological impact.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excessive and repeated media exposure puts people at risk for secondary traumatization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk of violations of privacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Secondary Injury                      | Victims' needs may conflict with necessary steps in the criminal justice process. |
|                                       | Steps required to obtain crime victim compensation and benefits can seem confusing, frustrating, bureaucratic, and dehumanizing and trigger feelings of helplessness. |
|                                       | Bias-crime victims may suffer prejudice.                                      |
and blame.
- Victims may feel that the remedy or punishment is inadequate in comparison to the crime and their losses.


**Population Exposure Model:** Mental health providers new to responding to community disasters and widespread trauma must consider a community perspective as well as individual psychological effects. The collective social, political, environmental, and cultural impacts of community disaster interact with individual reactions and coping. A concentric circle model, in Figure 1, depicts the spectrum of populations affected following large-scale disaster.

![Population Exposure Model](http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA-3959/chapter2.asp)

**Figure 1:** Source: http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA-3959/chapter2.asp

A: Community victims killed and seriously injured Bereaved family members, loved ones, close friends

B: Community victims exposed to the incident and disaster scene, but not injured
C: Bereaved extended family members and friends. Residents in disaster zone whose homes were destroyed. First responders, rescue and recovery workers. Medical examiner's office staff. Service providers immediately involved with bereaved families. Obtaining information for body identification and death notification.


E: Groups that identify with the target-victim group. Businesses with financial impacts. Community-at-large.

The model's underlying principle is that the individuals who are most personally, physically, and psychologically exposed to trauma and the disaster scene are likely to be affected the most. This relationship has been consistently demonstrated in numerous research studies and reviews. There will always be individuals within each category who suffer severe reactions requiring more intensive mental health assistance. Many of these individuals are at risk because of pre-existing vulnerabilities, another key consideration for planning and screening. 35

**Traumatic Events and Characteristics of stress:**

As shown in Figure 1, the level of exposure to the traumatic event and the stress associated with that event are highly correlated with mental health outcomes especially in "most exposed" groups. However, not all events and traumatic stress are equal in their potential for psychological impact. Eight dimensions of traumatic exposure associated with posttraumatic stress are:
➢ Threat to life and limb;
➢ Severe physical injury;
➢ Receipt of Intentional Injury;
➢ Exposure to the grotesque;
➢ Violent/sudden loss of a loved one;
➢ Witnessing or learning of violence to a loved one;
➢ Learning of exposure to a noxious agent;
➢ Causing death or severe injury to another.

Most of these dimensions are inherent in mass violence and terrorism. The level of community trauma is increased when there are both large numbers of victims relative to non-victims and high numbers of fatalities and serious injuries. The grieving process is intensified and complicated when a loved one's death is sudden, violent, random, preventable, mutilating, and associated with multiple other deaths. In addition, when no physical remains of the deceased are identified, many families have even more difficulty accepting the death and memorializing their loved one.

When death and destruction are deliberately planned and caused by other persons, survivors, family members, and the larger community are horrified by the tragedy, evil intent, and unnecessary losses. They may be both enraged and terrified by their inherent vulnerability to such random, yet deliberate acts. Incessant questioning "Why me?", "How could this have happened?", "Why my child's school?", "What terrible thing is going to happen next?" interacts with the need to blame and demand justice. Survivors feel confused, out of control, frightened, and unable to make sense of an act that seems incomprehensible. Since the goal of mass murder of innocent civilians appears outside the bounds of rational human behavior, the perceived
vulnerability of future attacks causes many to live with high levels of anticipatory anxiety and hyper-vigilance.\textsuperscript{36}

Terrorist acts and mass violence that result in a significant number of deaths and serious injuries can be expected to have profound and long-lasting physical, emotional, and financial effects for many survivors and family members. Deliberately human-caused disasters may be motivated by further terrorism targeting innocent people, prejudice and hate toward a group for revenge. Terrorist acts are calculated, yet are designed to be unpredictable. The ruthless intent underlying terrorism is to harm and kill defenseless people for political or sociocultural purposes. Terrorists seek to intimidate a civilian population. The killing of innocent people becomes a vehicle for delivering a message. When children are among those who are killed, the community loses its sense of being able to protect and provide safety for its children. The great threat of terrorism is that anyone, anytime, anywhere can be a target. No one is immune; no one is protected.

Mass acts of violence may be motivated by hate and may target victims based on their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or country of origin. Victims of hate crimes are attacked due to a core characteristic that is immutable. Instead of feeling they have suffered a random act of violence or one that was economically motivated, victims, as well as the larger targeted group, continue to feel vulnerable to intentional attacks.

Post-trauma reactions are expressed through different pathways: physical, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Complex biopsychophysical interactions between parts of the brain, different neurotransmitter systems, and neurohormones play a role in
increasing or regulating arousal symptoms associated with traumatic stress.

Thus it can be seen that there is a lot of stress associated with modern living contrary to ideal living conditions. This stress is the root cause of mental illness prevailing in the society. It may not be too easy for us to improve family systems, reduce population growth or do away with the division that exists in the society based on caste creed and religion but certainly practicing and preaching yoga can reduce the stress of the society and heal the mental illness to a great extent.
d. Cultural Encroachment through Multimedia

Here under this topic, I have first tried to describe in brief, the basic theme of rich cultural heritage of India and then tried to throw light on the role of mass media in preservation or otherwise of our rich cultural heritage, the challenges ahead and how multimedia is responsible for the increased stress conditions in our society.

**Cultural heritage of India:**

India is famous for its rich and unique cultural heritage. Indian culture is one of the oldest in the world. The age old traditions have survived throughout history and customs, traditions and ideas from invaders and immigrants have been absorbed from time to time. Diversity in cultural practices, languages, customs and monuments are examples of this co-mingling over centuries.\(^{37}\)

There is remarkable cultural diversity throughout the Indian subcontinent. It can be seen as a cultural melting pot for different and distinct cultural identities of South, North, and North-East regions. Each state of India has carved out its own cultural niche. Despite diversity in culture, the entire country is bound as a single civilization due to its common history; and thus has preserved the national identity.

Basically the Indian culture is a composite entity. Diverse ethnic groups in the country have enriched it. Education has helped the process of transmission, transformation, assimilation and qualitative enrichment of cultural heritage of India. Culture of India maintains a historic continuity with a marked characteristic of maintaining a happy balance between change and stability, tradition and modernity, unity and diversity.
Multimedia & challenges to Indian Culture:

The multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual society of the Indian subcontinent has a long and diverse history. The Indian culture is associated with spirituality & tolerance. India's diversity forces it to either evolve strong foundations to retain the spirituality & tolerance and survive, or face break-up. Globalisation has led to revolutionary changes in multi media & inflow of information. People now have access to hundreds of television and satellite channels, Internet, mobile phones, teleconferencing and other modes of communications. This has reduced the geographical distance and time lag in communication to a great extent and the world can be said to have been reduced to global village.38

Apart from the various advantages of technological revolution in the field of mass communication, the electronic media has given rise to some disadvantages as well. Terrorist groups and antisocial elements are making full use of the fast communication systems in planning and executing their inhuman operations. Easy access to pornographic web sites in the internet has been distracting school going children and young adults and affecting their personality growth. It has also been observed that few TV channels in the name of journalism are spreading hatredness between communities and adding to already existing tensions and rift in the society.

Of late foreign culture has invaded into some sections of the Indian society through multimedia and foreign TV channels. Indian public has started accepting western influences and it is emerging is a confluence of past local culture with the new western culture. Globalization and onslaught of consumerism have led to a situation where cultural invasion, westernization, loss of family values and
growing intolerance can easily be observed and traditional Indian culture seems to be getting diluted.

Remarkable influence of western culture can be seen today in many spheres of our life, e.g. westernisation of Indian music, dance, dressing sense, food and sex habits and particularly in Indian cinema. The way Indian youth are trying to imitate the west it is quite likely that the essence of Indian culture will become diluted by next one or two generations. Aggressiveness and intolerance among youth has increased. The character of youth has changed as a result of exposure to certain kinds of programmes in TV serials as well. It is sad to note that while Indian women are liberating themselves from conservative dress, they are enslaving themselves as sex objects. Indian women have started smoking publicly imitating Hollywood heroines. Alcohol ads have resulted in underage drinking and young people are beginning to consume alcohol. Violent scenes and use of guns in Hollywood movies have resulted in Indian youths taking to arms. The presence of weapons can significantly enhance aggression among viewers because they tend to activate aggressive thoughts. These thoughts may later facilitate aggression or influence the interpretation of neutral events as possibly threatening. Also, consumption patterns for middle class Indians are becoming increasingly western (i.e. buying on credit, ending up in debt). We should stop blindly imitating the west and instead learn from its progress and mistakes.

For some social thinkers, the miscegenation of diverse ancient culture with modernity, spirituality with science/ technology, eastern with western world-view is potentially making India a social laboratory and biggest melting pot of human ethnicities, languages, cultures, religions, ideologies for the evolution of
futuristic global-unity consciousness. If, and only if, everything evolves right, then Indian culture could retain its old vigour and gain worldwide acceptance, otherwise there are every chances of it getting diluted or even lost. We need to develop a sense of pride in our composite culture, preserve its identity, take precaution against superficiality, guard the youth against rootless-ness and alienation, make them modern in their outlook and yet preserve their distinctive Indianness.

The gradually diminishing cultural content in education today combined with negative impacts of the electronic media has resulted in large-scale value erosion in our society. It has generated inter-generational conflict, weakened the moral fabric of society and increased permissive behavior, especially among the educated youth. Even rural and tribal youth have not remained unaffected by it. Value conflicts of various types are widely prevalent in our society. Quality of life of our people is getting affected.

The traditional social order in India with its ascribed status, and role, is incapable of facing the challenges of ever advancing communication system and westernization of the multimedia. The behavioral pattern, age-old social customs, inter-personal and inter-group relationships, values and norms of life are incapable of meeting the new challenges. Traditional vocations are no longer attractive. Some of these developments are really worth appreciation but they demand their critical appraisal as well.

Revolution in the field of information and communication technology has opened new vistas for electronic as well as print media. Advent of computer, internet and the mobile phone have transformed every thing. Man now has access to huge information
base at any point of time and almost in any part of the world. The world has become interdependent and is turning gradually into a global village. Now one has to think globally and act locally. People in different parts of the world have come closer to each other like never before. The traditional concepts of matter and energy, relationship between man and nature, theological beliefs and practices, superstition and obscurantist practices have changed. Automated machines are replacing men. Production process is no longer arduous and tiresome. Material comforts and amenities of life are made available to all who can pay for them.

However, there is another side of the picture too. Though the society as a whole is advancing with advances in science and technology, advances in the field of mass communications and we can say that the erstwhile economy of scarcity has been transformed into economy of plenty, poverty is yet to be eradicated. There is still a large segment of the world population deprived of the benefits. Though man has gained material comforts he has become spiritually poorer and his privacy has shrunk. Science and superstition are simultaneously flourishing in Indian society because adequate emphasis is not being laid on the development of scientific attitude and scientific temper of mind. Its application to anachronistic social and cultural contents is not being given due consideration.

The effects of advances in communication technology are not proving wholly beneficial to man and society. Society has become interdependent but family and other primary groups have lost their importance. Man has become a prisoner of market forces of and advertisements. His capacity to choose has diminished. His freedom has been curtailed. Possibilities of regimentation and standardization of thought and indoctrination have tremendously
increased. The cultural gap between various sections has widened. The harmony between man and nature has received a setback. Morality and values have become its worst causality. Material culture is weakening spiritual culture. All these factors indicate that reconsideration of policies has become essential and role of media towards social responsibility needs to be reviewed. If the weaker sections of the society and those under stress are to survive and if the quality of life is to be assured, controllers of the multi media needs to re-think themselves and re-frame their priorities. We have to take serious note of the situation and evolve effective measures; otherwise the gains achieved so far may be neutralized or may even go negative.

The impact of information and communication technology, role of the multimedia, and its impact on different sections of the society needs to be fully discussed and debated. Positive temper has to be developed and its application for the solution of problems of life has to be encouraged. Its potentialities for making a humane social order need to be emphasized so as to promote values like impartiality, integrity, intellectual honesty, optimism, fellow-feeling, tolerance and humanitarianism.

India is passing through a period of change. Information and communication technology are transforming the traditional way of life and making inroads into beliefs, values and norms. In spite of their desirable contributions, science, technology, industrialization, westernization and modernity are creating considerable social instability and value crisis. The impact of value crisis, especially among the educated youth, is a matter of grave concern. Global culture is well spread in urban India today. Growth of cultural separatism in India is a real threat. The "openness" that we valued
so much is certainly under great strain right now - in many countries.

Religious fundamentalism still has a relatively small following in India; but various factions seem to be doing their best to increase their numbers. The expansion of religious sectarianism is being seen as closely associated with an artificially separatist view of culture. The increasingly overbearing and more influential Western Culture have damaged Indian culture as a hold.

The Power of Western Media:

Influence of western media has been very much negative and it has created a clash of culture in Indian Society. Bollywood seen as a movie making & idea-producing machine is highly influenced by Hollywood. Bollywood is not only an entertainment industry; it is seen as a role model and the ultimate image. This is because cinema is the most powerful media force especially in country like India. The young after watching more films depicting western culture have started challenging the Indian tradition.

The western concepts such as divorce, sex before marriage, and homosexuals etc. have a negative impact on the Indian youth and teen-agers. Indian society is cautious about sex and is very much divided and vastly conservative on this issue, although the ultimate sex instruction booklet the 'Karma Sutra' originated from India. This is largely due to the way the Bollywood cinema has copied sex scenes from Hollywood movies. They just haven't shown them unlike western movies where they are essential part of the movie. Intact they haven't even shown kiss scenes and have left it up to the audience's imagination as they saw it more romantic. Traditionally Indian films have been revolved love
stories. Yet increasing influence from the west has resulted in showing increasingly long kissing scenes, violence and new methods of crime. Production of these sorts of movies is on the rise. This is detrimental to Indian culture and is adding to the generation gap, misunderstandings and mental stress of people.

Imitating the complex of the West Indian youth now a days prefer love marriage and they would rather run the risk of disgrace than do the traditional ways. Increase in break ups and divorces are the results.

**Responsiveness of the electronic media to civil society:**

The electronic media are not responsive to civil society. Entertainment has become the bugbear and citizens are now being treated as ‘one-dimensional consumers. Organizations involved in media monitoring and advocacy admit that sponsorship and commercial pressures makes it difficult to tell the difference between the truths, half-truths and lies carried by the media.

The state monopoly of broadcasting has been broken but the states have been slow to see what their role should be in the new situation. Program makers have also been slow to assume responsibility to audiences beyond their prime target areas. As far as civil society is concerned, research show that public opinion, even in the districts, has been extraordinarily resilient but it is not making itself felt very effectively. Though many organizations are concerned about the impact of the new media, few have been monitoring it systematically and engaging with the channels on behalf of civil society.  

Rather than focusing on real issues of the society, many of the family serials in the private channels portray upper class cultures.
Women are shown more as the vamps, where as there is a need to present the middle and lower class women as strong and fully able to manage both a family and a career. Many women do not find themselves in tele serials. Fictional conflict leads to emulation of the bad characteristics of upper class families and discourages marriage.\(^{40}\)

Programme makers instead of giving the audience what they want, are in the business of re-engineering society and building taste. Of course it is unrealistic to expect private commercial media to report on development, analyze content in particular fields like the environment or women’s representation etc. In television such dedicated slots mean a loss of viewership, though development stories are now incorporated into news bulletins.

There is currently little media monitoring, though there are big civil society networks, which could be influential if they took up these issues. Changes are required in civil society to enable these issues to be addressed. There is a need for monitoring leading to a critique of the print media, television and the neglected medium of radio. At present such monitoring barely exists. News is meant to be objective not to be dictated by the sentiments of the populace. Since satellite TV, the Indian intellectual critique of ‘cultural imperialism’ has disappeared.

Public Service Broadcasting should include children’s programmes and ‘public access’ programmes, which are a means of addressing issues of marginalisation. The discourse on public service broadcasting needed to shift away from development support programming to the wider aim of creating a plural public culture, which is accessible to the public, not talking down to it.
Making the community responsive to the media and its effects: There is a responsibility on the part of viewers and civil society as well to ensure that public service broadcasting is maintained. People need to be made aware and trained to react. As far as coordinating the responses of civil society is concerned, there are obvious advantages in tapping into organized groups. One way to do this is to increase the sensitivity of those already working in communication. Abhivyakti e.g. is a NGO providing courses in media training and criticism for students in 6th, 7th and 8th classes in some Nasik schools. Most children had seen Lagaan and most liked it. But they did not realize it bore little resemblance to historical reality. In the context of recent Indo-Pak tensions, most children favoured war. They found pleasure in defeating others. These are some of the dangers fostered by the media. Abhivyakti’s strategy for dealing with this was to encourage ‘localness’.41 Educated young people are reluctant to go into agriculture. There is a need to strengthen the local, to build local experience and culture, value it, and to encourage diversity. Another organization working on media monitoring and advocacy is Sanhita of Kolkata.

As per Article 51A of our constitution also it is the duty of every citizen of India to value and preserve the rich heritage of our Composite Culture. Our cultural heritage is one of the noblest and the richest. If today’s media is not watched and monitored, children are going to be the most affected in terms of their personality growth, women will remain vulnerable and the essence of the Indian culture will fade away.

Viewing is not a passive act; viewers’ likes and dislikes have repercussions, which leave an impact on behaviour of individuals, groups & society as a whole. TV is an inclusive medium and the
popularity of fiction on TV makes it powerful. However, pitfalls in censorship of TV programmes and censorship by unqualified people are to be blamed for the negative impacts of many serials. In the name of selling fiction, many serials today generate embarrassment in family and society. Serials like Mahashaktiman for children have distracted children from reality & strengthen their belief on supernatural heroes. Some have injured themselves trying to imitate. Commercialization of children programmes has made children almost slaves to several consumer products. Live telecast of execution of death sentences have resulted in suicide by many ignorant children just trying to imitate the scene. The character of youth has changed as a result of exposure to certain kinds of programmes in TV serials as well.

It is difficult to find sponsors for programmes on classical dance, environment and AIDS. The mega-serials now a days on the other hand are popular though are full of 'negativity and perversion'. The purpose of these serials is to make money and there is a neglect of real issues. The melodrama and negative characterisation of these serials has a damaging effect on family relationships and society. Sponsors should therefore be persuaded to 'put a proportion of their funding into better programmes.' If programmes were good the channels would benefit. Parents are shocked to know that their children are growing up without even a simple knowledge of the elements of Indian culture. Channels showing 'porno stuff' late at night should be banned.

Media monitoring can be useful to measure and quantify the level of marginalisation or stereotyping that different groups in civil society, especially women, children and less-privileged groups, experience in the manner in which media treats the issues related to their lives. It is therefore needed to study the media more
systematically and monitor the contents of display. It is important for larger interest of the society to have a track of the channels to know how hard and soft news is constructed? What are the priorities? What does the viewer make of the soap operas, panel discussions, chat shows and the mediation of public opinion around the electoral process, how viewers relate to advertising in terms of individual values.

Women, Media & Violence: Women are often depicted as victims of violence and portrayed as sexual objects. This influences how women are viewed and treated in society. Film, television, music, music videos and computer games have all been criticized for content considered demeaning to women, such as sexual objectification, depictions of violence against women, and the frequent association of violence with sexuality. Scientific investigation has led researchers to conclude that media violence significantly contributes to aggressive attitudes and behavior in society. Negative perceptions of women in entertainment can affect women in real life. Men who view a number of films in which women are portrayed in sexually degrading or violent situations become increasingly less disturbed by violence against women and less sympathetic toward female victims of violence. Some people target pornography as the medium most likely to depict women in an offensive manner. A series of survey of prisoners reveals that majority of rapists admit to regular use of pornography, and admit actual imitation of pornographic scenes in commission of sex crimes. Apart from TV, mainstream films and magazines are often more violent than pornography.42

Effects of Media Violence on children: Exposure to media violence causes children to behave more aggressively and affects them as adult years later. Children develop "cognitive scripts" that
guide their own behaviour by imitating the actions of media heroes. As they watch violent shows, children learn to internalize scripts that use violence as an appropriate method of problem solving. Children who consume high levels of media violence, play violent video games, are more likely to be aggressive in the real world. Exposure to violence in the media is associated with increased heartbeat, blood pressure and respiration rates. Violent music lyrics increase aggressive thoughts and hostile feelings. Incidences of psychological trauma (including anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress) have increased in proportion to the number of hours of television watched each day. Presence of a television in a child’s bedroom makes it more likely that the child will suffer from sleep disturbances.\textsuperscript{43}

**Impact of the Internet:** As computers and Internet access become widespread, real-world crimes of harassment and stalking have moved on-line. Whether at home or in school, the Internet has become a permanent fixture in children’s lives. With this emerging new media comes several concerns regarding children’s safety and privacy online. Today many parents are worried that their children may view offensive material online. Most of the parents in households with personal computers are concerned that their children may view sexually explicit material over the Internet. There is a relationship between exposure to sexual content in the media and sexual beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. Web sites that advocate hate and promote violence also pose a significant threat to impressionable youth. Web sites espousing racism, anti-Semitism, violence and other forms of extremism have more than doubled and are readily accessible to any child browsing the Internet.
Internet is causing many people to spend less time with friends and family. Researchers also have found that teenagers seemed the most vulnerable to the Internet's potentially isolating effects. Many parents are concerned that children are jeopardizing healthy interpersonal relationships offline by spending too much time online.

Over exposure to media/ television viewing may lead to poor attention span among children and affect their school performance. Children may develop ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). These children have less ability to listen, pay attention, and engage in independent problem solving. In sum, they have less ability to learn.\(^{44}\)

Guidelines for parents:\(^{45}\)

1. Limit children's total media time (with entertainment media) to no more than 1 to 2 hours of quality programming per day.
2. Remove television sets from children's bedrooms.
3. Discourage television viewing for children younger than 2 years, and encourage more interactive activities that will promote proper brain development, such as talking, playing, singing, and reading together.
4. Monitor the shows children and adolescents are viewing. Most programs should be informational, educational, and nonviolent.
5. View television programs along with children, and discuss the content. Two recent surveys involving a total of nearly 1500 parents found that less than half of parents reported always watching television with their children.
6. Use controversial programming as a stepping-off point to initiate discussions about family values, violence, sex and sexuality, and drugs.

7. Use the videocassette recorder wisely to show or record high-quality, educational programming for children.

8. Support efforts to establish comprehensive media-education programs in schools.

9. Encourage alternative entertainment for children, including reading, athletics, hobbies, and creative play.
e. Psychosomatic Disorders

Various aspects of modern living as described above have led to a number of psychosomatic disorders. In ideal living conditions people are free from stress and do not have psychological complications reflecting on their health. However, in modern living people are subject to stress in all spheres of life, which is the root cause of psychosomatic disorders.

Psychosomatic disorder refers to a mind and body relationship. All illnesses can be considered to be psychosomatic. That is, they inevitably involve the mind's reaction (psyche) to a physical (soma) illness. Somatogenic disease occurs when the mind increases the body's susceptibility to some disease causing microbes. Psychogenic disease is a disease associated with emotional stress, which by itself lowers the body's immune system.\textsuperscript{46}

In some illnesses, psychological factors seem to play a particularly important part. They can influence not only the cause of the illness, but can also worsen the symptoms and affect the course of the disorder. It is these illnesses that are termed as psychosomatic disorders. Because psychological factors are important in every illness, there is lack of agreement as to what should be considered as a psychosomatic disorder. Many doctors believe that illnesses such as duodenal ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, bronchial asthma, eczema, psoriasis, high blood pressure and heart attacks are strongly influenced by psychological factors. Sometimes psychological factors can cause ill health without actually causing any visual somatic disease. As a result of unhappiness, anxiety or stress due to personal problems, physical symptoms may develop. We are all familiar with the headache that develops as a result of
stress. Similarly, other physical symptoms can develop. These
include nausea, abdominal pain and chest pain, breathlessness,
diarrhoea and giddiness and muscle pains.

Illness can be due to many factors. It can occur as a result of
social or environmental factors. It may also happen as a result of
genetic or hereditary reasons: a tendency for a certain condition to
run in families. Some families also tend to suppress feelings: any
emotion then tends to be expressed through physical symptoms.
Children can learn this behaviour, which may continue to adult life.
Some people think that it is our personality that is a major factor
in determining which illness we develop. For example, people with
certain personality type tend to be ambitious, impatient, and set
themselves high standards. They seem more likely to develop
heart attacks. Quiet, introverted individuals, who tend to conceal
their feelings and fears and to suppress emotions, may be more
likely to develop cancers.

Why the illness occurs at a particular time is often a mystery. It
could be that a combination of the factors mentioned above
triggers off the illness. Should there be untoward stress due to
personal problems at home or at work, or bereavement, then an
illness may result. We know for instance that certain life events
such as moving house, getting divorced or suffering bereavement
can precipitate physical illnesses. Similarly, an existing illness may
worsen as a result of these stresses.

Many people with psychosomatic disorders feel that their doctor
does not take them seriously. They feel that the doctor believes
that it's all in the mind. Doctors normally attempt to treat the
physical illness. This does not help much many a times. For
treating a person suffering with psychosomatic disorders, we need
to deal with the whole person. People suffering from
psychosomatic disorders should be given the opportunity and time to talk about their feelings and emotions. This means taking all factors of his life into consideration. By doing this, we are not playing down or ignoring the physical disease rather we understand more about the person who has the illness. Sometimes it is helpful to look at the whole lifestyle of the person involved. This may require looking at how the stress is dealt with, teaching techniques for stress management, as well as examining factors such as diet and exercise.

Yoga is of extreme help in treating people with psychosomatic disorders since it not only tunes the physical body and strengthens immune system but also brings about a positive attitude in life, and mental balance. The reasons that the illness arose are often complex and not easy to deal with. They can be confusing sometimes. Time is required to allow understanding if healing is to take place. There is no quick and easy answer. The yogic solutions are discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Emotion & physic: Investigations have revealed that emotions affect our physical activities in various ways. So much so that some morbid emotions may be at the root of even cancer and emotions may be vitally responsible for many other bodily changes. In fact, the repressed accumulated psychic energies are expressed through physical disorders. So before looking into any one's disease, it is very important to understand what type of person the patient is and has been, that is, his past and current emotional experiences in various situations of life must be thoroughly understood. This understanding will give a correct insight for reaching the root of the malady the person happens to suffer from.
Certain challenging stresses in life lead to physical disorders. One's autonomous nervous system and tissues relating to hormonal phenomena become degenerated and even damaged as a result of stresses that one may have to undergo. In this connection it is also necessary to understand the organ that has been particularly affected in an adverse manner. Emotional tension may be of temporary nature, but it does not mean that its impact on our physical organ will be only temporary. In fact, the danger done to the particular organ of the body during emotional tension may be of permanent nature.

According to the Cannon-Bard theory, when a person faces an event that somehow affects him or her, the nervous impulse travels straight to the thalamus where the message divides. One part goes to the cortex to originate subjective experiences like fear, rage, sadness, joy, etc. The other part goes to the hypothalamus to determine the peripheral neurovegetative changes (symptoms). According to this theory physiological reactions and emotional experience occur simultaneously.\(^{47}\)

Psychosomatic disorders arising from emotional factors refer to such physical symptoms, which are generally controlled by autonomous nervous system, and these symptoms are reactions that stand for visceral expressions of the underlying impact, which are generally not realised by the concerned person on the conscious plane. At the root of a psychosomatic disorder there has been an emotional tension of long duration. Consequently, a particular organ of the individual begins to degenerate and some type of disorder comes into it. This disorder does not end even when the individual becomes conscious of his inner conflicts because of blocking by the emotional tension. It happens so because the damage to the bodily organ has already been done
and it assumes a permanent nature. Various types of psychosomatic disorders that develop because of some kind of emotional tensions and the allied frustrations are as given below.

Psychosomatic or Somatoform disorders are among the most common psychiatric disorders found in general practice. It is a condition of dysfunction or structural damage in bodily organs through inappropriate activation of the Involuntary nervous system and the glands of internal secretion. Psychosomatic disorder is mainly used to mean a physical disease, which is thought to be caused, or made worse, by mental factors. Some physical diseases are thought to be particularly prone to be made worse by mental factors such as stress and anxiety. 48

Types of psychosomatic disorders include:

i. **Psycho-physiological skin disorders** – disorders related to skin as neurodermatosis, eczema, itching, and hyperhydrosis etc. Complexion of our skin changes in varying emotional experiences. In anger it gets red, and in fear it becomes blue or pale, in deep depression it appears yellowish and in calamity it goes somewhat darker. All such changes happen because during emotional feelings the blood running into small blood cells is disturbed. For example, in fear blood runs out from the blood cells making the complexion of the skin bluish and in anger more blood is drawn into them making the skin reddish. When one happens to be under emotional tension for a long time skin rashes may appear all over the body. It may be noted that we unconsciously associate certain personality traits with certain types of skin. For example, if one is sensitive and of shameless personality, we use for him the term thick-skinned; if he is much sensitive as to be easily
provoked, we use the term thin-skinned for him. When our emotional experiences change, the complexion of our skin may also change. Thus the changes in skin complexion may be indicative of our emotional conflict. In our blood there are minute blood vessels governed by autonomous nervous system with which our emotions are closely associated. Therefore emotional tensions develop skin disorders through the autonomous nervous system. Eczema is such a skin disorder. Generally, the skin diseases begin from some physical disbalance, but later on they become related with some intense emotional experiences. A skin disorder associated with some challenging situations of life disappears when acceptable solutions of the same are obtained.

ii. **Physiological musculoskeleton disorders** – such as headaches, arthritis, backaches, muscles cramps, etc. are included in this form of disorders.

**Headache:** should not be regarded as a disease in itself. In fact, it may be symptomatic of some disorder in one's body. This implies that there may be several causes of headache varying according to the different personalities of individuals concerned. Causes of headache may be both physiological and psychological. From the physiological point of view it is believed that headache may be due to some inflammation in blood vessels and increase in liquid within the cranial cavity. Psychologically speaking, headache is considered as a result of some emotional conflict. Of all the types of headaches migraine headache is a different type of disorder which shows some clear symptoms and physiological changes. Hence it is regarded as different kind of disease. It is generally believed that one feels migraine headache due to inadequate flow of blood in blood vessels reacting on certain
parts of the brain. Some physicians are of the view that due to great emotional tension arteries in the brain are adversely affected and they develop pain.

**Arthritis:** Causal factor of arthritis is not yet known, but the role of some emotional tension has been accepted in its development. So it is regarded as a psychosomatic disorder. This disorder is generally seen in those persons who are very active in having some special achievements, but at the same time they are not expressive of their intensive emotional feeling. When one inhibits his emotional experiences from being expressed, this creates an adverse impact on the functioning of some physical organ. This disorder may be found also in those persons who are victims of repressed anger and rage and are not able to exercise due control over their emotional expressions. This disease may be found also in those persons who suffer from depressed feelings of guilt.

### iii. Psycho-physiological respiratory disorders

such as bronchial asthma hyperventilation syndromes etc. We know that in great fear, one's breathing process may become so slow as to excite great anxiety in the onlookers. Similarly, when one is exceedingly excited in anger his breathing rate may become faster due to increased speed of the palpitation of heart. In hysterical fits sometimes it appears that the breathing is stopped for a few seconds. Under great emotional shock of grief or anxiety one may get unconscious and his breathing process also appears to be disturbed. Due to great emotional tension one may develop asthma, whooping cough or bronchitis. In such maladies the weakness of the autonomous nervous system and unconscious struggles of a person against challenges of life may have an important role.
iv. Psycho-physiological lymphatic disorders- This type of disorder include disturbance in the blood and lymphatic system.

v. Psycho-physiological Cardiovascular Disorders- Disorders pertaining to hypertension, vascular spasm, heart attack etc. If an individual's life is full of tension and strains for a long duration, he may develop heart problems. In a tension-full life blood pressure usually rises and palpitation of heart increases & if it continues for a long time, the individual suffers from hypertension. Due to long continuance of hypertension an individual develops some heart disease. In modern living a person is naturally very much self-restricted in giving vent to his emotional feelings. As a result, a modern man is likely to remain continuously tensed with increased palpitations of heart. Such a situation makes one prone to development of heart diseases.

vi. Psycho-physiological Gastro-intestinal Disorders- chronic gastritis, peptic ulcer, mucus colitis, constipation etc. are included in this type of disorders. Some emotional factor is at the root of any organic disorder. Experiments have revealed that an emotional experience may influence gastrointestinal functions adversely or favorably. We know that if at the time of taking meals one gets extremely angry or unhappy, the digestion of the food will be badly disturbed and the person will experience indigestion. Similarly, if one takes food in a happy mood, the digestion is helped. That is why, it is always advised that one should be cheerful while taking food and one must not eat while one is angry. Several studies have revealed that ulcers are developed in the
stomach due to the feelings of anger, jealousy, distrust, frustrations or enmity.

**Peptic Ulcer:** Persons, under great emotional stress complain of indigestion and other stomach troubles. Prolonged emotional problem may lead to peptic ulcer. Proper digestion gives satisfaction to the individual because it is the feeding ground for providing nourishment to other parts of the body. So any disturbance in this feature creates an emotional tension. Person suffering from perpetual loss of appetite, indigestion or constipation is easily irritated and he feels that he is losing the real zest of life.

**vii. Psycho-physiological Genito-Urinary Disorders** - Sexual disorders like impotence and disturbance in urination and menstruation fall under this type of disorders. Disorders of sexual function may be found both in men and women due to some feeling of guilt in relation to sex-affair in the past or due to feelings of repulsion, hatred, anger and unacceptability of any one of the two partners. In excessive emotional tension of grief, fear, anger, fatigue, thirst and hunger one may not be sexually stimulated. Thus, due to various psychic factors and particular emotional reactions various types of sexual disorders may be found. Various types of Genito-urinary disorders can be Bed-Wetting, Urinary disturbances and Menstrual disorder.

**Bed-Wetting:** Bed-wetting is seen as a habit even in some children up to the age of seven or eight years or even after, when normally every child much before this age is well trained in his toilet habits. Children who have the habit of bed-wetting are victims of some complex and they are also conscious of the fact that they have done something undesirable or wrong in wetting the bed. A two-year old child
running very high fever involuntarily wet his bed and after realising that his bed became wet his facial expression was explicitly indicative of his feeling of guilt. The children who are kept under unduly hard discipline or who are given excessive affection in quiet disregard for other children in the house may develop the bad habit of bed-wetting. It may be noted that it is not a disorder with children alone. Adolescents and adults, both male and female, go on for urination a number of times due to nervousness at the time of examination or interview. During war period the disorder of enuresis is found in soldiers at the reception centres. Bed wetting has its root in some kind of emotional tension. That is why it is clearly a psychosomatic disorder.

**Urinary Disturbances:** Urinary disturbances have their roots in emotional tensions and frustrations. There happens to be a close relationship between processes of bladder and emotional conditions. The principal cause of urinary disturbance is that our urine passages are filled with such autonomous tissue which are affected by the autonomous nervous system. Since our autonomous nervous system is affected by our emotions, one’s emotional condition influences the functioning of the bladder. This functioning may be either accelerated or obstructed, depending upon the kind of emotional feeling which the individual happens to experience at a particular point of time. Experiments have shown that the changes in the functioning process of bladder may be associated with one’s anxiety. These may also be due to aggressiveness, rage and mental conflict.

**Menstruation Disorders:** During the menstruation period some girls during adolescence have to undergo great emotional stress and strain. Girls from the very beginning, are given a wrong notion regarding their menstruation
phenomenon. Most of the women just before and during menstruation period suffer from uncalled for anxiety and irritability. The emotional tension and the unbearable pain during the menstruation period are generally associated with various psychological factors.

viii. **Psycho-physiological Endocrine Disorders**
Malfunctioning of various endocrine glands as hyper or hypo thyroids and other endocrine disorders in which emotional factors play a causative role.

**Hyperthyroidism:** During this disorder a person suffers from unaccountable anxiety. This psychosomatic disorder is generally found in those persons who are naturally self-dependent and unnecessarily overactive and hypersensitive. During childhood this disorder may be due to excessive secretion of thyroid glands, but during adulthood it is a result of some psychological stress.

ix. **Psycho-physiological Disorders of organs of special senses**
Disturbance in the sensory organs in which emotional factors play a causative role as chronic connectivities.

x. **Psycho-physiological Disorders of other types**
Such disturbance in the nervous system in which emotional factors play significant role.
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