



## **MANAGEMENT OF STRESS THROUGH SPIRITUAL LIFESTYLE**

### **– A STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*We observe that everywhere competition is growing rapidly and due to new inventions and advancement of technology lifestyle is also changed. Growth of material interest and development of inventions have added new direction to modern business and society for comfortable living. Customers get wide services at door steps and employees gain good salaries too with many other benefits. But one thing is frequently reported worldwide that still many are dissatisfied and do not get long term happiness due to anxiety and pressure in life instead of luxury living. Many employees complain that due to heavy pressure they get stress and suffer from much stress related hazards. Having medication or treatment also they do not get relief from such a clumsy situation in life. This entirely provokes thought and we search true meaning to life for which spirituality comes within our study and practice in daily activities. Excessive attachment towards material gratification and going away from spiritual life have brought such days of stress at present. Stress is very critical to understand and difficult to completely remove from mind and body. But after knowing about truth of life and features of stress we can easily manage stress with lovable spiritual lifestyle. Stress can be minimized in workplace or suppressed by power of spirituality very easily. In ancient days spirituality based life style has solved many problems of people and reduced stress from critical levels. Spiritual values help to manage society with cooperation and unity and harmony. This study focuses on such spiritual life styles that easily handle stress and make mind free from excessive pressures. Having this study we know that stress really hampers personality and attitudes in workplace and brings dissatisfaction. But spirituality manages*

*life very smoothly and reduces stress in day to day life and increases satisfaction and happiness lasts for long. Hope this study will be beneficial to many.*

**Keywords:** - Stress, life, attitudes, spirituality and management.

## **I. Introduction:-**

Beloved BapDada states, “Sweet children, whatever thoughts you have for Godly service are said to be pure thoughts; you are then free from other thoughts; they are not wasteful.” (Morning Murli-31/12/15) Values make a personality very pleasing. Sweetness is the right of souls. All souls are pure originally and being children of one father they have right of inheritance of peace, bliss and happiness. Always we have thoughts. Due to impact of nature on our births and deaths and lifestyles we always think and mind is always filled with many, many thoughts. There is no single creature in this world who does not have thought. Nobody can sustain or stay here without any thoughts. Due to these only we perform action. We live in family and society. We have blood relations, relatives, friends and co-workers. At each moment we think about them, and go on working either for them or for us. Very often many of us who do not understand secret of life attach their minds with relatives or friends and expect many things out of their actions. Due to attachment with them and with material things they very often perform sinful actions. To remain free from any attraction we need to serve selflessly in memory of God without attaching minds on relatives, friends, or matters. Having service with Godly visions is definitely wise. By doing so each thought rests on pure perception of remembrance of God. Having attraction to the earthly relationships and matters an individual keeps him in body consciousness and thinks that he is a body or biological machine and forgets own status of being conscious. This gives rise to vices and due to influence of these vices on senses the person does not remain in control of self rather remains in control of sense organs or attraction of various matters and relatives or friends. In such condition there is maximum chance of committing sinful actions. Such actions are roots of all sufferings, conflicts and pressures directly or indirectly. Giving effort as much as possible to remain in soul consciousness is cleaver idea. This helps in providing services and performing actions remaining free from attachment and sorrows. Having Godly service by actions requires pure thoughts. Thoughts become pure while mind remains in contact with beloved God. Then only we can be free from other normal thoughts or bad thoughts those come in mind. Thoughts of Godly service are not wasteful and we do not suffer by actions resulted from these. Thoughts about any relationship based on vices result such actions which become sinful. That is why this is very much necessary to remain free from capture of vices and

attraction of relationships. Knowing the philosophy of thoughts keeps us away from stress resulted through vices in workplace. Remaining in this world we can never separate us from thoughts. We receive sorrows from sins as reward or fruits. Being careful we overcome from difficulties and sufferings. Understanding self matters a lot and this only solves many problems. Remembering Supreme father there is unlimited happiness in this limited world. Justifying this Holy Bible gives indication that plans are dependent on thoughts and having pure thoughts nurtures pure plans to which God favours. The Bible verse states, "In their hearts humans plan their course but the Lord establishes their course." (Proverbs16:9, New International Version) The results of establishment of pure thoughts and actions are established while a man remains in union in memory with God only.

Robert Crawford (1868-1930), one Australian poet states that spirituality is the way higher than ourselves that guides us from very inner core that brings changes within mind removing clumsiness that is called as time's stress. For stress control spiritual education is very much necessary and all should feel its importance. Jon Kabat- Zinn (1994), founder of Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre, states that stress is the major psychological imbalance resulted due to daily pressure and a growing problem from which we want to get relief. He suggests having practice of daily meditation with spirituality to get relief from stress because such practice brings mindfulness along with a condition of, 'being,' rather than, 'doing.' During meditation an individual pays attention to the moment rather than past or future and distractions of modern life. Ken Wilber (2001), states that in every field like medicine, business, education or environment there is stress but real world of life integrate realms of body, mind and spirit. Having integrative vision we can sustain here. Michael J. Burt (2005), Washington DC based American poet states that stress never leaves an individual to go top or straight and every circumstance in life brings stress and it takes a person in to higher pressure. Whole day at work stress teases, pleads, and takes away heart from work, does not allow eating and sleeping properly and medicine does not cure this. Perhaps stress loves us but having love for work and others and love for stress easily we capture this and control. Steven Pimentel (2009) a New York based young American poet expresses that stress is such a pain giving agent that is very hard to leave and it does not allow sleeping as it gives headache and even taking pills or medicine one person does not get relief from stress. Through stress we miss mind somewhere else but we need some where space in mind to be stress free and in this way Steven indicates that this space for relieving stress can be made by spirituality. Sharon Salzberg (2010), highlights the importance of meditation and spiritual practices that lower blood pressure, give relief from chronic pain and

reduce stress. Experience of greater calmness and inner feelings and self judgement can be achieved by practice of meditation only. She also states that meditation protects brain and improves capacity of learning and creativity. Brendan D. Murphy (2012), states that an individual cannot consider himself just as a powerless meat computer that had destiny for life's biological end that has firmly world view material set up and set out within. But forces and energies produced by our consciousness act on the world around us and give us understanding of life. Modern neuroscience considers brain as a receiver of consciousness and not as the generator of it. Carrier wave of consciousness can travel at speed far exceeding than light. All of us should get ready to realize about knowledge that we all are incredible immortal spiritual beings and we should not attach mind in perishable matters which are temporary and causes of stress. Catherine Saunier –Talec and Anne Vallet (2015), state that creativity flows in relaxed mind state and this is a nice value originated from spirituality. Creativity settles down stress and keeps in control due to rise of spirituality. Lee Bladon (2016), states that spirituality is the path that describes multidimensional nature of man and universe. Spirituality describes the mechanism behind diverse range of subject matters through which we get chance to understand consciousness, sleep, dream, reality, creation, evolution and many more including space and time that influence human life.

## **II. Objectives:-**

- To know about features of stress expressed by employees in workplace
- To know about relationship of life with spiritual values that handle stress in workplace
- To know about benefits of spiritual lifestyle and how these benefits help in reducing stress
- To manage life and society in stress-free condition by practice of spirituality in workplace
- To know and understand ancient stress handling techniques with modern spiritual tools

## **III. Literature review:-**

The Holy Bible states, “Humble yourselves therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5: 6,7, New International Version)” Anxiety comes in life frequently and thinking more deep about pressure we get disturbance in mind. Casting this in God we experience relaxed condition and this definitely brings cheerfulness even in stressed condition. Being humble in

personality and having trust on God bring life forward in path of spirituality. God's might hands give us true wisdom to help in right time. Self awakens with mercy and wisdom of light and we feel the truth of life in such a way that we forget about thinking of pressures in life. While happiness and bliss and peace are felt well stress stays so far. Understanding this universe we perceive nice glitter of reality behind birth and death. Performing actions we earn and live but this is important to earn righteousness by right choice of actions. Nicholas Kardaras (2011), reports in Psychology Today about importance of handling depression and anxiety following principles of ancient philosophy. According to him growing mental illness is the main problem that is resulted from high stress. According to WHO (World Health Organization) in entire world around 450 million people suffer in mental disorders and by 2030 the list of such disorders will top. According to Dr. Steven Ilardi, a psychologist from University of Kansas reports that Americans are 10 times more risky to have depression related illness at present than the risk of 60 years ago. Ilardi states that modernised, urbanized, industrialized lives face challenges of mental illness related to anxiety and depression. Kardaras highlights the importance of ancient Greek philosophy and states that principles of Plato and Pythagoras can save lives. Holistic way of living basing on ancient wisdom including healthy vegetarian diet, daily physical exercises and philosophical group discussions give benefit in managing stress and mental illness resulted from stress. To understand universe and purpose of life practicing spirituality matters a lot. Right actions are keys of wellbeing. Jonathan O'Callaghan (2015) reports on Daily Mail about findings of UK researchers about signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) signs before 3000 years. Having experience of horrors in the ancient battlefield is not new rather it brings phenomenon of modern warfare. In 490 BC Battle of Marathon witnesses the stress disorders and scientists identify shell shock that exists before 1,300 BC in ancient Mesopotamia. Soldiers experiencing horrors in battle field in ancient days remain in post traumatic stress disorders. Researchers of Queen Mary University of London and Anglia Ruskin University specify that chances of deaths from injuries which are surgically cured these days are greater than ancient days. Greek historian Herodotus reports about such stress disorders. Post traumatic and other psychiatric disorders are frequently reported in ancient historical records. Due to very stressful frightening events ancient soldiers suffer in PTSD that is brought up due to deep anxiety. Military combat, violent attacks, assaults, natural disasters, terrific road accidents immediately or lately develop PTSD. Although antidepressants medicines are given at present to treat such disorders still Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Decentralization and Reprocessing (EMDR) are much beneficial in treatment of stress

disorders. The figure of stress is growing rapidly and reports show that one in every 3 persons suffer from stress and stress related illness. Generalization of society has brought us forward for rapid competition that has moved to whole 7 days and 24 hours per day as Jerry Kennard states (2010).

#### **IV. Importance of the study:-**

Rapid development of science and technology has shown us life of comfortable living. But many authors and researchers find that although we have comfort due to new inventions still we do not get real happiness and stress is rapidly a growing issue at present. Many wings of stress are capturing us day to day as it has become double than past time. In such a condition many try for treatment about stress related mental disorders and hazards by medication but do not get relief as medicine does not become able to cure stress. Management of stress becomes major issue and we know that behavioural changes are observed due to stress and this can be handled by developing mental condition by practice of spirituality. Keeping the busy workplaces and growing worries of employees ahead we plan for such study to know about stress with respect to reality of life and managing this improving life sustaining tools with respect to truth, trust and practice basing on spiritual perceptions of values. Along with advancement we are also facing challenges related to environment like global warming, and natural calamities and human related negative activities like violence and communal imbalance around us and growth of intolerance among human individuals. At such time this definitely becomes essential to search for remedy to handle stress and balancing life with work. Many think that stress cannot be easily handled but this is suppressed by spirituality.

##### **A. Few features of stress in workplace:-**

**Stress is ubiquitous** – Stress presents in any condition or appears in any situation and stress is found everywhere in every workplace among every employee or individual.

**Stress is unavoidable** – Obstacles come and go in life. Along with these we get pressure, anxiety or depression, sorrows or pain. Thousand times we try we cannot avoid these. We have to bear and agree with this unavoidable feature of stress in workplace.

**Stress is transferable** - Stress is transferred from one place to another and from one person to another. A stressed minded person put pressure on others in workplace and by thinking about negative behaviours of the same others also get stress.

**Stress may be severe or mild** – Due to heavy pressure exerted stress may be very severe in condition or may be mild as we face in day to day life.

**Stress is not normally operational** – Many become unable to deal stress with normal social relations and operating stress to resolute is not so possible.

**Stress may be temporary or long term** – Stress depends upon situations come on life. This may be very temporary as per feelings or perceptions or psychologically this may last for long time or chronically depending on perceptions experienced during battle, violence or terrific accidents or any other serious troubles.

**Stress may be physical, chemical, biological, mental or cross-interactive** – Stress may be physical as per activities of physical body, may be chemical due to low intake of food or water or shelter, stress may be due to emotional imbalance called mental stress, due to imbalance of hormonal flow i.e. biological or may be of multi complications.

#### **B. Essence of spiritual lifestyle to reduce stress:-**

**Surrender** – Surrendering in God is very nice attitude that is well developed by spiritual practice as directed by scriptures. Offering self and actions to God a person remains free from tension with trust that his all performed actions go in right direction.

**Knowing and setting intentions high** – Without intention this is difficult to sustain in life as thoughts are uncontrolled. Knowing own intention whether it is right or wrong is very much important and after identifying right one this is very important to set this high. False intentions which are elusive in nature may bring fear, greed, hopelessness or other vices. This is necessary to check these.

**Discovering self in light** – Discovering self light means to know true wisdom of self and purpose of life in workplace. Having realization of inner light mind does not attach with outer matters so does not suffer much in stress. Ego makes life needy and powerless as a person runs behind matters getting happiness to fill his emptiness but does not able to do so. Satisfaction based on wisdom fills mind and spirit.

**Discovering others in wisdom of light** – Every human being is gift of God and his wisdom we have to obey and we have to feel others in the same light. In the level of conscious mind everyone performs well and we need to witness this.

**Forgiving self and others** – Forgiving is very nice value to break down conflicts and obstacles that come from others. Forgiving self is nice if any mistake a person commits. For carelessness, lie, selfishness and cheating or irresponsible activities one should repent and forgive him.

**Allowing inner spirit to lead** – Always hearing inner voice is clever. Allowing inner spirit to lead life easily makes an individual to remain in alert state of mind to have right thoughts and actions and thus he takes right decisions.

## **V. Discussion:-**

We know that without thoughts in this world we can never sustain for a single moment. Thoughts are generated frequently just like waves of ocean. But being careful all thoughts should be offered to God and remembering him we can be very pleasing. Any thought generated in memory of Divine is pure and thus every action performed in his remembrance is pure and righteous. Recognizing ordinary with negative thoughts is essential as they are originator of stress in mind. Mental illness grows by negative actions. Negative thoughts are wasteful but positive thoughts add essence in life. Having thought for Godly service brings happiness, peace, bliss and suppresses stress and anxiety. The Holy Bible indicates that every trouble can be easily handled with memory of God casting anxiety on him. Having control over high stress ancient wisdom is necessary and philosophy of life helps a lot to understand life, work, universe and reality. Stress is very difficult to remove completely and we know few features of stress as ubiquitous, unavoidable, and transferable, may be severe or mild, normally not operational, may be temporary or long term etc. Controlling stress is very much important these days with essence of spiritual lifestyle like surrendering self in God, knowing and setting intentions high, discovering self in light, forgiving self and others, allowing inner spirit to lead properly etc. those help us a lot.

## **VI. Conclusion:-**

This study helps us definitely to know about features of stress in workplace and handle this with much care. Again this guides to have inner values in life to fight with vices in daily activities. From this study we know that life is truth and managing this with high intentions, pure thoughts and pure actions becomes important. Life has directly deep connection with spirituality and this stabilizes mind by purifying vibrations while we remain in memory of God. After having this study this becomes clear that spirituality reduces stress as we remain in neutral condition towards obstacles and challenges we face. Having spirituality in practice

makes alert to feel inner power and happiness. This study helps managers and employees a lot in balancing relationship in workplace and helps in proper planning as per wise and pure thoughts in service of customers as well as achieving organizational goals. Managers remain careful for improving environment and working culture free from stress. This helps in improving spiritual lifestyles of employees in workplace to fight with stress.

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