

## AHALYA'S PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION IN RAMAYANA

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**Abstract:** The **Ramayana** is an ancient Sanskrit epic which follows Prince Rama's quest to rescue his beloved wife Sita from the clutches of Ravana with the help of an army of monkeys. It is traditionally attributed to the authorship of the sage Valmiki and dated to around 500 B.C to 100 B.C. **Rama** is the hero of the **Ramayana** epic, an incarnation of the God Vishnu. The eldest and favorite son of Dasaratha, King of Ayodhya, he is a virtuous prince and is much loved by the people. He is exiled from Ayodhya due to the plotting of his stepmother, Kaikeyi. Ram's main characteristics are mortality, virtue, ideal son, ideal king, ideal student, ideal teacher, ideal husband, ideal man. Rama nature is helping everyone who need help. Ahalya is intervene by Rama psychologically. In Hindu mythology, **Ahalya** (Sanskrit: अहल्या, IAST Ahalya), also known as **Ahilya**, is the wife of the sage Gautama Maharishi. Many Hindu scriptures say that she was seduced by Indra (the king of Gods), cursed by her husband for infidelity, and liberated from the curse by Rama (an avatar of the God Vishnu). In this research paper we want to elaborate that Rama psychological heal or give psychological intervention to Ahalya. Psychological intervention is a form of treatment for problems of an emotional nature.

**Key words:** Ramayana, Psychological intervention, Ahalya cursed.

**Introduction:** Psychological interventions are actions performed to bring about change in people. A wide range of intervention strategies exist and they are directed towards various types of issues. Most generally it means any activities used to modify behavior, emotional state or feelings (Mary B. Ballon, 1995). Psychological intervention involves a changing of perspectives with a view to understand emotional problems, alter coping strategies, or to restructure the personality. Various schools of psychotherapy have suggested different conceptual frameworks in order to review the existing reality, understand the issues and improve functioning. The commonly employed methods include cognitive behavior therapy, dynamic psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis, humanistic existential therapy, behavior therapy and others. These techniques have been used in the western as well as in India (varma, 1982, kumar and ram, 2001). However, the use of these techniques it is mandatory to learn these in new conceptual frameworks, the understanding of the process and acceptance of their implications, while these are possible for the well educated and western patients, it takes a substantial effort to induct those without such educational or cultural background into the use of these methods. The practice of these methods or western method for majority of Indian patients using these methods in their purest form is difficult so there is need for locally acceptable and applicable alternatives. If we want to solve mental health problems we must try to use locally acceptable ways. So the situation demands less rigid theoretical frameworks and an eclectic approach to intervene mental illness utilizing both western-international and indigenous-regional concepts and therapies (Jacob, 1999).

**Psychological intervention of Ahalya:** The Ramayana, one of India's greatest epics, is pervasive and part of the Indian ethos. The Rama is the hero of this epic, Sita the queen is his soul with whom he struggles to reunite. In Balkand of the Ramayana interaction of Ahalya with Rama is given, that how Rama make cursefree Ahalya. In Hindu mythology, **Ahalya** (Sanskrit: अहल्या, IAST Ahalyā), also known as **Ahilya**, is the wife of the sage Gautama Maharishi. Many Hindu scriptures say that she was seduced by Indra (the king of gods), cursed by her husband for infidelity, and liberated from the curse by Rama (an avatar of the god Vishnu). Created by the god Brahma as the most beautiful woman, Ahalya was married to the much older Gautama. In the earliest full narrative, when Indra comes disguised as her husband, Ahalya sees through his disguise but nevertheless accepts his advances. Later sources often absolve her of all guilt, describing how she falls prey to Indra's trickery. In all narratives, Ahalya and Indra are cursed by Gautama. The curse varies from text to text, but almost all versions describe Rama as the eventual agent of her liberation and redemption. Although early texts describe how Ahalya must atone by undergoing severe penance while remaining invisible to the world and how she is purified by offering Rama hospitality, in the popular retelling developed over time, Ahalya is cursed to become a stone and regains her human form after she is brushed by Rama's foot. Actually Rama's do psychological intervention with Ahalya.

**Rama strengthen the Ahalya's motivation to do right things:** In psychological intervention it is the ultimate aim of therapy is to strengthen the person motivation to do right things. Rams first treat Ahalya

as a human being and then guide her path. Rama is the only human and mortal form of Vishnu or Krishna, the Supreme Being. He is capable of seeing through the truth because no-one cannot hide anything from him. He gets to identify the rock as well, and that is Ahalya's liberation for being recognised in

her real spirits, not necessarily a re-transformation.

**Rama reduce emotional pressure of Ahalya by facilitating the expression of feeling:** Releasing pent-up feelings figures importantly in many types of therapy, (e.g. primal therapy, gestalt therapy). Emotional expression is one of important strategies in psychological intervention. When ahalya regains her human form, tears come out automatically from her eyes it is unacceptable for her that lord ram is there. it is described in Ram charit manas as:

मुनि श्राप जो दीन्हा अति भल कीन्हा परम अनुग्रह मैं माना ।

देखेउँ भरि लोचन हरि भव मोचन इहइ लाभ संकर जाना ॥

बिनती प्रभु मोरी मैं मति भोरी नाथ न मागउँ बर आना ।

पद कमल परागा रस अनुरागा मम मन मधुप करै पाना ॥3 ॥

well was it that the sage pronounced a curse on me, and I cannot it as a great Favour, for I have feasted my eyes on Hari, deliverer from the bondage of worldly existence, a vision Shankara regards as the only blessing worth the name. Lord, I am very innocent of heart; I have one request to make. I seek no other boon from you, my master; may my soul like a bee sip the honey of devotion to the dust of your lotus feet!

परसत पद पावन सोकनसावन प्रगट भई तपपुंज सही ।

देखत रघुनायक जन सुखदायक सनमुख होइ कर जोरि रही ॥

अति प्रेम अधीरा पुलक शरीरा मुख नहिं आवइ बचन कही ।

अतिसय बड़भागी चरनन्हि लागी जुगल नयन जलधार बही ॥1 ॥

At the very touch of his holy feet, which drive away sorrow, verily emerged Ahilya, a true embodiment of austerity. Beholding the lord of Raghu, joy of the faithful, she stood before him with folded hands. Overwhelmed with love and all unstrung, she was unable to utter a word. The most blessed Ahilya clung to his feet and tears streamed from both her eyes.

**Rama see potential in Ahalya and reattach her with society:** Gautam rishi cursed ahalya and

detached her from society, nobody is going in that ashram but ram went there according to ram charit manas this is described as:

आश्रम एक दीख मग माहीं । खग मृग जीव जंतु तहँ नाहीं ॥

पूछा मुनिहि सिला प्रभु देखी । सकल कथा मुनि कहा बिसेषी ॥

On the way they saw a hermitage without bird or beast or any other living creature. Nothing a rock lying there, the lord asked the sage about it, and the latter told him the whole story in detail.

According to this description there is no living creature in that place. It is total isolated place but ram went there with sage and attach ahalya again with society.

**Rama try to modify the cognitive structure of Ahalya:** In psychological intervention it is aim that to know the person ideas about the nature of the world, others and himself. The person is unaware of these distorted perceptions. Thus, therapeutic change involves having patients become aware of their cognitive structures and the incongruencies among their constructs and between their belief and external criteria. May be Ahalya have distorted perception towards herself and world. When Ram meet Ahalya Ram told Laxman his younger brother to touch the feet of ahalya and take blessing, this event really change cognitive structure of ahalya.

**Ahalya attain self knowledge or insight through Rama:** The notion that therapy should lead to increasing awareness and understanding of how and why we act as we do is fundamental in psychological intervention. Rama enlighten her with his grace and mercy, it develop insight and self knowledge in her.

**Facilitating interpersonal relations and communication:** This facilitates interpersonal relation and communication in ahalya. Before this she have no connection with external world she is in deep sense of isolation. But all this enhance her relation with her husband and others.

**Altering states of consciousness:** Ahalya was now aware of his past, present and future. She pray ram in these words:

धीरजु मन कीन्हा प्रभु कहँ चीन्हा रघुपति कृपाँ भगति पाई ।

अति निर्मल बानी अस्तुति ठानी ग्यानगम्य जय रघुदाई ॥

मैं नारि अपावन प्रभु जग पावन रावन रिपु जन सुखदाई ।

राजीव बिलोचन भव भय मोचन पाहि पाहि सरनहिं आई ॥2 ॥

Recovering herself she recognised the lord and by the grace of Ragunatha attained devotion to his feet. In a

speech framed in the purest of words she began to hymn his praise: "Glory to the lord of Raghu, whom only spiritual knowledge may reveal! I am an impure woman, while the lord is able to sanctify the world of sin and is the delight of the faithful! O lotus-eyed foe of Ravana you rid your devotees of the terror of rebirth, therefore, I have come to you for refuge! Pray me save me".

जैहिं पद सुरसरिता परम पुनीता प्रगट भई सिव सीस धरी ।

सोई पद पंकज जेहि पूजत अज मम सिर धरेउ कृ पाल हरी ॥

एहि भाँति सिधारी गौतम नारी बार बार हरि चरन परी ।

जो अति मन भावा सो बरु पावा गै पति लोक अनंद भरी ॥4 ॥

The merciful Lord Hari placed on my head the same lotus feet from which sprang the most holy Ganga (the heavenly river), which is borne by Shiva on his head, the feet which are adored by Brahma!" Having thus praised Hari and falling again and again at his feet. Gautama's took leave of the lord, and winning a boon, which she held most dear to his heart, went rejoicing to her husband's abode.

**Changed social environment:** Now Ahalya's whole life is changed. Before this she was living in isolated place. So Ram changed her social environment.

गौतम नारि श्राप बस उपल देह धरि धीर ।

चरन कमल रज चाहति कृपा करहु रघुबीर ॥210 ॥

Gautama's consort, "he said," was turned into a stone by a curse, and is helplessly longing for the dust of your lotus feet. Have mercy on her, O hero of Raghu's race! The Rama was ideal man, he does not reject request of anyone. When Vishvamitra told Ram about Ahalya he instantly followed the sage as described in Ramcharitmanas:

तब मुनि सादर कहा बुझाई । चरित एक प्रभु देखिआ जाई ॥

धनुषजग्य सुनि रघुकुल नाथा । हरषि चले मुनिबर के साथ ॥

The sage then politely said to him in a pleading tone, "Let us my lord, go and witness a certain ceremony." When the lord of the house of Raghu heard of the contest of the bow, gladly set out with the noble sage (Vishvamitra).

धीरजु मन कीन्हा प्रभु कहूँ चीन्हा रघुपति कृपाँ भगति पाई ।

अति निर्मल बानी अस्तुति ठानी ग्यानगम्य जय रघुराई ॥

मैं नारि अपावन प्रभु जग पावन रावन रिपु जन सुखदाई ।

राजीव बिलोचन भव भय मोचन पाहि पाहि सरनहिं आई ॥2 ॥

Recovering herself she recognised the lord and by the grace of Ragunatha attained devotion to his feet. In a speech framed in the purest of words she began to hymn his praise: "Glory to the lord of Raghu, whom only spiritual knowledge may reveal! I am an impure woman, while the lord is able to sanctify the world of sin and is the delight of the faithful! O lotus-eyed foe of Ravana you rid your devotees of the terror of rebirth, therefore, I have come to you for refuge! Pray me save me". Ahalya, was devoted to Maharishi Gautam because she didn't know another way of life! She served her husband with affection and truth because that's the way she knows. It was not justified and innocent that Brahma to create an exceptionally beautiful woman and then hand her over to a sage who was no comparison to her either in looks or in vitality! Maharishi Gautam is said to have raised her upon Brahma's instructions, but didn't reportedly lust for her till she became his wife. Brahma uniting Ahalya and Gautam is just another blunder mischief where destiny leaves her with something undeserving and then one day she was cursed by Maharishi Gautam and become lifeless rock or she may be in deep depression. It is perception that defines the world. Being perceived as the tender, virtuous woman instead of a lifeless rock was Ahalya's freedom.

Strangely, this spiritual freedom was not something that her husband could bestow upon her. When Ahalya was with Gautam, the rishi may not have treated her as anything beyond a rock! Had he treated the beautiful woman as a human being, he wouldn't have misunderstood or punished her at all. So they must have transformed Ahalya too was a metaphorical reference and the only person who suffered the punishment for being unfair in the entire episode was Maharishi Gautam himself, who lost a lovely wife to his vain ego!

**Conclusion:** In conclusion we can say that it was really a very interesting story. Ramayana has had a great impact on the culture of India. It gave form to the values of its society, reiterating to countless generations models of correct behavior. In the past it has provided an indispensable support for education. We can take lots of inspiration with this story. The Rama is the time honored symbol of the perfect man: he is generous, just merciful, the master of his emotion and a valiant warrior. He takes out Ahalya from psychological distress and makes a remarkable change in her life.

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