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INTRODUCTION
The subject of Integral Health may raise eyebrows of many clinicians and scientists. For the subject is new and uncharted, although for those who are acquainted with the profounder phenomena of life may welcome new departures, new practices and new orientations.

Integrality presupposes multiplicity of elements and a common supervening thread which can organize harmoniously and effectively the multiplicity of elements. It is well-known that the human being is a complex being, and this complexity is not merely bound to the limitations of body and mind. In attempts to discover a principle which can offer a harmonizing principle for the complexity of human body, recent researches in brain have revealed trillions of cells working mysteriously by virtue of the Power of Consciousness, to allow functioning of command for various parts of the body.

Study of Consciousness is at present the focal point of research, not only in the field of medicine but in various branches of science including Quantum Mechanics. Bell’s experiments with disentangled molecules have shown strange and amazing phenomena of non locality.\(^1\)

These developments give us an opportunity to integrate amazing achievements of modern medicine more meaningfully with the dimensions that were already a part of ancient knowledge, particularly Yoga which is still alive in our country, but somehow was temporarily put aside during the march of modernity.

PRESENT SCENARIO AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN PARADIGM OF PATIENT CARE:
Let us analyze the factors which are serving the purpose of leading the medical fraternity to expand the paradigms of health care.

A. Factors Related to Clinical Practice:

1. Changing Disease Scenario:
The health scenario of last fifty years of twentieth century was characterized by infectious disease epidemic and the mainstay of therapeutics was antimicrobial therapy. It was an age of ‘illness repair model’\(^2\) operating within the framework of ‘biophysical concept of health’.\(^3\) Emergence of non infectious disease epidemic, rather, lifestyle related disease epidemic has revealed that the major disruption of human homeostasis results from factors related to lifestyle, environment, society and psychological behavior. This transition in disease profile has shifted the focus of clinical practice from disease states to life states. The illness repair model has been replaced by a ‘wellbeing model’,\(^2\) operating within the framework of ‘biopsychosocial concept of health’.\(^4\)

2. Patient Dissatisfaction:
The balance sheet of medical science is a mixed one.

On the one hand, it has helped mankind to relieve pain and suffering and has contributed
Studies by Dean Ornish affirmed that mental peace is a thing of the past for many. He seeks treatment from doctors who know more and more about less and less. His coronaries get opened very effectively, but heart remains bruised, and there is hardly any mention or concern about it in the treatment. Such a trend in medical practice augurs unwell for the humanistic dimensions of care.

Commercialization of health practices is also compounding patient’s woes, but this stems from an immature perspective of materialism by the humanity rather than being defects of medical science per se.

The gap between ideals of medical science and its actual achievements can be bridged by synthesizing scientific and spiritual dimensions of care.

3. Emerging influence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Human quest for healthy life has led to development of various health sciences, each representing a unique, partial understanding of human nature endowed with healing potentials for specific disease states. From an integral point of view, all health sciences are partial and angular truths. What modern medicine tries to reach by precision, several traditional systems achieve through holistic balance. Major attributes of lifestyle related diseases belong to psychological and behavioral domain and it is here that complementary and alternative therapeutic methods are finding greater acceptability across the globe.

The need of the hour for a physician is to acquire a basic knowledge of principles of various alternative health sciences which can then form a basis of comprehensive health care program. As the title suggests, the principle relation amongst these sciences should be complementary and not competitive.

B. Factors Related to Advancement of Medical Science:

Scientific Research has expanded its pursuit of knowledge from what is objective and quantifiable to what is a subjective, yet tangible phenomenon of life. Results prove the point that there are measures beyond the measurable and measures beyond the mind that influence health.

Studies by Dean Ornish affirmed that mental peace is important, almost indispensable for self treatment in lifestyle diseases. It rediscovered that love which embraces and embodies all human emotions is a very potent life enhancing force. His study showed a reversal of coronary atherosclerosis with the help of emotional factors.5,6

Born Seigel an American oncologist characterized the peculiarities of cancer survivors and documented influence of personality on outcome.7

The Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Program (PAER) confirmed presence of anomalous correlations of machine output with pre-stated intentions in objective and statistically significant way. In other words, those operators who liked their machines, to them the machines produced most favorable output.8

INTEGRAL HEALTH: A NEW METHOD, A NEW VISION, A NEW ORIENTATION

Integral health is not a mental holism or surface manipulation of diseases with the help of some medicines, some exercises and some counseling. Integral health is neither an integrated system of medicine which carefully uses an eclectic combination of various health care systems to address somatic and psychosomatic dimensions of illness, howsoever wide and comprehensive may be coverage in terms of physical, mental, social or emotional dimensions of health and disease. Integration is not juxtaposition.

Integral view of health is based on integral view of life as explained from the perspective of an evolving consciousness.

• What is Consciousness?

This term has been used commonly to denote a quality of awareness to one’s internal and external stimuli as well as to denote ‘mind’ - a psychological component of living organism. However, the most profound explanation of Consciousness, which serves the very foundation of integral health, lies in ancient Indian description as Chit Shakti, or a Consciousness Force that, manifests the Universe.9

It is this principle of Consciousness emerging progressively throughout the process of evolution through forms of matter, life and mind that offers the principle of Integrality. Each level of consciousness enriched the preceding form, in a way transformed its very fabric. Thus emergence of life force in matter changed the very form of matter, it made it living! Similarly, emergence of mind form in life led to evolution of man from animals, whose mental consciousness was rudimentary. The human being is not on the last rung in the process of evolution and can consciously and willingly exceed his present state to take a leap towards the next step of evolution voluntarily unlike the preceding levels which
When we relate this evolution process to health, we at once come to realize that each plane of consciousness is endowed with specific peculiarities and limitations and these inherent limitations can best be overcome by evolving to a higher plane. Also, and most importantly, matter is a covert form of highest consciousness which is involved in it, and one’s ordained task must be to make it its overt manifestation through transformation...

As seen from the evolutionary perspective of composition and health of human beings, the physical plane is the plane for manifestation of perfect beauty and harmony, a healthy, strong, agile body is the desired goal for all therapeutic and preventive interventions. Ideally, the mental plane is ought to be the plane of thirst for knowledge – clarity of ideas, strength of volition and purity of affection are the desired goals for mental health. Again, ideally, the vital plane ought to be the plane of perfect dynamism – an enlightened will power, transformation of desires and freedom from bondages – these are the goals of emotional health. A man also has in him, a psychic plane of consciousness, which is the plane of mutuality, harmony and joy and irresistible attraction for truth, beauty and goodness – a state characterized by calmness, love, wideness, and an enlightened attitude towards life and health.

The health care model, in this context becomes a ‘growth in being model’ and the framework becomes ‘Integral’, which is in consonance with the march of evolving soul. These ideals, when not attained or only partially attained create disequilibrium and inner psychological conflict and that is the root cause according to the ancient knowledge regarding ill health.

Thus, an Integral view of health regards disease not as the chief cause of the illness, but rather views it as an external manifestation of subtle disequilibrium arising due to deviation in the locus standii, or a shift of source of actions of life to purely physical, mental or emotional perspectives. The illness can present itself in one or more planes.

It has been suggested that the primary process of re-establishment of healing would be restoration of the locus standii to one’s psychic consciousness – the integrating thread. The secondary process will be offered through action of various health sciences. External therapeutic measures are important for an all encompassing recovery, but their effect is enhanced if they are used as aids or adjuncts in helping the body to regain this inner equilibrium. This approach brings about a more durable cure and a step forward in the growth of the individual consciousness.

Naturally, for this to become successful, these principles need to be very well grasped and assimilated by the clinician himself. This will require, in the present state of medical education, till the very frame of medical education is revolutionized, three phases; the first phase would consist of conventional training, the second phase of widening the paradigm to include humane values and, third would involve deeper understanding of evolutionary consciousness and psychological element underlying the process of ascent and integration.

INTTEGRAL HEALTH IN CLINICAL PRACTICE – A PHYSICIAN’S PERSPECTIVE:

What is the impact of all this on clinical practice and what lessons can be derived for a physician?

This is a fundamental question which we can address now.

Our statement must be brief.

First of all, a clinician needs to look upon the human body as a creative product of human evolution, which is organic, holistic and yet incomplete, though striving towards greater completeness, integration and perfection.

In one of the yogic systems in India, it is pointed out that the human body is symbolic and that every part and every organ signifies the counterpart in the totality of the body in its integral and perfect state. The human body needs therefore to be looked upon as a temple and has to be treated as a Priest treats the temple. A genuine medical practice is sacred priesthood, and this implies a new attitude towards a patient and patient organism.

Thirdly, we have to reorganize that different medical systems can be utilized in combination for the perfect benefit of the patient. The ignorance of the systems other than that of our own specialization has to be overcome. We know that there are diseases for which there are no cures in modern medicine but there are claims of available cures in other systems. Hence, we need to be open to these claims and we have to be ready to study these claims rather than to scoff at them or to ignore them.

Fourthly, the medical practitioner needs to change his attitude and his role. He has to be humane towards the patient. A physician’s true role in his patient’s care is that of a friend, philosopher and a guide. A friend, one who treats and empathizes his patient during an illness; a philosopher, who offers a higher perspective of illness and recovery; and a guide, a true teacher indeed, who, as a result of his own development, shows him a path of enlightenment.

Fifthly, medical practice has to be conducted not merely...
for economic consideration but as a sacred service to the evolutionary process and as a soldier to the truth. Doctors have to look upon themselves as an army under training in which new researches have to be undertaken and we should expect evolutionary changes in the coming days.

Most importantly, we have to realize, that the barriers of science which have been created by materialistic dogma have to be broken and that the new trends of primacy of consciousness and ultimately the primacy of the Spirit is to be gradually and scientifically studied and adopted on the basis of accumulated knowledge, elimination of error, and verification by repeated experimentation.

In other words, medical practice has to be seen as a delicate and responsible process of experiment in which both science and spirituality have the respective roles and even a possibility of the synthesis.

Latest studies in the evolutionary theories and particularly in that of spiritual theory of evolution, we find not only theoretical proof but also experiential and experimental proof which emboldens us to declare in Sri Aurobindo’s words:

The Spirit shall look out through Matter’s gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit’s face.10

PROPOSAL:

In conclusion, let me make a proposal.

A working group should be constituted from amongst the qualified medical practitioners of different systems, which will aim at studying the human being in fresh lights transcending the Cartesian divisions of body and mind. In doing so, it will study the human evolution from Darwinian and pre and post Darwinian evolutionists’ perspectives so as to arrive at new experiments of Supramental body that can be projected into the evolutionary processes. The group will present the latest scenario of knowledge connected with the human being in its integrality with a definite purpose of appropriately incorporating the component of Integral health in medical curriculum.

Let us constitute at the end of this conference the proposed working group.

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