

## Understanding and managing *krodha* (anger) in *ayurveda*: A comprehensive review

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**ABSTRACT:** It reviews the multifaceted concept of *krodha* (anger) in *ayurveda*, drawing insights from ancient texts. *Krodha* is described as a destructive emotion with the potential to harm the inner self, akin to a burning fire that consumes the soul. Various synonyms for anger are detailed here. The philosophical and psychological aspects of anger, highlighting its association with jealousy, hatred and aggressive tendencies are also shown with the connection between mental and physical well-being, emphasizing that disorders of the mind. The impact of anger on the *doshas*, especially its *pittaja* nature, shedding light on its role in various diseases according to ayurvedic principles. The way of mentioning of *krodha* in Hindu scriptures, ancient Indian sculpture texts, Vedic astrology and the performing arts are discussed. The different manifestations of anger in theatrical performances, emphasizing the expressive elements of emotion are dealt along with the diverse dimensions of *krodha* in Buddhism. Insights from the Bhagavad Gita provide a spiritual perspective on the harmful effects of untamed anger, linking emotional turmoil to cognitive impairment. Contraindications for practices such as *sneha-paana*, *vamana* and afternoon sleep in the context of anger and the intricate relationship between *pitta dosha* and *krodha*, are given showcasing the physiological manifestations of anger, including increased body heat and adrenaline release. Here the practical applications of ayurvedic principles in managing anger, including lifestyle modifications, self-control practices and the importance of maintaining balance in mental faculties are also given along with the insights into the detrimental effects of anger on health, such as its role in psychogenic fever and disrupted sleep. Concluding with ayurvedic treatments for *krodha*, need of a holistic approach, encompassing the understanding of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kaama*, along with the pursuit of knowledge of the self and divine powers and *satvaavjaya cikitsa* approach are shown. Comprehensively, a nuanced exploration of *krodha* is discussed here, providing valuable insights for practitioners, scholars and individuals seeking a holistic understanding of anger in the context of *ayurveda*.

*Keywords:* *Krodha*, *Manoroga*, Anger, *Satvavajaya cikitsa*

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### Introduction

As described by Acharya Chakrapani, the ailment which is by product of jealousy and which burns the inner soul in the flames of fire is known as *krodha*.<sup>[1]</sup>

This definition highlights the intense and destructive nature of anger, likening it to a burning fire that can consume and harm the self. The use of the word *pradvesha*, which means "hatred," suggests that anger arises from a deep sense of dislike or aversion towards someone or something. The phrase "*prajvalitamiva*", meaning "like a blazing fire," further emphasizes the intense and volatile nature of anger.

Charaka Chakrapani *teeka*'s above mentioned definition of anger provides a powerful image of the emotional experience of anger. It underscores the importance of recognizing and managing this intense emotion to avoid harm to oneself and others.

Along with all other emotions like *tandraa utsaaha*, etc, *krodha* is a disorder of *satva* that means mind<sup>[1a]</sup>. Taking this in account when Vagbhatacharya says that *manas* and *ṣareera* are interconnected i.e, if mental *doshas* are vitiated, they could affect physical *dosha* and vice versa also. Being a disorder of *manas*, *krodha* must be having a strong influence on the body also and that is why to understand and over rule the *krodha* are of much importance.

The synonyms found for *krodha* in Amarakosham are *kopa*, *amarsha*, *rosha*, *pratighaa*, *rut* and *krudha*<sup>[2]</sup>. *Aacaarya* Sushruta explained the meaning of *krodha* by saying anger is the jealousy for other or the aggressive nature towards others<sup>[3]</sup>. It is a phase of mind which exhibits the tendency to be hostile or enmity towards others. Further explanation of *krodha* , illustrates that the destructive and harmful nature of anger originating from the seat of heart in which heart feels like burning in fire towards the disservice of others. This condition is harmful to the self and also to the people around them<sup>[4]</sup>.

The Vishnu Puraana (6.5.1), an ancient Hindu text, defines *krodha* as a type of *adhyaatmika* pain that falls under the category of mental suffering. *Adhyaatmika* pain refers to the spiritual or psychological pain that arises from within oneself. *Krodha*, in this context, is seen as a negative emotion that causes mental anguish and distress.

*Silpasastra* is a Sanskrit term that refers to the ancient Indian texts that deal with the art and science of sculpture. In these texts, the term *krodha* is often used in the context of the eight manifestations of Bhairava, a fierce form of Lord Shiva. Bhairava is a deity who is associated with destruction and renewal. The eight manifestations of Bhairava are known as *ashta bhairava*, and each one represents a different aspect of the deity. *Krodha Bhairava* is one of these manifestations and is associated with anger<sup>[5]</sup>.

*Samvatsara* is a term in Vedic astrology and Hindu calendar system that refers to a vedic year. Each year is associated with a specific name and number, and there are a total of sixty different names for each year in the lunar calendar of vedic astrology. The beginning of the this lunar year is marked by the new moon day. According to this system, *krodha* is the name of the 38th year in the sixty-year cycle. The year is considered to be under the influence of the planet Mars, which is associated with the emotion of anger or *krodha*<sup>[6]</sup>.

In the *Naatyasastra*, a treatise on Indian performing arts, *krodha* is one of the eight "permanent states" or *sthaayi bhaavas*. These states are considered to be the source of delight in a performance and are not interfered with by other states. The term *krodha* refers to the

emotion of anger, which can be expressed through different gestures, facial expressions and vocalizations in a theatrical performance. According to chapter 7.31 of the *naatyasastra*, *krodha* is characterized by certain physical and vocal expressions, including shaking the fists, biting the lips, grinding the teeth, reddening of the eyes and harsh, loud speech. These expressions are meant to convey a sense of intense anger and agitation to the audience<sup>[7]</sup>.

In *Naatyasastra* anger is of 5 types-

1. anger caused by enemies,
2. anger caused by superior persons,
3. anger caused by lovers,
4. anger caused by servants,
5. feigned anger.

In the *Sreematottara-tantra*, an expansion of the *Kubjika-mata* tantra, *ashtakalaa* refers to the eight energies or powers that are located in the locus of the heart and surround the fourth sacred seat. These energies are *moha*, *aavrta*, *prakaasya*, *kiranaa*, *raagavatee*, *hrshata*, *pushti*, and *krodha*. In the *ashtakalaa*, *krodha* is considered one of the eight energies or powers that surround the fourth sacred seat located in the locus of the heart. *Krodha* refers to the power of anger and is believed to have a significant impact on a person's emotions, thoughts and behaviors. In the context of the *ashtakalaa*, *krodha* is seen as an energy that can be harnessed and utilized for various purposes. For example, it can be used to overcome obstacles or challenges, to motivate oneself to take action, or to defend oneself against perceived threats<sup>[8]</sup>.

In the context of *pariyavasthaana*, which refers to the Buddhist concept of dependent origination or interdependence, *krodha* (anger) is seen as an emotion that arises in dependence on certain causes and conditions. According to this concept, nothing exists independently or in isolation, but rather everything is interconnected and dependent on other phenomena. *Krodha* is no exception, and it arises due to various causes and conditions, such as a perceived threat, frustration or disappointment. Furthermore, the *pariyavasthaana* teaches that *krodha* can lead to negative consequences not only for oneself but also for others. For example, uncontrolled anger can lead to harmful actions, hurtful words and damaged relationships, which in turn can create further causes and conditions for negative emotions to arise<sup>[9]</sup>.

Sreemad Bhagawadgeetaa has a beautiful *śloka* explaining the steps that go up to the end of life, from the prosperity due the evolvement of *krodha* <sup>[10]</sup>

Anger causes delusion, and delusion causes confusion in person's memory. Confusion leads to intelligence- loss, and that leads to the destruction. In other words, becoming angry and allowing the emotion to control you might lead to confusion and illusion. This can affect negatively someone's judgement and drive them to act in ways that are not in their or others' best known. As a result, one's memory may suffer, making it difficult to recall information clearly or properly. This can lead to a loss of intelligence as one's ability suffers.

### **Manifestation of *krodha* explained by *Acaarya Charaka***

The mithyaayoga aspects of mind are fear, sorrow, anger, greed, illusion, arrogance, jealousy and visual hallucinations <sup>[11]</sup>. Further explanations are illustrated below <sup>[12]</sup>.



**Figure No.1.**

In the another context Bhagwathgeeta suggests that three things, ie., *kaama*, *krodha* and *lobha* are the doors to the way of hell. Here hell is not a place to visit, it is an emotion or feeling of being hurt, *krodha* being a disorder of *manas*, going hurt the self more than others and will lead to several possible bad outcomes which make the person's life hell. *Krodha* directly effect the heart, heart beat suddenly starts getting faster and heart being the seat of consciousness is of much importance. With this effect on heart, it is going to affect whole body in a negative way. This *sloka* is again supporting the importance of *krodha*<sup>[13]</sup>. *Aacaarya* Charaka in *Sareera sthaana* said that *krodha* is a phase of mind and it is manifested by mind only<sup>[14]</sup>.

*Acaarya* emphasizes that a cool person becomes hot by the disorder of *seela-vibhrama*<sup>[15]</sup>. This phrase highlights the relationship between one's character or moral conduct and the arising of anger. It suggests that when there is a delusion or distortion in one's character, it can give rise to anger. In other words, if someone's moral values, principles or sense of right and wrong are distorted or compromised, it can lead to the manifestation of anger. This can happen when there is a discrepancy between what one believes to be right and the actual behaviour or actions observed in oneself or others. The phrase reminds us that maintaining integrity, upholding moral values and adhering to virtuous conduct can help prevent the arising of anger. It emphasizes the importance of self-reflection, self-awareness and living in alignment with one's principles to cultivate a calm and peaceful disposition.

While explaining the mental attributes which one should avoid or suppress from doing, Charaka suggests to include *lobha*, *soka* like mental emotions., *krodha* is one among them. He says to avoid or suppress the feeling of *krodha*, in further part we'll get why it is so<sup>[16]</sup>.

In another context, *Aacaarya* Charaka explains the contra-indications for exercise and one of them is *krodha*. Exercise is contra-indicated for persons who are emaciated due to excessive sexual activity, weight lifting and by travelling on foot and for those who are in the grip of *krodha* (anger), *soka* (grief), *bhaya* (fear), *aayaasa* (exhaustion) and for the children, the old persons and for persons having *vaatika* constitution and those having the profession of speaking too much. One should not do exercise while he is hungry and thirsty also<sup>[17]</sup>.

Why not to exercise when you are angry?

It has been found out in a study performed by John P Erwin that why not to perform exercise while you are having a phase of anger<sup>[18]</sup>.

1. Studies say that anger can increase the chance of heart attack by two times and having exercise along with anger can increase the risk to three times. Both the factors contributing to heart attack hence one should avoid such practices and must first solve the anger first and then perform the rest.
2. Anger along with stressful practice like workout could release several hormones, which are helpful but after an extend they could be as hazardous as a poison. Excess of such hormones i.e crossing their toxic levels could lead to damage of internal body like blood vessels. Dr. Erwin suggests doing light exercises like yoga, slow walk or medication in such a condition.

### **Practices regarding self-control**

Habit of postponing things, indulging any activity without proper examination must not be done. Getting slave to the senses is also not appreciable along with fickle mind. Leaving mind with too much burden is also a cause for anger. When one is feeling anger he must be conscious and should not go in flow with anger. One should not be under continued grief. One should not be conceited over achievements nor be desperate in loss. Knowing self nature is always in plus point for controlling anger. Having trust on cause and effect theory is another things of benefit in reducing anger. Person must not lose the self-spirit and also must nor remember his insults <sup>[19]</sup>.

### **Relation of *pitta* with *krodha*-**

Marichi said *krodha* as abnormal function of *pitta dosha*<sup>[20]</sup>.

Properties of *pitta* include *ushna*, *teekshna*. Both of these properties could also be seen in phase of anger. An angry person seems like having red tint on face, reddish sclera due to i.e the gush of blood, sweating, heat in body, loss of appetite, high blood pressure, increased heart beat<sup>[21]</sup>.

### **Some miscellaneous points about *krodha* in *ayurveda* literature-**

*Krodha* is included under *mithyaayoga* of mind as per Charaka samhitha<sup>[22]</sup>. In which *mithyaayoga* is one of the reasons behind the causes of diseases<sup>[23]</sup> Out of these three *ayoga*, *atiyoga* and *mithyaayoga*, diseases start manifesting. Hence, it is very important to maintain the balance in them. *Krodha* is a mental phase, it comes under *mithyaayoga* of mind. *Mithya* means which is not important, viz. *krodha* is not at all important and hence must be prevented from evolving.

- *Snehapaana* is a procedure of drinking *sneha* material, specially used in a initial phase of *pancakarma*. *Krodha* being a factor responsible for *aama*-formation, should not be done while drinking *sneha* as strong *agnibala* is required to digest it and hence *Acaarya* has kept *krodha* in contraindication of *snehpaana* <sup>[24]</sup>.
- *Vamana*, a process of *pancakarma* has *krodha* as a contraindication and has also been said that even after *vamana*, *krodha* should not be facilitated. *Vamana* is an intensive procedure which does deep cleansing of *doshas* especially *kapha dosha*, so now *kapha* must be reduced in our body (the pacifier of *pitta*) and *krodha* being of *pittaja* nature would surely show negative effect on body <sup>[25]</sup>.
- As *krodha* is having integral properties related to vitiation of *pitta dosha*, it can lead to increase in heat of body and hence the BMR, whereas being a psychological parameter with negative emotions can reduce appetite also. In modern science anger leads to release of adrenaline, which has a property to suppress appetite and this could lead to weight loss <sup>[26]</sup>. This same is said by *Acaarya Charaka* that causes of getting extreme slim (*ati-krsa*) includes *krodha* <sup>[27]</sup>.
- *Ayurveda* is very strict regarding sleep in afternoon but has told some situations when one can sleep in afternoon also and *krodha* is one of them. Sleeping in afternoon increases *pitta* and *kapha dosha*, whereas *krodha* is a phase in which person must be getting tired and leading to increase in *vaata dosha*, sleeping in afternoon for some time could be beneficial for such person <sup>[28]</sup>.
- When everyone is talking about negative aspects of *krodha*, *Acaarya Charaka* used it and wrote its use in the treatment of *ati-nidra* i.e excessive sleep. Amygdala is the part of brain which performs dual function. It has its role in sleep and also in emotions like anger. When this part is supporting one function then cannot do the other one with that much precision. Studies said that having emotional outburst can disturb sleep or could keep you awake <sup>[29]</sup>.
- Reason behind vitiation of *rakta dhaatu*, also it is considered in *raktaja roga* <sup>[30]</sup>.
- *Krodha* is the *lakshana* of *pittaja mada* also <sup>[31]</sup>.
- In the reason of development of *aama-dosha*, one is the physical form of food we eat and second is the mental phase and in those mental phases one is *krodha* which could

lead to *aama-dosha* generation<sup>[32]</sup>. Even if one has taken food under the limit, still it could lead to *aama* formation due to mental phases likes *krodha*. As we discussed above anger releases adrenaline and adrenaline has an inhibitory effect on digestive system. It inhibits the gastric motility<sup>[33]</sup>. Gut and brain have a strong connection, having disturbed emotions like anger can cause disturbance in gut like nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, loss of appetite, fever etc<sup>[34]</sup>

- In *ayurveda* to gain knowledge four ways have been enlisted, which are *aaptopadesa*, *pratyaksha*, *anumaana* and *yukti*. *Krodha* is a determinant to identify jealousy in an individual by *anumaana pramaana*.

- *Krodha* is also a cause of *sweda-vaha sroto-dushti*<sup>[35]</sup>.

Among the does and donts in the 4<sup>th</sup> month of gestation, it could lead to bleeding per vagina<sup>[36]</sup>. *Krodha* is one of the contraindications. Fetus of an angry woman is active, most of the time and has slow growth process<sup>[37]</sup>. This could be due to high cortisol and adrenaline mimicked by fetus in prenatal time whereas low dopamine and serotonin were mimicked<sup>[38]</sup>. Charaka considers *krodha* as a reason of foetus-death.

- In *jwara-nidaana* the birth of *jwara* is considered from the *krodha* of Lord Shiva<sup>[39]</sup>. *Krodhaja jwara* is one among the different types of *manasika jwaras* the features of it are detailed in most of the old texts. In modern science there is a concept of psychogenic fever which is especially seen in young women. Due to some stress of emotional outburst here body temperature rises<sup>[40]</sup>.
- Intoxication of alcohol terminates in syncope, sleep or anger<sup>[41]</sup>.

### Diseases which occur due to anger according to Charaka samhitha

S.No.	Chapter Name	Description
1.	<i>Jwara nidaanam</i>	तीक्ष्णातपानिसन्तापश्रमक्रोधविषमाहारेभ्यश्च <sup>[42]</sup> - for <i>pittajwara</i>
2.	<i>Prameha nidaanam</i>	क्रोधविषमाहारोपसेविनश्च – for <i>pittajprameha</i> <sup>[43]</sup>
3.	<i>Unmaada nidaanam</i>	कामक्रोधलोभहर्षभयमोहायासशोकचिन्तोद्वेगादि <sup>[44]</sup>
4.	<i>Apasmaara nidaanam</i>	कामक्रोधभयलोभमोहहर्षशोकचिन्तोद्वेगादिभिः <sup>[45]</sup>
5.	<i>Rasaayana paadam</i>	भयक्रोधशोकलोभमोहायासबहुलानाम् <sup>[46]</sup>
6.	<i>Gulma cikitsaa</i>	क्रोधातिमद्याक्रुहुताशसेवा <sup>[47]</sup>
7.	<i>Raajayakshmaa cikitsaa</i>	ईर्ष्योत्कण्ठाभयत्रासक्रोधशोकातिकर्शनात् <sup>[48]</sup>
8.	<i>Apasmaara cikitsaa</i>	चिन्ताकामभयक्रोधशोकोद्वेगादिभिस्तथा <sup>[49]</sup>



9.	<i>Paandu cikitsaa</i>	कामचिन्ताभयक्रोधशोकोपहतचेतसः। <sup>[50]</sup>
10.	<i>Hikkaa-swaasa cikitsaa</i>	क्रोधातिमद्याक्रुहुताशसेवा <sup>[51]</sup>
11.	<i>Kaasa cikitsaa</i>	पित्तकासकरंक्रोधःसन्तापश्चाग्निसूर्यजः। <sup>[52]</sup>
12.	<i>Atisaara cikitsaa</i>	अतिरोषभाष्याध्वहारातिवर्तनेः। <sup>[53]</sup>
13.	<i>Visarpa cikitsaa</i>	क्रोधव्यायामसूर्याग्निप्रवातांश्चविवर्जयेत् <sup>[54]</sup>
14.	<i>Visha cikitsaa</i>	विरुद्धाध्यशनक्रोधक्षुब्धयायासमैथुनम्। <sup>[55]</sup>
15.	<i>Trimarmeeya adhyaaya</i>	सन्धारणाजीर्णरजोतिभाष्यक्रोधतुवैषम्यशिरोभितापैः। <sup>[56]</sup>
16.	<i>do</i>	शोकभयातिलोभक्रोधैर्मनोघ्नाशनगन्धरूपैः। <sup>[57]</sup>
17.	<i>do</i>	चिन्ताभयत्रासगदातिचारः। <sup>[58]</sup>
18.	<i>Vaata-vyaadhi cikitsaa</i>	चिन्ताभयत्रासगदातिचारः। <sup>[59]</sup>
19.	<i>Vaata-sonita cikitsaa</i>	विरुद्धाध्यशनक्रोधदिवास्वप्नप्रजागैः। <sup>[60]</sup>
20.	<i>Kshudra-roga nidaana</i>	क्रोधशोकश्रमकृतःशरीरोष्माशिरोगतः। <sup>[61]</sup>
21.	<i>Garbhinee vyaakarana saareeram</i>	क्रोधशोकावात्सल्यादिभिश्चस्त्रियाःस्तन्यनाशोभवति। <sup>[62]</sup>
22.	<i>Moodha garbha cikitsaa</i>	क्रोधविवर्जिता। <sup>[63]</sup>

*Aacaarya* Sushruta gives a general statement that with the harmful effect of *krodha*, disease increases in magnitude. This phrase emphasizes the detrimental effect of anger on one's physical and mental well-being. It suggests that when anger is allowed to prevail, it can worsen existing health conditions or contribute to the development of new ones.<sup>[64]</sup>

### **Harmful effects of *krodha* while cooking food in kitchen** <sup>[65]</sup>

It is interesting to note that Susrutha's suggestion that *krodha* is also prohibited in the kitchen area while preparing food for king. He has not explained the consequences, but it must be an important aspect as the food is being cooked for king who is the most important person of a kingdom. Negative thoughts like *krodha* must be having some subtle harmful effects on food.

### **Treatment for *krodha***

*Krodha* is a mental disorder and hence to be treated. When mental disorder arises one should keep following the track of *dharma*, *artha* and *kaama*<sup>[66]</sup>. The knowledge of soul, divine powers, time, strength etc helps to treat *krodha*.

***Satvaavajaya cikitsaa***- This is a type of treatment plan in which one should rule or try to win over *manas*, doing such will be helpful in treating the emotional outbursts like anger<sup>[67]</sup>.

## **Conclusion-**

A comprehensive exploration of the concept of "*krodha*" as described by various ancient Indian texts, particularly in *ayurveda*, reveals its profound impact on both mental and physical well-being. *Acaaryas* Charaka and Sushruta provide intricate insights into the destructive nature of anger, linking it to disorders of the mind and body. The multifaceted perspectives on *krodha* from *ayurveda*, Hindu scriptures and performing arts underscore its pervasive influence on human life. The interconnectedness of mental and physical health emphasizes the importance of recognizing, understanding, and managing anger for overall well-being. The diverse references to *krodha* in different contexts, ranging from medical treatises to philosophical discussions, reflect its significance in the holistic understanding of human existence. Overall, the ancient wisdom encapsulated in these texts provides timeless guidance on addressing and mitigating the detrimental effects of anger for a balanced and harmonious life.

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