

AROGYA



**SUKHAM
AROGYAM
UCHYATE**

**Aotearoa Research for Generic Yoga and Ayurveda
Health Division of Hindu Council of New Zealand**

AGING and SPIRITUALITY



THE SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

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What is it like to be a member of a minority ethnic group growing older in New Zealand

- Minority amongst a minority
- Acculturation: traditional, integration, separation, assimilation, marginalisation
- Social structure:
 - Brahmacharya Ashrama - 0 - 25 years
 - Garhasthya Ashrama - 26 - 50 years
 - Vanaprasthya Ashrama - 51 – 75 years
 - Sannyasa Ashrama - 76 – 100 years



Aging

- The patterns of life changes that occur as members of a species grow older
- **Biological Age** is the age or condition of a person's organs and body systems
- **Psychological Age** is a person's ability to cope and adapt to situations, their intelligence, and ability to care for themselves

How does your culture view older people?

- Vanaprasthya Ashrama – gradually loosen association with social life .
Renunciation is an important part of ideal human life
- Sanyas Ashrama – total renunciation



What is the dominant religious/spiritual understanding of the role of older people in your culture?

- Job & money
- Home
- Transport
- Access to services available
- Availability of & access to non-medical, ethnic-friendly services, akin to food services, in terms of:
 - Ayurvedic Clinics
 - Meditation Centers
 - Yoga Centers
 - Energy Healing Centers
 - Cultural Activity Centers
 - Public Libraries



Is there a gap in local services for older people in your culture, especially around Spiritual Care?

Cultural Festivals

- Spirit Festivals
- Open, non-medical Clinics and Healing Centers
- Appropriate education and training relationships
- Government support in terms of making operation of non-Western Conventional medical practices viable
- appropriate links with the medical practices and hospitals, for example via Primary Care Organizations
- Public relations with Schools, Universities, City Councils, TV, Radio, local Newspaper

Gaps

- Education – general physical health, psycho-education, other
- Motivation & encouragement – giving and receiving, peer groups, social activities
- Consciousness shifts – paying my way, sharing & giving out a percentage of what I have
- Empathy from service providers



Introduction

- **Almost 75% of the growth in the general Asian population during 2001-2016 is projected to occur in the 4 cities in Auckland region**
- **36% of Auckland City residents will be Asians by 2016, i.e. from 77,000 in 2001 to 177,000 in 2016**

Asian Population in New Zealand include:

- **Chinese - comprise the largest Asian population group**
- **Indians - second largest**
- **Koreans - third largest**

www.statistics.govt.nz

Countries of South Asia

- India
- Maldives
- Sri Lanka
- Nepal
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Pakistan
- Afghanistan
- Chagos Is. Tibet, Iran, Myanmar may be included
- What about the Pacific Island Indians ?

More minorities amongst the minority

Demography

- **Dominant people and cultures are Indo-Aryan and Dravidian**
- **Affinity with Iranian Plateau & Caucasus - particularly Pakistan & Afghanistan**
- **Most densely populated – 25% of world's population**

History

Ancient civilization in Dwarka & Indus River Valley

Colonization - Mughal, Maratha, Portugal, Holland, France, Spain, Germany, Britian

Migration – Global

New Zealand – immigrants, asylum seekers, quota refugees

Dominant Cultures

- Indo-Aryan Vedic
- Dravidian
- Persian, Arab, Turkish cultural traditions-integral part of Islamic culture
- Distinct Muslim culture, e.g pilgrimage to dargahs

Migrant Cultures

Acculturation – traditional, integration, separation, assimilation, marginalisation

Religion

- **India** - Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Others
- **Pakistan** - Muslim, Christian, Hindu
- **Sri Lanka** – Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, Catholic, Other Christians, Others
- **Bhutan** – Buddhist, Hindu
- **Bangladesh** – Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Animist & believers in tribal faiths
- **Nepal** – Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Kirat
- **Maldives** – Hindu, Muslim, Christians
- **Afghanistan** – Sunni Muslim, Shi'a Muslim, Others
- **Tibet** – Buddhist, Bon, Muslim, Others
- **Iran** – Shi'a Muslim, Sunni Muslim, Zoroastrin, Jewish, Christian, Baha'l
- **Myanmar** – Theravada Buddhists, Muslim, Christian, Animist, Hindu, others

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Asia

Concepts of Health

- Preventive rather than curative –
- “what ought to be”
- Mind - Body dichotomy does not exist
- Collective Consciousness
- Physical, Mental, Spiritual - interconnection
- Maintaining equilibrium with optimal functioning of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains;
- auras; energy centres
- Deviation results in abnormality

<http://www.languageinindia.com>

Sources of information

Hindu:

- Vedas
- Upanishads
- Religio-Medical Texts – Ayurveda & Siddha
- Yoga
- Rituals
- Growth towards the spiritual or transpersonal

Islam or Muslim – Koran

Christians – The Bible

Buddhists – Dhammapada

Emotional Regulation (Bhakti Yoga)

Realization of the manifested & unmanifested

- Feeling
- Satsangha – Fellowship
- Singing
- Listening to music, conversations
- Reflecting
- Pranayama – breathing
- Praying
- Meditating
- Changing consciousness of poverty, low self-esteem
- Shift Attitudes
- Raising Consciousness

Cognitive Regulation (Jnana Yoga)

Knowledge comes from the outside environment

- Thinking
- Studying, Reading, Writing
- Art work
- Communicating
- Board games
- Debating
- Creative activities
- Story telling
- Narratives and Discourses
- Music, singing
- Public speaking

Psychomotor Regulation (Karma Yoga) The nature of Right Action, Wrong Action & Inaction

- behaving
- physical exercises, hatha yoga
- environmental aesthetics –gardening, lawn mowing
- jogging, walking, cycling, swimming, writing
- house-keeping, cooking, washing, cleaning
- shopping
- dancing, drama, music
- dating
- socialising, watching movies
- contributing to society - voluntary & charitable work

Deviation

results in

abnormality

Physical Health Issues

- **General**
- **Immune and Defence System**
- **Disorders of the Eyes, Ears, Throat**
- **Skin Disorders**
- **Heart and Circulatory Ailments**
- **Respiratory Ailments**
- **Gastrointestinal Ailments**
- **Urinary Ailments**
- **Reproductive System**
- **Endocrine Ailments**
- **Skeletal and Muscular Disorders**
- **Blood Disorders**
- **Disorders of the Brain and Nervous System**
- **Tumours and Cancer**

Mental Health Issues

- **Karmic effects**
- **Kundalini syndrome**
- **Negative thought entities**
- **Curse**
- **Witchcraft**
- **Psychic Pollution**
- **Evil Spirits**
- **Trauma**
- **Abuse**
- **Stress, Anxiety, Grief, Hysteria**
- **Phobia, Obsessions, Compulsions**
- **Depression, Paranoia**
- **Addictions: smoking, alcohol, drugs, sex**

Other Migrant Health Issues

- **Adjustment Disorders**
- **Unemployment stress**
- **Post traumatic Stress Disorders**
- **Acculturation**
- **Psycho-social disorders**
- **Gender and hierarchal issues**

Treatment Options

- **Support systems :**
 - Families
 - Communities
 - Psycho-social – Ethnic Associations, Religious organizations, Sports & Recreation
 - Government – WINZ, HNZA
 - non-government organizations
- **Non-medical :**
 - Energy therapies – Prana, Yoga, Meditations
 - Ayurveda, Siddha, Homopathy, Rituals & Rites
- **Medical :** Western Conventional & other Colonial influences

Taking responsibility of my family's and my own health

Resources Needed:

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- Supported community incentives:
 - walking groups once a week
 - tree planting & gardening groups in local areas
 - cleaning local areas in groups
 - voluntary & charitable activities – clothes, furniture, household items for newly arrived refugees

Periodic Activities and Liaison with Tangata Whenua/Tangata Tiriti & the Greater Communities

Cultural Festivals

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Professional Support

- Social Workers
- Energy Healers/Therapists
- Yoga
- Cultural Councilors
- Community Support Workers
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Educationists
- Musicians
- Ayurveda
- Medical

Families and Communities

