

Colour Therapy

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I. INTRODUCTION

'Oh my fellow neighbours, open your doors, it is Holi. Holi has come to the land, water and forests. Open your doors, open your doors.'

The poet has summoned every neighbour of his to overcome all their barriers and obstacles, the hindrances which impede them from making merry, and immerse themselves in playing with colours.

Traditional treatment with colours was initiated by Carl Jung. The colours which rise from the innermost recesses of our inner world help in understanding the unique personality of an individual.

Playing with colours is the motto of the Indian festival of Holi. People of India, like the people of Egypt and China, have engaged themselves in colourful merry-making since ancient times. Making merry with colours has been seen from those times and is a part of their everyday lives, like flowers which bloom in the forest every day to give joy to the world.

Colour energy is stimulated by different parts of the body, such as the eyes and skin and are stimulated. To what extent colour treatment can be therapeutic is easily determinable.

Each experience of life, no matter how trivial, creates ripples in us. Some of the impacts are positive, but some are negative. Negativity has been found to bring about anxiety and bodily arousal. In such a case, the chakra affected can be located by the therapist, and treatment can be continued by increased exposure to the colour which fuels the energy of the chakra. For example, if the Kantha chakra is affected, the localisation in the body is of course the throat region. It is stimulated by the indigo colour. So by increased exposure to the indigo colour in varying shades, the client can be given colour therapy.

Colour treatment is a holistic treatment which is not age dependent. We are almost always surrounded by colours that are present in the earth and manifest themselves in a rainbow, which leads us to new dimensions of realisation and

understanding. Each colour has a different wavelength.

A humane and divine energy emanates from these colours. These relationships with colour and chakras are as follows: Violet–Crown; Indigo–Forehead; Blue–Throat; Green–Heart; Yellow–Solar; Orange–Sacral; Red–Root.

According to Carl Jung, colour is the key to the subconscious. They show the picture of the inner, private world. It evades the public eye and helps us make it beautiful, harmonious and joyful so that we are able to lead enriching lives. The sorrows, miseries, disappointments, despair and anger induced by daily hassles can all be done away with by resorting to appropriate colours. Happiness remains the primary motto in establishing a sense of being.

As yogic practice helps us alleviate mental and physical hurdles, the energy of colours elevates our consciousness.

Colour therapy and yoga are intrinsically linked with the concept of chakras, though not restricted with exclusivity to the seven chakras only.

Yoga and colour therapy together help to address emotions, thoughts and actions. It often serves as a cooling relaxation technique.

Colour therapy helps us to maintain the mind-body balance, enhancing physical energy, increasing circulation and blood flow to different organs of the body, stress reduction, expression of creativity, reduction of anxiety, increasing productivity, enhancing happiness by increased production of serotonin.

The administration of colour therapy, both diagnostic and prognostic, is quite simple in nature.

The rapport is established with the client initially. Then he/she is instructed to draw with his favourite colours. He might choose one, or he might choose many. Time constraint is not present. He can take his own time.

After completion of drawings, the picture is interpreted from a psycho-dynamical perspective. Chiefly, content and symbol analysis are done for assessing his personality patterns.

Psychotherapeutic intervention starts after completion of diagnosis. I am sharing a case study. For eg I.B., a teenage girl, was referred to me for her

temper tantrums, aggression towards her mother, lack of concentration and deterioration in study. She was instructed to draw a picture with her favourite colours. She had drawn a home with black and red colours. She had come from a broken family; her father had departed from them long back. I suggested that her mother initiate a colour therapy session. It was implied from the diagnosis that she was suffering from severe depression coupled with a revolting attitude. It was evident from content and dynamic analysis and was corroborated with biographical findings. As she had used red and black colours, a revolting and depressive attitude toward life, to calm down and to restore inner balance, she was offered to draw pictures with green and blue colours, twice a week, and to come for psychotherapeutic sessions at least twice a month. She was also given other assignments, but it was not discussed here. Remarkable improvement was noticed. She became jovial and calm. She was told to continue follow-up. Now she had graduated from a reputed college and had regained her psycho-social balance.

Colour therapy rectifies and enhances secure attachment style. The instinctual responses mature at different times during the first year of life and develop at different rates; they serve the function of binding the child to mother and contribute to the reciprocal dynamic of binding mother to child (Bowlby, 1958).

Four stages of attachment theory are linked with colour therapy. Pre-attachment (newborn to 6 weeks). Attachments in Making (6 weeks to 6–8 months); clear-cut attachments (8 months to 24 months). Formation of reciprocal relationships 24 months & greater.

To resolve insecure attachment, clients may be instructed to use green, blue and yellow colours, at least for six weeks. It would yield good findings. Carl Ritberger set certain goals of colour therapy on an individual level. They are decreasing conflict, enhancing quality interpersonal relationships, increasing success and resourcefulness in the personal sphere, proper parenting, choosing the right career which gives wings to one's hidden potential, and learning the art of communicating effectively.

Hartman's colour code has helped in vocational selection and in promotion of life choices. It has psychometric properties like reliability and validity.

The concept of colour code personality by Dr. Taylor Hartman helps in profile Colour therapy. He has conceptualised the personality to be divided into four categories—Red lovers have a striving for power. Those who like blue value the depth and intimacy of interpersonal interactions. Yellow lovers are cheerful and amusement-loving by disposition and want to spend their lives in fun and frolic.

It was evident in earlier researchers like Pyfister that green and blue are indicative of sensitivity to both external and internal stimuli, suppressed impulsivity and show signs of ego-strength. Black implies depression at the unconscious level. In this case, the therapist would have to check on the use of black by the client.

So, to conclude, personality patterns could be assessed from the drawings. By analysing the pictures, the therapist could intervene by telling the client to avoid certain colours and utilise others, depending on his personality patterns. Thus, desirable changes could be elicited for removing sadness and enhancing happiness.

Drawing an allusion to Holi, we could utter, 'Today we have to add colour to everybody's palette. We have to be healthy; let's have that hope. The clouds are woven in colours; love lurks in the colour of the sun. Today the colour of light rings in the chirping of birds.'

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