

HUMAN PERSONALITY IN THE MANDUKYA UPANISHAD

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ABSTRACT

The conceptualization of personality in the Indian context differs significantly from the Western individualistic approach. Indian philosophy emphasizes a holistic, multidimensional view of the self, integrating metaphysical aspects. Key frameworks, such as the Sāṅkhya and Vedānta schools, outline the role of *triguṇa*—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—which influence individual behavior and disposition. Ancient texts, including the Upanishads, especially the Mandukya Upanishad, define personality in terms of states of consciousness such as *Jagrata* (waking), *Swapna* (dreaming), *Susupti* (deep sleep), and *Turiya* (transcendental state). These philosophies suggest that transcending ego-driven behavior leads to self-realization, aligning with the ultimate truth. In Vedānta, the three bodies—*Sthula Sarira* (Gross Body), *Sukshma Sarira* (Subtle Body), and *Karana Sarira* (Causal Body)—correspond to the states of consciousness: *Jagrata* (Waking), *Swapna* (Dreaming), and *Susupti* (Deep Sleep). *Turiya* (Pure Consciousness) transcends these states. Understanding these layers is essential for holistic personality development, integrating physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual growth. By mapping these concepts to trait theory, individuals can refine personality traits through physical discipline, mental clarity, and spiritual practices. This multidimensional approach fosters a balanced, enlightened personality, culminating in self-realization and a purposeful life.

Key words: Mandukya Upanishad, *Triguṇa*, *Sthula*, *Sukshma Sarira*, *Karana Sarira*, *Swabhava*, Personality

1. INTRODUCTION

Conceptualization of Personality in Indian Context

Personality conceptualizations, when viewed through the lens of the individual as the unit of analysis, largely reflect the concept of individualism, which is central to Western societies like Europe and the United States. These theories are predominantly based on observations of individuals, shaped by prevailing belief systems, scientific developments of the time, and the research orientations, ideological affiliations, and cultural backgrounds of scholars. Consequently, the field presents a wide range of theories, models, assessment tools, diagnostic methods, and intervention strategies (Corr & Matthews, 2009; Church, 2017; John, Robins & Pervin, 2008; Robins, Fraley & Krueger, 2007; Wiggins, 2003).

In contrast, ancient Indian civilization approaches the conceptualization of personality through its six philosophical schools—*Pūrva-mīmāṃsā*, *Uttara-mīmāṃsā*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, and *Vaiśeṣika* (Sharma, 2001). A notable feature of this period is the emergence of the *triguṇa* concept, representing three fundamental qualities. The precise timeline for the development of *triguṇa* is not clearly documented, but it is believed to have taken shape during the Vedāntic period (1500–600 BCE). This period also marked the compilation of the Vedas, which had been passed down through oral tradition. The core texts of Vedānta include the Upanishads, *Bhagavad Gītā*, and *Brahma Sūtra*, collectively known as the *Prasthānatrayī*. The *Advaita* (non-dualistic) school of thought later interpreted these texts, with key figures such as Śaṅkara (788–820 CE), who wrote commentaries on Vedāntic literature, as well as Rāmānuja (qualified monism), Mādhava (dualism), and Vallabha (pure non-dualism). In more recent times, Neo-Vedantic thinkers like Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886), Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950), and Ramana Maharshi have continued to develop these ideas (Rao, Paranjpe, & Dalal, 2008).

The *Advaita* tradition distinguishes between person and personality as separate entities. The term *jīva* is used to describe "person," while *svabhāva* or *prakṛti* characterizes "personality" (Paranjpe & Rao, 2008). In addition, synonymous terms such as *puruṣa* (consciousness in both individual and universal forms), *ātmana* (true self), *śeṭra* (physical body), and *śeṭrajñāna* (self or consciousness as the knower) are used to describe the person (Krishnan, 2002). The *jīva* is conceptualized as a multilayered entity consisting of five sheaths (*koṣa*): *annamāyā* (sustained by food), *prāṇamāyā* (vital breath), *manamāyā* (mental sheath), *viññānamāyā* (cognitive sheath), and *ānandamāyā* (joyous sheath). This description of *jīva* is one of the earliest comprehensive views of the person (Paranjpe & Rao, 2008; Rao & Paranjpe, 2016).

In the context of *prakṛti* or personality, the concept of *triguṇa* is employed. *Triguṇa* refers to three fundamental attributes that manifest in behavior: *sattva* (goodness, harmony), *rajas* (passion, energy), and *tamas* (dullness, inertia). The typology of personality is based on the relative prominence of these three *guṇas*. Texts like the *Caraka Saṃhitā* and *Suśruta Saṃhitā* describe seven personality types based on *sattva*, six types based on *rajas*, and three types based

on tamas. Sattvic types are associated with gods or sages, rajasic types with demons, and tamasic types with animals, fish, and vegetation (Krishnan, 2002; Murthy, 2004; Pandey, 1990).

Varāhamihira (505–587 CE), an important scholar of ancient India, contributed significantly to the understanding of *triṣṇa*. In his work *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, he discussed the connection between the *guṇas* and temperament, noting that the predominance of one or a combination of *guṇas* results in different behavioral tendencies. A person dominated by *sattva* is merciful, firm-minded, and sincere, while a *rajasic* person is passionate, artistic, and bold. A *tamasic* individual, on the other hand, tends to be deceitful, idle, and ignorant. Varāhamihira also proposed a sevenfold classification based on the predominance of the *guṇas* (Krishnan, 2002). *Bṛhat saṃhitā* translation was carried out by N. Chidambaram Iyer in 1884 and this has been referred in this paper. “While describing ‘features of man’ in Chapter XXI (Part II, pp. 99–115) of *Bṛhat saṃhitā*, Varāhamihira advocates 12 facets to predict the future/fortune of a person. These are; (i) *kṣetra* (body), (ii) *mrjā* (complexion), (iii) *svara* (voice), (iv) *sāra* (strength), (v) *saṃhati* (joints), (vi) *sneha* (gloss), (vii) *varṇa* (colour), (viii) *anuka* (shape of the face), (ix) *unnamana* (height), (x) *māna* (weight), (xi) *prakṛti* (disposition), and (xii) *gati* (gait). Thus, the domains considered by Varāhamihira to predict personality are far more comprehensive than the domains (e.g., trait, motive, life narrative, etc.) considered by personality psychologists of modern period.”(Singh, 2021)

Buddhism and Jainism, both of which have roots in the broader Indian thought tradition, also address personality. Buddhist tradition, for instance, offers the aggregate and network models of personality and provides a sixfold classification of personality traits based on conduct: attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*doṣa*), dullness (*moha*), faith (*śrādha*), rational thinking (*buddhi*), and imagination (*vitakka*) (Krishnan, 2002; Ananda & Prasad, 2011). Similarly, Jainism, drawing from Mahāvīra’s teachings (599–527 BCE), categorizes human beings based on the doctrine of *leśyā*, which uses colors like black, blue, and white to symbolize different types of personality (Jain, 2008; Krishnan, 2002, Singh 2021). Satpathy (2018,2021 & 2022) has discussed on the Pancha Kosha theory of personality, Arishadvarga or Shadripu personality theory as expounded by Adi Sankaracharya and human personality based on Charaka’s theory of Dhatus. All these discussion made above clearly states that conceptualization of personality in Indian context is mainly through the Vedanta philosophy and Ayurveda and other Vedic texts.

Swabhava in the Mandukya Upanishad

In Indian psychological thought, the term ‘personality’ is not used in the strict sense. Instead, the idea of *Swabhava*, as mentioned in the scriptures, encompasses all aspects of personality. *Swabhava* represents the essential nature or quality of an individual. It is the driving force of the spirit, manifesting as the core quality in all expressions of being. According to the Bhagavad Gita, Dharma is action guided by *Swabhava*, the intrinsic law of one's nature. At its essence, *Swabhava* is the pure quality of the spirit, expressed through the inherent power of conscious will and its distinctive force of action. (Srivastava,K.(2012))

The term *Swabhava* in the context of the Mandukya Upanishad can be understood as the "inherent nature" or "essential nature" of an individual or reality. Although the Mandukya Upanishad does not explicitly focus on "*Swabhava*" in isolation, it implicitly addresses the concept when discussing the different states of consciousness and the nature of the Self (*Atman*). In this Upanishad, the four states of consciousness—*Jagrata* (waking state), *Swapna* (dream state), *Susupti* (deep sleep state), and *Turiya* (the fourth state)—represent the layers of experience through which the self moves. *Swabhava*, or the true inherent nature, is often explored in the context of these states, with the ultimate realization being that the *Turiya* state represents the pure, unchanging reality or Self, which is the true *Swabhava* of all beings. Waking, Dream, and Deep Sleep States are seen as conditioned by external (waking), internal (dream), or undifferentiated (deep sleep) experiences. Each state reflects a different aspect of the individual's nature but is not the ultimate truth of their *Swabhava*. The *Turiya* is considered as the True *Swabhava*. The fourth state, *Turiya*, transcends the previous three. It is described as pure consciousness, beyond dualities like subject and object, beyond the mind's projections. *Turiya* is non-dual (*advaita*), peaceful, and self-luminous. This represents the true *Swabhava* of the Self, which is free from the limitations and illusions associated with the waking, dream, and deep sleep states. The Upanishad also correlates the syllable *Aum* with these states, where each part of *Aum* (*A*, *U*, *M*) corresponds to waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, while silence beyond the sound represents *Turiya*, the ultimate *Swabhava* of the Self. The Mandukya Upanishad suggests that the true *Swabhava* of all beings is not found in the fleeting and changing experiences of the first three states but is instead realized in the transcendental state of *Turiya*, where the Self is recognized as pure, unconditioned consciousness.

One of the most relevant verses from the Mandukya Upanishad that speaks to the true nature (*Swabhava*) of the Self, particularly in the context of the *Turiya* state, is verse 7. This verse describes *Turiya*, the fourth state, which represents the ultimate *Swabhava* or true nature of the Self, transcending all other states of consciousness.

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम्। अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणं
अचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः॥

"It is neither inward-consciousness, nor outward-consciousness, nor the consciousness that is both inward and outward, nor a mass of consciousness, nor simple consciousness, nor unconsciousness. It is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, incomprehensible, beyond inference, unthinkable, indescribable. It is the essence of the one Self, the cessation of all phenomena, tranquil, auspicious, non-dual. This is the fourth (Turiya), and this is the Self, to be realized." This verse emphasizes that the Turiya state, which transcends the three conventional states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, is the ultimate nature (Swabhava) of the Self. It is beyond all worldly distinctions and categories, being pure consciousness and the ultimate reality, free from all dualities and limitations. The verse asserts that the true Swabhava is not conditioned by any perceptual or conceptual framework but is instead the tranquil, non-dual essence that is to be realized as one's own true Self.

Human Personality in the Mandukya Upanishad

The Mandukya Upanishad provides a profound framework for understanding human personality through the concept of the four states of consciousness. These states are aligned with both individual experience and the nature of reality, presenting an approach that goes beyond the physical and psychological aspects of personality. The Mandukya Upanishad describes the human personality as Waking State (Jagrat) that is the state of consciousness where a person is fully aware of the external world through their senses. In this state, the individual interacts with material reality and is identified with the Sthula Sharira (gross body). The personality in this state is outwardly focused, dealing with the physical environment and external objects. Next is the Dreaming State (Swapna). In this state, the person is aware of their inner world through dreams. This corresponds to the Sukshma Sharira (subtle body), where the mind creates and experiences an alternate reality. The personality here reflects the internalized desires, fears, and experiences that emerge from the subconscious. The third is the Deep Sleep State (Sushupti). This state is marked by complete rest, where the mind is not aware of either the external world or the dream world. It is a state of undifferentiated consciousness, characterized by peace and the absence of desires. This state aligns with the Karana Sharira (causal body), which contains the deep impressions (vasanas) that shape one's personality. Here, the individual experiences a state of bliss, but without awareness. The last one is the Turiya (The Fourth State). This is the transcendental state of pure consciousness, beyond waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. It is the true nature of the Self (Atman), which is beyond the limitations of the body and mind. In Turiya, there is no duality; the individual realizes the oneness of all existence. This state represents the ultimate understanding of human personality, where one moves beyond the ego and individual identity to recognize the eternal, unchanging self.

The Mandukya Upanishad thus sees human personality as not merely physical or psychological but rooted in deeper layers of consciousness. The highest understanding of personality is to transcend individual characteristics and realize the oneness with the universal consciousness (Brahman).

Personality States and Characteristics

In the Mandukya Upanishad, human personality is understood through four states of consciousness rather than as distinct personality "types" in the modern psychological sense. However, these states provide a framework for understanding different aspects of an individual's consciousness and interaction with reality. Each state is linked to different characteristics and dimensions of human experience such as the Waking State (Jagrat) has the Personality Type which is Outwardly Focused. The Characteristics of this type of personality are that they are engaged with the external, physical world through the senses. The individual identifies with the Sthula Sharira (gross body), which deals with physical actions and experiences. In this state, the person interacts with objects, performs daily duties, and perceives reality through sensory input. Personality is shaped by external stimuli, logical thinking, and rational decision-making. The Dominating Aspect in this personality is the ego (Ahamkara) and the mind's association with the physical body.

Dreaming State (Swapna) has the Inwardly Focused Personality Type. The major characteristics of this personality is that they are engaged with the inner, subjective world of dreams. They are identified with the Sukshma Sharira (subtle body), which contains mental impressions, desires, emotions, and imagination. Experiences in this state are shaped by latent desires (vasanas) and subconscious material from waking life. Personality in this state reflects the mind's creative and emotional functions. The dream state often reveals hidden fears, wishes, and unresolved psychological content. Dominating aspect of this is the subconscious mind, revealing unfulfilled desires and repressed emotions.

Deep Sleep State (Sushupti) has the At Rest or Blissful Personality Type. The characteristics of this state are that the individual experiences no awareness of external or internal objects—there is no dreaming or sensory input. It is

identified with the Karana Sharira (causal body), which is the reservoir of latent tendencies and karmic impressions. This state is characterized by complete rest, absence of desires, and a deep sense of peace and bliss, though the person is not conscious of it. Personality is undifferentiated in this state, as there is no awareness of individuality or separateness. It is often associated with a state of potential, where the deeper layers of the self are dormant but present. The Dominating aspect is the deep subconscious, holding the seeds of future thoughts, desires, and actions.

In the Fourth State (Turiya) the Personality Type is Transcendental or Universal Self. Characteristics of this state transcends the other three states of consciousness and represents the realization of the true Self (Atman). It is beyond all dualities—beyond waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. The individual recognizes their unity with the infinite consciousness (Brahman), beyond ego, body, and mind. Personality here is not bound by individual traits or characteristics; it is the state of pure, unchanging awareness. In this state, the person attains liberation (moksha) and experiences universal truth, infinite peace, and bliss. The Dominating aspect of this state is Pure consciousness, which is free from identification with the body, mind, or ego.

Summary of Personality States and Characteristics:

Waking State: Engaged with the material world, driven by logic and external stimuli.

Dreaming State: Focused on inner experiences, shaped by emotions, desires, and imagination.

Deep Sleep State: Restful and blissful, but without awareness of individuality or external objects.

Turiya (Fourth State): A state of pure, transcendental awareness, beyond individual personality, where the true nature of self and ultimate reality is realized.

The Mandukya Upanishad presents these states as a journey toward realizing the ultimate truth of one's identity as the Atman, which transcends all limiting personality traits and states of consciousness.

Traits Associated With Each of the Four States of Being

The Mandukya Upanishad describes four states of consciousness, each reflecting different aspects of personality, rather than distinct types of personality. However, we can identify **traits** associated with each of these states of being. Here's a breakdown of the traits related to each state:

State	Trait	Dominating Guna
Waking State (Jagrat)	<p>Sensory-oriented</p> <p>Personality is shaped by interactions with the external world through the five senses.</p> <p>Rational and logical</p> <p>The person uses reason, judgment, and analytical thinking in their daily life.</p> <p>Ego-driven</p> <p>The sense of self-identity is strong, with a clear distinction between the individual and the world.</p> <p>Action-oriented</p> <p>The individual engages in physical actions, making decisions based on observable reality.</p> <p>External attachment</p> <p>Attachment to material possessions, achievements, and social identity</p>	Rajas (Passion) – Often driven by activity, desire, and ambition
Dreaming State (Swapna)	<p>Imaginative</p> <p>Creative and emotional experiences shape personality, as dreams allow for freedom from the constraints of logic.</p> <p>Subconscious expression</p> <p>Desires, fears, and unresolved emotions from waking life manifest in dreams.</p> <p>Emotional</p>	Tamas (Inertia) – Dreams often arise from deeper, subconscious, and dormant impressions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The person may have vivid emotional responses, reflecting deep inner desires or anxieties. <p>Fluid identity</p> <p>In dreams, the ego is less rigid, allowing the person to experience different scenarios without fixed roles.</p> <p>Symbolic interpretation</p> <p>Reality is represented through symbols and abstract representations, not direct physical experiences</p>	
Deep Sleep State (Sushupti)	<p>Peaceful</p> <p>Personality is in a state of total rest, with no mental activity or conscious perception of the world.</p> <p>Blissful (but unaware)</p> <p>There is a sense of deep contentment, though the person is not actively aware of it.</p> <p>Undifferentiated</p> <p>No sense of individual personality traits, ego, or separate identity during this state.</p> <p>Potential-filled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The seeds of future actions, thoughts, and desires are stored in this latent state. <p>Balanced</p> <p>There is an absence of dualities like pleasure and pain, attraction and aversion.</p>	<p>Sattva (Purity and Harmony)</p> <p>This state is closest to pure consciousness, untainted by desires or distractions.</p>
The Fourth State (Turiya)	<p>Transcendent</p> <p>The personality transcends all limiting factors of the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states.</p> <p>Universal consciousness</p> <p>The individual identifies with the cosmic Self (Atman) and experiences unity with all beings.</p> <p>Pure awareness</p> <p>There is no duality, no ego, no attachment to the body, mind, or material world.</p> <p>Liberated</p> <p>Free from desires, fears, and worldly attachments. The person exists in a state of complete liberation (moksha).</p> <p>Timeless and unchanging</p> <p>The person is not subject to change, death, or decay, realizing their eternal nature.</p>	<p>Beyond the Gunas – This state transcends all three gunas (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas), representing a state of pure existence, consciousness, and bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda).</p>
Summary of Personality Traits:		

- **Waking State:** Rational, sensory-oriented, ego-driven, active, externally focused.
 - **Dreaming State:** Imaginative, emotional, subconscious, symbolic, fluid identity.
 - **Deep Sleep State:** Peaceful, undifferentiated, blissful, balanced, potential-filled.
 - **Turiya (Fourth State):** Transcendent, pure awareness, liberated, beyond duality, eternal.
- These states reflect different aspects of the self and offer a progression toward deeper awareness of one's true nature, with Turiya representing the ultimate realization of the Self, beyond personality and individuality

To support the discussion on the types of consciousness and their traits as described in the Mandukya Upanishad and other Sanskrit texts, the following key Sanskrit verses along with their English translations are given.

Waking State (Jagrat)

Sanskrit Verse:

Mandukya Upanishad, Verse 3:

Sanskrit:

जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः स्थूलभुक् वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः।

English Translation: "The first quarter (of the Self) is the waking state, where consciousness is outward-turned, having seven limbs and nineteen mouths. It enjoys gross objects. This is the Universal Being (Vaishvanara)."

This verse describes the waking state, where the person is externally focused, interacting with the sensory world. It supports the idea of a rational and ego-driven personality.

Dreaming State (Swapna)

Sanskrit Verse:

Mandukya Upanishad, Verse 4:

Sanskrit:

स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः प्रविक्लभुक् तैजसः द्वितीयः पादः।

English Translation: "The second quarter is the dreaming state, where consciousness is inward-turned, having seven limbs and nineteen mouths. It enjoys subtle objects. This is the Luminous One (Taijasa)."

The inward focus of consciousness in this verse describes the dream state, where imagination and subconscious thoughts influence one's experience, aligning with the traits of fluid identity and emotionality.

Deep Sleep State (Sushupti)

Sanskrit Verse:

Mandukya Upanishad, Verse 5:

Sanskrit:

यत्र सुप्तो न कञ्चन कामं कामयते न कञ्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम्। सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः।

English Translation: "The third quarter is the state of deep sleep, where the sleeper neither desires any objects nor sees any dream. In this state, consciousness becomes unified. It is pure consciousness, filled with bliss, and enjoys bliss. This is the state of Prajna."

This verse emphasizes the undifferentiated and peaceful nature of deep sleep, where personality traits dissolve, and the individual experiences a sense of bliss and rest.

The Fourth State (Turiya)

Sanskrit Verse:

Mandukya Upanishad, Verse 7:

Sanskrit:

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञानं नाप्रज्ञं। अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणं अचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः।

English Translation: "The fourth is not conscious of the internal, nor of the external, nor of both. It is not a mass of consciousness, nor is it simple consciousness, nor unconsciousness. It is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, beyond grasping, unthinkable, and indescribable. The essence of the one Self, the cessation of all phenomena, peaceful, blissful, and non-dual—this is the fourth. This is the Self, and it is to be realized."

This verse describes Turiya, which transcends all dualities and states of consciousness. It is pure awareness and represents the realization of the true Self, beyond personality and ego, supporting the idea of transcendence and liberation.

The four states of consciousness—Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dreaming), Susupti (deep sleep), and Turiya (the fourth state)—are key elements of Advaita Vedanta philosophy and are explored in various Sanskrit texts. The following discussion provides references to other significant Sanskrit texts that also discuss these states.

Jagrat (Waking State)

Sanskrit Reference: Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (2.1.1)

Sanskrit:

अथ योऽयं पुरुषे जागरितस्थाः सर्वाणि भूतानि विज्ञायते...

Translation: "In the waking state, the individual perceives the external world and all living beings through the senses. It is the state where consciousness is directed outward, engaging with gross objects and experiences."

Explanation: In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the waking state (Jagrat) is described as the state where a person experiences the external world, focusing on sensory input and physical reality. This is akin to the Vaishvanara mentioned in the Mandukya Upanishad.

Swapna (Dreaming State)

Sanskrit Reference: Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (4.3.9)

Sanskrit:

अथ यदेतस्मिन्स्वप्ने जाग्रत्येष पुरुषो यदेतस्मिन्स्वप्ने रजांस्युत्क्रामति...

Translation: "In the dream state, the individual moves freely within a world of mental projections and subtle objects, drawing from the impressions of the waking state."

Explanation: The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad explains that in the dream state (Swapna), the individual no longer interacts with the physical world but experiences a reality constructed by the mind. This aligns with the description of the Taijasa consciousness in the Mandukya Upanishad, where the dreamer engages with subtle objects.

Sanskrit Reference: Chandogya Upanishad (8.6.3)

Sanskrit:

अथ यदा स्वपिति नामास्मिन्सर्वे संप्रतिष्ठन्ति...

Translation: "When the individual dreams, the senses withdraw, and the self projects a world based on the residual impressions from the waking state."

Explanation: The Chandogya Upanishad also describes the dream state as one where the person is influenced by the waking world but perceives a mental version of it, constructed from previous experiences.

Susupti (Deep Sleep State)

Sanskrit Reference: Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (4.3.18)

Sanskrit:

अथ यदा सुप्तः सुषुप्तो भवति, यदा न कञ्चन कामं कामयते न कञ्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति...

Translation: "When one is in deep sleep, there are no desires and no dreams. It is a state where the individual merges into the unified Self, experiencing bliss and rest."

Explanation: In this verse, Susupti is described as a state of profound rest, where the mind, senses, and desires are inactive. The Prajna state mentioned in the Mandukya Upanishad corresponds to this, where the individual experiences undifferentiated awareness and bliss but without specific consciousness of the self.

Sanskrit Reference: Chandogya Upanishad (6.8.1)

Sanskrit:

स्वप्नान्पश्यन्त्यथ यदा सुप्तोऽभविष्यत्सुषुप्तात्र किञ्चन पश्यति...

Translation: "When one is in deep sleep, there is no perception of the external or internal world. The self remains in a state of pure consciousness, devoid of duality."

Explanation: Similar to the Mandukya Upanishad, this passage from the Chandogya Upanishad emphasizes that in deep sleep, the individual is not conscious of external or internal realities. The self rests in an undisturbed state of unity.

Turiya (The Fourth State)

Sanskrit Reference: Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (4.3.19)

Sanskrit:

यत्र न हि किञ्चन विपश्यति न किञ्चन विजानाति...

Translation: "Where there is no perception, no duality, and no division, that is the state of pure consciousness. It transcends waking, dreaming, and deep sleep."

Explanation: This description points toward the realization of the Turiya state. The individual transcends all forms of duality and plurality in this state, much like the description in the Mandukya Upanishad, where Turiya is the state of non-dual awareness beyond waking, dreaming, and deep sleep.

Sanskrit Reference: Yoga Vasistha (6.2.92)

Sanskrit:

अज्ञानमात्रोपमितः स्वरूपं तुरीयं समालम्ब्य परं समधिः।

Translation: "Turiya is the state that transcends ignorance and duality. It is pure, non-conceptual awareness, where one realizes the highest state of consciousness."

Explanation: The Yoga Vasistha, a significant philosophical text, also explores Turiya as the ultimate realization where there is no differentiation between subject and object, mind and matter. This state is free from the limitations of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, consistent with Advaita Vedanta's notion of the non-dual Self.

The Mandukya Upanishad provides a comprehensive framework for understanding human consciousness and personality through the four states: Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dreaming), Susupti (deep sleep), and Turiya (the fourth state). Other Upanishads like the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and the Chandogya Upanishad further elaborate on these states, each presenting unique insights into how consciousness operates in different phases of human experience. Turiya, the transcendent fourth state, is central to understanding the ultimate nature of the self in Advaita Vedanta.

Sthula Sarira, Sukshma Sarira, Karana Sarira and Their Relationship with Jagrata, Swapna, Susupti, and Turiya for Personality Development

In Vedanta philosophy, the human experience is understood through different layers of existence, known as Sthula Sarira (Gross Body), Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body), and Karana Sarira (Causal Body). These correspond to the three states of consciousness: Jagrata (Waking), Swapna (Dreaming), and Susupti (Deep Sleep), with an additional fourth state, Turiya (Pure Consciousness), which transcends the other three. Understanding these concepts is essential for personality development, as they provide a framework for self-awareness and spiritual growth. In the Advaita Vedanta text Panchadasi by Vidyaranya, the connection between the three Sariras and the states of consciousness is explored. The Panchadasi offers a systematic explanation of how these bodies and states of consciousness interact with each other in the process of experience and realization. Vivekachudamani by Adi Shankaracharya also contains teachings about the relationship between the physical, subtle, and causal bodies and their respective states of consciousness. Adi Shankaracharya's commentary on the nature of the Self (Atman) and the various bodies emphasizes the importance of understanding these layers to achieve self-realization.

Sthula Sarira (Gross Body) and Jagrata (Waking State)

Sthula Sarira (Gross Body): This is the physical body that interacts with the external world through the senses. It is the tangible, material aspect of existence, composed of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether). The Gross Body is responsible for physical actions and experiences.

Jagrata (Waking State): In this state, the consciousness is fully engaged with the external world through the Sthula Sarira. It is the state where the mind, senses, and body are actively involved in the perception of the physical environment. The waking state is characterized by duality and sensory experiences.

Personality Development Aspect: The awareness of the Gross Body and its connection to the waking state helps individuals understand the importance of physical well-being and sensory moderation. By developing discipline in the waking state, such as through yoga and healthy habits, strengthens the foundation of personality.

Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body) and Swapna (Dreaming State)

Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body): This body is composed of the mind (Manas), intellect (Buddhi), ego (Ahamkara), and the vital airs (Prana). It is responsible for thoughts, emotions, and the finer aspects of cognition that are not tied to the physical senses.

Swapna (Dreaming State): The Subtle Body functions predominantly in the dreaming state, where the mind creates its own reality independent of the physical world. In this state, consciousness is detached from the Gross Body and engages with the impressions stored in the subconscious mind.

Personality Development Aspect: By understanding the nature of the Subtle Body and its activities during the dreaming state, individuals can delve into their subconscious, identifying and resolving deep-seated fears, desires, and conflicts. Techniques like meditation and introspection help in refining the Subtle Body, leading to greater emotional intelligence and mental clarity.

Karana Sarira (Causal Body) and Susupti (Deep Sleep State)

Karana Sarira (Causal Body): The Causal Body is the most subtle layer, containing the seed of all experiences (Karmic impressions). It is the cause of the other two bodies and is the source of deep, unconscious patterns.

Susupti (Deep Sleep State): In deep sleep, the Gross and Subtle Bodies are inactive, and the consciousness is in the Causal Body. There is no awareness of the external or internal worlds, only a state of potentiality. It is a state of bliss, but without the consciousness of that bliss.

Personality Development Aspect: The Causal Body represents the deepest level of one's being, where karmic patterns are stored. Awareness of this body can lead to profound transformation as individuals work on purifying their subconscious tendencies (Vasanas) through spiritual practices. This purification process is essential for achieving lasting peace and contentment.

Turiya (Pure Consciousness) and Transcendence

Turiya (Pure Consciousness): Turiya is the fourth state of consciousness, transcending the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states. It is the state of pure awareness, beyond the limitations of the three bodies. In Turiya, the individual experiences the unity of existence, realizing the non-dual nature of the Self (Atman).

Personality Development Aspect: Attaining Turiya is the ultimate goal of spiritual practice. It represents the realization of one's true nature, leading to liberation (Moksha). In the context of personality development, Turiya signifies the integration of all aspects of the self, resulting in a balanced, enlightened personality that is free from the ego's limitations.

Integrating the Concepts for Holistic Personality Development

To develop a well-rounded personality, one must work on all three bodies (Sthula, Sukshma, and Karana) and their associated states of consciousness (Jagrata, Swapna, Susupti). This can be achieved through a combination of physical discipline (yoga, exercise), mental training (meditation, mindfulness), and spiritual practices (self-inquiry, devotion). By understanding and transcending these layers of existence, an individual can achieve a state of equilibrium and self-realization, leading to a fulfilled and purposeful life.

Mapping Trait Theory to the Three Bodies and States of Consciousness

Trait Theory of Personality suggests that individuals possess certain stable traits or characteristics that influence their behavior across various situations. Prominent psychologists like Gordon Allport, Raymond Cattell, and Hans Eysenck have contributed to this theory by identifying and categorizing these traits. The **Big Five Personality Traits** (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) are widely recognized in this context.

Sthula Sarira (Gross Body) and Jagrata (Waking State)

Connection with Trait Theory: The Gross Body is linked to observable behaviors and actions in the waking state. Traits such as **Extraversion** (sociability, assertiveness) and **Conscientiousness** (self-discipline, goal-oriented behavior) are prominently displayed in this state. These traits manifest through physical actions and interactions with the environment.

Personality Development: By cultivating positive physical habits and behaviors in the waking state, individuals can strengthen traits like conscientiousness and openness. Practices like yoga, exercise, and mindfulness can enhance the functioning of the Gross Body, leading to a more balanced expression of personality traits.

Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body) and Swapna (Dreaming State)

Connection with Trait Theory: The Subtle Body, which governs thoughts, emotions, and intellect, relates to traits like **Neuroticism** (emotional stability) and **Openness** (creativity, imagination). In the dreaming state, the subconscious mind processes experiences, often revealing underlying personality traits that might not be apparent in the waking state.

Personality Development: Understanding and refining the Subtle Body through meditation and introspection can help individuals manage traits like neuroticism and enhance positive traits like openness. Dream analysis and emotional

regulation techniques can be used to align the subconscious mind with conscious goals, leading to a more integrated personality.

Karana Sarira (Causal Body) and Susupti (Deep Sleep State)

Connection with Trait Theory: The Causal Body represents the root of one's personality, where deep-seated traits and karmic impressions reside. This level is linked to the trait theory's concept of enduring, stable traits that shape behavior across different situations. Traits like **Agreeableness** (cooperativeness) and **Neuroticism** are often influenced by deep-seated karmic patterns.

Personality Development: By addressing the Causal Body through practices like self-inquiry and karmic cleansing, individuals can transform negative traits and reinforce positive ones. This transformation occurs at a deep level, influencing both the Subtle and Gross Bodies and leading to lasting personality development.

Turiya (Pure Consciousness)

Connection with Trait Theory: Turiya, the state of pure consciousness, transcends all traits, bodies, and states of consciousness. It represents the true Self (Atman) beyond personality. While trait theory operates within the relative world of individual differences, Turiya points to the ultimate realization that the true Self is beyond all traits and characteristics.

Personality Development: The experience of Turiya leads to the dissolution of ego-based traits and the emergence of a personality that is balanced, compassionate, and aligned with higher consciousness. While traits may still manifest in the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states, they are now under the guidance of a higher, unified consciousness.

Integrating Trait Theory and Vedanta Concepts for Holistic Personality Development

By recognizing which traits dominate in different states of consciousness, individuals can work on refining those traits through targeted practices. For instance, mindfulness in the waking state (Jagrata) can help in managing neuroticism, while creative visualization in the dreaming state (Swapna) can enhance openness. Understanding the interaction between the three bodies and their associated traits allows for a holistic approach to personality development. For example, improving physical health (Sthula Sarira) through exercise can positively influence traits like extraversion, while spiritual practices that purify the Causal Body (Karana Sarira) can reduce negative traits like neuroticism. As individuals progress in their spiritual journey and approach Turiya, they begin to transcend ego-based traits, moving towards a personality that is more reflective of universal values like compassion, wisdom, and selflessness. By integrating Trait Theory with Vedantic concepts, we can create a multidimensional approach to personality development that addresses both the psychological and spiritual aspects of the self. This holistic approach allows for a deeper understanding of personality and offers practical tools for achieving a more balanced, enlightened existence.

Impact of Sthula Sarira, Sukshma Sarira, and Karana Sarira on Types of Personality

Understanding the three Sariras (Sthula, Sukshma, and Karana) offers a deep and nuanced approach to identifying and interpreting different types of personalities. Each Sarira influences various aspects of an individual's behavior, thoughts, emotions, and spiritual inclinations, shaping their overall personality. Here's how each Sarira impacts personality:

Sthula Sarira (Gross Body) and Personality

Impact on Personality: The Sthula Sarira relates to the physical aspects of personality. It governs physical traits such as health, appearance, vitality, and physical habits. Individuals with strong Sthula Sarira influence may exhibit personality traits like high energy, physical endurance, or a focus on material success.

Identifying Personality:

Physical Observations: The condition of the Gross Body can reflect aspects of personality. For example, someone with a strong, healthy physique may have a personality that is disciplined, energetic, and grounded. Conversely, neglect of physical health might indicate a lack of discipline or focus on the material world.

Behavioral Traits: Physical habits like regular exercise, dietary patterns, and grooming can also provide clues to a person's personality type, such as whether they are conscientious, methodical, or perhaps indulgent.

Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body) and Personality

Impact on Personality: The Sukshma Sarira influences mental and emotional aspects of personality. It governs thoughts, emotions, intellect, and ego. This body is associated with traits like creativity, emotional sensitivity, intellectual curiosity, and communication skills. People with a dominant Sukshma Sarira may have a personality that is introspective, emotionally aware, or intellectually inclined.

Identifying Personality:

Mental and Emotional Patterns: Observing how a person processes emotions and thoughts can reveal the influence of the Subtle Body. For example, someone who frequently engages in deep thinking, exhibits strong empathy, or is highly creative likely has a strong Sukshma Sarira.

Dream Analysis: Since the Subtle Body is active during the dreaming state, a person's dreams and how they interpret them can offer insights into their subconscious mind, revealing deeper personality traits.

Communication Style: The way a person communicates—whether through speech, writing, or artistic expression—can provide clues to their subtle personality. Those with a refined Subtle Body may articulate complex ideas well or display artistic talents.

Karana Sarira (Causal Body) and Personality

Impact on Personality: The Karana Sarira is linked to the deepest, karmic aspects of personality. It governs the unconscious tendencies, deep-seated desires, and karmic patterns that shape one's life. This body influences core personality traits such as resilience, spiritual inclination, and the ability to transcend egoic tendencies. People with a strong Karana Sarira influence may have a personality that is spiritually inclined, wise, and focused on long-term goals or life purposes.

Identifying Personality:

Karmic Patterns: Observing how a person deals with challenges or repeated life patterns can reveal the influence of the Causal Body. Persistent patterns in relationships, career, or life goals often reflect the karmic impressions carried in the Karana Sarira.

Spiritual Interests: Individuals with a dominant Causal Body might be drawn to spiritual practices, have a deep sense of purpose, or display wisdom beyond their years. Their personality may seem more focused on the "bigger picture" of life rather than everyday concerns.

Deep Introspection: Individuals who engage in deep self-inquiry or are motivated by a desire to understand life's mysteries often reflect a strong Causal Body influence.

Integrating the Sariras for Personality Identification

To identify someone's personality through the lens of the three Sariras, we can consider the following integrative approach:

Physical Assessment (Sthula Sarira)

Observe Physical Traits: Note their physical health, energy levels, and daily habits. A person who takes care of their body and exhibits physical vigor likely has a well-balanced Sthula Sarira.

Behavioral Observation: Look at their daily routines, punctuality, and how they handle physical tasks. This can give insights into traits like conscientiousness and discipline.

Mental and Emotional Assessment (Sukshma Sarira)

Analyze Thought Patterns: Engage in conversations that reveal their thinking processes, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. This will help in understanding their intellectual and emotional personality traits.

Emotional Reactions: Pay attention to how they handle emotions—whether they are expressive, reserved, empathetic, or reactive. Their emotional intelligence is a key aspect of their Subtle Body.

Communication: Assess their communication style, whether they are articulate, intuitive, or artistic, to understand their mental and emotional makeup.

Spiritual and Karmic Assessment (Karana Sarira)

Identify Deep-Seated Patterns: Reflect on their life history, recurring challenges, and how they handle existential questions. This reveals the influence of the Causal Body.

Spiritual Engagement: Consider their interest in spiritual practices, meditation, or philosophical inquiries. This can indicate the strength of their Causal Body and their overall life orientation.

Purpose and Long-Term Goals: Discuss their long-term goals and aspirations. A strong Karana Sarira may be reflected in a person's commitment to life goals that go beyond material success.

Practical Application: Balancing the Sariras for Personality Development

Physical Practices: Encourage the development of Sthula Sarira through regular exercise, yoga, and healthy lifestyle choices to enhance physical traits associated with vitality and discipline.

Mental and Emotional Practices: Cultivate the Sukshma Sarira through meditation, mindfulness, and creative activities. This will help balance emotional and intellectual traits, leading to a more harmonious personality.

Spiritual Practices: Focus on spiritual development through self-inquiry, meditation, and karmic cleansing to strengthen the Karana Sarira. This fosters traits like resilience, wisdom, and a higher purpose.

Understanding and identifying personality through the framework of Sthula Sarira, Sukshma Sarira, and Karana Sarira provides a comprehensive approach that goes beyond traditional trait theory. It integrates physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, allowing for a holistic understanding of personality. By assessing the influence of each Sarira, one can identify personality traits more deeply and guide individuals towards balanced, conscious development across all aspects of their being.

2. CONCLUSION

The conceptualization of personality in the Indian context, as presented in its ancient philosophical and spiritual traditions, offers a deeply holistic and transcendent perspective. While Western theories of personality emphasize individual traits, behaviors, and cognitive processes shaped by external factors, the Indian approach roots personality in the interplay between the self (Atman) and consciousness. Through the frameworks provided by the Upanishads, particularly the Mandukya Upanishad, Indian thought explores personality as an evolving journey through different states of consciousness—waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and Turiya. These states reveal the layers of human experience, from engagement with the physical world to the ultimate realization of pure consciousness, transcending the limitations of body and mind.

The Indian tradition, especially through the concept of Swabhava, defines personality not in terms of fixed traits but as an expression of the inherent nature of the self, which finds its highest realization in Turiya, the state of universal consciousness. The Triguna theory further illustrates how sattva, rajas, and tamas influence individual tendencies and behavior. Together, these frameworks emphasize that personality is not merely a psychological construct but a spiritual journey toward self-realization, where the ultimate goal is the recognition of the non-dual, eternal self (Atman) as inseparable from the universal consciousness (Brahman). This profound and integrative view of personality stands as a testament to the enduring relevance of Indian philosophical thought in understanding the deeper dimensions of human existence.

The Vedantic framework of Sthula Sarira (Gross Body), Sukshma Sarira (Subtle Body), and Karana Sarira (Causal Body), along with the corresponding states of consciousness (Jagrata, Swapna, Susupti, and Turiya), offers a profound and holistic approach to understanding and developing personality. By recognizing the influences of the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of the self, individuals can cultivate a well-rounded personality that harmonizes body, mind, and spirit. Integrating this framework with modern psychological concepts like Trait Theory further enhances personal growth by providing actionable insights into how personality traits manifest across different layers of existence. This multidimensional approach empowers individuals to achieve a balanced, enlightened existence, guiding them towards self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and spiritual fulfillment. Ultimately, this path leads to the realization of one's true nature, transcending egoic limitations and fostering a compassionate, purposeful life.

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