

THE NEED FOR EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE (WITH A SPECIAL MENTION OF THE TEACHINGS FROM GURU GRANTH SAHIB) IN THE PRESENT GLOBAL SCENARIO

Ms. Panna Kumaresh Purohit*

Dr. Mandeep Kaur Kochar**

ABSTRACT

The world is facing many challenges in the present (post pandemic) scenario. The US election results and subsequent court battles, the conflict between China and its bordering countries, unrest around the world for the human and religious rights, trade war between US and China are just few to name. India, as a global partner and member of UNO, is also affected by internal and external challenges. The border conflict with neighbouring China and Pakistan, threat from separatists' movements and terrorism are some of the major crises India has faced in recent years. The pandemic has affected the economy adversely and it has led to job losses, inflation and financial instability in the region. The irresponsible journalism and infodemic on social media platforms have created a world that is filled with negativity and chaos. This has led to a steady rise in the cases of anxiety, stress, and depression among the general population across the globe and in India as well. The emotional impact of lockdown, isolation, financial instability and uncertainty has raised concerns beyond the risks of the disease itself in the post-pandemic world. It may take long time to find the practical solutions to these issues, however, the training in emotional and spiritual intelligence can bring solace to the mental health issue arising from such challenges. Emotional and spiritual intelligence are correlated and leaning on the spiritual wisdom of ancient masters can improve an individual's mental health. Emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence can complement each other (Reza Homaei et al, 2016). Emotional self-awareness and empathy provide a foundation for spiritual growth of an individual. A spiritually intelligent person accepts the divine intervention. When the individual puts God first and carries out the daily routine based on the wisdom endowed by great spiritual masters, the person will exhibit greater patience. This leads to dynamic progress in emotional intelligence. The present paper examines the need of emotional and spiritual intelligence and how the teachings from Guru Granth Sahib can help an individual cope with the stress, anxiety and depression arising from the present chaos and disorder.

Key-words: Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, Guru Granth Sahib, present global scenario, chaos and disorder, Bombay Teachers' Training College

“When emotional intelligence merges with spiritual intelligence, human nature is transformed.”

Deepak Chopra

India is the land where many systems of faith have not only born but also took harbour. People with different faith and creed have come to India and not only survived but thrived due to the sense of togetherness and interconnectedness among the people. Spiritual intelligence is the source of all other intelligence and India is the reservoir of spiritual wisdom. Many spiritual masters have attained spiritual wisdom in our country. This spiritual

intelligence which is the cultural inheritance of the country has enabled the people of India to survive through a great many natural disasters, calamities, and pandemics.

The recent political, economic and ecological crises around the world has shaken the political, economic, and social order of the entire world. The world has plunged into darkness due to natural disasters such as coronavirus pandemic, floods, cyclonic storms

* Ph. D. Research Scholar, BTTC, University of Mumbai

** Vice Principal, Bombay Teachers' Training College, University of Mumbai

and man-made disasters such as blast in Tehran. The post pandemic crisis has added insult to the injury collapsing the global economy into recession. The burden on the healthcare system and the financial breakdown has led to chaos, uncertainty, and confusion among common people. The most disturbing factors in increasing chaos and confusion are irresponsible journalism and bombardment of information over the social media platforms. The need for spiritual and emotional intelligence is felt more than ever in this difficult time. The untamed emotions and depression are the by-products of the financial instability and chaos around the world. The infodemic created by social media adds woe into the current crisis where everyday people are furnished with unverified 'wisdom' claiming to have 100% solution to all problems of mankind. The spread of spiritual and emotional awareness is the only way to pacify and comfort the common people and stabilize the internal chaos arising from the unstable external factors.

1. Present Global Scenario and its Effect on General Population

According to Samman (2005), the crisis represents a situation that disrupts daily normal reality and danger, uncertainty, instability, and forced action exists and the world is definitely passing through the post pandemic crisis. The pandemic has forced us to rethink, reflect and change our lifestyle drastically. The other factors that have worsened the current situation are global financial recession, uncertainty over vaccines for COVID-19, the farmers unrest and its nationwide implications and changing political equations around the world and at home.

The post pandemic scenario has affected Indian people with unprecedented lockdowns, disruption of daily life, loss of jobs and self-isolation giving rise to stress levels among Indians. A survey conducted to know how Indians are coping with the new normal found that more than 40% Indians have displayed symptoms of stress and depression. The study considered nine aspects of a person's daily routine that included levels of interest in activities, appetite, sleep cycles, energy levels and ability to concentrate. An increasing number of

people were found to be dealing with mental health issues triggered by the outbreak of coronavirus and resultant chaos and disorder around them. The modern generation is empowered with paper as well as digital literacy. However, the increased digital literacy and availability of information on hand-held devices have also exposed the general population to the fake information making them vulnerable to take bad decisions. More and more people are getting affected by the poisonous media reports. The incidents of suicides, crime against women and children, and crime in the name of religion have increased due to decline in mental wellness.

2. Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Maturity and Spiritual Intelligence – The Interconnection

According to Goleman, emotional intelligence (EI) and its competencies are a prerequisite for the preservation of mental health in stressful situations and lack of emotional intelligence in such an unstable environment may be the cause of a failed outcome with questionable future consequences. Emotional maturity is the human ability to understand his emotions and employ it to make an effective decision within his life. In the context of human life, emotion is able to help an individual to manage the sense of disappointment, sad as well as negative feelings properly. Spiritual is connected with the soul and the religion, and not with physical things or ordinary human activities (Goleman, 1998). Spiritual intelligence is concerned with the inner life of mind and spirit and its relationship to being in the world. Spiritual intelligence implies a capacity for a deep understanding of existing questions and insight into multiple levels of consciousness. Spiritual intelligence also implies the awareness of spirit as a ground of being or as the creative life force of evaluation. If the evaluation of life stardust to mineral, vegetable, animal and human existence implies some form of intelligence rather than being a purely random process, it might be called spiritual. Spiritual intelligence then is more than individual mental ability (Frances Vaughan, 2002).

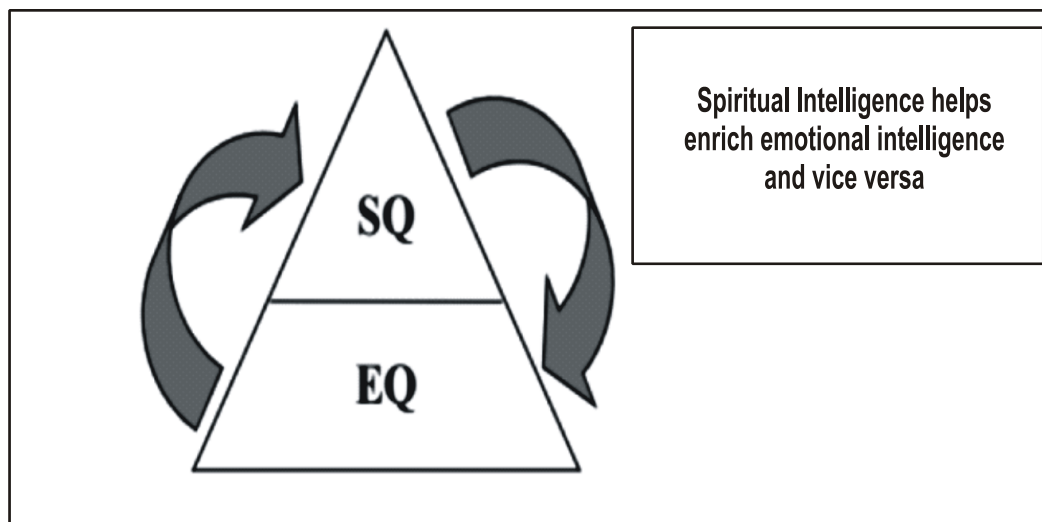
Spiritual intelligence allows an individual to utilize his/her IQ and EQ in a unified way to express his/her abilities in the world that betters not only the

person's life but all beings.

The following figure describes how the spiritual

quotient and emotional quotient of an individual are interconnected.

Figure 1 The relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence



Source: Knowledge Institute Perodio (2005)

The crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic has made it clear that emotional intelligence is the need of the hour. For almost all of the world's population, the pandemic is an unprecedented situation that has brought stress, anxiety, and uncertainty to citizens.

3. **India's Legacy in Spiritual and Emotional Wisdom**

Though modern systematic studies in emotional intelligence are mostly done by western psychologists, and there is hardly any serious research in the Indian perspective (Sharma, 2012), emotional intelligence is embedded in almost every text of ancient literature. The Indian philosophic tradition focuses on the existence of the Supreme being and guides an individual to train his mind for self-realization. A careful study of Indian scriptures reveals a way of life perfectly balanced to lead a harmonious life on and beyond earth.

The Indian religious and philosophical scriptures include Vedas, Bhagavad-Gita, Puranas, Agamas, Tripitaka and Adi Granth. Education in ancient India promoted unity in diversity and

individual social responsibility. It encouraged to lead the life as a 'sthita-prajna' (man-of-alleviated-intellect) and respect everyone as equals, without any distinction.

"That calm man who is the same in pain and pleasure, whom these cannot disturb, alone is able, O great amongst men, to attain to immortality."

(translation by Swami Swarupananda, 1996)
(Bhagavad-Gita, Ch. II, Shloka 15)

4. **Sikhism**

Sikhism originated in the states of Northern India today known as Panjab and the region around it. It is the world's fifth-largest organized religious philosophy. Sikhism advocates monotheistic system of one Supreme Being.

The word 'Sikh' has originated from the Sanskrit word 'shisya' meaning a learner or a seeker of truth. The Sikh faith is Gurmat meaning the way to the Guru.

More than 25 million people around the world follow Sikhism as their primary religion. Sikhism promotes the equality of men and women. The

religious philosophy condemns any discrimination based on gender, race, colour of the skin or caste. Guru Granth Sahib or Adi Granth is the main Sikh scripture. The Granth promotes ideals of freedom and equality to pursue the way to the Guru following the path of peace and prosperity.

4.1 Sikh Code of Conduct (Sikh Rehat Maryada)

The Sikh code of conduct is known as Sikh Rehat Maryada. The code is an outline of the mandates of daily routine followed by every Sikh. The code of conduct defines a Sikh and offers guidance for the Sikh how to lead the personal and public life. It stipulates principles and mandates, according to the teachings of Sikhism's 10 gurus. Sikh Rehat Maryada as the name suggests are protocol guidelines for worship, important life events, ceremonies, practices, rituals, prohibitions and penance.

The code defines a Sikh as the one who faithfully believes in:

- One Immortal Being
- Ten Gurus, from Guru Nanak Dev to Guru Gobind Singh
- The Guru Granth Sahib
- The utterances and teachings of the ten Gurus
- The baptism bequeathed by the tenth Guru.

According to Sikh Rehat Maryada, A Sikh's life has two aspects: personal and corporate or Panthic (Sangat and Pangat).

The personal life of an individual is guided by three principles:

1. Daily routine of worship
2. Living through honest earning
3. Serve the community without any type of discrimination

4.2 Social Ethics Indocrinated by Sikh Gurus

Sikh Gurus rejected the caste system and propagated complete equality among all as the fundamental moral principle. Sikhism believes that:

1. There is no fundamental difference among men in terms of physical constitution.

2. Laws of nature are not more kindly oriented towards the members of the so-called upper castes.
3. Attainment of the ideal is possible for all men irrespective of caste distinctions right in the present life itself.
4. Birth of a person and consequently the caste based upon it, does not enter into the ultimate reckoning of his deeds (spiritual realization).

Sikh Gurus were against disparaging practices regarding the status of women. They promoted equality of both men and women and have suggested corrective measures for restructuring of the situation. Sikhs respect women in their day to day conduct. Guru Arjan Dev reinforces the high status given to women by Guru Nanak by calling the God as our mother as well as our father (GGS, p. 1144).

Equality among various class and gender is introduced through the establishment of Langer and the concepts of Sangat and Pangat. The concept of Sangat means both women and men equally participate in reciting the praises of the Supreme Being. Pangat means a raw where both women and men, irrespective of their station in life, sit together to eat common meal in the Langer. Sikh gurus propagated monogamous marriages and professed that marriage is an equal partnership of love and sharing.

Sikh gurus worked to raise the status of women. To raise status of women, Sikh Gurus have used feminine symbols extensively in their writings. Women were also cast into the role of saints and soldiers by baptizing them. Great emphasis is placed on the education of women. Since they are considered to be the equal partners, they can lead prayers and perform all religious ceremonies and their education is considered an asset for them. Widow remarriage is allowed in Sikh religion.

While Sikh teachings strongly emphasize individual responsibility for the alleviation of poverty and distress, their main emphasis is on prevention, or the creation of a fair, just and more

responsible world order.

5. Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence through teachings from Guru Granth Sahib

Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism preaches a message of devotion and remembrance of God at all times, truthful living, equality of mankind, social justice and denounces superstitions and blind rituals. The Gurus propagated a lifestyle consisting of reading and reflecting on the holy scriptures in a way that helps to focus on positive living rather than on trivial things that can so easily deflect an individual.

5.1 Mental illnesses as described in Guru Granth Sahib

The Sikh holy scripture explicitly discusses sadness and depression (*dukh*) using many metaphors (Kalra *et al.* 2013). Although *dukh* may refer to physical pain and not depression *per se*, it can be argued that the mind cannot suffer from physical pain, and hence *dukh* here refers to depression.

The Verses from Guru Granth Sahib warn that an individual's mind can be afflicted with terrible diseases (GGS, 21-14) like depression (*dukh*) (GGS, 59-12; 813-9) if one forgets the beloved (Lord) even for a moment. However, when one remembers God, happiness (*sukh*) automatically comes to that person (GGS, 813-9).

Depressed individuals are said to suffer in sadness and agony and have been compared to maggots in manure (*bista meh keerey*) (GGS, 125-8). Like the deer caught in a trap (*fahi fathey mirag*), they continually cry out in pain (GGS, 23-2).

5.2 Mental well-being through meditation and worship – from the Guru Granth Sahib

The Sikh view of mental well-being covers the aspects of healing, not through medicines and at physical level, but as a holistic framework of healing the body, mind and soul. The verses describe *dukh* and all calamities as the part of divine design and appeal the individual to surrender to relieve from all types of pain.

The text also illustrates therapeutic topics

at an individual level by asserting that peace and tranquillity of the mind can restore the mind to its original balanced state or equipoise (*sanatan*). It gives due importance to diagnosing depression (GGS, p. 1279) and treating it in time. The text equates the *Naam* (Lord's name) to medicine (*aukhad*) (GGS, 259-14; 675-6), mentioning that it can help the depressed person and relieve him of his depression.

As per the text, remembering Lord (Prabhsim) and meditation (*dhyan*) can free both the body and mind of any illness (GGS, 611-11). Those who meditate on the Lord's name, with focused consciousness, remain stable forever (GGS, 87-5).

5.3 Purpose of Life and Ways to lead a happy life – The teachings from Guru Granth Sahib

The purpose of life as described in Guru Granth Sahib is to attain *mukti* (salvation) and meet the divine.

Although the Sikh spiritual tradition posits that life-stress can be alleviated by destroying the ego (GGS, 1993, p. 466), it recognizes nonetheless that this ideal is not easily achieved by those living in the material world (GGS, p. 241). Having said that, it is the Sikh belief that *surti* (conscious awareness) can free the ego from self-defeating impressions that have accumulated both in the present life and during the cycle of transmigration (Sandhu, 2004; Singh, 1982). Thus, one can be a conscious being without experiencing liberation (*mukti*).

The text reads:

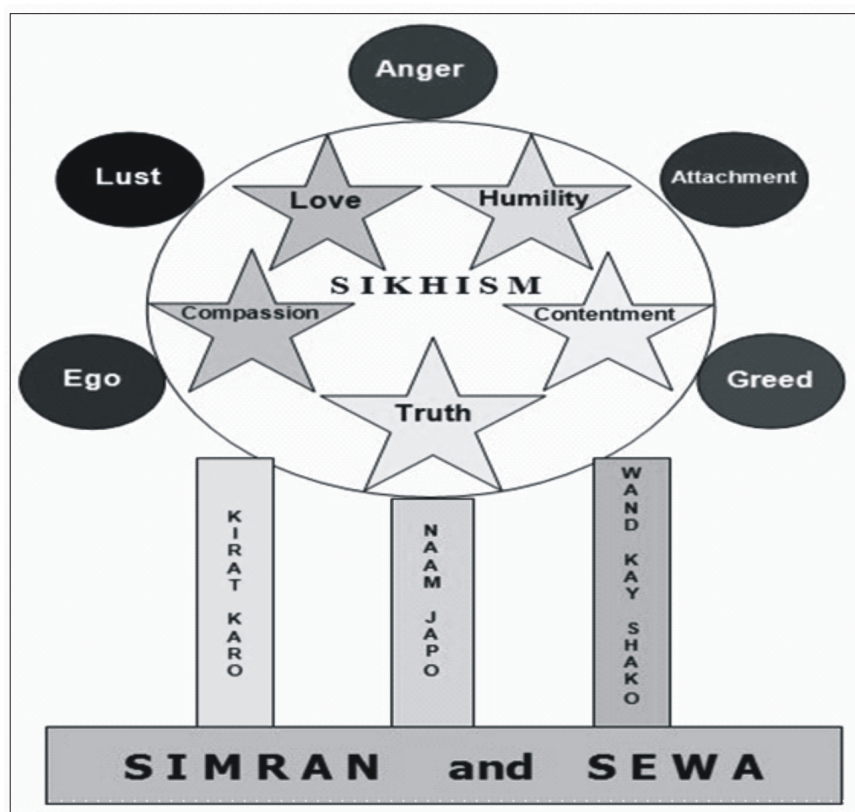
Bhiee Paraapat Maanukh Dhayhureeaa ||

This human body has been given to you.

Gobi(N)Dh Milann Kee Ieh Tayree Bareeaa ||

This is your chance to meet the Lord of the Universe.

The basic tenets of Sikhism can be summed up as shown in the following figure.

Figure 2 Basic tenets of Sikhism

Source: Living Reality by Bibiji Inderjit Kaur Khalsa

Conclusion

Spirituality and emotional well-being are vital parts of an individual's life. According to Steven Covey, "Develop all four intelligences. PQ (physical intelligence) which represents 70 trillion cells that fight disease and digest your breakfast. IQ (intellectual intelligence) EQ (emotional intelligence) the sensing and wisdom of the heart - - and SQ (spiritual intelligence) having to do with meaning, purpose and integrity around your selected value system and your believed source. When combined, they change the world for good."

Spiritual Intelligence provides meaning and purpose to our life and allows us to create new possibilities. Only SQ is capable of thinking beyond the known situations, to link a brand new thought or see a higher truth in a situation. Thus, spiritual intelligence refers to the skills, abilities and behaviours required to develop and maintain a relationship to the ultimate source of all being. In

the time of crisis as we are facing today, spiritual and emotional intelligence will not only provide the missing link between the physical cure of the COVID-19 disease and the mental wellness that is the demand to fight the depression and panic but also lead to happy and healthy society around the world.

Sikh teachings are all about creating a fairer, more tolerant society, and being ready to stand up for the weak and underprivileged, however daunting the circumstances; the need not only to give to charity, but to give one's time and even one's life for the well-being of others (Indarjit Singh, 2001). The holistic view of Sikhism can provide solace to an individual and society. The post pandemic chaos has created fear in the mind of an individual and the Sikh tenets have potential to provide healing touch to each and every individual irrespective of the person's gender, caste, class, race or colour in this chaotic global scenario.

*Nanak Naam Chardikala, teraa bhanaa Sarbaht
dah phahla ||*

Nanak, With Naam comes Chardi Kala and
with your blessings, may there be peace for all.

From Ardas

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