

## **Role of Spiritual Poems on Stress Reduction – A Study**

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### **Abstract**

We see advancement of science and technology and get many benefits of new inventions. Life is more comfortable at present as compared to olden days. Along with advancement of society our life styles have changed. We all remain very busy. We search for happiness. Clumsy mind gives rise to stress these days. This is a major problem for modern society. Literature is a special gift of creativity. This has power to dominate over clumsiness. Mind sings in relaxed mood or during heavy stress mind sings to be relaxed. There is connection of mind's singing in stress handling. While mind sings poems come out automatically. Poets say that they do not need to sit and write. Whatever comes in mind and flows from inner spirit to outward it becomes a poem. Any natural beauty that attracts, any feelings, emotion, pathetic conditions of life or romantic moments or any such incidences initiate to sing. Poets report that poem gives them inner satisfaction and happiness. Not only poems satisfy only poets or writers but also satisfy common people. In society always there is demand of poems. But spiritual poems touch every core of mind, body and spirit. This study focuses on such poems based on spirituality and poems that contain opinions on stress to handle in English literature. Having this study on various poems we know that these have important role in reduction of social and personal stress. Spiritual poems manage life with inner values and develop internal qualities. Poems become the part of natural music of life. These act as natural therapy on stress to reduce. This study confirms that spiritual poems have power to give inner happiness

and remove clumsiness of mind, tension and sorrows of human resources. Few of the poems are also reviewed here. We hope this study will be beneficial to many researchers, readers and people.

**Keywords:** - Life, stress, spirituality, poems and attitudes

### **I. Introduction:-**

Meera, famous princess devote saint of India of 15<sup>th</sup> /16<sup>th</sup> Century AD also known as Mirabai sings, “My beloved dwells in my heart. I have actually seen the abode of joy.” Touching the greatest height of devotion in her path of spirituality she realizes joy of inner life and truth of universe. Going deep to Mirabai’s biography we know that she faces many obstacles and criticism from her family members but she remains faithful to her Lord Krishna to whom she loves from her childhood and gives devotion. Mira’s mother supports growing religious status of her daughter but unfortunately she dies. At early age Mira’s father arranges her marriage with Prince Bhoj Raj, eldest son of Rana Sanga of Chittor. Luxury of palace never attracts Mira and she continues her devotion with Lord Krishna singing sweet devotional songs every evening. Dutifully she serves her husband of material world. While she sings for her Lord she loses attachment to this material world entirely and remains in states of ecstasy and trance. In such a state she sings, “Go to that impenetrable realm that death himself trembles to look upon. There plays the fountain of love with swans sporting on its water.” Her new family does not approve her devotion to Lord Krishna. But Mira’s fame and saintly reputation grows much faster. Mira’s sister-in-law Udabai does not tolerate and starts spreading false gossip to defame Mira. Her husband Boj Raj believing his sister’s words runs in to Mira’s room to tear by a sword but finds no men inside entertained but finds Mira playing with her doll of Lord Krishna. Growing fame of Mira attracts attention of Emperor Akbar and one day disguised in clothes of baggers he travels with Tansen to meet Mira. Akbar meets, gets astonished by saintly power of Mirabai and leaves a necklace below her feet before leaving. Message of Akbar’s visit spreads and Mira’s husband gets furious for meeting Akbar. Her husband orders Mira for committing suicide by drowning in to a river. She does according to order but soon she enters to river Lord Krishna appears and commands Mirabai to leave for Brindaban for safety practice of devotion. Along with her few followers she goes to Brindaban. Later her husband repents and goes Brindaban to bring her back to palace. Mirabai comes back but other family members easily do not accept her and continues

torturing. After few days of return Mira's husband dies fighting with Moghul emperors. Her father-in-law Rana Sanga blames Mirabai for misfortune and death of son and commands her to commit sati. Mirabai keeps inner conscience with Lord Krishna and says that her true husband does not die and due to her devotion still she sings for the Lord and that is why she does not like to commit sati. She says, "I will not become sati because my heart is enamoured of Hari." After such reply family members become more dangerous for her and torture more. Restricting her movements they make her life unpleasant and uncomfortable. Getting physical sufferings still she remains free from stress as she leaves material attachment due to deep devotion and spirituality. Nothing disturbs her at all and watching such situation family attempts twice to kill her but does not become able to kill as Lord saves her. She comes in contact with other saints. She gets advice from them to leave palace. One day very secretly she slips out from palace along with her few followers and comes to Brindaban where she practices devotion till her leaving of mortal body. This life story of Mirabai reveals that she gets high stress in every step of her life but she makes her fortune bright. She states that when troubles remain in life no one comes near to feel but while fortune smiles in life all come near to share joy. Every trouble she gets and removes by her own effort of practice of spirituality and manages her life very smoothly in spite of unfavourable conditions. While a person is ordered for death punishment or provoked for committing suicide then definitely he or she gets high stress. But Saint Mirabai declares that death himself trembles before love for Lord then why stress will remain while love is there. Love of devotion is a powerful spiritual value. This conveys the eternity of soul and to remain fearless.

Hildegard (1098-1179), defines spirituality as a power of divinity that brings meaning to life through living word of creator for which a human individual realizes self and understands all values exist in life and truth of universe. Angelus Silesius (1624-1677), defines spirituality as an essence of life to understand uniformity of human soul and God through value based perceptions and learning. Mirabai (1498-1557), defines stress as pressure that comes as mental or emotional strain that comes as the result of adverse situations in life as a feature of unfavourable circumstance that disturbs work and life bringing psychological and physiological imbalance. She defines spirituality as a powerful path of love originated from devotion towards the beloved Lord which helps in realizing truth about life and universe and teaches the art of sacrifice, tolerance and forgiveness. She declares that although stress comes and goes as troubles fluctuate in life still this does not able to cause harm while devotional

attitudes suppress tension we get in life and surrounding environment with rising power of spirituality. Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), defines spirituality as fragrance of life that brings perfection with devotional attitudes, improves faith towards God and strengthens inner potential to completely bloom in life like a beautiful flower. Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), defines spirituality as a philosophical path where an individual gets right wisdom to judge self and awake self to realize light of life and Supreme Power. He further states that stress is expressed with deepest sorrows in life but goes away by touch of light of soul.

## **II. Objectives:-**

- To know more about social stress that occurs in day to day life and hampers living
- To know the influence of spirituality expressed in spiritual poems on human resources
- To have an idea about how spiritual poems work on stress reduction in workplace
- To know about principles of social management and draw out them for learning

## **III. Reviewing essence of few poems:-**

**God's Word is in All Creation by Hildegard of Bingen (1098 – 1179)** – Without the word of God no creature has meaning in life. In invisible or in visible condition every creature has God's word within and every creation holds God's word. She signifies that the word of God is living being. Being word of God spirit is in the flesh. We perceive sometimes of invisible world and very often visible world in form of matters. We see the mortal bodies of various creatures move, dance, sing, perform their works and live life. The living consciousnesses within them are definitely words of God. Knowing this truth relaxes our minds and we accept truth. Reality dances at each moment and we often do not accept but having this idea we accept reality so our confusion goes away. This strengthens our spirituality and faith for God and solves many problems. God's laws for universe are very true. Like law of force of gravitation attracts us towards Earth but we do not able to see this. But this is a reality and we accept this. Listening to the words of God we release pressure and feel inner happiness.

**In the Sea many are one by Angelus Silesius (1624-1677)** - This poet's original name is Johann Scheffler. A loaf holds many grains of corn. Many myriad drops the sea. God's oneness is multitude and we are the great multitude. Extremely countless great numbers of water drops unite to become the sea and nobody knows what exactly the numbers of drops are. Large number people are formed from oneness of God and that is why knowingly or unknowingly all most all people get attraction towards God. Like a loaf holds many, many grains of corn of different varieties, God also holds all types of people in this Earth. Knowing

this truth we do not fight with each other for our status. Truth is that we unite in oneness in faith and attitudes. This solves many problems. Accepting oneness of God we accept his laws and values for integration and balance of communal harmony.

**The World by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)** – Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and full satiety we get and feel in this miraculous universe. Fruits grow and ripe like the ages of creatures grow. Sweetness of flowers with beauty in appearance and internal fragrance pleases us for unlimited time. We feel our state of being pure while accept sweetness of flowers. Fruits on ripening give sweetness. Having maturity in values and morality a person's personality becomes very pleasing to all. Spirituality dwells with purity and life becomes righteous. Every person should build personality and life so soft and sweet like flowers.

**Light by Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)** – “I look behind and after, and find all that is right, in my deepest sorrows, there is a soul of light,” Spirituality makes history of a person very right. Looking behind means doing assessment of own actions performed in past. Looking after and in front means to have determination and right planning to perform righteous work. Having righteousness and right attitudes is very nice and having spiritual values a person never likes to commit sin. But still sometimes there are deepest sorrows in life. As we move on life we experience various activities of others and environment or calamities. We can never give guarantee that there will be no sorrow in life. But knowing the right art we remain unattached with deepest sorrows which give stress of high level. Poet gives advice to realise light of inner spirit and to realize self as a soul, a conscious being. This easily controls deepest sorrows as the person realizes that he is right always. Feeling the light of soul is important to feel purity and truth and reality.

**Bliss of Identity by Sri Aurobinda (1872-1950)** – First stanza of this poem expresses that nature is taught in radiant way. “All begins are in myself embraced. Heart is filled with joy and love. At last poet expresses, in third stanza and declares, “I am a centre of Thy golden light, “The spirit's infinite breath I feel in me. My life is a throb of Thy eternity.” Nature teaches everything pure sending the light by sun and glowing brightly. Nature holds us very tightly with warmth of affection that we feel with light of life and brightness of nature. Like nature if we feel our inner light and realize oneness and brightness of self then we feel unlimited joy and heart's beat properly. Love surrounds our environment and love defines our relationship. While there is love in family and society there is less conflict or no conflict. Love determines life with affection and values to understand others and feel. Joy of life is

miraculous and truth. This lies on love and brightness of soul. This gives identity and helps us feeling bliss. Spirituality brings us closer towards true identity of our lives and role of God in this universe. In material body there is no breath but spirits do have breathing of infinite time. This signifies that eternity of soul is well identified here. Life has strong sound of consciousness and a regular rhythm inside that pulsates in steady. This gives realization as self is only the centre of golden light and rich in eternal resources.

**Prophecy by Robert Penn Warren (1905-1989)** – In second stanza of this poem poet describes little wrongs and petty ills. Present whirl of circumstance is filled with illness. In first stanza of poem poet says you see no beauty on parched parade. Rapid movement of life in round of action is true. But every human being is having freedom of performing action. Committing little wrong actions also bring illness. Wrong actions are cause of sufferings and illness resulted from sins are cause of stress. At present day we see that many suffer and illness remains with cycle of life that seems that there are many wrong actions. Due to wrong performances real beauty of life goes far and many lose their identities of righteousness. Due to lack of beauty, flower like life appears as very as dry life due to intense heat of stress. But we have to make life cheerful with development of beauty. We need parade means special public ceremony or procession as special event of life full of morality, ethics and spiritual values to counter parade of wrong doings. Only growth of ours in spiritual path can help us for such parade of love, caring and unity.

**Dew by Deepak Chaswal (2011)** - Young old grass waits for comfort after a long night crushed by sandals and shoes. Stress the young old grass gets here is very amazingly reflected in this poem and grass looks forward for well polished attitudes to maintain the freshness. That is why young old grass seems to be very thirsty to get nectar in life which falls through morning dew. The nectar only gives happiness and comfort in life and grass gets satisfaction. Not only has this beauty but also it maintains polishing personality to impact on others specifically on the onlookers. Morning remains very fresh with pure air and pure vibration around the pleasing environment. Morning dew holds the nectar for life. Old grass that gets various obstacles in life by crushing and thrashing of others looks forward for getting this nectar of spirituality to forget its stress. This grass also waits for pleasure and bliss in life to gain by practice of spirituality. Spirituality allows inner development of beauty and polishes attitudes to shine for others. This grass needs freshness for entire life. Humorous expression

of this poem talks about a common man in society and gives a clear picture of stress and highlights the importance of practice of spirituality.

**Stress by Amanda Kyara (2014)** – She describes that she does not know how to control stress actually. Day to day stress grows and she feels hopeless. She likes to break this stress and wants to learn the art. Stress becomes unsolved problem of advanced society and brings agony and hopelessness. For controlling stress many think and do not get solution to this. But having interest to learn the art of stress control signifies to have interest to know the secret knowledge behind. Human soul's tendency is that to adjust and learn new tools in life to have sharper skills. Spirituality is the art to remove stress and hopelessness and learning this art is important. For learning having interest in spirituality is important. Day to day growing sorrows definitely increase worries.

**A Poem a day keeps the Stress Away by Mark Frank (2016)** – Poem has the power to heal mind and a poem every day keeps stress away. Word of passion heals the soul. According to Mark exposing a word through presence is the best treatment to relieve pain. Life is very precious and not a game. Gaining many valuable things in life matters a lot. Life has definite ambition to search God, our beloved super father. Mark is absolutely true to have realization that poem heals ill mind as spontaneously sings about inner feelings. Poem is an automated outcome. This sings about true state of mind during sorrow or happiness. Due to spontaneous effect of creativity stress remains in suppressed condition. A poet forgets about his sufferings or illness and an auditor who listens to reciting or singing of poem feels relaxed due to touching of vibration of pleasantness. Accepting the power of creativity poet here accepts the necessity of spirituality that actually heals mind and gives relief from stress. Having care for life is important with word of passion.

#### **IV. Importance of poems in social reformation and management:-**

**Improve power thinking** – Poems improve power of thinking, Thinking gives better planning and creativity dwells in sharp sense. Thinking and rethinking is part of decision making. This power is widely used during risk and uncertainty.

**Give personal and social reasoning** – Thinking is definitely a power. But thinking in logical and sensible way becomes very necessary. Poems on writing and reading improve this quality which is very much necessary for field of management in social reformation.

**Contain and reveal secret knowledge** – Poems open the door of secret knowledge which remains in mind and secret knowledge of the world through others. Having knowledge we keep mind alert and skilful.

**Open the door of wonderful possibilities** – We always search for new possibilities or opportunities. Poems very often give us essence of life, nature and resources. We get hope of possibilities secretly hidden in poems those reveal our scopes to keep them in work.

**Teach discipline for reengaging in world** – Poems automatically flow out of mind and give feelings of wonderful discipline of natural resources. Through art of action we engage in mind and reengage with natural phenomenon. Poems very often talk about nature, society and inner feelings.

**V. Principles drawn from reviewed poems for social stress reduction:-**

**Self awakening and knowledge** – Poems are very much related to self. While mind sings spirit listens. Spiritual poems are mainly devotional poems where prayers are offered to God. These help in self awakening and bring brief knowledge about self. That is why soul detaches for that moment for being with matters or material relationships. This detachment takes far from stress and brings near realm of feeling self and happiness.

**Improvement of confidence** – Poems improve confidence about self abilities and skills. This helps in taking risk for new situation or projects in life. Fear goes away while confidence remains in mind. In such cases stress generated by fear and dilemma goes away.

**Self assessment of interests** – Sometimes interests bring happiness and sometimes hatred or pain if not fulfilled. Doing assessment of own interests reduces stress and poems reflect assessment of self of poets and readers or auditors who get this art.

**Development of tolerance** – Intolerance brings conflict and pain and sorrows. But development of tolerance brings victory over conflicts and violence. Tolerance solves many problems in our lives. Spiritual poems flow with spirituality and values reside in self on awakening. Power of tolerance reduces the chance of tension.

**Understanding responsibilities** – Chance of getting stress grows while irresponsibility is witnessed in life. But spiritual poems bring awareness of being responsible in all aspects of life. Responsibilities reduce confusion and tension as we remain alert much before of doing duty. Such understanding opens the door for self adjustment.

**Power of accepting truth or reality** - While we do not accept the reality in life we get tension. Whatever is truth can never be changed. At each time we should learn the art of truth

and face this with courage. Facing and knowing reality we gain certain powers. Poems are reflection of reality and we can learn this art from poems.

**VI. Discussion:-**

Stress occurs while troubles, anxiety or tension come in life. Stress is not permanent. While stress comes in mind a person feels heavy and clumsy. Fear of terror or torture provokes many for committing suicide. Such incidences propel them towards sufferings. Many think that there is no solution to reduce stress. But having devotion in mind for God and practice of spirituality strengthen their inner potential. Self awakening rectifies attitudes. Development of courage and knowledge helps them to judge on own sufferings and they do not break in pain or sorrow as they get opportunity to tolerate. Spiritual poems definitely have secret power within them. Listening to reciting of such poems brings valuable vibrations in mind. Purity and surety in attitudes dwell. The reality of nature and surrounding environment is well judged by inner power to avoid troubles. Avoiding unnecessary worries, people get ready to accept truth and reality. Understanding responsibilities we understand properly our duties. We get a clear picture from Mirabai and her devotional poems.

**VII. Conclusion:-**

This study definitely helps us to understand about system of society and how social stress is experienced from family and relatives. This study shows us direction to understand the causes of social stress and indicates that only spirituality is one solution that acts as medication to get relief from ache of stress. Having this study we know that creativity is the strength to express knowledge and revive inner fait. Having this study we can clarify that spiritual poems definitely play important role to manage life and society and suppress stress. Spiritual poems enhance the quality of leadership as followers sing these for many, many years. This study gives benefit to have knowledge and skill for proper thinking, planning, organising, and proper utilization of resources, controlling and co-ordinating. So such a study becomes very beneficial not for only people but also for managers and authorities. This study indicates us to have inner strength. Purity sends the message to perform righteous work in day to day life through which we get less pressure or stress.

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