

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF PALI AND BUDDHIST STUDIES

**HOW TO USE BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES TO COPE WITH
STRESS - FACED BY THE YOUNGER GENERATION IN MODERN
SRI LANKA**

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Abstract

The ever known effective Psychological Counsellor in the human history was the Lord Buddha. Even after 2500 years, the doctrines and methodologies used by Him could be applied in scientific manner with a great success. This Research and Thesis is an attempt to explore Buddhist Psychological principles to cope stress among younger generation in modern Sri Lanka.

Some Intellectuals suggest that 'stress' is not an important factor. During the literature survey it was found that 'stress' is a disguised nature of the suffering (*dukkha*) preached by Buddha with His first sermon as well as His last words. A fairly good comparison of these facts is exposed and discussed in Chapter One and Two.

Chapter three has concentrated on stress. Even though stress is a newly formulated word it is clearly mentioned in Early Buddhism as '*upāyāsa*' (*vehesakara bawa*) which signifies constant worry or nervous tension. *Upāyāsa* as mentioned in the Dependent Origination (*paṭṭiccasamuppāda*) it is highly connected with suffering (*dukkha*).

Buddhism is the main national religion in Sri Lanka. Majority of population are 'Born Buddhists'. All doctrines preached by Buddha is freely available. There are continuous grand scale *Āmisa pūjā* (behavioral Practices developing the faith - *saddhā*) in country-wide. In the same time younger generation is facing severe conflicts within their 'inner self' as well as with parents and the general society as a whole. The 'young blood' is generally aggressive with revolutionary ideas against conventional practices. Chapter Four is intended to discuss the nature of the younger generation by biologically, socially, psychologically, and cognitively in depth. Accordingly the elder generation should look at the youngers in empathetic, congruent and with unconditional positive regards.

With aggressive and revolutionary ideas of the younger generation, Sri Lanka faced severe and chaotic incidents a few occasions in recent past; Namely, Insurgency 1971, and conflicts in 87-89. Even today the 'unrest' among younger generation in universities, other educational institutions, and many other places create great losses to the whole society on it's

well-being. Whatever the interpretation one gives on this 'unrest', it is a known fact that the younger generation is psychologically highly attracted and vulnerable on these situations due to their younger age. Voluntarily as well as forcibly they participate such aggressive incidents, continuously.

Interlectuals today have to see in to these problems empathatically in depth. The solutions are available in Buddhism. There are many easy methods available. Without continuously sticking to the *Āmisa pūjā* (behavioral practices developing the faith - *saddhā*) one could be transformed to practical activities (*Pratipatti pūjā*). An attempt was made with this Research for last few years to find and test such a resultful, methodical and scientific tool. "The Contemplative Musical Catharsis" which is discussed in Chapter Five and Six are the outcome of that effort.

Not only adolescent, elders in many strata of the society are highly influenced with this simple music therapy. This is more clear, when individual shedding tears due to melting their 'un-solved' and 'un-told' burning problems, could spring up with a great relief and pleasure after few minutes later in the programme. Appendix 10 shows a few such photographs. Over 20,000 favorable written comments by the participants are available for any prospective Researcher.

The conclusion and the proposals after the Research is very clear. "Start with the general instructions (*Ānupubbī kathā*), grow up distinguishing the theoretical knowledge (*pariyatti*) and transform to practice by heart (*pratipatti*)". Then the next step is very clear. After achieving Right mindfulness, it will direct the individual to get in to the Right Path, i.e.: Noble eight fold path (*Ariya aṭṭāṅgika magga*) to lead for the deliverance (*nibbāna*).