

Āyurvedic Concordance
Discussion on Karma

Webster's New World Dictionary—karma

n. [Sanskrit, a deed, act, fate]

1. Buddhism & Hinduism the totality of a person's actions in any one of the successive states of his existence, thought of as determining his fate in the next.
2. Loosely, fate; destiny

The Practical Sanskrit Dictionary—V. S. Apte

Karman—

1. action, word, deed
2. execution, performance
3. business, office, duty
4. a religious rite
5. a specific action, moral duty
6. performance of religious rites as opposed to speculative religion or knowledge of Brahman
7. product result
8. a natural or active property
9. fate, the certain consequence of acts done in a former life
10. to object of an action
11. motion considered as one of the seven categories of things.
12. Organ of sense
13. The 10th lunar mansion (astrology)

Kriyā

1. Doing, execution, performances, accomplishment
2. An action, act, business, undertaking
3. Activity, bodily action, labor
4. Teaching, instruction
5. Possessions of some art, knowledge
6. Practice
7. A literary work
8. A purificatory rite, a religious rite or ceremony
9. An expiatory rite or ceremony
10. The ceremony of offering oblations to the deceased ancestors
11. Worship
12. Medical treatment, application of remedies, cure
13. Action, the general idea expressed by a verb (grammar)
14. Motion
15. Especially, motion as one of the seven categories of the Vaiśeṣikas
16. Vestigation by human means or by ordeals
17. Burden of proof
18. A verb
19. A noun of action
20. Disquisition
21. Study
22. Means, expendients
23. Instrument, implements

Kṛ

1. to hurt, injure, kill
2. to make
3. to manufacture, shape, prepare
4. to build, create
5. to produce, cause, engender
6. to form, arrange
7. to write, compose
8. to perform, be engaged in
9. to tell, narrate
10. to carry out, execute, obey
11. to bring about, accomplish, effect
12. to throw or let out, discharge, emit
13. to assume, put on, take
14. to send forth, utter
15. to place or put on
16. to entrust
17. to cook (as food)
18. to think, regard, consider.
19. To take (as in the hand)
20. to make a sound
21. to pass or spend time
22. to direct towards, turn the attention to, resolve on
23. to do a thing for another
24. to use, employ, make use of
25. to divide, break into parts
26. to cause to become subject, reduce completely
27. to appropriate, secure oneself
28. to help give aid
29. to make liable
30. to begin

31. to order
32. to free from
33. to proceed with, put in practice
34. to worship, sacrifice
35. to make like, consider equal to, of

Ca. Su. I.49 The movement initiated by effort is called karma (action).

Ca. Su. I. 52—Action which is the cause of combination and separation resides in substance alone. Action is the performance of what is to be done. It depends on nothing else.

Ca Sa 1.49 tells us that the doer equipped with instruments becomes the cause of all actions. Thus the question of authorship / origin will always hinge on our conception of creation as Self driven or materialistic-particle driven. Of course the latter scenario omits discussion of original cause and takes the functioning universe as a given or starting point of analysis.

Ca. Sā. I.67-69 At the time of dissolution, the Self gets detached from these enjoyable entities. Thus (the Self), subdued by rajas and tamas, gets manifested from the unmanifest state and the reverts to the unmanifest and thus moves continuously like a wheel (from one state to another). Those who are attached excessively to duals and are engrossed by ego are subjected to origin and destruction but not others who are contrary to them.

Ca. Sa. I.116-117 The deeds of the past life, called fate, are known as the cause of disease arising is a given time. There is no major action, the fruit of which, is not enjoyed. The diseases caused by karmas (actions) obstruct therapeutic measures and diminish only on their destruction.

Ca. Su.XI.29-31 By those who are devoid of a defects, in religious scriptures, freedom from rebirth is not mentioned for those who have not overcome their mental defects. Rebirth has been established on perceiving with divine vision by early and earlier great sages who were devoted to religious scriptures, are devoid of fear, attachment, aversion, greed, confusion, and conceit; devoted to ultimate knowledge, endowed with authoritative knowledge, having practical experience and having movement of mind and intellect quite not deranged. So one should decide like that. By perception also it is observed—progeny dissimilar to parents, difference in complexion, voice physiognomy, mind, intellect and fate despite of the similar genetic source, birth is a superior and inferior clan, slavery and sovereignty, happy and unhappy life, inequality in life span, achievement of the result of the deed here, inclination of untrained ones to weeping, breast-suckling, laughing, fear, etc., appearance of marks in body parts, difference in result despite similarity in action, intellectual interest or otherwise of previous birth showing the coming back of the persons who had left the world, liking or otherwise in spite of similar face. On the same basis it is inferred that the deed of the self is unavoidable, indestructible, related to previous body, and continuing is known as “daiva” (fate). This (rebirth) is the result of that (deed). Hereafter another (birth) will also be true. Seed is inferred from fruit and vice versa.

Ca. Vi. III.29-36 Lord (Atreya) replied to him—O Agniveśa! Life span of the living beings depends on proper coordination because the stability or otherwise of life span is dependent upon fate as well as puruṣakāra. Daiva is the deed self done in the previous life while puruṣakāra is that which is done here itself. In both these deeds also there are grades of strength and otherwise. Accordingly, the deed is of three types—inferior, medium, superior. Coordination of both daiva (fate) and puruṣakāra of the superior type is the cause of long, happy, and determined life span, while that of the inferior type is the cause of the contrary (short, unhappy and undetermined life span). In case of medium type the result is also medium. Now listen to further arguments. Weak fate is subdued by the (stronger) puruṣakāra. Likewise, by the distinguished daiva puruṣakāra is subdued. Observing this some hold the determined life span of life, but, in fact, some superior deeds exhibit results determined in time while other have such determination in time. This is known by observation. Hence because both types of causes are observed one-sided view is not correct. I will explain with examples. If there be determined life-span for all there would not be any necessity to apply mantras, herb-roots, gems, auspicious

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rites, offerings, gifts, oblations, observance of rules, expiation, fasting, blessings, bowing, visit to temples etc. with a desire for longevity nor there be any need to avoid excited, fierce and moving cows, elephants, camels, asses, horses, buffaloes and terrific winds, etc. Likewise, one would not abstain from water falls, mountains, uneven and difficult places and strong water current, from careless, insane, excited, fierce and unstable persons, and those inflicted with confusion and greed; from enemies, from furious fire, from various poisonous reptiles, from king's wrath, because these and other similar factors should not be destructive because of entire life having determined life span. Moreover, the living beings who have not practiced the alleviative measures against the happening of untimely death should not be subjected to such happening; all the talks of great sages for initiation and knowledge of application in the chapter of rasāyana would be useless; even Indra should not be able to kill with thunderbolt his enemy with determined life span. Why should Aśvins treat the patient with therapeutic measure? Why should the great sages try to obtain the desired life span by penance? It would also not be necessary for the great sages along with the lord of gods (Indra, who already knows that worth knowing), to see, to instruct and to behave properly. Excellent among all the visions is the one pertaining to Indra, which is possessed by us as well, with this it is observed like this—there is dissimilarity in life span of thousands of persons who are those not indulged in fighting battles; similarly in those who counteract or do not counteract the disease immediately after it is arise; there is also dissimilarity in life span of those who take poison or not; there is no similar fate of the jars carrying water and those in pictures (or kept only for decoration). Hence wholesome regimen is the basis of life and the contrary is that of death. Over and above, orderly and proper use of food and activities which are contrary to the properties of place, time, and self, abstaining from excessive, negative, and perverted use in respect of all (time, action and senses), holding up of psychic excesses (emotions), non-suppression of impelled natural urges, avoidance of over-exertion we take these as the cause for continuance of health and accordingly also instruct and observe properly.

Action:

Subtle & gross; fast & slow, initiated and received, limited and sustained, constant and intermittent, morally neutral on the level of the creator it's judged by its intention and effects in the culture. It is Self-generated and operates through the laws of Nature—gravity, strong force, weak force, electro-magnetism. This means that while diverse in expression they are united in a single field—the unified field, Consciousness.

In the living / conscious aspect of the creation it operates / expresses as mental, emotional, physical phenomena through mind and its agents--the 10 organs. It is mind stuff and includes the dynamic interaction of intellect, mind, memory, and ego.

For the Vaiśeṣikas motion (called *parispanda*) was posited at the atomic, molecular and mass levels in the forms of 1) whirling, rotating, circulating 2) vibrating/oscillating, harmonic. All matter is always in a state of *parispanda*. P.43 *The Fundamental Principles of Ayurveda / Dwarakanath* Also note that actions catabolic (cleavage, disintegration, decomposition, dissociation, hydrolysis, etc.) and anabolic (energy conservation in potential form/growth) p.160 Also note that karma are of 5 kinds: upward movement (*utkṣepaṇam*), downward movement (*apakṣepaṇam*), contraction or narrowing (*ākuñcanam*), *prasāraṇam* (spreading or dilation), *gamanāgamanam* (all motions in general). P I.47

Indian Philosophy relies heavily on the notion of karma The determination of the degree of objectivity of this notion shown from the planetary arrangement is the most noble of endeavors of Jyotisha. In order to understand we simplify it and take the simplification as the essence, the totality. Bad karma is the fixation but good is there too. Karma has numerous facets: = *kr* = to do, act? Kṛṣṇa says if in a body you must act. This leads to an inevitable sequence of results. Whether aware of them or not. + What is inherent in the action is the RESULT. In West we mainly talk about result but action is always present and must precede result. Four Types =

1. *Sancita* = all the results of the past actions of all past lives whether one is aware of result or not.
2. *Prarabdha* = that portion of your *Sancita* karma starting to manifest in your life (present unmanifested effects can exist in the potential *Sancita* karma--to become *Prarabdha* karma in the future) = ripened karma
3. *Kriyamana* = karma which falls on the action side means to do or to act = our free will of the moment

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4. Agama karma = that which has not yet come but is on the way as a result of your volitional capacity such as the new year's resolution. I will do sets an intention for action and change. The effect comes after you do the diet or the exercise or go to graduate school.

The Sancita and Prarabdha are the destiny = this must come but you can give new direction to change when you make new resolutions. This is a model with the conundrum of fate and free will which in the final analysis is not an either / or situation. Certain segments of a life may have so much in motion that you can't stop the Prarabdha karma. Habit may not be true volition. Patterns are a groove of neuronal functioning. Say a well-known rock star says I quit. Years later he will still have effects of the past. Despite present activity the fact of past work being notable or not its results linger and may be significant or not.

Karma is of three types in this context. fixed, unfixed-fixed, unfixed. = drdha, drdha-adrtha, adrtha bala roga v. bala rogi some disease will overcome the rogi no matter what the vaidya does. This is the weight of Sancita but has its resolution in the future --reincarnation. Fixed/unfixed could be an operation that can change the outcome. Ayurveda states that everything is medicine therefore everything produces effect. This is the law of life. Whatever you experience you become, especially if the body can not maintain balance in the face of it. This is true no matter whether you think it in a chronic way or eat it or feel it as climate or live it as lifestyle. It is treated mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually (as in spirit possession).

From the perspective of the effect of action the word kriyā now needs to be examined. An implication of its meaning is success or in a medical context—cure. Thus action with the fruit is sought. In the spiritual context kriyā is associated with action that produces effect but no samskara—no lingering impression or desire. Intention leads to thought then action. If the action leaves an impression then desire for more action is engendered. This is descriptive of the scenario of cause becoming the effect which then becomes the cause. Action that is spontaneous, done without attachment or aversion, produces great beneficial effect. Action which produces seeds of desire for further action are called karma, by contrast. Living in the now, the present, where the future and past are not given attention, all done with indifference—this is the recipe for successful living. This is the path of dharma.

The notion of karma

It is not insignificant that the notion of dravya is defined in two ways—guṇa and karma. These two features of reality are concordant with the notion that light and heat require two distinct models for understanding and portraying their behavior; viz. particle and wave or chemical and radiant. Further, note here that karma has the meaning of rajas from the Sankhya scheme. Hence, in this paradigm karma assumes the metaphorical equivalent of the wave notion. It's dynamic, active, non-physical, and yet, is only part of the understanding of what substance really is. Also, note from Dvarakanath p.25 that the particle is nitya while the wave or energy/action is anitya.

Dvarakanath p.145 Action is of 5 types:

1. Upward --utkshepana
2. Downward – apakshepana
3. Contraction / Narrowing -- akuñcana
4. Spreading / Dilating -- prasarana
5. All Motions in General – gamanagamana

Karma connotes different aspects of physico-chemical reactions i.e. decomposition, dissociation, displacement, double-decomposition, substitution, hydrolysis, addition, etc. including the products of these changes evolved as vapor or precipitated as insoluble substances, which are usually indicate in modern chemistry by arrows upward or downward, respectively. It also connotes certain primary qualities as gaseous and solidity in others. Being in the latter their evaporability and sublimability under heat are implied.

Karma is energy potential released with application of heat in some cases or other combinations for others.

Cause & Effect as Karma

As a cause its root is based in intention and desire. In this context it is mere thought. This is the core mechanism of creation and of change in the universe. While mere energy, it is responsible for the genesis of neuropeptides and neurotransmitters. These govern all manner of mental and physical processes in the body. Cosmically they are responsible for a diverse array of pre-cognitive and clairvoyant experiences as well as many effects at a distance. On the level of the Creator the creation is the evidence of Its mind-stuff.

Ca. Vi. VIII.95-125 Things to be known before proceeding with action—a) prakṛti, vikṛti, sāra, sattva, samhanana, pramāṇa, sātmya, sattva, āhāraśkti, vyāyāmaśakti, vāya, bala, kala,

Ca. Vi. VIII.68-79 b) kāraṇa, karaṇa, kāryayoni, kārya, kāryaphala, anubandha, deśa, kāla, pravṛtti, upāya.

Causes are as innocuous as presence--as in the principle that at microscopic levels the mere presence of an observer is said to bring changes to the process observed. To the extent this plays out at macroscopic levels is unknown. At nuclear levels causes are as deadly and powerful as the hydrogen bomb. At the level of creation itself this potential has been estimated at 57 ergs and 99 ergs at the level of the Creator.

Modes of source: spirit, nuclear, electrical, radiant, chemical, mechanical and operate through matter fields and particle fields. They appear on this basis to be both relativistic and non-relativistic (non-localized). In some ways they seem to be governed by the law of entropy in a cosmic—social way. Yet as causes they are potentially eternal as energy and matter are thought to be eternal. As cause they are both potential and manifest or dynamic.

Pharmacological Actions Definitions (Śārṅgadhara Ch 4.1-25):

- Dīpana = drugs that do not cook ama but only kindle digestive secretions = miśiḥ
- Pācana = drugs that do not kindle appetite but digest āma = nāgakeśara
- Dīpana-pācana = drugs that possess both = citrak
- Śamana = drugs that bring down increased doṣa to normal without expelling them out nor interfering with the doṣas that are normal = amṛtā
- Anulomana = drugs that expel flatus and feces after proper digestion by removing obstructions = haritaki
- Sraṃsana = drugs which expel feces and other wastes with or without proper digestion (laxatives) = kṛtamālaka
- Bhedana = drugs that break up the fecal mass and expel it out forcibly (purgatives) = kaṭukī
- Recana = drugs that make the feces watery and expel it forcibly whether formed or not (cathartics) = trivītā
- Deha Saṃśodhana = drugs that dislodge the wastes and expel them forcibly upward or downward (purifiers) = devadālī phala
- Cedana = drugs that scrape the adhering kapha and other wastes from their lodging (scarificants) = kṣāras (alkalies), marica (black pepper), śilājatu

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- Lekahana = drugs that expel the dhātus and malas after drying up their moisture (mild dehydrants) = honey, hot water, vaca, yava (barley)
- Grāhī = drugs that perform dīpana-pācana and dehydrating = śunṭhī (ginger), jīraka (cumin), gajapippalī
- Sthambhana = drugs that increase vāta by its guṇas—rūkṣa (dry), Fīta (cold), kaṣāya (astringent), laghupāka (easily and quickly digested) = vatsaka, ṭuṇṭuka
- Rasāyanas = drugs that prevent aging and disease (tonics, rejuvenators, elixirs) = amṛā, guggulu, harītakī
- Vājīkara = drugs that increase sexual desire (aphrodisiacs) = nāgabālā, kapikacchu bīja
- Śukrala = drugs that increase semen (semenogogues) = aśvagandha, musalī, śarkarā, śataāvārī kṣīra, māsa; bhallātaka-phalamajjā and amālakī increase semen and help in ejaculation
- Sūkṣma = drugs that enter into the minutest openings of the body = saindhava, kṣaudra, nimba taila, rubu taili
- Vyavāyī = drugs that act very quickly, spread all over it even before alteration later, quickly absorbed = bhaṅga, ahiphena
- Vikāśī = drugs that weaken the joints by dispelling ojas from the tissues = kramuka, kodrava
- Madakārī = drugs possessing tamas quality predominantly and affecting the mind (intoxicants) = surā and other alcoholic beverages
- Yogavāhī / Āgneya = drugs that possess vyavāyī, vikāśī, sūkṣma, cedana, and madakārī and kill = poison
- Pramāthi = drugs that remove accumulated doṣas from the minute spaces = marica, vaca

Abhiṣyandī = drugs that by virtue of picchil (sticky), guru (heavy) block the channels of nutrition (rasa vaha srotas) and cause heaviness of body or organ (obstructants) = dadhi (curd)

Three Categories of Action with examples:

1. stimulant / excitatory--choloretic, cholagogue, digestive (dīpana), pācana, tropic, diuretic, laxative, sialagogue, carminative, vikāśī
2. suppressant / inhibitor—analgesic, constipating, sthambhana, drying, absorbent, styptic, abhiṣyandī
3. amploteric / normalizer / adaptogenic (herbal only)—amrit kalash, aśvagandha,