

20 years experience
of
teaching Ayurveda in Europe
What have we learned from all this?

Prof. Dr. S.N. Gupta
Head, Department of Kayacikitsa,
J.S. Ayurveda College, Nadiad

Head, Academic Advisory Board,
European Academy of Ayurveda, Germany

The initial situation

Initial sources of information about Ayurveda

- Through tourism in India and Srilanka
- Yoga centers offering some short introductions
- Maharshi-Ayurveda with TM
- Visitors from India
- Pop-books in market

The initial situation

Prevalent misconceptions

- *Nadi*: mystification of Pulse-diagnosis
- *Pancakarma*: misunderstood as massage
- Diet: Every Indian item is Ayurvedic
- Constitution as only important matter
- Food rules: mixing up of modern theories
- Total refusal of conventional medicine
- Ayurveda as a Religion?
- Faith based only
- Over-simplification of fundamentals

The initial situation

Difficulties experienced by teachers-

- Language
- Socio-Cultural difference
- Difference in education systems
- Expectations
- Original texts
- Unauthentic literature- creating misconceptions
- Unavailability of treatment material
- Legal situation

The initial situation

Difficulties before the students

- Socio-cultural differences
- Educational background
- Misconceptions created by faulty literatures and teachings from incompetent teachers
- difficulties in application of Ayurvedic teachings arising due to geographical & climatic differences

The initial situation

Difficulties before the students-

- difficulties in application of Ayurvedic teachings arising due to geographical & climatic differences
- uncertainty about application of Ayurvedic teachings
- insufficient time.
- high costs of training program

Needs and solutions

Uniform curricula based on needs and circumstances

- after sincere discussions
 - with -responsible major institutions
 - eminent scholars,
 - experienced teachers
- basic information about Indian cultural and philosophical background
- avoiding controversial aspects
- emphasizing on practical aspects
- different curricula according to different needs

Needs and solutions

Selection and training of good teachers-

- knowledge of Ayurveda (more practically)
- capacity to explain questions from the students
- working knowledge of German language with good English
- experience of climate, life style, beliefs and social setup in the land
- knowledge about existing medical setup

Needs and solutions

Selection and training of good teachers-

- knowledge about the legal aspects concerning Ayurvedic practice
- knowledge about availability of treatment materials
- knowledge about availability of food articles
- Indian institutions may organize training programs for the fulfillment of these needs

Model Example

European Academy of Ayurveda per year:

- short-term seminars: students 1,400
- long-term courses : students 450
-currently matriculated
in MSc (Ayurveda): 120

Total-during 20 years:

- long-term trainings 2 to 4 yrs: 4,500
- Trainings medical professionals: 700
- PG trainings for medical doctors: 250

(source : the European Academy of Ayurveda, Birstein 2014)

Needs and solutions

Publications

- well explained translations of Ancient texts by a team of experts after sincere discussions
- proper explanations of technical words
- authentic books on specific subjects by teams of multiple authors (should include at least one scholar from European countries)



Prof. Dr. S.N. Gupta, J.S. Ayurveda College,
Nadiad, India

Needs and solutions

- **Refresher and re-orientation programs-**
annual or biannual programs
to exchange the information and to execute
the plans after feedback from various sources
e.g. institutions, teachers and students
- **Recognition of competent institutes**
- **Profound research at the level of universities
under Ayurveda Chair**

Conclusion

"Today, Ayurveda is standing on a crossroad, where - if lead rightly - it will firmly establish itself as a scientific system, but - falling in the wrong hands - it might totally vanish as a short lived medical fashion."