

Anger Management Through Chanting Kalabhairava Ashtakam: A Physiological Perspective

Sai Sailesh Kumar Goothy,¹ Bhagya Shree,² Satish S Patil,¹ Syed Sadat Ali,³ Anita Choudhary,⁴ Krishna Mohanty,⁵ Aanandi Sirivoru,⁵

Anger is defined as an emotional state that varies from mild irritation to rage. The cause for anger can be subjective. Anger plays a key role in the diagnosis of psychological disorders, and it affects the personality of an individual. Anger is effectively managed by various medications like mood stabilisers, anxiolytics, anti-depressants etc., which also have considerable side effects. Medications supported with lifestyle changes, relaxation and stress management techniques have proven to be more effective in managing anger. The Kala Bhairava Ashtakam is a Sanskrit hymn composed by the visionary philosopher Sri Adi Shankaracharya of the 8th century. The mantras in this are dedicated to Kala Bhairava, an intense form of Lord Shiva. An individual who chants the Kalabhairava Ashtakam, which is beautiful and a source of knowledge, will be free from all negative emotions, including anger. Hence, Chanting of Kalabhairava Ashtakam can be incorporated in everyday lifestyle for the well-being of an individual. As there are no scientific studies in this area, it is highly recommended to undertake a research study to provide scientific evidence for the effectiveness of the chanting Kalabhairava Ashtakam in the management of Anger.

Access this article online

Website:

www.cijmr.com

DOI:

10.58999/cijmr.v5i01.276

Keywords:

Anger, Chanting, Alternative therapy, Kalabhairava Ashtakam

Dear Editor,

Anger is an emotional state that ranges from mild irritation to rage. The cause for anger can be subjective. Anger plays a key role in the diagnosis of psychological disorders, and it affects the personality of an individual.¹ Unmanaged anger was reported to cause diabetes, bulimic behaviour, and coronary heart disease.² Anger is an intense emotional response to a real or imagined threat or provocation, ranging from mild anger to intense fury.³ The response to threat is mediated by

the basic threat system that consists of the amygdala, hypothalamus, and periaqueductal gray. The amygdala detects a threat, triggering an alarm response to protect us, even before the cortex consciously becomes aware of it.⁴ Anger, in excess and of chronic duration, is known to have debilitating effects on physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being. Anger is effectively managed by various medications like mood stabilisers, anxiolytics, anti-depressants, etc., which also have considerable side effects. Medications supported with lifestyle changes, relaxation, and stress management techniques have proven to be more effective in managing anger.

Chanting means repeating a word or name, or syllable, or a prayer regularly. Chanting is there as a part and parcel of Indian tradition. Chanting mantras has been reported to be beneficial, as it removes negative energy and calms the individual. Regulation of emotions through religious prayer or chanting was reported and supported by MRI studies.⁵ It was reported that maximum activity was recorded in the amygdala during the religious chanting. The other areas of the brain where

¹Department of Physiology, BGS Medical College and Hospital, Adichunchanagiri University, BGS Vijnatham Campus, Nagaruru, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. 562123.

²Department of Physiology, Adichunchanagiri Institute of Medical Sciences, Adichunchanagiri University, Karnataka, India.

³Department of Physiology, Chettinad Institute of Medical Education, DK Plantation, BEML Nagar, KGF, Kolar District, Karnataka, India.

⁴Department of Physiology, R.D Gardi Medical College, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, India.

⁵NRI Institute of Medical Sciences, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Correspondence to: Sai Sailesh Kumar Goothy, Department of Physiology, BGS Medical College and Hospital, Adichunchanagiri University, BGS Vijnatham Campus, Nagaruru, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. 562123. E-mail: dr.goothy@gmail.com

Submitted: 20/02/2026

Revision: 05/03/2026

Accepted: 20/03/2026

Published: 20/04/2026

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

How to cite this article: Goothy SSK, Shree B, Patil SS, Ali SS, Choudhary A, Mohanty K, Sirivoru A. Anger Management Through Chanting Kalabhairava Ashtakam: A Physiological Perspective. Central India Journal of Medical Research. 2026;5(1):132-133.

activity was observed include the thalamus, midbrain, and prefrontal cortex. The Kala Bhairava Ashtakam is a Sanskrit hymn composed by the 8th-century visionary philosopher Sri Adi Shankaracharya. The mantras in this are dedicated to Kala Bhairava, an intense form of Lord Shiva. According to Hindu mythology, Kala Bhairava, an avatar, manifested to humble the creator, Brahma, who had turned arrogant and grown a fifth head. As a mark of destruction of ego and arrogance, fierce Bhairava severed the fifth head and wandered with the skull (as a symbol of sin and redemption) and finally attained liberation in Kashi. This mantra represents the journey from ego and arrogance to peace and liberation. This hymn vividly describes Bhairava's aggressive and fiercely protective form, which may appear as anger, chaos, and destruction, but deep down, it represents acknowledgement, acceptance, and transformation of darker impulses like anger and redirecting them into discipline, awareness, and strength. This is similar to the Jungian concept of shadow work in psychology. Sanskrit syllables have been proven to produce patterns of vibrations that affect the brain waves and brain, especially the limbic system (responsible for emotional control), hence may lead to neuroplastic changes, enhancing self-control, emotional balance, and anger management. An individual who

chants the Kalabhairava Ashtakam, which is beautiful and a source of knowledge, will be free from all negative emotions, including anger. Hence, Chanting of Kalabhairava Ashtakam can be incorporated into everyday lifestyle for the well-being of an individual. As there are no scientific studies in this area, it is highly recommended to undertake a research study to provide scientific evidence for the effectiveness of the chanting of the Kalabhairava Ashtakam in the management of Anger.

References

1. Grünebaum A, McLeod-Sordjan R, Pollet S, Moreno J, Bornstein E, Lewis D, Katz A, Warman A, Dudenhausen J, Chervenak F. Anger: an underappreciated destructive force in healthcare. *J Perinat Med.* 2023 May 15;51(7):850-860.
2. Tsenkova VK, Carr D, Coe CL, Ryff CD. Anger, adiposity, and glucose control in nondiabetic adults: findings from MIDUS II. *Journal of behavioral medicine.* 2014 Feb;37(1):37-46.
3. Adolphs R. What does the amygdala contribute to social cognition?. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences.* 2010; 1191(1), 42–61.
4. Fernandez E, Johnson SL. Anger in psychological disorders: Prevalence, presentation, etiology and prognostic implications. *Clin Psychol Rev.* 2016 Jun;46:124-35.
5. Gao J, Skouras S, Leung HK, Wu BWY, Wu H, Chang C, Sik HH. Repetitive Religious Chanting Invokes Positive Emotional Schema to Counterbalance Fear: A Multi-Modal Functional and Structural MRI Study. *Front Behav Neurosci.* 2020 Nov 24;14:548856.