

Certificate in Integrative Palliative Care – 3
Dr. Geeta Joshi
Dr. Piyush Gupta
Dr. Col. Yashavant Joshi
International Institute of Distance Learning
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Week-03

Lecture 20: Overview of Yoga in palliative Care, Challenges & Therapeutic Role of Yoga

(Refer Slide Time: 00:15)



This session comprises of the integrated role of yoga in palliative care wherein we will cover the introduction of palliative care, its significance in today's modern world and the challenges faced. We will also cover the helping hand of yoga, types of yoga, specifically Ashtanga yoga and its practical implications in palliative care. Let's understand each and every aspect of the therapeutic role of yoga for palliative care settings.

(Refer Slide Time: 00:50)

Palliative Care & Yoga: A Holistic Approach to Healing

- With the rising demand of palliative care, governments have acknowledged its importance to make it mandatory, the medical community is increasingly embracing the integration of alternative therapies to enhance patient comfort and well-being. These complementary approaches not only address physical symptoms but also enrich mental, emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual dimensions of health.
- Yoga, in particular, has gained recognition as a powerful alternative therapy that aligns seamlessly with palliative care.** The holistic practices of yoga can significantly improve the quality of life for patients facing serious illnesses.

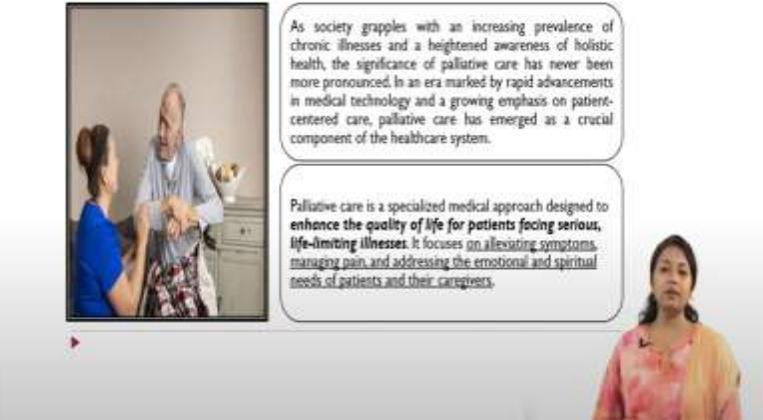


As the demand for palliative care continues to rise and governments worldwide recognize its importance by making it mandatory, the medical community is increasingly embracing the integration of alternative therapies to enhance patient comfort and well-being. These complementary approaches not only address physical symptoms but also enrich mental, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual dimensions of health. Yoga in particular has gained recognition as a powerful alternative therapy that aligns seamlessly with palliative care.

Its holistic practices can significantly improve the quality of life for patients facing serious illnesses. This session will explore the integrated role of yoga in palliative care, highlighting how its techniques can foster relaxation, reduce anxiety and promotes a deeper sense of peace for patients. Together, we can enhance the overall care experience and support patients in navigating their journeys with greater comfort and dignity.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:10)

Palliative Care: Definition and Significance in Today's World



As society grapples with an increasing prevalence of chronic illnesses and a heightened awareness of holistic health, the significance of palliative care has never been more pronounced. In an era marked by rapid advancements in medical technology and a growing emphasis on patient-centered care, palliative care has emerged as a crucial component of the healthcare system.

Palliative care is a specialized medical approach designed to **enhance the quality of life for patients facing serious, life-limiting illnesses**. It focuses on alleviating symptoms, managing pain, and addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their caregivers.

As the society grapples with an increasing prevalence of chronic illnesses and a heightened awareness of holistic health, the significance of palliative care has never been more pronounced.

In an era marked by rapid advancements in medical technology and a growing emphasis on patient-centered care, palliative care has emerged as a crucial component of the healthcare system.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:35)

Understanding Palliative Care



- ▶ At its core, palliative care is **about improving the quality of life** for patients by providing comprehensive support tailored to their unique needs. Unlike curative treatments that aim to eliminate disease, **palliative care prioritizes comfort and dignity**. It can be provided alongside curative therapies or as the primary focus of care, making it versatile and applicable at any stage of illness
- ▶ A key feature of palliative care is its **interdisciplinary approach**. A TEAM OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS—INCLUDING DOCTORS, NURSES, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND SPIRITUAL ADVISORS—WORKS COLLABORATIVELY TO ADDRESS VARIOUS ASPECTS OF A PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE.

Palliative care is a specialized medical approach designed to enhance the quality of life for patients facing serious life-threatening illnesses. It focuses on alleviating symptoms, managing pain and addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their caregivers. So, at its core, palliative care is about improving the quality of life for patients by providing comprehensive support tailored to their unique needs. Unlike curative treatments that aim to eliminate disease, palliative care prioritizes comfort and dignity for the patients.

It can be provided alongside curative therapies or as the primary focus of care making it versatile and applicable at any stage of illness. A key feature of palliative care is its interdisciplinary approach. A team of healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, social workers, and spiritual advisors, works collaboratively to address various aspects of a patient's experience.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:50)

What is Palliative Care?

- ▶ Palliative care plays a significant role in today's healthcare landscape, offering a **compassionate and comprehensive approach to managing serious illnesses**. As the prevalence of chronic diseases rise and the focus on quality of life becomes paramount, the need for palliative care will only continue to grow. **By providing holistic support that addresses physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, palliative care enhances the dignity and comfort of patients, empowering them to live their lives to the fullest.** As society continues to navigate the complexities of illness and healthcare, embracing and integrating palliative care into standard practice is essential for fostering a more humane and effective healthcare system.
- ▶ In these sessions we will understand in detail how yoga can prove a helpful hand to the concept of palliative care for people suffering with terminal illnesses.

Palliative care plays a significant role in today's healthcare landscape, offering a compassionate and comprehensive approach to managing serious illnesses. As the prevalence of chronic diseases rise and the focus on quality of life becomes paramount, the need for palliative care will only continue to grow.

By providing holistic support that addresses physical, emotional and spiritual needs, palliative care enhances the dignity and comfort of patients, empowering them to live their lives to the fullest.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:30)

Introduction to Yoga as a complementary therapy

- While many have achieved financial success and enjoy luxurious lifestyles, they often sacrifice their peace of mind in the process. However, in search of tranquility, many turn to ancient Indian practices like Yoga, which sages have long regarded as a valuable heritage. Today, Yoga is not just a relic of the past but a vital resource for the future.
- According to the **World Health Organization(WHO)**, true health encompasses physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, and Yoga offers a path to achieve this holistic state. By practicing Yoga regularly, we can harmonize our biological rhythms, and if disruptions occur, specific practices can help restore balance.



As society continues to navigate the complexities of illness and healthcare, embracing and integrating palliative care into standard practice is essential for fostering a more humane and effective healthcare system. In these sessions, we will understand in detail how yoga can prove a helping hand to the concept of palliative care for people suffering with terminal illnesses.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:00)

Introduction to Yoga as a complementary therapy

- Yoga is universally recognized and embraced, transcending borders and cultures. It is practiced worldwide for various purposes, including health, performance enhancement, therapy, and more. Yoga has established itself as a respected science with diverse applications for human benefit. However, it's essential to understand that **Yoga extends beyond mere physical exercises or breathing techniques; it is a holistic way of life.**
- As modernization and mechanization advance, we are transitioning into a developed nation. However, this shift has turned people into mechanical beings, chasing material wealth and comfort while neglecting their health. The relentless pursuit of prosperity increases mental stress, making individuals more vulnerable to tension-related illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure.

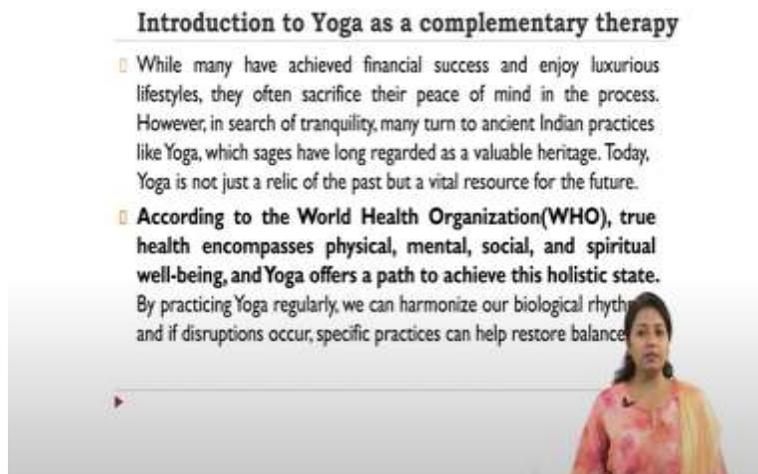


Yoga is universally recognized and embraced transcending borders and cultures. It is now practiced worldwide for various purposes including health performance enhancement therapy and many more.

Yoga has established itself as a respected science with diverse applications for human benefit. However, it's essential to understand that yoga extends beyond mere physical exercises or breathing techniques. It is a holistic way of life. As modernization and mechanization advance, we are transitioning into a developed nation. However, this shift has turned people into mechanical beings, chasing material wealth and comfort while neglecting their own health and of the families.

The relentless pursuit of prosperity increases mental stress, making individuals more vulnerable to tension-related illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:10)



Introduction to Yoga as a complementary therapy

- While many have achieved financial success and enjoy luxurious lifestyles, they often sacrifice their peace of mind in the process. However, in search of tranquility, many turn to ancient Indian practices like Yoga, which sages have long regarded as a valuable heritage. Today, Yoga is not just a relic of the past but a vital resource for the future.
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), true health encompasses physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, and Yoga offers a path to achieve this holistic state.** By practicing Yoga regularly, we can harmonize our biological rhythms and if disruptions occur, specific practices can help restore balance.

While many have achieved financial success and enjoy luxurious lifestyles, they often sacrifice their peace of mind in the process. However, in search of tranquility, many turn to ancient practices like yoga, which sages have long regarded as a valuable heritage. Today, yoga is not just the relic of the past, but a vital resource for the future. According to the World Health Organization, true health encompasses physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being, and yoga offers a path to achieve this holistic state.

By practicing regularly the yogic techniques, we can harmonize our biological rhythms and if disruptions occur, specific practices can help restore balance.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:05)

Misconceptions about Yoga

Yoga stands as one of the most popular yet misunderstood disciplines, with its principles and scientific foundations often overlooked. As we move towards greater acceptance of Yoga in the health field, we still have work to do. For Yoga to be recognized as a complementary therapy within medical science, ongoing efforts are essential. Medical professionals must collaborate to gather substantial clinical data and develop scientific explanations for yogic practices. Such foundational research will pave the way for Yoga to be embraced as a robust therapeutic tool, benefiting countless individuals in the process.



Yoga stands as one of the most popular yet misunderstood discipline with its principles and scientific foundations often overlooked. As we move towards greater acceptance of yoga in the health field, we still have work to do. For yoga to be recognized as a complementary therapy within medical science, ongoing efforts are essential. Medical professionals must collaborate to gather substantial clinical data and develop scientific explanations for yogic practices.

Such foundational research will pave the way for yoga to be embraced as a robust therapeutic tool, benefiting countless individuals in the process.

(Refer Slide Time: 07:48)

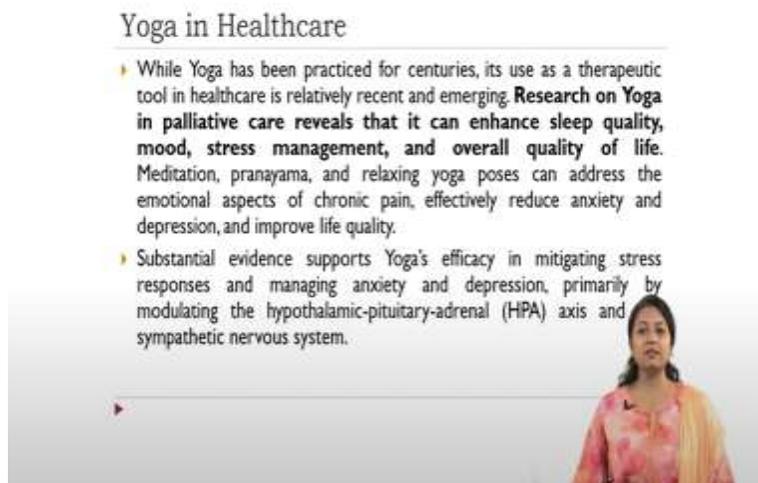
Role of Yoga w.r.t. Palliative Care

- ▶ In the context of palliative care, it is evident from a global perspective that there is a pressing need to develop effective and cost-efficient strategies. These strategies should address the needs of individuals facing serious illnesses and aim to enhance their quality of life
- ▶ **What yoga can offer in palliative care is a holistic approach that focuses on the individual as a whole, rather than just the disease itself.** It offers a patient-centered perspective on wellness, aiming to alleviate symptoms, pain, physical challenges, and mental stress, thereby enhancing overall quality of life. When practiced under proper guidance, Yoga has minimal side effects and can be adapted to any age and setting, including hospital beds. As the saying goes, "If you can breathe, you can do Yoga."



What yoga can offer in palliative care is a holistic approach that focuses on the individual as a whole rather than just the disease itself. It offers a patient-centered perspective on wellness aiming to alleviate symptoms, pain, physical challenges and mental stress thereby enhancing overall quality of life. When practiced under proper guidance, yoga has minimal side effects and can be adapted to any age and setting, including hospital beds. As the saying goes, if you can breathe, you can do yoga.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:30)



Yoga in Healthcare

- ▶ While Yoga has been practiced for centuries, its use as a therapeutic tool in healthcare is relatively recent and emerging. **Research on Yoga in palliative care reveals that it can enhance sleep quality, mood, stress management, and overall quality of life.** Meditation, pranayama, and relaxing yoga poses can address the emotional aspects of chronic pain, effectively reduce anxiety and depression, and improve life quality.
- ▶ Substantial evidence supports Yoga's efficacy in mitigating stress responses and managing anxiety and depression, primarily by modulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and sympathetic nervous system.

While yoga has been practiced for centuries, its use as a therapeutic tool in healthcare is relatively recent and emerging. Research on yoga in palliative care reveals that it can enhance sleep quality, mood, stress management and overall quality of life. Meditation, pranayama and relaxing yoga poses can address the emotional aspects of chronic pain, effectively reduce anxiety and depression and improve quality of life.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:03)

Yoga therapy for palliative care

- ▶ Mindfulness practices, which emphasize present-moment awareness, acceptance, and non-reactivity, can enhance quality of life and alleviate the fear of death. Although Yoga encompasses various styles and techniques, it can be tailored to individual needs, including those with functional limitations. Yoga therapy in palliative care focuses on gentleness and compassion, aiming to empower patients to face illness and death through a holistic approach addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

Here are some examples of yoga practices that can be beneficial in palliative care:

- ▶ **Gentle Yoga Poses (Asanas):** Supported and modified stretching is tailored to meet individual needs. Restorative yoga uses props to facilitate stretching, provide support, and induce relaxation, helping to reduce fatigue and pain especially in cancer patients.



Substantial evidence supports yoga's efficacy in mitigating stress responses and managing anxiety and depression, primarily by modulating the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis and the sympathetic nervous system.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:19)

Yoga- A Beneficial Approach to Holistic Well-Being

- ▶ Recent studies have shown that mindfulness, rooted in ancient Eastern meditation traditions, can effectively reduce pain. **'Mindful Yoga' has been identified as a beneficial approach for managing pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, psychological distress, and functional impairments in women with metastatic breast cancer.** Mindfulness meditation engages distinct brain and psychological mechanisms, helping to diminish the subjective experience of pain. **Techniques like relaxation postures and Yoga Nidra have been shown to reduce the need for pain medication, improve sleep, and alleviate fatigue in cases of malignant pain.**



Recent studies have shown that mindfulness, rooted in ancient Eastern meditation traditions can effectively reduce pain.

Mindful yoga has been identified as a beneficial approach for managing pain, fatigue,

sleep disturbances, psychological distress and functional impairments in women with metastatic breast cancer. Mindfulness meditation engages distinct brain and psychological mechanisms helping to diminish the subjective experience of pain. Techniques like relaxation postures and yoga nidra have been shown to reduce the need for pain medication, improve sleep and alleviate fatigue in case of malignant pain.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:08)

Yoga therapy for palliative care

- ▶ Mindfulness practices, which emphasize present-moment awareness, acceptance, and non-reactivity, can enhance quality of life and alleviate the fear of death. Although Yoga encompasses various styles and techniques, it can be tailored to individual needs, including those with functional limitations. Yoga therapy in palliative care focuses on gentleness and compassion, aiming to empower patients to face illness and death through a holistic approach addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

Here are some examples of yoga practices that can be beneficial in palliative care:

- ▶ **Gentle Yoga Poses (Asanas):** Supported and modified stretching is tailored to meet individual needs. Restorative yoga uses props to facilitate stretching, provide support, and induce relaxation, helping to reduce fatigue and pain especially in cancer patients.



Although yoga encompasses various styles and techniques, it can be tailored to individual needs including those with functional limitations. Yoga therapy in palliative care focuses on gentleness and compassion, aiming to empower patients to face illness and death through a holistic approach addressing physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects.

Here are some of the examples of yoga practices that can be beneficial in palliative care settings. Gentle yoga poses or asanas. Supported and modified stretching can be tailored to meet individual needs. Restorative yoga uses props to facilitate stretching, provide support and induce relaxation, helping to reduce fatigue and pain especially in cancer patients.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:05)

Yoga therapy for palliative care

- **Regulated Breathing Techniques (Pranayama):** Diaphragmatic breathing effectively lowers anxiety by decreasing sympathetic activity and enhancing vagal activity. This technique is accessible to individuals of any age or physical condition and can be practiced anywhere, including in a hospital bed. Deep yogic breathing with prolonged exhalation helps relax skeletal muscles and manage stress and anxiety.
- **Gestures (Mudra):** Calming mudras, which involve subtle physical movements, offer comfort and are easy to perform. Specific mudras such as Anjali, Padma, and Adhi mudras are recommended for end-of-life yoga therapy.
- **Meditation (Dhyana):** Helps in managing stress and fostering mental resilience.
- **Yoga Nidra:** Provides complete relaxation, self-awareness, and emotional stability, while reducing anxiety, rage, and emotional reactivity.
- **Nada Yoga (Chanting Mantra or Singing):** Reduces anxiety and positively influences EEG Alpha waves, contributing to overall well-being.
- **Mindfulness:** Can be practiced anytime and anywhere, making it suitable even for those with severe physical limitations. Mindfulness-based practices help individuals cope with stress and face the realities of illness and death.



Regulated breathing techniques known as pranayama effectively lowers anxiety by decreasing sympathetic activity and enhancing vagal activity.

The techniques of pranayama is accessible to individuals of any age or physical condition and can be practiced anywhere including a hospital bed. Deep yogic breathing with prolonged exhalation helps relax skeletal muscles and manage stress and anxiety. Calming mudras which involves subtle physical movements offer comfort and are easy to perform. Specific mudras such as Anjali, Padma and Adi mudras are recommended for end of life yoga therapy. The technique of meditation helps in managing stress and fostering mental resilience.

Yog Nidra provides complete relaxation, self-awareness and emotional stability while reducing anxiety, rage and emotional reactivity. Nada Yog or chanting mantra or singing reduces anxiety and positively influence EEG alpha waves contributing to overall well-being. And then last but not the least, mindfulness can be practiced anytime and anywhere making it suitable even for those with severe physical limitations. Mindfulness based practices help individuals cope with stress and face the realities of illness and death.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:45)

Yoga therapy for palliative care

- ▶ These practices can be adapted for specific circumstances, including for those who are bedridden or chair-bound. Participants are encouraged to work at their own pace and within their physical capacity. For patients with advanced metastatic cancers involving bone, poses that stress the bones should be avoided.

Practices involving hyperventilation, such as Kapalabhati (forceful exhalation) and Bhastrika (bellows breath), should be avoided in patients undergoing radiation for lung lesions due to the risk of pneumothorax. *All yoga therapies are most effective when guided by a professional yoga instructor.*



These practices as mentioned can be adapted for specific circumstances including for those who are bedridden or chair bound.

Participants are encouraged to work at their own pace and within their physical capacity. For patients with advanced metastatic cancers involving bone, poses that stress the bone should be avoided. Practices involving hyperventilation such as Kapalabhati, forceful exhalation and Bhastrika, bellows breathing should be avoided in patients undergoing radiation for lung lesions due to the risk of pneumothorax. All Yoga Therapies, it is important to mention that all yoga therapies are most effective when guided by a professional yoga instructor.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:30)

Challenges Facing Yoga in Palliative Care Settings

Yoga can be a valuable complement to palliative care, providing physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits. However, there are several challenges that practitioners and healthcare providers may face when integrating yoga into palliative care settings:

1. Patient Condition and Limitations

- Many patients in palliative care have complex health conditions that can limit their ability to participate in yoga. Fatigue, pain, and mobility issues may hinder their engagement in physical practices.

2. Lack of Awareness and Understanding

- There may be limited awareness among healthcare professionals about the benefits of yoga in palliative care. This can lead to hesitance in recommending yoga to patients or integrating it into care plans.

3. Training and Expertise

- Not all yoga practitioners are trained to work with individuals who have serious illnesses. Specialized training is needed to ensure that yoga instructors can adapt practices to meet the unique needs of this population.



Despite all the benefits that yoga can provide in palliative care settings still there are many challenges to palliative care so yoga can be a valuable complement to palliative care providing physical emotional and spiritual benefits.

However, there are several challenges that practitioners and health care providers may face when integrating yoga into palliative care settings The primary challenge is patient's condition and limitation. As many patients in palliative care have complex health conditions that can limit their ability to participate in yoga. Fatigue, pain and mobility issues may hinder their engagement in physical practices. There is a lack of awareness and understanding among healthcare professionals about the benefits of yoga in palliative care. This can lead to hesitance in recommending yoga to patients or integrating it into care plans.

Then lack of training and expertise is there. Specialized training is needed to ensure that yoga instructors can adapt practices to meet the unique needs of this population.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:50)

Challenges Facing Yoga in Palliative Care Settings

4. Cultural Sensitivity

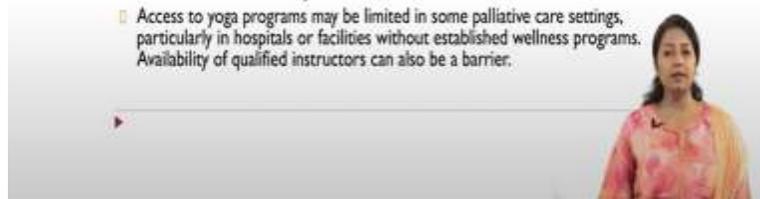
- ❑ Palliative care patients come from diverse backgrounds with varying beliefs about health, wellness, and spirituality. Yoga practices may need to be adapted to align with patients' cultural values and preferences.

5. Integration into Care Plans

- ❑ There can be challenges in incorporating yoga into existing treatment plans. Coordination between yoga practitioners and the healthcare team is essential for seamless integration, which may not always occur.

6. Access and Availability

- ❑ Access to yoga programs may be limited in some palliative care settings, particularly in hospitals or facilities without established wellness programs. Availability of qualified instructors can also be a barrier.



There is cultural sensitivity as well as palliative care patients come from diverse backgrounds with varying beliefs about health, wellness and spirituality. Yoga practices may need to be adapted to align with patients cultural values and preferences. Along with this, there is lack of coordination between yoga practitioners and the healthcare team, which is essential for seamless integration, which may not always occur.

And then access to yoga programs may be limited in some palliative care settings particularly in hospitals or facilities without established wellness programs. Availability of qualified instructors can also be a great barrier.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:35)

Challenges Facing Yoga in Palliative Care Settings

7. Emotional and Psychological Barriers

- ❑ Patients may face psychological barriers such as anxiety, depression, or fear related to their illness, which can affect their willingness to engage in yoga.

8. Research and Evidence Base

- ❑ There is still a need for more robust research to demonstrate the efficacy of yoga in palliative care. Lack of strong evidence can hinder acceptance and integration into standard care practices.

9. Resource Constraints

- ❑ Limited resources, such as time, funding, and space, can affect the implementation of yoga programs in palliative care settings.

10. Individual Preferences

- ❑ Not all patients may be open to or interested in yoga as a form of therapy. Personalized approaches are necessary to respect individual preferences and needs.



There are emotional and psychological barriers among the patients such as anxiety, depression or fear related to their illness which can affect their willingness to engage in yoga. Also, there is still a need for more robust research to demonstrate the efficacy of yoga in palliative care. Lack of strong evidence can hinder acceptance and integration into standard care practices.

Limited resources such as time funding and space can affect the implementation of yoga programs in palliative care settings and then at the last not all patients may be open to or interested in yoga as a form of therapy. Personalized approaches are necessary to respect individual preferences and needs.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:35)

Conclusion

Despite these challenges, the integration of yoga into palliative care can offer significant benefits, such as improved quality of life, enhanced emotional well-being, and relief from physical discomfort. Addressing these challenges through training, awareness, and research can help make yoga a more accessible and effective component of palliative care.



Despite these challenges, the integration of yoga into palliative care can offer significant benefits such as improved quality of life, enhanced emotional well-being and relief from physical discomfort. Addressing these challenges through training, awareness and research can make yoga a more successful and effective component of palliative care. Having learnt about the role of yoga in palliative care and the challenges faced, now let's talk about the types of yoga.

In Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says to Arjun, by whatever paths men love me, By that path they come to me. Many are the paths of men, but they all in the end come to me. Often perceived as merely a physical practice involving complex poses and breathing techniques, yoga is in fact much more profound. It is a science dedicated to unlocking the vast potential of the human mind and spirit. Maharshi Patanjali expresses this well.

The purpose of yoga is to prevent suffering before it arises. Yoga aims to heal negative emotions such as greed, anger, jealousy, hatred and frustration. The essence of yoga as

conveyed by the saying yoga karmasu kaushalam which means yoga is skill in action is to cultivate skilfulness in living. It teaches us how to manage our minds, navigate emotions, interact with others and sustain love without letting it turn into hatred. Understanding that each person's journey to self-realization is unique.

Yoga is divided into four distinct paths to address diverse needs and approaches.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:33)

The Four Paths of Yoga- Gyan Yoga

While the ultimate goal of the different paths of Yoga is the same, the journey may vary depending on the individual's mental and spiritual inclinations. These paths can be broadly classified into four branches.

I. **Gyana Yoga (Path of Knowledge):** This path focuses on gaining a deep understanding of the Self. A practitioner of Gyana Yoga contemplates fundamental questions such as "Who am I?" and "How am I connected to the world?" Through logic and reasoning, the yogi investigates the nature of the mind and seeks wisdom that leads to liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Key Concepts of Gyan Yoga:

- **Self-Realization:** The central goal is to understand one's true nature and the nature of the universe. This involves discerning the difference between the eternal self and the transient physical body.
- **Discrimination (Viveka):** Practitioners learn to differentiate between the *real* (permanent) and the *unreal* (temporary) aspects of existence. This understanding helps in detaching from material desires and attachments.
- **Detachment (Vairagya):** Cultivating a sense of detachment from the outcomes of actions and worldly possessions allows individuals to experience greater peace and clarity.
- **Introspection and Study:** Engaging in deep study of sacred texts and self-reflection is crucial. This involves contemplating philosophical concepts and seeking guidance from enlightened teachers.
- **Meditation:** Regular meditation practices help quiet the mind, allowing for deeper insights and connection to higher consciousness.



It is noteworthy to mention that while the ultimate goal of the different paths of yoga is the same, the journey may vary depending on the individual's mental and spiritual inclinations. These paths can be broadly classified into four branches. The first branch is of Gyan Yoga or the path of knowledge. This path focuses on gaining a deep understanding of the self.

A practitioner of Gyan Yoga Contemplates fundamental questions such as who am I? How am I connected to the world? Through logic and reasoning the practitioner investigates the nature of the mind and seeks wisdom that leads to liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:20)

Benefits of Gyan Yoga

Benefits of Gyan Yoga:

- ▶ **Clarity of Thought:** It fosters a clearer understanding of life's complexities and helps individuals make more informed decisions.
- ▶ **Inner Peace:** By transcending material concerns, practitioners often find greater tranquility and contentment.
- ▶ **Enhanced Awareness:** Gyan Yoga encourages a heightened sense of awareness, promoting mindfulness in daily life.

In summary, Gyan Yoga is a profound path for those seeking knowledge, wisdom, and a deeper understanding of themselves and the universe. It combines intellectual inquiry with spiritual practice, leading to holistic growth and fulfillment.



The path of Gyan Yoga provides clarity of thought as it fosters a clearer understanding of life's complexities and helps individuals make more informed decisions. It induces inner peace by transcending material concerns. Practitioners often find greater tranquility and contentment. Gyan Yoga encourages a heightened sense of awareness, promoting mindfulness in daily life.

So, in summary, Gyan Yoga is a profound path for those seeking knowledge, wisdom and a deeper understanding of themselves and the universe. It combines intellectual inquiry with spiritual practice, leading to holistic growth and fulfillment.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:05)

The Four Paths of Yoga- Bhakti Yoga

2. Bhakti Yoga (Path of Devotion): Bhakti Yoga is characterized by intense love and devotion towards a specific deity. According to The Bhagavad Gita, the path of devotion is considered the highest spiritual practice. It involves daily worship, prayer, chanting, and expressing gratitude for various aspects of life. This practice helps in cultivating a profound connection with the divine.

Benefits of Bhakti Yoga:

- ▶ **Emotional Fulfillment:** The practice fosters deep emotional connection and joy, providing a sense of purpose and belonging.
- ▶ **Inner Peace:** Surrendering to a higher power can bring tranquility and reduce anxiety, as individuals learn to let go of control.
- ▶ **Unity with Others:** Bhakti Yoga encourages community bonding and collective worship, enhancing social connections and support.

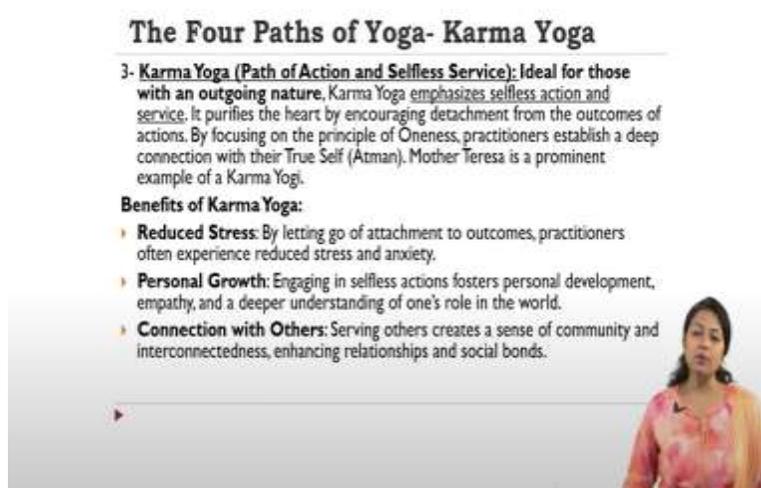


The next path is the path of Bhakti Yoga or devotion. Bhakti Yoga is characterized by intense love and devotion towards a specific deity. According to the Bhagavad Gita, the path of devotion is considered the highest spiritual practice.

It involves daily worship, prayer, chanting and expressing gratitude for various aspects of life. This practice helps in cultivating a profound connection with the Divine. The path of Bhakti Yoga fosters deep emotional connection and joy, providing a sense of purpose and belonging to the practitioner. It induces inner peace as surrendering to a higher power can bring tranquility and reduce anxiety.

Individuals learn to let go of control. Bhakti Yoga encourages community bonding and collective worship, enhancing social connections and support.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:10)



The Four Paths of Yoga- Karma Yoga

3- **Karma Yoga (Path of Action and Selfless Service):** Ideal for those with an outgoing nature. Karma Yoga emphasizes selfless action and service. It purifies the heart by encouraging detachment from the outcomes of actions. By focusing on the principle of Oneness, practitioners establish a deep connection with their True Self (Atman). Mother Teresa is a prominent example of a Karma Yogi.

Benefits of Karma Yoga:

- ▶ **Reduced Stress:** By letting go of attachment to outcomes, practitioners often experience reduced stress and anxiety.
- ▶ **Personal Growth:** Engaging in selfless actions fosters personal development, empathy, and a deeper understanding of one's role in the world.
- ▶ **Connection with Others:** Serving others creates a sense of community and interconnectedness, enhancing relationships and social bonds.

The third path of yoga is karma yoga or the path of action and selfless service. This is ideal for those who have an outgoing nature. Karma yoga emphasizes selfless action and service. It purifies the heart by encouraging detachment from the outcomes of actions.

By focusing on the principle of oneness, practitioners establish a deep connection with their true self, often known as Atman. Mother Teresa is a prominent example of a Karma Yogi. This path of Karma Yoga reduces stress by letting go of the attachments to outcomes. Practitioners often experience reduced stress and anxiety. Engaging in selfless actions fosters personal development, empathy and a deeper understanding of one's role in the world.

It also helps connecting with others as serving others creates a sense of community and interconnectedness, enhancing relationships and social bonds.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:25)

The Four Paths of Yoga- Raja Yoga

4-Raja Yoga (Path of Meditation): Raja Yoga addresses the restlessness of the mind (Vikshepa) which disconnects us from our true essence. The solution lies in calming the mind through meditation, revealing the inherent Oneness of our being. **This path follows the Ashtanga System outlined by Maharshi Patanjali in the Raja Yoga Sutras.** Many modern Yoga practices are rooted in the principles of Raja Yoga.

Eight Limbs (Ashtanga Yoga): Raja Yoga is structured around eight essential practices, known as the Eight Limbs of Yoga:

- **Yama:** Ethical disciplines, including non-violence, truthfulness, and non-possessiveness.
- **Niyama:** Personal observances, such as purity, contentment, and self-study.
- **Asana:** Physical postures that prepare the body for meditation.
- **Pranayama:** Breath control techniques to enhance the flow of vital energy (prana).
- **Pratyahara:** Withdrawal of the senses, focusing inward.
- **Dharana:** Concentration on a single point or object.
- **Dhyana:** Meditation, or the practice of deep contemplation.
- **Samadhi:** A state of blissful union with the object of meditation, often regarded as the ultimate goal.



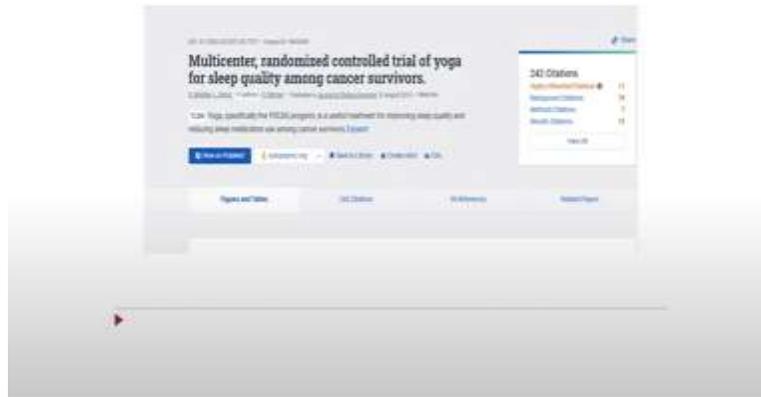
The fourth path is the path of Rajyoga or the path of meditation. Rajyoga addresses the restlessness of the mind often known as vikshepa, which disconnects us from our true essence. The solution lies in calming the mind through meditation, revealing the inherent oneness of our being. This path follows the Ashtanga system outlined by Maharshi Patanjali in the Rajyoga Sutras.

Many modern yoga practices are rooted in the principles of Rajyoga. Rajyoga is structured around eight essential practices known as the eight limbs of yoga. Yama, ethical disciplines including non-violence, truthfulness and non-possessiveness. Niyama, personal observances such as purity, contentment and self-study. Asana or the physical postures that prepare the body for meditation.

Pranayama, breath control techniques to enhance the flow of vital energy. Pratyahara withdrawal of the senses and focusing the consciousness inward, dharana concentration on a single point or object, dhyana meditation or the practice of deep contemplation. And then Samadhi, a state of blissful union with the object of meditation, often regarded as the ultimate goals. These were the eight limbs of yoga which we will discuss in detail later in next session.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:45)

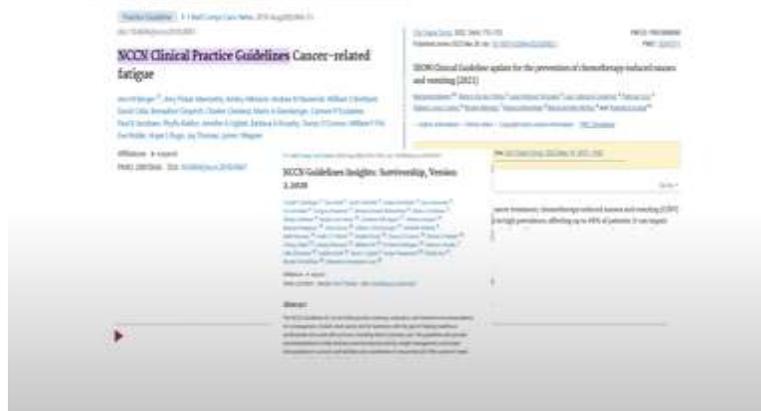
A multicenter randomized trial involving cancer survivors with sleep disturbances found that a combination of Hatha and restorative yoga significantly improved sleep quality.



Another review of 29 clinical trials found that low-intensity form of yoga such as gentle, hatha and restorative yoga are safe and effective in alleviating issues like sleep problems, nausea, fatigue, pain, emotional distress and muscle symptoms. Additionally, they may help improve cognitive impairment.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:05)

Yoga is officially recognized in the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology as an effective intervention for cancer-related fatigue, anticipatory nausea/vomiting, and for enhancing survivorship areas such as distress, cognitive function, menopausal symptoms, and pain.



There was another research on the role of yoga across the cancer care continuum which strongly supports the benefits of yoga in enhancing overall health quality of life and physical function while also reducing stress, anxiety, depression, sleep issues and fatigue.

Take a look at the multi-center randomized trial control involving cancer survivors with sleep disturbances.

It was found out that a combination of hatha and restorative yoga significantly improved their sleep quality. Now, yoga is officially recognized in the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology as an effective intervention for cancer-related fatigue, anticipatory nausea and for enhancing survivorship areas such as distress, cognitive function, menopausal symptoms and pain. Let's take an overview of what we have covered in this session so in this module we've explored the concept of yoga from both modern and palliative care perspectives and we covered the modern understanding of yoga an overview of what yoga entails today focusing on its various practices and benefits. And then we covered yoga in palliative care which is a look at how yoga can be integrated into palliative care settings, addressing general practices, the challenges faced and the types of yoga that are beneficial based on individual personalities and conditions. Thank you.