

Certificate in Integrative Palliative Care – 3
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Week-03

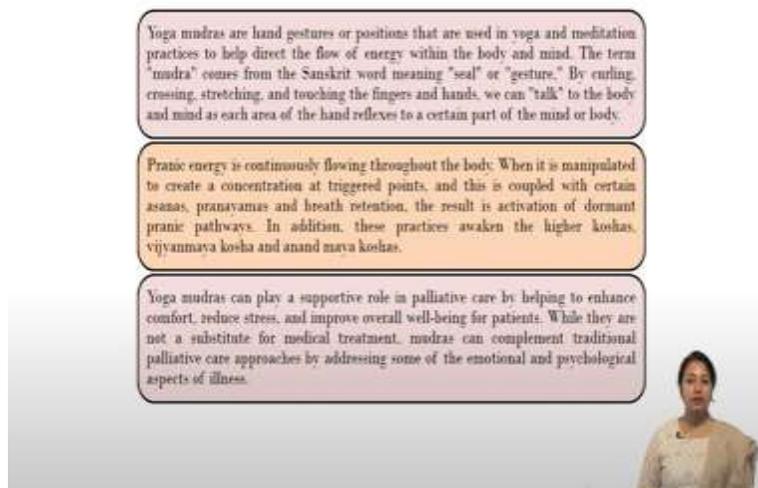
Lecture 26: Therapeutic Role of Mudra for Mental and Emotional Health

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The slide features a blue header with the text "COURSE-THE INTEGRATIVE ROLE OF YOGA IN PALLIATIVE CARE". Below this, the title "Session-7 Therapeutic Role of Mudra for Mental & Emotional Health" is centered. On the left is an image of a person in a meditative pose on a lotus flower. On the right is a logo with a heart and hands, labeled "AASHA CARE". In the center, it says "Prepared by Nisha, Member NARCA/UK, Yoga Practitioner & Instructor." At the bottom right, there is a small video inset of a woman speaking. A small footer at the bottom left reads "For further questions or inquiries, please contact 7711100000".

In this session, we'll try to understand the therapeutic role of yoga to enhance the overall vitality as well as for the patients who are receiving palliative care.

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Yoga mudras are hand gestures or positions that are used in yoga and meditation practices to help direct the flow of energy within the body and mind. The term "mudra" comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "seal" or "gesture." By curling, crossing, stretching, and touching the fingers and hands, we can "talk" to the body and mind as each area of the hand reflexes to a certain part of the mind or body.

Pranic energy is continuously flowing throughout the body. When it is manipulated to create a concentration at triggered points, and this is coupled with certain asanas, pranayamas and breath retention, the result is activation of dormant pranic pathways. In addition, these practices awaken the higher koshas, vijyanmaya kosha and anand maya koshas.

Yoga mudras can play a supportive role in palliative care by helping to enhance comfort, reduce stress, and improve overall well-being for patients. While they are not a substitute for medical treatment, mudras can complement traditional palliative care approaches by addressing some of the emotional and psychological aspects of illness.

Yog Mudras are hand gestures or positions that are used in yoga and meditation practices to help direct the flow of energy within the body and mind. The term Mudra comes from the Sanskrit word meaning seal or gesture. By curling, crossing, stretching and touching the fingers and hands, we can talk to the body and mind as each area of the hand reflexes to a certain part of the body and mind. Pranic energy is continuously flowing throughout the body. When it is manipulated to create a concentration at triggered points and when this is coupled with certain asanas, pranayamas and breath retention, the result is activation of dormant pranic pathways.

In addition, practicing mudra awaken the higher koshas that is vijyanmaya kosha and anand maya koshas. Yog mudras can play a supportive role in palliative care by helping to enhance comfort, reduce stress and improve overall well-being for patients. While they are not a substitute for medical treatment, mudras can complement traditional palliative care approaches by addressing some of the emotional and psychological aspects of illness.

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Mudras can be easily adopted to individual needs and physical capabilities.

They can be practiced while sitting or lying down, making them accessible to patients with limited mobility. For yoga therapy, at the end of life, Hasta Mudra such as Adhi, Padma or Lotus and Anjali Mudras are advised. In order to restore inner harmony and balance, Gyan and Chin Mudras are helpful. To experience the full benefits of Yoga Mudras, it is recommended to practice them daily for 45 minutes. This can be done either in one continuous session or divided into three 15-minute sessions, consistently for at least two to three months.

Let us see the practical demonstration of some of these mudras as mentioned. First, we will practice Adhi Mudra. To perform Adhi Mudra, sit in a meditative posture or in continuation to performing Pranayama. Press the thumb on the inside of the palm, close the fingers around the thumb to form a gentle fist. With this mudra, meditate and focus on the breath.

Observe the flow of breath, taking deep inhalations and longer exhalations. You can practice Adhi Mudra either individually or with Pranayama. Adhi mudra calms the mind, balances emotions, improves breathing, reduces stress, improves digestion and energy flow. Next yoga mudra suitable for subjects at end stage of life is Padma mudra which is also known as Lotus mudra or Pankaj mudra. In this mudra hand gesture represents the lotus flower.

To practice Padma Mudra, start by bringing the hands together in front of the heart in the Anjali Mudra or prayer position. Feel the flow of the energy that your heart is feeling. Slowly open the hands as if a lotus flower is blooming, keeping the thumbs and little

fingers together at the base of the hands touching. Keep a gentle smile on your face and observe the flow of energy throughout the body. You can hold this mudra for 5 to 10 minutes or longer.

You can also close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and reflect on what's possible in the moment. You can also observe gratitude for all that you have in your life. People with injuries or who have had surgery on their palms, wrists or fingers should avoid this mudra. Relax your hands. We'll now practice chin mudra which can be adopted whenever practicing meditation.

For that, assume a comfortable meditative posture where spine is straight, neck, head are relaxed, shoulders relaxed. Palms are open and eyes are gently closed. Slowly fold the index fingers so that they touch the inside root of the thumbs. Straighten the other three fingers of each hand so that they are relaxed and slightly apart. Place the hands on the knees with palms facing upwards.

Relax the hands and arms. In this posture, breathe deeply and rhythmically. Bring your awareness on the breath. There should be natural flow of the breath. The practice of chin mudra slowly takes you to the transcendence state.

Let's explore some additional mudras that you can easily incorporate into your daily routine. These practices can support regular detoxification, boost your vitality and promote harmony in your life. We will begin with Vayu Mudra. To practice Vayu Mudra, sit comfortably in meditative pose. Slowly touch the index finger to the root of the thumb and press its knuckle gently with the thumb over it.

Rest three fingers are loosely straight and slightly apart. Close the eyes and bring awareness to the breath. Continue practicing in Vayu Mudra for a few minutes and observe the natural flow of the breath. Incorporate Vayu mudra every day to keep your gut healthy. One can also practice these mudras in a seated position or while walking even with one hand, but prefer to sit and practice to reap maximum benefits.

Relax your hands. From here we will practice Prana Mudra. This mudra can be very helpful if you feel low energy or excessively yawning. It will reduce the stress and fatigue and increase productivity during work hours. For Prana Mudra, touch the tip of the ring and little finger to the tip of the thumbs. The rest two fingers are stretched and relaxed.

Continue breathing deeply in prana mudra. Observe the natural flow of the breath. One can Mentally chant any mantra of your choice for deeper connection with the cosmos. The practice of prana mudra should be taken every day for better vitality and high energy

levels. This mudra is a way to boost the immune system which is responsible for fighting off diseases, infections and pathogens.

Let's practice one more mudra which is mostly apt in today's time as it aids in complete detoxification of the body and maintain cardiovascular health. To practice apan vayu mudra we join the tip of the thumb with the tips of your middle and ring fingers. Next, curl the index finger to touch the base of the thumbs of both hands. This is the final mudra. Index finger should be bent so its tip touches the thumbs base.

Little finger is extended and relaxed. Continue practicing deep breathing in Apan Vayu Mudra. Initially, it would be tough to hold, but with regular practice, it becomes easier. Thank you.