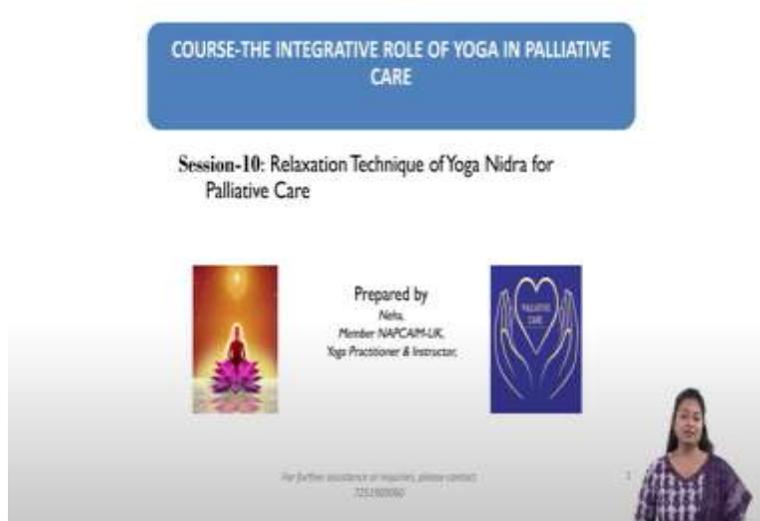


Certificate in Integrative Palliative Care – 3
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Week-03

Lecture 29: Relaxation Technique of Yoga Nidra for Palliative Care

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This session is about the therapeutic role of Yoga Nidra which is the gem of all the yogic practices. Let's deeply understand what Yoga Nidra is.

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Role of Pratyahara in Palliative Care



Yoga Nidra often referred to as yogic sleep is a guided practice of relaxation. In this practice, the consciousness rests between the fully awakened state and the sleep state. One is aware of one's dream state but not of one's environment. One remains in a subconscious state.

Yoga Nidra can be given by a teacher or an audio recording may be used. It provides total physical, mental and emotional relaxation. Physical relaxation provides rest and the opportunity for the body to rejuvenate and heal. Mental relaxation allows mental conditionings and defenses to be dropped.

During Yog Nidra, emotional relaxation allows suppressed emotions to float up into the conscious awareness. Such emotions can be experienced from the position of a witness, enabling them to be understood from a different perspective and so dealt with objectively. This can put an end to stressful, emotionally charged situations of the past. Yoga Nidra is a very powerful tool for combating stress of any kind and for the management for any disease including cancer.

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Understanding Yoga Nidra

- We all know all types of tension lower the effectiveness of the immune system. When the immune response of the body is less than optimum, many enemies start raising their heads. Cancer is one such strong enemy. By keeping our internal mental environment clean by removing negativities and inviting positive, we boost our immune system.
- When the mind experiences negative states such as worry, depression, frustration, anger, jealousy and revenge, the body's defence mechanism are adversely affected and life-threatening diseases along with cancer has a greater chance of developing a foothold.
- The practice of Yoga Nidra can also be used to explore and know what kind of thoughts and attitudes we harbor in the mind without being conscious of it. This gives us the chance to make changes as needed to improve our relationship with life. Fears, anxieties and insecurities can be addressed without identifying and becoming involved with them.
- Yoga nidra can be specifically designed to enhance healing. For this purpose, the instructions guide the listener to tune into the cosmic energy.



All types of tension lower the effectiveness of the immune system.

When the immune response of the body is less than optimum, many enemies start raising their heads. Cancer is one such strong enemy that is difficult to keep in check. When we observe our internal mental environment and keep it reasonably clean by removing the negative tendencies and tuning it with positive attitude and states, we boost our immune system and help prevent disease of cancer or such fatal diseases from germinating or growing. When the mind experiences negative states such as worry, depression, frustration, anger, jealousy and revenge, the body's defense mechanism are adversely affected and Fatal illnesses like cancer can have a greater chance of developing a foothold. The practice of Yoga Nidra can also be used to explore and know what kind of thoughts and attitudes we harbor in the mind without being conscious of it.

This gives us the chance to make changes as needed to improve our relationship with life and also with ourselves. Fears, anxieties and insecurities can be addressed without identifying and becoming involved with them. Yoga Nidra can be specifically designed to enhance healing. For this purpose, the instructions guide the listener to tune into the cosmic energy.

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Yoga Nidra can be highly beneficial in palliative care settings due to its profound effects on relaxation, stress relief, and overall well-being



We should know that Yog Nidra can be highly beneficial in palliative care settings due to its profound effects on relaxation, stress relief and overall well-being.

Let's talk about the benefits of Yog Nidra for palliative care.

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Its practice can complement other palliative care methods, contributing to a more comprehensive approach to managing serious illness.

This practice involves the following key aspects:

Withdrawal of the Senses from external stimuli—such as sights, sounds, and sensations and direct their sensory experience inwardly.

Turning the mind inward to concentrate into its inner states and consciousness.

Preparation for Meditation.

Mental Control over thoughts going outwardly repeatedly.

Pratirakta can be used as a valuable support in palliative care as it helps

reducing stress and induce a deep state of relaxation, which is beneficial for overall comfort and improving the quality of life.

Provide emotional resilience and mental clarity.

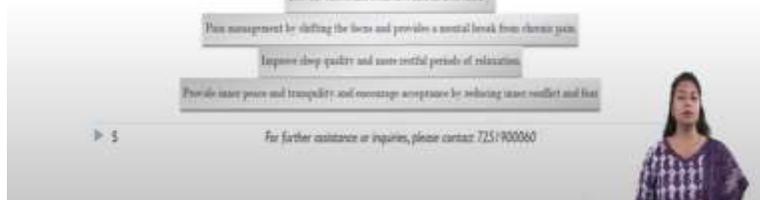
Pain management by shifting the focus and provides a mental break from chronic pain.

Improve sleep quality and more restful periods of relaxation.

Provide inner peace and tranquility and encourage acceptance by reducing inner conflict and fear.

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So, Yoga Nidra helps achieve a state of deep physical and mental relaxation similar to restorative sleep. This is particularly valuable for individuals in palliative care who may

experience chronic fatigue, pain or discomfort. The practice helps reduce tension by systematically relaxing the body and mind. Yoga Nidra alleviates muscular tension and helps ease physical discomfort.

It calms the mind. The guided nature of Yog Nidra promotes mental calmness and helps reduce anxiety and stress. This is crucial for patients facing the emotional challenges of serious illnesses. Then it facilitates emotional release, which can be helpful in dealing with feelings of fear, sadness or grief. It improves restfulness as the regular practice of Yoga Nidra can improve the quality of sleep which is often disrupted in palliative care patients due to pain, anxiety, depression or medical treatments.

Practicing Yoga Nidra before bedtime can help create a sense of calm and promote more restful and restorative sleep. The practice of Yoga Nidra also helps managing the pain very well as the deep relaxation achieved can alter the perception of pain and provide temporary relief. The practice helps shift focus away from the pain by promoting mental and emotional relaxation. It can be used as a complementary technique alongside other pain management strategies enhancing overall comfort and well-being. One can also enhance the self-awareness by the regular practice of Yoga Nidra as it helps patients connect with their inner selves and find a sense of peace and acceptance.

It also supports positive outlook as it fosters a sense of calm and emotional balance which improve the overall mood and outlook contributing to a higher quality of life. It also proves to be a holistic approach specially in respect of palliative care as it addresses the emotional mental and spiritual aspects of well-being. It integrates seamlessly with other therapeutic modalities to prove a holistic approach to care and finally it strengthens inner awareness and facilitates the connection of the body and the mind which helps patients becoming aware and more attuned to their needs and responses. This can be empowering in managing symptoms and overall well-being. So overall, Yog Nidra offers a valuable tool for enhancing comfort, reducing stress and improving the quality of life in palliative care.

It provides a gentle, non-invasive way to promote relaxation and well-being, supporting patients through their care journey. Now, it's time to practice Yoga Nidra, the ultimate path to deeper relaxation.

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To practice Yoga Nidra, choose a quiet room with minimum or no interruption of family member. The lights should be either very light or switched off if possible. Avoid use of pillows unless required.

Maintain the temperature of the room. It should not be either too hot or too cold. It is preferable to wear light loose clothing during the practice of Yoga Nidra. Once all the prerequisites are being taken care of, lie down comfortably on your bed. Gently close the eyes.

Keep the feet apart so much so that there is no tightness. Rest the hands by the sides of the body. Palms are facing upwards. Observe the whole body. The whole body should be lying relaxed.

Observe that there is no stress or tightness in any part of the body. If there is, release and relax with awareness. Be aware about the natural breathing. Observe its movement flowing from navel to chest to throat to nose. Take a deep breath in and as you exhale, observe that whole body is becoming relaxed and all the mental worries are flowing out of you.

Develop your awareness from head to toe and mentally chant the mantra OM thrice to deepen the calm of body and mind. Mentally chant, OM, become aware of the fact that you are practicing Yoga Nidra. Mentally say to yourself that I am aware of practicing Yoga Nidra. I am aware of practicing Yoga Nidra. Keep the eyes closed and body stable throughout the practice unless asked to move.

Now we sequentially rotate our consciousness through different parts of the body. Do not attach yourself with the body parts. Just thoroughly be aware of the body and its parts as instructed. Repeat the part in your mind and simultaneously become aware of that part of the body. Keep yourself alert, but do not concentrate too intensely.

Now, become aware of the right hand, right hand thumb, observe it getting relaxed. The second finger, third finger, fourth finger. Observe the palm of the hand, become aware of your palm back of the hand, the wrist, the wrist, lower arm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder observe the armpit, the right waist. Observe the right waist, right hip, right thigh. Observe the right leg's kneecap, calf muscle, ankle, heel, sole of the right foot, the top of the foot, the big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe.

Become aware of the left side, observe your left hand, left hand's thumb. Second finger, third finger, fourth finger, fifth finger. Become aware of the palm of your hand, back of the hand, the wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm the shoulder become aware of the shoulder the armpit armpit of left hand then move down to left waist, left hip, left thigh. Observe the kneecap, the front of the kneecap, the back of the kneecap, calf muscle, ankle, whole of the heel, sides of the heel, the sole of the foot, top of the foot. Top of the foot, now become aware of the big toe, second toe, third toe, fourth toe, fifth toe.

Now to the back, become aware of the right shoulder blade and then the left shoulder blade, the right buttock, the left buttock, whole of the spine, whole back together. Now go to the top of the head, the top of the head, the forehead, both sides of the head, right eyebrow, left eyebrow, the space between the eyebrows, right eyelid, left eyelid, right eye, left eye, right ear, left ear, right cheek, left cheek, the nose, be aware about the nose, the tip of the nose, upper lip, lower lip, both lips together, the chin, observe the chin, the throat. Observe the throat, then the right chest, left chest, middle of the chest. Going down to the navel, the abdomen, whole of the abdomen, now the whole of the right leg, whole of the left leg. Both legs together, both legs together.

Observe the whole of the right arm, whole of the right arm, whole of the left arm. Both arms together, both arms together. The whole of the back, buttocks, spine, shoulder blades, whole of the back, whole of the front, whole of the front, abdomen, right chest, left chest, middle of the chest, whole of the front. Now, whole of the back and front together, whole of the back and front together, whole of the head, whole of the head. The whole body together, the whole body together, observe the whole body together, become aware of the whole body, physical body that is lying practicing Yoga Nidra and now become aware of your breath, be aware of your breath, feel the flow of your breath in and out of your lungs.

Do not try to change the rhythm. The breathing is natural and automatic. There is no effort. Just the free flow of breath going in and out. Maintain awareness of your breath. Continue, continue the awareness on your breath.

Complete awareness of breath. Now slowly become aware of your physical body, slowly become aware of your physical body, awareness of your physical body, observe the body, the room that you are practicing in, the mattress that you are on and then gently move the toes and fingers very gently keeping the eyes closed, gently move the toes and fingers. Clasp the fingers together, interlock them and stretch the arms overhead, stretch the toes, stretch the whole body, stretch the whole body. The practice of Yoga Nidra is now completed. There is a small note after the Yoga Nidra. Although Shavasana is the best position for Yoga Nidra, it can also be practiced in a sitting posture or while standing.

If you have a tendency to fall asleep very quickly in Yoga Nidra, then it is better to practice while standing or even sitting. It is not recommended to instruct yourself until the entire practice is very clear in your mind so that you do not have to stop anywhere and try to remember what comes next. Otherwise, you will strain yourself trying to remember the sequence of the body rotation and the whole practice will lose its flow. Instead of achieving relaxation, you will become very tense. Therefore, in the beginning, it is much better to practice by following the teacher's voice of the instructions on a recording.

Of course, after some time, you will be able to practice the whole process unaided by any external agency. You will be able to initiate the instructions and respond to them effortlessly. Thank you.