

**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-11**  
**Lecture 84: Spiritual Distress**

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6<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHOLOGY  
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10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> NOV 2021  
VIRTUAL

Spiritual distress  
and  
Palliative Care

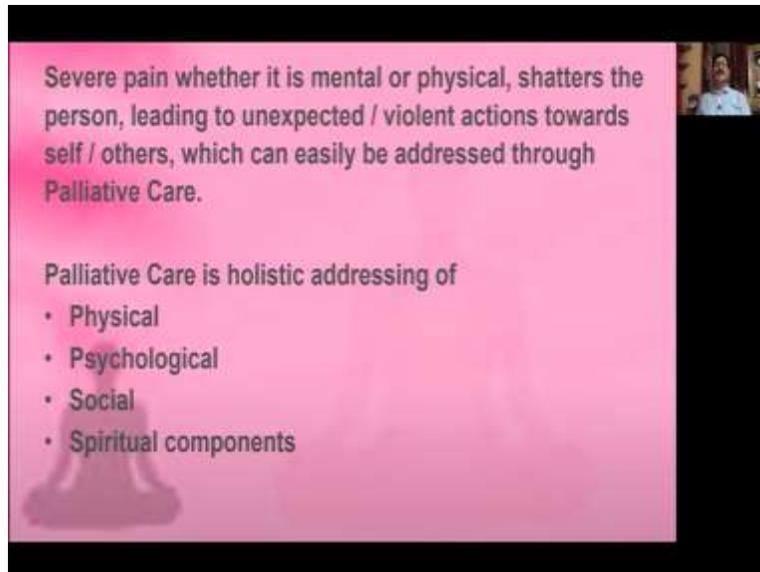
**SPEAKER**  
**Dr. Piyush Gupta**  
Cancer Aid Society  
India

**Dr Piyush Gupta**  
BSc, PGDIPM, MA, LLB, Fellowship in Palliative Care, PhD  
Jewel of India Award, Fellow National Cancer Institute - USA  
Board Member:  
FOA - Switzerland, Fight Cancer Global - USA, SHPC India  
Secretary National Association of Palliative Care  
for AYUSH & Integrative Medicine  
Vice President Cancer Aid Society - USA  
Secretary & CEO, Cancer Aid Society  
M: +91 9333266600  
E: [piyushgupta@cancaidsocietyindia.org](mailto:piyushgupta@cancaidsocietyindia.org)  
W: <http://www.cancaidsocietyindia.org>  
A: Sunshine Court 2, Prag/Narain Road, Lucknow, UP - INDIA

[www.spirituality-conference.org](http://www.spirituality-conference.org)

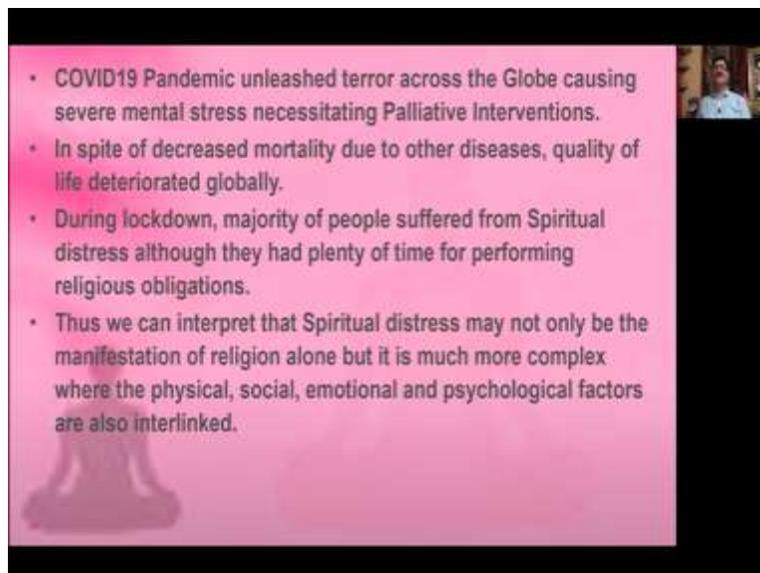
Hi, my sincere thanks to the organizers of Sixth International Conference on Spirituality and Psychology. Well, I am here to cover spiritual distress and palliative care.

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Severe pain, whether it is mental or physical, shatters the person leading to unexpected or violent actions towards self or others. It can easily be addressed through palliative care. Palliative care is holistic addressing of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual components.

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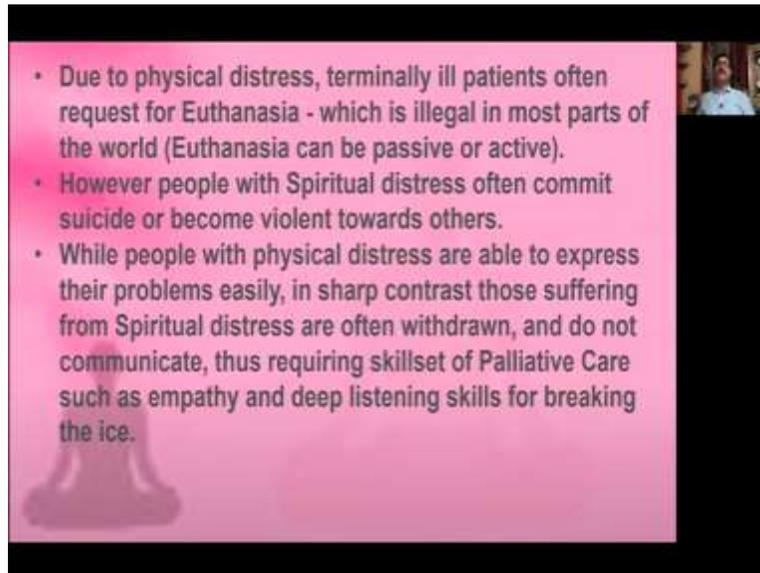


COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed terror across the globe, causing severe mental stress, necessitating palliative interventions.

In spite of decreased mortality due to other diseases, quality of life has deteriorated across the globe. During lockdown, majority of people suffered from a spiritual distress,

although they had plenty of time for performing religious obligations. Thus, we can interpret that a spiritual distress may not only be the manifestation of religion alone, but it is much more complex where the physical, social, emotional and psychological factors are also interlinked.

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Due to physical distress, terminally ill patients often request for euthanasia, which is illegal in most parts of the world.

Euthanasia can be passive or active. However, people with spiritual distress often commit suicide or become violent towards others. While people with physical distress are able to express their problems easily, In sharp contrast, those sufferings from spiritual distress are often withdrawn and do not communicate, thus requiring a skill set of palliative care, such as empathy and deep listening skills for breaking the ice.

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### What is Spiritual distress?

**Spiritual distress** is "the impaired ability to experience and integrate, **meaning and purpose of life** through connectedness with self, others, art, music, literature, nature, and/ or a power greater than oneself.

**Cause of Spiritual distress** are existential concerns, grief and loss, and isolation.

Spiritual distress is the impaired ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose of life to connectedness with self, others, art, music, literature, nature, and or a power greater than oneself, that may be God. Cause of spiritual distress are existential concerns, grief, loss and isolation.

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### What are signs of spiritual distress?

- Feelings of **anger** or **hopelessness**.
- Feelings of **depression** and **anxiety**.
- Difficulty sleeping**.
- Feeling abandoned by God.
- Questioning the meaning of life or suffering.
- Questioning beliefs or sudden doubt in spiritual or religious beliefs.
- Asking why this situation occurred.

What are the signs of spiritual distress? Feeling of anger or hopelessness, feeling of depression and anxiety, difficulty in sleeping, feeling abandoned by God, questioning the meaning of life or suffering, questioning beliefs or sudden doubts in the spiritual or religious beliefs. Asking why this situation has occurred.

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**What are Spiritual needs?**

Human **spiritual** needs include Love, Faith, Hope, Virtue, Beauty and **Spiritual suffering** is experienced when these needs are unfulfilled.

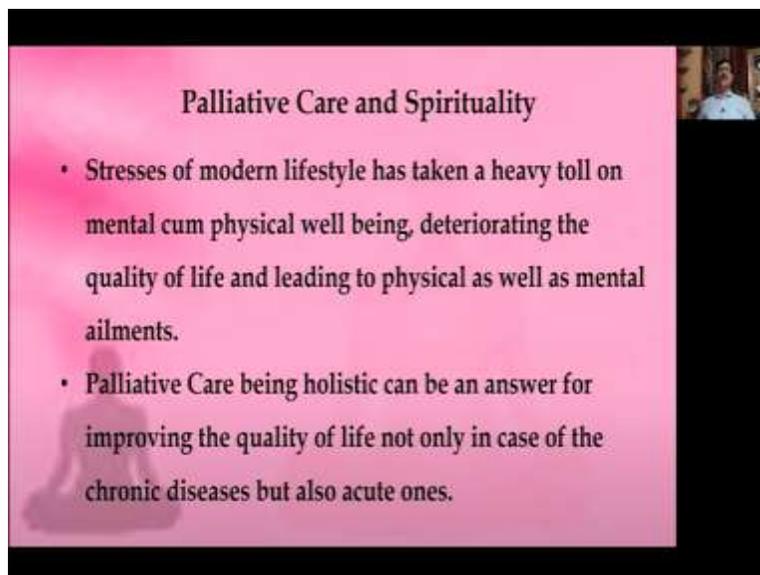
**Spiritual care** involves assisting in the fulfillment of these needs.

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What are our spiritual needs? Human spiritual needs include love, faith, hope, virtue, beauty and spiritual sufferings. They are experienced when these needs are unfulfilled. Spiritual care involves assisting in the fulfillment of all these needs.

Maybe when we go near the nature, our spiritual distress decreases. Maybe near the beach of a sea or near a river or maybe mountains or maybe greenery. It all helps in curing spiritual distress.

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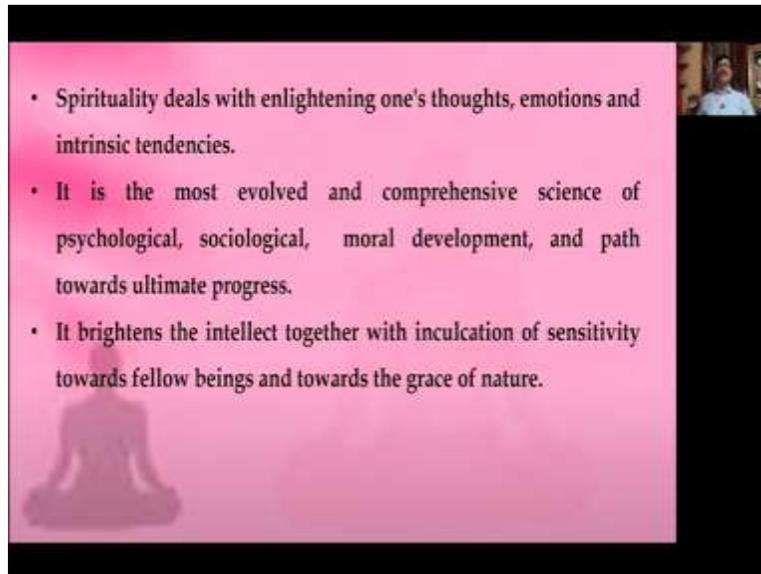
**Palliative Care and Spirituality**

- Stresses of modern lifestyle has taken a heavy toll on mental cum physical well being, deteriorating the quality of life and leading to physical as well as mental ailments.
- Palliative Care being holistic can be an answer for improving the quality of life not only in case of the chronic diseases but also acute ones.

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Palliative care and spirituality, what is the connection between the two? Well, stresses of modern lifestyle has taken a heavy toll on mental and physical well-being, deteriorating the quality of life and leading to physical as well as mental ailments. So palliative care being holistic can be an answer for improving the quality of life, not only in case of chronic illnesses, but also acute.

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Spirituality deals with enlightening one's thought, emotions, and intrinsic tendencies. It is the most evolved and comprehensive science of psychological, sociological, moral development and path towards ultimate progress. It brightens the intellect together with inculcation of sensitivity towards fellow beings and towards the grace of nature.

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The universe comes out of the union of two fundamental forces:

1. Matter (jada - that which gives shape or prakrati - the manifested form)
2. Consciousness (chetan or purusha - the invisible enlivening spirit)

Both have merits when considered in isolation; however the union and co-operation of these two entities works wonders.

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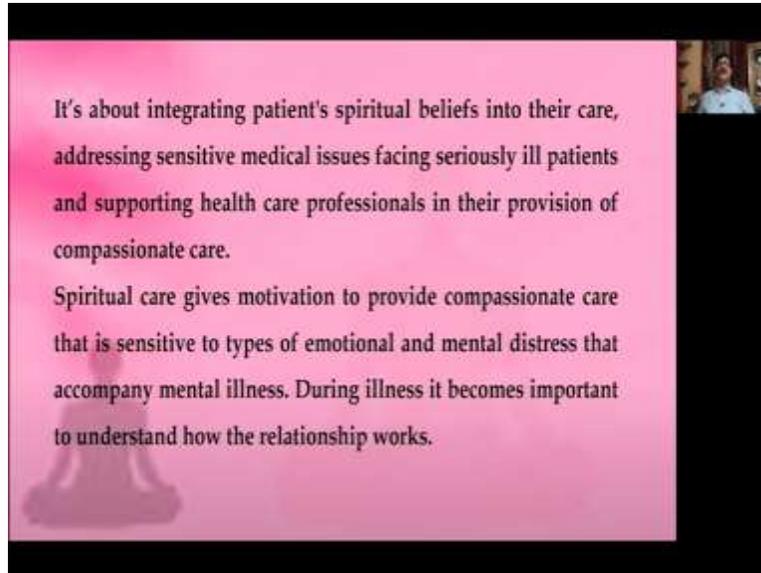
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- "Spiritual Care should be fully utilized as a resource in provision of clinical care, education of future healthcare leaders & advancement of the science as well as practice of medicine".
- It's integration shall lead to effective delivery of holistic Health Care including Palliative Care within the community.

Spiritual care should be fully utilized as a resource in providing care clinically, education of future healthcare leaders and advancement of science as well as practice of medicine

again. Its integration shall lead to effective delivery of holistic healthcare, including palliative care within the community.

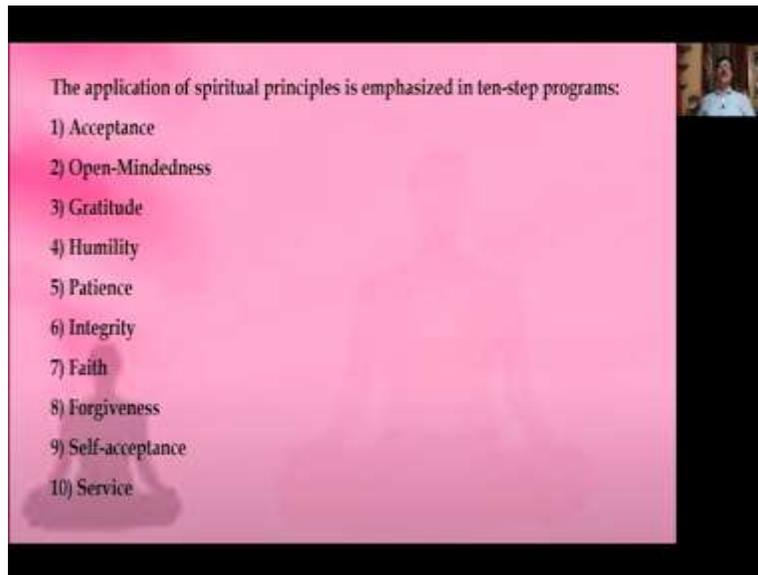
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It's all about integrating patients' spiritual beliefs into their care, addressing sensitive medical issues facing seriously ill patients and supporting healthcare professionals in their provision of compassionate care.

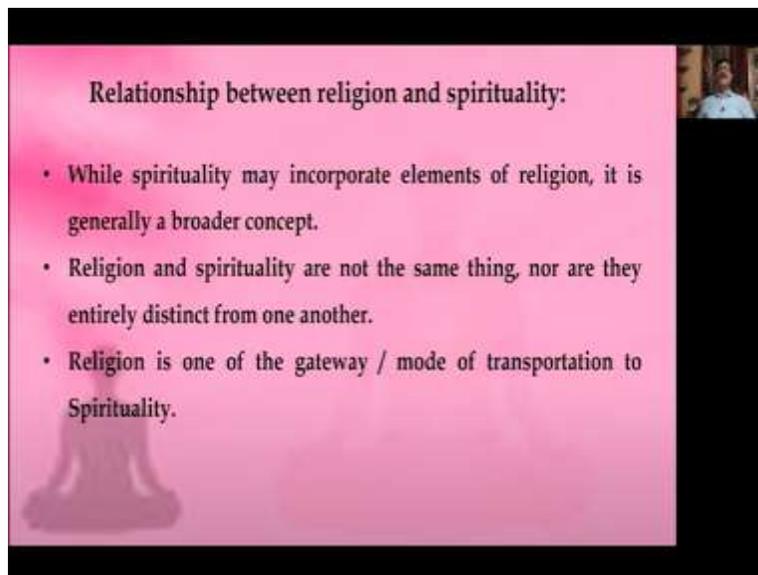
Spiritual care gives motivation to provide compassionate care that is sensitive to types of emotional and mental distress that accompany mental illness. During illness, it becomes important to understand how the relationship works.

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The application of spiritual principles is emphasized in 10-step programs. Acceptance, open-mindedness, gratitude, humility, patience, integrity, faith, forgiveness, self-acceptance, and service.

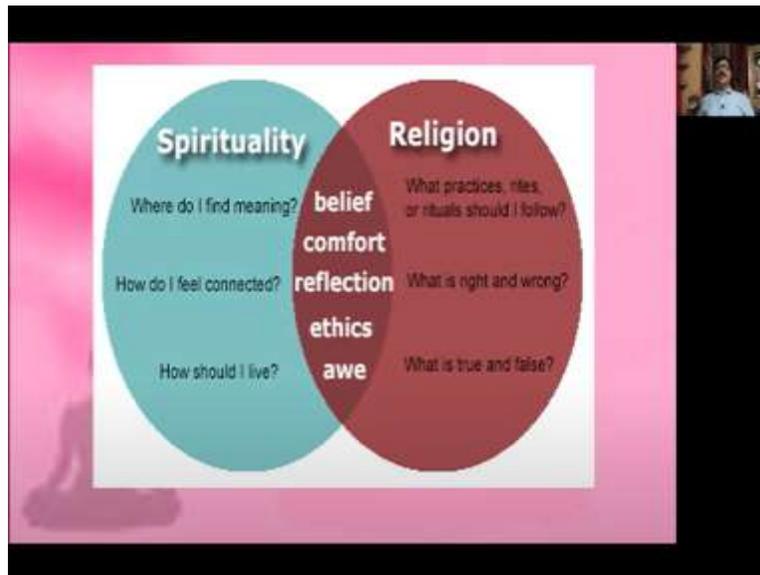
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What is the relationship between religion and spirituality? While spirituality may incorporate elements of religion, it is generally a broader concept.

Religion and spirituality are not the same thing, nor they entirely are distinct from one another. Religion is one of the gateway or mode of transportation towards the spirituality.

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In spirituality, we ask, where do I find meaning? How do I feel connected? How should I live? And these are answered by spirituality. Whereas in case of religion, what practices, rights or rituals should I follow? What is right and wrong? What is true and false are addressed by religion. So we have in between belief, comfort, reflection and ethics coming together.

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**Role of Spirituality in Palliative Care:**

**What is Palliative Care?**  
Care beyond cure improving the Quality of Life & Death

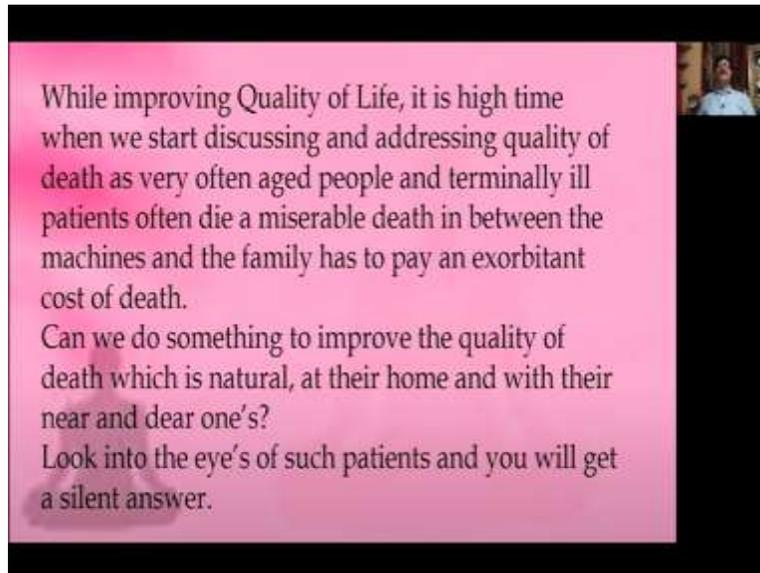
**Palliative Care has four components:**

1. Physical (Pain)
2. Psychological
3. Social
4. Spiritual (need to be focused)

What is the role of spirituality in palliative care? What is palliative care? Care beyond cure, improving the quality of life as well as death. Palliative care has four components as

we have covered earlier. Physical, which covers pain as well as other distressing symptoms. Psychological, social and spiritual where we need to focus so as to even decrease sometimes the physical pain.

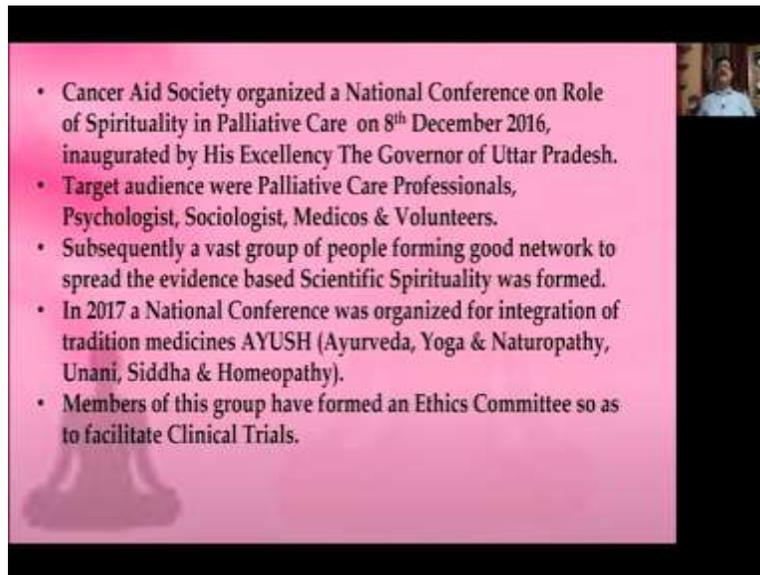
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While improving quality of life, it is high time when we start discussing and addressing the quality of death as very often aged people and terminally ill patients often die a miserable death in between machines and the family has to pay an exorbitant cost of death.

Something to improve the quality of death, which is natural at their home and with their near and dear ones. Look into the eyes of such patients and you will find a silent answer.

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And so the society organized the national conference on role of his spirituality and palliative care in 2016, which was inaugurated by his excellency, the governor of Uttar Pradesh. Target audience were palliative care professionals, psychologists, sociologists, medicals, and volunteers. Subsequently, a vast group of people forming good network to spread the evidence-based scientific spirituality resulted.

In 2017, a national conference was organized for integration of traditional medicines, which are known as Ayush, Ayurveda, Yoga, and Naturopathy, Yunani, Siddha, and Homeopathy, together with spirituality. Members of this group are prominent ethics committees who has to facilitate clinical trials.

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Here are the snaps of the two national conferences.

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We are not human beings having a spiritual experience, but we are spiritual beings having a human experiences.

Thank you. Have a great day.