

Yoga Therapy Evaluation: AIDS

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Koshas

Annamayakosha:

Immune System: AIDS results from the destructive effect of a certain HTLV-3 on Helper-T cells. Without these major components, the immune system is incapable of effectively defending itself against foreign invaders and abnormal cell growth. The impairment of the immune system leaves every system of the body under-defended.

Common effects on other systems: muscular wasting, pneumonia, chronic diarrhea, thrush, neuropathy, scarification on the brain, lymphatic disorders, blindness, etc.

Pranamayakosha:

Breath: Lack of breath awareness; shallow breathing, minimal release of toxins and carbon dioxide as a result

Chakras: possible effects on each

First: loss of connection with earth energy; fear and survival issues

Second: guilt; loss of sexuality; fear of sexuality; disconnected

Third: poor self-esteem; shame; loss of power and will; inverse may also be true if one possesses "fighting spirit"

Fourth: love issues and insecurities; need for love; grief; support system is of considerable importance here

Fifth: communication surrounding care and support system; need to be heard

Sixth: denial; inability to focus and concentrate

Seventh: deep loss of spiritual connection; others may be seekers and make new, profound connection

Vayus: general lack of awareness and deficiency in all vayus

Nadis: lack of awareness of life force travelling through and around the spinal column

Manomayakosha:

Stress Response: Immune system shutting down leading to all systems shutting down; rate at which systems breaking down may be exacerbated by level of stress and coping methods

Other effects: depressed or angry posture; hypersensitivity; defensive; very compassionate toward one another

Vijnyanamayakosha:

Painful inner struggle with life circumstances; powerless to change outcome; unwillingness to accept responsibility; "Why me?"

Anandamayakosha:

Sense of bearing one's cross; difficulty accepting self as complete

Ayurvedic Perspective:

Ojas - the essence of all dhatus (lymph, plasma, blood, muscle, bone, marrow, etc.) - give rise to immunity. When ojas are decreased or depleted, immunity is compromised. Excessive innoculums - as in cases of contraction from blood transfusion - and any excessive sensory pleasure - sex, substance abuse - will decrease ojas. Ojas must be reduced before the body contracts or succumbs to any viral attack.

Wellness Tools:

Annamayakosha:

Asana to strengthen the body without overheating; restorative postures to promote deep relaxation and body awareness; guided imagery and education on the immune system

Pranamayakosha:

Breath: Pranayama for breath awareness, release of toxins, cooling and calming, and rest and relaxation

Chakras:

First: prana vidya for downward energy flow to ground and connect with earth energy; asanas which bring awareness and opening to this chakra

Second: pranayama and imagery to soothe issues of self-acceptance and forgiveness; asanas to open this chakra such as baddha konasana

Third: asanas to empower this chakra; bioenergetic exercise for stimulating energy flow in the solar plexus; mudra for power and healing; kundalini warrior flow

Fourth: partner poses; heart openers; guided imagery

Fifth: vowel mantras; pranayama

Sixth: Tai-Chi style arm movements with visual focus; affirmations; concentration exercises

Seventh: devotional seated yoga mudra; mantra; chanting

Vayus: apana and somana vayus emphasized

Nadis: teach how to visualize and sense the channels of energy using breath

Manomayakosha:

Heart openers; warrior flow; first and third chakra bioenergetics; forward bending postures

Vijnyanamayakosha:

Kum Nye; guided meditation

Anandamayakosha:

Meditation; chanting; affirmations

Ayurveda:

Supported inversions; guided imagery; 8 limbs of yoga; diet

Yoga Therapy Session: Theme: Healing Light

Check in:

PIES (Physically, Intellectually, Emotionally, Spiritually)

Body Awareness:

Chakra scan with candle imagery; healing light affirmation

Sharing:

Sensations and experiences in the third chakra

Education:

"A Fighting Spirit"

Pranayama:

Complete breath; sitali

Warm-ups:

Seated head, neck and shoulder sequence; seated cat; ardha chandrasana to each side; kundalini arms opening to "T" position on inhalation, drawing clenched fists back to heart center with facial contraction on exhalation; dhandasana with ankle and wrist rotations

Asanas:

Standing tadasana; ardha chandrasana series in all four directions; thymus tapping; Tai-Chi arm movements with visual focus; bioenergetic exercise for the first chakra energy flow; gentle warrior II flow to kundalini warrior with "bow and arrow" imagery; prone cobra to child/cobra vinyasa; seated baddha konasana with a partner bending forward and back; supine baddha konasana with gentle twists; apanasana rocking side to side; savasana variation with bolster supporting spine and opening heart center

Guided Imagery:

Healing light in the immune system

Relaxation:

Silent reflective relaxation following guided imagery

Meditation:

Shivalinga Mudra

Affirmation:

Rama Mantra

References

1. Healing; Hafen, Karren, Frandsen, and Smith
2. Rituals of Healing; Achterberg, Dossey, Kolkmeier
3. Mudras: Yoga in your Hands; Hirsch, Gertrude
4. Healing Mantras; Ashley-Farrand, Thomas

also World Medicine; Monte, Tom