



NAMASTE CARE NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2018

NAMASTE CARE

Holiday Greetings!

Although this is a December newsletter I'm writing it just before the American holiday of Thanksgiving. This holiday is a time when we eat turkey and gather with families and friends to give thanks for all of the blessings in our lives. If you are reading this, I count you as a blessing in my life.

APOLOGY

In the last newsletter I forgot to include Australia as one of the ten countries offering Namaste Care. Sara Karacsony, our Australian Champion gently reminded me of this error. This is most embarrassing as the University of Western Sydney School of Nursing and Midwifery was the first organization to sponsor a grant to study outcomes of Namaste Care.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

In many countries December is a month when Christians celebrate the birth of the Christ child. A manger where people (I'm not saying residents as many of you are providing Namaste Care to people in hospitals or at home) can arrange the various figures in the manger.

Just the thought of Santa Claus usually generates smiles on faces, so any objects, stuffed dolls, toys or even pictures that show Santa Claus will stimulate happy memories. In the USA, Santa brings gifts wrapped in brightly colored paper. People

can tear off the wrapping (good hand exercise) and because of their memory loss, they can wrap or unwrap the same gift over and over!

Music for this month can be calming, for instance *Silent Night*, *White Christmas* or upbeat like *Santa Clause is Coming to Town* or *Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer* carols. When playing this song or *Jingle Bells*, pass out bells that people can shake.

The scent of cinnamon is a good choice if you are in a country or state that is cold!

Thank you, Nicola Kendall the Namaste Care for St Cuthbert's Hospice in the UK, for the following ideas.

"Tis the season....

In Northern climates, it is the season for coughs and sneezes. Taking extra care over hand washing can help cut down on the spread of infections, but we can also take the opportunity for some bug busting with our choice of room spritzer or use of a room diffuser.

If we use essential oils, we need to ensure they are well diluted in water and check for allergies. Only a few drops are needed in a spray bottle, topped up with water. Or we can choose to use a hydrolat spray, which is the water that remains from the distillation process when distilling essential oils. This water has all the properties of the pure concentrated essential oil but is already safe and diluted. A good choice is the usual lavender smell as this has antibacterial properties, but this time of year it might be nice to use frankincense which is good for the chest, or eucalyptus, thyme or sage. Neroli (sweet orange) is also a lovely scent to lift people's mood, if they tend to feel a bit down in the winter.

We are anxiously awaiting the publication of your book on Namaste Care and will let everyone know when and how to order it!"

The first Namaste Carer, Mary Longtin, always has good ideas. These are her contributions for this newsletter.

"Nutmeg oil is an oil I like to use in the cold weather. I also put cloves in oranges, sometime just have pine boughs and pine cones in a basket a scent that is very comforting in the winter."

Seasons Hospice has been providing Namaste Care to patients for over 10 years. When I asked them what their volunteers bring to patients Yelena Zatulovsky and Nicole McCann-Davis of their Patient Experience Department sent these ideas.

"As hospice employees we understand the importance of the holiday season. The holidays are a special time to reflect on the previous year and spend time with the ones you love. This is also the perfect time to find new, creative ways to honor patients during their end of life through holiday specific Namaste Care offerings.

- Christmas
 - Using peppermint scented lotion when giving a hand massage
 - Playing classic Christmas music during a visit
 - Bring fresh pine cones into the room during your visit
 - Bring a Christmas stocking for the patient to rub their hands on and hang it in a spot that's easy to see
- Kwanza
 - Sweet potato pie and fresh fruit are traditional Kwanzaa desserts. Provide a taste for your patient to enjoy or consider those smells for aromatherapy benefits.
 - The kinara and seven (black, red, and green) candles represents the days and principles of Kwanzaa
 - An ear of corn represents the future hopes of the family that are brought to life. During Kwanzaa, we take the love and nurturance that was heaped on us as children and selflessly return it to all children, especially the helpless, homeless, loveless ones in our community
- Hanukkah
 - Playing traditional Hanukkah music during a visit
 - Pick up some Hanukkah gelt (they are little chocolates, but they have a specific scent and feel) to both stimulate taste and touch
 - Latkes (or potato pancakes) are a traditional addition to meals. Some cultures eat them with sour cream, others with apple sauce, and some families have created their own additions
 - The Dreidel is a four-sided spinning top played with during Hanukkah. Lift your patient's spirits by taking it for a spin.
 - Menorah lights (use electrical ones) can provide a visual memory and warmth during the holiday. Remember to light them right to left (with the central flame always lit) for each successive night

JANUARY MEMORIES

A New Year's celebration might be scheduled for the following day, January first. When working with people who have advanced dementia keep in mind loud noises that we typically associate with ringing in the New Year are not appropriate. If Namaste Care is offered in a group setting, the choice of music playing as they enter

the room might be “Auld Lyne Sang”. The Namaste Carer can wear a silly hat with “Happy New Year” on it and perhaps ring bells that have a pleasant sound as they greet their special friends. Decorate the room with colorful balloons and funny paper hats for everyone, including families and visitors! Beverages and snacks might be a bit more special for this day. Ginger ale has bubbles and is a perfect substitute for champagne.

If January is cold in your country, warm coco might be the beverage of choice. If it is snowing, place some residents near windows so they can see the snow. Having bird feeders outside the window, so people can see birds feeding, is always a lovely activity.

RESOURCES

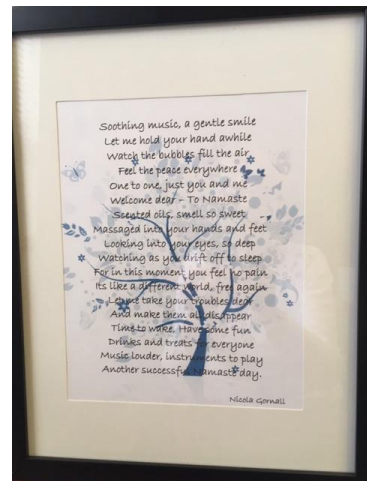


Nancy Krisman has been Namaste Care fan for many years. She has just published another book for caregivers. .

A Namaste Poem

Many of you liked the Namaste poem written by Nicola Gornall who works at Betsy Clara nursing home in Maidstone, Kent (UK).

Shelia Gordon our friend at the Saskatoon Convalescent Home had it framed and hung in the Namaste Care room.



Here is another poem written by Nicola.

*Close your eyes, what can you see?
A different world - So heavenly
Reach out my love, what can you feel?
A healing hand, time stands still
Relax my dear, for at this time
All your troubles are now mine
Hear the music gently play
Oh, how I love namaste
I watch with wonder at your face
You are in such a peaceful place
As your hands slowly unfold
Opened up, no longer cold
Your face that is usually full of fright
Now shows signs of pure delight
As you watch the lights above
The whole room fills with love
The atmosphere is so surreal
I can almost feel what you feel
So calm, at ease and worry free
In this moment just, you and me
So namaste - It means so much
To every single life I touch*

Namaste Care Presentations

I will be in Singapore January 14-16, sponsored by the Dover Park Hospice. Contact Cheong Ee May eemay_cheong@doverpark.sg for more information.

Sending you best wishes for a lovely holiday season and an early Happy New Year! Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter with wonderful ideas. Please send me yours to include in the next one, joycesimard@earthlink.net

Namaste, Joyce



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