

Vol 2. Issue 3. March 2021

NEWSLETTER

This is a monthly diary giving updates on activities at Graceful Living and providing information on ageing 'gracefully' to help elders live a life with maximum ease



GRACEFUL LIVING

LOVE LIFE LIBERTY

Ageing with Dignity and Grace

Tulsi Trust was established by the Chanrai family in 1975. Graceful Living (GL) is a programme of Tulsi Trust which came into existence out of a realization that in today's world the elderly deserve due care and respect.

Graceful Living is a provider of elder care services. It has a presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) to create awareness of elders needs. GL aims to become the best service provider in Mumbai.

COMPANIONSHIP

- Individual Interaction
- Counselling
- Creative Workshops
- Brain Stimulation Activities
- Specialised Care for Alzheimer's, Dementia, Parkinson's, through our Partners
- Regular Support Group Meetings
- Overcoming Loneliness

MEDICAL SERVICES

- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment
- Depression Screening
- Vision/Hearing Tests
- Individual Nutrition/Diet Plan
- Review of Medications
- Preventive Care... Vaccinations and Medicines
- Home-based Physiotherapy

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF GRACEFUL LIVING

With Taare Social: A discussion which focussed on 'Seniors taking care of seniors' was held on 16/1/21. There was a talk on 30/1/21 'Vaccine for seniors - part 1' (Covid) which was followed by another vaccine discussion on 13/2/21, part 2. The topic of Covid of much concern to all, was very well attended.

With Suhana Safar : - *My Safe Place* of Suhana Safar provides mental wellness services for individuals and organisations. They run a wellness circle called Suhana Safar for older adults to express themselves and unfold their potential. 'Memory and how to preserve it' was the subject of the talk held on 22/1/21.

With Rotary Club of Dombivli Diamonds: On 25/1/21, Graceful Living presented a session on 'What is Geriatrics' to Rotary members, mostly senior citizens. An informative talk was given on Geriatrics. The CGA and Geriatric Syndromes were also explained. A Q/A session followed.

With MMP Shah College, Matunga: Graceful Living, in association with MMP Shah College has completed an 'Elder Care' course for their Sociology students. Medically-oriented sessions were conducted and these were divided into three parts: On 28/1/21 the focus was on diet, hygiene, and healthy ageing; on 9/2/21 the

subject spoken about was 'Emergencies in older adults' and 11/2/21 covered a talk on 'Empowering older adults'.

With Story Mitr. The *Gupshup* program was held on 29/1/21. Two stories on personal freedom were related. Participants listened to musical instruments and had to identify them; they were also asked to identify names of animals from some sentences shown to them.

With Ms Amruta Lovekar: Companion sessions are on-going. The Mumbai-based user had a session on 25/1/21 at his home. Mental stimulation activities were conducted followed by an online session on 13/2/21. The Singapore-based user who has a cognitive impairment, had eight sessions related to mental stimulation, recognition of objects and more.

With Dr Dheeraj Mulchandani: Dr Mulchandani is a Consultant General Surgeon, Laparoscopy and Day-Care Specialist. He spoke about elder care issues and gave a presentation of the same on Zoom on 11/2/21. He discussed nutrition/diet in older adults, mobility of seniors, and more. He deliberated on these issues and gave information on minor invasive surgery such as laparoscopy and laser surgery. This was followed by a Q/A session.

WEBINAR

A Webinar was conducted by Graceful Living on January 16. This was in conjunction with Mr Manoj Gursahani, Healthcare Evangelist & Global Strategic Consultant and Mr Mahinder Singh, Programme Curator, MM Activ Sci-Tech Communications. Guest speakers were invited: Ms. Nazneen Hussain, a dietician, spoke on the importance of leafy vegetables; Mr Harish Mehta, founder-executive chairman of Onward Technologies & founder-member of NASSCOM, talked on the importance of modern technology; Dr Prem discussed the Covid vaccine and bodily reactions to it.

RECENT SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS HELD BY GRACEFUL LIVING ON FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Can seniors change?
- Psychological and Physical changes in seniors
- Ageing and body changes; emotional changes
- Geriatrics and Geriatric syndromes
- Overcoming loneliness
- Managing multiple medications in old age
- Skills for working with older adults
- Hygiene and healthy ageing

IMPROVING APPETITE IN OLDER ADULTS



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Dr Naganath Narasimhan Prem, MD, Geriatric Medicine
Consultant - Jaslok Hospital, Graceful Living
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It may seem like appetite just comes and goes mysteriously, but there are things you can do to help your loved ones increase their appetites. Try the following tricks to stimulate appetite in the elderly.

Starting a routine helps as it creates a set schedule. The food should be packed with nutrients. Loneliness can reduce appetite, so eating meals with others is preferable. Washing your mouth before meals can

prevent a dry mouth. Sandwiches, fruits eaten with the hand/fingers may be more fun/interesting for them. Keep a variety of easy-to-eat, healthy snacks handy. Many elderly people have trouble chewing their food. And many others just prefer liquids and softer foods. Smoothies, whole-fat milk and soup work well. Nutritional drinks like Ensure are also good options. Creating a pleasant atmosphere may make eating more enjoyable. To make the elderly feel

more empowered, get them involved in what they eat and how it's going to be prepared. Loss of appetite is very important to understand in the older person. Specific care plans for the elderly need to be devised. The risk factors can range from medical to social, hence should be thoroughly looked into.

LONELINESS



Ms Amruta Lovekar
Gerontologist & Project Co-ordinator, Graceful Living
Contact: 98331 36536

“Loneliness does not come from having no people around, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to oneself” - Carl Jung.

Loneliness is a complex human emotion unique to each individual. While common definitions of loneliness describe it as a state of solitude or being alone, it is actually a state of mind.

Loneliness causes people to feel unwanted,

empty and alone. But it is not necessarily about being alone but about *'feeling alone and isolated'*. It is the feeling that no one values or understands you. A person who is attending a party with lots of people around or having more people in the house can still feel lonely.

Loneliness is a sad reality of modern life. It can affect anyone but older adults are more vulnerable to being lonely. According to a study by AgeWell Foundation done in

Happiness is not something ready-made.

It comes from your own actions.

-Dalai Lama

2017 in which 15,000 older adults across 300 districts of India were surveyed, it was reported that 47.49% older adults were feeling lonely. As people age, they tend to get disconnected from their social circles. Increasing physical limitations, and debilitating ailments also contribute to social isolation. Loneliness is a critical problem amongst older adults which needs to be addressed.

FOCUS ON FUN

GUEST COLUMN



Dr Pratha Mehta
Co-founder and Head Physiotherapist, Iconic Physio

Every experience teaches us something. And the pandemic has taught us that nothing is above our health. So let us use this as a lesson that prioritizing health is important. Let us work towards becoming *atmanirbhar* (self-reliant) and keep good health. To start with, *pranayam* is a good way to start the day. *Pranayam* means practice of breath control in yoga, first step to good health. It reduces stress, anxiety and improves lung function.

Three simple breathing exercises to incorporate are:

1. Pursed lip breathing. Sit in a relaxed position, keep your mouth closed, inhale slowly through your nose for three counts. Close your lips as though you are going to whistle. Exhale slowly by blowing air through your pursed lips for four counts.
2. Diaphragmatic breathing. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other one below your rib cage. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling your stomach pressing into your hand. Exhale (pursed lips still) as you tighten your stomach muscles, keeping your upper hand still.

Start this with 10 counts, gradually increasing to more.

3. *Anulom-vilom* or alternate nostril breathing. Everyone has heard of this. It's simple. Close one nostril and breathe in slowly and deeply until your lungs are full. Then breathe out/exhale through the other. Do the same with the other nostril. This should be done on an empty stomach for a few minutes. Gradually increase the time. Breath control is one magical solution to all health problems if done correctly and consistently.



Photo by The Humantra on Unsplash



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HOW TO CATCH AN EARLY WARNING FOR DEMENTIA

Apathy and a loss of motivation and interest in life have been linked to a type of frontotemporal Dementia. The condition is believed to be caused by brain shrinkage, and scans show the more acute the apathy, the worse the brain shrinkage. This type of frontotemporal Dementia tends to show up in younger people aged 45 to 65, but may have been present for some time. A long-term study suggests that apathy may show before other symptoms of Dementia appear.

Professor James Rowe of Cambridge University's Department of Clinical Neurosciences said people who lose motivation in their middle age should seek medical advice in order to guard against the early onset of Dementia. "It's not the same as being depressed. It's about that flatness and losing energy to do things," Rowe said.

Ref: Daily Mirror, The Economic Times.

SOME EXERCISES FOR SENIORS TO IMPROVE STRENGTH AND BALANCE

Falls are one of the leading causes of injury and death for senior citizens. However, you don't have to fall prey to slips and falls. By exercising, you can improve your balance and your strength, so you can stand tall and feel more confident when walking.

Single Limb Stance - It's best to start off with a simple balance exercise for seniors. Here's how you do this one: stand behind a steady, solid chair (not one with wheels), and hold on to the back of it. Lift up your right foot and balance on your left foot. Hold that position for as long as you can, then switch the foot. The goal should be to stand on one foot without holding onto the chair and hold that pose for up to a minute.

Walking Heel to Toe - You might read this and wonder, "How is walking an exercise to improve balance?" This exercise makes your legs stronger, which enables you to walk without falling. Put your right foot in front of your left foot so that the heel of your right foot touches the top of the toes of your left foot. Move your left foot in front of your right, putting your weight on your heel. Then, shift your weight to your toes. Repeat the step with your left foot. Walk this way for 20 steps.

Back Leg Raises - This strength training exercise for seniors makes your bottom and your lower back stronger. Stand behind a chair. Slowly lift your right leg straight back – don't bend your knees or point your toes. Hold that position for one second, then gently bring your leg back down. Repeat this ten to 15 times per leg.

Single Limb Stance with Arm - This balance exercise for seniors improves your physical co-ordination. Stand with your feet together and arms at your side next to a chair. Lift your left hand over your head. Then, slowly raise your left foot off the floor. Hold that position for 10 seconds. Repeat the same action on the right side.

Side Leg Raise - You'll need a chair for this exercise to improve balance. Stand behind the chair with your feet slightly apart. Slowly lift your right leg to the side. Keep your back straight, your toe facing forward, and stare straight ahead. Lower your right leg slowly. Repeat this exercise 10 to 15 times per leg.

Excerpts - Courtesy: Philips Lifeline, Internet

TESTIMONIALS

What people say about us...

Mr Yashwant Deshpande, Hon Director, Shushrusha Hospital, Dadar. Presentations made by the three monthly guest speakers have been excellent. Please try and reproduce them in your monthly newsletters. They are worth preserving and could be documented for reference.

Mr J B Mudaliar, Goregaon Seniors Association. Your trust has provided a good platform for seniors to express and present their issues. I am very happy to attend your meetings and Webinars. Thank you, Graceful Living.

Ms Alka Mahajan, Ghatkopar Seniors Association. The last program of *Gupshup* was very good but it started very late. Please try and start it on time. The speakers are good and they discuss about seniors with great enthusiasm. There are many different activities so everyone is involved which is good. A duration of one-and-a-half hours is perfect.

Ms Neena Kundra, participant of regular support group meetings. Wonderful sessions are being held by GL on a regular basis. They are very useful to us. I always attend your sessions. Thanks to the Graceful Living team.

Mr Chandrakant Parpillewar, Secretary, Jyestha Nagrik Sangh Sanpada. I attended the meeting on February 4, 2021 which was on "Multiple Medications" and its effects on seniors. We were informed about multiple medications and the precautions to be taken under such circumstances. It was a well organised meeting by GL. I do look forward to such meetings.

SPIRITUAL CORNER



Bring anger and pride under your feet,
Turn them into a ladder and climb higher.

- Rumi



FUN TIMES

WORD PUZZLE

Find the words in the puzzle

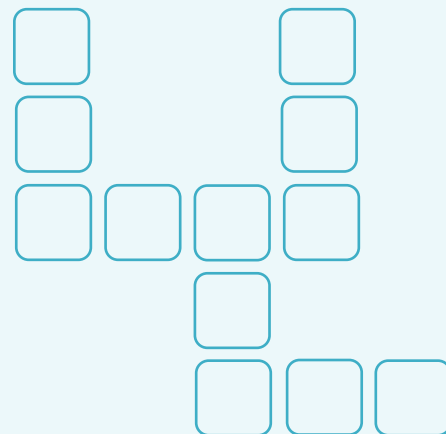
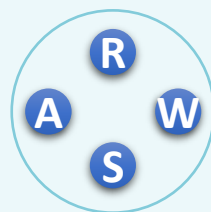
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tent	tap	taxi	table
train	tape	tiger	tomato



FORM WORDS

From the letters in the circle below



VIEWPOINT

Just when we were joyful about the Covid fast dissipating, there is news that cases are suddenly rising in Mumbai and the state of Maharashtra. The numbers may not be that alarming but definitely gives us a sad feeling of 'how much more'. We are getting drained of all our positivity. On the other side we were awaiting the month of April...why? Some news item did mention that there is a likelihood of Covid going away by April and life becoming normal once again. Will it or won't it, is the moot question. But pray for it we will.

The March issue is flooded with Graceful Living's activities, increasing by the day. We are back with our regular columnists this month. Dr Prem writes about the elder's diet and improving the appetite, Ms Amruta discusses loneliness and our guest writer, Dr Pratha Mehta, a physiotherapist, discusses some vital yet simple exercises for breathing.

We have started introducing a guest speaker every month on our Graceful Living platform, be it in the field of medicine, psychology, or any other field of expertise. In this way we hope to cover several topics relevant to the elderly. On February 11, 2021 we introduced Dr Dheeraj Mulchandani on our platform of Zoom. He explained various old age issues including safety and fall prevention, and more. He put up an interesting visual presentation well appreciated by the audience.

And now more on Mumbai. If you drive around the roads of this 'great' city, exhaustion will be the result. However good a driver you are, the traffic which is back to pre-Covid days, weighs you down. Everyone seems to be in a rush all over again. Obviously lessons have not been learnt. We stayed indoors for nearly a year and patience should have become our 'dharma'. But no, we are still in a hurry despite this realization. Result: frustration while driving. Add to that two-wheelers prancing on the roads. They seem to be all over the roads. Too, too many. They squeeze through the narrowest of gaps and 'hurt' your vehicle. No choice but to accept. That apart, they come from all sides (even no entry lanes) and to avoid injuring them, you have to be on the alert and manoeuvre your vehicle. Phew! What a life!

Asha Gurnani Vohra
Editor



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