

Vol 2. Issue 4. April 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



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 MMP Shah College, Matunga: Graceful Living, in continuation with its talks on elder care with MMP Shah College for Sociology students, conducted its last session on February 11 on 'Empowering Older Adults' which resulted in a very positive and encouraging feedback. The College is keen to conduct this course on a regular basis.

With Taare Social: GL conducted a session with Taare Social on Dementia & Alzheimer's. This meeting was held on 27 February. People were very interested in the subject as most elders fear the oncoming abnormality of forgetfulness with advancing age. The short-term forgetfulness cannot be mistaken for Dementia and should be ascertained by a doctor in case it is acute.

With Story Mitr: The *Gupshup* program was held on 16 February on the occasion of Vasant Panchmi. Ms Nandita and Ms Prakriti discussed how family interactions can be kept afloat and shared stories about couples and their relationships. One couple had saved money for family needs and was pleasantly surprised when they could put this to good use when the need arose. The *Gupshup* session held on 26 February was conducted on National Science Day. Ms Nandita asked the participants to talk about their experiences related to science. Participants shared several thoughts on the subject.

With Ms Amruta Lovekar: Ms Amruta of GL continued to conduct companionship sessions with two elderly people. Brain gym exercises and other quizzes dominated the sessions. These meetings also included singing songs, discussion of recipes and the notion of creating good value systems which can be passed on to the younger generation. As usual, primary care-givers were also included in the discussions.

WEBINAR

A Webinar was conducted by GL on 6 March. This was in conjunction with Mr Manoj Gursahani, Healthcare Evangelist & Global Strategic Consultant and Mr Mahinder Singh, Programme Curator, MM Activ Sci-Tech Communications. This was part of the Eldercare Webinar Series under the head, 'Managing Dementia – Care Practices and Awareness'. The meeting comprised four people on the panel: Ms Vidya Shenoy, Secretary-General of Alzheimer's Related Disorders Society of India (ARDSI), Dr Joy Desai, Head of Neurology, Jaslok Hospital, Dr Sonal Mehta, Associate Program Director of the Geriatrics Fellowship at Weill Cornell University, USA and Dr NN Prem of Jaslok Hospital, Consultant Geriatrician. They spoke of obtaining better results after meeting the Dementia patient and the importance of a good care-giver was emphasised. The fact that a patient should not be compelled to recall anything on a daily basis as this would put pressure on their minds was highlighted.

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

- Covid vaccine
- Multiple medications in older adults
- Overcoming Loneliness



Photo by Matthias Zomer from Pexels



Dr Prerna Chhugani
MBBS, Primary Care Physician

One is young by accident but 'ageing gracefully' is an art.

Health is a state of complete harmony of body, mind and spirit, and not just the absence of illness or infirmity. Irrespective of age, all have the ability and the right to be fit and healthy. An elderly can improve his/her health by improving the diet, cultivating healthy relationships, managing stress, exercising and resting/sleeping well.

Having annual health check-ups along with monthly visits to your family physician is a must. If you have any ailments educate yourself about them. Keeping a list of medications in your wallet/purse would be a wise thing to do.

Self-medication should be avoided as some medicines can interact with others, causing life-threatening emergencies. Painkillers should be taken with caution and under supervision of your physician. Also having self-monitoring tools at home like a digital blood pressure machine, the one-touch sugar check and the oximeter are essential. Note: All emergency numbers must be kept handy.

Planning your diet as per your medical condition would be the next step. I would strongly suggest a holistic approach using traditional therapies along with the new knowledge of nutrition. One size does not fit all, hence diet and exercise plans have to be customised for each person.

Let your body be challenged beyond what it can do (under guidance) so that it can evolve and become stronger slowly but surely. Yoga, outdoor walks, strength training to maintain bone and muscle mass is a must. Laughter and warmth of loved ones is the best health booster. A joyful spirit is always young. Keep yourself active, because what you don't use, you lose (eg. muscles, bone strength).

Health and ageing gracefully go hand in hand. Make the most of this golden phase of your life, for now you have the knowledge and wisdom and with health by your side you can find happiness and joy.

THIS TOO SHALL PASS



Serena Franklin
Journalist

"Even this shall pass away" - Theodore Tilton

In these trying times, everyone seems more exasperated as the pandemic continues with no end in sight. Rather, it's more complications like newer mutations. But we as elderly citizens have to cope like everyone else. It's that much harder as going out is a strict no-no for us. I spend my time doing some needlework at home and a lot of reading. Evenings I go for walks just around my area. Having reached this

age of being a senior citizen I feel wiser. One becomes calmer as one understands human emotions. In fact, I am filled with the knowledge of my experiences which I share with my children and grandchildren as also inter-connecting on video calls with friends and relatives.

A mention of Women's Day which was on March 8. Women are at the receiving end of the high-handedness of the powers that be...often from home to the workplace and in occupations beyond walls. The day



Don't get to the end of your life
And regret all the things you didn't do."
- Rhonda Byrne



reminds us that women have equal rights and privileges as well as duties and responsibilities like men do and these must be honoured and when in jeopardy, comprehensively restored.

We sincerely hope and pray that the way forward will slowly albeit surely ease out the pandemic and resolve all the mammoth problems that now stare us in the face.

KEEPING IN TOUCH



Mr M N Dhokale
Retd. Branch Manager, Maharashtra State Co-op. Bank

I am a senior citizen and I love/enjoy video meetings with friends to keep in touch. Zoom meetings are great too as we can share our ideas not only with friends but also outsiders. I feel at our age (I am 70), we are all stressed out. Some people can take stress in their stride. I do so, and I am fine. I discuss my problems with my doctor and follow his advice. There is a mental/emotional reason

behind every illness. I think every illness needs a second opinion of a counsellor/psychiatrist.

These days, we are forced to stay at home because of the Corona pandemic. I don't even attend any wedding or any other ceremony/function beyond a certain distance. Reason: we seniors tire easily.

Where is the need to go long distance? I am very happy and content with what I do. To keep fit I walk regularly (45 minutes) and do yoga while encouraging others to do the same. I keep active with the Dombivli Senior Association group, and regularly attend GL meets. I spend time reading and writing. I connect with my friends on the phone and don't feel the need to travel. I keep happy.



Photo by Ben Hershey on Unsplash

ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person. This type of violence constitutes a violation of human rights and includes physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse, financial and material abuse, abandonment, neglect, and serious loss of dignity and respect.

KEY FACTS

- Around 1 in 6 people 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings during the past year.
- Rates of elder abuse are high in institutions such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, with 2 in 3 staff reporting that they have committed abuse in the past year.
- Elder abuse can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.
- Elder abuse is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations.
- The global population of people aged 60 years and older will more than double, from 900 million in 2015 to about 2 billion in 2050.

Source: WHO – Internet

SITARE-THE RISING STARS



Graceful Living has started *Sitare-The Rising Stars*, an online live interaction with people. Senior citizens who identify themselves through their work, who even after retirement, continue to make a difference to those around them. This is about Dr H S Palep, MBBS and MD, Modern Obstetrics and Gynaecology. He is the founder of Palep Research Foundation and has graduated in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery as well.

He is instrumental in starting an integrative medicine department at K J Somaiya College, Mumbai. His zeal and vision led him to develop Ayurveda into a modern Scientific language. More acclaim came to him with the release of his book titled, *Scientific Foundation of Ayurveda*. He was selected by GOI to conduct short training courses in Ayurveda. Now at 79, he is still engaged in medical research, training and development and appeals to other senior citizens to do the same. This is the way he says, to a healthier, meaningful life. He proves the adage “Age is just a number” as he is zestful even today and is on the go.

- Shrinivas Sawant

SPIRITUAL CORNER



At the end of the day, I’m at peace.
Because my intentions are good and
my heart is pure.

- Lord Buddha



TESTIMONIALS

What people say about us...



Ms Anila Fadnavis, Pune Participant. The *Gupshup* session organised by Graceful Living was interesting. Stories about two scientists were discussed with us. Initially, they felt like children's tales, but the quiz based on Science topics made it special. All participants were agog with enthusiasm. There was one among us who knew most of the answers. This was a good activity. The slides, questions were well presented. Thank you GL.



Mr Davinder Singh, participant of regular support group meetings. The session I attended on Covid vaccination for senior adults was very relevant. It was well attended. I will definitely recommend seniors to attend GL programs with relatives and friends.



S G Patel, Secretary, Kokan Region FESCOM. The *Gupshup* program held on 9 March was different and interesting. The first story narrated was about one brave woman who converts her ‘thief’ brother and changes the life of her village; the second was about Raye Montaque, a Marine Engineer in the US, and her fight against discrimination. The program was good and we all willingly participated.



Prakash Joshi, Thane Seniors Association. The support group meeting on ‘Managing Medicines’ taught us a lot about medicines and their side effects. Even the *Gupshup* program for seniors is highly interactive and gives us a chance to participate in activities. All in all, GL is a wonderful platform for senior citizens.



Companionship Service User (son) - Companionship Sessions: A note of thanks to GL (Ms Amruta) for the time she spent with my mum during the past eight weeks. Although the interaction was via zoom, in spite of a lack of physical contact, the counselling sessions have benefitted my mother. Complete trust has been established. At her age, to experience this with a complete stranger without a personal presence, is remarkable. Thanks to technology and more importantly, the skills in understanding my mother and making her comfortable.

FUN TIMES

WORD PUZZLE

Find the words in the puzzle

H A T N S E J T B G
 T O S M T B W A E S
 C O U L E O S H H U
 O P A S L K T R C I
 L P A G E A M C E O
 O A E T A C R P Q T
 G N P O S H O E S U
 N A B R U T E A V R
 E M E C O R I C T O
 D A E B G N E U T U

OPAL SHOES PANAMA
 COLOGNE HOUSECOAT BASKET
 OVERALLS TURBAN APRON

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"We can afford to get married soon.
 I'm almost halfway done with my
 student loan payments!"



112-A Mittal Towers, Nariman Point,
 Mumbai – 400 021. Tel. +91 22842006
 Email: info@tulsitrust.org
www.tulsitrust.org



GRACEFUL LIVING
 LOVE LIFE LIBERTY

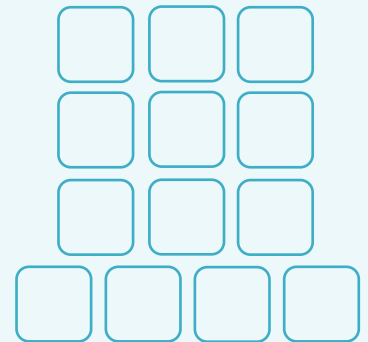
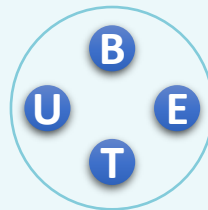
Email: info@gracefulliving.co.in
www.gracefulliving.co.in



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FORM WORDS

From the letters in the circle below



VIEWPOINT

The world is abuzz with the Covid vaccine and today it's about whether you have taken your vaccine yet. As I write this, it is available for the 60-plus and the drive is ongoing. The hospitals are well organized, the queue system is not too painful, and the prick happens in a flash. I waited, pondering whether to take it right away (having doubts about its efficacy like one and all). Suddenly I seemed surrounded by seniors who had taken it and were comparing notes. I actually felt left out. So one fine morning, after registering with Aarogya Setu, I just took off at 9 am and went to Bombay Hospital, waited in line (which was again well organized and the 'sisters' attending were patient and courteous) and soon it was my turn. All those painful thought processes and fear vanished in a jiffy. I stretched my arm and it was over. We had to sit there for half-an-hour in case of immediate side-effects. Then came the fear of 'later' after effects. Mercifully, a little fever the next day and a slight backache, and I was fine. Thank God the first dose is done with. By now I guess most responsible seniors have taken their first shot. Starting this month (April) the drive is set to start for the 45-plus age group.

Our current issue is back with recent activities of Graceful Living including the Webinar conducted in early March. 'Managing Dementia – Care Practices and Awareness' was the subject of discussion which was part of the Eldercare Webinar Series. Four guests were invited to talk on various aspects of Dementia stressing the importance of a 'good' care-giver. In this April issue, we have once again introduced two guest speakers who talk about their senior years and how they spend their time favorably; the third guest speaker is Dr Perna Chhugani, a Primary Care Physician, who gives tips on how to make your senior years healthy and happy.

Graceful Living has started a new series, *Sitare-The Rising Stars*, an online live interaction with senior citizens who identify themselves through their work and want to make a difference to the world. Also, on the news page, we give you certain facts on 'elder abuse' with some statistics. Many countries are experiencing an increasing life span. The possibility of elder abuse too can increase, resulting in a frightening future for the elderly. Here's hoping things go in reverse gear and senior citizens get less abuse and more respect in the near future.

Asha Gurnani Vohra
 Editor