

Vol 2. Issue 11. November 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

CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF GRACEFUL LIVING

With Dr Sarosh M Katrak, neurologist, 16 September. As part of our guest lectures, GL organised a Zoom talk with Dr Sarosh Katrak who specialises in treating diseases/disorders of the nervous system. He spoke about medical facts and changes occurring in the brain cells which lead to memory loss. He suggested ways to prevent forgetfulness and improve the memory and emphasised certain dos: getting involved in solving puzzles, doing different things like learning a new language or a musical instrument and more, all this to keep the memory sharp.

With Dr Prem. A discourse was held by Dr Prem on 20 September for the senior citizens group in Goregaon. Topic: 'Dementia and memory loss in older adults'. He explained the symptoms and mentioned the requirements for Alzheimer's care givers and the challenges they also faced when dealing with these patients.

With Ms Amrita Patil Pimpale, founder of Echoing Healthy Ageing (EHA). On International Alzheimer's Day, 21 September, GL organised a special program with Ms Amrita Patil Pimpale. She talked of the services EHA offers to patients afflicted with memory shortcomings. This was for the patients and their families and caregivers.

With Taare Social. GL conducted a session on 25 September on 'Memory, Forgetfulness & Ageing' by Dr Prem. He explained how to identify memory loss as also the effect of other medicines, tension, smoking and drinking, reasons which also affect retention of memory in old age. Scheduling time for rest in the day and enough sleep at night are important aspects.

With Dr Santosh Bangar, Geriatric Psychiatrist, and Ms Amrita Patil Pimpale of EHA. A session was conducted by Dr Prem on 11 October. The guest speakers were Dr Santosh Bangar, Geriatric Psychiatrist, and Ms Amrita Patil Pimpale of EHA. Dr Sangar spoke about the signs of mental illness in old age like memory loss, cognitive impairment, fear and anxiety and emphasised the importance of physical and mental exercises. Ms Amrita Patil mentioned that the doctor's diagnosis was important and families needed to accept this condition at all levels. This program was well attended, about 107 elderly were present.

With Ms Amruta. Companion sessions were carried out by GL with our service users which included cognitive stimulation activities, singing, brain gym exercises. Also, discussions on subjects like ageing problems and successful ageing were part of the companionship sessions.



GRACEFUL LIVING VIDEOS:

- 21 September - World Alzheimer's Day
- 29 September - World Heart Day

GRACEFUL LIVING: RECENT SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

- With Thane Senior Citizens Association on 27 September. Dr Prem explained the negative effects of tension, smoking and drinking which dim the memory as you grow older.
- With Kalyan/Dombivili Senior Citizens Association on 29 September. Ms Amruta prepared a quiz on the ancient scriptures, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and the attendees were quizzed on them.
- With Andheri Senior Citizens Association on 30 September. Very few attended. However, those who did gave suggestions: making various videos on subjects of seniors interest. Mrs Laxmi Orpe suggested body donation; Mr Virendra Chitre mentioned the need to start physical meetings.





EYE WEAR – GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES



Dr Phiroze Patel

DOMS, MS-FRCS (ED) FRC OPHTH (UK)
Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon

Glasses are an essential part of our lives for poor eyesight. Frames and lenses are expensive but you need to look after them well, keep them in a case when not using them and keep contact lenses in their small cups with fluid in them so they don't dry up. Keep the glasses clean with solutions or even a quick wash under the tap will do and wipe them clean with the special cloth. They then last longer and don't scratch easily (anti-scratch coating can be applied when you order them). Various filters can be used and so discuss them with your optician for your comfort.

When you choose your frames let them fit you well, especially the multifocal. The optician should centre the lens for optimal results – do remind him/her as they tend to avoid this step especially for progressive or multifocal lenses. Remember these are expensive lenses and need to last for 3-4 years.

Young children, when they start wearing glasses should give importance to the size of the frame – a good fit is recommended and the ear pieces can be designed to wrap around the back of the ear so that they can play sports and other activities without them falling and the family not having

recurring expenses.

People like to wear glasses as they can see well and are used constantly. The hyperopes (plus numbers) will have their numbers reduced over the years and in their teens - 80% will not need them while the myopes (minus numbers) unfortunately will see an increase in numbers and will be used for a life time but note that laser surgery is very successful in getting rid of glasses once they turn 18. It is a life-changing surgery and the most popular surgery in the world at present.

Elderly folk who have age-related macular degeneration may need magnifiers or specially made glasses – low visual aids to help them read. Advanced gadgets are available which help them to read and see images which cannot be seen normally. Your eye doctor will guide you accordingly.

Contact Lenses are popularly used by the younger generation but are useful for all generations. They are used for all forms of refractive errors (myopia, hyperopia and astigmatism) and modulate the cornea (alter its shape) thereby helping in visual status.

The old hard lenses are available in better material now but out of favour - the soft modern lenses are preferred. These soft lenses can be used for one year, one month and one day (disposable); they come in packets of 30+30 lenses for daily disposable (cost approx. Rs 6000/- a pair). Monthly cost is the same but they can be used for 3 months. Multifocal lenses are also available which give you the ability to see far and near. Recently, new EXTENDED DEPTH of FOCUS lenses are in the market - they are very useful for myopia, presbyopia and antifatigue; 35+ year old folk (antifatigue), above 40 (presbyopia) and myopic children over the age of 5 benefit immensely from them.

Patients with conical corneas (Keratoconus) can also benefit from contact lens use - orthokeratology is a science which applies to them. Astigmatic contact lenses are also available. Great importance should be laid on keeping these lenses clean and sterile and the contact lens specialist will guide you as taking care of them is different for each of these lenses.

UNLOCKING SECRETS OF MENTAL HEALTH



Dr Pratha Mehta

Senior Physiotherapist & co-founder, Iconic Physio

Last two years have taught us a lot about the importance of mental health.

We need to be in a good state of mind and overall well-being is vital to handle whatever comes our way. Considering this perspective, not just for the currently changing scenario but also for life henceforth, we will introduce you to the secret to boost up your mental health.

There is a secret to uplift and sustain your mood, feel enthusiastic, increase attention and memory, all of which can help you increase your efficiency almost in everything you do and help you stay happy.

Wouldn't it be interesting to know that there is one thing which if included in your daily routine can give you all those benefits?!

It is **EXERCISE!**

Benefits of exercise:

- Exercise increases secretion of certain hormones

Serotonin: enhances mood.

Dopamine: improves focus, learning and motivation.

Norepinephrine: improves attention, perception and motivation.

Endorphins: reduces pain sensation.

- Improves memory

A recent research review from *Journal of Brain Plasticity* has revealed that a wonderful part of our brain called hippocampus which plays a role in memory, has its activity increased with exercise and gifts us with improved memory and learning ability.

Repetition (bringing to mind often), and



association (linking and connecting what we know and what we learn), are the processes through which exercise helps improve our memory.

- Exercise protects and repairs brain cells called neurons.

Hence, it protects the brain from deterioration as we age.

- Besides mood regulation, it also helps us achieve and maintain mental clarity.

To conclude, if you stay motivated, sustain a good mood with improved focus and memory, then you will get through your work efficiently which will make you happy. And... you will retain your good mood and this cycle goes on and on and on...!

So go ahead and get an exercise routine as all these benefits will last long only if you exercise regularly. Be consistent and do not skip the dose - all those hormones do keep your mental health up and efficient while facing challenges.



LIVING WITH MULTIPLE HEALTH PROBLEMS

As we continue to live longer lives, we become more likely to develop different kinds of health problems. One challenge older adults, in particular, are likely to face is living with multiple health problems. More than half of all adults 65 and older have three or more ongoing medical problems such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or arthritis. Figuring out the best course of treatment for multiple health problems can be tricky. For example, prescribing medications for a patient with multiple health problems is more complicated than it is when the patient has one health problem, because a drug that may be useful in treating one health problem may make another worse. That is why both patients and healthcare providers have a role to play in figuring out the best solution to these problems.

- **Get as much information about treatment options as possible.** You should work with your healthcare provider to understand all of your options for care and take an active role in deciding what kind of care you would like. For example, you should ask your provider to tell you how long each treatment option may take to work because some treatments may take longer than others to show benefits. You should also decide if you want to make all of your 'care' decisions on your own or include others in the decision-making process. And you should always let your healthcare providers know right away if you have questions or concerns, want to stop treatment, or try something new.
- **Make sure your healthcare provider understands your priorities for care.** Decide what treatment outcomes are important to you. For example, if you may want to remain as independent as you can for as long as possible, you may prefer treatment with fewer side effects, even if this treatment may not prolong your life as long as other treatments. This is just one example.
- **Ask questions about "trade-offs" between benefits and risks of treatments.** Most medications and other treatments have both benefits and risks. Find out about the possible benefits of each treatment, as well as possible drawbacks such as increased risks of disability, new health problems, and poorer quality of life. Understanding all the pros and cons of each treatment will help you decide which option is best for you.
- **Let your healthcare professional know immediately, if a treatment doesn't seem to be working or is causing problems.** Since there isn't a lot of research examining how older adults with complex health problems respond to treatments, your healthcare provider may not be able to predict exactly how a treatment will affect you. Because of this, it's very important for you or your caregiver to tell your healthcare provider—right away—if a treatment doesn't seem to be working or is causing side effects.
- **Speak up if your treatment plan is too complicated to manage.** Studies have found that the more complicated treatment instructions are, the more likely patients are to stop following them. Let your healthcare provider know if your treatment becomes too complicated or difficult for you to follow. And make sure you understand all instructions before you leave your provider's office. Ask them to work with you to make instructions as simple as possible and easy-to-follow.
- **Make the most of treatments that cause few or no side effects.** Your healthcare provider should make the most important and effective treatments the highest priority. Your treatment plan should fit your needs and preferences while getting you the most benefits and least amount of risks. Among other things, your providers should be able to tell you about non-medication treatment options—and how to use them when possible—to avoid potentially dangerous interactions between medications as well as other potential side effects. Ask your healthcare provider if there are non-medication options for at least some of your symptoms.

Courtesy: Healthinaging.org. ComfortCaregivers.Inc

FACTS FOR SENIORS

Did You Know?

- Age doesn't determine success
- We lose a few bones along the way
- Seniors hold the most voting power
- Creativity doesn't diminish with age
- Seniors are living longer
- You (mostly) have control over ageing
- There's less stress after 65

The Senior's Guide to Staying Healthy Year-round

- Get active. Physical activity is an immune system booster
- Take supplements as necessary
- Eat a healthy diet
- Wash your hands frequently
- Learn how to manage stress
- Get plenty of rest
- Take steps to prevent infections
- Schedule annual physicals

Courtesy: Internet



TESTIMONIALS: What people say about us...

- “ **Ms Rashida Chittalwala, Mazagaon Seniors Association.** I enjoy all the sessions organized by Graceful Living. But amongst them all, my favourite is the 'Brain Gym' one. It helps seniors to rejuvenate tired, exhausted minds. I try to attend most of your support group meetings. Do appreciate GL.
- “ **Ms Sarla Chandak, ex-bank employee, Goregaon Seniors Association.** I came across your NGO through Mr Damle. My favourite program is the quiz/brain gym stimulating activities session. What I also enjoyed was the Dementia and memory loss talk by Dr Prem. I really like to attend the programs and interactive sessions. Thanks for the same.
- “ **Dr Vasant Bhumkar, Ayurveda & Yoga specialist, Mumbai.** I attend programs organized by GL. They are informative, practically useful and cover varied subjects. But sometimes the talk bends towards too much reality and it frightens me. But all in all, good sessions.
- “ **Ms Neena Kundra, regular attendee of Jaslok Support Group meetings.** Thank you for the wonderful session on brain gym exercises. These exercises are truly very useful for senior citizens. GL is taking great interest in the affairs of seniors and we are truly grateful.

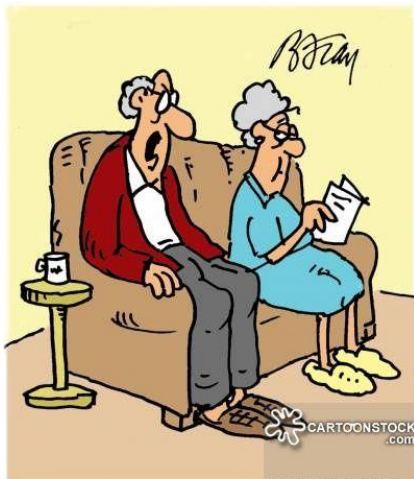
FUN TIMES

WORD PUZZLE

Find the words in the puzzle

P	B	R	C	L	T	L
L	C	O	V	E	R	T
A	K	I	C	E	R	M
N	I	B	K	R	W	A
T	E	E	L	O	O	K
S	I	A	I	C	R	E
P	O	S	V	K	K	K
W	A	T	E	R	C	N

BEAST	COVER	LIVE
LOOK	MAKE	PLANTS
ROCK	WATER	WORK



Search ID: b1m364
 "I'M JUST SAYING, IF OUR INCOME IS 'FIXED', HOW COME WE'RE 'BROKE'?"



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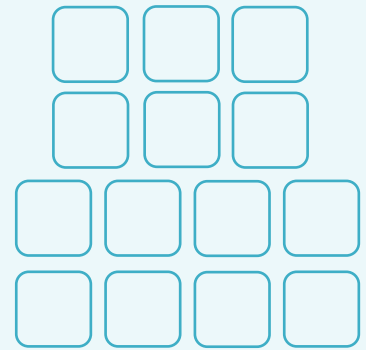
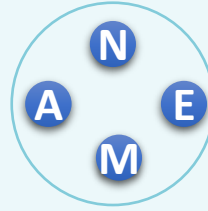
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FORM WORDS

From the letters in the circle below



VIEWPOINT

Celebrations have begun. Diwali is here and this means a few days of lights and more lights. It's first the 'small' Diwali, then the main day of Lakshmi Puja, followed by Hindu New Year and finally Bhau Beej. So many days of fun, joy and merriment! And happily Covid is on its way out. Well, there have been days when Covid has not left its indelible presence. This calls for double festivity.

The November issue of our Newsletter carries ample information as usual. On the first page, we have mentioned the activities and support group meetings of Graceful Living including a Zoom presentation by Dr Sarosh Katrak, a neurologist. On page 2, our guest columnist, Dr Phiroze Patel, an ophthalmologist who is writing a regular column for us on eye-care (last issue was on itchy burning eyes), has given us information of corrective measures for the eyes, namely using glasses and contact lenses. Our second columnist is Dr Pratha Mehta, a physiotherapist (she has also listed exercises for the elderly in some earlier issues), writes about the *secret* (exercise) to uplift and sustain your mood, increase attention span and memory, all of which can help you improve your efficiency almost in everything you do and help you stay happy.

As we continue to live longer lives, we become more likely to develop different kinds of health problems. One challenge older adults, in particular, are likely to face is living with multiple health issues. An article of 'Living with multiple problems' goes a long way in giving dos and don'ts and ways to balance health issues, while figuring out the best course of treatment. Other pointers are mentioned which many seniors may be unaware of, such as 'there's less stress after 65' and so on and importance of eating a healthy diet at all times.

In a pensive mood and a stray thought: Very often, we get angry with our near and dear ones over trivial issues and in our minds runs the thought: Wish I could change his/her track of thinking. Have we ever been able to achieve it? And what makes us think that our minds are moving in the right direction! So live and let live!

A well-known saying: "If thou cannot make thyself as such one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another according to your liking?"

Asha Gurnani Vohra
 Editor