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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 with an aim to fulfil basic needs of the poor and needy. At a deeper level, it's more than indulging in physical activities. Health care, skills development and education are top priorities. It envisages a fair world for all, working with partners to improve health care and opportunities for livelihood, and education. Add to this, the capacity to understand another's needs and do this with utmost integrity.

Graceful Living (GL) is an arm of Tulsi Trust which came out of a realization of a social need for elderly care. After three active years, GL is now a recognized organization for those in their twilight years and has created an awareness through its activities and talks for senior citizens. GL has a social presence viz. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

ACTIVITIES OF GRACEFUL LIVING

In Partnership...

- Intellectual companionship and special care programs – includes companionship, counselling and care-giving for Dementia, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's when required. These services are provided through our partners:

Echoing Healthy Ageing
Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Society (PDMDS)

- Physiotherapy sessions which help the elderly to improve their mobility and become more independent:
Iconic Physio with Dr Pratha Mehta and Dr Rajshri Lad
- Training candidates in 'elder care' in order to have professionals for the same:
MMP Shah College – elder companionship course for Sociology students
Aaji Care – Geriatric counselling course for post-graduate Psychology students
- Activities for the elderly:
Story Mitr: story-telling
Mrs Manasi Golwalkar: technology training

Sensitization programs for school/college students to create an awareness of the needs and issues of the elderly.

Direct Intervention by GL...

- Support Group Meetings
- Webinars (MMACTIV + Mr Manoj Gursahani)
- Guest Lectures by professionals/experts – mainly on Zoom
- Graceful Living Monthly Newsletter carrying important information for the elderly plus articles by known doctors and other professionals
- Online interviews with senior achievers called 'Sitare'
- Co-ordination by GL to create platforms for senior citizens organizations in the city

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

- An online support group meeting on 15 March conducted by Dr Prem. Topic: Women's health. Common health issues which are part of old age in women including hormonal treatment to keep the balance of the body were discussed. He emphasised on an annual gynaecological check-up.
- A physical meet (16 March) at Sahabhaav, the premium residential care home for seniors at Andheri. Amruta conducted a quiz session on the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Attendees talked about their achievements.
- Multi-lingual songs were sung by seniors in different languages (29 March) at this meet. This program was based on GL's survey with seniors regarding their hobbies.
- A repeat quiz (5 April) was conducted by Amruta on the epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* with senior women members of Snehvardhini Seniors Association at Ghatkopar. The quiz served as a platform for infotainment as well as mental stimulation.
- An online meet was conducted by Dr Prem on 'Healthy Ageing' (7 April is celebrated all over the world as 'World Health Day'). He elaborated on how seniors could keep themselves physically healthy. He stressed the importance of medicines and regular medical check-ups.
- A meeting was held on 12 April with senior members of Snehvardhan (Andheri) Senior Citizens Association.

ONGOING EDUCATIONAL COURSES

- The Geriatric Counselling Course which Graceful Living conducted with Aaji Care (28 March) for creating eldercare professionals. An exam was held: three students have been placed with Aaji Care for their internship.
- Companionship course conducted by Graceful Living with students of Smt Maniben MP Shah Women's College of Arts and Commerce. Aim: to provide an overview regarding eldercare and working experience.

WORKSHOP

A workshop on 'enhancing growth of senior citizens associations' was held (23 March) at SNDDT Matunga in collaboration with Maniben MP Shah College, Matunga - 30 participants from 15 associations participated.

A follow-up meeting with senior citizens associations (pan Mumbai) on 31 March after the initial workshop on the same was held on 23 March.

WEBINAR

A webinar on 'Physiotherapy: Beyond Exercise' (26 March) included three panellists... Dr Rajani Mullerpatan, professor-director, MGM School of Physiotherapy, Navi Mumbai; Dr Pratha Mehta, head physiotherapist at Praj-The Rehab Sphere; the third, physiotherapist Dr Rajshree Lad. Information regarding mobility, exercise and postures for seniors was the agenda.



OLDER ADULTS AND THE NEW NORMAL



Dr Naganath Narasimhan Prem

Consultant, Geriatric Medicine - Jaslok Hospital and Graceful Living

As we are into the third year of the pandemic, three waves of COVID-19 have risen and fallen. For the first time since the start of the pandemic in 2020, things have opened up. We are better placed as far as covering most of the population with vaccination is concerned. However, it would be in the best interest of older adults that they still exercise caution.

The tips to be followed during reopening include:

Understand the risks

It may be scary but any activity one engages in outside the home might still incur a risk of getting COVID-19. The key to staying safe is to understand your risk factors, the level of COVID-19 infection risk in your community, and your comfort level.

Follow public health guidelines

Monitor public health guidelines in your area and follow all recommendations

designed to keep community members safe. These recommendations may include wearing a face mask, practicing social distancing, washing hands, avoiding crowds, and limiting the size of gatherings. The guidelines are fluid and might change with time.

Care for your mental health

It is certainly reasonable for older adults and their family caregivers to experience some anxiety related to reopening. In contrast, some older adults may have trouble coping with prolonged isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Older adults should continue to embrace technology and stay connected with friends and family. If you feel anxious or depressed, contact your healthcare provider.

Continue delivery and virtual services

As far as possible, continue using delivery and virtual services for essentials such as

groceries, prescriptions, medical visits, and keep in touch while maintaining social distancing. Although you will still have to leave home from time to time, using these services can reduce the amount of exposure you may have.

Establish safety rules at home

If you allow visitors into your home, consider asking them for vaccination certificates. Limit the number of visitors and continue to practice hand hygiene.

Stay healthy

Keeping healthy is always a priority. Maintain a good lifestyle, consume a healthy diet and continue to exercise.

The pandemic is not over as of now. But we are better placed than at the beginning of the pandemic. Prevention is better than cure. Most importantly, concentrate on keeping healthy.

GUEST COLUMN

UNDERSTANDING THE SHARE MARKET



Dr Chandrashekhar Thakur

Head, Investor Education (Retd)

Investment in the share market is not a tool to double your money in a few months, but it is a wealth creation mechanism! Wealth creation is easy to understand. When we sow 250 grams of rice grain on fertile land, the land may give us back even five kgs of rice after three months. Taking another example, a piece of waste iron may fetch us five rupees but if someone prepares the spare part of a car from the same piece of iron, the said spare part can be sold for 200 rupees also! This again is wealth creation.

If I start a business by using my own funds eg. Rs 10,000, it is called proprietary business. If five people come together and each of them puts in Rs 2,000 each, it becomes a partnership business. Profit or loss will be shared by five people.

However, if a big manufacturing industry is started, then about 20 lakh people can come together and everybody would need to contribute Rs 10 each, thereby raising a fund (capital) to the tune of 200 crore rupees. This arrangement is known as a company. Needless to say that initially if 15 people are taking the initiative to raise funds, provide infrastructure, start a business, sell products and ultimately make profit for this company, they are known as promoters-directors. If the business chosen by the company is profit-oriented then these 20 lakh people (called shareholders because they have a small share in the capital of the company) are likely to earn good profits which will be paid to them in proportion to the amount invested by them. In order to choose the right company, one has to study the

promoters, their reputation, the demand for the concerned products. This is known as fundamental analysis.

If somebody does not want to invest directly in the share market due to lack of knowledge or inability to study necessary pros and cons, the next option is Mutual Funds. Mutual Fund organizations have their own experts known as fund managers who take decisions to invest investors' monies in the way they feel proper. Every Mutual Fund house has various schemes; these include equity funds, debt funds or a combination of both (hybrid schemes). There are schemes based on 50 companies' shares (NIFTY) and 30 companies' shares (SENSEX) which can earn a higher income for retired people.

“ Your baggage may not be your fault,
But your healing is your responsibility. ”

- DENICE FROHMAN





PARKINSON'S : A NEURO-DEGENERATIVE DISORDER

A virtual 'World Parkinson's Day Celebration 2022' was held on April 10, 2022 by the Parkinson's Disease & Movement Disorder Society (PDMDs) in Mumbai. The theme was "Celebrating Life...Igniting Hope".

PDMDs has enabled people to reach out and impact the lives of 50,000 people with Parkinson's and their families and raised awareness through educational and sensitisation programs to 8,00,000 people. The mission is to improve their quality of life.

World Parkinson's Day:

World Parkinson's Day is observed annually on April 11 to spread awareness about the neuro-degenerative disease which has a wide range of symptoms from shaking, stiffness, balance and coordination issues to difficulty in walking and talking. The day also marks the anniversary of James Parkinson who wrote the article - *An Essay on the Shaking Palsy* in 1817, recognising the disease for the first time.

The neuro-degenerative movement disorder occurs when the dopamine-producing cells in the part of the brain called *substantia nigra* start to deteriorate. It mainly affects people over 60, although younger people are also at risk. The symptoms of the disease are tremors in the limbs, stiffness, problems in coordinating movements, posture problems, and sleep problems. There is much to be still known about this condition.

Parkinson's disease has unfortunately no cure but it can be managed by making some dietary changes. "There are a variety of meals that can help a person with Parkinson's disease symptoms. Fish oils, fava beans, antioxidant-rich meals, and foods strong in vitamins B1, C, and D," says Dr Santosh Kumar Jha, Medical Superintendent, Porvoo Transition Care.

Eat Omega-3 fatty acids

Omega-3 fatty acids have been shown in studies to reduce nerve inflammation, increase neuro-transmission, and halt neuro-degeneration. "Patients with Parkinson's disease may benefit from eating more Omega-3 rich fatty fish or taking an Omega-3 supplement," adds Dr Jha.

Limit sugar and salt

It is advised to limit sugar, sodium and salt intake and eat plenty of grains, vegetables, and fruits to manage symptoms.

Add antioxidant-rich foods to your diet

Antioxidant rich foods, such as brightly coloured and dark fruits and vegetables, should be consumed by the patient.

Avoid processed foods, dairy products

A person with Parkinson's disease may also want to avoid processed or high-cholesterol foods. "Processed foods including canned fruits and vegetables, dairy products like cheese, yoghurt, and low-fat milk, as well as foods rich in cholesterol and saturated fat, fall in this category," says Dr Jha.

Eat soft foods

Chewing and swallowing problems are common in people with Parkinson's disease. As a result, foods that are difficult to chew and swallow, such as tough meats, may therefore be avoided.

Ref. Hindustan Times, E paper



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ISSUES OF OLDER PEOPLE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Population ageing is a global phenomenon and is occurring faster in developing countries, which have less time to adjust to the consequences of this demographic transition.

By 2050, older people will account for 20% of the population in developing countries, the same ageing demographic currently experienced in developed countries.

What are the issues for older people in developing countries?

- Lack of pensions and social protection support
- Lack of access to age-appropriate health services, particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS
- Lack of consideration of older people in humanitarian response during times of emergency and/or conflict

NOTE:

Income Security

Globally, just one in five older people have a pension. In other words, 80% of older people in developing countries have no regular income.

Health

Old age is associated with health deterioration and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are one of the main reasons for this.

Age discrimination

Age discrimination is when someone is treated differently with an unreasonable or disproportionate impact, simply because of their age.

Older women

Older women are more likely than men to be widowed, to live alone, to live more years in poor health and with disabilities and to deal with financial problems or live in poverty.

HIV/AIDS

There are around 3.5 million people over 50 years old living with HIV worldwide.

Humanitarian response

Older women and men in humanitarian crises face risks associated with age and related to adequate health care and nutritional support, mobility issues or visual and aural impairment.

Source: Internet. *Age-Action*

“ No one is coming to rescue you from yourself: your inner demons, your lack of confidence, your dissatisfaction with yourself and your life. Only self-love and good decisions will rescue you. ”

- Jenni Young -

TESTIMONIALS: What people say about us...

“ Ms Varsha Sinkar, Member, Neral Seniors Association. All meetings of GL are excellent. What I enjoy most are Dr Prem’s sessions on medical issues. They provide us with vital information on well-being and fitness. I love attending these meetings.

“ Ms Kanchan Sonkusre, Goregaon Seniors Association. Graceful Living provides a helping hand to seniors. The *Gupshup* programs are specially fun to attend. Attendees share their stories and experiences. Even your monthly guest lecturers provide us with so much information, given by physiotherapists and specialised doctors. Thank you, Graceful Living.

“ Ms Laxmi Orpe, Snehvardhan Seniors Association, Andheri. A discussion session was held with members of Snehvardhan Seniors Association, Bimanagar Society. We were kept informed about Graceful Living and its activities/various programs. A forum like Graceful Living is so appropriate for senior citizens these days. Rarely do you find an organization that focuses on the problems and needs of the elderly.

“ Mr Ramakant Kamt, Savali Senior Association, Thane. The Workshop for Senior Associations held on 23 March, 2022 was very well conducted. All the discussions conveyed so much information. The arrangements were good. Got to know many things which can be useful for other senior associations. Also, we were informed about various government schemes.



Just because you are right, does not mean, I am wrong. You just haven't seen life from my side.



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BRIGHTEN THE DAY WITH HEARTY CHUCKLES

Ah, the modern days...

I just saw a grandpa help a youngster who was staring into his phone, to cross the street.



Patient: “Doctor, you have to help me, I think I can look into the future.”

Doctor: “When did it start?” Patient: “Next Friday”.



What do Alexander the Great and Winnie the Pooh have in common?

They have the same middle name.



A woman told her friend, “I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor’s permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my leotards on, the class was already over.”



I told my physical therapist I broke my arm in two places.

He told me to stop going to those places.

VIEWPOINT

Phew! Here’s May. April has been so hot, what will May be like?! The hottest month in Mumbai! With the pandemic giving us some relief in our movements, we may still wish to stay indoors because of the intense heat. COVID is also threatening us. Delhi has a raised number of cases and Mumbai too we hear is being threatened. But can we once again go into hibernation? For how long? The news that seems to go around is that there will be no severe lockdown. We all have to fend for ourselves and be vigil and careful. London has opened up completely although there is news that COVID is around.

Our May issue has listed GL’s activities which include a webinar on ‘Physiotherapy: Beyond Exercise’ which comprised panellists Dr Rajani Mullerpatan, professor-director, MGM School of Physiotherapy, Navi Mumbai, Dr Pratha Mehta, head physiotherapist at Praj-The Rehab Sphere; and Dr Rajshree Lad. Information regarding mobility, exercise and postures for seniors was discussed. A workshop on ‘enhancing growth of senior citizens associations’ was held on 23 March; 30 participants from 15 associations participated. Issues to be handled by seniors was also part of the discussion. GL’s support group meetings were held on the following topics: Women’s health, a quiz on the two epics – *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, an online meet was conducted by Dr Prem on ‘Healthy Ageing’ on 4 March, World Health Day. Also, our ongoing education classes are very much happening - Geriatric counselling/companionship courses and sessions for students on medical/social topics.

Talking of human relationships, each one of us should understand that when we hurt others, we will also be hurt. It’s the law of karma. Recently, a friend of mine was gossiped about by two people. And when they got talking, it was criticism all the way. The whys and what are difficult to understand, but this innate need to be mean to others seems a ‘nasty’ part of human nature. People get hurt, sometimes not easy to repair, and sometimes this can lead to psychological problems which become part of everyday life for the person who has to take the brunt. This sadness can be averted if the concerned person does not hear of it. The least we can do is not allow the ‘mean guys’ to be nasty in our presence on moral grounds. Just look after yourself without involving other people. Because what goes around, comes around.

Asha Gurnani Vohra
Editor