

## **"Mindful Living" Video Series: Soothing Touch**

"Mindful Living" video series

helps us integrate mindfulness into daily life

for enhancement of mental health

There are seven mindfulness practices tailored for elderly people

They are of different durations

some with more movement and some with less

Choose the practices that best suit your needs

and join us to experience the wonders of "Mindful Living"!

Stop asking!

Let's talk when I get back!

What's going on?

I asked my husband

how his doctor's appointment went

And you know how he replied?

He blamed me for that

I was just showing concern for him

The way he treats me is

really upsetting sometimes

When you care for your family

you need to care for yourself too

It's alright

Let's practise Soothing Touch together  
to look after ourselves first

Before the mindfulness practice  
there are a few things to keep in mind  
Remember to watch this video first

When you're feeling down or anxious  
one way to care for yourself  
is to offer yourself a soothing touch  
Human touch is an innate way  
of expressing care

Just as a mother uses gentle touch  
to comfort her child

Through a physical touch  
such as simply placing the hand over the chest  
we can already influence how we feel

Soothing touch can stimulate  
the parasympathetic nervous system  
to release the hormone oxytocin

Oxytocin promotes feelings of  
being cared for and nurtured  
while reducing

the stress hormone cortisol

Therefore, this simple practice  
not only helps  
calm our mind  
but also alleviates stress and negative emotions

This is the practice of Soothing Touch  
We will do this practice in a sitting position  
Find a comfortable sitting posture  
You may slightly adjust your posture  
to make yourself feel at ease and fully supported  
Once settled into a comfortable position  
you may choose to close your eyes completely  
or lower your gaze at a spot on the floor in front of you  
Allow yourself to connect with your inner experience  
Slowly take two or three deep breaths  
to let the body settle in  
and bring awareness to the present moment  
Now gently place one hand  
over the chest  
Feel the rising and falling of the chest  
with each breath  
Also bring attention  
to the sensations of warmth  
where your palm meets the chest

It is natural if you feel a bit awkward or uneasy  
if you are a beginner to this practice  
These feelings could be  
your body's responses to the care and support  
from the soothing touch  
Try to be patient with yourself  
and allow yourself time to adapt gradually  
Give yourself time to savour  
the feelings of being cared for  
when your hand rests upon the chest  
If it feels right for you  
bring both hands  
to rest over the chest  
Continue to feel the warmth  
of being cared for  
Some people may feel that placing the hands over the chest  
may not be most suitable for them  
We will then try a few other ways  
of soothing touch  
Take some time  
to explore which way of touch  
is most soothing or supportive for you  
Now try patting  
the chest with the hands gently

Notice how this soothing touch makes you feel

Now place one hand on the chest

and the other on the abdomen

Next, try bringing both hands to rest on the abdomen

How are you feeling at this moment?

Now try cupping the face with both hands

and feel the warmth

as the palms cradle the face

Now try to gently hold your own hands

Now, cross the arms

and give yourself a gentle hug

If it feels right for you

you could try giving yourself a hug

while gently swaying the body from side to side

In the following time

you can choose

any kind of soothing touch

that feels most suitable for you

You may choose what we tried earlier

or other forms of soothing touch that call to you

such as cupping the hands on the back of the neck

lightly stroking the arms

or gently rest the hands on the knees

Take this time to comfort and support yourself

to take good care of yourself

As we approach the end of this practice

bring awareness back to the breath right now

When you are ready

gently open your eyes

or lift your gaze

Look around the surroundings

At this moment

you could also stretch your body

to bring this practice to an end

Hey, what are you two talking about?

The more I practise, the more nervous I get

Am I doing something wrong?

When we practise mindfulness

we become more aware of our experiences

Therefore, whether it's pleasant or unpleasant feeling

you may notice it more intensely

Noticing that you're nervous

doesn't mean you've done anything wrong

Just gently bring the attention back

to what you were observing

and continue the practice with an open heart

For example, if your hands are resting on the chest

just bring awareness back to your breath and body sensations

During the practice just now

I didn't feel anything at all

Was that normal?

Remember the key of practice is

to be aware of any experience here and now

Feeling nothing

is also an experience in the present moment

Whether or not you notice any sensations

it is completely normal

All you need to do is

to continue practising

with an open and curious mind

If you have any other questions about the mindfulness practices

visit the website of Elderly Health Service for more information