

"Mindful Living" Video Series: Mindful Stretching

"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"!

Watch out!

Don't push yourself too hard

Pay more attention to your body's limits

Let's practise Mindful Stretching together

to take care of ourselves

Sure

Before the mindfulness practice

there are a few things to keep in mind

Remember to watch this video first

The purpose of Mindful Stretching is

to tune in to your body's conditions and changes

in every moment

and to accept its limitations

so that we can take better care of ourselves

As you do this practice

please remember that you do not have to compare with yourself or anyone else

Take this practice as a way to nurture

and cherish your own being

and feel how your body responds

moment by moment

If you have any injuries or medical conditions

please consult a healthcare professional first

to see if the following stretches are suitable for you

If you find any of the movements

too difficult for you

do not force yourself

You may simply sit and rest for a while

until you find the next movement suitable

then you could continue the practice

Throughout the practice

feel free to adjust the range of each stretch

based on your physical condition

or even pause the practice

This is the practice of Mindful Stretching

We will do this practice in a sitting position
Find a comfortable and stable sitting posture now
Place the feet flat on the floor
Rest the hands gently on the laps
or on the armrests of the chair
Relax the shoulders
Keep the back naturally upright
Tuck in the chin slightly
and relax the facial muscles
Direct your gaze softly ahead
Allow the body to settle down gradually
Tune in to the sensations in the breath and throughout the body
When doing the mindful stretches
there is no need to control the breathing
Just breathe naturally
When you are ready
slowly let the head
tilt towards the right shoulder
The degree of tilt is not important
Pay attention to how it feels
and stop when it feels right to stop
Keep your gaze ahead
Notice the sensations when the left side of the neck stretches
while the right side contracts

Bring your attention to the sensations in the arms
and the upper body
Breathe naturally
Then, gently bring the head back to the centre
allowing it to rest naturally on the neck
When you feel ready
slowly let the head tilt towards the left shoulder
Listen to the body
Stop when it feels right
Feel the stretch on the right side of the neck
and the contraction on the left side
Notice the differences in sensations on the left and the right sides
Now, gently bring the head back to the centre
Pay attention to each movement
Then, once again, sit and rest in stillness
Notice sensations in the body right now
As best you can, feel deeply
whatever body sensations in this moment
If it feels right for you
interlock the fingers
and bring them to front of the chest
Then slowly turn the palms outwards
until they face the front
and push the hands forwards consciously

as if you are pushing something away from you

Pay attention to the sensations in the fingers, palms, wrists
and entire arms right now

Feel the sensations throughout the whole body

Keep breathing naturally

If you prefer

you could push your hands forwards a little more
to increase the stretch in your arms

If it feels right for you

gradually turn the palms around
and gently bring the hands back to the chest

Let the hands slowly lower

Feel the sensations in the arms when lowering them
until the hands rest on the thighs

Sit and notice the sensations
after completing this stretch just now

Be seated again

feel the sensations
with the hands resting on the thighs

Now slowly bend both arms
gently place the fingers on the shoulders
and slowly lift the elbows forwards
allowing both shoulders to rotate backwards

Remember, the rotation does not need to be too fast

With each rotation, carefully notice the sensations
in the shoulders, arms, muscles, and bones
As best you can, notice whatever body sensations arising now
Accept them, observe them
If it feels right for you
continue to keep the hands resting on the shoulders
Lift the elbows forwards
then slowly rotate them
in the opposite direction
Observe the changing body sensations
during the rotation
If you feel ready
slowly come to a stop
Let the hands rest on the thighs
and continue breathing naturally
If it feels right for you
slowly raise the arms
with fingertips pointing towards the ceiling
Notice the sensations in the arms right now
If you like
you could imagine
a bunch of grapes hanging above your fingertips
See if you could stretch both arms
as if reaching for those grapes

Notice the sensations in the entire body right now

Breath in and out naturally

If you like

you could explore your limits

let your arms extend a bit more towards the sky

When you are ready

slowly lower the arms

paying attention to the sensations in the arms when lowering them

until the hands resting back on the thighs

Take a moment to notice the body sensations

after this stretch

As we approach the end of this practice

you may slowly close your eyes

allowing the body to sit naturally

Feel the sensations throughout the entire body

with each in-breath and out-breath

When you are ready

you may gently open your eyes

Look around the surroundings

At this moment

you could also gently move your body

to bring this practice to an end

When practicing Mindful Stretching

do I need to complete all the stretches?

You can decide based on your physical condition
and body's needs

If you notice certain body part rather tight
you can choose to do

stretches for that specific part only

If you want to bring awareness to
the condition and needs of your entire body
you may complete all the stretches

Practise with the intention to care for yourself
then you can choose the movements that suit you best

What's the difference between Mindful Stretching
and other stretching exercises I usually do?

Mindful Stretching

is quite similar to stretching exercises in terms of postures
but they serve different purposes

Stretching exercises

often require adopting specific postures
to train up the body

The purpose of Mindful Stretching is
to cultivate body awareness
through bringing attention
to the physical sensations in each movement
while accepting the body's

present condition and limitations

If you have any other questions about the mindfulness practices
visit the website of Elderly Health Service for more information