

Brain

HEALTH ACTIVITIES



Episode Guide

Beginnings



Brain Boost



Brain Health 101

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTHY BRAIN AGING AND
CLINICAL TRIAL RESEARCH CALL:**

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Program Description:

Brain Boost

Activities designed for those with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and those with mild Dementia

Brain Health 101

Activities designed for those with mild to moderate Dementia and those who care about them

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Painting Watercolor Poppies



Supplies

Water color paper

Medium size soft paint brush

Water colors of your choice

Cup of water

Paper towels

* If you have trouble grasping the paint brush try to use a brush with a wider handle.



Modifications

You can prepare by filling up the cup with water, setting out the paper, and getting the paints and paint brush out. Make sure you have paper towels close by. If your paper is not on a pad you can use masking tape or painters' tape and tape your paper to your work surface (table or desk).

When creating a painting, don't be afraid to try new things. You may start doing one thing and end up doing another and that is okay! Try using different colors, repeat different objects on the same paper or on different sheets. Explore and practice what you are learning.

You can do one painting or many paintings. There is no right or wrong way. This is your time to be creative.



Find the joy in painting and being creative, there is no wrong way to paint and everyone's picture can look different.



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Modifications

You can start by preparing the space for your loved one by filling up the cup with water, setting out the paper, and getting the paints and paint brush out. Make sure there are paper towels close by. If the paper is not on a pad you can use masking tape or painters' tape and tape the paper to the work surface (table or desk).

When creating a painting, you may find that you enjoy painting one particular part of the painting. You could do this repetitively on many pieces of paper.

Try using different colors.

You could do one painting or many paintings.

If your painting with your loved one maybe you could work together on a painting.

If you see them struggling you can lead by example "don't forget to dip the paint brush in water first"

If the instructions are too difficult to follow enjoy getting the paper wet and watching how the color fills up the space as color is applied to the wet paper.

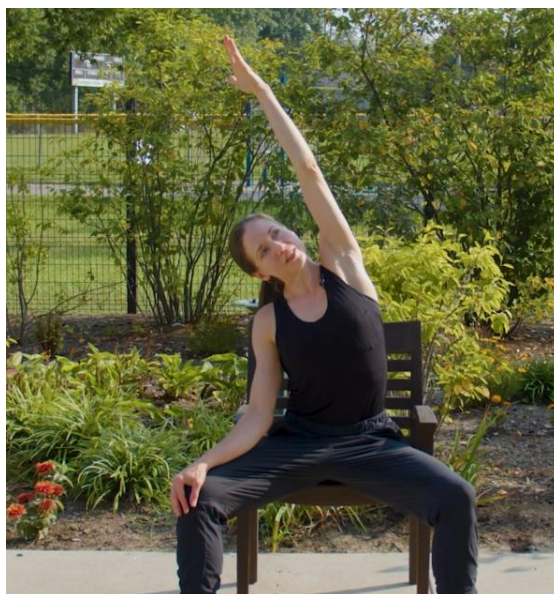
Chair Assisted Yoga



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Supplies Needed: Chair, preferably with armrests

Instructions

While seated, scoot to the edge of your chair so you can sit up tall with your feet comfortably and securely on the floor.

You can have your hands resting on your knees or on the chair.

Sit quietly for few moments. Keep your eyes open or closed (whatever is most comfortable for you).

Notice the parts of your body that are touching the floor and touching the chair. Start to draw your navel in towards your spine.

Lift the chest up. Relax the shoulders back.

Draw your chin in gently toward the chest so the back of the neck lengthens. Feel the crown of the head float up toward the ceiling. Now bring awareness to the breath.

With your next breath in, feel the breath fill the front of the chest.

The next breath feel the front and back of the chest fill with breath.

Your next breath feel the front, back, and sides of the chest fill with breath. Breath fills the chest in all directions.

Start raising and lowering your shoulders. You can do this as you take a breath. As you inhale, pull the shoulders up to the ears. As you exhale, relax the shoulders down along the back.

Inhale, lift the shoulders up. Exhale lower them down.

Turn this into a circle. Start to bring the shoulders forward. Lift them up. Draw them back. And down.

Shoulders forward. Up. Back. And down.

Reverse this. Draw the shoulders back. Up. Forward, And down. Keeping that tall spine. Shoulders back. Up. Forward. And down.

Shake it out.

Find your tall spine again. Chest is lifted.

Next is the Cat and Cow position

Place hands on your knees or chair for more support.

Inhale and lift your chest. Look up. As you exhale, draw the belly in and push your hands into your knees or chair. Round the spine. Continue.

Inhale and lift your chest. Look up. As you exhale draw the belly in and push your hands into your knees or chair. Round the spine. Do this one more time.

Inhale and lift your chest. Look up. As you exhale draw the belly in and push your hands into your knees or chair. Round the spine.

Come to a neutral position again.

Hold on to your left knee. Draw the belly in. Look up and raise your leg. You can hold on behind the thigh if this is easier. Hold. Then put the leg down.

Push hands into the knees or chair. Round the back.

Hug the right knee in or hold on behind the leg. Lift the chest and look up. Hold.

Place the foot down. Push hands into the knees. Round the back.

Come back to a comfortable seated position. Take a deep breath in and exhale.

Take another deep breath.

Hands can be on knees or the chair.

Lift and lower your heels, pressing the balls of your feet into the floor.

Raise heels up. Press them down.

Raise the heels up. Press them down.

If this is too easy, add resistance by pressing hands into knees making your legs work a little harder.

Hold left knee. Raise leg. Circle your ankle in one direction. And then reverse direction.

Put foot down.

Pick up other foot.



Hold right knee. Raise leg. Circle your ankle in one direction. And then reverse direction.

Put foot down.

Now holding on to the seat of your chair or the armrest, extend both legs out and then both legs in. Repeat.

Reach your left leg out as much as you can. Press through the heel. Draw your belly in. Lift your chest up. Take your foot and move it side to side so the entire leg is moving in and out. Bring that foot back in.

Reach your right leg out as much as you can. Press through the heel. Draw your belly in. Lift your chest up. Take your foot and move it side to side so the entire leg is moving in and out. Bring that foot back in.

Take your legs and move them out wider. You may want to move forward more in your chair. Sit up straight. Draw belly in and lift chest. Take your arms out wide, like a cactus. Lift the chest. Hands and arms are strong.

As you exhale, draw the arms together. Elbows should meet. Palms should meet.

Inhale, and open arms wide.

Exhale and close the arms so that elbows meet. Palms should also meet.

Inhale, arms open.

Exhale and close the arms so that elbows meet. Palms should also meet.

Inhale, arms open.

Exhale and close the arms so that elbows meet. Palms should also meet.

Inhale, arms open.

Shake the arms out and relax.

Put hands on knees. Press left hand on left leg.

Bring your right arm up to the ceiling. Stretch up and over. Draw the belly in to the spine. Reach through the fingertips. Lower your arm.

Press right hand on left leg.

Bring your left arm up to the ceiling. Stretch up and over. Draw the belly in to the spine. Reach through the fingertips. Lower your arm.

Return to center. Bring knees back in close together. Sit up tall.

Calming Breath Meditation

Draw the belly in. Lift the chest. Relax shoulders.

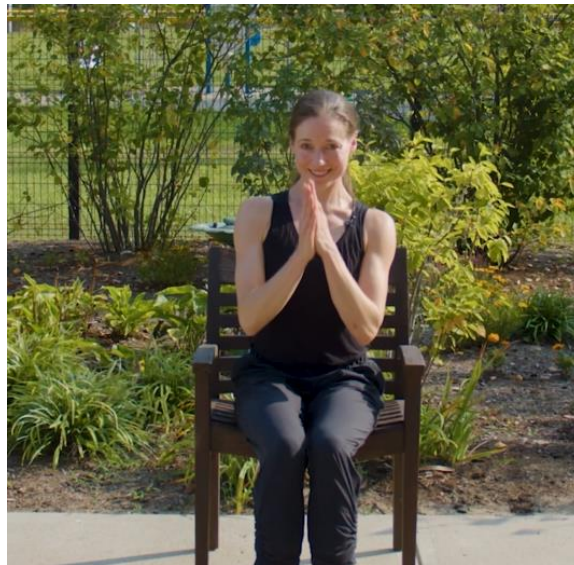
Let all of the air empty out. Breathe in. Notice the space at the top. Breathe out. Space at the bottom. Breathe in. Space out. Space. Breathe in. Space. Out. Space. Continue breathing like this finding space at the top and bottom of the breath. Gradually let your breath turn to a natural rhythm.

Modifications

If following along with the chair yoga instructor is difficult, you may want to choose only a few of the stretches in the video to try in one session. Each time you do it, add another type of stretch until you get used to it. Keep building, adding more as you feel comfortable.

Do chair yoga together. It is always good to have a buddy to do things with, and chair yoga is the same! By doing it together, your loved one may watch how you do it and mimic what you do to the best of their ability.

If chair yoga isn't working in a quiet environment, make it more fun by stretching and singing some old favorites such as "Singing in the Rain," "You are My Sunshine," or "Blue Suede Shoes".



Gardening



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Modifications

Gardening has many health benefits! There are many ways to modify gardening to make it easier that have been shared in the segment. Here are some additional ways to enjoy gardening.

Pause the video at any time to discuss the video or to go try something.

Plant a small garden in your yard, in raised garden beds, or pots.

If you do not have access to a garden, perhaps you could get some vegetables from a farmer's market or store. String beans, shuck corn, shell peas, stem tomatoes.

Take a garden tour in your area. There may be special gardens open for tours. Or you may have plants in your yard, neighborhood, or community park. You may even want to take a trip to a landscaping store. Make sure where you are includes a safe place to walk with no trip hazards. Make sure to take time to stop and smell the flowers blooming. If the flowers are your own,

pick a few and make a bouquet. You could even give the bouquet to a friend.

Another activity about gardening is to view photographs of gardens. You could look at old photographs you have, view images online, or get some books from the library with pictures. Engaging with someone about your favorites, or most colorful, or your own experiences in the garden can provide meaning. Saying things like, “tilling the soil was a dreadful task, but picking the flowers made it worth it!”

