

April 2024 Newsletter

Have you ever stepped out of your comfort zone? I personally have a difficult time stepping out of my own comfort zone. Over the years, I have always been one to take the fast-paced type classes, like Zumba, Boot Camp, Spin Classes, etc.; however, a few years ago I decided to slow myself down and try *T'ai Chi Chih*[®]. This class was definitely out of my comfort zone!

Does this sound familiar? How often do you think about doing something out of your comfort zone or trying something new only to change your mind or stop before even giving it a try? It happens all the time at the UMC Activities Center, people go into the center talking about starting exercise or starting a particular class and then never come back. There are also the people who find out the exercise program is all done in a group setting and are out the door before even trying or observing a class.

I get it! Getting out of my comfort zone was difficult; I had to change my mindset. The first few classes were hard, I was always over doing the movements and felt very clumsy, but just like my fast-paced classes, one day it clicked! I survived getting out of my comfort zone and at my next doctor's appointment; I found out that my blood pressure had dropped!

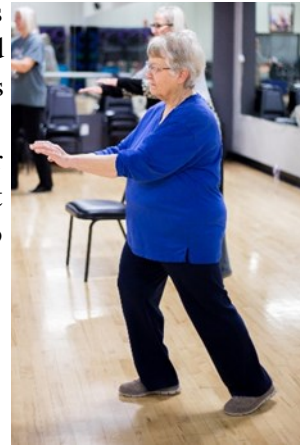
Getting out of your comfort zone is never easy. We can usually think of a million excuses as to why our comfort level does not need to be toyed with and only one or two reasons to risk the uneasiness that ensues. It is up to each of us to decide what we can and cannot do. However, there is usually a way to push ourselves and remain comfortable.

How can you get out of your comfort zone?

1. Give it a try; remind yourself that you are simply giving a new situation a try.
2. Devise a plan; having a plan helps you leave your comfort zone slowly.
3. Seek support; talk about what you would like to do with friends or family. Ask them to join you.

If you are interest in *T'ai Chi Chih*[®], the UMC Activities Center offers it Tuesdays and Thursdays with Cindy at 3:30PM. A mix of gentle movements that focus on balance and the circulation of energy or chi. The class involves slow, continuous, circular, shifting movement to stimulate inner energy chi flow. These movements can be performed standing or sitting. Intensity Level: Low

T'ai Chi Chih[®] may be ideal for individuals looking to improve their strength, balance, sleep or for a mind body experience without having to get onto the floor. A study from Emory University showed people older than 70 years old who practiced a form of T'ai Chi had 47.5% fewer falls than those who did not. It is believed to be because in *T'ai Chi Chih*[®] one is constantly shifting their weight forward and back and even some side to side. Building strength in your feet, ankles and legs improving coordination and nerve and muscle communication (hss.edu). Visit the UMC Activities Center at 7102 Kewanee Ave and try *T'ai Chi Chih*[®]!



TRIP ALERT! TRIP ALERT! TRIP ALERT!

Seniors are Special travels to Iceland: Land of Fire and Ice March 12, 2025 - March 19, 2025

Space is filling up fast, however we still have a few openings available for this trip! This seven day trip will include visits to volcanoes, waterfalls, geyser, relaxing in the Blue Lagoon, and a spectacular view of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights).

DAY 1: Depart the USA: Today you'll depart on an overnight flight to Keflavik, Iceland.

DAY 2: Keflavik, Iceland: Iceland is full of surprises – for one, it isn't covered in ice! It's a stunning mix of green plains, wild volcanic scenery, beautiful coasts and lakes, spouting geysers, hot springs, mud pools and sophisticated cities. Topped off by clean, fresh air, you'll find yourself in a trance surrounded by unique natural beauty throughout the country. Upon arrival, you'll be met by a representative of Mayflower Cruises & Tours and transferred to your hotel. Rooms will be available for check-in upon arrival. All flights should arrive by 3:30pm. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at the hotel. Meal: D

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DAY 3: Iceland's South Shore: After breakfast, your adventure to the South Shore begins with a journey through small villages and farmlands to the majestic mountains with views including Mt. Hekla, the most active volcano in Iceland, and the towering, ice-capped strato volcano Eyjafjallajokull, which last erupted in 2010. Iceland is also famous for its waterfalls and you'll see two of the most magnificent—the Seljalandsfoss which tumbles over high rock escarpments allowing you to walk behind the waterfall, and Skogafoss. Learn about the preservation of the Southern Iceland cultural heritage on the visit to Skogar Folk Museum. Exploration continues to Dyrholaey, a magnificent rocky headland with sheer cliffs, en route to the village of Vik. Head to the seashore, flanked by steep bird cliffs rising high above the beautiful black sand beach. In the sea, just outside of Vik, see the Reynisdrangar Rocks which stand 216 feet above sea level at their highest point. Meal: B

DAY 4: Reykjanes Peninsula / Blue Lagoon: This morning, head for the rough tracks of Reykjanes, one of the most active volcanic areas in Iceland. Visit the geothermal area of Krysuvik and Lake Kleifarvatn with its hot springs and solfatares. The moonlike surroundings of the lake never fail to leave a strong impression on visitors! A remarkable life enriching experience is a visit to the Blue Lagoon – a lake of warm, mineral-rich geothermal water, internationally renowned for its healing prowess. Located in the middle of a lava field in the pure and beautiful Icelandic wilderness, water is heated by underground volcanic activity at a depth of 5,400 feet and is pumped to the surface to form this man-made wonder. The Blue Lagoon is known for its special properties and its beneficial effect on the skin. Visitors from all over the world come here in search of health, relaxation and an exotic experience. You'll have an opportunity to soak in the pleasantly warm mineral-rich water. Meal: B

DAY 5: Reykjavik: Reykjavik, Iceland's capital city of 100,000 people, is unique in many ways. This capital is a modern city with a variety of restaurants, museums, galleries and theaters. Heated entirely by geothermal water, it is home to the "smoking bay", so named for the rising steam that greeted the city's Viking founder, Angolfr Arnarsson, as he sailed into the bay here in 874 AD. The city center is the heart of Reykjavik and home to many charming historic buildings of stone and timber contrasting with imaginative modern architecture. It has the features of a modern society complemented by a close connection to natural wonders right on the city's doorstep. Hot springs, glaciers, lava fields, midnight sun, waterfalls, northern lights, volcanoes and bizarre landscapes – the city has them all! On the included panoramic city tour of the world's most northerly capital, see the old town center, Parliament, cathedral, harbor, National Museum, "Pearl" and Hofoi House (site of the Iceland summit of 1986), and Hallgrímskirkja Church whose steeple is a landmark of the city. Enjoy free time for lunch on your own and shopping, then prepare to "take off" as you visit FlyOver Iceland. During this virtual flight, experience waterfalls, geysers, scenic landscapes, and the spectacular natural wonders of Iceland like never before. With the special effects of motion, wind, sound and scents, this unique "flying" experience is sure to be a highlight of your day! Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. Meal: B

DAY 6: The Golden Circle: On the full-day tour of the Golden Circle, enjoy scenic drives along with the geological and historic sites of the island. Your excursion includes a drive to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Thingvellir National Park. A remarkable geological site, it is one of the few spots in the world where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge is seen above water. The amazing canyon that runs through the park is a meeting point of two of the earth's tectonic plates. The park is situated by Lake Thingvallavatn, the largest lake on the island. The park is also the most historic site on the island as the world's oldest democratic parliament was founded here in 930 AD. You'll see outstanding natural wonders when you visit Geysir, Iceland's most famous area for thermal activity.



Strokkur – one of the most active geysers in Iceland

View "Strokkur", one of the most active geysers, and "Gullfoss" (Golden Waterfall), Iceland's most famous waterfall. Before returning to the hotel, a visit to a local farm gives you the chance to meet some of the native Icelandic horses, as well as learn about the growing of healthy tomatoes using green energy, pure water and organic pest controls. This evening, join your travel companions for the farewell dinner. Meals: B, D



DAY 7: Iceland / USA: Following breakfast, transfer to Keflavik Airport and bid a fond farewell to amazing Iceland, as you return home with memorable life enriching experiences to cherish. Meal: B

Costs: The cost of this trip is \$3,699 per person with double occupancy (add \$1,149 for single traveler); this includes round trip airfare from Lubbock, TX. Deposit of \$250 per person is due to lock in this rate. Travelers Protection Plan is available for an additional \$399 per person and must be paid at time of deposit.

Passport copies are required and must be valid for six months after the RETURN date of March 19, 2025.

For more information or to reserve your spot for this trip, please call 806-775-8760.

UMC ACTIVITIES CENTER

Avery Williamson

Blooming Health Benefits from Gardening

Ever heard that the secret to a long, healthy life might just be in your garden? It's true! Gardens have been places of peace, creativity, and fresh starts for centuries. For seniors, gardening brings even more wonderful health benefits.

Embrace a Natural Stress Reliever

Among the myriad health benefits of gardening for seniors, one of the most valuable is its potent ability to relieve stress. In a world increasingly focused on screens and artificial environments, spending time nurturing plants has a grounding effect, bringing calm and tranquility. Studies have reported older adults experience better sleep patterns, less stress, and enhanced self-esteem, underlining the strong connection between gardening and improved well-being. However, it's important to note that some gardening activities can become strenuous with age. Fortunately, gardening for seniors doesn't need to be a back-breaking chore. Raised garden beds can alleviate physical stress, reducing the need for bending. Lightweight gardening tools, designed ergonomically, make tasks easier and more accessible. It's about progress, not perfection, and even the smallest touch of green can reduce stress levels and bring peace, making gardening a worthwhile pastime for seniors.

Enjoy Fresh, Nutritious Produce from Garden to Plate

Another of the gardening benefits for seniors is the opportunity to cultivate fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Having fresh, organic produce right at your fingertips means not only less time spent in the grocery store but also a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Not only that, it's a way to ensure a nutritious and balanced diet, essential for better health in older age. For seniors, who may be on a tighter budget or at greater risk of nutritional deficiencies, gardening offers a rich source of nutrients. Time gardening becomes both a moderately intense exercise and a means to healthy eating. The vitamin-rich produce nurtures the body, while the act of caring for your garden nurtures the soul.



Keeping Active Safely with Gardening

One of the significant health benefits of gardening for seniors is the unique opportunity it presents for regular exercise. Activities such as lifting potted plants, digging soil, and raking leaves serve as light exercise, improving heart health and overall physical strength. This type of physical activity also helps manage high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and improved immune system, all a common concern in old age. However, to ensure seniors enjoy the benefits of gardening safely, some adjustments may be necessary. Raised beds and lightweight tools can make the tasks more manageable. Adequate pathways for easy navigation, and it is crucial to stay hydrated. With these adaptations, gardening becomes a great exercise for seniors, offering an enjoyable way to stay active.

Cultivating Purpose and Mental Stimulation

The philosophy of Happier Aging™ emphasizes finding joy in the activities we love. For many seniors, gardening is that beloved hobby, a source of mental stimulation and self-esteem. There's a certain satisfaction in seeing the fruits (and vegetables) of your labor grow and thrive, and this process of nurturing plants brings a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Learning about new plants, developing new skills, and planning the garden layout are all part of this rewarding journey. Additionally, the act of gardening can alleviate stress symptoms, contributing to better mental health. Thus, gardening offers seniors an effective way to stay mentally active, engaged, and happier, reinforcing its position as an essential part of the journey to better health and well-being. Remember, the benefits of gardening for seniors extend beyond the physical. The benefits of gardening also encompass mental health. Sun exposure during time gardening can help regulate the body's circadian rhythms – our internal clock that influences sleep patterns. The serenity of being in nature, along with the sensory awareness it fosters, can alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety. Engaging in light exercise through gardening can contribute to better sleep and mood by reducing stress levels and boosting serotonin, the body's mood-stabilizing hormone. Gardening offers a tranquil retreat, providing an effective and enjoyable method of stress relief.

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Class Spotlight:

We are spotlighting **Intro to Wellness** this month. **Intro to Wellness** is a fun and unique class that will take you back to the good ole days with songs from the past. **Intro to Wellness** offers basic exercises performed seated and standing that focus on building strength, stretching, and most importantly, increasing aerobic endurance. In this class, it is common to sing songs while exercising. This forces you to be mindful of your breathing while doing both exercise and singing. **Intro to Wellness** is a very low intensity class and is a great way to begin exercising and meeting friends. Shana does a great job making sure each member is enjoying themselves while exercising by adding jokes and fun questions throughout the workout. **Intro to Wellness** meets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week at 1:15pm. Feel free to come try it out and get back in shape with **Intro to Wellness**.

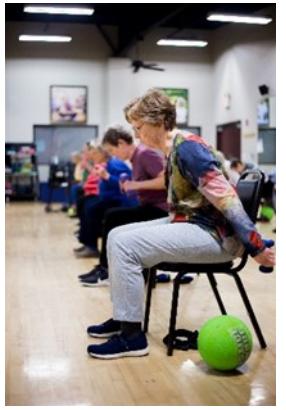
For those who are not a member of the UMC Activities Center you are welcome to any of our classes for a \$5.00 guest fee. We ask that you come a few minutes early to sign a waiver and pay your fee. We are here to help you. Contact the office at (806) 761-0676 or stop by and see us at 7105 Kewanee Avenue, Lubbock, TX 79424.

Announcements:

A **Self-Defense** class will be hosted at the UMC Activities Center. Kristi Wuensche with 10-10 Self Defense is putting together a 3-day class to help you learn everything there is to know about protecting yourself. These classes will be held on April 23rd, 25th, and 30th from 5:00pm to 7:30pm. Classes are \$75 per person. Contact Avery at 806-761-0676 or stop by the UMC Activities Center. Space is limited and preregistration is required.

The UMC Activities Center is hosting a Seminar about Protein, Fats, and Carbs. How much should we be eating, and what are some foods that we should avoid? Seed oils, dyes, sugar? Come find out as UMC's Nutritionist Samantha Jackson talks about the importance of macronutrients. The Seminar will be hosted on Wednesday, April 24th at 11:00am at the UMC Activities Center.

Learn to Dance with Jim & Linda will undergo a couple of changes for the future. Our Learn to Dance class will now be held ONLY on Mondays from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. There will no longer be a Wednesday class. If you want to learn how to dance to any song anywhere then come, try out **Learn to Dance with Jim & Linda** on **Mondays at 6:00pm**.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Robin Welch



This month we are featuring our Popcorn Crew. Jan Lukens is the visionary for bringing back the Popcorn fundraiser post COVID. Popcorn is popped and sold at UMC on Monday evenings and Wednesday mornings. The Popcorn Crew sells popcorn in the cafeteria and throughout the hospital. All proceeds fund the Auxiliary Scholarships given each semester to a UMC employee or a family member studying medicine. We appreciate the service provided by Jan and her Crew. Due to their hard work, dedication, and commitment, the auxiliary can provide scholarships each semester up to \$2,000.00 each. Thank you for your service to UMC employees, their families, and the Auxiliary!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Are you interested in helping support UMC Health System and our community? Volunteering is a great way to get involved! UMC Health System relies on the support of our volunteers who generously give their time in support of our mission to help the community and provide the best care possible. Ways to get involved include:

- Greeting Program
- Messenger
- Information Desks
- Therapy Programs (Pet & Music Therapy)
- Donations (Patient Care/Nursing/Staff Care Packages, Books, Cards, Blankets, Toys, Etc.)

Ready to get started or have questions? Please follow the contact information below.

Contact Us:

Phone: 806.775.8680

Email: VolunteerServices@umchealthsystem.com