New Dance and Exercise Program for Seniors Promotes Well Being While Dancing from a Chair

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While working with seniors, Barraclough noticed that many of the homes' residents were unstable when standing, so she created a program using her 30 years experience as a physical education, dance, and exercise instructor that would enable individuals to "dance" while sitting in a chair. "I saw a visible difference every day in how Sit and Dance for Seniors changed the lives of the residents where I taught," said Barraclough. "As I have continued this program, I have seen an increase in strength and agility in seniors who routinely participate in Sit and Dance for Seniors. In addition, they have a happier outlook on life and if they are feeling down or sad when I first get there, they are usually happy when we finish."

Sit and Dance for Seniors not only engages the bodies and minds of seniors--it is a program that helps them feel respected and honored as individuals when they are struggling with physical and memory challenges. Barraclough believes the music and accompanying dance movements motivate seniors and take them away from the fact they are less active and have mobility problems, or are confined to a wheelchair or walker. For Barraclough, Sit and Dance for Seniors is the perfect way to teach seniors to "Bloom where you are planted."

The Sit and Dance for Seniors program consists of four 28-minute DVDs that feature strength, stretch, and dance exercises to help balance social, physical, and cognitive stimulation. The music has been licensed by familiar artists in the Big Band and Holiday DVD's and was professionally orchestrated for the Ballroom and Hawaiian Paradise DVD's. The complete set may be purchased by seniors, caregivers, or care facilities.

"This idea is amazing," said Geri Lehnardt, Case Manager for Mountain Land Department of Aging and Family Services. "It's a brand new idea that I think will help all of these seniors who can't really do a whole lot." Sit and Dance for Seniors is based in American Fork, Utah. For more information or to purchase Sit and Dance for Seniors visit its Web site at SitAndDance.com
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