

Let's Do the Watermelon!

17 May 2017

'Are you all sweating? No? Ok let's try another watermelon. That's right, open those arms and draw as big a circle as you can. Give me a huge watermelon!'

That's trainer Shereen from *Strong Mind Fit Body (SMFB)* urging the community at *St Joseph's Home (STJH)* to work those muscles. She's leading the first-ever community workout that brings folks from outside, into the home and those in it, 'out', by having them interact with the public. It's part of a larger goal of both SMFB and STJH to write our own story about how we'd like to age – with and within the community. And in the process, change the (often negative) way people view ageing, seniors and nursing homes.

For who says you can't get involved with a nursing home if you don't need its services? And why should there be a clear separation between the home and the larger community? Shouldn't we care about the people in there like we would if it were a childcare or after-school student care centre?



'Aunty, jing hor (that's very good)! Jor kare ji kai! (try it again!).' Shereen and her community champions are now urging the crowd to do the twist with their

partner – a move that’s got even the usually quiet aunty laughing and grooving to the upbeat music.

The champions are young – a few barely out of their teens, but all passionate about exercising with the community including seniors. Through workouts like these, it is our hope that people come to experience their neighbours young and old in a different light - as *part of* their circle of friends rather than a separate entity, like a supermarket or bank that you go to only for a specific service. For it is when we spend time to get to know others can we learn to see things from their point of view and empathise.



Trainer Shereen is on the far left



Our breakout sessions emphasise the importance of every individual and their ideas. Everyone in the circle has to introduce themselves and execute a move that everyone else has to follow. Some bend sideways while others opt to touch their toes. But no routine is too small or insignificant. Whether you’re in a wheelchair or 6 feet tall, every move counts and everyone matters.

We had a blast at our first workout session and can’t wait for more of you to join us! Give it a shot. At the very least, you’ll feel fitter and if you’re really open about it, you’d be helping to craft a new story on ageing too...

Our community workouts happen every Monday 7.30pm at St Joseph's Home (36 Jurong West Street 24 Singapore 648141, right next to the Singapore Boys' Home)

Everyone of all ages and functional abilities are welcome to participate.

Light refreshments will be provided post-workout and your feedback is most welcome.

Want to volunteer as an workout Champion? Email us at volunteer@stjh.org.sg

For details on *Strong Mind Fit Body*, visit <https://strongmindfitbody.com/>