



## March 2009 News Flash

### Spring Is Here!

As we get older, it's especially important to exercise because it can play an important preventative role in lowering the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Studies show that exercising can help enhance structure and function of the brain. Therefore, it's important that we be proactive in improving our memory, reaction time, balance and creativity through physical activity.

Spring is "in the air," and as the temperature gets warmer our outdoor interests can really give us a jump start on becoming more physically active. Gardening, mowing the law, or taking a stroll with a loved one or a pet are all great activities that benefit us physically and at the same time help prevent cognitive decline. So, put away the winter blues and get outside to enjoy the opportunities of spring!

Here's another brain/body exercise activity from the book, *In Full Bloom-A Brain Education Guide For Successful Aging*, by Ilchi Lee and Jessie Jones Ph.D.

Practice the Triangle Circle Square Exercise (below) every day for a few weeks. Once you get good at it, test your skills against your grandkids or kids. They'll be impressed that you can "out-do" them. You don't have to tell them you've been practicing!

## Triangle Circle Square Exercise

When doing two tasks simultaneously, you challenge various parts of your brain to work together.

- 1) In the air, draw a circle with you left hand and a triangle with your right, drawing the shapes continuously with both hands at the same time.
- 2) Next, switch hands, draw a triangle with your left hand and draw a reverse circle with your right.
- 3) Alternate hands and repeat the above. When you become proficient at drawing a circle and triangle, try drawing a square and triangle.

Once you've mastered the Triangle Circle Square Exercise mix it up with some of your own shape variations. See if you can get a friend onboard and challenge each other with new combinations. Remember, self-amusement is good therapy.

Until next month, keep reaching out for a better day!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Ann". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Ann".

Mary Ann