

Activities Programming for People with Dementia



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**Past: Activities Director in skilled nursing and
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*** I have no actual or potential conflict of interest to this presentation.**

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What is Activities Programming?

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Why are activities important?

What things do you enjoy in life?

Why are those important to you?



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Why are activities important for People with Dementia?

- Improved ability to think clearly, learn, and remember
- Improved emotional well-being
- Decreased isolation
- Increased independence
- Increased self-worth and esteem
- Improved physical health and boosted immune system
- Increased longevity and quality of life



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We know activities are important.

- What kind of skills and approaches are needed in Activities Leaders?
- How do we offer activities to people with differing and changing needs?
- Tips, Ideas, and Best Practices for activities



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What skills are important to be able lead activities for People with Dementia?



- Open Minded
- Creative
- Experienced
- Kind
- Patient

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What skills are important to be able lead activities for People with Dementia?



Engagement and Motivation

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How to Engage – Small Talk

Use these questions to guide your conversation:

- How are you feeling?
- What are the doctors saying about your health?
- Do you have any personal interests?
- What does your typical day involve?
- Are there any events that create excitement for your future?
- Has anything changed in your life?

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How to Engage

Use these communication techniques during your conversation with someone with dementia:

- Breathing
- Pick a Topic
- Get Close
- Listen
- Pay Attention



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What skills are important to be able offer activities to People with Dementia?

Motivation



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MOTIVATION - OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES

Lack of interest or energy:

- Have an open conversation to see what interests they have.
- Encourage them to participate in developing a plan and take *small steps* to move toward those interests.
- Emphasize the mental and physical benefits of being active in your conversations, such as having fun while improving their health or meeting new people.

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MOTIVATION - OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES

Pain and discomfort:

- Speak with a health care provider to assess the source of pain and develop a plan of care to address it.
- A health care provider can help you understand what activities are safe to participate in.
- In some cases, a plan for pain management may also help. (Pre-activity medication)

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MOTIVATION - OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES

Feelings of loneliness or isolation:

- Especially in the wake of COVID-19, it is easy for People to feel lonely or depressed.
- Spark conversations of about how being more active might combat those feelings and encourage activities where in-person or online participation is done safely while they remain socially connected and safe.

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MOTIVATION - OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES

Fixed Income:

- A fixed income does not have to be a reason to avoid activity.
- There are many low or no-cost activity opportunities such as:
 - Walking
 - Dancing to their favorite music
 - Chair yoga



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MOTIVATION - OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES

What are some other common barriers?

What are some possible solutions?



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MOTIVATION

“Offering activities to seniors is only one part of the equation. It’s an important part...but equally important is their motivation to participate.”

– Luke Skywalker



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How do we offer activities to people with differing and changing needs related to cognitive decline?

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What are the 7 stages of dementia?

STAGE 1	No cognitive decline	An individual has no memory loss and is mentally healthy.
2	Very mild cognitive decline	An individual has normal forgetfulness linked with aging.
3	Mild cognitive decline	An individual has forgetfulness that is more frequent than normal and shows signs of mental decline that are noticeable to others.
4	Moderate cognitive decline	An individual begins to forget recent events, has trouble socially and begins to withdraw from family and friends.
5	Moderately severe cognitive decline	An individual has major memory loss and needs some assistance with daily activities.
6	Severe cognitive decline	An individual needs considerable assistance with daily activities, may not remember names of close family members, suffers from incontinence, etc.
7	Very severe cognitive decline	An individual has limited ability to communicate and requires assistance with almost all activities.

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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

1. People with dementia are still able to experience joy, comfort, meaning and growth in their lives.



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

2. Their quality of life depends on the quality of the relationships they have with others.



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

3. Optimal care occurs within a social environment that supports the development of healthy relationships



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

4. Good dementia care involves assessment of a Person's abilities; care planning and provision of activities; strategies for addressing behavioral and communication changes; and an environment that fosters community.



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

5. Each person with dementia is unique, having a different constellation of abilities and need for support, which change over time as the disease progresses



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

6. Determine how best to serve each Person by knowing as much as possible about each Person's life story, preferences and abilities



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7 Fundamentals for Effective Dementia Care

7. Good dementia care involves using information about a Person to develop “person-centered” strategies, which are designed to ensure that services are tailored to each individual's circumstances.



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Some important things to know

- Cognitive health
- Physical health
- Physical functioning
- Behavioral status
- Sensory capabilities
- Decision-making capacity
- Communication abilities
- Personal background
- Cultural preferences
- Spiritual needs and preferences



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Best Practices in Activity Assessment

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION/ACTIVITY EVALUATION																	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Admission <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Change of Condition																	
PERSONAL STRENGTHS																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Motivated <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerful <input type="checkbox"/> Able to make needs known <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of humor <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure interests <input type="checkbox"/> Feels useful <input type="checkbox"/> Decisive <input type="checkbox"/> Adapts to change <input type="checkbox"/> Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Developed coping skills <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____																	
SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS					RECREATION INTERESTS/NEEDS												
A. PRIMARY VISITORS					A. ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT												
<input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Friend / Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer: <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Facility <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Pet <input type="checkbox"/> No visitors <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____					<input type="checkbox"/> Groups: <input type="checkbox"/> Large <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Independent (self-directed) <input type="checkbox"/> One-to-one <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Own room <input type="checkbox"/> Day/Activity room <input type="checkbox"/> Inside facility/outside <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No interest												
B. TYPES OF CONTACT					B. PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES												
<input type="checkbox"/> Visits <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Outings <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____					<input type="checkbox"/> Active participation <input type="checkbox"/> Passive participation <input type="checkbox"/> Independent/individual <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership exhibited <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement needed <input type="checkbox"/> No interest												
C. HELPS OTHERS					C. ACTIVITY SCHEDULE PREFERENCE												
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer: <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Work <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Activity leader <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No interest					<input type="checkbox"/> Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon <input type="checkbox"/> None of these, (explain) _____												
PURSUITS PATTERNS (P = Past Interest C = Current Interest N = No Interest)																	
P	C	N	ACTIVITY	P	C	N	ACTIVITY	P	C	N	ACTIVITY						
			Cards				Education/Intellectual				Watching TV						
			Games				Walking/wheeling				Watching movies						
			Crafts/arts				Math/Science				Computer						
			Exercise				Traps				Choreographing						
			Outings				Shopping				Parties/social events						
			Music				Writing				Being around pets						
			Reading				Television/radio				Radio						
			Spiritual/religious				Gardening/landscaping				Hobbies						
											Community outings						
											Groups/organizations						
Initials Last			First			Middle			Attending Physician			Record No.			Room/Bed		

BRIGGS HealthCare THERAPEUTIC RECREATION/ACTIVITY EVALUATION

ADAPTATIONS FOR ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION OR SKILLS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH																	
A. SENSORY:																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Taste <input type="checkbox"/> Touch <input type="checkbox"/> Smell <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adapted activity. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adaptive equipment. Specify: _____																	
B. COGNITIVE:																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Requires reminders/cues <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adapted activity. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Requires extensive verbal cuing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adaptive equipment. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot comprehend instructions																	
C. PHYSICAL:																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance needed getting to and from activity areas: <input type="checkbox"/> W/C <input type="checkbox"/> G/C <input type="checkbox"/> Walker <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adapted activity. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adaptive equipment. Specify: _____																	
D. BEHAVIORAL:																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs encouragement <input type="checkbox"/> Needs re-direction <input type="checkbox"/> Needs reminders <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adapted activity. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adaptive equipment. Specify: _____																	
E. COMMUNICATION:																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Primary language, other than English: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot initiate conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Non-verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Gestures <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adapted activity. Specify: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Needs adaptive equipment. Specify: _____																	
SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS																	
Comments: _____																	
ACTIVITY CARE PLAN DECISION																	
<input type="checkbox"/> Proceed (explain why activity CP is required) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not Proceed (explain why activity CP not required) _____																	
Comments: _____																	
SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR ASSESSMENT																	
<input type="checkbox"/> MDS/CAAs/other assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Progress notes <input type="checkbox"/> Staff interview <input type="checkbox"/> Care plans <input type="checkbox"/> Resident interview <input type="checkbox"/> Physician consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Resident observation <input type="checkbox"/> Family interview <input type="checkbox"/> Other/Identify _____																	
Signature/Title: _____					Date: _____												
Initials Last			First			Middle			Attending Physician			Record No.			Room/Bed		

BRIGGS HealthCare THERAPEUTIC RECREATION/ACTIVITY EVALUATION

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Best Practices in Activity Assessment

Leisure Interest Measure (LIM)

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Pop	Time	Purpose	Measures	Scoring	Notes
Moderate to no cognitive impairment, IQ 80 or higher, mental age of 12 or older, Ranch 7 or higher, mild to no orientation disability	5-10 mins	To measure how much interest the client has in each of the eight domains of leisure	Physical Outdoor Mechanical Art Service Social Cultural Reading	Scale 1 = never true 2 = seldom true 3 = somewhat true 4 = often true 5 = always true Each component has 4 items. Add all 4 items and divide by 4. Low scores (1 or 2) = low interest; may indicate need for education about activities within domain High scores (4 or 5) = high interest; high scores in all areas may indicate a tendency toward mania, reading comprehension difficulties, or other problems — further evaluation needed	RT assessment tool. Used in a variety of settings to determine types of activities person enjoys. Sometimes clients don't know what they like to do. Determining the "type" of things they enjoy (high scores) will help you narrow down leisure activities for exploration. Attention however, should not be given to high scores only. Sometimes clients rate items low because they are unfamiliar with it or have never tried it. Consequently, low scores can also indicate areas for exploration.

Leisure Attitude Measure (LAM)

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Pop	Time	Purpose	Measures	Scoring	Notes
Moderate to no cognitive impairment, IQ 80 or higher, mental age of 12 or older, Ranch 7 or higher, mild to no orientation disability	10-30 mins	To review (and quantify) the participants' attitude toward leisure on three different levels	Cognitive: What the client "thinks" about leisure • Knowledge and beliefs about leisure • General beliefs about leisure's relation to other concepts such as health, happiness, and work • Beliefs about the qualities, virtues, characteristics, and benefits of leisure to individuals such as developing friendships, renewing energy, helping one to relax, meeting needs, and self-improvement Affective: "How does the client 'feel' about his/her leisure experiences?" • Evaluation of his/her leisure experiences/activities • Liking of those experiences and activities • Immediate and direct feelings toward leisure experiences Behavioral: "The person's intentions" to engage in leisure • Verbalized behavioral intentions toward leisure choices and activities, and on self-reports of current and past participation	Scale 1 = never true 2 = seldom true 3 = somewhat true 4 = often true 5 = always true Each component has 12 items. All 12 are added together and divided by 12. If a client received a 2.5 or lower in any component intervention is warranted as follows: Cognitive: education about the need for leisure in society and one's life Affective: provision of positive experiences related to interests, values, needs Behavioral: education about the importance of leisure activities for improving quality of life	RT assessment tool. Part of the Iytl Arbor Leisure Battery. Used when client's attitude towards leisure is unclear or need further definition. Findings can assist with to or program planning.

Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS)

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Pop	Time	Purpose	Measures	Scoring	Notes
Moderate to no cognitive disability, IQ 80 or higher, mental age of 12 or older, Ranch 7 or higher, mild to no orientation disability	10 mins	To measure a client's motivation for engaging in leisure activities.	Intellectual: The extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities which involve substantial mental activities such as learning, exploring, discovering, creating, or imagining Social: The extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities for social reasons. This component includes two basic needs. The first is the need for friendship and interpersonal relationships, while the second is the need for the esteem of others Competence-Mastery: The extent to which individuals engage in leisure activities in order to achieve, master, challenge, and complete. The activities are usually physical in nature. Stimulus-Avoidance: The extent to which individuals engage in leisure as a way to escape and get away from overstimulation life situations. It is the need for some cause a person to avoid social contacts to seek solitude and calm conditions for others it is to seek rest and to avoid themselves.	Scale (1 = never true; 2 = seldom true; 3 = somewhat true; 4 = often true; 5 = always true) Each component has 12 items. All 12 are added for a component score. The highest possible score for each component is a 60. Component with highest score = 1st motivator for leisure activity engagement Component with lowest score = least motivating factor for leisure activity engagement A very low score may indicate that these kinds of motivation actually cause a person to avoid the leisure activity NOTE: Doesn't include all meaning. For example, missing freedom/autonomy, identity, power/control, etc.	RT assessment tool. Used in a variety of settings to determine what motivates a person to participate in leisure activities. Useful when trying to increase activity attendance/participation in residential settings. If working in a rehab setting, clients are more likely to actively engage in activities that are intrinsically motivating resulting in better functional outcomes. For example, if a person is motivated by social activities and you need work on standing tolerance then treating two clients within the same treatment session might motivate the person to engage in the therapeutic activity (standing longer). Activities can also be paired up with healthy behaviors to promote continued engagement. For example, if a person is motivated to participate in activities that are stimulus-avoidance then you would want to explore physical activities that allow for this (e.g., swimming, treatment with a pool) rather than group exercise activities (e.g., aquatic). Therapist groups or group living because the person will be less likely to engage or continue engagement. Reengagement is healthy behavior will benefit the client's health, which is what RT aims to do.

Leisure Satisfaction Measure (LSM)

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Pop	Time	Purpose	Measures	Scoring	Notes
Moderate to no cognitive disability, IQ 80 or higher, mental age of 12 or older, Ranch 7 or higher, mild to no orientation disability	5-10 mins	To measure the degree to which a client perceives his/her general "needs" are being met through leisure	Psychological: Activities being about a sense of freedom, engagement, involvement, and intellectual challenge Educational: Activities are intellectually stimulating and help the person learn things about himself or his surroundings Social: Activities foster rewarding relationships with other people Relaxation: Activities offer relief from the stress and strain of life Physiological: Activities are a means to develop physical fitness, stay healthy, control weight, and otherwise promote well-being Aesthetic: Activities are pleasing, interesting, beautiful, and generally well-designed	Scale (1 = almost never true; 2 = seldom true; 3 = somewhat true; 4 = often true; 5 = almost always true) Each component has 4 items. All 4 items are added together and divided by 4. • Higher scores (4 or 5) indicate an area that is most satisfying about his/her leisure • Lower scores (less than 2) indicate an area that is least satisfying about his/her leisure • Can add up the scores for all 24 statements and divide by 24 to indicate overall level of leisure satisfaction	RT assessment tool. Used in a variety of settings. Used when want to determine what needs the client perceives are being met through leisure. Doesn't include all possible needs but will help you in determining. Domains where leisure satisfaction are low, may indicate a need for engagement in new/different activities in those domains in order to increase satisfaction ratings OR maybe the activities need to be modified in some way. It is important that individuals experience satisfaction in many domains to maintain overall health.

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Best Practices in Activity Assessment - Life Story

- What's your first, most vivid memory?
- Can you describe the neighborhood you grew up in?
- How did you decide what you wanted to do with your life?
- What was your first job? What did you like or not like about it?
- Have you ever had any nicknames as a child or as an adult?
- Do you have any hobbies or special interests?
- Do you enjoy any particular sports?
- What's your typical day like now? How is it different from your daily routines in the past?
- What do you do for fun?
- www.legacyproject.org/

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Best Practices in Activity Assessment - Shadow Box



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Tips for Choosing the Right Activities

- Relate activities to the Person's work life or interests
- Avoid over-stimulation
- Activities include more than just "planned" activities
- Choose activities that hit the "sweet spot" – not too easy, and not too hard.
- Tap into memories of past events
- Continue to go on Outings
- Focus on enjoyment, rather than achievement
- It's about engagement, not about the outcome or achievements



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Exercise and Activities to Promote an Active Lifestyle

- Chair exercises
- Dance to music from their generation
- Take a walk
- Slow marching is a good exercise for balance
- Try water exercise
- Restorative yoga is ideal for improving balance and flexibility

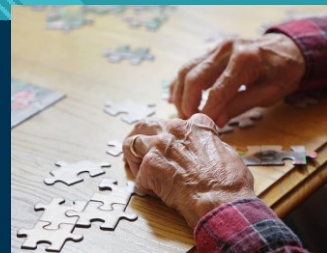


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Games, Puzzles, and Around the Home Activities

- Listen to music
- Sort and match up nuts and bolts, or tighten screws
- Create a memory bag
- Help with clean-up around the home
- Prepare food
- Put together a jigsaw puzzle
- Color-by-numbers or memory card games
- Coin sorting
- Keep a table game box

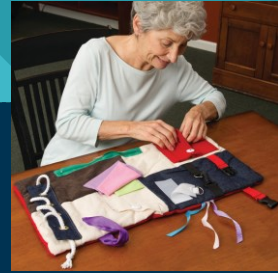


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Sensory Activities

- Provide sensory bean bags with different textures
- Incorporate art and music in the daily routine whenever possible
- Try simple crafts
- Knitting or painting can be relaxing
- Make a DIY fidget box
- Have some spa time and engage the senses with a hand and arm massage
- Bake cookies
- Create a virtual beach



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Social and Emotional Activities

- Create a mystery bag
- Playing with dolls can help to fulfill needs for comfort and attachment
- Relax and reminisce about the past
- Spend time with pets
- Singing can help to build connections with others
- Try improv
- Scrapbooking is great for connecting with others and reminiscing
- Visit a museum



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Outdoor Activities

- Visit a therapeutic garden
- Start a simple garden
- Simply enjoy some tea and take in the outdoor sights and sounds
- Visit a fruit farm
- Visit the zoo
- Go fly a kite
- Take them for a drive
- Enjoy some birdwatching
- Go to a sporting event



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What other Activity ideas do you have?

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We learned:

- What kind of skills and approaches are needed in Activities Leaders?
- How do we offer activities to people with differing and changing needs?
- Tips, Ideas, and Best Practices for activities



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Sources

Why are activities important?

<https://www.seniorlink.com/blog/helpful-daily-activities-for-dementia-patients-50-expert-tips-and-suggestions-to-keep-your-loved-one-engaged>

What training and skills are important to offer activities?

<https://www.nccdp.org/resources/Pick-Your-Staff-Carefully-for-Dementia-Units.pdf>

<https://www.papa.com/resources/blog/how-to-motivate-seniors-to-participate-in-activities>

What is the spectrum of needs related to progressive cognitive decline?

<https://www.isavta.co.il/content/migrated-b082dbe9baa89d01e36101ff85ed953d-269.jpg>

https://images.ctfassets.net/v34v7xd1a3ac/RVZZjaFmXWNcfXq4T0R48/6022d46e369c4eeb56011534d772ed24/2003-005_SeniorLeaf-Alzheimer_s_Dementia_7_stages_Sans_Logo.png

<https://www.alz.org/media/documents/dementia-care-practice-recommend-assist-living-1-2-b.pdf>

What are tips and ideas for activities across the cognitive spectrum?

<https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/Alzheimers-Activities-Programming>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/living-with-dementia/keeping-active/activity-resources.asp>

<https://ralna.org/how-to-engage-seniors-simple-conversation-starters/#:~:text=1%20Breathing%3A%20Take%20a%20few%20deep%20breaths%2C%20stay,eye%20contact%20and%20show%20that%20you%20are%20engaged.>

<https://www.seniorservicesofamerica.com/blog/how-to-motivate-seniors-to-participate-in-activities>

<https://www.legacyproject.org/>

<https://www.seniorlink.com/blog/activities-for-dementia-patients-50-tips-and-ideas-to-keep-patients-with-dementia-engaged>

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