

Keeping Active and Occupied - *Factsheet*

Dementia web 
Information resource for carers, professionals and you

www.dementiaweb.org.uk



Keeping Active and Occupied

Why a person with dementia needs to be active

- Being active and being occupied engages an individual in a purposeful pursuit. It is a way of passing the time that has an outcome, however small or transitory that might be.
- Activity and occupation should provide an opportunity to promote a sense of usefulness, well being, motivation and stimulation.
- Activities are still worth the effort even if the person has problems with the sequence and completion of the task. 'Success' is measured by taking part, by enjoying, being satisfied and stimulated.
- Although the person you care for may not be able to recall any part of the activity once it has finished, they may have benefited greatly during the activity and may retain an 'emotional memory' that is pleasant and fulfilling..

Well and Ill being

- 'Well being' and 'ill being' indicators are ways of measuring and monitoring a person's sense of worth, contentment, self-esteem, confidence and hope. When a person's needs are being met, they will feel positive about themselves and the environment they live in. If the person's needs are not being met their well-being declines.
- Activity and occupation can support a person's well being.

Types of activity

Therapeutic:

- Reminiscence Therapy; sensory and multi sensory stimulation; complimentary therapies i.e. reflexology, aroma therapy; doll therapy; music/art therapy; massage (hand massage or foot massage); reflexology.

Day to day living:

- Involvement in everyday tasks and activities promotes a sense of independence. For many people they are continuing to do something they enjoy and this helps them feel useful.
- Washing and dressing; making a meal/cooking under supervision; dusting; sweeping; washing and drying dishes; folding clothes; tidying a room; sorting out a drawer; collecting the newspaper from the local shop; attending church.

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Types of activity cont.

Leisure:

- Arts and craft ;games; music, dancing, singsong; cinema; drama; reading; walking; gardening; needle work / knitting.



A Developmental Model

Some activities may be more appropriate for people at different stages in their dementia:

- Early dementia: Games, sports, quizzes, crafts.
- Early to middle dementia: Music, dance, drama, stories, reminiscence.
- Middle to late dementia: Movement, massage, cooking, soft toys multi sensory stimulation.
- Late dementia: Singing, rocking, stroking, holding.

Dementia Information Service for Carers

Helpline Number **0845 1204048**

Call in normal office hours. Answer phone at other times.

Email: info@dementiaweb.org.uk

Web: www.dementiaweb.org.uk

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