

connecting people, connecting support

occupation matters



A space where people with dementia, family members and supporters can come together and explore ways of living well with dementia.



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We are a group of occupational therapists and designers who have come together to share resources and activities for people with dementia, their family members and supporters.

Whilst we have been working hard to provide group interventions for people at an early stage of their dementia journey, we also recognise that these need to be accessed at home and be available to those who cannot access a group.

These resources and activities have been tried, tested and recommended by people with dementia.

We hope that you enjoy exploring them and please get in touch if you have any activity suggestions.

Thank you!



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Daily Routine

Having a routine can provide a rhythm and structure to the day. Building enjoyable activities into your daily routine can increase opportunities to experience enjoyment and wellbeing.

chat

1. What is your favourite day of the week?
2. What is your favourite time of the day?
3. Is this linked to particular activities you take part in?
4. Do you feel like you have a routine?
5. Over your lifetime have particular days been associated with particular activities (for example Sunday lunch or Monday wash-day)?

try

Why not try the exercise on the next page. Record your current daily routine on the top timeline, adding the activities and times at which you do them. At the end of the day, reflect on your routine. What are you missing? Then draw your ideal daily routine.

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Record your **current** daily routine on the timeline below:

Wake up

Bed

At the end of the day, reflect and draw your **ideal** daily routine:

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Music

The opportunity to listen and respond to music is key to quality of life. Many studies have shown that when used as a meaningful activity, music enables people to recall events from their lives, to express themselves and increase activity levels leading to improved emotional and physical wellbeing.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

1. What does music mean to you?
2. What types of music do you enjoy?
3. Have your tastes changed over your lifetime?
4. Are there particular songs that are very meaningful to you?
5. What memories do you associate with them?

try

Over 10 days try to think of a song for each question on the following page. By the end of the 10 days you will have your own personal playlist. If you or a family member have access to Spotify or Apple Music for example, you could create this playlist and use it on days where you might need a little pick me up.

Creating a playlist about you!

Find one song each day and note down why you chose it:

Day 1 - A song from your childhood

Day 2 - A song that calms you down

Day 3 - A song that reminds you of a parent

Day 4 - A song that is often stuck in your head

Day 5 - A song that reminds you of someone special

Day 6 - A song that reminds you of summertime

Day 7 - A song that makes you happy

Day 8 - A song that reminds you of winter

Day 9 - A song that reminds you of a place

Day 10 - A song that makes you want to dance

Memory Book

The use of a Memory Book can help you with your routine. It can support your memory for everyday events as well as help you with planning. It can also be useful for conversation with family and friends, for example if they telephone and you want to talk about what you have been doing. The physical act of writing something down helps you pay attention to the information and keeps it organised.

chat

1. Have you ever kept a diary to help provide a routine to your day?
2. Do you write things down to help you remember?
3. What activities do you take part in during the day?
4. Do you like to make plans for the days ahead?
5. Do you know anyone who keeps a diary?

try

To create your own Memory Book you can use a normal notebook or copy the next page multiple times and join them together. You are more likely to remember if things are in boxes, which has informed the layout of the Memory Book. Make sure you clearly label your Memory Book and keep it somewhere easy to see.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

Photographs

Photographs of holidays or special occasions (birthdays, weddings, anniversaries) are part of everyday life. Photographs can tell important stories of who we are, with the power to evoke memories.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

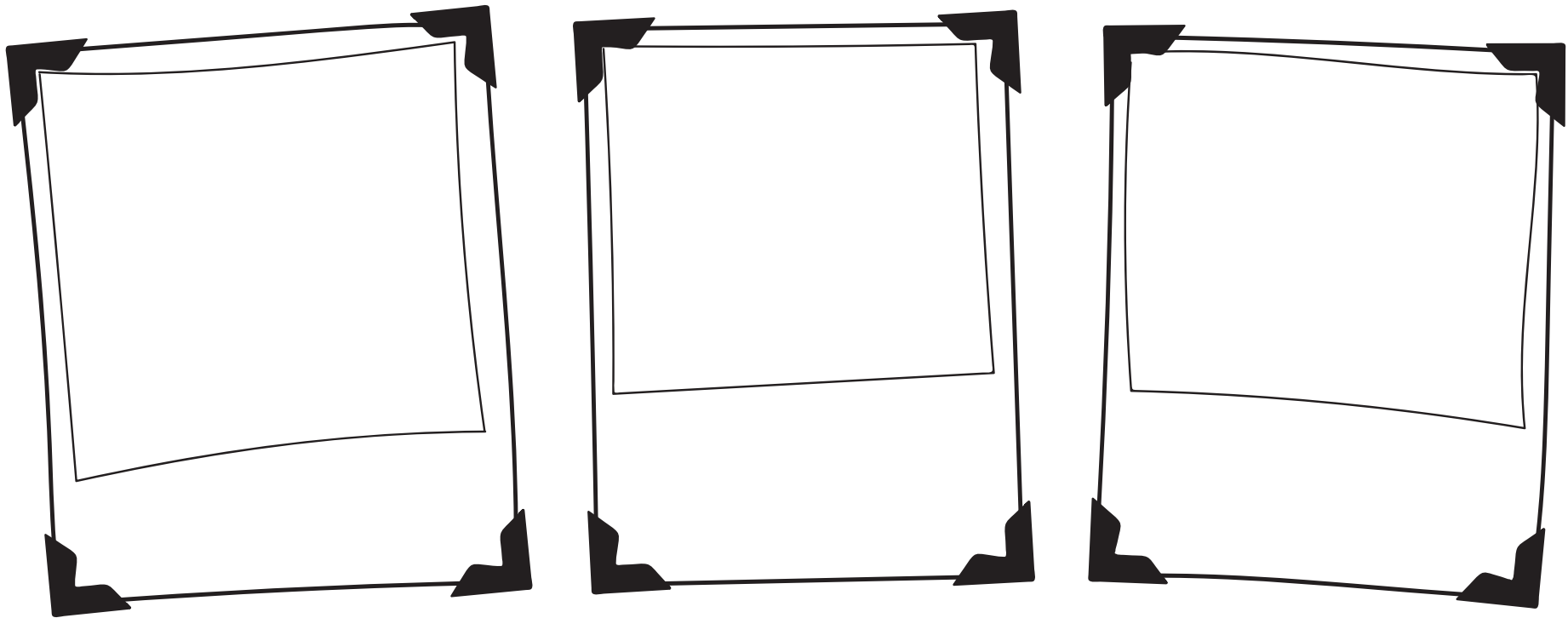
chat

1. Look around your home.
2. What photographs do you have on display?
3. What is the story behind each of those photographs?
4. What do the photographs say about what is important to you?
5. Are there photographs you wish you had taken?

try

Take some time to look back through your photo albums. Choose 3 pictures that reflect things you feel particularly proud of. On the following page can you draw these pictures in the boxes?
If each of the photographs had a caption or a title what would that title be?

Look through a photograph album and choose 3 pictures that reflect things you feel particularly proud of and draw them in the spaces below:



Add a caption or title to each photograph to share why these are special moments to you.

Sleep

A good night's sleep is important for physical and emotional wellbeing. Over a lifetime our sleep patterns and the amount of sleep we need will change. These activities invite you to think about sleep and offer some suggestions of how to get a good night's rest.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

1. What is your perfect way to wake up?
2. Are you a lark or an owl (someone who likes to wake up early or someone who goes to bed late)?
3. What are your bed-time rituals and routines?
4. Do they help or hinder a good night's sleep?
5. Are there activities that help you to feel well rested?

try

The starting point to thinking about sleep is to understand what your sleep patterns are. For the next few days create a record. The following page might help. Pay particular attention to the activities you do leading up to bed-time and particular routines and rituals that might help you to get a good night sleep.

Sleep lines: Record the times that you sleep over the next 10 days, is there a pattern?



Time: 7pm 8pm 9pm 10pm 11pm 12pm 1am 2am 3am 4am 5am 6am 7am 8am 9am 10am 11am

Day:

Example



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10



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Drink

Keeping hydrated is essential for good brain and body health. Recommendations are that we drink 6-8 glasses of fluid a day (water, fruit squash, tea, coffee and other beverages). There are also many other ways to stay hydrated including ice pops and different fruits - visit MORE for further information.



pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

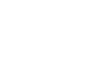
1. Are you a tea or a coffee drinker or do you drink neither?
2. Are there particular drinks you associate with times of the day or daily routines? (morning coffee, afternoon tea, hot chocolate or milky drink before bedtime)
3. Do you have a cup or mug at home that you like to drink from?
4. Do family members have mugs or cups that they consider theirs?

chat

try

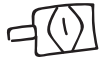
Drinking Challenge: Recommendations are that we drink 6-8 glasses of fluid a day (water, fruit squash, tea, coffee and other beverages). Use this chart to record your drinking habits for the week and try to reach the target by Sunday!

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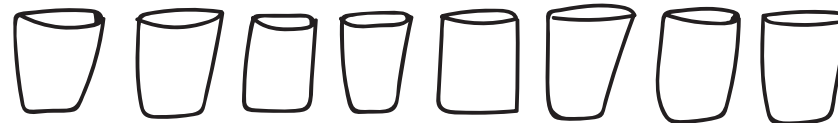
Monday



Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Friday



Saturday



Sunday



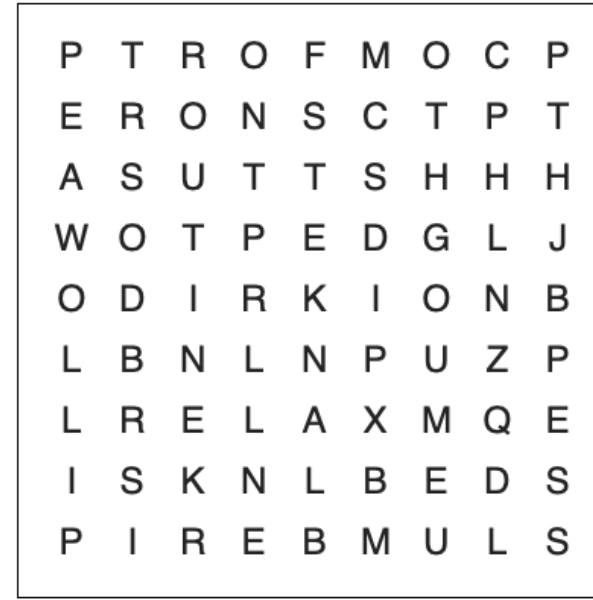
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A couple of word searches

Word Search : Routines



Word Search : Sleep



Activity	Regular
Balance	Rhythm
Bathing	Sleep
Daily	Structure
Dining	Usual
Familiar	Weekly

blanket	quiet
comfort	relax
doze	rest
nap	routine
night	slumber
pillow	snore

Weaving

Weaving is a great craft to aid relaxation and stimulate the senses through using different materials and colours that you have to hand. This theme will share simple weaving activities for those that would like to try something new. We're sure that you will enjoy this.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

1. What fabric and textures do you like to feel with your fingers?
2. Are there particular colours that are important to you?
3. Do you prefer to handcraft with other people, or quietly on your own?

If you decide to try the weaving activity:

4. Do you want to tell a story of a time, place or person in your weaving? What is it?
5. Some people find repeated actions relaxing, like the needle going under & over. How does it make you feel?

try

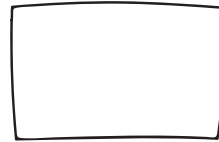
The instructions on the following page will help you to try weaving at home, enjoy!

Weaving on a Homemade Loom

Materials:

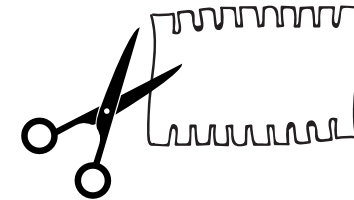
- Cardboard (eg from post or food packaging)
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Large needle
- Yarns in different colours and textures

1 - Cutting out your loom



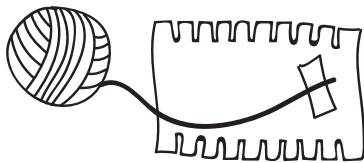
Cut out a rectangular piece of cardboard
(A6 or about the size of your hand)

2



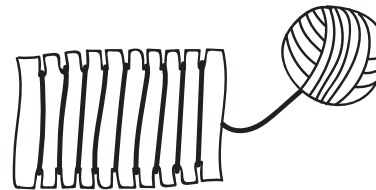
- Mark the top and bottom every 1 / 1.5cm, with an EVEN number of marks
- Cut short slits where you have marked

3 - Prepare your loom for weaving



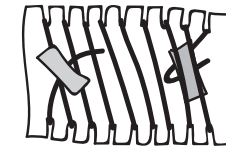
- Take some yarn, string or wool and tape the end on the back of your loom to secure it
- Pull the yarn through the first slit at the top and then the matching one on the bottom

4



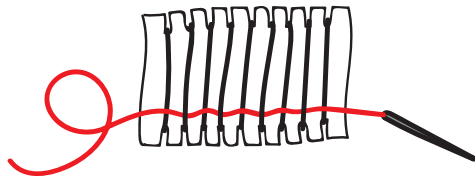
Keep doing this to the end...

5



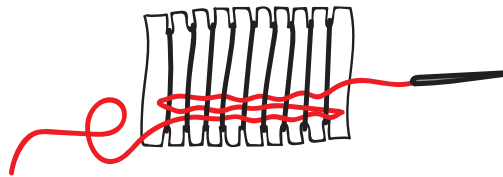
...then tape the end at the back - the front will be straight and the back will be slanted.

6 - Begin weaving



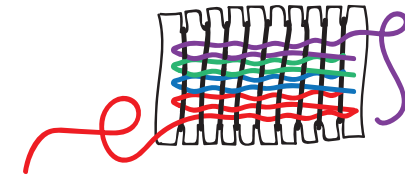
- Thread a large needle with some new yarn
- Leaving a tail at the end, use the needle to weave OVER the first thread on the left and UNDER the next

7



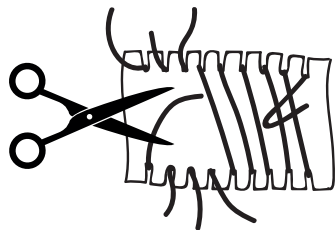
- Keep weaving OVER and UNDER until the end and pull your yarn straight
- Use your fingers to push the yarn down and weave your tail ends in behind the fabric

8



Keep weaving, changing yarns whenever you like

9 - Tying off the ends



- Turn the loom over to see the back
- Cut the yarn threads down the middle
- Knot every 2-3 threads together



What else could you use?

Instead of wool yarn, try:

- Strips of fabric / ribbons
- Strips of paper
- Strips of plastic carrier bags
- Long leaves and grasses

Instead of a cardboard loom with cut edges, try:

- A sink mat with grid holes
- A plastic basket with grid holes
- A baking cooling tray
- Lolly sticks glued into a square frame
- Sticks and branches from the garden

Relaxation

Maintaining some kind of balance and finding time to relax is important. Stress not only impacts on emotional wellbeing, it can also affect memory and physical health.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

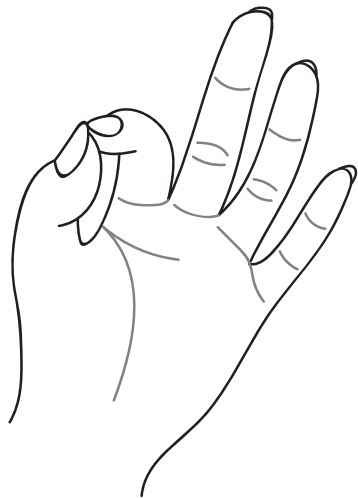
1. What do you do to relax?
2. Are there particular activities that help you to experience a sense of wellbeing (feelings of enjoyment or achievement)?
3. How often do you take part in these?
4. What helps you and what stops you from taking part in these?
5. Can you build bursts of relaxing activities into your routine?

try

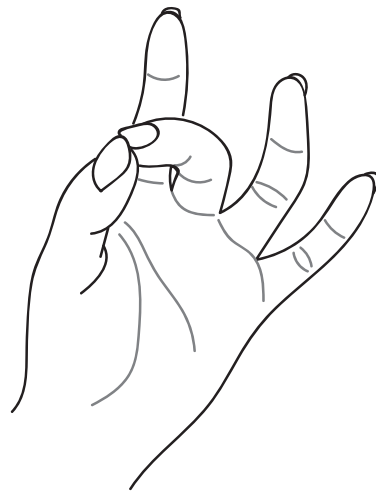
Try to build time into your daily routine to pause and engage in a relaxing or restorative activity. This might be making sure you have time for a regular drink or a bath, it might be winding wool or even taking part in a relaxation exercise. You don't need to block off large amounts of time. Even a five minute break to pause is important.

Five Finger Relaxation

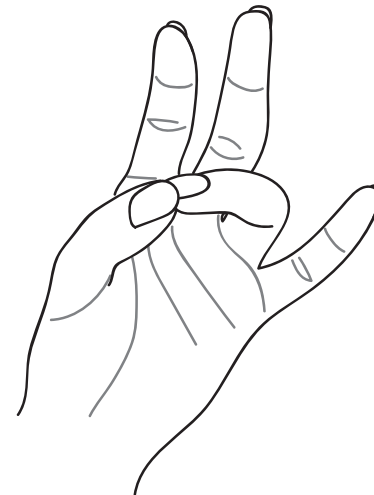
Five Finger Relaxation is a simple technique that helps you to pause for a moment and to focus your mind. The strength is that you can try it anywhere. Sit in a comfortable position with your hands resting on your lap.



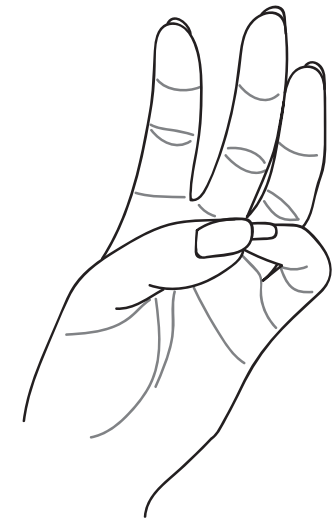
Touch your thumb to your index finger. As you do so, go back in time when you felt physically tired after taking part in exercise such as a game of tennis or after digging in the garden.



Next touch your thumb to your middle finger. As you do so, go back to a time when you felt loved and cared for.



When you are ready touch your thumb to your ring finger. As you do so, think about the nicest compliment you have ever received. Try to really accept it now.



Finally touch your thumb to your little finger. As you do so, go back to the most beautiful place you have ever been. Dwell there for a while.



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Mealtimes

A balanced healthy diet is important to keeping mentally and physically well. In this topic we think about the importance of establishing mealtime routines and ways of making dining into a meaningful activity.

chat

1. Do you have a dining routine? (for example eat particular foods on certain days, eat in a set place or a set time?)
2. If you have a dining routine what is your favourite meal of the week?
3. Do you have any rituals you associate with dining?
4. What is the difference between eating to nourish your body and sharing a meal with friends?

Food associations can help to support orientation to the time of day (for example cereal might be associated with breakfast) and could also be linked to days of the week (for example a curry, pizza or roast dinner could be associated with the weekend). Think about ways you could establish a dining routine. This might be about the time you eat or where you eat.

try

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Time



Breakfast



Lunch



Dinner

Meal Plan Date:

Monday

Treats for the week:

Tuesday

Wednesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Thursday

Friday

Friday

Saturday

Saturday

Sunday

Sunday



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Art

This topic will help you to think about how art can help you to express how you feel. Here we focus particularly on art to promote relaxation. As Pablo Picasso once said: 'Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life'.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

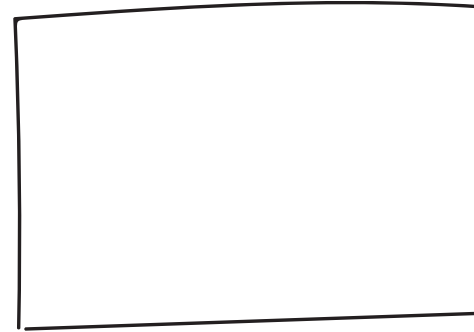
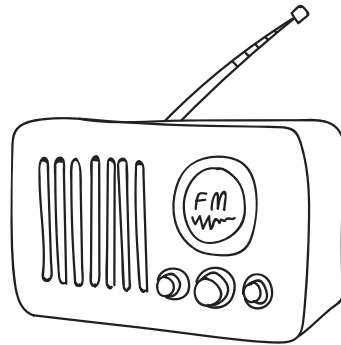
1. What words and feelings spring to mind when you think about painting and drawing?
2. Can you think of an artist or a piece of art that has inspired you?
3. What is it about this work that you enjoy?
4. Do you have drawings or paintings hanging on your wall at home? What do you like about these art-works?

try

Painting to music can be a gentle aid to relaxation. It requires no technical skill simply a willingness to make marks on a page in response to music. If you made a playlist based on the tips under the 'music' theme - this might be a good place to start!

Painting to music

You will need:



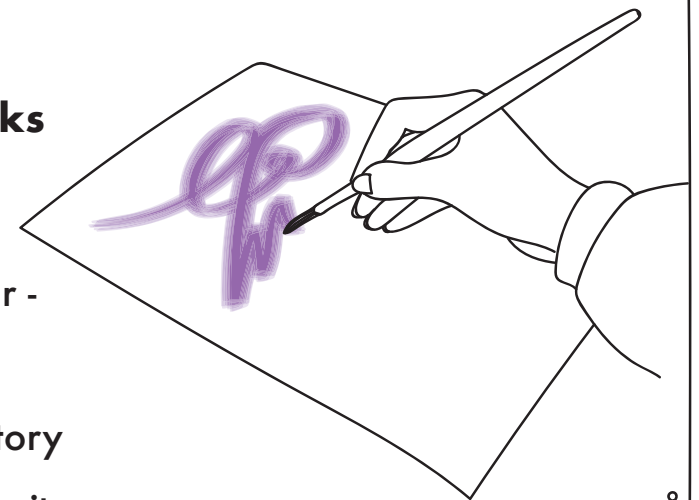
Some **music**, a sheet of **paper** and some **art media**.

Watercolour or poster paints work well but if you don't have these to hand, pencils or pastels are just as effective.

Begin by listening to the music with your eyes open or closed and then when you feel comfortable **simply make marks** on the paper in response to the **rhythm or beat** of the music.

The marks you make don't need to look like anything in particular - the focus is on the **expressive qualities** of the materials.

Sweeping brush strokes, zigzags, dots and patterns will tell the story of the music - a visual representation of the mood, rhythm or story it conveys.



Physical Activity

There is a close relationship between physical health and emotional and cognitive health. Building in some form of physical activity in our everyday routines can support wellbeing, offering a good source of exercise and a way to channel energy in a positive way.

chat

1. When you think of physical activity what images and memories come to mind? (is your immediate association with sport or with activities such as gardening?)
2. Are you someone who has always been physically active?
3. Is physical activity something you enjoy?
4. Is physical activity part of your daily or weekly routine?

try

Try to set yourself a simple achievable challenge. For example when watching television why not stand up or walk around the room during the adverts? Small changes can make a big difference. The following sheet can be used to record the everyday tasks and routines you perform and identify the physical actions involved.



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Activity

The activity broken down

Physical actions involved

<p>Laundry</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking washing from wash-basket 2. Washing into the machine 3. Hanging washing on clothes line with pegs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bending, stretching, lifting 2. Walking to the machine, bending, stretching 3. Reaching, lifting, pinching to open pegs



Checklists

The use of a checklist can help with keeping you organised and in a routine. They can be used in a variety of ways for example, to help you remember what you need or to help with keeping you safe. This theme shares examples of how to create your own checklists and use them on a daily basis.

chat

1. Have you ever used a checklist?
2. Do you know anyone who uses or has used a checklist?
3. Would you describe yourself as an organised person?
4. Can you think of how a checklist could be useful for you?

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

try

Going out checklist:
This can be used to remind you of items you usually need when going out and about. Make sure that you place this on the back of the door or near the door at eye level and check it before leaving the house.

Going our checklist template

Follow the prompts
to make your own
for the front door.

Bag, wallet or purse -
whichever you'd typically take
with you when going out. →

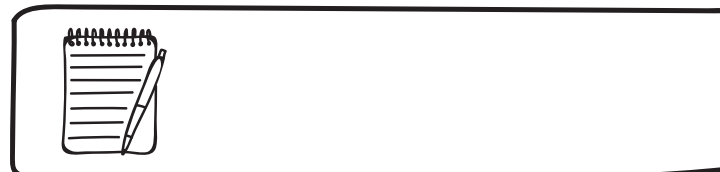
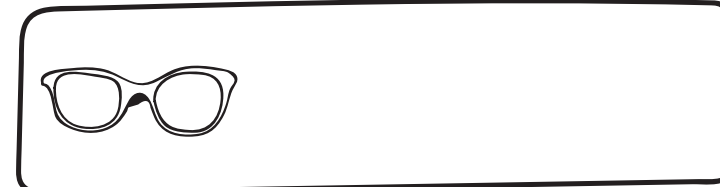
Keys, keychains or anything you
typically need to secure your home. →

Mobile phone and/or phone book -
anything you typically take with
you to stay connected. →

Things to help with accessibility
and mobility, for example glasses,
walking stick, hearing aid etc. →

Other items such as notebook,
pen, diary, tissues, medication etc. →

Going out checklist



A couple of word searches

Word Search : Relaxation



breathe	peace
calm	relax
comfort	rest
ease	restore
meditate	stillness
pause	unwind

Word Search : Physical-activity



bend	move
cleaning	polish
dust	stretch
garden	tidy
hoover	walk
laundry	washing

Poetry

People often find that in times of change or trouble they turn to poetry as a solace or stimulation. The following activities have been put together in the hope that they will bring satisfactions of this kind. Brought to you by writer and poet, John Killick.

pick up the phone and call a family member or friend...

chat

1. Is poetry something you enjoy?
2. Can you remember any poems from your childhood?
3. Have you a book in your house with poems in?
4. Do you think you might enjoy reading poems about life today?
5. As an adult have you ever tried learning poems by heart?

try

Read the poem on the left of the following page.
The write out the poem backwards.
(making the last line first and the first line last.)

What have you discovered?
Which of the two versions do you prefer?

WORST DAY EVER

Chanie Gorkin

Today was the absolute worst day ever
And don't try to convince me that
There's something good in every day
Because, when you take a closer look,
This world is a pretty evil place.
Even if
Some goodness does shine through once in a while
Satisfaction and happiness don't last.
And it's not true that
It's all in the mind and heart
Because
True happiness can be attained
Only if one's surroundings are good.
It's not true that good exists
I'm sure you can agree that
The reality
Creates
My attitude
It's all beyond my control
And you'll never in a million years hear me say that
Today was a very good day.

WORST DAY EVER (reversed)

Chanie Gorkin

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**We are really interested
to know what you think
of our new resource.**

What did you like?
What would make it even better?
Whats missing ?

Please send us an email:
AHPconnectingpeople@gmail.com

Or Tweet us:
[@AHPDementia](https://twitter.com/AHPDementia)

Thank you.

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Occupation Matters Activity Pack Feedback

Feedback on our activity pack will help us to develop it further. We'd be really grateful if you could answer a couple of questions and pass this back to the team.

What could we have done better?

Please circle how you felt before receiving the activity pack and add some comments:



Please circle how you feel after exploring the activity pack and add some comments:

