



Tips for Using Art Therapy to Engage Your Loved One with Memory Loss

Research is finding that certain types of holistic therapies, including art therapy, are proving highly beneficial to Alzheimer's patients, enabling them to express themselves and reconnect with the world in ways not thought possible.

The Key Benefits of Art Therapy

According to experts, art therapy has been shown to promote health and well-being in loved ones with memory loss in a number of important ways including:

- Improved mood and decreased agitation and outbursts
- Increased ability for self-expression and communication
- Increased social engagement and reduction of isolation
- Providing an important sense of accomplishment and purpose
- Enhanced memory and the ability to reminisce
- Improved ability to focus
- An awakened sense of interest and curiosity
- A rekindled ability to form relationships, particularly with the person providing the therapy

How to Incorporate Art Therapy into Your Caregiving Plan

Organizing an art therapy program for your loved one is relatively simple. When planning an art activity for a loved one with mid-to late-stage Alzheimer's disease, the **Alzheimer's Association** recommends that you keep the following tips in mind:

- Keep the project on an adult level. Avoid anything that might be demeaning or seem child like.
- Build conversation into the project. Provide encouragement and discuss what your loved one is creating or reminiscing about.
- Help your loved one begin the activity. If the person is painting, you may need to start the brush movement. Most other projects should only require basic instruction and assistance.
- Use safe materials. Avoid toxic substances and sharp tools that could hurt your loved one.
- Allow plenty of time. Keep in mind that your loved one doesn't have to finish the project in one sitting.

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