

## **Arts and Dementia – Do's and Don'ts**

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **3 ways of Communication:**

1. Verbal Communication
2. Prop Communication
3. Rhythmic Communication

#### **Verbal Communication**

- For individuals who can communicate through verbal communication and understand all words and discussions taking place
- Can understand what you are saying and respond accordingly, using the correct words
- Early stages of Dementia

#### **Prop Communication**

- Props are needed to communicate effectively with the individual
- I.e./ Soap and a Towel – representing a bath or shower
- Communication is associated through images / props
- Facial Expressions and body language are also very important whilst using Prop Communication
- Mid stages of Dementia

#### **Rhythmic Communication**

- Music is the last part of the brain to diminish with Dementia – with rhythm and music been the key to communication for the later stages of the disease
- Clapping a Beat / Call and Response is a fantastic way to communicate with no verbal or prop communication needed
- Late stages of Dementia

#### **3 x Different Levels of Activities, which can be combined into ONE Arts Activity, with ONE THEME:**

- Timeslips
- Prop – 5 x Senses Stimulation
- Rhythm / Music

I.e.

Theme: Flowers and Gardening (all shown in sampled workshops)

Workshop Plan:

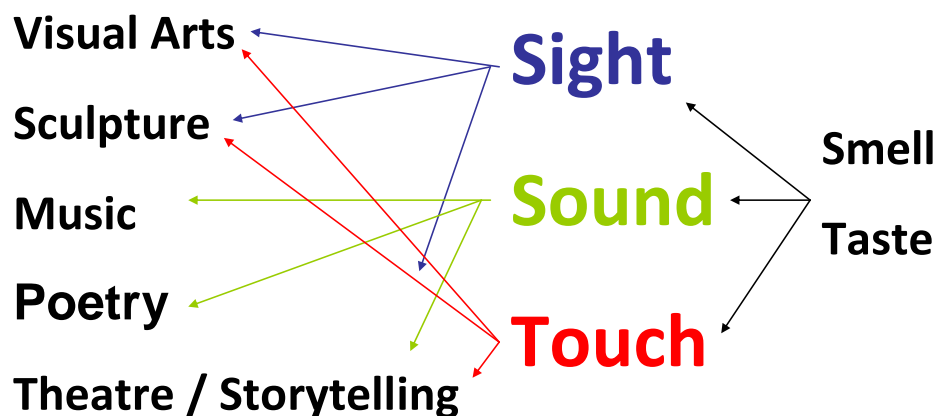
1. Rhythmic Warm Up using Flower Themed Music

2. Prop Stimulation incorporating all of the five senses (Flowers, Seeds, Soil, Flower Sweets etc.)
3. Timeslips built up inspired by sensory props
4. Visual Art Activities – Pom Pom Making / Marbling / Origami
5. Finish with Rhythm call and response activity

#### Why combine Communication methods?

- Varying levels of Dementia therefore using the various Communication Methods will engage everyone within the group
- A greater stimulation through mixed Communication, all the five senses are used
- Can inspire surprises and new ways of communicating with loved ones

## Senses v Art Forms



This diagram is really helpful for embedding the five senses into the different art forms.

## **Dos and Don'ts**

### **DOs**

## **Pointers for a Successful Workshop**

- Incorporate all of the senses, so everyone (dependant on individual Dementia and Diagnosis – can engage and be empowered within the session
- Design instant Visual Stimulation Activities that engage individuals automatically!
  - Relaxing and will not cause frustration
  - A non childlike activity
  - An activity which everyone can input at various levels and stages
  - Order and control over task
    - Through Repetition, clear language, short sentences, using participant names at all times
    - No pressure of completing or making a final piece
    - Create ONE theme that the whole group can relate to (i.e./The Seaside)
    - HAVE LOTS OF FUN AND MAKE SURE PEOPLE LAUGH!

### **DON'TS**

- Don't assume that everyone likes the same music, art and themes. Go out of your comfort zone and try something completely unexpected or get to know the individual before hand – you will get some really exciting and new results!
- Don't facilitate an activity that takes a lot of verbal communication through instruction to understand
- Do not patronize or make any of the activities childish in any way
- Do not carry on the same activity from week to week. You must complete it in the one session for it to create a sense of pride and worth for the individual.
- Always choose a theme that everyone can relate to – don't choose a theme that is sexist i.e./ Sewing or Football – Keep it quite open for discussion (i.e. 'At Home or 'Sport')

**Remember it's:**

# IMAGINATION INSPIRING REMINISCENCE

**And NOT:**

## REMINISCENCE

### *Logistics of Workshop to take into Consideration*

- All Activities to be **Person Centred** – Designed around the individual (taking into consideration previous Careers, Favourite Music, Family, Hobbies and Interests and so on)
- When facilitating workshops make sure you stay in a **familiar environment** that the members feel comfortable with, and will not cause any distress
- Take into account Coffee Breaks, Medication, Visiting Times, and other routines that usually take place when designing a Workshop – **DO NOT change these routines** (if it can be helped)
- Wear a **Name Badge** to remind members of the group, of your name and don't always assume that they know it (it could be a case of they are too embarrassed to ask again)
- Provide **'Borders of Enquiry'** – i.e. / lines on the piece of paper which show where the area is to create on
- Facilitate an Activity in which there is **NO WRONG answer** – everything is seen as a creation
- **All Staff and Family Members to be briefed** on the Project you hope to deliver before you begin facilitating
- **Posters** to assist with memory in when the workshops are to take place / where / time / what will be happening

## ***How to set up an Arts and Dementia Workshop***

1. Choose a theme that EVERYONE can relate to
2. Plan the workshop to be facilitated for one hour (allowing for set up and clear up, before and after)
3. With the theme in mind, design appropriate activities that stimulate all the five senses
4. Encourage discussion through an Open ended question approach throughout, with no right or wrong answers
5. At the end of the Workshop, design an activity which finishes it off nicely (perhaps a toast to the group / or holding hands / boat away into the water – Seaside Example)
6. Always give a round of applause for the whole group and Thanks for taking part.