



Gift of Enrichment uses the Montessori Method for Dementia Activities

1. Prepare the room for activities: decrease any distractions, soften music, turn off TV, and open the curtains.
 2. The activity should have a sense of purpose and capture the person's interest
 3. Invite the residents to do an activity. Don't say "Do you want to do an activity?" the residents will likely say no because I not know what the activity is or don't know what you are saying.
 4. Offer choice whenever possible but 2-3 choices.
 5. Talk less. Demonstrate more.
 6. Use visual hints or cues.
 7. Focus on what the person can do with their physical skills.
 8. There is no right or wrong. Think engagement.
 9. Break a task down into steps; make it easier to follow.
 10. Positive interaction
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Helpful Notes

- A. Find out the cognitive (early to late stages of dementia) and physical skill level before you start an activity.
- B. Engage your resident: If your resident is ready, willing, and able to jump in and start an activity. If your resident is NOT willing and able to jump-in then your resident needs encouragement. Encouragement: Some may hesitate to start an activity because they are insecure about their ability due to cognitive level and personality. Be calm and supportive – "Just give it a try".
- C. Demonstration– With very little explanation, show the materials and demonstrate how to use them. For example, set a basket of spools of thread and a spool rack in front of the individual. Pick up a spool of thread from the basket and place it on the rack. Repeat if necessary. This approach is especially helpful with participants who have language barriers, hearing impairments, or receptive speech issues or those who are overly chatty.
- D. Step away: Sometimes the best option is to simply lay out the materials and walk away. Many who seem resistant will start an activity when given the time and privacy to explore it on their own.
- E. Once everyone is engaged in the activity, circulate and observe, allowing each person to work at their own pace and in their own way. There is no need to intervene

if they are not doing the activity correctly. However, there are times when intervention is necessary.

- Signs of frustration: Is the task too simple? Too complex? Are there vision or dexterity issues? Provide only as much assistance as needed.
- Signs of unclear what to do: Hand a puzzle piece or paint brush or playing cards to the resident, then she or he will know what to do after. You need to keep reminding them.
- Losing interest: Offer another activity. “Let’s try this on.”
- Safety concerns: Address an action or use of materials that may cause harm. Beads, coins, etc. – tends to put the items in their mouth.
- Reassurance: Some participants may need reassurance. “Am I doing this right?” Just give them support – “You are doing awesome!”

Questions or Comments: Contact@GiftofEnrichment.com