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SHARING RESOURCES

Simple Idea for an In-Room Activity

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Many of you have written to share your challenges and successes over the past few weeks and to ask for simple activity ideas that can be done easily in one's bedroom on a tray table. Before I share the activity idea, I want to send heartfelt thanks to all of you who are caring for our elders with extra kindness and compassion, putting aside whatever fears you may have, to be there not only to provide physical care, but to provide love at a time when their families are unable to visit.

This weekend I went to visit my family member at the assisted living community where he now resides. My daughter, husband, and I stood outside his open window while we waved and chatted and tried to explain why we couldn't come up stairs to his room or why he couldn't come down to see us. It was heartbreaking on many levels. But when I hear your stories of personal connections during this time, it is heart filling. For example, my clients have shared stories such as this:



“I have to say that spending one-on-one time with the residents has been great. We have had the chance to slow down and really be with the person, talking, and doing activities that are 100% personalized. We've been using their memory books to help us to have meaningful conversations and have been doing different Montessori activities that we know the person likes. The residents have been responding well to this approach. When we did a lot of group activities before, there would always be several people who weren't engaged. Now we are spending quality time directly engaging the person.”

Isn't that what person-centered care is all about?

Below is an idea for a simple activity that can help an individual to maintain fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination while feeling a sense of purpose by caring for his or her belongings.

Polishing Personal and Household Items

Materials:

- Tray
- Placemat
- 2–3 personal items to polish, such as a few vases, simple porcelain figurines, teacups, or candlesticks
- Cloth for polishing, such as a microfiber cloth or a simple cotton cloth

Purpose of Activity

- Maintaining mobility of the hands
- Maintaining attention and focus on a task
- Caring for the community

Preparation of Activity

This can be done before the person starts the activity or follow the steps with them to make this part of the activity.

1. Bring the tray to the table.
2. Unroll the mat and place on the table in front of the tray.
3. Place one of the household items on the middle of the mat.
4. Place the cleaning cloth on the dominant hand side of the elder.

Participating in the Activity

First demonstrate a step and then invite the person to participate in the step.

1. With the dominant hand, pick up the cleaning cloth.
2. In a circular motion, polish the object from top to bottom.
3. Place cleaning cloth to the side.

4. Place polished item back on the tray.
5. Place second item to be polished on the middle of the mat.
6. Repeat steps 1-5 for the rest of the objects.
7. Place cleaning cloth back on the tray.
8. Roll mat.
9. Place mat onto the tray.