



# **ACTIVITY BOOK**

**DEMENTIA TOOLKIT**

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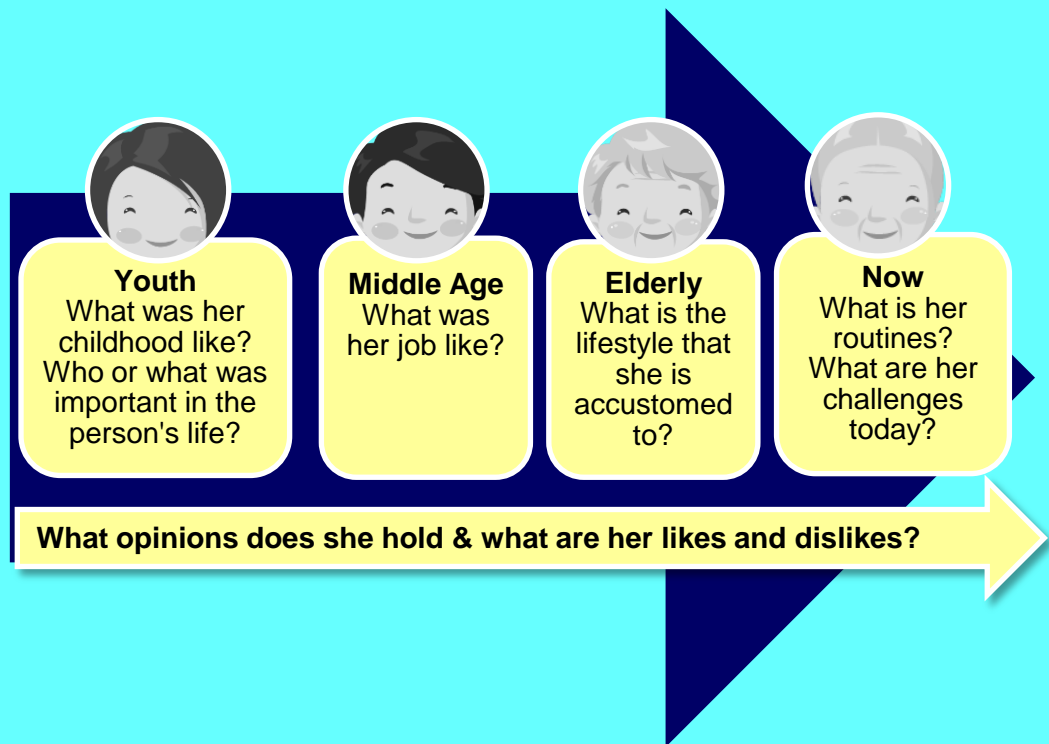
# introduction

The Dementia Toolkit have been designed and developed for care providers who are engaged in delivering cognitive stimulation activities for persons with dementia. These care providers can be anyone.

The Activity Book is part of the Dementia Toolkit, providing guidance on how to conduct activities for person who are living with mild cognitive impairment or may have early onset dementia. These activities can be carried out by anyone.

The goal is to spend quality time and create enjoyment for that person.

In order to engage the person meaningfully, we need to focus on the person-centred care philosophy, finding out about her past and preferences from youth to now.



This means providing care and open communication based on the preferences and interests of the person and her life story.

*The end in mind is to spend quality time with the person and create enjoyment for that person.*

**tips**

# engaging the person with dementia

When you are planning for every activity session, it is recommended to consider the following areas:

## Client's ability in cognitive and function

Does the client:

- have any hearing or visual impairment?
- have any physical/mobility limitation
- have problem in concentration, memory and understanding what you say?

## Client's social history and area of interest

- Culture and language
- Hobbies
- Previous job occupation

## Timing of activity

- Elderly are usually more alert in the earlier part of the day, so try to plan activity that requires greater concentration during this timing.
- It is recommended to consider activities that are more interactive and/or less tiring in the afternoon.
- Take into consideration sundowning syndrome (i.e. feeling confused, agitated as the sun goes down)

## Environment to carry out the activity

- Is it a conducive environment?
- Are there adequate lighting and minimal distractions (visual, auditory)
- Is the area safe for the activity and free from obstacles?



Before the activity, remember to CARE:

**Centre around the person**

*Finding activities that provide meaning and purpose.*

**Accept the person**

*Understanding medical condition to set up realistic expectations*

**Enable the person**

*Breaking into smaller steps, prompt, guide and assist to perform each activity*

**Respect the person**

*Treating person as an adult - be patient, flexible, reassuring and encouraging*

**CARE**

When communicating with the person, it is important to:

## DOs

Speak in simple & short sentences calmly

Listen carefully & encourage the person to share

Catch attention before you speak and maintain eye contact

Communicate care and affection by the tone of your voice and touch

Avoid negative use of language

Do not persist if the person is upset. Try again later.

## DON'Ts



After the activity, feedback to your team or supervisor about any of the below:

- Stories that was shared (*following guidelines from page 9*)
- Positive or negative body language
- Duration of entire session
- Duration before client becomes restless
- Recommendation for next session





***It is the quality of the interaction that is important.  
If they do not wish to participate, do not force them.***

**tips**

# activities

## to engage the person with dementia

### How to select activities?

-  Recognise the person as an individual  
*(understanding his/her lifestyle, interests, preferences)*
-  Consider the person's current functioning level  
*(level of concentration and physical ability)*
-  Remember there is no minimum timeframe to conduct any activity
-  Most importantly, the person enjoyed the activity at that point of time

### Starting your engagement:

#### 1. Learn their life story

Conduct a life story interview to find out about his/her past, interests and preferences.

*Refer to page 9 on how to conduct the life story*

#### 2. Select appropriate activities

Select activities which are relevant to the person, considering his/her function level, concentration level and physical ability.

#### 3. Introduce & demonstrate

Always introduce an activity and provide a demonstration on how the activity works.

***You will need to understand the person's lifestyle, work and interests before conducting any activity.***

**tips**



# 1. Learn their life story

## Life story interview

Recollecting and sharing stories of his/her life, experiences, interests and preferences allow you to better understand him/her to provide person-centred care. Below are the areas of his/her life story which you are encouraged to collect:

- Childhood and schooldays
  - Family
  - Marriage and children
  - Celebrations and events
  - Career
  - Leisure and entertainment
  - Your present and desired future
- i. What do you need?
- Pen and notebook to take down important points
  - Recorder to tape down the conversation in case you missed out some details
- i. How do I start?
- Introduce yourself and explain what you are going to do and the purpose of the activity
  - If you would like to record the discussion, seek permission.
  - Constantly engage the person and respond spontaneously
  - If the person is tired and do not wish to continue, do not force him/her. The story can be collected over a couple of sessions.



## 2. Select appropriate activities

### Conducting activities:

When planning to facilitate an activity session, a proper structured session can help to ensure smooth transition. This serve as a guide for a structured activity session with the person with dementia:

#### Introduction & warm-up

- Greet the elderly and introduce yourself
- Briefly mention the purpose of visit for first session
- Make the elderly comfortable by initiating small talk
- Prepare the environment for activity

15  
mins

#### Basic reality orientation

- Presentation of information on the time and place
- Recap last activity session with elderly

#### Main activity

- Explain the objective of the activity
- Describe and show the materials to be used
- Explain the rules and instructions of the game/activity
- Give a demonstration of the activity

30-45  
mins

#### Cool down and end the activity

- Gradually proceed to end the activity (i.e. inform elderly of the last game to ensure a smooth closure)
- Do not end the session and activity abruptly
- Thank the elderly for the participation and ask for feedback of the session
- Compliment the elderly for the completed work
- Keep the material and clean up (encourage elderly to help if possible)
- Plan for next session appointment date/time

10-15  
mins

We have also included some games in this activity book which you can also tap on.

## **Other activities you can carry out**

In the Dementia Toolkit, we have included two games “See Me” and “See Shape” that can be used to assess the client’s level of functioning. The game instructions can be found in the physical game box.

In addition to the games in the toolkit, you can explore the following activities:

### **Sensory**

- Music
- Stringing & threading
- Massage
- Peg board

### **Memory**

- Photo Reminiscence
- Matching of images
- Bingo

### **Exercise**

- Ball & tossing games
- Outings
- Gardening

## Photo reminiscence

Reminiscence involves recalling and re-experiencing of ones' life events. It allows one to share their personal stories of life, family, friends and work. Reminiscence provides an opportunity for family members and caregivers to learn about a person's past. This helps to build relationship and bonding.

### *How it can help the elderly*

Reminiscence can improve communication with elderly and is also a form of therapy to improve cognitive function and quality of life of people with dementia. Photographs, household and other familiar items from the past can be used to aid in the therapy.

### *Photos*

The method is to share the photographs with people with dementia - show and tell why the pictures are important to them. Use sensitivity, flexibility, awareness and warmth in the approach. Focus on positive interactions. Not all memories are positive. Though negative experiences are an important part of their life, but there is a need to steer the discussion to a happier topic.

In engaging the elderly for reminiscence, hand one photo at a time to the elderly. Ask what the photo means to them. Give them time to think and observe for any emotional expressions. Acknowledge their emotions. Let them talk and be a good listener. Walk them out of their memory onto another.



For example, if you hand a picture of a tea pot to them, some leading questions you can ask are:

- What is this object? – let them talk about the teapot, design, the use
- What is it used for? – let them talk about tea, their favourite tea and occasions where the family or friends enjoy the tea. Memory has been switched to tea from teapot
- Where do you use it? – let them talk about the places they enjoy the tea such as restaurant or hawker centre. Memory has been switched to places of enjoying tea from teapot.



# Some photos for photo reminiscence



*Courtesy of Chua Ai Lin*



*Courtesy of Chua Ai Lin*



*Courtesy of Chua Ai Lin*



*Courtesy of Dawn Tan*



*Courtesy of Liew Moy Yin*



*Courtesy of Quek Tar Hiah*





*Courtesy of Lye Siew Fong*



*Courtesy of Teo Kiang Chong*

## Coloured sticks

### *Benefits*

- Motor: Eye-hand coordination, finger dexterity
- Cognitive: concentration, understanding
- Visual perceptual skills

### *Materials/equipment to prepare*

- Bundle of multi-coloured sticks (variation in thickness)
- A flat surface such as a table

### *How to play it*

- Explain the objectives and instructions of the activity to the elderly
- Demonstrate and do a trial run
- Hold the bundle of sticks and drop all the sticks onto table. Let them lie where they landed. Do not rearrange any of the sticks.
- Ask the elderly to pick up the stick without touching and moving the other sticks. He/she will continue until all sticks are removed.

### *Ways to adapt*

- Make it easier: use fewer colours and reduce the number of sticks
- Make it more challenging: remove sticks with one hand instead of two



# Memory cards

## Benefits

- Motor: fine coordination
- Cognitive: concentration and attention, sequencing, visual memory
- Visual: recognise the picture

## Materials/equipment to prepare

- Memory cards (in pairs)

## How to play it

- Explain the objectives and instructions of the activity to the elderly
- Demonstrate and do a trial run
- Shuffle the cards and place them face down on the table (in rows of 3 by 4)
- Ask the client to flip over 2 cards
- If the picture on the cards matches, get the elderly to keep the pair and continue until he/she is unable to find a pair
- If the picture on the cards do not match, flip the cards back and the next person takes a turn
- Repeat the process until all the cards are matched.

## Ways to adapt

- Make it easier:
  - The elderly turns one card and leaves it facing up. You take turns with the elderly to turn the cards and this continues until 2 matching cards are revealed. The first to react by calling out the picture on the paired cards gets to keep the pair. The game will end when only two cards are left. The player with more number of pairs is the winner
- Make it more challenging:
  - Shuffle the cards and scatter the cards facing down on the table
  - Increase the number of pairs (position them in rows)

*Please note that you can also use memory cards that match colours or shapes instead of pictures*



## Origami- folding a boat

### Benefits

- Motor: fine-motor and bilateral coordination
- Cognitive: concentration and attention, sequencing, execution
- Visual attention

### Materials/equipment to prepare

Rectangle piece of paper

### How to play it

- Explain the objectives and instructions of the activity to the elderly
- Demonstrate step by step for the elderly to follow

### Ways to adapt

- Make it easier: assist the elderly to fold the paper
- Make it more challenging:
  - Use a bigger piece of paper (require greater strength to press the paper and coordination to align the edges)
  - Use a smaller piece of paper (require greater fine dexterity)

## How to fold a boat

1. Fold a piece of origami paper into half



2. Fold up each side to meet the centre fold



3. Fold each corner to meet the centre fold

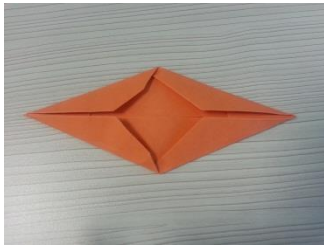


4. Fold the bottom left side again to meet the centre fold

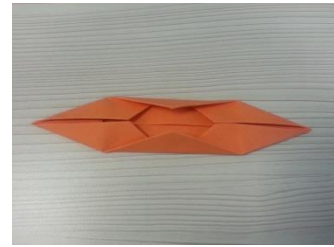


*To be continued on next page...*

5. Repeat the fold for other 3 sides



6. Fold the top and bottom tip to meet the centre fold



7. Open up the middle and flip over the sides



# Domino

## ***Benefits***

- Motor: Eye-hand coordination, finger dexterity
- Cognitive: concentration, sequencing, problem solving
- Visual perceptual skills

## ***Materials/equipment to prepare***

A set of dominoes (number of dots or colours)

## ***How to play it***

- Explain the objectives and instructions of the activity to the elderly
- Demonstrate and do a trial run
- Shuffle the domino tiles and arranged them neatly in stacks of 2 in a line, facing down on the table.
- Distribute 10 tiles to the elderly and yourself, place 1 open tile in the centre.
- Start first by placing a matching tile if available. If not, guide the elderly to place the matching tile
- Each person takes a turn after placing a tile. If there is no matching tile, draw new tile until a matching tile is available
- Repeat the process until either one player has no tile left or left with no more matching tiles.

## ***Ways to adapt***

- Make it easier: use coloured tiles instead of numbered tiles



## Eight treasure tea packs (八宝茶)

### **Benefits**

- Motor: eye-hand and bilateral coordination, fine dexterity
- Cognitive: concentration and attention, sequencing, memory, calculation
- Visual attention, differentiation of colours/shape

### **Materials/equipment and ingredients to prepare**

- Wolfberries
- Red dates
- Chrysanthemum
- Dried longan
- Jasmine or Long Jing tea leaves
- Mai Dong (Lilyturf root)
- Dried lily buds
- Rock sugar
- Container with small divider
- Small plastic zip blog bag

### **How to do it**

- Explain the objectives and instructions of the activity to the elderly
- Demonstrate how to prepare one pack for the elderly to follow
- If the elderly finish the packing or feel tired, make a cup of tea using one of the packs prepared.

### **Ways to adapt**

- Make it easier: let the elderly sort the ingredients into the container with divider

### **Some ideas for simple activity**

- Pressing the bubble wrap sheet
- Sorting out beans (red, green, yellow) in preparation for making soup
- Pluck the roots of the bean sprouts



Those with dementia are still people,  
they still have stories,  
they still have character,  
they are all individuals,  
they are all unique.

They just need to be interacted with  
on a human level.

*Carey Mulligan*



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