

Summer Activities

The days are now longer and you are looking for ways to fill them, to keep both you and your loved one engaged and fulfilled.

Depending upon their interests, there are still activities you can plan to enjoy together. Remember to take each endeavor slowly and enjoy the time spent on it, not focusing on the results. You may need to adapt your plans daily, depending upon their mood.

Bake or cook simple recipes together, or have them assist you with preparation like corn shucking, peeling apples or potatoes, assembling a simple salad.

Involve them in simple chores. Sweep the patio, set part of the table, fold towels, dust, water plants or try other household tasks that help them feel a sense of accomplishment.

Look at favorite old books, watch a movie or listen to music that may spark memories. Play simple games like, "Name that Tune."

Organize household items in a drawer or small space, particularly if your loved one used to take pleasure in organizational tasks

Work in the garden, plant seeds or arrange (real or artificial) flowers, visit a park. The level of difficulty will depend upon your loved one's condition - sometimes the feeling of hands in soil for someone who used to garden may be enough to relax them and to bring back feelings of comfort.

Organize simple craft projects. One idea that appeals to people who like to work with their hands is rolling yarn into a ball, or some may enjoy making and using home-made play dough. Use this recipe below and let them work with cookie cutters or mold in their hands.

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
2 cups warm water
1 cup salt
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
1 Tablespoon cream of tartar (optional for improved elasticity)

Optional: food coloring (liquid, powder, or unsweetened Kool-Aid or similar drink mix); scented oils (lavender)

Mix all of the ingredients together, and stir over low heat. The dough will begin to thicken until it resembles mashed potatoes.

When the dough pulls away from the sides and clumps in the center, as shown below, remove the pan from heat and allow the dough to cool enough to handle. **If your playdough is still sticky, to cook it a bit longer!** Continue until the dough is dry and feels like playdough.

Enjoy the outdoors – take a short walk, have a picnic, set up outdoor painting spot. Be creative and link the activity to something they have always enjoyed. Reminisce over summer foods, tastes, smells and sounds.

Be patient and be flexible as you take part in these activities together.