

A GUIDE TO EVERYDAY CREATIVITY FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA



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This guide can be used on its own or alongside training workshops for carers delivered by Collective Encounters. Get in touch if you would like to find out more, our contact details can be found at the end of this guide.

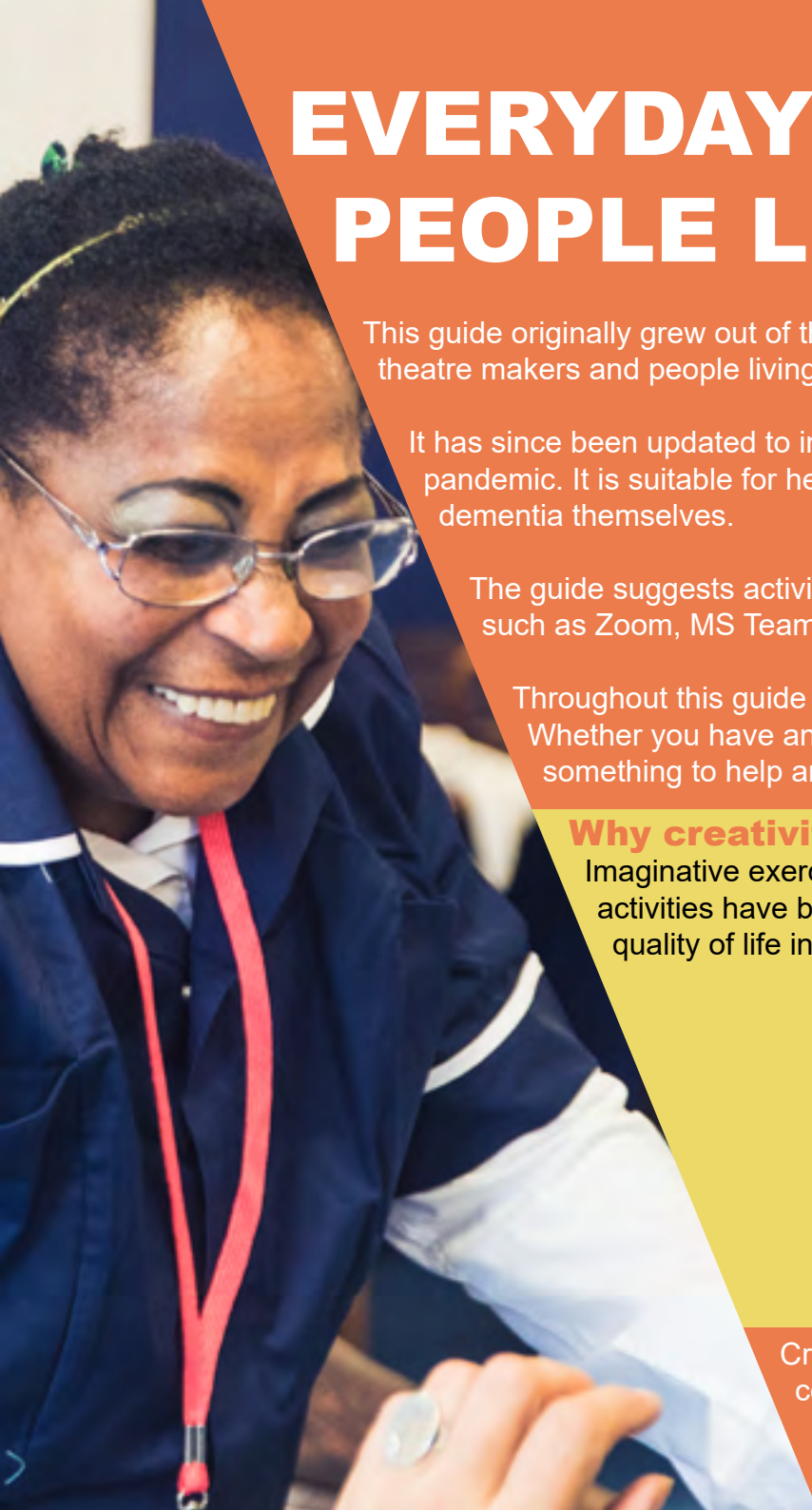
First published in 2015 by Collective Encounters
Second edition published in 2017 by Collective Encounters

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Photographs show: Keith Barber, Alma Brown, Tessa Buddle, Valerie Burton, Abi Horsfield, Cassius James, Tamara Walker, Paul Whiteside.

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EVERYDAY CREATIVITY FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

This guide originally grew out of three years of research in Merseyside between a team of Collective Encounters' theatre makers and people living with dementia and their carers.

It has since been updated to include developments in research and practice, and in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is suitable for healthcare professionals as well as family members, friends and people living with dementia themselves.

The guide suggests activities that might work in a group or one-to-one, face-to-face or using digital platforms such as Zoom, MS Teams, through the post or over the phone.

Throughout this guide you can find fun creative activities designed to stimulate imagination and memories. Whether you have an hour to spend or want to add a new spark to your daily routine, we hope you'll find something to help and inspire.

Why creativity?

Imaginative exercises have a positive impact on the health of people living with dementia. Arts activities have been shown to help people with dementia manage symptoms, significantly enhancing quality of life in the process. Creative exercises can:

INCREASE

- Physical movement ,
- Communication skills
- Face-name recognition
- Ability to recall life events
- Quality of social interaction
- Collaboration and alertness
- Spontaneous activity

DECREASE

- Fear
- Anxiety Confusion Agitation
- Loneliness

Creative activities can enable improved communication and help people feel part of a community. They are also wonderful enablers.

CREATIVITY & SOCIAL DISTANCING

There may be times when physical closeness needs to be limited. The activities include suggested adaptations for social distancing, as well as ideas for things to do over a phone or video call. Many care homes and people have tech such as tablets and computers that can be used to connect people digitally through platforms such as Zoom, MS Teams and WhatsApp and some of the activities can also be done through the post or over the phone.

TECHNOLOGY & TIPS

Keep things simple and familiar. Although technology can enable us to do lots of exciting new things, this can be overwhelming for people who are not used to it. Start with familiar games and activities, or even just a chat using our activities as a starting point.

Provide support where possible. People with dementia will need help to use new or unfamiliar technology. Whether it's a family member at home or a support worker in a care home, someone will ideally be there throughout a video call to help navigate the controls.

Choose the appropriate platform. We recommend Zoom because it offers the best features for creative workshops as well as accessibility tools such as live captioning. Make sure everyone knows how to join the meeting and has the correct link, meeting code and password if you have enabled one.

Consider accessibility. Those with hearing loss may require additional amplification (e.g. speakers connected to the computer), and those with sight loss may require larger text or text on a coloured (usually yellow) background.

NOT ONLINE?

Find opportunities for creativity within new routines. Start a conversation about hands while helping someone to wash or sanitise theirs. Invite patients to suggest decorations for staff face masks. Spend more time outdoors and with windows open - talk about how the air feels, what we can smell and what we can hear.

Keep connecting. Do this in whatever way you can. If a visit isn't safe, call regularly to reminisce, send photos and stories through the post. Restrictions don't have to mean you are creatively restricted.

GETTING READY

This guide is set out so that anybody who lives with, works with or cares for somebody with dementia can start using creativity to stimulate imagination and memories.

You don't need any previous experience. Activities are written in stages that guide you through the process.

They have been tried and tested, so we know they work.

Activities are divided into sections and build up in their complexity, starting with simple activities that can be done over dinner.

Alongside each activity is a guide as to how it can be adapted for social distancing including recommendations on the activities that work well online, face to face and in the post.





It's good to take some time to do some preparation before you launch into some of the activities, and here are some tips:

- If you are working one-to-one, select two or three activities. You may not get round to all of them, but you will be prepared if you need them.
- With a group, select one or two shorter activities as warm ups, an extended activity and a cool down. Leave time for introductions and reflections at the end (what did people enjoy/not enjoy? What would they like to do next time?).
- Read through the activities you have chosen and familiarise yourself with them so you know what you are doing with confidence. You might want to rehearse how you are going to explain the activity, or try it out with a colleague first.
- Gather the equipment and resources you will need. These are listed along with each activity in this guide.
- Choose your stimulus. The activities in this guide suggest different things that can be used to stimulate creative responses, with or without a theme. Some suggestions are:
 - Music
 - Objects
 - Photographs
 - Artwork
 - Stories or books
- You might want to think about selecting a theme for the activities. Themes can help focus the session and if they are broad, they are relatable to all participants. Ask people what themes they might like or what interests them. Once you have a theme choose stimuli to bring it to life. Here are some themes we like to work with:

• Seasons	• Nature
• Fashion	• Holidays and festivals
• Colours	• Hobbies
• The local area	• Travel and transport

It's also good to think about where and how you are going to do the activity.

- Ideally, you will have a reasonably large, well-lit comfortable space where you won't be interrupted.
- Take some time to prepare the space.
- If you are working one-to-one, think about where to position yourself. Facing the person is best but you may want to sit at their side, depending on the exercise. If you are doing a group session, it is good to set the chairs in a circle.
- Here are some pointers for working online:

COMMUNICATION

Be aware of body language. If people seem disinterested or tense, consider changing the exercise or giving reassurance.

Enjoy what people say. Let people say what they want in their own way. Try not to criticise, correct or interrupt.

Use your hands. If appropriate, physical contact communicates warmth, affection and sympathy.

If people struggle with verbal communication. Try encouraging a song, gesture, painting, or writing as a way for people to express themselves.

Think about your position in relation to the person you're caring for. You could place yourself on the same level as them. Bend, kneel or sit on the floor. This can help you to forge a bond.

Don't be afraid of silence. Allow people to feel comfortable in your company without speaking.

Smile. Smiling encourages intimacy and trust. If you are asking questions, give space and time for people to answer.

ATTITUDE AND APPROACH

Encourage contributions and give praise. People thrive on the reassurance that they are doing well.

Try not to correct words or phrases people use to describe feelings or ideas. There are no wrong ways to answer questions in a creative context.

Feel comfortable. Others in the room will respond to your discomfort.

Have fun, enjoy yourself, laugh, joke and delight in creativity. The more you enjoy it, the more others will.

TAKING PART

It's okay if someone is sitting alone and not visibly joining in. They may still be making connections.

Encourage family members and friends to get involved too - the more the better.

Don't be afraid of repetition. People may want to play their favourite game or even tell the same story every day. Great! It will bring them great joy.

Remember, the exercises in this booklet are a start. As your confidence grows you might want to adapt and invent new activities.

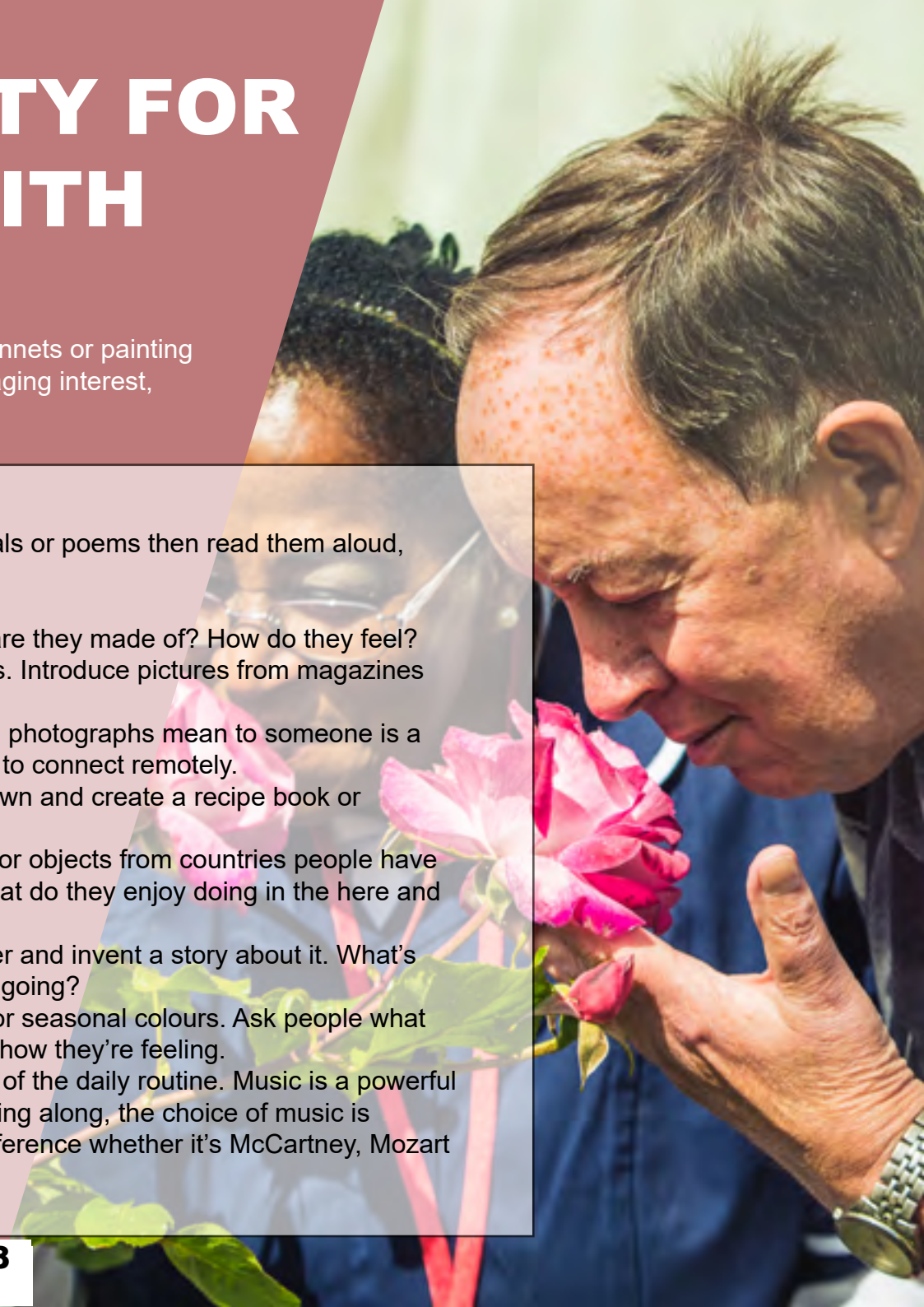
CREATIVE ACTIVITY FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

Incorporating creativity in dementia care isn't about composing sonnets or painting masterpieces. It's about encouraging use of the imagination, engaging interest, stimulating conversation, building community - and having fun.

Chat to those who enjoy reminiscing.

Write down what they say, and assemble notes into stories, journals or poems then read them aloud, insert them into care plans or frame them on walls.

- **Talk about their clothes.** What colour are they? What fabric are they made of? How do they feel? This could lead to discussions about fashion or favourite outfits. Introduce pictures from magazines and make a collage.
- **Discuss objects in the room.** Learning what mementoes and photographs mean to someone is a great entry point into happy memories and can be a good way to connect remotely.
- At mealtimes, prompt memories related to food. Write them down and create a recipe book or organise a cooking or tasting session.
- **Chat about holidays and favourite places.** Bring in pictures or objects from countries people have visited or lived in. Take inspiration from what's around you. What do they enjoy doing in the here and now? What's around them that they like?
- **Use visual aids.** Pick a random photograph from a newspaper and invent a story about it. What's going on? Where has this person come from? Where are they going?
- **Discuss the view outside.** Ask questions about the weather or seasonal colours. Ask people what they see, what they find beautiful and how the light may affect how they're feeling.
- **Turn off the radio and sing yourself.** Make singing a feature of the daily routine. Music is a powerful trigger for memories. Whether the goal is singing, or just listening along, the choice of music is important. Familiarity with the music is the key. It makes no difference whether it's McCartney, Mozart or Meat Loaf; if everyone knows it give it a go.



SHORTER CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

A man is shown in profile, looking down at a stack of cards he is holding in his hands. He is wearing a dark jacket and a watch. On the table in front of him are various items: a red container holding many colorful pens or markers, a blue cup, a white mug with a red and yellow stripe, and some papers. The background is a brick wall and a whiteboard with some writing on it.

These short creative activities take around 5 - 10 minutes

They can be used as a stand alone activity, or as a warm-up exercise before trying an extended creative activity.

EMOTION NAME GAME

AIM

Introducing participants and giving them confidence to speak in a group.

EQUIPMENT

4 or 5 objects representing different emotions.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

On a video call, or if you are concerned about passing objects around in-person, the facilitator can hold up the object and say a participant's name; the participant then responds with the word 'hello' and the emotion represented by the object.

DIRECTIONS

1. Get the group into a circle.
2. Introduce a 'happy' object (perhaps a brightly coloured cushion or beanbag) and pass it around the circle. As each participant receives the 'happy' cushion, they should state their name clearly, as if they are feeling extremely happy, before passing it on.
3. Now replace the 'happy' object with a 'sad' one (a shabbier cushion, a darker beanbag, perhaps) and repeat the exercise - this time with participants pretending to be extremely sad as they announce their names.
4. Different objects, each representing different emotions, are passed around. Participants say their name while expressing the emotion - frightened, sad, angry etc. as they receive the object.



THE STORY OF MY HANDS

AIM

To get people telling stories and sharing moments; to build connections between people.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This exercise works best in the room. It can be done one-to-one or in a group.



DIRECTIONS

1. Make sure you both have washed or sanitised your hands.
2. Sit opposite each other - one person is the teller and one the massager. Usually the massager is the caregiver.
3. The massager asks permission to take the teller's hand. Then holding the tellers hand in both theirs, the massager begins to gently massage it asking "what have you done with these hands?"
4. If the teller says, for example, "thrown a cricket ball", the massager can just acknowledge it or use it to ask additional questions e.g. "Do you play cricket?"
5. If the teller says nothing the massager can prompt with more direct questions: "Do you write with this hand?", "Did you hold your child's hand with this hand?" or "How many dishes did you wash with this hand?"

This is a really intimate activity. It is so important, especially after lockdowns, that people experience touch and connectivity. This is one to do in a quiet space and is a nice way to connect.

ADAPTATIONS

In a group setting you can ask people to look at their hands and think about all the things that their hands have done.

Each person can share something and mime the activity. This would also work one-to-one if the teller does not want to be touched.

MIRRORS

AIM

Connecting with each other without verbal communication; exploring movement; honing observation skills.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This exercise works best in the room.



DIRECTIONS

1. Arrange the group in pairs, standing or sitting 1-2 metres apart, facing each other. Partners should be in identical positions, so if one partner needs to sit, the other should as well.
2. Ask one partner to slowly raise and lower their arm (or some other simple movement that they find easy to do).
3. The other partner's goal is to copy this movement as if they're the reflection in a mirror.
4. The first partner can now try different movements and see how well their partner can copy. Keep movements slow enough to copy. The aim is to move together.
5. If anyone is not sure what to do, they can imagine they are looking in a mirror and getting ready in the morning - mime the actions they would do such as putting on a shirt, doing their hair, brushing teeth etc.
6. After a while, swap roles so the second partner leads.
7. If the exercise goes well, ask each pair to demonstrate their mirror work to the rest of the group.
8. After each pair has had a go, encourage everyone to applaud.

ADAPTATIONS

This activity works well one-to-one too.

ALPHABET GAME

AIM

Having fun while starting to work creatively; stimulating memories of words and objects.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

If connecting via video call, instead of poses it can be fun to ask people to find objects beginning with the letter.

This is a great way to share personal items in a gentle way.

DIRECTIONS

1. Ask participants to find a space in the room where they feel comfortable on their own and have space around them to move
2. One person chooses a letter of the alphabet and everyone thinks of something that begins with that letter. Each person takes up a pose or action pretending to be the thing they have chosen. (For example, for the letter 'b' people might choose to be a bee, a bus driver, or going bowling).
3. Ask for some volunteers or choose someone to show their action or pose. See if the rest of the group can guess what they are pretending to be. Have fun with the poses that are harder to guess, and enjoy the inventive ways people represent different things. People might also want to make sounds and noises that go with their chosen word (such as buzzing like a bee).
4. After going round the group, the person who chose the letter now decides who has come up with the most interesting thing. That person now chooses the next letter, and the game is repeated.



FOLLOW THE LEADER

AIM

To get people looking, listening and leading; to get moving and have fun; to encourage self-expression.

EQUIPMENT

Music and something to play it through e.g. CD Player or Bluetooth speaker.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well one-to-one or as a group, online or in person.

DIRECTIONS

1. Put a tune on and ask people to dance in any way they like. If people have mobility issues this can be played seated in a circle. The dance can be as big or as small as people are comfortable with, from throwing your arms in the air to simply tapping your feet.
2. Ask people to freeze and then name a leader and ask people to copy the leader's moves.
3. After a few moves, call the name of a new leader and ask everyone to follow them.
4. Keep going until everyone has had the chance to be the leader.



ENDOWMENT

AIM

Using the imagination; starting to work with objects; encouraging people to make creative choices.

EQUIPMENT

A colourful scarf or cloth (or see adaptations for other ideas).

SOCIAL DISTANCING

On video call, you can play the game with everyday household objectives - such as a spoon. Ask everyone to find a spoon and choose people in turn to announce “this is not a spoon, it is a hair brush” etc. and mime the action with the spoon.

DIRECTIONS

1. Get the group into a circle.
2. Show people the scarf and explain that the scarf can be anything people want it to be: an apple (make the scarf into a ball shape and pretend to bite it), a baby (cradle the scarf in your arms and make a crying noise), a phone (fold the scarf into a rectangle and pretend to ‘press the buttons’ and hold it to your ear) etc.
3. Pass the scarf round. Each person makes it into something it is not.
4. The rest of the group can guess what people are making the scarf into. If they are not getting it, ask the person to tell you what they have made the scarf into.
5. Ensure everyone who wants a turn has a turn. If people are enjoying it, go round again, or try it with a different object.
6. Try using different objects like a ball, cushions or a jumper.



IN THE MANNER OF THE WORD

AIM

Having fun while doing drama; connecting with emotions; using the imagination.

EQUIPMENT

- Envelope 1 - with adverbs written on A4 paper, e.g. sadly, quickly, slowly, happily, drunkenly, angrily.
- Envelope 2 - with actions written on A4 paper, e.g. brush your hair, clean your teeth, read a book.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

On Zoom you can place someone in the 'waiting room' while the group chooses an adverb. Instead of an envelope, you could have a list of actions in the chat box for the volunteer to choose from, or ask them to think of an action themselves.



DIRECTIONS

1. Explain the game to the group. It is best to be brief and use an example. Tell them you are going to hold up two cards and they will act them out - hold up an adverb card from Envelope 1 and an action card from Envelope 2 as you are saying this, and read it outloud. Encourage people to try it out right away and join in yourself to get people going. E.g. "This says 'clap happily', so let's all clap in a happy way!"
2. Tell the group you will now ask for a volunteer to go out of earshot and that they will try and guess the adverb.
3. Choose a new set of cards (adverb and action). Hold them up, read them out and again ask people to act it out
4. Get the group to keep doing the action whilst the volunteer comes back into earshot
5. Encourage the volunteer to guess the adverb. You might need to prompt them to guess the adverb and not the action by saying something like "your friends are all clapping. In what manner are they clapping? Is it happily? Sadly? Excitedly?"
6. Repeat with a new volunteer.

ADAPTATIONS

When people are used to the game, you can get them to think of their own actions they would like people to do and ask group members for suggestions about adverbs.

FORTUNATELY/UNFORTUNATELY

AIM

To begin to create a story; to explore characters and plot; to have a go at following a simple structure and sequencing.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works really well one-to-one or as a group, online or in person.



DIRECTIONS

1. Ask the group what the words 'fortunately' and 'unfortunately' mean; listen to their answers and then give a definition yourself. Fortunately means when something good happens or someone is lucky; unfortunately means when something goes wrong or someone gets back luck.
2. Tell the group that you are now going to tell a story together, taking it in turns to add new bits on. Each sentence will start with either the word 'fortunately' or 'unfortunately'.
3. Start the story yourself with a sentence beginning 'fortunately'. A good way to start if you are stuck is: "Fortunately it was a sunny day".
4. Next, ask the person to your left to add to the beginning of the story but this time starting their sentence with the word 'unfortunately'. Following on from the sentence before, someone could say, "Unfortunately, I forgot to put sun cream on".
5. Once the next person has added their sentence, the story continues with the person to the left again alternating 'fortunately' and 'unfortunately'.
6. You can either end when everyone has had a go or the story has come to a satisfactory stopping point.

Don't worry if you don't follow the rules exactly.

Sometimes people may prefer to choose the sentence starter they prefer or have an idea for, it's okay if you get three 'fortunately' in a row.

PHOTO STORIES

AIM

To get people talking and remembering.

EQUIPMENT

Photos of the past. These can be photos that belong to the participant or pictures from magazines etc – it is better to have pictures of places like a beach or a street, rather than of people.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This activity works well online, the facilitator can use the 'share screen' option to show the photo. It is also a great option for an activity to send out in the post.

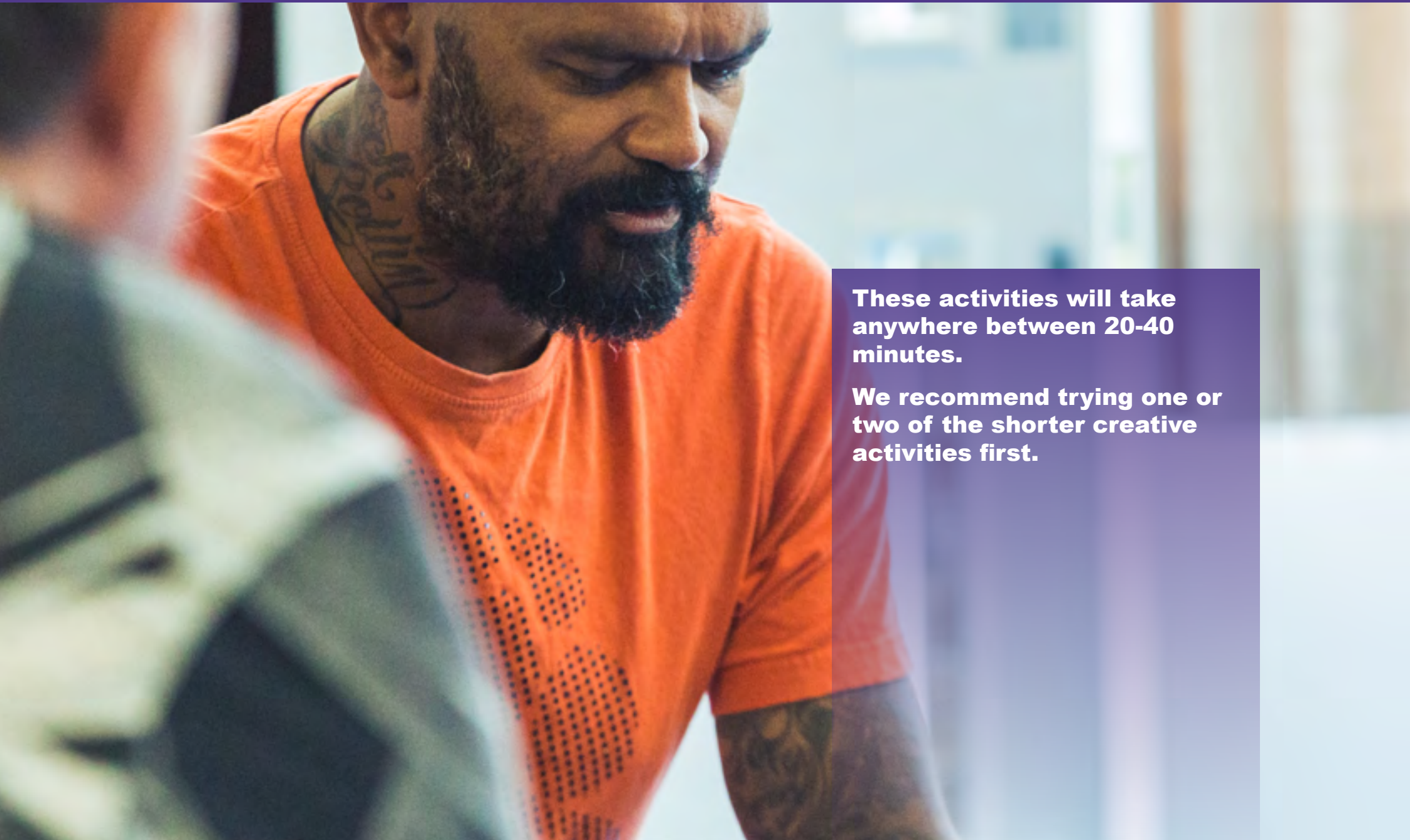


DIRECTIONS

1. Show the photo to the participant.
2. Ask them “what’s the story?” Encourage them with questions: “what is the weather like?”, “is this a happy place?”, “who would you like to be with if you were there?”, “what time of day is it?” or “what would you be doing if you were there?”
3. If they are struggling, you can tell the story to them of what you would like to be doing if you were in the story.
4. Retell the story back to the participant, checking in with them that you are getting it right.
5. Ask them if they would change anything in the story or if it has made them think of any other places and stories.

If you know that they had a particular job or they liked going to festivals or cycling etc, you could use pictures that are specific to their experiences and interests.

EXTENDED CREATIVE ACTIVITIES



These activities will take anywhere between 20-40 minutes.

We recommend trying one or two of the shorter creative activities first.

PICTURE POEMS

AIM

To get people using their imaginations and creating poems, exploring the senses.

EQUIPMENT

Some photographs or pictures, pens and paper. .

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Emotion Name game; Alphabet game.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

If you are doing this activity remotely, you could ask participants to choose a photo themselves, perhaps in response to a theme, or you could share a photo on the screen or send photos to individuals in the post.



DIRECTIONS

1. Hand out a picture to each participant along with some paper and pens. Those who struggle to write can be paired with a support worker or family member who can write down what they say.
2. Ask people to imagine they are inside the picture.
3. Ask them to write or say what they can see from inside the picture, then what they can smell from inside the picture, what they can hear from inside the picture, what they can taste and finally how being in the picture makes them feel.
4. Encourage people to be as descriptive as they like. Suggest that they are painting a picture in words and stimulating the imagination with their descriptions. Play with words and have fun.
5. Ask people to put the words and sentences in an order that tells the best story, or that sounds most interesting. They can add or take away words, or mix them up. It is all about people enjoying and having fun with words to see what happens; people often surprise themselves. There is no right or wrong in this creative journey.
6. When everyone has a poem, encourage them to show the picture and read the poem to the group. Ask them to come up with a title for their poem. This builds confidence and allows people's work to be celebrated. Alternatively, the facilitator can read the poems out.

If literacy and writing is an issue, you can work as a group: the facilitator asks the questions and writes the responses to bring everyone's ideas together into one poem.

HAIKU ('HIGH-KOO')

AIM

To get people using their imaginations and creating poems, exploring the senses.

EQUIPMENT

Flip chart paper or large board, pens.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Emotion Name Game; In the Manner of the Word.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well one-to-one or as a group, online or in person. On Zoom, you can use the whiteboard or screen share feature to share a document where the group can create the poem together. Start by writing a list of words in response to a particular theme or title, then reshape the words into the Haiku structure.

DEFINITION OF HAIKU

Haikus are traditional three-line Japanese poems. They follow a simple structure:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

DIRECTIONS

1. Tell the group what Haikus are.
2. Check that people know what a syllable is: a syllable is part of or a whole word that contains a single vowel sound. Ask people their names and clap each syllable, for example Abi is two syllables: A - bi; Francesca is three syllables: Fran - ces - ca; John is one: John.
3. Choose a theme or title and ask people to share words and thoughts that come to them when they think of the theme or hear the title. You can write these on a board or big piece of paper.
4. Reshape the ideas to fit the Haiku structure. If there are lots of ideas, you might end up with more than one poem.
5. It is OK to break the rules. Sometimes people struggle with the structure or the idea of syllables - this doesn't matter. Keep it relaxed, enjoy telling the story or exploring the theme in just a few words.
6. When the Haikus are finished, they can be read aloud and celebrated.

A HAIKU ON HOPE

Some people will see
Hope as a four lettered word
But for me it shines

Remember each day
Optimism is your friend
Give it a chance now!

ACCIDENTAL PICTURES

AIM

Using the imagination, developing storytelling skills and creating characters.

EQUIPMENT

Music and something to play it through e.g. CD Player or Bluetooth speaker.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Endowment; Mirrors; or Follow the Leader.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well with a group online. On Zoom you can use the 'spotlight' and 'pin' features to focus on two or three participants. You can also incorporate any visible objects - for example if someone has a plant near them, perhaps the story is in a forest.

DIRECTIONS

1. After playing 'follow the leader' as a warm up game for a while, introduce a new instruction: when the music stops, everyone has to freeze exactly where they are.
2. The facilitator asks two or three people to stay frozen and asks everyone else to form an audience, looking at the frozen people.

3. Prompt the audience to take a good look and imagine a story about the people in front of them. What's going on? Who are these people? What story can you see? Everyone is encouraged to say what they think. Accept every idea: there is no right or wrong answer.
4. If any of the frozen people start laughing or scratching their face etc. incorporate these accidental movements into the story being imagined.
5. Put the music back on and encourage everyone to start following a leader again. Stop the music again and choose different people to be frozen this time.

ADAPTATIONS

There are many different ways you could try creating accidental pictures and imagining stories; here are some other ideas:

- Ask two volunteers to walk around the room whilst making eye contact with each other. Ask the rest of the group: "What is their relationship? What are they doing?"
- Ask participants to freeze while playing mirrors and focus on two participants from different pairs. Ask the rest of the group: "what story can you see between these two?"
- For participants with limited mobility you can simply ask two volunteers to sit next to each other and for one to look at the other. Give some prompts to the volunteers to try smiling, closing their eyes, looking in a different direction or leaning closer or further away. Encourage the group to tell you what they think is happening between the two people.

IMAGE THEATRE

AIM

Using the imagination, developing storytelling skills and creating characters.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

In the Manner of the Word or Alphabet Game. This also develops well from the 'Accidental Pictures' activity.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This activity works really well online. Use the breakout rooms to enable participants to work in small groups.

DIRECTIONS

1. Ask participants to stand or sit comfortably. Take a few deep breaths together. Tell participants to think about any parts of their bodies that might be sore or tense and to imagine those parts relaxing each time they breathe out.
2. Explain that you are going to say a word and you want everyone to create a picture with their body to express that word. If mobility is an issue, they can use just their hands or face.
3. Start with some common emotions - happiness, sadness, anger, suspicion - and give everyone time to respond to each word with their bodies. If the group is anxious or embarrassed about expressing themselves physically, encourage them to do this with their eyes closed. As confidence grows, it can be fun to do this with eyes open

and see the different ways people are responding to the words.

4. Now try some concepts - love, wealth, hope, strength, freedom. Some might struggle with these words, while others will find it easier to respond to these more abstract ideas. There is no right or wrong way to respond.
5. Now arrange participants into groups of two or three with at least one support worker or family member in each group. Choose a word and ask each group to create a picture with their body to express that word.
6. Give the groups 5-10 minutes to work together to create their picture, then invite each group to share what they have done with everyone else. This might lead to discussion about the emotions or concepts expressed, or about how we use our bodies to communicate. Perhaps the audience can see different stories to the ones that were intended - these might be interesting as well!

IDEAS FOR THE GROUP ACTIVITY

- You might choose words that relate to the workshop theme if you have one. For example, if your theme is seasons you could name each season and ask participants to create a picture with their body to express each one.
- Ask the groups to choose one of the emotions or concepts they liked from earlier in the exercise and use this to create their picture.
- Ask all the groups to respond to the same word. Words like 'work', 'holiday' or 'family' might evoke different memories and associations which will lead to interesting discussions about what these concepts mean to us.

STORY TELLING WITH OBJECTS

AIM

Developing imagination; sharing something about themselves.

EQUIPMENT

A collection of objects - chosen in advance by the participant.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Fortunately, Unfortunately or Photo Stories.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This exercise can be done one-to-one on the phone, or a video call.

DIRECTIONS

1. Before you start, ask the participant to choose a number of objects in response to a theme. For example happiness, holidays, winter, nature etc.
2. During the call, ask the participant to describe the objects they have chosen.
3. Gently question them to find out more about each object: "why have you chosen this?", "what does it make you think about?", "how does it make you feel?". Enjoy hearing any anecdotes or memories they choose to share during this discussion.
4. Make notes while they are speaking - note down any

phrases, words, emotions or sentiments that stand out for you.

There are a number of different directions you could take this activity depending on how the participant responds and the nature of the objects they have chosen. Here are two ideas:

1. Use the objects to imagine a fictional story:
 - Choose one object and ask if they can imagine a person who would use this object (e.g. a rolling pin might suggest a baker).



STORY TELLING WITH OBJECTS

DIRECTIONS (CONT.)

- Then choose another object and ask if that suggests a location or situation this person could be in (e.g. a tree ornament might suggest a forest).
 - Then choose other objects to decide other elements of the story (e.g. a pen might suggest that the baker has come to the forest to write a letter, but then a candle suggests that a fire breaks out in the forest...).
 - Allow the story to go in unexpected directions and ask questions to develop it: who are they writing a letter to? What do they do when the fire starts? What happens next? If you get stuck, go back to the objects or ask them what they can see in their room to inspire the next step of the story.
2. Use the notes you have made as a starting point for a poem or story:
- Choose an especially interesting phrase and use it as the title for a story.
 - Ask the participant what they think would happen in a story with this title.
 - Alternatively, read back some of the words you have written down and ask the participant how they feel when hearing those words.

Work together to arrange the words and phrases into a poem, adding more words as you go.

Some participants might prefer to work on some writing on their own.

Leave them with a starting point (as above) and ask them to share what they come up with the next time you speak.



ADAPTATIONS

This can also work as a group activity. Invite members of the group to each bring or choose an object (or use the object version of the alphabet game as a warm up). After introducing their objects, the group creates a story together, with each person in turn adding to the next part of the story by incorporating the object they have chosen. Individuals could also write a story or poem on their own, or write down any memories that have been prompted by the objects or the game.

INSTANT STORIES

AIM

To explore characters and create stories; to explore familiar phrases.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Fortunately, Unfortunately.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well with a group online.

DIRECTIONS

1. Explain to the group you are going to create a character. Choose a phrase from the table, say it out loud to the group and ask “who might say this?”.
2. Then ask the group who the character is talking to and where they are. Once this has been established, ask what the second character’s response to the phrase is.
3. You can now move on to ask what the story is: “what happens next?”.
4. As people respond to these questions, dig deeper. Feel free to ask more, such as “what is the weather like in the park?”, “what are they wearing?”, “how are they feeling?”.

Don’t worry about going off on tangents. You might get people who want to tell their own stories; let them and ask them more questions too. Ask if someone in the group can think of a new phrase and create another character. Follow the same steps.

Penny for the guy?	Do you come here often?	Who’s next please?
‘What are you looking at?	Ello ‘ello ‘ello	Move along the bus please
All stand back on the platform	Who’s next please?	Make a wish!
Are you sitting comfortably? Then I’ll begin	Run along now!	Where am I?
Do you want peas with that?	Will you be my valentine?	Nice to see you
Got any spare change?	Would you like to dance?	Fancy a cuppa?



A LIFE IN 100 WORDS

AIM

Writing a brief theme-based autobiography.

EQUIPMENT

Paper or notepads, pens.

SUGGESTED WARM UPS

Emotion Name Game or Story of my Hands.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This exercise can also be done on the phone, or a video call.



DIRECTIONS

1. Select a theme in advance. Explain to the participant that you are going to work together to write a poem about their life, based around the theme you have chosen. The theme could be based on a previous conversation, something you know about the participant, or something connected to the time of year or an occasion.
2. Encourage your participant to explore their lives through the chosen theme, asking them about the past. For a food-based theme, you might ask about favourite dishes when they were children (what were they? Who cooked them? What did they taste like?); for a holiday theme, childhood holidays might be the key (where did you go? Who drove you? What was the best thing about the trip?).
3. Write down responses in the form of a list. All memories, even inaccurate ones, should be accepted without comment.
4. Write down responses in the form of a list. All memories, even inaccurate ones, should be accepted without comment.
5. Read back the list to the participant and ask if they would like to add anything. Take this opportunity to say something positive about the autobiography you have created together.
6. This autobiographical poem could be printed and/or framed and sent out to the participant. You could discuss the poem again on your next call and suggest some follow up activities such as creating a painting or illustration or choosing a photograph to be displayed alongside it.
7. If you are doing this activity with several different participants, you could put all the poems together and get them printed as a book.

COOL DOWNS

A photograph of a middle-aged man with thinning hair, wearing a dark blue and white patterned short-sleeved shirt and a gold chain. He is smiling and looking down at something in his hands, possibly a small object or a piece of paper. He is standing outdoors in front of a brick wall and a large bush of yellow flowers. In the foreground, the back of a person's head with blonde hair is visible, and another person's arm is partially visible on the right. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting it's daytime.

It's always good to take the time to reflect on the activities with everyone that took part, and here are a couple of activities for this to happen.

GIFT GIVING



AIM

To end the session on a positive note, encouraging people to think of others, fostering a positive environment.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well with a group online. Rather than going round a circle, each person chooses someone else to give their gift to. Someone volunteers to go first and announces who their gift is for, tells them what it is and mimes handing it to them, as above. Encourage participants to give their gift to someone who hasn't received one yet .

DIRECTIONS

1. Tell the group that everyone is going to end the session by giving the person to their left an imaginary gift. Have them think for a few moments about what their neighbour might like (something they spoke about during the workshop perhaps, or a bunch of flowers/box of chocolates).
2. Going round the circle, each person now tells their neighbour what they are gifting to them, then mimes picking it up and passing it over. As they do they can imagine the size of the present, its weight and how it feels to hold.
3. The recipient mimes opening the imaginary gift, reacting to it and using it. They thank the donor.
4. Then it is their turn to give a gift to the person on their left.

AFFIRMATION CIRCLE

AIM

To get group members celebrating their own and each others contributions.

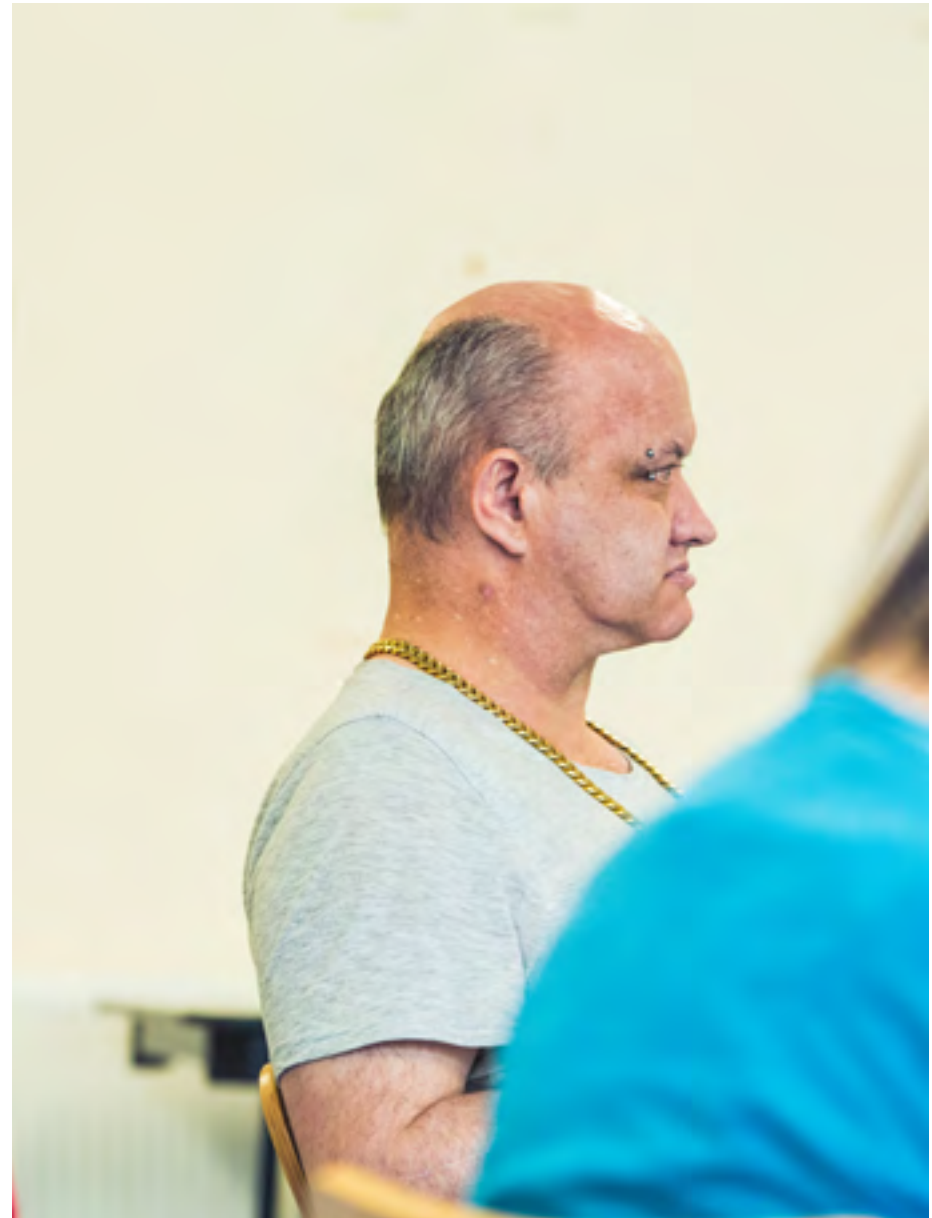
SOCIAL DISTANCING

This works well with a group online. The facilitator will need to name the first person and then call the next name as you won't have a circle.

DIRECTIONS

1. Get the group into a circle.
2. Ask the person on your left to tell the group something they have done well in the session or something they are proud of. You can prompt by asking questions or if they get stuck, gently remind them of something you have noticed they have done well.
3. When the person has shared the rest of the circle clap or positively acknowledges their contribution.
4. You then move onto the next person and repeat until everyone has had a turn.

Some people find it hard to give themselves praise, so give lots of space and encouragement.



Creative Resources & Organisations for People living with Dementia

Below is a list of just some of the organisations providing events and resources for people living with dementia and those that care for them.

Arts 4 Dementia

<https://arts4dementia.org.uk>

Dementia and Imagination Alliance

<http://dementiaandimagination.org.uk/art-and-dementia/>

Dementia and the Arts: Sharing Practice, Developing Understanding and Enhancing Lives

www.futurelearn.com

Arts in Care Homes

<https://artsincarehomes.org.uk/category/arts/dementia/>

Alive Activities

<https://aliveactivities.org/about-alive/>

Arts in Healthcare

<https://www.artinhealthcare.org.uk>

Equal Arts

<https://www.equalarts.org.uk/about-us>

Creative Dementia Arts Network

<https://oxfordshire.org/project/creative-dementia-arts-network>

Collective Encounters

MPAC, 1-27 Bridport Street, Liverpool, L3 5QF

Tel: 0151 345 6266

info@collective-encounters.org.uk

www.collective-encounters.org.uk



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

