



# Montessori for Ageing and Dementia

[Montessori for Dementia and Ageing  
\(montessoridementia.org\)](http://montessoridementia.org)

**Blogs and videos**

# Montessori = Person Centred Care

“ The Montessori philosophy is not a technique, task or intervention. It’s a way of living one’s life to the fullest extent possible.”

# MONTESSORI FOR AGEING AND DEMENTIA CHARTER

- All older adults and persons with dementia have the right to a caring community that is aligned with the individual's needs, interests, abilities, skills and strengths for optimal social, emotional, physical and cognitive support.
- This environment is carefully prepared to meet and nurture the needs of each person, providing opportunity for success, choice, enhanced independence and self-initiated activity.
- Lives are enriched through the engagement in roles, routines and activities, fostering a sense of belonging and well-being.

Think of 3 things  
you would like to  
be able to do when  
you are 80

Did anyone say:

- I'd like to sit around all day with nothing to do
- I'd like to be totally dependent on others for every aspect of my life
- I'd like to live in a nursing home
- I'd like to have forgotten all the warm, loving memories of my family
- I'd like to feel stuck in one place
- I'd like my life to have lost meaning and purpose.

# 1. Meaningful Roles



Roles provide opportunities to care for oneself, others and the environment, their importance is in maintaining independence and purpose.

# Why do we need Roles

- Each role a person has provides a structure to the day, a reason to get out of bed in the morning, something meaningful to do
- Think of the roles we each have in any day outside of work
- The need to have a purpose does not end with a diagnosis of dementia
- Frequently we take roles away from those we care for and they can then lose the ability quicker than they may have e.g. pouring a drink, laying a table, making a sandwich

# Facilitating Roles v's Risk Assessments

- Someone tries to help when the tea trolley comes in by pouring their own tea
- Someone wants to help clean or tidy up
- Could those we care for be involved in setting their place or others to prepare for the meal?

- Could tea and coffee be put in insulated tea pots and coffee pots?



- Set up a cleaning rack in each day room with an invitation to help



- Set table or clear up after a meal



# Meet Maria

- Maria is an independent woman with a diagnosis of dementia
- Maria has just moved into supported living as she recently lost her husband and is finding it difficult living alone
- Maria does not refuse help getting dressed but frequently dresses inappropriately for the weather and/or puts clothes on in the wrong order

# Maintaining Independence

- Prepare for the season
- Reduce opportunities for dressing inappropriately for the weather
- Label wardrobe and drawers so Maria can find the items she wants
- Provide a sequence card to assist Maria with the order of dressing



## 2. The Prepared Environment



A big part of helping individuals succeed in their roles is preparing the environment.



"The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the [person] to conduct his own experiences."

Dr. Maria Montessori

# Physical Environment should be:

- Consistent and ordered in layout
- Free of clutter
- Have designated areas for work, quiet and social activity
- Bright (2-3 times more light than younger eyes)  
Avoid Glare
- Avoid patterns
- Activity materials easily accessible and stimulating
- Significant Way Finding and labelling signage



# Provide prompts and guides



Water the  
plant



Spray the  
plant



Wipe the  
leaves



### 3. Fill the environment with fun and meaningful things to do

- Include invitations to use the materials
- Add placemats in contrasting colour for ease to see
- To promote success provide guides and supports
- Have a step by step instruction for staff, family or visitors to encourage use



<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Title of Activity:</b>	Colouring
<b>Purpose of the activity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain manual dexterity and fine motor skills</li> <li>• Practice sustained focus and attention</li> <li>• Fulfil the need for creativity</li> <li>• Maintain hand - eye coordination</li> <li>• Enjoyment</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	Colouring pencils or pens, colouring pages
<b>Routine to support the activity</b>	<p>Have colouring pages and pens/pencils at a table in sight to encourage independent engagement</p> <p>Sharpening pencils can be another activity to support this one</p>
<b>Ways to simplify the activity</b>	Using an inset shape or stencil to provide guidance and a bumper for colouring
<b>Ways to make the activity more complex</b>	Use paints and brushes



## Step by Step directions

- Prepare the colouring pages, pens or pencils on the table
- Invite \_\_\_\_\_ to join you to colour
- Demonstrate by taking a page and beginning to colour
- Invite \_\_\_\_\_ to take a page or set the page in front of her
- If \_\_\_\_\_ does not reach for a pen or pencil give one to them and continue to colour
- Continue until \_\_\_\_\_ completes the page or returns the pens
- Return pens or pencils to the container
- Encourage \_\_\_\_\_ to help you check pen lids are on tight or if pencils need sharpening
- Thank them for their participation



Sense of achievement



Improve concentration



Satisfaction



Practice fine motor skills and pincer grip





Enjoyment

Having activity  
Resources in view  
means patients can  
see and use them  
independently if  
they wish



Maintain skills



Purpose





# Establish Activity Stations



**Drinking Station**



# 3 part cards



Bourgainvillea



Orchid



Gardenia



Sunflower



Bourgainvillea



Orchid



Gardenia



Sunflower

This activity can be made with any images related to the persons interests, hobbies or jobs. The task is to match the image and label.

This activity will

- Practice sustained focus and attention
- Maintain language and reading skills
- Provide a talking point for a topic of interest

# Other ideas

- Changing batteries in things
- Window cleaning – spray water and cloth
- Cleaning station – brush, dustpan, duster
- Folding laundry
- Mystery bags to guess the item
- Matching real items to images  
e.g. shells, kitchen utensils, tools, etc.



**Activity “materials that match an individual’s physical, sensory, and cognitive level as well as their interests is just one way of helping people engage with their environment and community.”**

**“Meaningful Work gives life purpose”**

***Jennifer Brush***

***Montessori for Elder and Dementia Care***

# Living An Abundant Life

- [https://youtu.be/Jd\\_Pjh1ifyw](https://youtu.be/Jd_Pjh1ifyw)