

Healthy at Home: 8 Strategies for Caregivers



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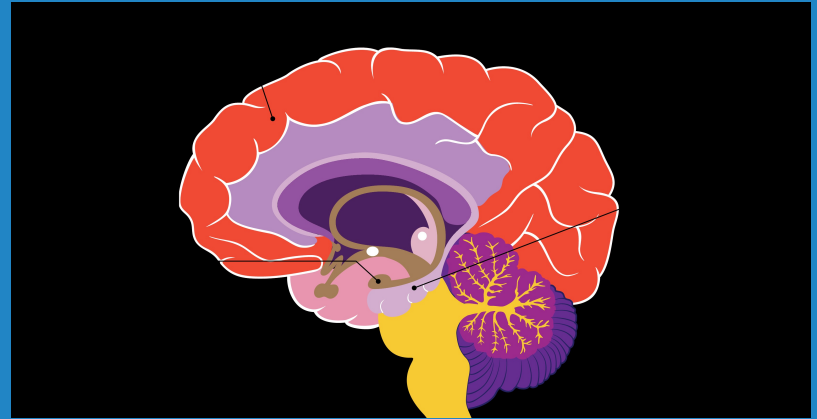
Department of Occupational Therapy & Occupational Science

For BCDH Aging & Care Services | May 6, 2021

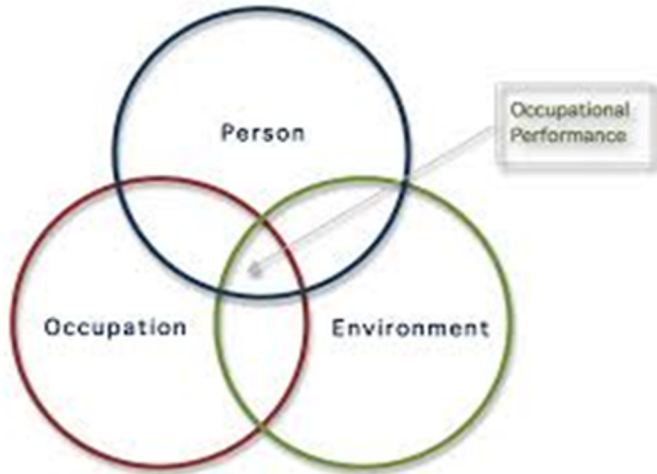
Social Engagement | Social Isolation

- ▷ The changing shape of daily life (COVID-19)
- ▷ Vulnerable groups

- ▷ Impact on cognition
 - Changes to brain
 - Memory
 - Emotional regulation
- ▷ Impact on health



Person-Environment-Activity Fit

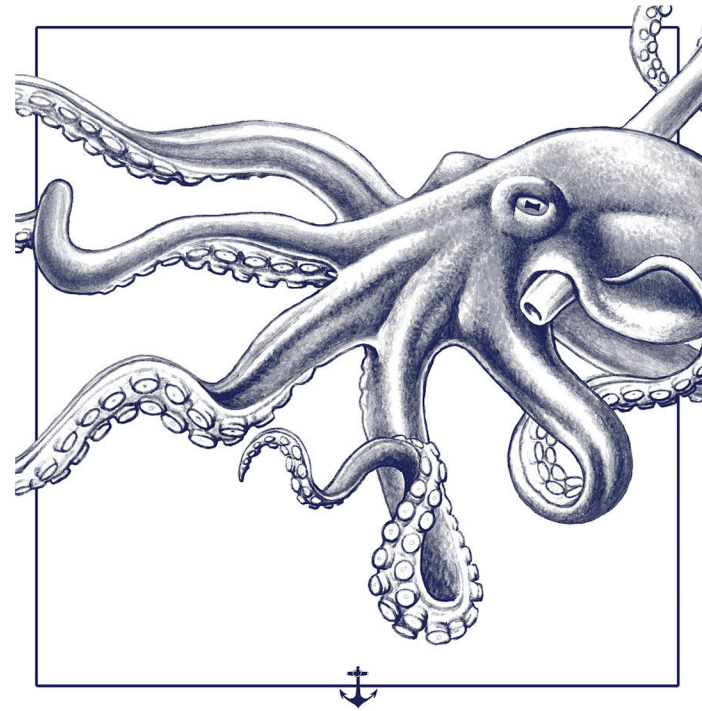


Law et al., 1996

- ▷ Strengths-based approach
- ▷ Disease/stage-appropriate progression
- ▷ Engagement is the goal
- ▷ Stay true to the person

Staying Engaged at Home

- ▶ The goal:
 - Combat social isolation
 - Stimulate the mind & body
- ▶ The challenge:
 - Social distancing & fewer services
 - Passive/'flat' technology, old habits, limited options, decreasing abilities



8 Strategies

Ways to think + Things to try
to increase daily engagement & socialization



Involve multiple senses



Create consistency



Move with others



Embrace natural environments



Extend your geography



Grow errands into events



Find something to offer



Use an alternative



Involve Multiple Senses

- ▷ Alternate title: “Don’t JUST talk!”
- ▷ Social beyond socializing
- ▷ Benefits: mimics real life, layers of enjoyment
- ▷ Examples:
 - Video calls over a meal, having tea, jointly watch a show, video call on a walk/from practice/sports
 - Parallel activities/proximity

Social Interactions are
embedded in DOING



Create Consistency

- ▷ Routine, not repetitiveness
- ▷ Sense of time linked to sequences, interactions, movement through spaces – *create* if it is missing
- ▷ Benefits: decreases disorientation, frustration
- ▷ Examples:
 - Anchor activity (Tuesday is tea with Alice)
 - Oriented around meals/locations
 - Follow a schedule/order of events

Anticipate
&
Reflect



Move with Others

- ▷ Physical activity goes beyond ‘exercise’
- ▷ Avoid “delivery pattern”, embed movement
- ▷ Move WITH beyond the home:
 - Classes/instructors that are familiar (chair yoga, senior stretching)
- ▷ Move WITH inside the home:
 - Chose with active component included (polishing silverware, dusting, sorting) (standing to fold towels, wash windows)

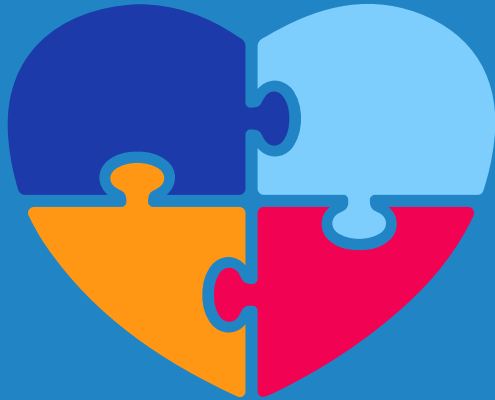
ElderGym
The Sunflower Channel





Embrace Natural Environments

- ▷ Places in our home have shared meanings, social norms
- ▷ Draw on procedural memory and context
- ▷ Spend time in different rooms/zones
- ▷ Benefits: creates sense of time passing, increased sensory, cognitive boost
- ▷ Examples:
 - Morning vs afternoon set-up, reading chair, meal prep in kitchen, flowers outdoors, getting ready in front of a mirror, eating at a table



Brainstorm ...

- *Sensory during social visits*
- *Consistency/predictability*
- *Movement*
- *Natural environments*



Extend Your Geography

- ▷ Go out without going out
- ▷ Creates something to do, to talk about doing, and enriches other social interactions,
- ▷ Examples:
 - Art or history museums, Broadway shows, Aquariums, Zoos, international destinations, Disney World

Pair with a SENSE or
EXPERIENCE
for impact



Grow Errands into Events

- ▷ Leverage what you're already doing
- ▷ Benefits: cognitive stimulation, physical exertion, contributes to “roles”, new scenery
- ▷ Examples:
 - Stops before/after errands (church parking lot, park deck, old neighborhood, friend)
 - Route for reminiscence, route for exploring
 - Extend/repeat timing for familiarity

Consider the timing



Find Something to Offer

- ▷ Being socially engaged is **RECIPROCAL**
- ▷ Benefits: match capacity, passes time, natural fatigue, sense of completion & accomplishment
- ▷ Examples:
 - (Family) Sorting memorabilia, check-in calls, reading a book for kids, planning celebrations
 - (Household) Folding, watering plants, drying dishes, kneading, dusting, stirring/mixing, sanding, polishing, rocking
 - (Community) Letters to military, painting post cards, folding brochures, stamping envelopes

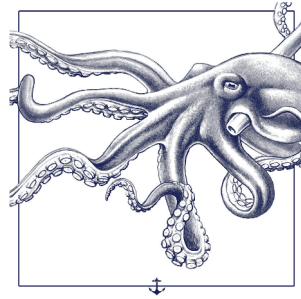


Use an Alternative

- ▷ Proxy socialization involves connection to a memory, story, or feeling
- ▷ Technology is a powerful tool
- ▷ Benefits: can be immersive, relaxing, energizing, predictable, and hands-off
- ▷ Examples:
 - Music channels, read-aloud stories specific (painting, cooking demonstration, repair, war memorabilia), classes, pr

Grand Illusions
Senior Stories
Cooking with Clara
Food Wishes
Postmodern Jukebox





*To thrive and flourish, all people need
something to do, a safe place to be, connection to others
and opportunities to participate in ways
that bring meaning to life.*



Social Engagement

- ✓ Structures the day, expends positive energy, and stimulates both brain and body
- ✓ Enhances safety with sensory input, increases orientation, and demands purposeful action
- ✓ Minimizes resistance or emotional dysregulation

Questions & Discussion



Contact Information



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