101 Activities Dementia Care Partners Can do Together (1)

If you’re at a loss for things to do with your dementia care partner, don’t worry – there are lots of ideas on this list.

In my experience, the most important thing is to be open-minded. Be curious. Be childlike. Remember how exciting discovery and exploration can be. See magic and possibility instead of tragedy and limitations.

Almost ANYTHING can lead to engaging life when you are present in the moment. Open your eyes and your heart to really being in a space that brings you both pleasure. Your dementia care partner can take you back to old places and fond memories as well as to new places you never dreamed existed. Open the door to their world and step through the threshold together.

The activities you choose to engage in will depend on many factors including the capacities of whoever is involved, the mood of the moment, personal preferences, physical considerations, the environment, available resources, etc. This is a list of “starter ideas” to spark your imagination and creativity. I downloaded the original from http://www.alz.org/living_with_alzheimers_101_activities.asp

I may create additional lists with my own ideas and those of others, so please feel free to send your activities and ideas to susan@amazingwomenrock.com

1 Listen to music
2 Toss a ball
3 Color pictures
4 Make homemade lemonade
5 Count trading cards
6 Clip coupons
7 Sort poker chips
8 Read out loud chapters from Harry Potter books or other favorite stories
9 Rake leaves
10 String beads
11 Bake cookies
12 Take photos of the person and you and create a collage
13 Brush or comb one another’s hair
14 Participate in the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s.
15 Plant seeds indoors or outdoors
16 Look at family photographs
17 Wipe off the kitchen table
18 Weed the flowerbed or tend to the garden
19 Fold laundry
20 Have a friend visit with a well-behaved pet
21 Cut pictures out of greeting cards or magazines
22 Play dominoes
23 Ask the person about his or her favorite childhood books or cartoon characters (you can share yours too)
24 Bake homemade bread
25 Sort objects by shape or color
26 Sing old songs
27 Invite the person to tell you more when he or she talks about a memory
28 Put silverware away
29 Make a Valentine card
30 Play favorite songs and sing
31 Ask the person about his or her brothers or sisters
32 Make a cherry pie
33 Play with tops or jacks
34 Make a scrapbook
35 Take a walk around the yard
36 Write a poem together
37 Reminisce about the first day of school
38 String Cheerios® to hang outside for birds
39 Make a fresh fruit salad
40 Sweep the patio
41 Color paper shamrocks green
42 Fold towels
43 Have an afternoon tea party
44 Talk about great inventions
45 Look through the pages of a clothes catalog
46 Look at a map and identify countries
47 Make a family tree poster
48 Color a picture of your country’s flag
49 Eat a picnic lunch outside
50 Water house plants
51 Play horseshoes
52 Dance
53 Watch Sesame Street together
54 Make homemade ice cream
55 Make holiday cards
56 Reminisce about favorite sports activities the person enjoyed while growing up
57 Write a letter to a friend or family member
58 Dress in your favorite sports’ teams’ colors
59 Pop popcorn
60 Name the presidents / prime ministers / kings and queens
61 Give a manicure
62 Make paper butterflies
63 Plant a tree
64 Finish famous sayings
65 Feed the ducks
66 Model with play dough
67 Look at pictures in a comic book
68 Put a puzzle together
69 Sand wood
70 Rub in hand lotion
71 Arrange fresh flowers
72 Remember famous people
73 Recite nursery rhymes
74 Make peanut butter sandwiches
75 Cut up used paper for scratch paper
76 Blow bubbles
77 Take care of a fish tank
78 Bake cupcakes and decorate them
79 Interview the person about his or her life with a video camera or audio recorder
80 Play Hangman
81 Finger paint
82 Cut out pictures from magazines
83 Put coins in a jar
84 Put bird seed out for the birds
85 Decorate a pumpkin
86 Reminisce about a favorite summer
87 Roll yarn into a ball
88 Trace and cut out autumn leaves
89 Cook a favorite family recipe together
90 Gather a yellow sponge, crayons, paper and tape and make a SpongeBob Square Pants
91 Wash silverware
92 Give him or her a hug
93 Ask the person to show you how to knit or sew (or another favorite hobby)
94 Make a picture frame out of popsicle sticks and glitter
95 Play a musical instrument
96 Keep a journal together
97 Ask the person to talk about his or her favorite sports hero
98 Sort playing cards
99 Ask the person about his or her favorite pet
100 Wash windows together
101 Ask the person about his or her first car

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