

CAREFREE CONNECTIONS GROUP

We hope you have been enjoying the Carefree Connections group. We look forward to being together again in the near future. Since the group has been temporarily suspended we wanted to share with you some ideas to continue engagement and manage stress.

- Stay informed but be careful of keeping news stations on frequently looping information over and over which can heighten all our anxiety but particularly those with diagnosis of dementia.
- Enjoy humor! Laughter relaxes the whole body, boosts the immune system, protects the heart and triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Watch a funny movie or TV show – what is your favorite? *Commercial free videos are best to use.*
- Get out for fresh air, take walks, even a short one can relieve boredom and refresh the spirit. YouTube has many exercise videos. A good search word is “seniorcise”.
- Order Lunch from Crystal to be delivered and enjoy eating with another couple.
- Play music and dance in your apartment, sing together or just enjoy listening.
- Play games, simple puzzles, Qwirkle and dominoes can be enjoyed by someone with diagnosis of dementia. If you have an iPhone – explore new apps such as Fingerpaint Magic (free but has an in app purchase)
- Bake something! The aroma of cookies baking can be calming and comforting. Simplify by using ready to bake cookies. Immaculate, Annie's and Sweet Loren's are brands that have simple ingredients.
- Work on a gratitude list together of 100 items while eating the cookies.
- Give each other a nice relaxing hand massage with a nice cream. All this handwashing and hand sanitizing is drying!

A few simple hints for activities with someone with dementia

1. Focus on enjoyment, not achievement – it's ok to bend the rules of a game, just have fun!
2. Adjust activity to abilities – attention span gets shorten. Person may not be able to focus on a full length TV program but may thoroughly enjoy the first 15 minutes.
3. Most importantly if you or your care partner are feeling particularly anxious or stressed please reach out to your Healthy Living Coordinator.

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