

## **Welcome to Art in an Envelope.**

**This project is aimed at individuals living with dementia, their families and carers, Art in an Envelope is a scheme that supplies creative activity packs to households where people are living with dementia.**

**Each pack contains all the materials and resources needed for the carer to confidently deliver and participate in creative activity with their loved one.**

Collage photo frame:

Get creative and engage with your loved one. You do not have to be an artist to enjoy the benefits of collage. Making a collage involves choosing images, shapes, and 'bits and pieces', then arranging them, and gluing them onto a surface. Collages can be wildly complicated, beautifully simple, or anywhere in between. It's the opportunities to make choices, express preferences and feelings, and create that empowers an individual and gives them a voice.

Over time, brain changes caused by Alzheimer's and other dementias diminish language abilities making it progressively harder to engage with others. It becomes more difficult to understand the spoken words of others and to verbally express personal preferences, needs, thoughts and feelings. Losing the ability to effectively communicate can cause frustration and isolation and lead to anger, loneliness and boredom. Art provides a positive and meaningful way to communicate when words are not readily available.

Collages can be made from just about anything, we have supplied a selection in this pack. You can add to them if you wish with photos, images from magazines (pets, travel or transport), dried leaves, seeds or flowers etc.

### **Before you start:**

- Minimize distractions.

- Set out a variety of papers, images, bits and pieces and see what sparks interest. What is of interest today may not be interesting tomorrow.
- Items can be grouped into themes and placed in separate baskets and brought out on different occasions.
- Help get things started with positive comments and simple instructions. It can be difficult for individuals in later stages of dementia to get going so start by sifting through images and pieces, ask for help in selecting items and arranging them onto the surface.
- Wait for a response and create the opportunity for reminiscence. Using photographs encourages thoughts and conversations about familiar faces, good times and times gone by.
- The possibilities are endless.

### **Do:**

- Relax.
- Pay attention to what sparks interest and encourage with compliments.
- Pay attention to when your loved one starts tiring.
- Keep supplies handy and growing so art becomes a regular part of your rhythm and routine.
- Make note of items most enjoyed, changing abilities and moods.
- Display your collage frame complete with photo.

### **Don't:**

- Too many choices can make it difficult to decide.
- Hurry the process or take over. It is all about the process and not the product.

If you need advice, guidance or assistance with your pack or would like to know more about the project, please email [outreach@acearts.co.uk](mailto:outreach@acearts.co.uk)

**Feedback:**

We need and welcome your feedback. It is very important to us that we gain honest feedback. We want to be able to improve and grow this scheme and make it work for many households. Please let us know your thoughts on the pack, the activity, the content, the information etc

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