

## Aim to Engage

# DementiAbility & Behavioural Supports Ontario Individualized Meaningful Engagement through COVID-19 and Beyond



Behavioural Supports Ontario  
Soutien en cas de troubles du comportement en Ontario



**NOTE: Please use the Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizing Tips and Tools throughout this period of the COVID-19 pandemic. These documents are available at [www.dementiability.com](http://www.dementiability.com)**

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## The Purpose of the Document

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The purpose of the document is to support you – a family care partner or a healthcare team member - and those in your care - during this time of physical distancing (previously called social distancing) and physical isolation. We aim to address the needs of those in your care while also keeping you safe - focusing on the well-being of all.

If you who have taken the DementiAbility Workshop, you already know that boredom and loneliness are two of the main reasons for personal expressions/responsive behaviours. COVID-19 safety and precautionary measures will add to the challenges related to boredom, especially when people living with dementia do not understand why they must stay in their rooms. We hope this document will help to meet the needs of those in your care.

**Please note:** DementiAbility has created a wide range of Message Boards related to helping those living with dementia to understand what is going on in their world related to COVID-19, such as the answer to why family are not permitted to visit at this time. Also, a large print book about the COVID-19 Pandemic is also available for you to download and share with those in your care. Visit the DementiAbility website at [www.dementiability.com](http://www.dementiability.com) to download these documents.

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## **IMPORTANT NOTATION**

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**It is essential that you adhere to Public Health and/or your organization's infection control practices. They will provide direction regarding the required precautions related to cleaning of activity items and/or ensuring items remain with one person only.**

**Each health organization will have its own set of infection, prevention and control guidelines, in addition to provincial, national and international guidelines.**

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**National and international websites include:**

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**Government of Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals.html#i>

**WHO**

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/early-investigations>

### **Hand Hygiene**

Hand washing tips, tools and posters are provided at <https://www.dementiability.com/hand-hygiene>

**PLEASE PRINT – LAMINATE – AND TEACH PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA TO FIND THE SIGNS – AND FOLLOW HAND WASHING AND HAND HYGIENE STEPS.**

Try to create new hand washing routines for those in your care – and make it fun! Sing with them as they wash – thereby conditioning positive outcomes (which is an important component of DementiAbility's education).

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### **Ideas for Leisure and Purposeful Engagement**

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## **Help People with Dementia Understand What COVID-19 Is and What to Expect**

Many people want to know what is going on and why you are doing things the way you are doing them. They may ask, "Why can't people visit – and why can't I go out?" DementAbility has created a book to help those in your care to understand what COVID-19 is and what we need to do to prevent the spread of the virus. Download the book from [www.dementiability.com](http://www.dementiability.com) – and please feel free to change the details to suit the needs and abilities of your reader(s).

## **Pinterest**

**Visit the DementAbility Pinterest website and explore the many categories of pins that are posted. Print some of the images and laminate – and ask those in your care questions about something related to the pin. Some of the categories include:**

- **1950s food** – people will have fun thinking about the recipes for Spam or Jello with fruit and vegetables
- **Ads from the past** will surely take people down memory lane. Print – sort – ask questions.
- **Books from the past** will stimulate memories about reading to their children – or their favourite books
- **Reminiscing is one my favourites!** Have fun with the images on that part of the Pinterest site. Did you know – according to these ads from long ago - that smoking is good for you – and smoking is great for expectant mothers? This will create rich opportunities to explore the opinions of those in your care. Ask if they believed these ads – and how they feel about these ads now.
- **Cars and trucks** will offer people memories about their old vehicles – or the vehicles they would have loved to drive – but could never afford.

## **Community & Resident Engagement**

A number of communities have asked children to create a heart or picture of an egg, or anything else that is bright and colourful, and then they tape it to their front window. The goal is to put their art in the window and then, when everyone walks, they count how many items they can find while walking. People with dementia can easily join this initiative by creating art for their windows. For those in LTC, you will also need to tell the community to be sure to walk by your home and count how many items are on your windows.

Ask those in your care to create and post something different every day, or once every few days, and then tape their work to their window. While the purpose of this initiative is to provide the children with something fun to do when they go for a walk, this would give people with dementia something to do. Some communities are already including older adults who live in the community and in LTC in this initiative. Regardless of whether the person lives at home or in LTC, why not ask people of all ages to create something and tape it to their window. Spread the word, and tell those in your care that we are sending love to the community. When people walk or drive by, they will see how much we care.

## **Colouring Books**

DementiAbility has launched a series of **new colouring books**. These books are designed for people with dementia. Some books are very basic, for those with limited abilities (e.g. - Basic Shapes, Cars and Flowers) and other books have pictures for people in almost any stage of dementia (including the Cars and Flowers Colouring bookd). Check out details at [www.dementiability.com](http://www.dementiability.com) There are also many colouring pages on the DementiAbility Pinterest site that can be downloaded at no charge.

### **Virtual Paint Nights**

Paint night activities are now available virtually. Consider hosting a paint night for those who can connect to a computer screen. The link is:

[https://www.yaymaker.com/events/?utm\\_campaign=031920-ALL-Virtual-Classes&utm\\_medium=campaign-email&utm\\_source=Klaviyo&\\_ke=eyJrbF9lbWFpbCI6ICJnYWlsLmVsbGvdEBkZW1lbnRpYWjpBG10eS5jb20iLCAia2xfY29tcGFueV9pZC16ICJLVU5FMmgfQ%3D%3D](https://www.yaymaker.com/events/?utm_campaign=031920-ALL-Virtual-Classes&utm_medium=campaign-email&utm_source=Klaviyo&_ke=eyJrbF9lbWFpbCI6ICJnYWlsLmVsbGvdEBkZW1lbnRpYWjpBG10eS5jb20iLCAia2xfY29tcGFueV9pZC16ICJLVU5FMmgfQ%3D%3D)

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## **IMPORTANT NOTATION RE COVID 19:**

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**Remember to adhere to Public Health and/or your organization's recommendations regarding physical distancing and infection control practices (including personal protective equipment and use of shared equipment).**

**PROCEED WITH CAUTION – BE SAFE – BE CAREFUL – BUT CARRY ON!  
ENGAGE WITH CAUTION!**

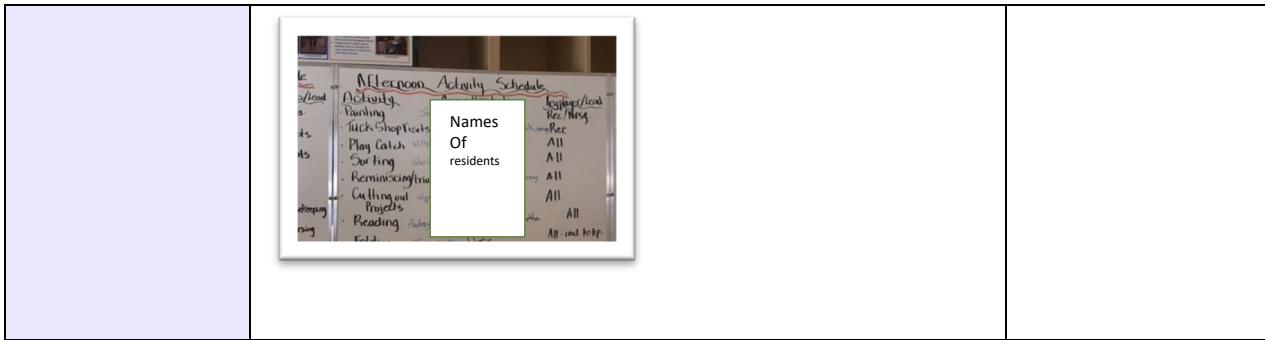
Theme/Focus	Activities	Adaptations
<b>Leisure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nursery care (doll therapy – one doll per person)</li><li>• Watch television (Check out “older Tv” – go to <a href="http://www.dementiability.com">www.dementiability.com</a> and click on the link “Older TV” in the bubble on the home page.</li><li>• Listen to music</li><li>• Play cards i.e. Highest card wins (Often called the game of War) – could be played via skype or facetime</li><li>• Sort cards by colour, sort by suit and line up the cards in order to be sure all the cards are there.</li><li>• Read books (check out the free downloads on our website – or order from our over 30 titles)</li><li>• Vintage rummage box (place things in a box and reminisce and explore)</li><li>• Shuffleboard</li><li>• Conversation prompts (Let’s Chat and Let’s Chat</li></ul>	

	<p>Some More at <a href="http://www.dementiability.com">www.dementiability.com</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-pad apps</li> <li>• Make a collage with old magazines</li> <li>• Sort trading cards (hockey, baseball, etc.)</li> <li>• Sort pencil crayons, markers or crayons and put them back in the box</li> <li>• Paint a canvas</li> <li>• Sand and paint an item such as a bird house or small table</li> <li>• Clean paint brushes</li> <li>• Make a bird feeder out of toilet tissue rolls, peanut butter and bird seed and hang outside</li> <li>• Have someone hold a hoola hoop and throw balls into it</li> <li>• Bead a necklace</li> <li>• Cut up pool noodles into thin slices and thread using coloured wool or rope.</li> <li>• Bowling</li> <li>• Match words to pictures</li> <li>• Picture bingo</li> <li>• Make a drum with a tin can – paint the can – cut a circle of stiff fabric for the top, punch holes for string and connect top fabric to bottom fabric by running string through the holes</li> <li>• Create a rock vase</li> <li>• Create a rummage purse</li> <li>• Paint Easter Eggs</li> <li>• Make birthday cards or get well cards</li> <li>• Use Pinterest posts and reminisce</li> <li>• Use Pinterest posts to make puzzles (print 4 copies, laminate and cut the pages up into three sets – easy, medium and hard – keeping original as the template to follow)</li> <li>• Find a fun fact of the day from the internet or newspaper</li> <li>• Daily events discussion. What happened on this day in 1950? Etc.</li> <li>• Joke of the day</li> <li>• Using a large photo of family members, laminate, make multiple copies and make a puzzle (easy, medium and more difficult)</li> <li>• Have a picnic – on “sandwich day” create the theme for lunch time: “We’re having a picnic”. Play the song “The Teddy Bears Picnic”. If you have a TV, put up the video or other fun videos</li> <li>• Make gift bags with small bags (even paper lunch bags would do). Colour or add cut out pictures from old cards or magazines</li> <li>• Set up a train set – and watch and reminisce</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide laminated prayer sheets for those who would</li> </ul>	

<b>Café/ Dining</b>	<p>benefit (use printed prayers - see <a href="http://www.dementiability.com">www.dementiability.com</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulate kitchen memories (use the Pinterest pins to share and reminisce)</li> </ul>	
<b>Practical Life &amp; Skills Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Folding laundry (their own)</li> <li>• Make their bed</li> <li>• Stuff a pillow</li> <li>• Pull stuffing from a pillow (later stuff the pillow)</li> <li>• Cleaning glasses</li> <li>• Clean windows (in their own room)</li> <li>• Clean chairs (in their own room)</li> <li>• Clean the arms of their wheelchair</li> <li>• Sweep</li> <li>• Matching clothespins to baskets</li> <li>• Sorting buttons by colour and/or size</li> <li>• Shredding paper</li> <li>• Hanging personal laundry</li> <li>• Putting pencil crayons back in the box</li> <li>• Counting money and sorting one's own coins</li> <li>• Modified Manicure – provide a bowl of warm soapy water for individuals and “soak” – get those fingernails and hands clean. Provide hand lotion and then ask the person to enjoy a few minutes sitting with a small towel wrapped around their hands.</li> <li>• Match the tools</li> <li>• Pick lint off of a blanket or sweater (put items of their clothing or their blanket into a dryer with small bits of lint and/or Kleenex so there are plenty of things to pick off)</li> <li>• Unwind a knit scarf or sweater</li> <li>• Roll a ball of yarn</li> <li>• Roll the rope back onto a spool</li> <li>• Sort the tools</li> <li>• Sort beans</li> <li>• Use a computer or iPad to search the internet or write a letter to a friend or family member</li> <li>• Put lids back on containers</li> <li>• Fold their own apron for meal times</li> <li>• Wash and Sort cutlery (wash before sharing with others)</li> <li>• Sort poker chips</li> <li>• Polish silverware</li> </ul>	
<b>Horti- culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening – plant some seeds</li> <li>• Water plants</li> <li>• Make centerpieces with silk flowers</li> <li>• Match flowers to a printed template of the flowers</li> <li>• Sort seeds</li> <li>• Grow plants and vegetables</li> <li>• Create planting boxes</li> <li>• Create a mini garden</li> </ul>	

<h2>Social</h2>	<p><b>NOTE: Adhere to Public Health and/or your organization's recommendations related to physical distancing before engaging in activities designed for group participation. Explore new ways to engage and connect from a distance.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading groups</li> <li>• Discussion groups</li> <li>• Chat Cards</li> <li>• Trivia Games (with two choices for answers)</li> <li>• Would you rather?</li> <li>• Bible study</li> <li>• Sing-a-long</li> <li>• Doll therapy</li> <li>• Pet therapy</li> <li>• Feed pets</li> <li>• Pet therapy</li> <li>• Doll therapy</li> <li>• What's in the bag?</li> <li>• Call a relative or friend</li> <li>• Skype a relative or friend</li> </ul>	
<h2>Exercise</h2>	<p><b>Note: Adhere to Public Health and/or your organization's recommendations regarding physical distancing and infection control practices (including personal protective equipment and use of shared equipment).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk – count your steps</li> <li>• Exercise bike – placed near a window</li> <li>• Leg or arm exercise</li> <li>• Winding rope</li> <li>• Unknotting tensor bandages</li> <li>• Squeeze the ball</li> <li>• Dance group</li> <li>• Gentle yoga</li> <li>• Filling tins with golf balls</li> <li>• Balloon ping pong</li> <li>• Exercise machines</li> <li>• Rolling out dough</li> <li>• Scooping balls or dough</li> </ul>	
<h2>Memory Training</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math sheets</li> <li>• Word searches</li> <li>• Word match</li> <li>• Spelling quests</li> <li>• Trivia cards</li> <li>• Playing cards (use template below to sort the cards by suit. Put the ace on a suit (e.g. – the diamond) and ask the person to put the 2 next, then the 3 and see if all the cards are there – or are any missing?)</li> <li>• Work on computer – watch YouTube videos, watch an</li> </ul>	

	<p>educational session, watch “Happy Babies” or “Funny animals”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search for Ted Talks and learn something new</li> <li>• Teach others about a skill (residents teach residents)</li> <li>• Family Feud</li> <li>• Puzzles</li> <li>• Match pictures</li> </ul>	
<b>Generic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bible sort</li> <li>• Word puzzles</li> <li>• Create a memory jar</li> <li>• Journal your day</li> <li>• Draw</li> <li>• Colour – paint – draw – write a story</li> </ul>	
<b>Nursery</b>	<p><b>Note: Adhere to Public Health and/or your organization’s recommendations regarding physical distancing and infection control practices (including personal protective equipment and use of shared equipment).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fold the baby clothes</li> <li>• Bathe the baby</li> <li>• Sing the baby a song</li> <li>• Change the outfit</li> <li>• Feed the baby</li> <li>• Sort the toys</li> <li>• Watch the mobile</li> <li>• Sort soothers by colour</li> <li>• Wash bottles</li> <li>• Sort diaper size</li> <li>• Fold baby blankets</li> <li>• Sing nursery rhymes</li> <li>• Play an instrument for nursery</li> </ul>	
<b>Other</b>	<p>Post ideas beside the names of each resident and encourage the staff responsible for those residents on this shift to engage each person in something to do. If you do not create such a board that aims to identify staff + resident - “All” are responsible (as seen in the right column). A chart is provided below to help identify what each person would enjoy doing.</p>	

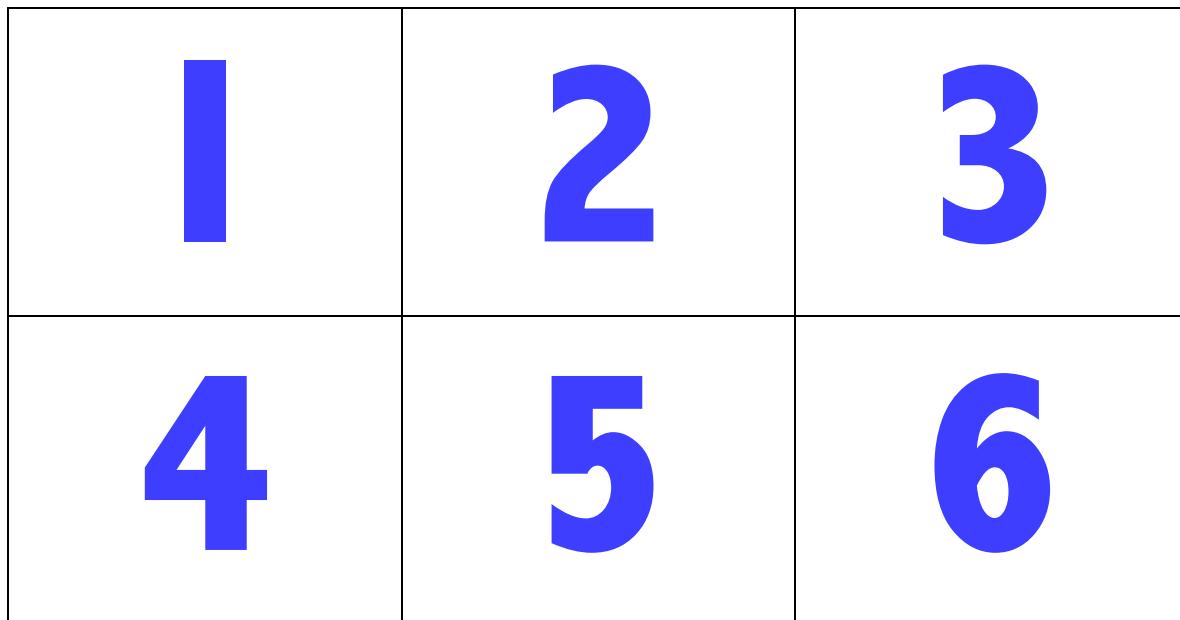


Template for sorting cards provided below:

# **Roll the Dice – Check off the Number You Roll**

**Use a dry erase marker and cross out the number when you roll  
the number on the dice.**

**Use one dice.**



**How many times did you roll the dice?**

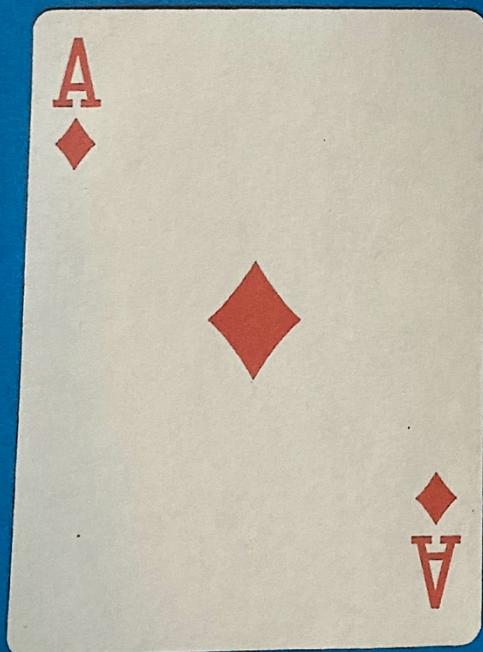
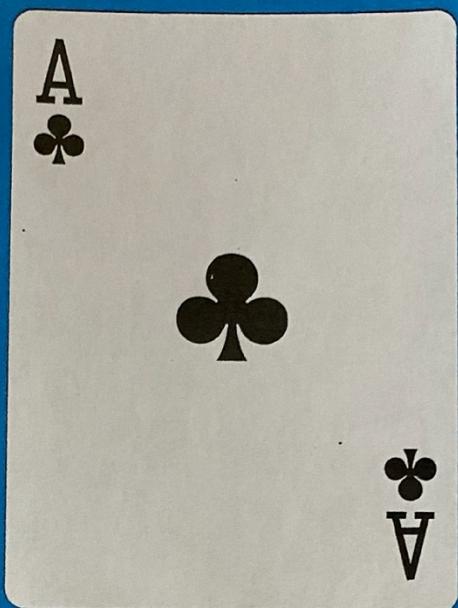
<b>First game</b>	<b>Second game</b>	<b>Third game</b>

## **Roll the Two Di – Check off the Total or Each Number**

**Use a dry erase marker and cross out the number when you roll  
the numbers on the di.**

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>





## **Creating Meaningful, Enjoyable engagement – in a **SAFE** “Prepared” Environment**

Activities and items needed to complete tasks should be available and accessible in public and private spaces. Adhere to Public Health and/or your organization’s infection control practices. Provide something to do according to needs, interests, skills and abilities – especially when people are isolated in their rooms. It is important to address the boredom that heightens during this time. Address infection control issues by teaching everyone in your care to wash and disinfect hands regularly. Encourage hand-washing by teaching those in your care to wash hands – and to do this often. Use the DementiAbility Hand and Hygiene Tips and Tools (including posters).

It is critically important for everyone to work as a team. Create a list of activities that is well suited to each resident. The chart below could serve as a master list. Print a list of “Things I enjoy doing” and post in each room (adhering to organizational documentation policies). Ask all staff to become familiar with the list and provide these activities throughout each day. Create routines when possible. For example, in the morning this person enjoys reading a newspaper and sorting cards in the afternoon.



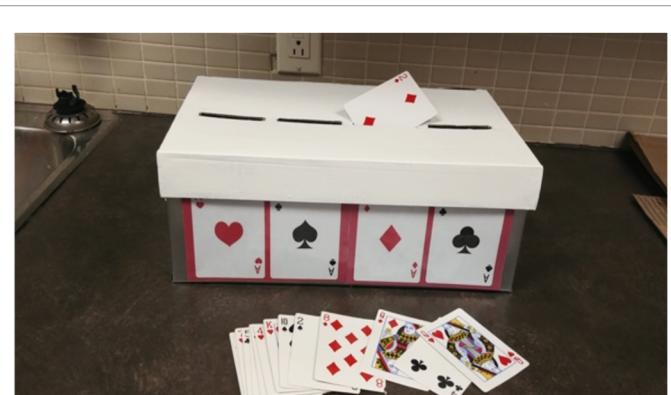
**NOTE: Some of these jobs may need to be limited to the individual's own environment. If someone is living at home, sanitizing tables and chairs is a good idea. If they are in LTC they should be limited to their own area.**

Name of Resident:

Jobs I Would Enjoy		Adaptations
Sort keys		
Sort paint brushes		
Put tools away		
Measure things – tables, plates, chair width, books, boxes		
Sort fishing tackle		
Wrap a hockey stick with tape		
Sort a tool box		
Wash clothing items – socks, face cloth, kitchen cloth		
Hang laundry		
Wash a wall		
Wash railing		
Sanitize railings		
Sanitize tables		
Sanitize chairs		
Cut out shapes for craft projects		
Search the internet for a joke of the day and post		
Update the daily "What's on today" board"		
Put a flashlight back together (or put batteries in flashlight)		
Open up the blinds and curtains in the morning		
Roll newspapers to make fire log (actual log makers are also available for purchase)		

Look up the forecast for the day and write it on a board near the dining room		
Sweep the sidewalk		
Read a story to a grandchild – or ask family to call and read to resident – using skype, phone, facetime		
Clean and sort DVDs or CDs (ideal for people living at home – or if they can be isolated in a resident room until the outbreak period has passed)		
Read a prayer at meals - even over the phone to a loved one		
Using bowls, boxes or bins of same colour, sort popsicle sticks, clothes pins or anything else that provides motor movement and purpose		
Fold their own hand towels		

Put the cards in the right section of the box  
 (This idea is with thanks from Villa Columbo)



# DementiAbility Methods

## Examples of Items to Purchase

- ① 1 – 3 cutlery trays with cutlery for each tray. (You might find trays with matching colour cutlery included in the set.)
- ① Two - four different colours (with 5-10 in each package) of clothespins. If available, select packages with different sizes.
- ① Plastic bins or bowls for clothespins to match the colour of the clothespins.
- ① Spools of rope or heavy twine in different colours. Rope that is on a spool is recommended (as the goal is to put the rope back on the spool).
- ① Permanent black markers.
- ① Dry erase markers with eraser on end. The number required depends on how many activities you plan to use that require a dry erase marker. It is recommended you begin with about 20.
- ① Socks. At least 5 pairs of white socks and 5 pair of a different, plain socks.
- ① At least 10 pair of different colours/patterned socks.
- ① At least 5 packs of the largest size Ziploc bags.
- ① For the “warm face cloth at meals” program you will need bright coloured face cloths – 2 per resident at each meal (to provide time to launder).
- ① Large container for dish clothes, preferably with a lid, and a pair of bright coloured tongs.
- ① At least 12 containers with lids (cup with lids, small containers with lids). Bright colours are recommended. Some stores carry small jello containers (with lids on top and bottom).
- ① Two or three different colours of poker chips with matching colour bowls or containers to put them in when being sorted. OR a poker game box.
- ① A number of pairs of shoes to shine and a polishing kit. (Shoes are often purchased at a used clothing store.)
- ① 10 sets of coloured pencils in a box – for sorting or for decorations for tables (then you would need a glass or something else to put them in to be placed on the table).
- ① Colouring pages with a range of large easy to more difficult pages to colour.  
DementiAbility pins colouring pages.
- ① A wooden puzzle that contain pieces in a frame – a marker to put numbers on the back of each piece and a photocopy of the puzzle to use a template. Play game by calling the numbers (1 - ???).
- ① Sanding block that is easy to hold and wooden boxes to sand.
- ① A variety of paints and paint brushes to paint the wooden boxes.
- ① Coloured paper clips in a jar or coloured paper clips and a jar for each size and type of paper clip for sorting.

- ① 2 laundry baskets made of mesh material and a number of larger soft balls.
- ① 4 bottles of brightly coloured paints and pack of paintbrushes and a number of large canvases to be painted for walls.
- ① 2 muffin cup tins, two packs of 6 golf balls (or other similar size of balls) and a set of tongs. Alternatively you could use small pompoms and smaller ice trays.
- ① Laminating sheets

Throughout the COVID 19 pandemic online shopping will likely be the only way to access supplies. Check online sites such as Amazon, Walmart, Keeping Busy, DementiAbility, etc. for products.

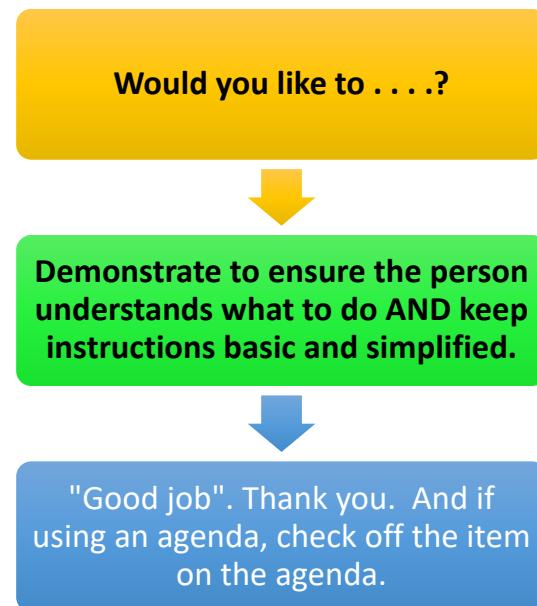
## Examples of Signs to Print and Laminate

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- ① Please sort the clothespins by colour and put on matching colour bowl.
- ① Please wind the rope/twine on the spool.
- ① Please match the socks.
- ① Please fold the your washcloth.
- ① Please put the lids on the matching containers.
- ① How many balls can you fit in the muffin tray?
- ① Please sort the poker chips by colour.
- ① Please shine the shoes.
- ① Please put the pencils back in the box.
- ① Please sort the utensils.
- ① Please put the puzzle together.
- ① Please sand the box.
- ① OR replace the word “Please” with . . . “**Would you like to . . .**”

**NOTE: Some of these are available on the DementiAbility Website at [www.dementiability.com](http://www.dementiability.com) (Under Free Downloads).**

**Always remember that DementiAbility recommends a three-step formula for interactions:**



**DementiAbility and Behavioural Supports Ontario extends a deep and sincere thank you to all of you who are working through this time of added concern for self and others.**

**We commend you for the work you are doing, the care you are providing and contributions you are making during these difficult and uncertain times.**

**THANK YOU! Stay safe. Stay healthy!**