

Physical Activity/Games

- Toss or kick a ball, ride a stationary bike, play horseshoes (inside & outside)
- Take a walk outside or in a mall
- Do exercises
- Arrange dominoes
- Put a simple puzzle together
- Play cards
- Play bingo
- String beads together



Gardening

- Force bulbs for winter blooming
- Plant a tree and flowers
- Put a bird feeder out for birds and fill the feeder daily with water and food
- Rake and bag leaves
- Help wash and polish the family car
- Sweep snow off the walk



Sorting

- Sort poker chips, buttons, large pop beads, playing cards and crayons by color and size
- Put coins into a jar or wrap in a tube
- Build and sort Lincoln Logs or blocks
- Sort paper and cans for recycling
- Sort nuts, bolts and PVC plastic pipe and fittings

Family Outings

The family must remember when planning an outing that things might not go smoothly. Allow for these problems and be flexible. Choose a time when attendance at the designated place is low and, if the person appears tired or restless, leave.

- Go fishing
- Have a picnic in a park
- Get an ice cream cone
- Take a ride in a car
- Feed the ducks in a city park
- Go out to dinner
- Tour a museum
- Take a trip to a bird sanctuary
- Visit the zoo
- Take a walk in a forest with a handicapped accessible path
- Walk around the park
- Visit a public flower garden
- Attend cat, dog, and horse shows
- Visit an art museum
- Take a hayrack ride
- Visit a pet store
- Go to the circus
- Attend ice, sports, and auto shows

Miscellaneous

- Look up names in the phone book
- Keep cans of food in a special sack and allow the person to empty and fill a sack
- Put clothes on hangers (designate special clothing that the person can use and keep these items separate)
- Have a suitcase available for packing and unpacking
- Develop a "feel box" and include items of different texture and smoothness
- Develop a "memory box" and include items of importance to the person
- Staple or punch material for mailing (great service for a church/synagogue)



Activities For The Individual With Alzheimer's

The activities listed here are not all going to work with all individuals with Alzheimer's disease (AD). These are simply suggestions that might lead to different workable ideas.

Main Office

1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 205
Omaha, NE 68105
402-502-4300 / 1-800-272-3900
Fax: 402-502-7001

Branch Office

300 West Broadway, Suite 233
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
712-322-8840 / 1-800-272-3900
Fax: 712-322-0688

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Midlands Chapter



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Activities for Individuals

With Alzheimer's Disease

For an individual with Alzheimer's disease (AD), the day is often filled with frustration and failure. These feelings are brought on by neurological changes in the person's brain causing physical and psychological limitations and impairments.

Using activity properly can provide the AD individual with feelings of increased satisfaction and self-esteem. Successful activity ideas also allow the caregiver freedom by reducing the stress of continuous caregiving.

In order for an activity to be successful, it must incorporate skills and abilities that the individual has left and play down the skills that can no longer be performed.

When selecting an activity, it is important to remember what activities the individual enjoyed when he/she was well and modify them to meet the person's current needs. Not all of the listed ideas will work for everyone, but they are a starting point. By using these suggestions, other successful ideas may develop.

Depending on the individual's advancement in the disease, many of these ideas will need careful supervision and loving guidance. Encouragement, reassurance, hugs and praise are necessary in all activities.

Reminiscence

- Identify state capitols
- Finish famous sayings, nursery rhymes, and Bible quotes
- Remember famous people and great inventions
- Talk about events that happened to the person in his/her past

Crafts

- Color adult appropriate pictures
- Cut pictures out of greeting cards and use these to make sewing cards
- Cut out pictures from magazines and make a collage
- Make a family tree poster
- Decorate paper place mats
- Make a calendar for the current year using old photographs or ask the person to supply artwork
- String Cheerios to hang outside for the birds
- Finger paint with pudding
- Mold with PlayDoh
- Build with Popsicle sticks
- Sand wood and make simple wooden crafts
- Roll yarn into a ball
- Make a rag ball from scraps of material

Personal Grooming

- Dress in a favorite team's colors on "football Sunday"
- Give a manicure/pedicure
- Rub in hand lotion with a pleasant scent
- Give a shoulder massage
- Style the person's hair



Cooking

- Make no-bake cookies
- Pop popcorn
- Cook hot dogs outside
- Make cream cheese mints

Household Tasks

- Use a carpet sweeper/vacuum cleaner or dust
- Sweep the patio, kitchen, or basement floor
- Wipe off the kitchen table, patio furniture and appliances
- Cut up paper for scratch pads
- Cut out coupons from newspapers and magazines
- Polish family shoes
- Put shoestrings in shoes
- Dry dishes and silverware (non-breakables)
- Roll silverware in napkins
- Polish silverware
- Water and care for house plants
- Fold clothes, towels, and socks



Leisure Time

- Read a newspaper, short story, or poetry out loud to the person
- Ask a friend, neighbor, fellow church member, or someone with a young child or pet to make a short visit
- Have an afternoon tea
- Listen and dance to music
- Watch old musicals on video tape in short segments
- Sing older songs and hymns
- Look at old family photographs
- Look at pictures in magazines
- Wrap gift packages