



Engagement Guide

What is Connectivities?

Connectivities is a monthly box of 8 grab-and-go activities. Each activity is designed by dementia experts and tested with people living with dementia. Each activity has therapeutic goals and modifications for different strengths. These therapeutic activities can also create fun, laughter, and authentic connections.

Connectivities isn't just crafts, but includes things like **science experiments, word games, art projects, sensory activities, and motor activities**. They are engaging for both men and women!

Think about a time when you had an amazing connection with someone. Write down how that made you feel.

Life is better when we connect.



What's included?

- ▶ 8 different activities with all necessary materials (excluding scissors and water)
- ▶ instructional videos
- ▶ printed step-by-step directions
- ▶ virtual engagement support
- ▶ differentiation when activities are too hard or too easy
- ▶ specific therapy targets for all activities

How do I use Connectivities?

- ▶ Open the box.
- ▶ Read the Getting Started guide.
- ▶ Decide which activity you want to start with.
- ▶ Scan the QR code to access the videos.
- ▶ Watch the video and/or read the printed instructions for the activity.
- ▶ Check out the differentiation and therapy goals for helpful tips.
- ▶ Now you are ready to connect!

Top 5 Reasons to Use Connectivities

1 Trying new things builds neuroplasticity which boosts the brain's ability to change, adapt, and make new connections.

Positive feelings linger long after the memory of the activity is gone.

2

3 It's all about the process, not the product. Even if your activity doesn't go as planned, it's still a success if you activated your brains, solved some problems, or just had fun.

Connectivities can help you start a conversation that meets your loved one where they are. Learn how to connect with them now, in ways you may not have connected before.

4

5 We've done all the planning for you. Everything is ready for you to grab and go!

Dementia drastically changes the way a person takes in information.

Vision

Hearing

Touch

Taste

Smell

What does this mean for me as a caregiver?

Tips for Successful Engagement

- ♥ Make sure their needs are met before starting the activity (bathroom, hunger, pain, cold).
- ♥ Make sure distractions are removed (to the best of your ability of course).
- ♥ Gather all your supplies ahead of time (with Connectivities, we do that part for you).
- ♥ Who do you want to connect with? One person or a group? Make sure you are seated in the best location to facilitate everybody or have others to help.
- ♥ Remember that the goal is to engage and have fun – don't worry if the end product doesn't turn out how you wanted it to.

What if you are having trouble getting someone to connect?

- Go through the steps for successful engagement (previous page) and see if there is something keeping them from getting started.
- Do a self-check – do you have an unmet need?
- If the person isn't wanting to actively participate, see if they just want to watch – often that turns into them joining in later on. You can always invite them to join or provide feedback along the way.
- Is the activity too hard or too easy? Do you need to modify the activity or make it appropriate for that person?
- Don't get discouraged if it doesn't work that day. We all have bad days. Try again another time or day.

Helpful phrases to get someone to connect

Can I show you something?

Will you help me with this?

I'm working on a project for...

Can you hold this for me?

Can you read the directions to me?

What's in it for me?

The benefits of engagement apply to everyone involved, not only the person living with dementia. It can be very lonely and isolating to care for someone, especially when the person is living with brain change. It's important to have a community of support to help carry the load. Finding ways to make meaningful connections can bring satisfaction and enjoyment to this hard time and build some new memories with your loved one.