QUARANTINE ACTIVITY IDEAS - Spring 2020 by ElderSong

This has been produced by ElderSong Publications,inc, and shared by NAPA with their permission.

The COVID-19 coronavirus, which is sweeping across our nation, has certainly caused many of our usual activities and routines to cease. Our government is asking us to keep their distance and stay home in order to contain this devastating virus. For many of you, this means that your setting is on lock down. Family residents may not be allowed to visit their loved ones. Your usual group activities may have had to halt for a time. Your residents may be feeling anxious, worried, and unsure. In this time of uncertainty, we want to support you, the activity people. That’s why we created this special edition activity guide to help support you and your group as our nation and world faces this pandemic.

Below you’ll find a list of one-on-one activities, as well as a few other non-traditional group activities to help you raise morale. (You can also find this list on our website at this link.) Please adapt as needed. Let the other departments in your facility know your activity plans, and then follow your company’s policies and procedures during this emergency.

DAILY BOOST – There are so many good stories happening as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Look for a positive story to share with residents as you visit room to room. Share a video you find on social media, an inspiring quote, or a heart-warming story. Speaking of boosts, be sure to share (with permission) positive stories that are happening in your community. With many people turning to social media, it’s a great time to flood newsfeeds with positive stories and reassure family residents that their loved ones are doing well.

GO LIVE – Many institutes, celebrities, and programs are taking their talents live on social media in order to boost morale all over the world. Join the going-live movement and interview residents of your community. The senior population has lived through WWII and has a lot of wisdom to offer the younger population. With permission, invite residents to go live with you. Advertise ahead of time so that your audience knows when to tune in. Then, select residents to discuss various topics, such as how they survived WWII, parenting suggestions for multiple children, tried-and-true recipes that use common ingredients, or other advice to help Americans through this crisis.

REMINISCING – Now is a great time to reminisce with residents about WWII or the Korean War. Questions to prompt discussion include: Where were you during most of the war? Did you or any family residents serve? Where were they stationed? What was everyday life like? How did you stay updated regarding war efforts? What do you remember eating? What was rationing like and how did your family handle rationing? How did you guide your young children through the wartime? How did you hear that the war was over? Do you remember where you were, or what you were doing or wearing? How long did it take for life to get back to normal after the war?

IN-ROOM BINGO – Keep the fun going by offering in-room Bingo, especially if your residents can’t gather for usual activities. Copy your regular Bingo cards so that residents can use a pen to mark their individual cards, reducing the risk of spreading germs. Ask residents to sit near their doors while you walk down the hallway, calling out the numbers. Play with just one wing at a time, and schedule other Bingo games for other hallways, so that everyone has a chance to play. If your facility has an in-house TV channel, put the numbers on the screen and ask residents to tune in to the appropriate channel.

HALLWAY SING-ALONGS – Boost morale with a hallway sing-along. Gather residents to their doors and play their favourite sing-along music. Encourage residents to sing-along or just enjoy listening to the voices of their neighbours.

ZIPLOCK CRAFTS – Sort through your craft supplies and create individual crafts that residents can do in their rooms, or that you can do one-on-one with them. Include all the supplies needed, such as glue sticks, stickers, markers, etc. Be mindful of your residents and only give the kits to those who can follow instructions. Work one-on-one with those who need assistance. If you don’t have a lot of supplies right now, copy adult colouring pages and encourage residents to colour in their room.

CREATE A STAINED-GLASS PANEL – Work one-on-one with residents to create individual stained-glass panels, then display them as a collective piece of artwork on your community’s front windows to boost morale. You’ll need contact paper, coloured tissue paper in all sorts of colours, and black construction paper. Start by cutting a rectangular frame out of the construction paper, about 1/2 inch thick, as large as you want. Cut two pieces of contact paper the same size as your frame but leave them whole (do not remove the centre). With your resident, peel off one of the backings to the contact paper, laying it sticky side up on a table. Place the black frame on top of the sticky side. Then, tear small sections of the tissue paper and ask the resident to arrange it how they desire. Fill the entire panel. Peel the backing off the second piece of contact paper and carefully place it on top, sealing the panel together. Make two panels with each resident. Secure one panel in the window of the resident so they can enjoy it. Use the second panel to create your community stained glass window.

TAKE A VIRTUAL RIDE – Theme parks may be closed, but that doesn’t mean that you can’t enjoy a virtual ride. Head over to Romper.com for links to rides. Then, share one-on-one and take the time to reminisce about thrill rides, amusement parks, fairs, and more. Ask about their first roller coaster or theme park: What was the name of the ride or park? Where was it? Do you prefer rides that spin or rides that offer bigger thrills? How much did a ticket to the park cost? Is it still open?

TRAVEL TO A MUSEUM – In addition to virtual rides, many museums across the world are offering virtual tours. During one-on-ones, ask residents about their favourite museum and visit, virtually, with them. Use a laptop or tablet to share images. Reminisce about their travels to the museum: Who did you go with? What did you like most about it? What memories does this virtual tour evoke?

TUNE IN LIVE – As mentioned above, many celebrities, artists, institutes and more are sharing free, live programs that you can share one-on-one with residents. Search on social media for art classes, book clubs, concerts and more. Then, schedule one-on-one visits according to individual resident preferences. For example, if you have someone who loves art, bring a drawing pad and pencil with you and follow along to a live drawing class. Someone who prefers reading might appreciate being a part of a virtual book club. It might take a little effort on your part to coordinate schedules, but it will be worth the great boost to morale.

IN-HOUSE FITNESS – Keep residents active by offering in-house fitness classes. If you have an in-house TV channel, record a fitness video that can be shared over the TV. If you don’t, invite residents to join in from their doorways, in smaller groups. Sit in the centre so they can hear and see you and lead them in a condensed version of your usual fitness classes. Then, move down the hallway and repeat with the next group. Be mindful of blocking the hallway; stand if necessary, so that you can quickly move out of the way if there is an emergency.

ADVERTISE WAYS OTHERS CAN HELP – Turn to social media to share ways the community can support and encourage your group. If your facility permits, accept handmade cards or pictures from children. Distribute to residents or display them throughout the hallways. If residents have access to a balcony, perhaps a musical family could give a private concert while keeping a safe distance. If your facility is near a neighbourhood, encourage families to walk by and wave to your residents. A little note or gesture could go a long way to boost morale during this pandemic.

UTILISE VIDEO CALLS – If you aren’t already doing this, be sure to offer video calls so that residents can stay connected with their families. Provide residents’ families with information on how to request a video chat with their loved one. If residents have a smart phone, teach them how to make a video call during your one-on-one visits.

SET UP A WINDOW VISIT BOOTH – For families who live locally, set up a window visit booth so that residents can visit in person. Designate a certain window on the first floor where families can drop by to visit. Ask residents to use their cell phones, or use a regular phone, being sure to follow proper disinfection protocol between users.

MINDFUL MEDITATIONS – Help residents combat anxiety and fear by leading them through mindful meditations during your one-on-one visits. Start by instructing the resident to find a comfortable position in a chair or bed and close his or her eyes. Then read a guided meditation from your favourite resource. Use a Bluetooth speaker to play soft, calming music in the background. Properly disinfect the speaker after each room visit. (Some people with hearing loss may hear the meditation better without the background music.)

BRING THE OUTSIDE IN – If residents cannot get outside due to strict quarantine guidelines, bring the outside in for them to enjoy. Here are a few ideas you can do during one-on-one visits. Plant a windowsill herb garden. Grow grass in a plastic basket for Easter. Give each member a small houseplant to take care of during the quarantine. Place bird feeders near windows to attract wildlife. Watch nature DVDs with residents or take a virtual hike through a national park. As spring arrives, take pictures and share with residents.

GRATITUDE JOURNALS – Give residents a small journal and encourage them to take a moment each day to write one thing they are grateful for. Encourage them to think of different, unique experiences or moments from that particular day, instead of writing the same thing each day.

AFTER-THE-QUARANTINE BUCKET LIST – Start a running list of what residents are most looking forward to once life returns to normal. Display the list in your activity room or common space and update it whenever someone has a new idea. Once the pandemic subsides, be sure to cross off items as residents engage in the activity. Use the list to guide your future activity planning.

SUPPORTING THOSE WITH MEMORY LOSS – Individuals with memory loss may be most susceptible to feeling anxious and afraid during this global pandemic. They might not understand why their loved ones aren’t visiting or may not comprehend the scope and severity of the COVID-19 coronavirus. The best way to support those with memory loss is to try to maintain some sense of routine and normalcy with them. Lead smaller groups if permitted. Take them for short walks in a safe area. Keep them busy by asking them to fold towels, sort items, or organize cabinets. Limit their access to the daily news. Read short stories with them and ease their anxiety through humour. Sit down and enjoy a cup of tea or decaf coffee with them. Encourage them to rest in the afternoon. Be mindful of your own feelings and conversations with other employees. Residents with memory loss may not understand the global pandemic, but they will pick up on anxiety in conversations. Ask employees working with memory loss residents to be present and to save certain conversations for the break room.

A QUOTE TO INSPIRE YOU

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.” ~ William James

“Quarantine Activity Guide” was written by Erin McCart. Copyright 2020 ElderSong Publications, Inc. All rights reserved.

This has been produced by ElderSong Publications, inc. Shared with permission – Click here for the original publication : <https://blog.eldersong.com/2020/03/quarantine-activity-guide/>

ElderSong Publications Inc | info@eldersong.com | 301-829-0533 | www.eldersong.com