



Isolation kit

A collection of ideas, tips and suggestions to cope with isolation while living and caring for someone with dementia.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all of us in many ways.

A contagious new virus started spreading fast, causing uncertainties, creating anxiety and pushing us into home isolation, which has been a learning curve for many. We now have a vaccine and a lot more information about the virus and what to do to keep ourselves, our loved ones and our community safe.

While lockdowns may be a thing of the past, we might still need to self isolate for our safety in the current traffic light settings. We understand that isolation can be an extra challenge for those living with and caring for a person with dementia, therefore we have put together an isolation kit packed with tips and advice to take you through this challenging time.

The kit includes things to do around the house, fun activities and games, exercises and online resources.



<https://alzheimersmanawatu.org/>



manawatu@alz-man.org.nz



[@alzheimersmanawatu](https://www.instagram.com/alzheimersmanawatu)



www.facebook.com/alzheimersmanawatu





Tips

for a day-to-day routine to engage in activities with someone living with dementia.

Caring for someone with memory loss often feels challenging since they might not act and engage the way they used to - that is natural. When doing daily activities with a person living with dementia, it is essential to remember that you have to be flexible. One day, you will do what you want, the next, you will do what your loved one wants, and finally, you will reach an agreement and do what you both want.

Remember to:

- Use gentle encouragement phrases, like "Could you please help me with that?" or "I know you are good at this."
- Set the activity out ready.
- Always give one at a time instructions and break down the activities.
- Start the activity with the person until they get engaged and can continue alone.
- Be flexible to adapt according to their limitations and mood.
- Avoid over stimulation.
- Remember to have fun and find moments of joy even if the situation is not ideal.





Around the house

Asking for help in house activities can make the person living with dementia feel useful, giving a sense of satisfaction and belonging.

When helping around the house, it is all about your loved one feeling helpful. It doesn't need to be right, so let go of a perfectly performed job and use some of the activities below as an entertainment.

- **Cleaning/chores, such as help drying the dishes or hanging out washing.**
- **Sorting out packs of playing cards into suits and/or colours.**
- **Folding clothes, tea towels or towels.**
- **Rolling up bandages, ribbons or braids.**
- **Untying knots.**
- **Listening/dancing to music or watching a film/documentary.**
- **Pampering (hand massage, nail painting, hair, beard...).**
- **Sorting buttons or beads into colours.**
- **Pairing up socks.**
- **Sorting, matching colours, shapes or numbers.**
- **Cooking/preparing food together (e.g. peeling veggies).**
- **Gardening or sewing.**





Activities and games

Playing games can be a great way to engage the brain, use creativity and have fun! Below are some ideas of games and activities you can use while isolating.

Rummage (or sensory) box are a sensory stimulation therapy that can help people with dementia and also provide a great way to connect.

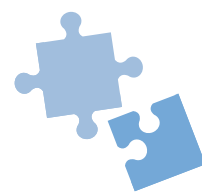
- Try preparing a box filled with everyday objects that can trigger positive emotions and memories, those could be: photos, newspaper cuttings, music, souvenirs, personal items such as jewelry for women and tools for men. As they go through the box use the opportunity to engage in some discussions (**reminiscing**).

Homemade jigsaw puzzles help exercising the brain and can be made from things around the house.

- Get some post cards, magazines or calendar photos and glue them to a white paper. Draw your puzzle according to the abilities of your loved one, cut the pieces and the game is ready. If you want to make it easier, try writing numbers behind the pieces (check the links for ideas in the online tools).

Vision boards are lots of fun to create and to entertain the mind.

- Grab some old magazines and find some nice images of things they like or that they would like to do. Let the creativity create a nice collage in form of a vision board while you also connect with them. This is a good activity for **Armchair Travel**.





Activities and games

Stimulating the brain while having fun is a strategy to keep the mind focused and occupied with an activity rather than stressing out with external factors.

- **Finishing the proverbs**

- This is a matching game using well known sayings, idioms and proverbs. We suggest printing the fragments of the proverbs, so they can easily visualize and find the matching pairs. The exercise can lead to reminiscing and conversation. Example: **There's no place like home** or **as fit as a fiddle**

- **Reciting nursery rhymes**

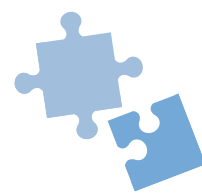
- This is also a form of reminiscing and can bring back memories and feelings. Example: "Five Little Monkeys" - recite by heart, or print out some cards with the rhymes.

- **Playing cards**

- Try some games like Crazy Eights, Slapjack or Rummy.

- **Quiz time**

- There are so many ways to trigger memory in a quiz game! Use things like: food, animals, occupations, countries...
- Grab a pen and a piece of paper and start the call out, you can be very specific or quite open. This is another opportunity to engage in a conversation brought by some memories, find some examples in the next page.



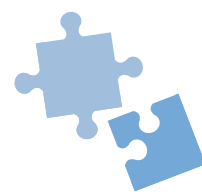


Activities and games

Stimulating the brain while having fun is a strategy to keep the mind focused and occupied with an activity rather than stressing out with external factors.

Examples of quiz activities - those can be tailor-made according to the person's preferences and hobbies.

- 3 cars starting with the letter M
- 4 NZ trees
- 5 pieces of furniture
- 3 colours starting with B
- 4 pieces of clothing
- 5 animals found on a farm
- 3 types of desserts
- 4 types of jewellery
- 5 things found in the ocean
- 3 types of fruit starting with P
- 4 types of shapes
- 5 items you wear on your head
- Things you can find in a pantry
- Items you need for camping
- Words starting with the letter B, H, T, etc
- Things that are round
- Types of Animals, veggies or fruit
- Things found in the ocean
- Things found on the farm
- Types of Sports





Online tools

There are some fantastic resources online. If you have access to the internet, check some of our suggestions below. We can help you through those if you would like to try.

Things you can do online:

- Go to **Youtube.com** and look up for some videos of interest, those could be travel, make-up, cars or playing some of your favorite music.
- Try making **video calls** to talk to those that you might not be able to see in person.
- **Google** poetry, funny jokes, cute animal videos or short stories to read aloud.
- There are some very good websites where you can **play online games** and get some **creative ideas** from:
 - <https://www.jigidi.com/>
 - <https://www.thecolor.com/>
 - <https://www.solitr.com/>
 - <https://www.goldencarers.com/>
- We came across Heather's story and how she used **art therapy** while caring for her mom, check her **Facebook page and blog**:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/CreativeCarer/photos>
 - <https://creative-carer.blogspot.com/>
- **Alzheimers Manawatu website** also has resources and links to other useful websites, such as Alzheimers New Zealand, and you can follow us on social media for updates, tips, information and much more!
 - <https://alzheimersmanawatu.org/> is our website address
 - @alzheimersmanawatu is where you can find us on Facebook or Instagram





Physical exercise

Keeping active is key for health and happiness! Exercise boosts energy and also releases good hormones making us feel good even when facing an adverse situation.

It is vital to **keep active** even if isolating. Exercise stimulates blood circulation, improves sleep and makes us feel happier. See some options below:

- Sit Fit exercises, stretches, exercises with scarves to music, check out the 'Sit and Be Fit' YouTube Channel.
- Coin toss.
- Cushion throw into clothes basket.
- Making paper planes and having a flying competition.
- Painting old pots.
- Simon Says.
- Play musical instruments or dance to some music.
- Make the most of the sunshine and sit outside to reminisce
- Garden scavenger hunt – make a list of things to find such as red leaf, brown leaf, green leaf, a twig in the shape of a Y, a stone or maybe a butterfly or garden bug.
- Outdoor sensory time – What can you smell? What can you hear? What can you see? Whilst enjoying fresh air.
 - Gardening jobs – Re-potting plants, gentle weeding or harvesting fruit and vegetables.





A message from the team at Alzheimers Manawatu

Remember to go easy on yourself and others.

We're all riding an emotional rollercoaster. It's hard not knowing whether we'll be up one minute or down the next. We all want this pandemic to end and be able to fully open our bubbles again.

IT'S ALL RIGHT TO BE RIDING THE
EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER RIGHT NOW



The team here at Alzheimers Manawatu are here to support you. You can contact us via phone or email.

Phone:

06 357 9539

Email:

manawatu@alz-man.org.nz

Website:

www.alzheimersmanawatu.org

Dementia Advisors:

Anne Lowry: 027 357 9543 (Horowhenua)

Andrea Hodgetts: 027 357 9560 (Manawatu & Tararua)

Liam Walsh: 027 600 4408
(Palmerston North)

