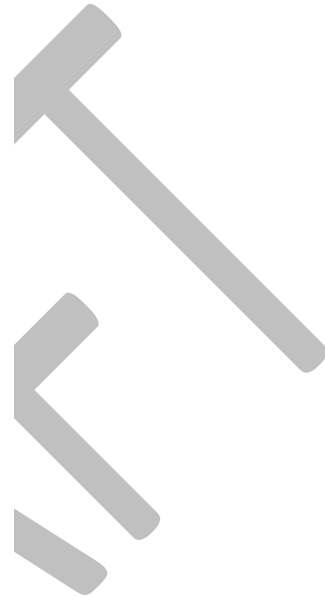


Resources to support families / carers of people with learning disabilities



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carers of people with learning
disabilities**



AUGUST 23 2020

**NHS LANARKSHIRE
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
ADULT LEARNING DISABILITY**



Introduction

The Occupational Therapy Adult Learning Disability Team has put together this collection of resources that may be useful to support families/ carers of people with learning disabilities.

The Learning Disabilities Occupational Therapy Team hope that they are useful in supporting people with learning disabilities and families and carers who support them.

Personal Care Tasks

Have a vigorous shower – use different sponges and scrubs and different soaps

Teethbrushing and flossing

Hairbrushing – trying different hairdos, plaits, ponytails (ideas online!)

Have a shave, use a brush and shaving foam

Massage (head, shoulder, feet, hands)

Bubble bath

Paint your finger nails

Moisturising/creaming

Aromatherapy activities

Essential oils on hot/cool flannel

Footspa

Hot water bottle (not too hot) and wheat microwavable pillows (there are scented versions)

Do some meditation classes, there are different kinds you can find and try online (guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness)

Do online exercise classes – there are all kinds online including seated versions

Domestic Tasks

Around the house:

Hoovering/vacuuuming

Dusting and polishing

Sweeping
Mopping the floors
Spring cleaning -organising drawers and wardrobes
Emptying the bins
Checking the cupboards and writing a shopping list
Ordering shopping online and putting things away
Laundry (putting things in the washer, hanging things up with pegs to dry, folding and sorting, putting away in drawers)
Handwashing clothes
Putting things you don't need in a bag for charity
Looking after plants (watering and re-potting and planting, removing the dead leaves/flowers)
Changing your bed sheets
Washing and drying up (use lots of soap and bubbles and different types of scrubbers and sponges)
Loading and emptying the dishwasher
Wiping down counters and tables
Setting and clearing the table
Polishing shoes
Mending things (holes in clothes, or things that need gluing)
Ironing
Making tea (you could use a teapot and a tray and sit down for tea-time together)
Washing windows
Home decorating

Cooking:

Loads of recipes online
Peeling and washing and preparing food
Fruit/vegetable salad
Sandwiches and toasties
Ice-lollies
Fruit smoothies with blender
Soda stream for fizzy drinks

Chocolate crispies

Non-cook recipes (like fruit kebabs, lots of recipes online)

Baking bread or biscuits – use packet or raw ingredients

Popcorn

Angel delight

Crumble

Leisure Tasks

Arts and crafts:

Cards and letters – make your own, send to your friends and family

Scrap-books related to personal interests ie trains, popstars

Keep a diary, make a story about what you did when you had to stay at home

Taking selfies and family photos – have fun with filters!

Making a collage

Hand painting/printing

Sewing/embroidery/knitting

Making jewellery, beadwork

Making models

Modelling with papier-mache

Printing with stencils

Painting by numbers

Magic (water) painting

Using online apps to do art work

T-shirt decorating

Sticker books

Drawing or painting

Pottery with air drying clay

Making salt dough (make the dough at home from flour and water and salt, mould it in to shapes, bake and paint, recipes online)

Block printing (or use a potato-stamp!)

Reading or looking at magazines/newspapers/old photo albums

Acting and role play

Have a fashion show, dress up!

Make a 'smelly box' with different scents (ie body lotion, coffee beans, washing powder, mint mouthwash, marmite, star anise, cinnamon, perfume, essential oils etc)

Music:

Playing musical instruments – have a concert

Singing – record it, make an album!

Listening to music

Make your own playlists – make different playlists for different times(upbeat/relaxing)

Karaoke

Dancing – even seated chair dancing!

Make your own musical instruments (ie plastic bottle with rice or lentils inside)

Musical bingo

Socialising:

Sending emails and text messages and voice recordings and video clips about your day to checking in with friends and family

Sending letters and cards

Using social media to connect with others

Using the telephone to call people – use the video function to see them

Discussions about people/places things

Start a blog or website to share your interests with others

Games:

Games on ipad – there are all kinds of apps you can tailor for individual interests

Wii

Jigsaw puzzles

Card games, such as snap

Bingo

Memo

Ball or bean bag games – throw these into a basket (add points for competition)
Velcro dartboard
Balloon volleyball (bat this backwards and forwards between you, or balloon tennis
- try to get it over something a line of tape on the floor)
Clapping games
Rhymes and tongue twisters
Jenga and connect 4
Board games
Tabletop football
Water play with collanders, funnels, pots and pans, paintbrushes
Blow bubbles – catch and pop these

If you have access to a garden:

Potting plants
Weeding
Sitting in swing chair
Ball or racket games
Frisbee
Touching and smelling plants and herbs and flowers
BBQ
Looking after birdtable or feeder – you can make your own birdfeeder with old
plastic bottle (instructions online)
Sowing seeds (can also be done inside)
Growing vegetables
Watering the garden
Caring for hanging baskets and window boxes
Looking after compost

General Heavy work / proprioceptive strategies

<p>Undertaking proprioceptive / heavy work activities can be helpful to feel more regulated and me in a calm/alert state. These are general strategies – there would need to be consideration base on individual need, preference and risk assessment.</p>
<p>Oral motor – follow SLT guidelines if there are any dysphagia concerns</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blowing bubbles • Sucking thick milkshakes/smoothie through a straw • Chewing – gum, bagels, dried fruit, caramels. • Eating crunchy food/ice • Sucking sweets • Using curly straw • Drinking from a sports bottle

Activity ideas for when you need to stay at home

When we need to stay at home it can be hard to know what to do with our time. Here are some suggestions of activities you could try. These will not be appropriate for everyone, so pick and choose based on your knowledge of the person you support and previous guidelines and recommendations from health care professionals. Lots of resources and ideas can be sourced online.

<https://www.rcot.co.uk/staying-well-when-social-distancing>

<https://sensoryproject.org/2020/03/16/sensory-stuck-at-home/>

Activities of daily living

Food preparation by the individual client may need to be for individual consumption during social distancing

- making drinks / smoothies • sandwich making • making dips / salads • puddings • pizza • bread making • baking • taking part in meal preparation • laying table for themselves, • doing

laundry • washing up • filling dishwasher • sweeping / mopping • Gardening, digging , planting , watering plants • Making bed, Doing laundry , Cleaning room **Exercise / movement**

Dancing - make up your own, take it in turn to copy each others or learn a new

dance. Stretching , yoga type moves. Following exercise videos (see attached for some ideas

– there are many available Obstacle course • Where there are facilities in garden use them •

Circuits in garden (eg, target games with bean bags, going through hula hoops, running back to point etc, sports day like activities • Nature / bird spotting / cloud watching • Outdoor gyms •

Muddy / hill walks eg box hill – national trust sites are currently free, there are also many

arks in Surrey Trampoline or Swing • Bean bag target • Running races • Running, jumping,

stomping, • Stretches, wall pushes • Treasure hunt • Skittles • Football and other ball games –

throwing and catching • Balloon volley ball

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Thank you for your support – it is invaluable in keeping the person you support and community well! Please contact the team- on 01698 855515 if you have any queries we may be able to support with, or if you are struggling to find activities to do with the person you support at home.

NHS Lanarkshire, Occupational Therapy, Adult Learning Disability Team, June 2020

Relaxation and mindfulness (for families, carers and people with learning disabilities)

Compassionate Mind exercises:

Mindful exercises for everyday life (Solent NHS Trust) FREE

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFbeQITqQPGTLAmNgKs0srX9Vau7mctFf>

A series of mindfulness, ACT and compassion-based exercises on you tube.

Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World (Danny Penman)

FREE

<http://franticworld.com/resources/>

Includes recordings of the body scan, 3-minute breathing space, chocolate meditation, mindfulness of the body and breath, befriending meditation etc.

The <https://www.compassionatemind.co.uk/resources> Compassionate Mind Foundation website (FREE)

Recordings of addressing self-criticism, building the compassionate mind, posture, faces and tones, soothing rhythm practices.

Apps

Headspace – free trial and then subscription required after that **Calm** -free trial and options to pay for additional functions if you want to) **Aware** – free (you can pay for additional functions if you want to)

Top tips: supporting someone with a learning disability when you need to stay at home

- Routine is still important: Try to get up and go to bed at the same time. Try to break up the day at similar times for breakfast, lunch, dinner.
- Use a visual timetable, make a to-do list and plan what you will do in the day
- Try to keep busy – make sure to do physical activities throughout the day (like shaking out sheets, hanging up laundry, whisking and mixing when baking, kneading bread, scrubbing and wiping dishes and tables, cleaning the bath, hoovering, or an online exercise class).
- Be mindful of screentime – it's easy to get too much of this.
- Try to get some fresh air into the house – open blinds and curtains and let the light in
- If you have your own garden or balcony you can use this to spend some time outdoors. If you and the person you support are well, you can take a walk but make sure to keep a distance from other people.
- Have a look at what you can hear and see outside, wildlife can be a good one, such as birdwatching. You might have some seeds you could put out for the birds, or water for a birdbath.
- Try mindfulness and focusing on the 'here and now' – what you can see, hear, smell, taste and touch
- You may need to remind the person you support why you are not going out – you can use social stories to help with this. You may need to offer an alternative suggestions.

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- Validate people's feelings around staying at home.
 - Don't tell the person you support what they CAN'T do, but focus on the activities that they CAN do
 - Support the person to make choices around activities so they still have some control – make sure you only give options that are available to them and remember to use symbols, photographs and objects to support choice making
 - Try to involve the person you support where possible in anything that you need to do around the house – even involvement in small steps of an activity is good.
 - Try to do calming activities before bed, keep the same bedtime routine
 - If possible encourage the person you support not to use the bed apart from at bedtimes so that this is associated with sleep
 - Support the person you support to reach out to others via phone, email, skype and social media.
 - You can encourage good hand hygiene at home by making this fun – this could be by doing more water based activities like washing up, handwashing clothes, water play (use colanders, funnels, recycling containers, different sponges and scrubbers). Try using different scented soaps, lots of bubbles, singing songs together whilst washing your hands to ensure the person you support is washing thoroughly, or setting a timer, competing about who can make the most bubbles or squelchy noises!

Meaningful engagement during time of social distancing

The Government has advised that all people adopt the guidance on social distancing

The people we support in the community, inpatients and residential settings will experience disruption and changes to their usual routines , meaningful activities and interactions due to social distancing. **Please see latest government guidance.**

These individuals (and anyone self-isolating) are at risk of occupational deprivation.

Occupational Deprivation is “the prolonged restriction due to circumstances outside of the person’s control” which affects mental and physical well-being. (Whiteford 2000)

Therefore we need to start being creative in how we support the individuals we work with to participate in meaningful activities, and routines as much as is possible (within the guidance), directly and through their supporters to promote physical and mental well being . Please see RCOT guidance on staying well when social distancing <https://www.rcot.co.uk/staying-well-when-social-distancing>

The individuals that we work with may have difficulties with:

- Changes in routine
- Not being able to see people who are familiar and important to them
- Not understanding why changes are happening around them
- Managing worries about what they see and hear on the news etc
- Difficulties initiating, sequencing or continuing activities independently and may need support to do this.

STRATEGIES AND SUGGESTIONS THAT MAY BE HELPFUL AT THIS TIME:

- Predictability and routine –
- Having visual information of what is happening and ensuring it is up to date with any changes
- Using an up to date activity timetable / now and next board etc,
- Communicating what are staff on shift and updating for changes and new staff – could there be photos sent with any agency / bank staff used?
- Using social stories to explain changes and managing concerns (see attached for examples)
- Building handwashing into the start and end of activities where ever possible (see attached for examples of handwashing guidance
- Continuing as many elements of usual routine that are possible whilst still following latest government advice.
- Promoting choice and control where ever possible, but this may need to be adjusted to what can be chosen at that time. – ie only offer choices of

what they can actually do at that time • Remove (from choice boards , timetables etc) activities that are not accessible / possible in current climate to avoid disappointment and frustration. (ie.place is closed) • Think about about actively supporting the person • Individual risk assessment will be needed - Ensure that activity items are cleaned after use – You may wish to have individual (labeled) activity boxes at this time to reduce risk of cross contamination. • Anything that cannot be used safely without supervision put away after use. • Keep information about what is happening simple, this means that it is easier to change if necessary. *It may be helpful to have individual (labelled) activity boxes with items that meet their interests, items should be cleaned and returned to the box after use as the virus can stay on objects for many hours unless cleaned). Items in the box should be reviewed and rotated to ensure that activities are varied.* Suggestions for other activities:

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