

Meaningful Engagement Resource Guide:

Evidence-based activities for older adults

What is Meaningful Engagement?

Meaningful engagement is the intentional use of activities and interactions that honour a person's identity, preferences, abilities, and life story. It creates purpose, comfort, and belonging, while respecting autonomy, dignity, and the whole person.

Why is Meaningful Engagement Important?

For people living with dementia, unmet needs such as boredom, loneliness, fear, or loss of control can lead to responsive behaviours (personal expressions).

Meaningful engagement:

- Reduces boredom, isolation, and distress.
- Supports emotional well-being and cognitive stimulation.
- Improves mood and connection.
- Helps reduce the risk of delirium.
- Enhances overall quality of life.
- Supports restraint reduction.
- Creates smoother, more positive care interactions.
- Reduces stress for care partners and members of the care team.
- Promotes inclusion by honouring cultural identity, values, and lived experience.

How to Implement the Meaningful Engagement Resource Guide?

The guide is a proactive and flexible tool to support meaningful engagement in everyday practice. Begin with small, realistic actions that fit naturally within daily roles and routines, and approach implementation as a team effort. Supporting meaningful engagement is flexible and can be adapted to your setting, available resources and team members. Momentum can be built by identifying team champions and leadership supports. Recognizing and celebrating successes as a team reinforces that these practices that create connection, calmness, and joy.

Everyone has a Role: This resource guide is intended to be used by ALL members of the care team, not solely recreation therapists. Nurses, PSWs, dietary and environmental team member, volunteers, family, one-to-one staff, students, workers of modified duties all play an important role in supporting meaningful engagement for older adults.



For practical steps, see the **Guidelines for Use - Tip Sheet** or explore the full **Meaningful Engagement Resource Guide** for more details.

We want to hear from you!

Your feedback is important to us. Please take a moment to share your thoughts on the *Meaningful Engagement Resource Guide*.

Click here to complete the feedback survey.

Thank you for your time and support!

