

Social and Therapeutic Horticulture

The importance of stimulating day care and the natural environment

Sarah Durrant, Horticultural Therapy Practitioner.



Green Care

**Animal Assisted
Interventions
(Pet Therapy)**

Care Farming

**Social & Therapeutic
Horticulture (STH)**

**Ecotherapy
Nature Therapy
(e.g Forest Schools)**

Green Gyms



Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia 2020,

DoH, 2012.

Regarding 'the person with Dementia alongside their carer and family'

'Their wellbeing and quality of life must be uppermost in the minds of those commissioning and providing services.' P.6

Dementia and wellbeing.

- Anxiety, stress, lack of self-worth and depression¹
- Social isolation²
- Carer strain³

1. Alzheimer's Society, 2013; Jolley, 2005; Mental Health Foundation, 2014.

2. Alzheimer's Society, 2013; Howerda *et al*, 2012; Mental Health Foundation, 2014.

3. WHO, 2012.



‘ART’ Attention Restoration theory,

Kaplan, 1995: 170

Research shows link between lack of Vitamin D and cognitive decline.

Lewellyn *et al*, *Arch Intern Med*. 2010;170(13):1135-1141; Morris *et al*, *Arch Neurol*. 2002;59(7):1125-1132



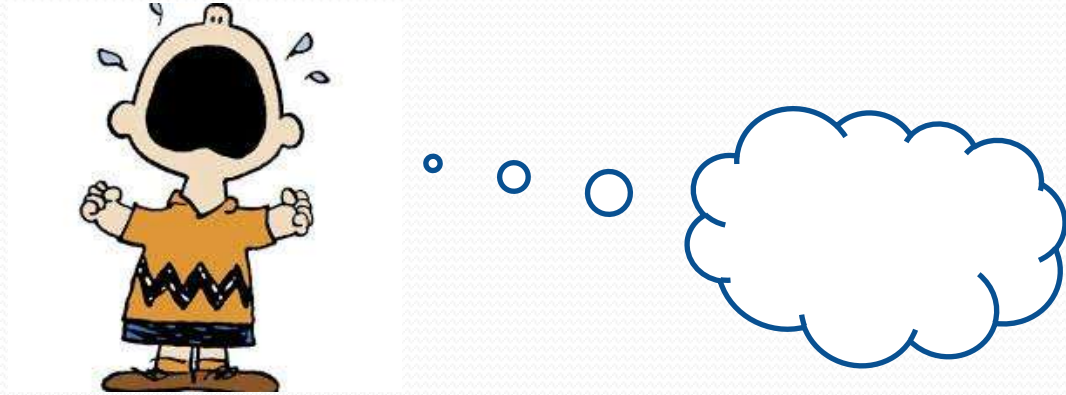
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Health benefits to increased physical exercise



Image source: Medical News Today

Strain



“ I don’t know how to spend time together at home anymore. You know, finding things to do.” *Carer.*

Its not the telling, its the doing.

Martin *et al*, 2013

- Recommendations for facilitators included placing emphasis on **activity**, relationships and social interaction.

Martin, F. Turner, A., Wallace, L., Stanley, D. Jesuthasan, J. & Bradbury, N. (2013) *Dementia*, August 12.

Droes *et al*, 2004

- Regular **activities** involving ***both dementia patient with carer more effective*** in reducing inactivity, non-social behaviour and depression than day care alone.

Droes *et al* (2004) *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*. 19 (7), 673-684

Adapting to change



I'm not sure



I don't need any help thank you

Gardening is....

- Purposeful and meaningful
- Seasonal – provides sense of time and place
- Normal hobby, not seen as a ‘therapy’
- Instils hope
- Socially inclusive – any one, of any age can take part.
- Naturally brings us outside – gaining all the ‘green care benefits’ without us really being aware of it
- Gives us something to actively do
- Health benefits – growing food, physically active
- A part of everyone’s culture – we all eat plants for start!
- Plants are useful tool for reminiscence work

What does a Horticultural Therapy Practitioner actually do?

Person-centred – match activities to interests, abilities and needs

Set up activities with a specific aim in mind

Use plants to help trigger memories, stimulate discussion



Image source: Caregiver.com

Create the right supportive environment

Focus on what part of an activity someone **can** do, not what they can't

Use group work to encourage people to have a go, provide a sense of belonging to something

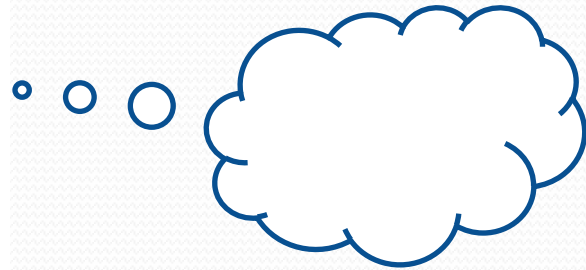
It doesn't matter if....



Thyme Together

- Carer and those in the early stages of Dementia attend gardening session together in small groups
- Once a week, Fridays 10-12 noon, dig 'n' grow, Witney
- Create gardener's log and 'Garden Memory Box' of ideas – which activities worked well? What needs to be adapted to work at home? What produced a stimulation to memory – talking about the silkiness of rose petals, the smell of freshly cut grass, watching a robin on the birdfeeder?

Strain



- “ I don’t know how to spend time together at home anymore. You know, finding things to do.”
- “I don’t want to embarrass her, so we don’t get out much, apart from when we come here.”
- “We used to do gardening a lot, but he loses concentration, I have to keep my eye on him all the time.”
- “It’s getting really hard to have a conversation with her, about anything really. You stop trying.”



Image source: HenleyGoodNeighbours



Image source: DementiaActionDevon



©Thrive



Image source: PennLive



©GardenOrganic