

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Explore and Inspire

Taking creativity into every corner of the home

Art  Post

nightingale hammerson



Introduction to the booklet

This booklet has been developed for anyone working in care settings, and was inspired by the Southbank Centre's Art by Post project, which brings free creative activities direct to the door of the individuals, care-givers, practitioners and professionals most isolated by social distancing measures. We believe it's important for everyone to take time out from their daily routine and enjoy doing something creative. Both for yourself, and for the colleagues and residents that you support.

By making time to share what you see and feel, inspiration will find you. Everything around you can be art: a leaf you found on the pavement, a simple white sheet lying in the laundry, even a view through your window. There is magic in everyday things. All it takes is one curious question, and something creative and extraordinary can happen.

This is your invitation to take a sensory exploration with those around you. We hope these activities generate inspiration from within your home, and encourage creativity and expression to blossom.

Our collaborators

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre and one of the nation's top visitor attractions, located in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The Southbank Centre is made up of Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Hayward Gallery, National Poetry Library and Arts Council Collection.

To produce this booklet, the Southbank Centre has worked in collaboration with the following partners:

Thessa Verwolf and Emily Chilvers from Nightingale Hammerson, an independent charity and leading specialist in care of older people. They have served the Jewish community since 1840.

Nenagh Watson, a professional puppeteer and activity coordinator at Beaumanor Care Home, part of Rushcliffe Care Group, Loughborough.

NAPA, an umbrella organisation that connects, signposts, encourages and motivates anyone with an interest in lifestyle, wellbeing, love and laughter in the care sector. Arts in Care homes is a five-year programme that champions the importance of arts, culture and creativity in care settings.

How to use this booklet

- Activities are not time sensitive and are specially designed for you to come back to time and time again.
- Inside your booklet, you will find a separate insert to keep and share within your care setting.
- You might want to keep a notebook on hand to capture any ideas or links that you make to the booklet at different times during your day.
- Information on how to share your feedback and your responses can be found on the back page, alongside details of how you can join our regular monthly networking sessions.

1

Slow looking

The people you support may spend a large part of their lives sitting. They must see so much as staff bustle and busy themselves around them. What if we just stopped for a few moments? Slowed down and gave space to appreciate life from their perspective? We may notice something new.

One person who lived in the home Nenagh works in, spent the majority of her time alone in her room, shared amazing observations and insights she had gained from her 'slow' looking at life outside of her window. Just sitting, seemingly daydreaming, but really engaging and observing life from her home.

Take a moment out of your busy day. Stop, close your eyes and listen. Take the time to really be present in the moment. What sounds do you hear? Bells ringing, crockery clattering, TV channels competing, staff gossiping, a resident calling out, a canary singing.

Sometimes it can be refreshing to get a different perspective. Sit in one of your residents' favourite chairs. How does the room look from their viewpoint? How does it make you feel?

Encourage yourself and your residents to stop when you pass a window and take the time to look at what is happening outside: clouds moving; plants trembling in the breeze; shadows dancing on walls; birdsong or the sounds of the city.

You might want to invite those who pass or walk alongside you to make an observation of their own, in just a word or a sentence. By noting down everyone's individual contributions, you could create a collaborative piece of poetry or prose to reflect this collective view.

How can these observations change how you see your workplace, and what could be the impact for residents whose home this is?

Take this moment for yourself and your residents. You never know when something you've observed may be a useful starting point for a conversation or another creative activity.



2

Looking beyond the laundry



At my home, I was asked to create a home life corner. This got me thinking about how to animate a corner to encourage spontaneous interaction. I remembered Glenda Colquhoun's beautiful photograph *Washing Day*, where the laundry is captured in mid-dance. Just take a look at how alive the washing looks – it's included in your insert.

I bought a freestanding washing line, bright tea towels and a cute peg bag. Placing a domestic fan on the floor at the back of the washing line enabled the tea towels to flap, but what really helped to bring all this to life was creating simple shadows.

I experimented using a feather attached to a length of gardening wire. Residents were invited to wiggle this in front of a light source, creating a lovely shadow dancing on the tea towels. Add to this a soundtrack of birds singing and you're immediately transported outside, evoking memories of pegging out the washing!

Nenagh



Laundry Day

The weather is lovely, I like to do my washing on a Sunday.

The thing I love most is pegging it out to dry.

A nostalgic chore to peg the washing.

The use of the line and a peg bag.

Watching your mum or nan 'hang' or 'peg' the washing out.

That smell as the breeze flutters the washing.

The visual appearance of the line with sheets or clothing all neatly lined up.

The sound of the flapping is like music to my ears.

However, the best bit...

When it's all dry and you can't help having a big sniff of the fresh air scent that lingers on the washing.

NAPA Natalie Ravenscroft



- Take your leaves and flowers and lay them on top of the clay, spaced out the way you both like. Use the rolling pin to press them into the clay.
- Use cookie cutters to cut out shapes or just freestyle with a plastic knife.



- Then, paint over the top of the clay and the leaves. You could use all the colours your partner-in-clay likes. As the paint is drying, you could chat about famous gardens like Kew or their favourite plant, flower or spot in their garden.
- When the paint is almost dry, use a thin point or knife to peel off the leaves and flowers. You can paint the impressions if you want to.

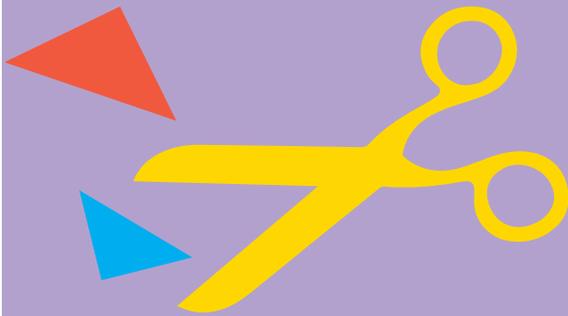
For a hanging decoration, make sure to add a hole before drying. Or, use it as a coaster for that cup of tea you will have after all this hard work!



Make your own butterfly shadow puppet

You will need:

- Clear plastic food packaging (plastic trays, etc.)
- Scissors
- Permanent marker pens or overhead projector pens
- A light source (torch, mobile phone torch, overhead projector light)
- Some flexible wire (garden wire or wire from IKEA paper lamp shades are perfect!)
- A stick or broom handle
- A white shower curtain, sheet or tea towel or simply a white wall
- Your butterfly template on the back page



How to make your butterfly:

- Cut a length of wire about 2ft/0.5m long, and wrap one end around a broom handle several times.
- Then slide the wire off the broom – this will create a curl of wire to act as a safe handle for your butterfly.
- Use the templates to draw your butterfly onto the plastic and colour them in, directly on the plastic.
- Work together to cut out the butterfly, cutting away any black outlines. Remember, wonky butterflies can add their own beauty.
- Carefully pierce the straight end of the wire through the plastic in line with the body of the butterfly – make one hole at the tail and then thread it through and pierce it through in line with the head of the butterfly.
- Pull it through so you're left with a small piece of wire protruding from the head and bend this back on itself to secure it. It will look like an antenna! The butterfly should naturally flutter and wobble on the bendy wire.

The puppet will come to life when projected onto a wall, a plain white bedsheet or a white shower curtain pinned to a portable washing line. This enables residents to perform on one side and the audience to watch from the other.

Let's explore

Experiment by moving the butterfly in front of a light source. Sunlight is brilliant for shadows, so if it's a bright day, enjoy going outside!

Ephemeral animation

Be it a plastic bag blowing in the wind or shadows of leaves dancing on a wall, these chance animations are created by debris being moved by the elements, usually the wind, sunlight creating shadows or something floating within the water. The effect is often very magical. Look around at the world, as it's full of tiny moments of theatre.

Karrie Marshall shares the following, inspired by Nenagh Watson's concept of ephemeral animation:

'When we are open to noticing things in the moment, we discover inspiration for creative connections all around us, including ephemeral animation. e.g., a dying lady smiled at the way her washed nightdress was dancing on top of the washing line, caught between the wind and the birch tree like a tightrope walker. It was magical.'

K. Marshall, *Puppetry in Dementia Care: Connecting Through Creativity and Joy*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2013.

3

Bring the outside in – nature clay prints



‘I don’t know if you have ever done this as a child, but after visiting new places I would always end up with a box full of leaves, rocks and twigs. Great memories of being out in nature, feeling the wet soil and picking out the prettiest leaf.’

Thessa

You will need:

- Air drying clay (if you don’t have this, why don’t you make your own playdough with residents?)
- Acrylic or poster paint
- Sponges or paintbrushes
- Rolling pin
- Cloths
- Plastic knives and cookie cutters
- Found items, ideally leaves and flowers, or shells, pine cones or sticks

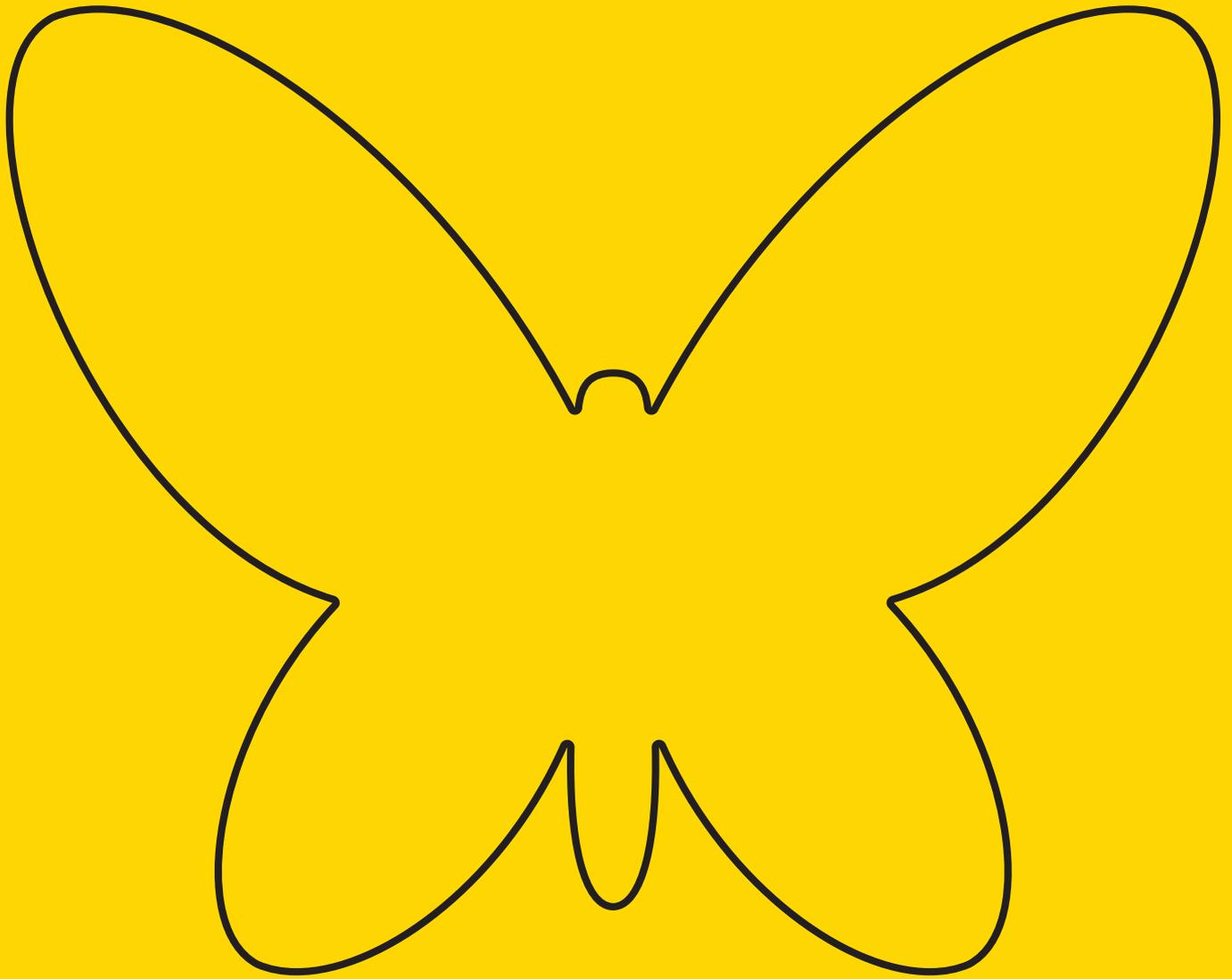


Let’s give this a go!

Emily

- To start with, gather your leaves and flowers. Depending on who you are supporting, you may go outside and pick these together, or you can prepare in advance. Leaves with prominent veins will make a good print. Plants that have a scent like lavender, mint, basil or rosemary are also great for activating the senses.
- Smush and knead the clay; it’s the best part! Roll out your clay on a cloth until roughly 1cm thick.





We'd love to hear your feedback and see what you create

Every Corner Network

Together with NAPA, the Southbank Centre runs monthly online networking sessions for professionals and volunteers to meet and share ideas and offer support for those supporting people living in care communities.

You can also provide feedback on this booklet and share any creative work that you have made in response to the activities.

We'll be using these suggestions to inform our monthly networking sessions, so please get in touch.

For more Art by Post booklets and tips on how to use them visit:
southbankcentre.co.uk/artbypost/resources

Keep in touch with NAPA

NAPA is a national charity and membership organisation supporting the sector to prioritise wellbeing and promote activity, arts and engagement. NAPA's Arts in Care Homes programme is a five-year campaign that champions the importance of arts, culture and creativity in care settings.

NAPA has a free helpline for any activity or care-related enquiries. Call freephone 0800 1585503 or email helpline@napa-activities.co.uk

Contact NAPA to find out more about the benefits of becoming a member and what it offers in terms of resources, training and support. Email info@napa-activities.co.uk

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Let's explore NAPA Challenge #EveryCorner

The Southbank Centre and NAPA Arts in Care Homes invite you to take 'activity' out of the activity room and into every corner of your care setting.



Create your own mobile activity resource

Can your team work together to develop a mobile creative activity resource for your care setting? You will need to consider the current Covid regulations of your care provider when doing this.

You could use a trolley, a box, a bag, a basket, a suitcase or a tray piled full of interesting objects, conversation starters and multi-sensory prompts on a specific theme.

This doesn't have to cost lots of money. Agree on a theme and go on a treasure hunt, looking for interesting objects around your workplace and at home. Ask friends, relatives and neighbours to donate items or have a look in charity shops.

Let's explore: smell

Collect together some essential oils to make a scent library. Try lavender, peppermint and orange. (**Important: lavender is the only oil that is safe to use neat on the skin**) Put a few drops on a cotton pad and encourage someone to have a sniff. You could do this one-to-one or in a small group. Ask:

- Can you guess what fragrance this is?
- Do you like it?
- What does it make you think of?

Let's explore: touch

Create your own mobile museum on a tray by gathering up interesting objects. Objects could all be on a specific theme, for example natural objects such as pine cones, gourds, leaves, fossils and pebbles; or historical objects such as coins, stamps, medals and souvenirs.

- Take your tray on a journey around your care setting.
- Let people explore the objects and respond.
- Pass objects around between residents and invite them to make up a story about that object.
- You can also use them to share memories.

Let's explore: taste and sound

Gather up some party paraphernalia on a trolley and make your way around your care setting, taking the party into every room and every corner. You will need decorations, costumes, drinks, snacks and music. Ask:

- What is your favourite drink/snack?
- What is your favourite song?
- Can you show your best dance move?
- What is your dream party outfit?

This activity is inspired by the Magic Me projects Cocktails in Care Homes, The After Party, and Inside Out.

Let's explore: sight and touch

Collect together different hats, for example berets, woolly hats, sun hats or fascinators. Encourage people to pick a hat to try on.

- Ask who would wear a hat like that?
- Make up a character, give them a name.
- Strike a pose and take a photo.



Get creative: signs

Why not make your own handwritten signs to display around your care setting?

These can remind staff and residents to take time out, stop, look, listen, smell, taste, be in the moment, and be curious and creative.

Here are some examples:

- Stop and watch how the sunshine makes the shadows appear.
- Close your eyes and count to five, what can you hear?
- One person's junk is another's treasure (to create a sculpture).
- Draw a random shape and create your favourite animal.

Have fun creating your mobile activity resource together and taking activity into every corner of your care setting.

Share your adventures

Email alison@artsincarehomes.org.uk or use #EveryCorner in your social media posts, tagging the Southbank Centre and NAPA Arts in Care Homes:

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facebook.com/artsincarenapa

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