

Hand and foot bathing

Sensory

15–30 minutes

You will need:

One washing basin per participant (rectangular is preferable)

One towel per participant

A stable chair

A table
(if doing the hand bathing)

Warm water

Optional:

Radox, epsom salts, essential oils or fresh herbs such as rosemary and lavender

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Sensory
Relaxing
Calming

An easy experience to set up that can be enjoyed by anyone. It can be done in a group whilst chatting or framed as a relaxation activity to be done with one person.

To prepare:

Set up your equipment on the floor for foot baths or on a table for a hand bath. If you are using things like oils and salts, you must check that nobody has got any allergies to the things that you have chosen to use. Make sure that you set up well away from any electrical items or plugs.

Please be mindful if the participant has low blood pressure or is prone to dizziness. If this is the case, ensure the water temperature is lower and the length of time of 'the soak' could be reduced.

To begin:

Invite the person that you are working with to get comfortable in their seat. Whilst they are doing this fill the bowl you will be using with 5-7cm of water. The temperature should be warm, not boiling and pleasant to the touch. Add any essential oils or herbs to the water as appropriate – you could invite your participant to choose what they would like to add.

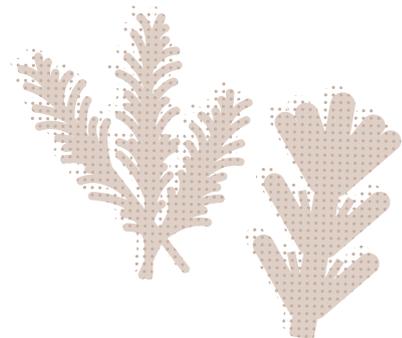
Next:

Invite the participant to place their hands or feet in the bowl. For the hands, ensure the bowl is at a height that doesn't cause stress on the shoulders or back; it should be easy to reach. You could do one hand or foot at a time or both together.

Allow the participant to 'soak' for approximately 10 minutes or until they indicate they would like to stop. Then remove the hands or feet and gently dry with a towel. You could invite the participant to swap, i.e. do the feet if they have just done the hands or vice versa.

You could also:

Where appropriate, you may like to encourage conversation around how it feels. Hand and foot baths can stimulate sensations and feelings which the participant may enjoy sharing. It can also be nice to play some gentle music in the background to relax the participant even more! Again, this could be a lovely starting point to talk about.



Credit:

Spin Turn Creative Movement.