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A Montessori-Based Approach for Aging and Dementia

Kathleen Weissberg, OTD, OTR/L, CMDCP, CDP
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Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the fundamental principles of a Montessori-based approach to dementia programming
2. List individualized activities that you can implement with individuals with Dementia and/or teach others to implement to reduce unwanted behaviors and improve engagement
3. Describe ways to modify the physical environment to support individuals with dementia

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continued



“What you do for
me, you take from
me.”

Maria Montessori

Wikimedia Commons

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continued

Dementia

- Researchers predict an estimated 7.1 million American citizens over the age of 65 will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease (AD) by 2025, a 39% increase from the current number of 5.1 million (Alzheimer's Association, 2015)
- Health care programs have begun to reevaluate the efficiency of services and quality of care provided to older adults with dementia
- 'Helping persons reach their optimal level of fulfillment', 'enriching the lives of our residents', and 'promoting the well-being of older adults' can be found in most mission statements

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continued

Barriers to Dementia Care

- Single greatest barrier is beliefs
- Concept of 'therapeutic nihilism' (Camp, 2006; Clark, 1995)
- Belief that persons with dementia cannot learn new things

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The Montessori Approach

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Montessori Background

- Maria Montessori -- early 1900s
- Individualized instruction designed to enhance practical life skills and sensory experiences (Montessori, 2014)
- Simplify tasks, provide immediate feedback, and promote individualized supervision and learning (Lillard, 2008)

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Montessori Approach

- Dr. Cameron Camp adapted the Montessori method to treat people with Alzheimer's
- Engages the senses and evokes positive emotions
- Stimulation of cognitive, social, functional skills
- Conducted one-on-one

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Benefits to Montessori Approach

- Increase social engagement (Judge et al., 2000; van der Ploeg et al., 2013)
- Enhance attention, affect, and decrease agitation (Judge et al., 2000; van der Ploeg et al., 2013; Vance & Johns, 2003)
- Decreased problem behaviors (Giroux, Robichaud, & Paradis, 2010)
- Improved self-feeding (Sheppard, McArthur, & Hitzig, 2016)
- Sensory and cognitive stimulation (Camp & Mattern, 1999)
- Improved work satisfaction at work and reduced staff turn-over (De Witt-Hoblitz et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2015)

(*Q1)

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Montessori with Late Stage Dementia

- Increased active engagement, pleasurable affect, less anxiety (Orsulic-Jeras & Judge, 2000)
- Increased engagement and carryover of functional tasks (Camp & Skrajner, 2004)
- Improved ADL (e.g., eating) (Lin, Huang, Watson, Wu, & Lee 2011)
- Reduced behaviors (De Witt-Hoblitz, Miller, & Camp, 2016; Lin et al., 2009; Roberts, Morley, Walters, Malta, & Doyle, 2015)
- Improved language (Van der Ploeg et al., 2013)

(*Q2)

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Montessori Overview

- Emphasis on:
 - Independence
 - Freedom within limits
 - Respect for a person's natural development
- Simple activities that provide a sense of accomplishment and connection with personal history

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Alignment with Person-Centered Care

- Montessori activities align with person-centered care
- Emphasize:
 - Respect
 - Dignity
 - Independence
- Provide more structure, individualized attention (smaller groups), opportunities for interaction, adequate sensory and cognitive stimulation vs. traditional LTC activities

(Camp & Mattern, 1999; Judge et al., 2000; Orsulic-Jeras, Schneider, Camp, Nicholson, & Helbig, 2001; Giroux et al., 2010; Orsulic-Jeras et al., 2000; Volicer, Simard, Heartquist Pupa, Medrek, & Riordan, 2006)

(*Q3)

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The “Basics”

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The Basics ...

- Use Everyday Materials
- Match Interests & Skills (group/individual)
- Use Past Experiences & Preferences
- Adapt According to Cognitive & Physical Status
- Simplify as Much as Necessary

(*Q4)

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Assessment of History/Background

- What do they like to do?
- What is their history?
- Strengths and limitations?
- Environment -- what contributes to successful engagement and what hinders it?
- Relevant life experiences, values, interests?

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Pleasant Events Schedule

Instructions: This schedule contains a list of events or activities that people sometimes enjoy. It is designed to find out about things your relative has enjoyed during the past month. Please rate each item twice. The first time, rate each item on how many times it happened in the past month, (frequency); the second time, rate each event on how much your relative enjoys the activity.

Activity	Frequency			Enjoy		
	Not at all	1 to 6 Times	7 or more Times	Not At All	Some what	A Great Deal
1. Being outside						
2. Shopping, buying things						
3. Reading or listening to stories, magazines, newspapers						
4. Listening to music						
5. Watching T.V.						
6. Laughing						
7. Having meals with friends or family						
8. Making or eating snacks						
9. Helping around the house						
10. Being with family						
11. Wearing favorite clothes						
12. Listening to the sounds of nature (birdsong, wind, surf)						

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The Basics ...

- Match Speed to Ability
- Progress from Simple to Complex
- Demonstrate
- Encourage & Assist
- Evaluate

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Activity Requirements

- Gross motor
- Repetitive
- Uses familiar motions
- Involves 1 or 2 steps
- Observable effect on the environment
- Non-competitive
- Involves few or no rules

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Considerations When Adapting Activities

(Warchol, Copeland, & Ebell, 2002)

- Attention span
- Environmental scanning
- Awareness of purpose/goal
- Communication
- Physical attributes
- Quality of work
- Problem solving
- Sequencing
- Social factors
- Environment
- Ability to initiate
- Ability to choose
- New learning ability
- Direction following
- Response time

(*Q5)

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The Basics ...

- Structure
- Immediate feedback
- High probability of success
- Repetition
- External cues
- Procedural/nondeclarative/implicit memory

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The Basics ...

- Self-Correcting activities
- Social participation
- Tailored to the individual, most delivered in groups
- Integrated into every facet of daily activities
- Right to refuse
- Modify for success
- Guided/structured repetition

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Creating Activities

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Creating Activities

Step 1

- Question why the person living with dementia is behaving in certain ways or demonstrating behaviors

(Elliot, 2011)

(*Q6)

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Creating Activities

Step 2: CREATE

- C: Consider needs, interests, skills, abilities
- R: Remove clutter
- E: Error-free
- A: All materials are modifiable
- T: Templates to support declarative memory
- E: Evaluate the activity

(Elliot, 2011)

(*Q6)

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Creating Activities

Step 3: PRESENT

- P: Prepare the environment
- R: Room set up
- E: Extend an invitation
- S: Show the activity
- E: Error-free
- N: Needs, interests, skills, abilities (modification)
- T: Thank you

(*Q6)

(Elliot, 2011)

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Meaningful Activity

Every activity must . . .

- Have a purpose that is obvious to the participant
- Be voluntary
- Be pleasurable
- Be socially and age appropriate
- Be failure proof

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Montessori Approach

- Every participant should have an activity that he/she can successfully handle
- If materials are used inappropriately, but engagement is strong, let the activity occur
- Provide demonstration as needed
 - Matching Shapes/Colors
 - Color Sorting
 - Picture Puzzle
 - Pairing & Sorting
 - Sensory Boxes

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Montessori Approach

- Cognitive Skills
- Life Skills
- Movement
- Sensory
- Music
- Art
- Socialization

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Activities by Stage

- Early stage of dementia
 - Activities that focus on the whole task
- Mid-stage of dementia
 - Activities that focus on the individual steps of the activity
- Late stages of dementia
 - Activities that focus on the sensory part of the activity

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Montessori Approach

- Issue that may occur
- Lose focus
- Walk out
- Lose interest
- Place small objects in their mouths

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Sensory Kits

- Offer an opportunity to stimulate as many senses as possible, for example:
 - Balls box
 - Cereal Box
 - Kinetic Sand
 - Seeds
 - Food

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Activity Kits

- Five domains of function
 1. Cognitive stimulation
 2. Life skills
 3. Motor movement and fitness
 4. Sensory stimulation
 5. Socialization

(*Q7)

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Tailored Activity Programs/Kits

- Tailored Activity Programs reduce behaviors and increase engagement (Gitlin et al., 2008)
- Activity kits improve quality of visits and QOL (Crispi & Heitner, 2004)
- Individualized and meaningful activities show positive results (Pool, 2001)

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Activity Ideas

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continued

Activity Ideas

- Golf ball scoop
- Living/non-living or
Happy/not-happy
- Memory BINGO

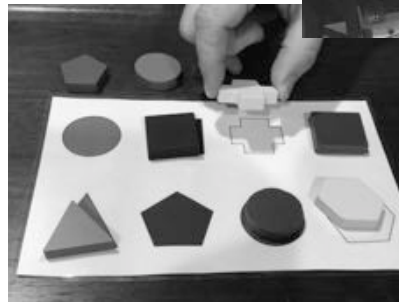


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Activity Ideas

- Cognitive stimulation
 - Sorting
 - Matching
 - Discussion



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continued

continued

Activity Ideas

- Life Skills
 - Meal-related
 - Sorting Pouring
 - Squeezing



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continued

Activity Ideas

- Sensory stimulation
 - Massage
 - Olfactory
 - Rice bin



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continued

Activity Ideas

- Templates



Credit Rachel Dellinger



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Activity Ideas

- Job Boards

Would you like to help
in the work room?



Would you like to help
make centerpieces for
lunch?



Would you like to help
bring friends to lunch?



Would you like to help
us sweep the floors?



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Intergenerational Activities



en.wikipedia.org



Image by Sue Sapp



pxhere.com

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Case Study

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Case Study

- M was an 85 year-old woman with moderate stage dementia residing in a long-term care facility
- Often refused to take part in the activities that were offered at the facility, preferring to stay in her room alone most of the time
- The activity chosen for M was arranging flowers
- M had once enjoyed gardening, so it was surmised that she might find this activity meaningful.

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Case Study

- Montessori principles
 - Providing a meaningful activity based on remaining skills
 - Use of everyday/familiar materials
 - Beginning the activity with an invitation
 - Demonstrating how to complete the activity
 - Breaking the activity down into steps
 - Providing closure to the activity

(*Q8, 9, 10)

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Case Study

- Key takeaways
 - All individuals, no matter the level of impairment, can, and should, be provided with opportunities to engage in meaningful activity
 - Some will need to be eased into the activity
 - Try to spark interest and build rapport
 - Small decisions to increase involvement

(*Q8, 9, 10)

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Staff Feedback

- “I can see they are much happier after the group. I thought they were slow and irresponsive, now I know I was wrong.”
- “I would not have thought to give them that activity before.”
- “Now I know that if we give them a chance, they can achieve something after all.”
- “Staff can give these residents something to do where they feel useful and they’re enjoying their time as opposed to, you know, maybe looking for negative attention.”

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Staff Feedback

- “You can either spend the time responding to those behaviors OR you can implement the little two second activity and let them work on it for half an hour... it really isn't time consuming – where do you want to spend YOUR time?”
- “...seeing it work and seeing the residents get engaged and smiling and taking part in an activity, especially residents when they don't think that they're capable really of doing much of anything ... it's a bit of a shocker.”
- “Sometimes families get lost when they come in as to how to have a quality visit with their loved one when “mom doesn't even recognize me.” So this gives them a tool also to have that visit in a meaningful manner.”

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Questions?

- redhead_lxx@yahoo.com

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