



Drawing ON **Strengths**

You do NOT have to face dementia alone

Five reasons YOU should make ART! (Yes...you!)

- 1. Get it out-** Art provides a great form of non-verbal expression. This becomes even more important when we are trying to express difficult or complicated emotions, things that are often hard to put into words.
- 2. Join with others-** There are art classes in the community, art exhibits at local galleries and several wonderful museums in the South Florida area that you can enjoy. Creating your own art can spark your curiosity about others' artwork, rekindle a previous interest in art, or lead you to seek out these artistic venues for inspiration. Either way, it can be a great way to get out of the house and be part of the local community.
- 3. Learn something new-** Keeping the brain stimulated and engaged is widely accepted as an important part of the treatment of dementia. Creating meaningful artwork, for example, designing a collage

about a family vacation, engages your brain in planning, selecting, and organizing; as well as in coordinating the fine motor control it takes to cut, paste, draw or write.

4. Involve all your senses- Sit outside to sketch a nearby flower and you feel the sunlight on your skin, you smell the flower when the breeze blows just right, hear the birds overhead and take in the colors, lines and shapes all around. Art making can engage multiple senses at once. Collage materials such as photographs, ribbons, and glue all have textures to be touched, paint and markers have their own smell, even the movements needed to create a line or hold a paintbrush create sensory stimulation that is much needed in keeping your days vibrant and your mind and self engaged in the world around you.

5. For the sheer joy of it!- Remember the way you felt as a child when you created yet another masterpiece? Or perhaps you can identify with the feeling of pride and satisfaction in creating a great dish, composing an articulate speech, essay or document, or even playing or writing music. These are all creative processes that help us feel alive, help us communicate and help us connect. You deserve to feel all those things and art can help you experience those feelings everyday.

Please visit me at www.drawingonstrengths.com for further tips and strategies for introducing art making into your life, or the life of a loved one affected by dementia. Please consider working with a trained art therapist to ensure you have both the artistic and emotional support you need.

www.drawingonstrengths.com
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