

# *Adapting Wiser Now's Mind Play Connections™ for Someone with Dementia*

*by Kathy Laurenhue, M.A.*



## Introduction

Note: In this document we have used dementia and Alzheimer's disease (AD) interchangeably, simply because Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. Many of the principles outlined apply to most forms of dementia. We have also randomly used examples using "he" and others with "she" to avoid the awkwardness of constantly using "he or she."

## First lesson: Slow down

The number one thing you can do to enhance the likelihood of people with dementia enjoying an activity is to **slow down**. It frequently takes people with Alzheimer's disease a significant amount of time to "tune in" to an activity and to "get their brains in gear" to react. If you have ever been sound asleep and awakened suddenly by someone who wanted you to take immediate action, you have a sense of how discombobulated a person with dementia frequently feels.

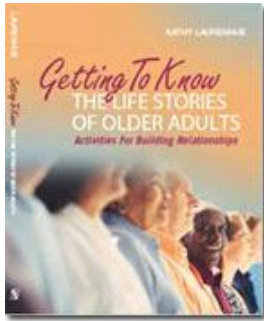
A person with dementia who feels rushed to respond, also feels flustered and uncertain, which tends to cause him to slow down even more. What seems like a normal movement of arms and legs to a person under 60 or so, may come across as wild flailing to the person with dementia. It takes a conscious effort on our part to slow our movements and our speech and to wait quietly for a response from a person with dementia, but – although it may not seem like it – our deliberate slowing results in a faster response time from the person with AD who is relaxed in our presence.

The relaxation comes when our body language, facial expression and tone of voice all indicate that we are willing to wait for him to gather his thoughts and form the words. We, in turn, will be rewarded with sometimes amazing insights and at the least, a more affable response than if we had rushed him. Along these same lines, if you are playing a board game with someone with AD, throw out the buzzers and egg timers and be willing to go at that person's pace.

### **The goals of all of these exercises are simple:**

- **To build self esteem, not tear it down**
- **To build rapport with one another, to be engaged with one another**
- **To have fun**

The material in Wiser Now's MindPlay Connections™ is written for well adults (plus, many of the exercises can be done intergenerationally) to peruse individually or for activity leaders to use in a group setting. Family or professional caregivers are likely to find the exercises also work well as a one-on-one activity with the person they are caring for. This



remains true when the person has dementia, although adaptations (as explained on the following pages) will be necessary. If you are using the exercises in group settings with people who have dementia, everything written here still applies, but I also suggest that you can get many more ideas from my book, **Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults**, which describes adaptations in each chapter and is available by [clicking here](#).

## Trivia quizzes

### People with dementia are often uncomfortable with tests

Trivia (and certain other) quizzes require us to examine the facts and come up with a single right answer, which can be uncomfortable for the person with AD, who may be sensitive about what he may no longer know. He may express a lack of interest rather than risk being ashamed. A person who chooses not to participate in an activity/exercise should have his choice respected. On the other hand, it is usually possible to adapt games with single right answers into a more comfortable format.



### About quizzes generally

Approach is key. Except for titles devoted to a single format, such as all discussion topics or all word games, each MindPlay Connections™ publication contains at least one trivia quiz. If you ask the questions as a guessing game that you are playing together, you are likely to have greater success than when you “test” the other person. Rather than saying, *I'd like you to take this quiz*, try saying something like, *Here is some trivia on \_\_\_\_\_ (name the subject). Would you play along with me?* **Almost all of the exercises involve multiple choice or true/false answers to increase the odds of anyone getting the answers right.** Fairly frequently, we include material that is not common knowledge (because we want to *increase your knowledge*), and in that case, the guess of the person with dementia may be as good as yours.



For example, one quiz honors Earth Day with questions about garbage. We suggest approaching each item like this: *Here's the question: Which of these things takes the longest to decompose in a garbage dump. (Name the items on the list.) Care to make a guess with me?* Then make your choices – you don't have to agree. **Look up the answer right away** – don't wait until the quiz is over, because the person is likely to have forgotten the questions – and make a positive comment.

- If the person with AD got it right, celebrate.
- If only you got it right, downplay your success, perhaps as a lucky guess.
- If you both get it wrong, say something like, *Well, isn't that interesting? I didn't know that. Did you?*

Always keep it light.

We also sometimes use **quotation quizzes**. (Who said what?) Most people with dementia are unlikely to be able to match, for example, eight names to eight quotations, but if you **pair them**, they have a 50 % chance of being right. Therefore, if you have a quiz as we once did about who wrote various famous opening lines, you might say, *Here is the quotation: "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times . . ." Do you think that was the beginning of Moby Dick by Herman Melville or A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens?* Again, immediately look up the answer, and make light of errors. (Note that in preparation for doing this, you will need to look up the answers in advance so that one of the choices you offer really is right.)

**Remind the person that whenever he learns something new, he is growing new connections in his brain, and that's a good thing. When he is simply retrieving information from his brain that he already knows, he is exercising his brain, but not stretching it.**

You can also take away the "test" feeling by simply talking about the topic. *Did you ever read A Tale of Two Cities or see it as a movie or a play? Did you think it was a moving story?*

If the person is unfamiliar with the quotation or author, change the focus to an opinion question or two: *Do you think we are living now in both the best of times and worst of times? What's good about the present time? What's bad about it?* Pause between questions to give the person time to answer.

Many of our quotations quizzes feature the speaker's view on a particular topic and the person with dementia can at least say whether he agrees with the sentiment. **Opinion questions give people with AD a chance to succeed, because everyone has a right to his opinion, whether or not we agree.** And often, people have interesting opinions based on their unique experiences.



Finally, these exercises are called "trivia" quizzes for a reason. Knowing the answers is not important; having fun while you do them, is – which is why I am more likely to create a quiz on the history of beer or underwear than on European capital cities. If you don't know the answers, no one cares. My aim is to stimulate laughter and discussion.

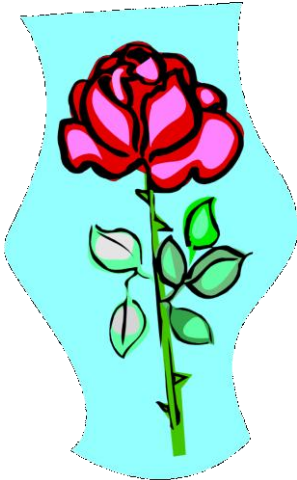
## Imagination and Reminiscence

These activities are designed to be done spontaneously with minimal introduction. Each one almost always has space for writing down thoughts, but if the people in your group are no longer able to write their thoughts, it also works as a discussion, and many of the topics can be talked about while you're waiting for lunch or on a bus outing, that is, outside of normal activity calendar events.

With some frequency we try to introduce the imaginative exercise with **light-hearted examples**, so that if the person with dementia cannot think of his own clever answers, he will at least have been amused by the introduction. For example, we introduced an exercise on:

- **unusual names** with an organist named C. Sharpe Minor
- **proverbs** with samples written by school children, such as “A penny saved is not much”
- **quirky song titles** with samples that included “You Can’t Have Your Kate and Edith, Too.”

Most of the imagination and creativity exercises we suggest can be done as is or with slight adaptations for people with dementia. Here are a few examples:



- In one issue, I used a sample from my book, ***Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults***, and asked readers to view their lives as a **metaphor**: Are you more like a rose or a daisy? We suggested a number of other possible comparisons, such as comparing your life to a tool in a toolbox or an instrument in an orchestra. Some people with dementia can handle such metaphors easily; others will need more concrete comparisons:
  - *Do you see yourself as more formal or informal?*
  - *Are you able to thrive anywhere or do you really appreciate being pampered?*
  - *Are you cheerful and friendly to all, or are you more shy and reserved?*
- **Unfinished sentences** are an easy way to get people with AD to use their imaginations. Once focusing on a money theme, we asked questions like:
  - Being rich means . . .
  - Never buy . . .
  - I am rich in . . .

You can do endless variations of unfinished sentences at any time to stimulate a person’s imagination. As a person’s verbal skills diminish, you might want to simplify the open-ended question by asking it as a choice between two things: *Would you rather be rich in dollars or rich in love?* Then follow up with additional questions: *Do you feel you are rich in love now? Who are the people who are most important to you?* And so on.
- Sometimes we suggest **simpler variations**. For example, when suggesting poetry writing ideas, we noted that acrostic poems are an easy warm-up. (Write a word vertically, such as the person’s name, and then think of a word that begins with each letter. For example, Joe might be Jovial, optimistic and enthusiastic.) We also suggested conjuring up images related to a color and writing a free form poem using those images. (See more on poetry under “Word Games”.)
- Similarly, with the exercise on thinking of quirky song titles, we suggested that readers reminisce about odd song titles from their youth, such as “Flat Foot Floogie,” or camp songs from their childhood, “Knick-Knack Paddy Whack, Give the Dog a Bone,” or sounds (She-boom, she-boom or



Sha-na-na) that we once thought were “cool.” If this then leads to a sing-along, that’s a terrific variation. **Imaginative exercises that lead into musical variations are always worth encouraging.**

- Another creative art is art, so sometimes we suggest an **art project** as an alternative. Many people with Alzheimer’s disease have trouble initiating tasks. If you say, “Draw a tree,” they may not know where to begin, but if you give them a blank piece of paper and perhaps draw two parallel lines on it to represent a trunk, they may be able to continue the drawing from there. Other art exercises may also require a little “jump-start.”



- **A brief word about art:** The best resources I know for teaching someone to help people with dementia enjoy painting are La Doris “Sam” Heinly’s update of the book, *Memories in the Making* and her first book, *I’m Still Here*. You can order them through <http://thememoriesinthemaking.com>. Sam is a strong advocate for giving people with dementia real art materials – water colors, for example, rather than markers or crayons – and for having “classes” with a real sense of creation, rather than time-fillers or “therapy” (even if the result is therapeutic).
- Others have found that some people with AD enjoy working with clay.

## Discussion

People with Alzheimer’s disease tend to be able to read until quite late in the disease process, as long as the print is large enough for them to see. They tend to lose the ability to read with *comprehension* fairly early, and yet, as many reading groups for people with dementia can attest, they still enjoy the group and the process and take pride in retaining this adult skill. Therefore, consider taking turns reading paragraphs in these discussions.

In these sections of Wisser Now’s MindPlay Connections™ we always try to choose topics for discussion that are broadly appealing and ask questions that prompt opinions rather than require specific information.

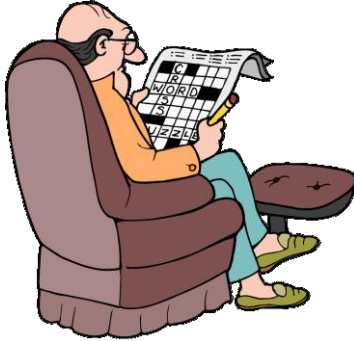
To develop your own variations, consider purchasing a book that has short stories that are interesting to read and discuss or picking some up at the local public library. You can learn more about and (if you desire) order the books listed below from Amazon by clicking on the blue links.

- [Life in These United States](#) is a compilation of entries from the Reader’s Digest column of the same name. Each story is short and easy to follow; all are either humorous or heartwarming.
- [Do Fish Drink Water?](#) by Bill McLain is one of dozens of books of this genre (many by him) that ask unusual questions and provide the answers.
- **Gene Kelly** is one in a series of books produced by the Myers Research Institute in extra large print for Alzheimer’s reading groups. You can learn more by going to <http://store.myersresearch.org/rero.html>.



## Word Games

Many of the word games that are part of MindPlay Connections™ are unsuited to people with AD, but **never underestimate what a person may be capable of doing**. Once you know a person's abilities, you can avoid what will be frustrating. Nevertheless, individual people with AD sometimes retain surprising skills.



### Humor

I have frequently included word games (puns, daffynitions, etc.) meant to amuse as much as stretch one's brain. The person with dementia may or may not "get" these jokes or word plays depending upon the degree of deterioration in his or her verbal skills, but **when it comes to humor, I always vote to keep trying**. You never know when laughter will come through.

### What I use sparingly or not at all

I do not include **crossword puzzles** among my word games because they can be found in every grocery store checkout line.

For the same reason, I seldom include **word searches**, except when I choose to create one related to a specific theme. As their dementia progresses, most people with AD are likely to need crossword puzzles and word searches vastly simplified. Both are easy to create using mostly words of no more than 5 or 6 letters and obvious clues. A good website with reasonably large print word search puzzles for varying levels of ability is <http://www.puzzles.ca/wordsearch.html>. I printed out one that had hidden the titles of Broadway Musicals within the square, for example. Note that this is a Canadian site, so it does not *always* spell words like Americans do (realise vs. realize, etc.)

**Word scrambles** are likely to be difficult for most people with AD; I seldom use them, but when I do, substitute something completely different.

However, there are lots of word games that can be successful with people with AD, especially if they are adapted. Here are some examples:

### Poetry and rhymes

Rhyming is an area in which people with dementia are likely to succeed if guidelines are simplified. People with dementia may not be able to come up with rhymes that require complex thinking. For example, one week we talked about **reversals**:

Rotten lettuce makes a bad salad; a depressing song is a sad ballad.

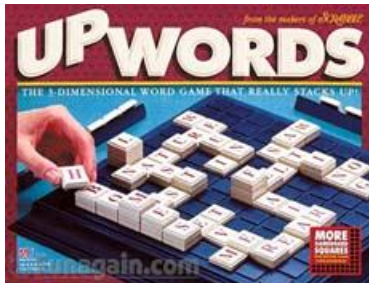
Nevertheless, the person may be able to appreciate the reversal when he hears it.

He can also probably manage to **make lists of words that rhyme**. In celebration of Earth Day, we suggested coming up with words to rhyme with:

- Earth
- Tree
- Green
- Flower
- Lake
- Waste



One game we mentioned that encourages rhyming and is easily adaptable to people with Alzheimer's disease is **UpWords**, which is similar to Scrabble except that the tiles are interlocking so that you can build on top of existing letters. A basic game of Scrabble in which a person is expected to take seven tiles and build on words horizontally and vertically – especially as an increasing number of words appear in multiple directions on the board – is likely to be overwhelming for the person with dementia.



However, the Upwords board is blank (no numbers, triple word scores, etc.) making it easy to adapt. If you simply make a word across the middle of the board – “cake,” for example – and then give the person with dementia several consonants to make new words, he is likely to be able to place a B on top of the C to make “bake,” or an R to make “rake.” He is less likely to be able to put that R over the K to make “care.” Rhyming words are easier than changing the middle of words, but once you have

exhausted “cake’s” rhymes, you can set up a new word.

To purchase **Up Words**, if you are reading this online, [click here](#).

A great resource for **using poetry with people with dementia** is Gary Glazner's ***Sparking Memories***, which is a collection of poems compiled for the Alzheimer's Poetry Project. Mr. Glazner is a master at using poetry effectively with older adults, especially those with dementia, and provides details in a lengthy introduction. The book ends with an interview of Peter Beeson, a man with early onset Alzheimer's disease, along with several pages of poems by him that are likely to resonate with anyone who has or works with people who have dementia. Order a copy of ***Sparking Memories*** online at [www.alzpoetry.com](http://www.alzpoetry.com) (using Paypal) or by sending a check in the amount of \$14.95 to: Gary Glazner, 158 5th Ave. #1R, Brooklyn, NY 11217. This price includes shipping and handling. Also consider hiring Gary as a presenter or staff trainer.

You can also find loads of poems online by simply typing in the name of a famous poet such as Emily Dickinson or Robert Frost followed by the word “poems.” Find one you like and then copy and paste it to a word document so that you can make the print as large as necessary.

If, like me, you tend to enjoy poets with a high element of humor, look for works by Shel Silverstein, Ogden Nash and Dr. Seuss (To order his *You're Only Old Once*, [click here](#).) I have written an entire course on using poetry in groups of older adults. Check it out by going to the Wiser Now store under “Staff Development.” (<http://shop.WiserNow.com>)

## Miscellaneous word games

One week we talked about **anagrams**. These require using all the letters in one's name to make up a new word or phrase and are likely to be too difficult for the person with AD, but he may be able to make up random words from some of the letters in his name.

H D A Y  
T R I B E  
C A K E

Another making-up-words game that I have had success with in working with people with Alzheimer's disease is **The Clock Game** which was produced by ElderGames. It does not seem to be available any longer, unfortunately, but you can make your own version. The premise, as you can see from this example, is to make as many words as possible from a 12-letter phrase arranged in a circle like the numbers on a clock. Each of the 25 phrases in the original game can lead to more than 100 words.

The advantage of putting words in a circle is that you escape the linear thinking of putting the phrase in a line. If I write

B I R T H D A Y C A K E

In a line like this, you see the same letters as when they are in a circle, but your thinking is likely to be less creative. For example, you do not see the obvious word "tribe" that shows up when the phrase is in a circle, and "C" in a line is not so easily paired with other combinations (ck, ch, cl, cr, tch) as it is in a circle. (This is also a trick used by developers of word puzzles.)

Among the other examples of 12-letter phrases used in The Clock Game were

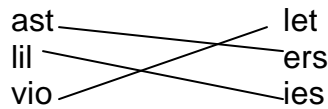
- the newspaper
- spring flower
- Italian bread
- raking leaves
- costume party
- Mother Nature
- Christmas Eve



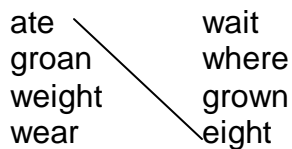
The beauty of this game is that it is easy to make your own variations by simply putting any phrase with a good combination of consonants and vowels in a circle. You can also use more or fewer than 12 letters. If you work with a higher functioning group, let them develop the list of words to be made from the phrase, along with some clues. For example, one word that can be made from the letters in "Mother Nature" is "roam," so the clue might be, "Where the buffalo \_\_\_\_\_."

One week, we used a word game in which people were asked to **combine 20 three-letter groupings into 10 six-letter groupings** to form the names of common flowers. This would likely to be too difficult for most people with Alzheimer's disease, but if the

syllables are arranged in **smaller groups**, they may have success drawing a line to the right ending or writing out the combined syllables. For example:



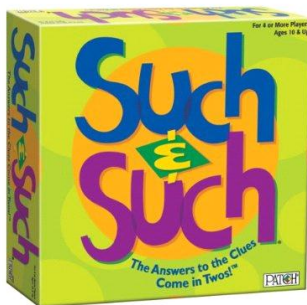
Another time, we created a word scramble using **homophones** – words that sound alike but are spelled differently. As mentioned earlier, people with dementia would be unlikely to be able to unscramble and match them, but might be able to come up with, for example, another way to spell “where.” Or they might match homophone lists in groups of 2 – 4 pairs, as illustrated here, particularly if they were introduced as “sound alike words” rather than “homophones”:



You can create these variations by looking up the answers ahead of time and writing the shortened columns on a white board, flip chart or in large print on normal paper.

**Fill in the blanks** is another word activity that people with dementia frequently succeed at. One week we suggested that readers complete titles of well-known songs about money:

1. Hey . . . Big Spender
2. Pennies . . . from Heaven
3. We Ain't Got . . . a Barrel of Money
4. Million Dollar . . . Baby
5. Brother, Can You . . . Spare a Dime?
6. Green Back . . . A Dollar
7. We're in . . .the Money
8. Gold . . .finger
9. Five Penny . . .Opera
10. Money can't buy . . . me love (John Lennon)



Read the words before the ellipses (dots) and see if they can fill in the rest of the title. Then try singing the songs. This often works with proverbs and pairs, too. There are also many books designed with this “Fill in the blank” premise that are available from various senior catalog companies. Check out:

- ElderSong (<http://www.eldersong.com/> or 800-397-0533)
- Nasco (<http://www.enasco.com/senioractivities/> or 800-558-9595)
- Flaghouse (<http://www.flaghouse.com/> or 800-793-7900)

Another game that can work with people with AD because it asks participants to name pairs of things, is **Such and Such**. For example: Basic baseball equipment = bat and ball. To order if you are reading this online, [click here](#).

### Activities about words

Finally, when we're talking about words and word games, many people with dementia may still be able to enjoy books *about* words, especially ones written in a humorous vein. Following are a few books you can learn more about and order directly from Amazon if you are reading this online.

- [Alphabet Juice](#) by Roy Blount, Jr.
- [Crazy English](#) by Richard Lederer
- [Fractured English](#) by Richard Lederer
- [More Joy of Lex](#) by Gyles Brandreth
- [Mother Tongue](#) by Bill Bryson

Along the same lines, at various times I've also included a few word games that allow participants to express opinions or ideas without worrying if they are wrong. We sometimes talk about **word origins**, for example. People with dementia have sometimes surprised me with their suggestions about where these words came from. Never hesitate to ask.

### Here are a few additional ideas:



#### Visual games

People with Alzheimer's disease frequently lose visual-spatial understanding, so there are some visual brain-teasers, such as optical illusions, that simply won't work with them.

Other games and ideas may be able to be adapted. For example, one of my favorite games is Scramble Squares from b.dazzle ([www.b-dazzle.com](http://www.b-dazzle.com)). The object is to take nine 4 x 4" squares and arrange them in one 12 x 12" square so that each side matches the side it touches. There are more than 100 variations of this puzzle from the b.dazzle company including loads of flower, bird, sea creature and animal variations as well as quilts, teapots, cars, cocktails and many more. At left are four pieces from the tulip square. Each puzzle is quite difficult to solve in the intended way, but there are many ways to adapt them, such as:

- Playing with fewer pieces, like just these four to make a square or rectangle
- Arranging the pieces in a long line, so that no piece has to match another on more than two sides
- Creating pairs of matched pieces
- Playing it like dominoes: Put one piece on the table; then give each person four pieces and let them take turns finding someplace to put each of their pieces where it will match on one side with another piece already on the table.

When a person is unable to do any of the above, simply arranging the pieces at random remains a colorful activity because the strong backgrounds tend to minimize the look of “mistakes.” You can see a video demonstration of these ideas on the home page of my primary website, [www.WiserNow.com](http://www.WiserNow.com).

### **Physical exercise**

The most important thing anyone can do to preserve brain function is to get regular physical exercise that elevates the heart rate and helps us draw oxygen into our bodies and brains. I always encourage exercise.

I am especially fond of **outdoor physical exercise**. Skin cancer is a real danger to many people, but mostly because of the long days they spent baking on the beach in their youth. Most older adults don't get outdoors often enough, and while some people really do need to protect their heads with a straw hat, almost everyone can benefit from getting a bit of UV rays on their hands and arms for 10 -15 minutes a day. This helps with proper absorption of vitamin D for building strong bones, but even more important, being outdoors is a mood-lifter. I am not alone in suggesting that we could do away with a great many prescriptions for anti-depressants if people simply got themselves outdoors for a 15-minute (longer, if possible) walk each day.



So take a nature walk. Watch the squirrels play. Listen to the birds. Marvel at the flowers. Appreciate the beauty of the earth. Or play badminton or croquet or miniature golf. If the people you work with have mobility challenges, at least consider holding your mind play discussions outdoors when the weather is reasonable.

**A caution:** Some outdoor activities are probably *not* advisable for people with dementia. I once wrote about flying a kite during Kite Month. Because of their balance problems and difficulty focusing on things above their heads, that's not likely to be a good idea for them.

As for **indoor exercise**, that, too is beneficial, and particularly if you can find a teacher of Tai Chi or Yoga, both of which are excellent for improving balance, flexibility and general well-being.

Furthermore, in my book, ***Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults***, (See Resources) I talk at some length about various ways you can add a physical aspect to non-physical games. For example, I advocate “voting” on opinion questions: *How many of you agree that it is important to look before you leap?* I then suggest that participants be given colorful plastic party plates to wave in the air if they agree. (That tends to produce much more energized and visually appealing responses than simply raising hands.) If you are doing these exercises one-on-one with someone with dementia, you can still wave your two plastic party plates, or perhaps stretch after every right answer in a matching game.

### **Finding purpose and meaning**

Another thing that lifts spirits is finding purpose and meaning in life. That may come through:

- **Volunteer work.** There are hundreds of organizations that need help. I have known people who have quite advanced Alzheimer's disease who are still able to help make soup and sandwiches for the homeless and stuff envelopes. Others have knit blankets for babies or made favors for nursing home table trays. I occasionally mention charities in the materials that I believe deserve support.
- **Cooking and baking.** There are endless possibilities here. People with dementia may not be able to measure all the ingredients anymore, but they may be able to help with mixing and pouring, and at the very least can offer an opinion about the results.



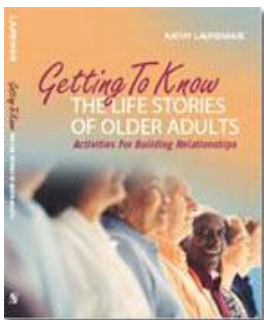
- **Creating art or appreciating art.** New York's Museum of Modern Art has a wonderful program for bringing in people with Alzheimer's disease for special tours, and interestingly, many seem to appreciate abstract modern art more than traditional art.

- **A talent show.** Never underestimate what might still be possible.
- **Dancing.** People who walk unsteadily can often still dance amazingly well.
- **Socializing.** New research is finding that socializing with friends can be as good for the brain as doing crossword puzzles or other brain-focused activities. It has the added benefit of lifting others' spirits while we lift our own.
- **Music.** Most people with Alzheimer's disease maintain a strong affection for the music they fell in love to or have always loved. Assuming you know what kind of music that is, (Broadway show tunes, classical, pop) consider taking them to an outdoor concert which is often free and easy to leave, while also providing fresh air and interesting surroundings.

This should give you a good start; learn more through the resources below.

## Wiser Now Resources

### Do you want additional mind-stimulating material?



Visit the Wiser Now store (<http://shop.WiserNow.com>) or print out [this list](#) to see the ever-growing catalog of downloadable **MindPlay Connections™** titles. Then consider doing the following:

- Order the [Creative Mind Play](#) CD series from Health Professions Press based on archived material from Kathy's **Brain Aerobics Weekly**.
- Order Kathy's book, [Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults](#),



**Activities for Building Relationships** also from Health Professions Press.

- Watch the video demos of two of her favorite activity ideas at [www.WiserNow.com](http://www.WiserNow.com).
- Visit her blog at [www.MindMusings.com](http://www.MindMusings.com).

### **Are you a caregiver?**

You will find both useful advice and compassionate reassurance at Kathy's website [www.WiserNowAlz.com](http://www.WiserNowAlz.com) and her blog [www.CaregiverCheer.com](http://www.CaregiverCheer.com). Check out the material there, including her very practical and upbeat **books on Alzheimer's caregiving**, which are also available on Kindle.

### **Is there an older adult in your life to whom you would like to send ongoing joy?**



Sign up for **Letters for Elders** to send that person regular friendly letters that arrive via the U.S. Postal system in brightly colored envelopes. Learn more at [www.Letters4Elders.com](http://www.Letters4Elders.com).

### **Do you have staff development needs?**

- Under the name **Elder Care Conversations**, Kathy and her friend and colleague, David Troxel, co-author of "The Best Friends Approach" books on Alzheimer's care, have created a 12-part, self-contained, downloadable series of audio tapes and print training material on "**Amping Up Your Activity Programming**." Order them individually or as a package at <http://shop.wisernow.com> and learn more at [www.ElderCareConversations.com](http://www.ElderCareConversations.com).
- Kathy gives active aging and train-the-trainer workshops to professionals in person or via webinar or teleseminar. Her topics include brain aerobics/mind play, life stories, creative training techniques, dementia care, and medical staff sensitivity.
- Order "**22 Creative Training Tips to Use Instantly**" at <http://shop.wisernow.com/> and check out [Kathy's other downloadable materials there on staff development](#).
- Kathy has a master's degree in instructional technology and has developed multi-media curricula for corporate clients for more than 20 years. Contact her to discuss your specific staff development needs.



Kathy can be reached by writing to [kathy@wisernow.com](mailto:kathy@wisernow.com) or calling 800-999-0795 (weekdays 9:00 – 5:00 Eastern time).

### **Do you need a presenter who can provide fun and stimulating mind play exercises?**

Kathy would be delighted to comply. Contact her at [kathy@wisernow.com](mailto:kathy@wisernow.com) or 800-999-0795 (weekdays 9:00 – 5:00 Eastern time). More detail is provided under "staff development" at [www.WiserNow.com](http://www.WiserNow.com).

### **Are you a media representative needing an interview subject/press release?**

Here are some of Kathy's topics:

- Exercising Your Brain: What's Laughter Got to Do with It?
- The #1 Activity for Brain Health Will Surprise You
- Addressing Stress to Maintain Your Brain
- Variety Is Vital to a Vigorous Mind
- Getting to Know Your Group: Fast and Fun Exercises
- Humor in Dementia
- Alzheimer's Disease: Stop the Fear-Mongering
- The Logic Behind Illogical Behavior in People with Dementia