



Art Therapy 4 All

Simple Creative Exercises For Relaxation and Distracting a Busy Mind.

A Booklet For Carers





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Welcome

We have designed this booklet to provide you with quick and simple creative exercises to distract a busy mind and help you with creative activities to aid relaxation. We are really aware of just how little free time carers have so we have made the exercises quick. You can however expand these ideas in any way you wish.

Pick and choose which exercises work for you. You might really take to one and not like another. Remember there is no right or wrong way to do the exercises, it's not about producing 'good' art it's about playing with the ideas.

Please note, this booklet is for creative ideas. The ideas aren't art therapy. Art therapy is a type of psychotherapy where you work with an art psychotherapist either 1:1 or in a group with other people

We hope you will find the booklet helpful.

The creation of this booklet was funded by the National Lottery Awards for All as part of our project: Beyond, beyond words - Online art psychotherapy groups for carers.



Draw a Line Whilst Focussing On Your Breathing.

You will need:

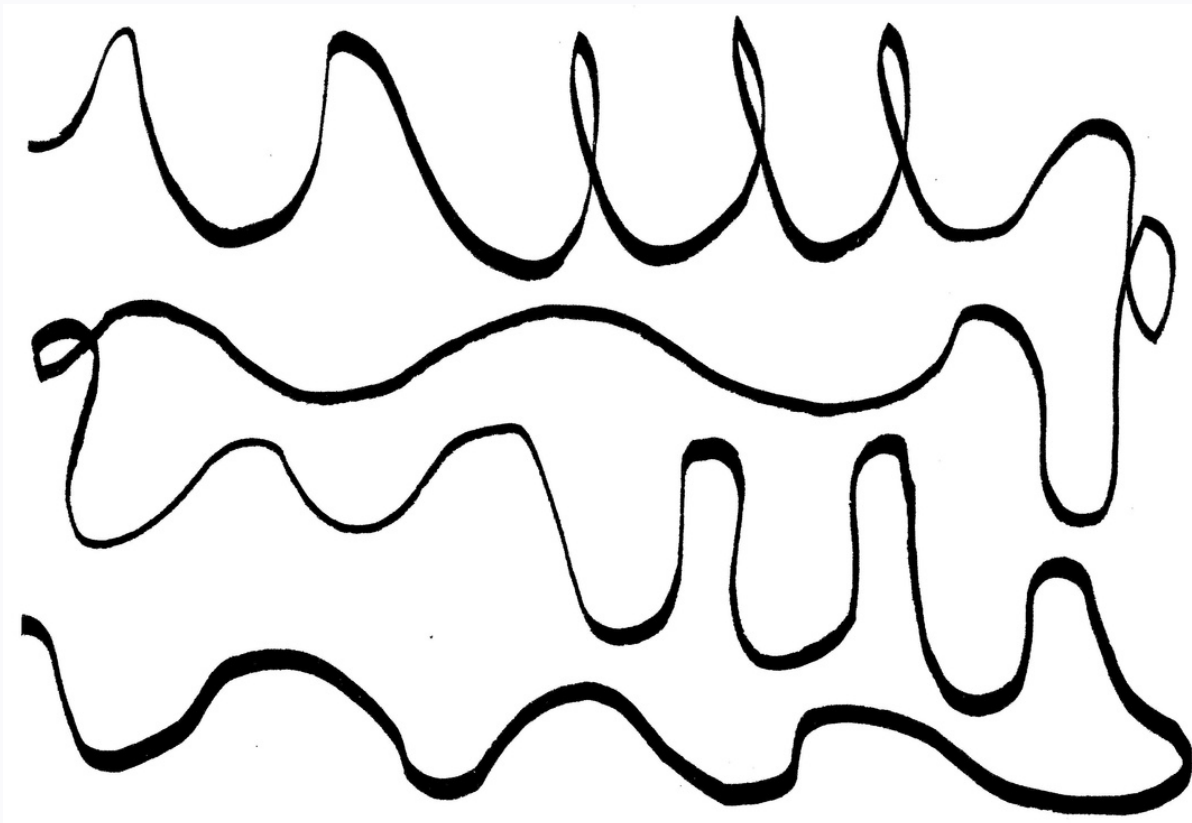
A pen, pencil, pastel or chalk

Paper

This exercise can be done in as little as 3 minutes but you could do it for much longer if you find it relaxing.

Method

Choose a pen/pencil/pastel and begin to move it over the paper making a line. As you do so be aware of your breathing. Make marks to reflect this. Try to do this without making judgements or trying to change anything, just noticing.



Found Object

This is a really helpful exercise to do if you feel anxious outside the house. It can help distract the brain from those internal anxieties to focusing on the environment around you.

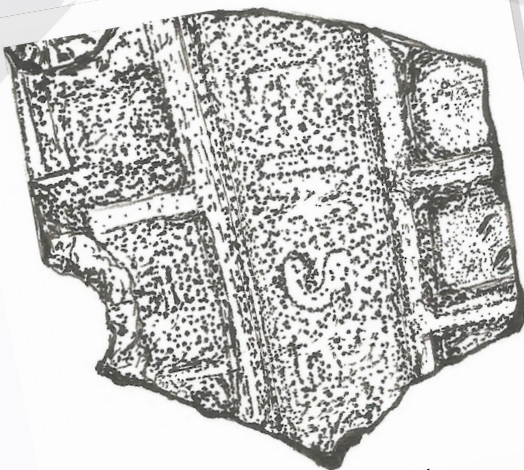
Method

When out walking find an object that you are drawn to. You will be surprised when you start looking what is lying around. Maybe you will find a tiny bit of jewellery, a particularly nice leaf or an old crisp packet from 20 years ago that brings back memories of that time. You can walk in the country, city or just down your street, you could even do this in your own garden if you have one.

Why are you drawn to the object you have found?

What can you do with it now?

You could take the object home, draw the object, frame the object, start a collection or you could leave it where it is and take a photo of it to remind yourself.



Using pen to draw the texture



Found fragment of a tile

Drawing Exercises

You will need:

Pen or pencil

Paper

Both of these exercises require a lot of concentration. They are therefore a great tool for distracting a busy mind. Please remember that the outcome is not important!

Draw an object without looking at your paper.

Method

Find an object to draw, place your pen to the paper. Start drawing the object but don't look at your paper or pen.

How did that feel to do? Are you surprised at the outcome?

Draw an object using your non-dominant hand

Method

Find an object to draw. Using your non dominant hand start drawing (you can look at your paper in this exercise).

How did that feel to do? was it easier or harder than you thought? Are there qualities in the image you like or wouldn't have seen if you had used your dominant hand?

A Message To Yourself

You will need:

White card

Pencil

Scissors

Felt tip pens or coloured pencils.

A bank card to draw around.

Method

Place the bank card on your white card and draw around it using the pencil, cut out the shape. Think about what you need to tell yourself or hear. Here are some examples but make it personal if you can.

- I can do this!
- I am a strong and capable person.
- I'm doing the best I can and my best is enough.

Write this message on the card and then decorate using the felt tip pens.

Along with your bank card you can fit this in your purse or wallet so it's there with you as you go about your day.



Natural Artworks

Another good exercise to practice focusing attention outwards and on to the environment around you.

You will need:

To go for a walk in the park, country or garden if you have one.

Camera or phone camera

Found natural objects

Method

When out walking start collecting leaves, stones, sticks and feathers; anything you are drawn to.

Arrange these objects to make a natural artwork. Can you make a circle, placing the objects inside in a pattern? Can you weave the objects around each other and hang the object on a tree?

Different environments will give you different materials to play with.

For example at the beach, you might find shells, stones, sand or fossils. In addition there might be items washed up from the sea.

Take a photo of your natural artwork to keep as a memory.



The exercises on the following pages need a few more art materials.



A Patchwork of Kindness

You will need:

Glue stick

White paper or card

Paper squares in a range of colours, patterns and textures

You could also include plastics, textiles, metal, whatever you are drawn to. If you enjoy sewing you could patchwork squares of fabric together.

Method

Select squares that stand out to you and arrange them in a patchwork design. Stick them onto the paper.

Think of each square as representing a different person who made you smile and helped shape your life in a positive way.



Stained Glass Window Decorations

You will need

Tracing paper circles

Black felt-tip pen

Coloured cellophane

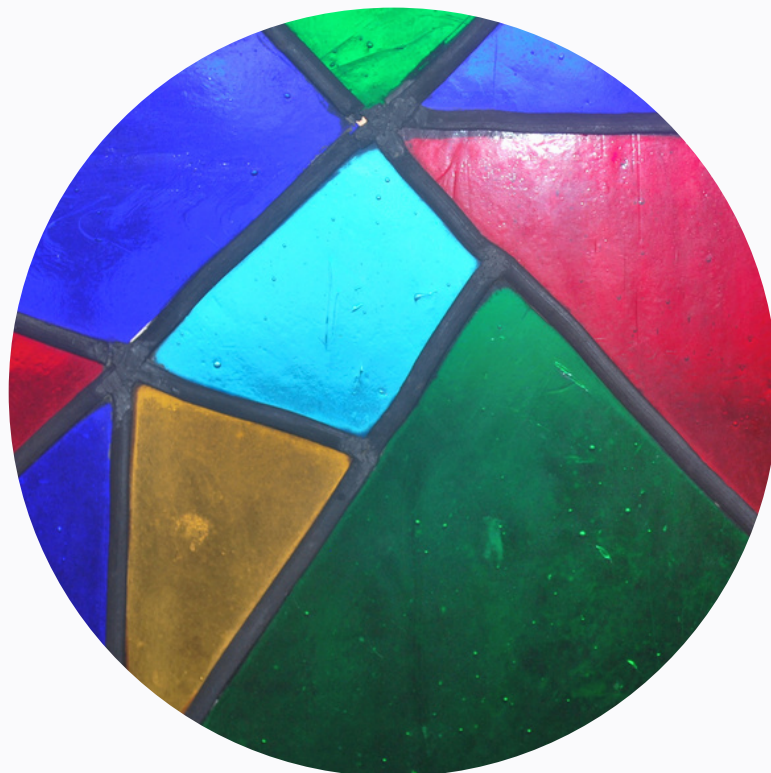
Glue

String

Method

Use the black pen to draw a simple pattern or design onto a circle of tracing paper. Turn it over and stick coloured cellophane all over the side not drawn on. Once dry, hang using the string at the window or somewhere light can shine through.

Stained glass has been used in various ways for over a thousand years.
What or where do they remind you of?



Oil Pastel Resist Painting

You will need:

Watercolour paper/thick paper or card

Oil pastels or wax crayons

Watercolour paints

Pot of water

Paint brush

Method

Use the oil pastels or wax crayons to draw a design onto thick paper, pressing them down hard on the paper to make thick lines. Then, using a very wet brush dipped into the paints, paint over the top with a thin wash of paint. Use different colours to cover the whole page and allow them to blend into one another. Watch how the paint moves away from your design.



Picture Frames

You will need:

A4 white card with frames drawn on or readymade blank cardboard frames.
Art materials of your choice such as metallic pens, jewels, sequins, paints.

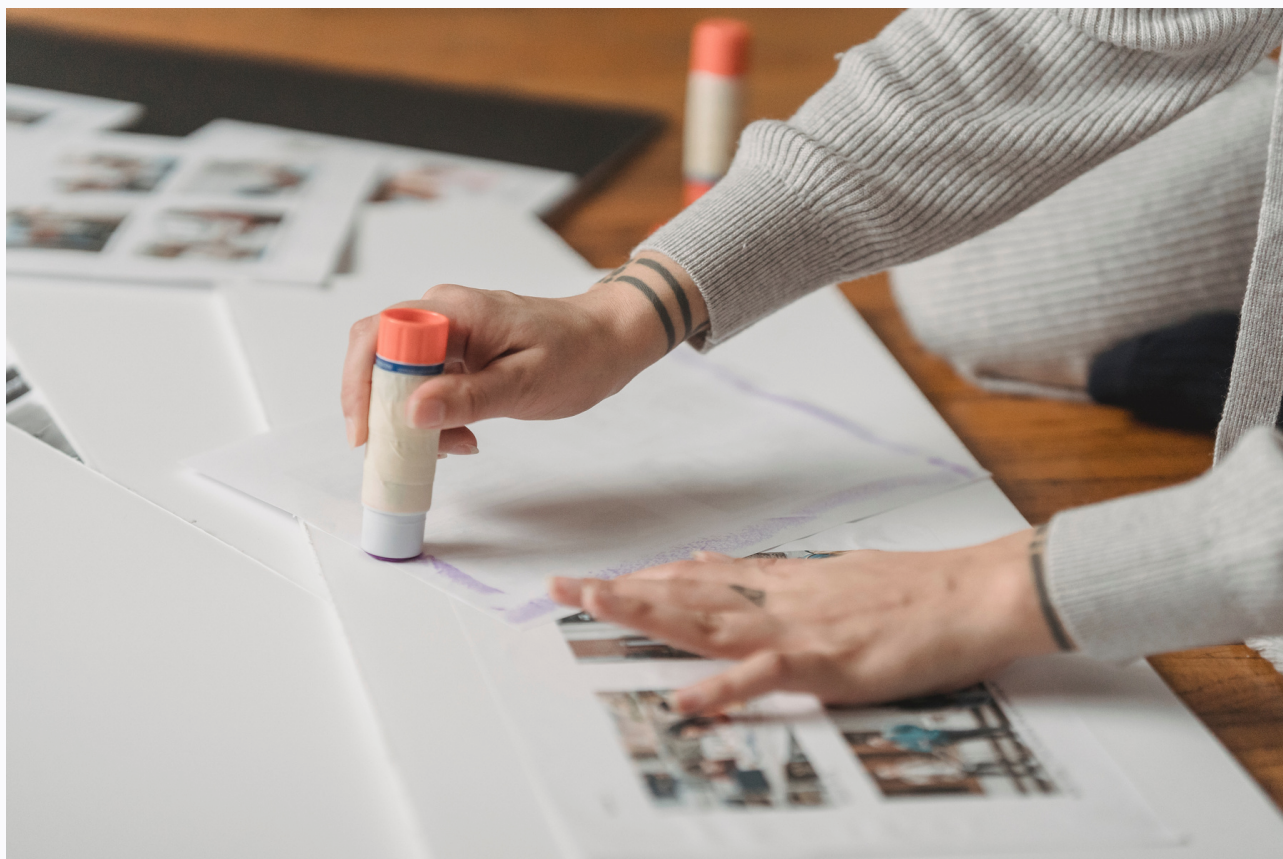
Method

Decorate the border as you like to create a special frame. Stick a photo within it, or you may like to draw a portrait.

Who are the important people in your life?

Who would you like a picture of in your frame?

Perhaps you might have a photo of you and a friend enjoying life, maybe your friend would like to see it too?



Decorate a Stone

You will need:

A pebble or stone

Acrylic paints

Paint brushes of various sizes

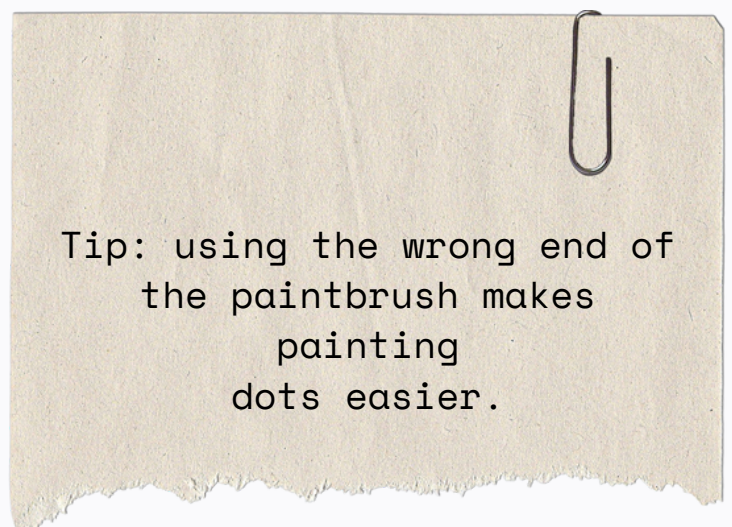
Method

Using white acrylic paint cover the surface of the stone you would like to decorate. You may need to do a few thin layers to get good coverage. Set aside to dry.

Once dry you can use the paints to decorate the stone. Here are some ideas to try:

- Can you cover the stone in patterns?
- Create an image or little scene on the stone.
- If you wanted to you could write a message to yourself or to give to someone else and decorate around it.
- You could make the stone into an animal.

Once decorated you could put the stone back where you found it for someone else to find.





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We hope you enjoyed the creative ideas in this booklet.

If you would like to join a mailing list to be notified when the next online art psychotherapy group for carers is please follow the link below:

www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/7W71W3/

or contact:

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