

Music Therapy: Tips to Help Your Loved One Benefit

When a senior has a form of memory loss, such as Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, it can hinder their ability to remember places, people or activities they once loved. When memory loss progresses, it can affect their speech, mobility and ability to connect. Unfortunately, there is no way to cure this disease; however, there are some ways caregivers can help reignite the spark in their loved one.

In an article titled "Five Reasons Why Music Boosts Brain Activity," it states that researchers have found that music therapy boosts brain activity in those with memory loss in a number of ways, such as:

- 1. Evoking emotions that carry memories** – The article states that music can bring memories back to those with memory loss. Music allows us to connect to a place and a time in our lives, and when we hear certain songs, it may cause a link that helps increase cognitive ability. The article also states that if music is played with everyday activities, those with memory loss may be able to connect that song with the activity, which can help to improve cognitive ability over time.
- 2. Music aptitude and appreciation last** – According to the article, musical abilities remain longer than other abilities. While other abilities fade, musical abilities and memories last longest. We often hear, "where words fail, music speaks," and in those with memory loss, this is proven to be true.
- 3. Closeness occurs** – One of the symptoms of memory loss is the lack of ability to share emotions, feelings and connections with those around them. Music allows those with memory loss to talk, touch and dance with others. According to the article, this can create the feeling of security.
- 4. Music is engaging** – The article states that music is able to provide a high level of brain exercise. For example, singing can activate the left side of the brain, while listening to it activates the right side. Watching music being played helps the visual parts of the brain become more active.
- 5. Emotions can be stimulated and managed** – Music requires no mental processing, according to the article. This means that minds can be eased and stress levels can lower. Music has the ability to shift moods and increase the amount of positive interactions.

With the various ways that music therapy benefits those with memory loss, it can help you in your journey as a caregiver to try to put some of these benefits into action. Try some of the following suggestions:

- **Play the DJ.** If your loved one used to enjoy particular songs or types of music, build a playlist and play it. This can especially help when your loved one feels agitated, seems stressed or needs an outlet for their negative emotions.
- **Dance with your loved one.** Push the furniture to different parts of the room to make a dance floor. If the music your loved one enjoys makes them want to move and groove, get up and have a dance party. Not only will this help them get some exercise, but it can get rid of frustration and energy, which can help them sleep at night.

Live Well. Age Well. Be Well.

- **Bring out old instruments.** If your loved one with memory loss played an instrument when they were younger, try to take them somewhere they can either play that instrument, listen to it or touch it. Just like it was seen in the movie classic *The Notebook*, Allie could play the piano by heart, even though her mind couldn't remember.
- **Watch a musical television show or movie.** Try to watch old television programs or movies that your loved one once enjoyed. These can potentially bring back fond memories of time with family or friends and can help you and your loved one bond and connect.
- **Find a music therapy club.** Check out the local senior living communities. Many have programs that can help your loved one reap the benefits of music therapy. Not only this, but they can also help your loved one socialize and engage in a memory-loss-friendly environment.

We Would Love to Hear from You!

If you have comments or questions about our blog, we'd love to hear from you. We also welcome you to read our [recent blog articles](#) on current caregiver and memory care topics.

Live Well. Age Well. Be Well.

Now open and offering [Independent](#), [Assisted Living](#) and [A Knew Day[®] Memory Support](#), Aspired Living[®] of Prospect Heights is a distinctive senior living community designed to offer seniors residing in the Chicago Northwest Suburbs area a fresh alternative to "typical" senior living communities.

Aspired Living[®] of Prospect Heights provides residents with the ideal balance of personalized support, dignified privacy and enhanced independence complemented by luxurious amenities and our life-enriching, award-winning [VIVA!SM programming](#).

Managed by Pathway to Living[®], an innovator in senior living, Aspired Living[®] offers the choice of private apartment floor plans and the beauty of a brand new community, stunningly appointed and decorated for unsurpassed comfort and style by the award-winning senior living design firm, Thoma-Holec Design, Inc.

For more information, please call Diane or Janette, Lifestyle Specialists, at 847-243-6920.

***Disclaimer:** The articles and tip sheets on this website are offered by Aspired Living[®] of Prospect Heights for general informational and educational purposes and do not constitute legal or medical advice. For legal or medical advice, please contact your attorney or physician.*

Live Well. Age Well. Be Well.