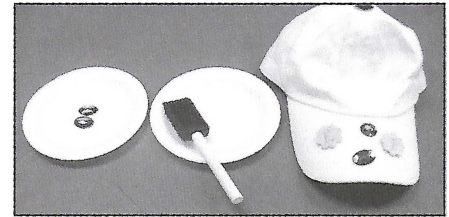


Decorate a Hat

From "A Different Visit: Activities for Caregivers and their Loved Ones with Memory Impairments"

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Does your loved one or client wear hats? Do you think that they would wear a hat if it reflected their own brand of creativity? This activity consists of giving new life to some old (or new) hats and designing an article of clothing that the participant will wear, giving purpose and meaning to this creative outlet. If a group of community members are in a club, they'll feel connected in their matching hats. One of our favorite applications of this activity is in preparation for a Kentucky Derby celebration or summer activities. Add to the experience by going to the store together to shop for pieces to use for decoration.



HOW TO

1. Gather your supplies:
 - a. **A hat.** At the craft store, you can purchase visor hats that are made of craft foam. You can also purchase cotton baseball caps and fisherman hats. All of these hats are in the craft store because they are meant to be decorated. Additionally, they are not expensive.
 - b. **Decorations for your hat.** While you are at the craft store looking for your hat, you could also search for decorations. You could purchase self-adhesive shapes made from craft foam. They also have a number of shapes that are not self-adhesive, but could work as well. You could also choose flowers, rhinestones, team logos, or whatever your family member finds interesting. If possible, bring them along and let them help choose what they'd like to put on their hat.
 - c. **Glue and a brush.** You have to be picky about your glue here because you need glue that is non-toxic and will allow you to adhere things to fabric or craft foam. Ask workers at the craft store to help you select glue. You will also want to purchase (if you do not already have one) a thick-handled brush to apply the glue. Thicker handles allow for easier gripping, thus making it more likely that your family member can help with the gluing process.
 - d. **A plastic dish.** You will need a dish to pour your glue into.
2. Pour some of the glue into your dish and place it near the participant's dominant hand. Place your brush in the glue and place the hat directly in front of where the person is sitting. Put your decoration items in front of them so they can see the different options. Do not make the options too plentiful, which may add frustration. Five to seven items are best to try at first. You could always add more or take some away.
3. Demonstrate. This is a three-step process of dipping the brush in glue, dabbing the glue on the spot of choice on the hat, and putting the decoration item on the glued area.
4. After demonstrating, allow your family member to proceed with the project. Provide guidance as needed, but allow them to make this hat their own. Whatever they create is perfectly acceptable. There is no right or wrong way to decorate something.
5. If an individual is experiencing any memory problems, you can find a way to let them remember what they have created. This way, they can feel that sense of accomplishment and pride over and over again. One suggestion would be to write on the inside of the hat in permanent marker, "Made Together By ... " Then, when they see or are shown that message, they can feel good about their accomplishment again.

TIPS

- Glue can be tricky. Depending on the type of glue and decorations that you are adhering, you may also need to put glue on the back of the items (rhinestone, shape, etc.) as well as on the hat. If this is the case, perhaps it would be a good idea for you to be the glue dabber to prevent any frustration.
- We would not recommend throwing these hats in the washer. Chances are, you would not have your decorations still attached when they came out. If an individual adores the hat and wears it constantly, perhaps you can try hand washing it or spot cleaning it, or making a second, "back-up" hat.
- Keep this age-appropriate. It is critical to respect their status as adults. We would not suggest choosing any decoration item that could seem child-like.
- Be aware! You are probably going to be working with small objects. If your family member or client has some memory deficits and forgets what the rhinestones, shapes, or flowers are, they may think they are candy and place them in their mouth. We do not want that to happen. It helps to start an activity by describing what the objects are, and to demonstrate their use before giving them to the person with memory problems. However, if you feel that putting things in their mouth is a realistic possibility, please choose another activity.
- Make hats that they can give as gifts, especially to grandchildren.



There is no right or wrong way to decorate something.

ADAPTATIONS - More Challenging

- Use more decoration items. Maybe they can work with ten at a time. Or, you can make the design a little more complex. Instead of just gluing shapes, flowers, or rhinestones to a hat, the participant can add some decorative paint to the hat as well.
- Create a coordinating miniature tote bag, also sold at the craft stores.
- You can also create a picture frame. Pick up an unfinished wooden picture frame, and cover it with your chosen decorations. If you are going to work with wood, you also need to pick up an appropriate non-toxic glue. Ask someone at the craft store for guidance.

ADAPTATIONS - Less Challenging

- As we have mentioned a number of times throughout this manual, eliminate steps if necessary. Make yourself the designated glue dipper, glue dabber, or decoration adherer to reduce the number of steps. Make this a doable activity for your loved one or client.
- Use a shirt instead of a hat to decorate. Put outlines of the decoration items in permanent marker on the shirt. This way, they have more of a guide for placing the items.
- Let them make a hat together with a grandchild.



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