

Human Right to Personal Expression



A Slice* about Magic Moments

* Over 20 different strands of work took place between March and October 2022 as part of Rights Made Real Phase 2. Each of these strands was situated under one of 4 Human Rights. This Slice offers a slice of insight into one of those strands.

HUMAN RIGHT TO PERSONAL EXPRESSION

A Slice about Magic Moments

The Magic Moments Activity Packs & Workshops Opportunity was a collaboration between Magic Me (www.magicme.co.uk) and Rights Made Real in Care Homes.

27 care homes received a Magic Moments Activity Pack in the post. The contents of the packs have been carefully selected to explore light, touch, colour and sensory ways of working.

A flavour of what was included in the packs includes: a torch, acetate, marbling ink, cinnamon sticks, dried rose petals, modelling clay, lace and sequinned fabrics.

After receiving the packs, care home staff were invited to an online workshop with Georgia Akbar and Lily Ash Sakula, the artists who created the packs. The workshops provided an opportunity to explore how the various activities could be offered to a wide range of residents with varying needs, including those who stay in their room and those with later stage dementia.

Creating Connections with the Right to Personal Expression and Principles from the National Care Standards

Some key elements of this opportunity which link the right to personal expression and the National Care Standards were:

- Emphasises no one desired outcome, no right or wrong- for example with a marbling ink activity the patterns created are guaranteed to be unique to each person
- Creative activities which avoid being childish
- A chance for residents and staff to be playful together- for example shining a torch through a glass and seeing what shapes it creates
- Options of different activities which are accessible to everyone including those with cognitive and sensory impairments, and those who spend much of their day in bed

What we've Heard

"Most the time when we make something (art activity) residents might say 'well I didn't do that' because someone else usually helps them. With this marbling activity they did everything themselves- swirling the colours around in the water to make different patterns & shapes. One resident blew through a straw to move the colours around, this was a good idea for people who aren't able to hold a brush".

"For the clay activity we first went out into the garden and residents picked up different items (like twigs and flowers) that they could then use to create something with the clay. It made the activity even more personal to each of them. A resident who hasn't taken part in any activities for months, was sitting at the table as we were having a go with making shapes with the clay. He picked up some clay and spent time rolling it in his hands- this was a revelation to see something capturing his attention".

“Another resident took the clay and made a shape like a log, put holes in it and gave it an oar- and went on a trip in his canoe. He took another piece of clay and gave it two lumps and a tail, but this wasn’t a Loch Ness monster- he told us it was an anaconda. It opened up a really fun conversation”

“Using the light activity – shining the light of a torch through different materials such as cellophane wrappers or lace material- has worked a treat for some residents, particularly those who spend a lot of time in bed. Looking at the different shapes that are created seems to bring a calmness”.

“A resident with a significant visual impairment took part in the touch activity. He was holding a large cinnamon stick, and this reminded him of the feeling of wood. This led him to share about his time working on the docks”.

“I see it as a sign of success during an activity when an activity takes on a life of its own, and I can sit back because the residents are able to lead the way with it themselves- I saw this happening using the activities in the pack”.

“I tried the modelling with a group of ladies in the nursing unit. One lady was really pleased with her two models, they were very creative. The others struggled a wee bit to get going and in the end, for them, it became more about the conversation than the model”.

“Last Friday we tried the marbling. We marbled some paper and then we marbled the card disks which are now hanging on a tree as a decoration in the lounge. Everyone enjoyed that experience. Comments were “fascinating”, “marvellous”, “magical” and “Look at that! You wouldn’t believe it!”

“Today I tried some scrunchy cellophane on white with a lady who is quite ‘locked in’. She was smiling, her face lit up and she kept touching and rearranging the colours. I didn’t have a dark space so we didn’t use the torch, but the window and the sunlight. We looked through the different colours too. But the showstopper was the golden fringed curtain – she was the most animated I’d seen her in a long time. A true success!”

1 Thing you Might Want to Do

Check-out the Magic Me website www.magicme.co.uk, where you can find a booklet in the Resources section, which gives you all the information needed to create and get going with your own Magic Moments Activity Pack.

Something you Might want to Ask or Think more About

Ask yourself: What ideas presented in the stories about might I like to find out more about or try out?

