

Music for Reminiscing

This program will encourage meaningful dialogue within the encouraging and inspiring construct of music. Reminiscing with music can improve memory stimulation and support a positive life review. Try to share the thoughts, memories and feelings that are sparked during the music.

Ideal Group Size: 1:1

Equipment needed

- A theme and at least 10 related song titles
- A list of relevant questions
- Access to Google and YouTube websites
- A journal, writing utensil and a binder (optional)

Instructions

1. Choose a theme - perhaps an approaching holiday, season or a common word.
For example: "Valentine's Day", "Springtime", "Love", etc.
2. Find at least 10 song titles related to that theme catering to the interest of your loved one.
For example, if the theme were "Baby", here are 10 songs that include "baby" in the lyrics:
-Hello my Baby
-Baby Face
-Melancholy Baby
-Baby it's cold outside
-Walkin' my baby back home
-You must have been a beautiful baby, cause baby look at you now
-I found a million dollar baby in a 5 and 10 cent store
-Blue Heaven
-Is you is or is you ain't my baby
-Santa Baby
3. List the song titles and give your loved one the choice of which song they would like to begin with.
4. Search for the lyrics to the song on Google and search for a recording of the song on YouTube.
5. Depending on your loved one's vision, consider enlarging the lyrics to a minimum font size of 20.

6. Listen to the song-and singalong if you wish!
7. Ask your loved one questions, such as:
 - Why did you choose this song to listen to first?
 - Why is this song meaningful to you?
 - When was the first time you heard this song?
 - During what time in your life was this song popular?
 - What else was going on in your life at that time?
8. Analyze the lyrics of each song and ask how the lyrics relate to your loved one's life story. For example: In the song "Hello my baby", the first lyric is "Hello my baby, hello my honey, hello my ragtime gal". Ask questions such as the following:
 - What terms of endearment were popular in your day?
 - What loving names did you call your family members?
 - What loving names were you called?
 - What is a ragtime gal?
9. Continue with other songs on your list and ask similar questions. Be flexible and stray off your list if other songs are brought up during this process. Also, find answers on the Internet that were unknown to your loved one. People often enjoy learning fun facts about the composer of a song, the year it was released and origins of bizarre sayings and lyrics.
10. Keep a record of the time spent with your loved one in a journal. Write down the date of your music sharing session, the songs you explored and listened to, the questions asked and the responses given. If you printed a hard copy of the lyrics, build a repertoire by keeping the lyrics together in a binder. During future music reminiscing sessions, you can begin with reviewing familiar songs from previous occasions. It's a good way to start the ball rolling and set the tone for what you will be doing over the next hour or so.