Exhilarating Exhales!


“Sometimes all I need is the air that I breathe and to love you.” (From The Air That I Breath, by Albert Hammond and Mike Hazlewood, recorded by The Hollies)
“We tried to play games to get our minds off of drowning.”
– Adolescent victim of Hurricane Katrina

- London Bridge
- Ring Around the Rosy
- Rain, Rain Go Away
- Humpty Dumpty
- Snow White
  - www.rhymes.org.uk

Let’s have fun!

“Play-related” Therapies

- Drama Therapy (www.nadt.org)
- Dance Therapy (www.adta.org)
- Music Therapy (www.musictherapy.org)
- Play Therapy (www.a4tp.org)
- Art Therapy (www.arttherapy.org)
- Therapeutic Recreation (www.atra-online.com)

The purpose of all of the above?
- To move from being stuck toward personal growth and emotional freedom
Definition of Play

- To occupy oneself in amusement, sport, or other recreation
- To deal or behave carelessly or indifferently
- To behave or converse sportively or playfully.
- To move or operate freely within a bounded space, as machine parts do.
- “Play is apparently purposeless activity that’s fun to do, pleasurable. It’s one of the brain’s most important exercises, actually opening up the brain to new ideas. It’s a terribly important component of being a human.” Play can “make one enormously more productive and invigorated in other aspects of life.” - Dr. Stuart Brown, psychologist and author of *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*

The Purpose of Theater Games

- To ignite a spirit of playfulness
- To build connection with others
- To provide a platform for self expression
- To generate catharsis (often leading to new and healthier perspectives)
- To create focus
- To enhance memory
  - “You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.” – Plato (Ancient Greek philosopher)
**Play Partners**

- Two Things in Common
- Story Behind Your Name
- Mirroring

According to Naomi Feil, author of *The Validation Breakthrough*, “When one can ‘step into the shoes’ of another human being and ‘see through their eyes,’ one can step into the world of disoriented very old people and understand the meaning of their sometimes bizarre behavior.” Mirroring is one way to enter into empathy.

---

**Metaphor - I Am Bird**
Birthday Fun

- “Happy Birthday” Silly Sing
  - Vowels
  - Opera
  - Hum
- Improvisational Birthday Wishes/Tributes
  - Choral Speak (director points randomly to individuals— one word, phrase, sentence, series of sentences)
  - In Sync Birthday Wishes (one word, phrase, sentence, series-of-sentences at a time)
- __________Mania!
- Personalized Songs

Group Fun

- In Sync Clap
- Count to Twenty
- Pass the Energy
- Yes And!
- And Then!
- Improvisational Dance
  - Parkinson’s residents claim they are “symptom free” when dancing (Source: The Dana Foundation’s BrainWork: The Neuroscience Newsletter, Jan.- Feb., 2009)
- Creative Quote
  - “Fun is __________ ” – Dr. Seuss

“The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes to do, but in liking what one has to do. ” — James Barrie
What Makes Us Tick

• “When it all boils down, life makes us tick. I never wanted to get old, but if I’d lived to 75, I never would have enjoyed all the things I got to enjoy after that. And if I’d lived to ninety, I’d missed a lot. So maybe I should live to be 100. It’s wonderful to think we all tick for something.”
• “This (creative engagement gathering) was the pause in the day’s occupation that’s known as fun.”

– Helen Kriger, 96 years young

Contact Information

Speaker Name: Kareen King
Title: Registered Drama Therapist
Organization: The Golden Experience
Website: www.thegoldenexperience.com
Phone: 785-633-7293
Email: kking@thegoldenexperience.com

Kareen works with organizations that want to create a culture where elders and their care partners are loved, validated, and creatively engaged.

The GOLDEN EXPERIENCE