

Meaningful Activity

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Activity Gives Meaning to Life

Did You Know?

- Physical and cognitive (thinking) impairments caused by a stroke can make it challenging to have a satisfying and balanced lifestyle.
- Without meaningful activities, hobbies and pastimes, days can feel long and empty resulting in social isolation and depression



"I used to be an outgoing person. After my stroke I withdrew and didn't go out or talk to people as much"

Why participating in activities can be challenging after a stroke:

- Physical weakness
- Lack of confidence
- Depression and or anxiety
- Aphasia (difficulty communicating)
- Decreased mobility
- Difficulty initiating activities
- Difficulty thinking and understanding (cognition)
- Difficulty understanding the environment (perception)
- Memory problems
- Activities not adapted
- Changed living situation
- Feeling worthless or helpless
- Unaware of community resources
- Unsure of leisure interests
- Limited finances
- Lack of transportation



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Engaging in meaningful leisure activities after stroke is essential for mental, physical, and emotional recovery. Meaningful activities provide enjoyment and a sense of purpose.

Did You Know That Taking Part In Leisure Activities:

- Creates opportunities for meeting new people
- Improves self-confidence
- Aids in adjustment to a disability
- Reduces depression and improve mood
- Supports connections to the community
- Enhances quality of life



"After rehab I was not done, I was just beginning my life again"

The "Meaning" in Meaningful Activities

Leisure activities help to structure the day in a productive and therapeutic way. Participation helps to maximize and maintain function at home and in the community.

Meaningful activities meet the individual's need for:

- Social contact, conversation and companionship
- Physical fitness
- A sense of control
- A feeling of accomplishment and mastery
- Creative expression
- Stress relief, relaxation, and FUN!!!

MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT CONTRIBUTES TO MEANINGFUL RECOVERY. AN INDIVIDUAL IS MORE LIKELY TO CONTINUE IN ACTIVITIES IF THEY FEEL SUCCESSFUL, CHALLENGED AND CONNECTED.



What You Can Do To Help

Ask the following questions....

- What do you like to do...what makes you smile?
- Where do you like to do your favorite activities?
- Do you prefer daytime or nighttime activities?
- Who do you enjoy doing things with?
- What makes it hard to do your favorite activities now?
- How can I help you to prepare for and/or participate in these activities?
- Last week you participated in _____ (e.g. card games). Did you enjoy yourself?

Talk with the individual, family and other caregivers to find out more about the individual's interests.



What you can do to help ...

- Assist with choosing meaningful activities
- Encourage a return to activities previously enjoyed
- Ensure the individual is prepared to participate in the activity (e.g. hearing aids, glasses, mobility devices, etc.)
- Have necessary assistive devices available (e.g. card holder)
- Find others with similar interests
- Support activity initiation. Remember that initiation for a stroke survivor can be difficult.

"Going to activities helps me to talk more and participate. It opens the world up"



Get to know the person, their abilities and interests. This is key to developing a successful relationship. You can make the difference.

STROKE NETWORK
of Southeastern Ontario