
In these times of social distancing it's important that we try and incorporate music into the lives of people living with dementia and their carers to help us stay connected.

Music has huge benefits for people with dementia and those caring for them. It helps reduce agitation, depression and anxiety, alongside improving general health and wellbeing.

Detailed below is a Practical Musical Guide that offers ideas on how to keep the music going!

1. **Have a musical conversation via a phone or video call** – Whether you’re creating a playlist for someone with or without language, it’s important to try and communicate with them about their music and whether they would like to make a playlist with you. Help them to be part of their musical soundtrack by involving them from the very beginning. If you are using a video call, they may not be able to answer you in sentences or with words, but they might nod, smile or shake their head. Perhaps hum a phrase or two from a song to help get your musical conversation started. Check out our easy to use guides and create a playlist today!

2. **Go old school** – Look to see if your loved one has any favourite CDs, vinyl or old mix tapes and ask them which is their favourite - then see if there’s a way of being able to play them on an existing stereo or copy into a digital library on your computer or device.

3. **Listen to a radio show** – There are some amazing musical radio shows that bring the best of radio from past decades, made for people with dementia. Check out BBC Memory Radio and Reminiscence Radio, to name a few.

4. **Watch live music in the comfort of your own home** – Between music-focused TV programmes, apps, streaming video services, and various websites, there are so many brilliant performances available to watch through your TV or computer. Why not experience your favourite live musicians from the comfort of your sofa?

5. **Watch a musical film** – Research has shown that films centred around music, interactivity and simple plot lines can be ideal for people living with dementia. Our favourites include Singing in the Rain, Laurel and Hardy, Sound of Music, Wizard of Oz, West Side Story, Jungle Book, Grease, Mary Poppins – what’s yours?

6. **Experience a virtual music event** – Many of our amazing musical mappers are creating their events virtually. From virtual discos to virtual choirs, contact your local group and see what you can get involved with through our website - www.musicalmap.co.uk

www.musicfordementia2020.com
13 **Learn an instrument** – Playing musical instruments and listening to music throughout your life has been shown to stimulate and protect the brain. So maybe now is the perfect time to start learning a guitar, piano, ukulele, harmonica or drums – whatever instrument you may have in your home. Get those fingers moving and your brain cells firing!

Use hashtag #M4D2020 on your favourite social media to share your musical stories with us: