



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022

For those of you who don't know about us, we are a charity that supports people living with memory loss, including the elderly and those living with some form of dementia. We support carers too, all through the power of music. Our support is varied, but our overall aim is to have fun and put a song in our heart at the start of the week. It has been well documented that singing can have a profound effect upon someone's mood and

Where words fail, music speaks – Hans Christian Andersen



Did you know that by the end of 2025, the UK's telephone network will be digital?

For more information contact your landline provider.

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As we know that the number of people living with dementia will increase, we look to ways to make the situation easier for everyone.

“Every problem contains within itself the seeds of its own solution”

Stanley Arnold

WHAT DID WE GET UP TO IN 2021?

- ♪ We provided sessions throughout the whole year on Zoom
- ♪ In August, and after much organisation, we returned to face-to-face sessions at The Emmanuel Centre in Battle whilst continuing with Zoom
- ♪ We secured funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to support people who may require assistance in person and/or with technology through funding
- ♪ We secured funding from the Sussex Community Fund to buy the necessary equipment that has allowed us to improve our online connections throughout the pandemic and beyond
- ♪ We set up a stall on the Abbey Green in Battle, handing out literature and information and generally familiarising local people with our programme of support
- ♪ We secured the services of the fabulous Phoebe, from Pheeb's Sing School, as a lead singer - what a hit she is!
- ♪ We have been so fortunate to be joined by some fabulous volunteers in Lois, Pauline, Ian, Jocelyn and Neil. Each one brings their own skills and adds to the development of the charity. They are a brilliant bunch to work with and we thank them enormously.

The benefit of music on our mood is no secret but research shows that certain pieces of music are more effective than others. One song was shown to reduce overall anxiety by as much as 65%. The song 'Weightless' by Marconi Union is a mix of soothing melodies and rhythms designed to quieten the mind.



Listening to music involves several different processes involving the brain. Music can therefore be much more effective than drugs for some people living with dementia.

Dementia Alliance International

Kettle tippers and hot water dispensers



Hot Water Dispensers.

These are ideal for people with mobility/strength problems and stops the worry about lifting a kettle of boiling water.



Kettle/teapot tippers

These help to make making hot drinks much easier and safer. They are easy to use and are available for corded and cordless kettles and teapots.

QUIZ

1. Four US states begin with the letter I. What are they?
2. Is the population of the UK higher or lower than Thailand?
3. Which is correct? A mischief of a) Ferrets, b) Turkeys, c) Dolphins or d) Mice
4. Identify the famous sports star from this anagram: park farmland
5. What is the longest running shown on London's West End?
6. How long is the River Thames in miles?
7. What is the national flower of Japan?
8. What is the longest river in the world?
9. Name Disney's first film
10. How many bones does an adult human have?

What do you call a beehive without an exit?

Unbelievable

Thomas Kitwood was a pioneer in the field of dementia care. He developed innovative research projects and training courses, challenging the “old culture of care”. His aim was to understand, as far as is possible, what care is like from the standpoint of the person with dementia.

The key points of person-centred care

- Treating the person with dignity and respect
- Understanding their history, lifestyle, culture, and preferences, including their likes, dislikes, hobbies and interests
- Looking at situations from the point of view of the person with dementia
- Providing opportunities for the person to have conversations and relationships with other people
- Ensuring the person has the chance to try new things or take part in activities they enjoy

Rather than approaching people with a list in our heads, person-centred care looks at the person first, and the goals and tasks second. Examples include providing the person with a breakfast of their choice, rather than the same as others, encouraging exercise but not persisting if it is the wrong time and returning to it at a later stage. Person centred care has been shown by multiple research studies to be effective in reducing challenging behaviours in people with dementia.

A 2017 review of 19 studies which included 3985 participants was undertaken to determine the effectiveness of person-centred care for people with dementia. The results? Agitation, emotional symptoms, and depression were reduced, and quality of life was improved by practicing person-centred care in long-term care facilities. Person-centred care can reduce carers frustrations and it provides a better quality of life for persons with dementia and their loved ones. It is also very likely how we would like to be treated!!!

It is widely known that pets make great companions for people living with dementia, and can help to ease loneliness, aid relaxation, and generally promote health and wellbeing. However, it's not only cats and dogs that are used to bring pleasure and comfort. Stepney City Farm in London has taken the idea further by introducing a menagerie of furry creatures to hospitals and care homes. They take small animals including guinea pigs, rabbits, chickens, and ferrets to meet older people facing disadvantage. 'These creatures offer comfort physically and emotionally bringing about conversations, reminiscence and laughter.'

However, the farm isn't the first to offer this kind of therapy. A project called HenPower in the Northeast of England was set up to encourage people with dementia to care for hens and has proven so popular that it is now being adopted by 40 care homes nationwide.

Borrow My Doggy – a scheme to connect dog owners with dog borrowers for walks, weekends, and holidays.

www.borrowmydoggy.com

Pets as Therapy – a charity that provides a visiting service, delivered by volunteers along with their own behaviourally assessed pets, to people in hospitals, hospices, day centres, nursing homes and care homes.

www.petsastherapy.org

Equine Assisted Therapy – provided by various organisations across the UK. They encompass a range of activities to promote human physical and mental health.

www.eaqbodster.co.uk

WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEART IS GOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN

Your brain is incredible. It's what makes you who you are. Billions of cells all work together to control our emotions, memories, movement, and speech – but are you looking after yours? Just as we can protect other areas of our health, for example our hearts, we can take steps to keep our brains healthy and reduce our risk of developing dementia in later life. If that's news to you, you are not alone - only a third of people in the UK realise that it's possible to reduce their risk of developing dementia. There is no sure-fire way to prevent dementia because your age and your genes play a role but taking care of your brain will increase the odds in your favour. **The latest evidence suggests that up to 40% of all cases of dementia are linked to lifestyle factors that we can influence for ourselves.**

Alzheimer's Research UK says that the way to keep your brain healthy can be broken down into three groups. The first big message is "*What's good for your heart is good for your brain*". The second message is to "*stay mentally sharp*" and the third is to "*stay connected with loved ones and the world around you*". Let's look at each of these three:

What's good for your heart is good for your brain

Most people know that cutting out smoking, being physically active and keeping blood pressure in check will lower your risk of heart disease, but very few realise that there is now strong evidence that your risk of dementia will also be significantly lowered.

Quitting smoking is probably the most important step you can take to reduce the risk of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's and Vascular Dementia. It's hard to give up smoking, but the NHS offers lots of resources to help and the benefits of giving up are quickly noticed. Did you know that only 48 hours after your last cigarette, the toxic carbon monoxide in your body will have disappeared?

Increasing physical activity is the next most important thing you can do. Several big studies have demonstrated that more exercise in mid-life is linked to a lower risk of dementia. Being physically active doesn't have to involve strenuous exercise; just aim to be a bit more active every day and move more – whether it's gardening, dancing, going for a walk, parking the car further away from the supermarket entrance or using the stairs rather than the lift.

Controlling blood pressure will also help reduce the risk of developing dementia. One third of adults in the UK have high blood pressure and a recent important study of adults in their 50s, showed that controlling blood pressure at this stage of life could protect the brain from damage. Blood pressure can be elevated without the presence of any symptoms and the recommendation is that those over 40 years should have their blood pressure checked every 5 years, or more frequently if there is cause to be concerned.

Information collated from Alzheimer's Research UK 'Think Brain Health' – www.alzheimersresearchuk.org



Stay Mentally Sharp

Researchers think that challenging your brain on a regular basis helps to build what is known as ‘cognitive reserve’ – a resilience that protects the brain and enables it to form new connections between cells when old ones become damaged. This is a comparatively new area of research, and it is not yet clear which activities may confer the greatest benefit. The advice is to ‘do things you enjoy’ because you are more likely to do these on a regular basis, including jigsaws, puzzles, quizzes, reading, learning a new language, or improving your IT skills.

Keep Connected

The latest evidence suggests that social isolation is linked to an increased risk of dementia. A recent major study concluded that social isolation in later life could be a factor in around 4% of dementia cases. A link between hearing loss and dementia risk has also been established but it is yet to be demonstrated whether hearing loss is a risk factor on its own or whether a loss of hearing leads to a loss of connection with other people which, in turn, leads to social isolation. The advice from Alzheimer’s Research UK is to spend time with loved ones, enjoy virtual catchups with friends and family who are further afield and to make new connections by joining clubs or volunteering. It will take time to establish the extent to which the COVID pandemic and lockdown may have exacerbated this area of risk.

Although it is never too early and never too late to start thinking about your brain health, research suggests that taking steps to improve brain health in your forties and fifties is particularly important. This is because the changes in the brain associated with dementia start many years before symptoms become apparent.

Consequently, efforts to reduce all the risk factors mentioned in this article are likely to have the greatest impact in midlife.

Think Brain Health

Alzheimer’s Research UK

www.alzheimersresearchuk.org

One million

people in the UK will have dementia by 2025 and this will increase to two million by 2050.



This year marks the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – a celebration of her 70 years on the throne as Britain’s longest reigning monarch. The official date the Queen started her reign was February 6th, 1952, the day her father, King George VI died.

The Queen has a strong connection with music, obtaining two honorary degrees in the subject.

The following songs are listed as her top 10 favourites.

Oklahoma! by Howard Keel

Anything You Can Do (Annie Get Your Gun) by Dolores Gray and Bill Johnson

Sing by Gary Barlow and the Commonwealth Band featuring the Military Wives

Cheek to Cheek by Fred Astaire

The White Cliffs of Dover by Vera Lynn

Leaning on a Lamp-post by George Formby

Praise, My Soul, The King of Heaven (hymn)

The Lord is My Shepherd (hymn)

Lester Lanin Medley

Regimental March Milanollo



Why couldn't the sailor learn his alphabet?

He kept getting lost at sea

“How do you do it?” said Night
 “How do you wake and shine?”
 “I keep it simple.” said Light
 “One day at a time.” Lemn Sissay

In 2021 Jenny, one of our trustees, and an ambassador of Alzheimer's Research UK, was contacted about making a short film called Connections. The film highlights that, although Alzheimer's can erode connections between couples, the love and care of partners and family ensure that many others can be preserved. To watch the film, view it on YouTube. Search *Jenny and Dick – Living with Alzheimer's disease.*



Sleeping better

Struggling to sleep at night is a common problem faced by people living with dementia. It is particularly an issue for people with sundowning dementia – whose body clock has been affected. There are various products and aids to help.



Weighted blankets – these can be a good product for people who struggle to sleep because of anxiety and restlessness – an example is the multi-award winning *Mela Weighted Blanket.*

Glowing Timer Devices – these use light pattern systems and a metronome to help people sleep. They help to slow the breathing, allowing people to fall asleep naturally more quickly. After a period, the device switches off – an example is the *Dodow Glowing Timer Device*



Q U I Z

1. Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa
2. Lower. UK approx. 67.95 million and Thailand approx. 69.95 million
3. d) Mice
4. Frank Lampard
5. The Mousetrap
6. 215 miles
7. Cherry Blossom
8. The Nile – 6650km)
9. Snow White, 1937)
10. 206

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Leo Buscaglia

Over 42,000
 people under 65 have dementia in the UK, 5.2% of the total.

What musical instrument is found in the bathroom?

A tuba toothpaste



I have always been interested in music since an early age, when in the 1960's, I tried (using the word loosely) to play the violin. Well, to be honest, the only tune I could play and recognise was "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star". However, ironically, I did make it into the school orchestra.... How I did that I'll never know; I think they were short of numbers!!

In the 1970's I tried the cornet/trumpet. This was a little more successful as I progressed to the local town band, eventually playing the principal cornet. Then, in the 1980's, I tried out the guitar to encourage music in the church I attended and helped with my involvement in the Sunday school and its singing. When moving to Catsfield 28 years ago, I helped set up a music group in St Lawrence church, again also involved in the Sunday school work. However, due to age and the groups illness, our music group disbanded. In 2019 my wife and I had a great cruise adventure down to the Caribbean, and on the cruise was a chance to learn the Ukulele, so I did, and on return my wife brought me a Uke. So off to evening class I went to learn this instrument. Later, I joined one



or two Uke groups in the area and my playing improved, (well, I thought so). It was also a great chance to sing many of the old songs from years past. I must admit a lot of those songs I either knew the chorus, or the odd line or two and la la la.... The rest. Then along came an advert in the local paper, for anyone interested in singing to help with MFTM. Well, I couldn't resist, as 2 weeks earlier I'd retired from 49 years with one company in retail. What a great use of some of my now, spare time. Since joining the group in Battle, it's been great to be involved, and on the last session I attended, I took along my Uke. Double whammy!! I look forward to sharing with you all every other Monday (for now). What a way to link Me & Music together – sharing it with others.



1 in 3

people born in the UK this year will develop dementia in their lifetime.

DEMENTIA AND THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Dementia affects memory, perception, and judgement, posing everyday challenges for some people. It may be difficult for a person to see or judge where objects are; they might struggle to distinguish doorways, stairs, cupboard handles; and resist stepping on patterned carpets or shiny floors.

It is important to keep open areas clear of obstacles and surfaces tidy. Moreover, having high colour contrast helps a person navigate their way effectively around their environment. For example, a brightly coloured toilet seat, painted door frames in a contrasting colour, using plain coloured plates. These are small things that can make a big difference to a person's everyday experience, reducing stress and agitation and creating a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

What did the ocean say to the beach?

Nothing, it just waved.

m4d Radio is a group of 5 themed radio stations available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year playing music that evokes memories. It was developed as a direct response to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown measures. Aware that carers and people living with dementia were severely affected by lack of stimulation and social contact, m4d Radio was conceived to provide era-specific 24-hour music direct to people's homes.

5 WAYS TO USE MUSIC

Music is a powerful tool in dementia care - from entertainment to activity to therapy, it can help with daily tasks, provide meaningful stimulation and health and wellbeing benefits. Use our handy tips from experts and celebrities to make music a part of your day.



MOOD CHANGER

Grace Meadows, Music for Dementia Campaign Director and music therapist

Music is our emotions put into sound. It sets off a series of chemical reactions in our brains, altering how we feel about ourselves and the world around us and helps to manage and regulate behaviour. Use familiar up-tempo music to lift mood and distract, or soothing music to calm and reassure.



MAKING NEW MEMORIES

Catherine Loveday, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience

When we think of music, memories are often evoked. However, when we experience music, both old and new, in the here and now, we're also making new memories. For family and carers of someone living with dementia, that's happening across generations and those memories can be treasured for many years to come - remembering the person you care for through music, for who they are beyond their dementia.



PHYSICALLY CONNECTING

Sophie Scott CBE, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience

Music that we love affects us - emotionally, physically, spiritually. Music can reach parts of the brain that are unaffected by dementia, and be a source of connection, reduce stress, and help improve everyone's mood. Ways to enhance this can include moving to the music - especially dancing together, where possible. Music and affectionate touch (like a hug) are both ways of expressing and communicating love, compassion and comfort.



CREATING CONVERSATION

Lauren Laverne, broadcaster and Music for Dementia Ambassador

Music is a conversation and there are many ways we can have those musical conversations. Be it with words, through eye contact and gestures, singing along to songs or listening to favourite music together, these can all spark moments for connection. Music is a powerful means of communication - use it as your bond to enable people to share and express feelings and emotions beyond the spoken word.



EXERCISE & MOVEMENT

Dame Arlene Phillips, choreographer, theatre director, TV presenter, and former dancer

We are musical beings, with rhythm built into us through our heartbeats. Whatever our age, music increases motivation, reduces feelings of fatigue, helps motor and movement co-ordination. The link between our auditory and motor neurons means our bodies and brains respond to what we hear. Choose music that motivates you to help you incorporate exercise and movement into each day.



For more tips on music in dementia care, visit musicfordementia.org.uk



m4dradio.com

HOW TO USE MUSIC

Practical tips for carers for every day, whether at home or in a care setting



VOLUME AND HEARING

- ✓ Check whether you are playing music at the **right volume**. Ask if the level is ok - too loud can overwhelm, too quiet can frustrate. Try to **reduce competing noises**.
- ✓ Think about positioning. How far away is the speaker from listeners? Consider moving speakers or people to accommodate **different hearing levels**.
- ✓ **Hearing loss and impairment** is often associated with dementia. If someone appears to be having difficulties with hearing, help them get it tested.
- ✓ Dementia impacts each person uniquely and, depending on the type of dementia, can affect how they **process and hear music**. Previously pleasurable sounds may no longer be enjoyable.



WHICH MUSIC?

- ✓ Musical memories endure when much else is lost - music **familiar and personalised** will be most effective. If possible, ask friends and family to suggest music.
- ✓ Find out popular songs, TV theme tunes or music from **key moments** in the person's life.
- ✓ Pay attention to their **responses** - see what other music this might suggest they would like.



TIMING

- ✓ What are the **best times of day** for music to aid you and/or engage someone you care for?
- ✓ Start the day by playing music that **motivates** and helps to **stimulate** and invigorate.
- ✓ In the evening, help **wind down** by playing music to relax to.



PERSONAL CARE

- ✓ Use music while delivering personal care to provide a **useful distraction**, making it less embarrassing or awkward while putting some fun into a daily routine.
- ✓ Can you find a **favourite song** that you can both sing to get dressed to or wash hair to?



ROUTINE AND RITUAL

- ✓ Use music to help **create routine** and familiarity e.g. favourite music for mealtimes to support nutrition. Try different genres and artists to see which work best.
- ✓ **Ease transitions** with music or singing to provide a bridge between different activities in the day or when moving from room to room.



TOGETHERNESS

- ✓ Try to listen together to create a **shared experience** and find your way of connecting - hold hands, tap your feet, sing along or dance together. Encourage movement if you can.
- ✓ Perhaps **talk about the music** or ask a few questions when you see someone responding to it.



For more tips on music in dementia care, visit musicfordementia.org.uk



m4dradio.com

One in 14

people over 65 have dementia in the UK and one in 79 of the whole population.

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