

# Meaningful Activity



## 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	→ Memory problems
→ Lack of confidence	→ Activities not adapted
→ Depression and or anxiety	→ Changed living situation
→ Aphasia (difficulty communicating)	→ Feeling worthless or helpless
→ Decreased mobility	→ Unaware of community resources
→ Difficulty initiating activities	→ Unsure of leisure interests
→ Difficulty thinking and understanding (cognition)	→ Limited finances
→ Difficulty understanding the environment (perception)	→ 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 improves 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 participate in 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 ready (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.**

For More Information: [www.strokenetworkseo.ca](http://www.strokenetworkseo.ca)




