

The background of the image is a vibrant, marbled paper pattern. It features intricate swirls and spots of light blue, teal, and bright yellow-green against a white base. In the lower right quadrant, a person's hand is visible, holding a thin, light-colored wooden stick or tool, which appears to be in the process of creating or manipulating the marbled pattern. The overall composition is dynamic and artistic.

# **Magic Moments**

## **A Magic Me Project**



## **Magic Me**

Magic Me is a leading arts charity based in East London, bringing high quality arts and creative engagement to people in care settings for over 30 years.

### **Magic Moments Activity Pack**

This activity pack has been produced following a project funded by **Essex County Council** with a network of eight care homes during Summer 2021. The network trialled and fed back on activities, and chose the title 'Magic Moments'.

This pack contains activities designed by artists **Georgia Akbar** and **Lily Ash Sakula** which aim to spark creativity, ideas, conversation and play among staff and residents.

Activities are suitable for residents with a wide range of needs including those who stay in their rooms and those with later stage dementia. They can be easily replicated in care settings anywhere using everyday materials and resources.

The activities in this pack explore **light, touch, colour and sensory** ways of working. In the trial, activities were filmed and projected live so that those not taking part could enjoy the results.

These activities are suitable for **groups and one-to-one sessions** and create space to share creative ideas, explore mindfulness and focus on playful experimentation.

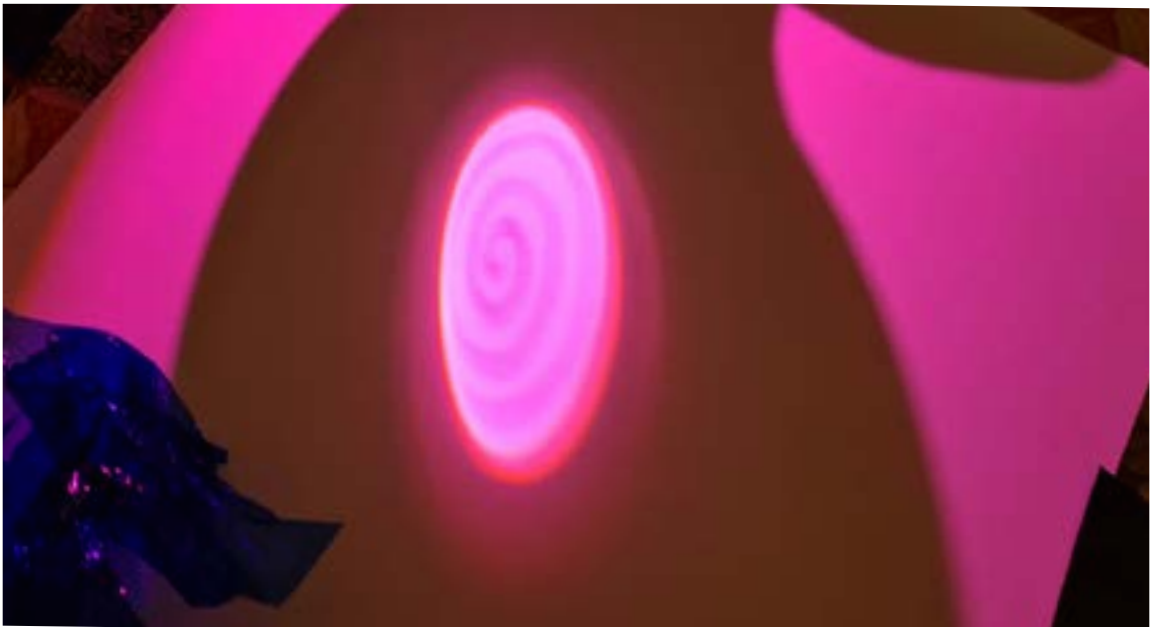
This pack includes feedback from a network of care staff who trialled activities and shared their experiences. These staff fed into this pack and suggested ways to extend activities.

We would love your feedback, so please get in touch and tell us how it went...!

**Contact Emily Bird on [emilybird@magicme.co.uk](mailto:emilybird@magicme.co.uk) or 07401 400 101**









# Experiments with Colour

***“The marbling activity was magical.”  
(Staff member, Marmora)***

***“No matter what people’s abilities they all  
ended up with the same result, and it was an  
instant outcome people could see.”  
(Staff member, The Haven)***

## **Key benefits:**

- **An instant outcome for each resident that they can take away or gift to others.**
- **An opportunity to explore sensory processes.**
  - **An opportunity to explore mindfulness.**
  - **An activity to encourage conversations.**



### **You Will Need:**

- **Marbling inks (non-toxic)**
- **Paper (any shape or size that will fit within your tray)**
- **A watertight tray or dish with deep sides, ideally the same size or larger than an A4 piece of paper**
  - **A jug of water**
- **A bucket, bowl or sink to discard used water**
  - **String and pegs to create a drying line (if desired)**

### **The Space**

- **A table or work surface**
- **Something to protect the surface and aprons to protect clothes.**
- **An area or washing line to dry work**

# Method

1. Pour water into the tray until it's 1-2cm deep.
2. Choose 2-4 colours from the selection of marbling ink bottles.
3. Add drops of ink to the water a few drops at a time.
4. Use the tip of a pencil or end of a paintbrush to move the paint around the tray until all the colours mix. Some people really enjoy this process so feel free to swish the ink around for quite a while.
5. Place paper into the tray on the surface of the water. Make sure it is completely flat, floating on top of the water. Leave for 5 seconds.
6. Gently lift the paper.
7. You should see the marbling ink has created an image on the paper.
8. One of the most enjoyable parts of this activity is discussing what images have appeared. What can you see in the patterns?

***“One resident said the shapes looked like planets and even started naming them”***

**(Staff member, Glengariff)**



9. Either peg your marbled paper onto a washing line or place it to lie flat on some newspaper until it's completely dry.
10. Once you have repeated the process a few times and taken several 'prints' from the surface of the water, you will need to replace the used water with fresh water.
11. Many people enjoy repeating this process several times!
12. You might like to try this with different paper shapes and sizes.

### **Possible extentions...**

Once the marbled paper is dry, you can use it for all kinds of things, collage, postcards or cutting up and arranging the patterned paper to create a bigger artwork. We used a **free app** called **Stop Motion Studio** (available on tablets and smartphones) to make animation with the finished artwork.

The activity inspired staff at Marmora to explore other techniques such as paint splashing and to find an **app** called **Paint Splash** which they are now using as a calming tool for when residents are anxious.

# **Experiments with Light**

***“It’s bringing up my inner child!”  
(Edensor Resident)***

***“This has really brightened up my day.”  
(Quenby Resident)***

## **Key Benefits**

- Engaging for residents who are unable (or who prefer not) to leave their bed or room.
- An opportunity for movement.
- Can work well with things that are low cost and easy to find.
- An opportunity for staff and residents to slow down and test things out together without the pressure of making anything.

## You Could Use:

- Torches, lamps or other strong light sources (some phones have built in torches)
- Coloured cellophane (you could use see-through sweet wrappers)
- Lacey fabric (or any objects or fabrics with holes in them)
- A large white sheet
- Magnifying glass
- Coloured / clear acetate sheets
- Reflective objects i.e a shimmer curtain
- Objects with interesting silhouettes (plants could work well)
- A speaker for music
- Chalk, different types of pens
- A white box or box lined with white paper

## Playing with the Space

There are a lot of different ways to try the suggestions below, depending on the specific needs and preferences of the residents you're working with.

### **You could:**

- Create a darker, cosy space by blocking out windows.

***“It’s important to know the resident before trialling activities in a dark room as for some people it creates a great atmosphere, for others it could be unsettling.”***  
***(Staff member, Marmora)***

- Shine lights inside a white box for more of an impact in brighter rooms.
- Shine lights on the ceiling or floor, thinking about what residents who are lying down can see.
- Playing music whilst you experiment can help create a relaxed atmosphere.

# Possible Experiments

## *Small Magic Moments*

- Try looking through coloured cellophane, holding it up to the light.
- Scrunch small pieces of coloured cellophane into different shapes, place them on a white sheet of paper and shine torches on and around them to make interesting effects.
- Cut or pierce holes in large pieces of paper and shine lights through it to create exciting shadows (this works well with lace or any objects with holes in them!)
- Colour in or draw on a magnifying glass and shine a light through it. See how the light changes when you move the magnifying glass around.
- Draw onto a sheet of clear acetate and shine lights through it to see the drawing bigger on the wall.
- Shine lights onto reflective objects i.e shimmer curtains or sequins and enjoy the effect. You could try doing this with music.

# Possible Experiments

## *Set the stage!*

- Play music whilst residents hold the torch and experiment with the objects we've suggested.

***“Moving the torch around to create different effects was a great opportunity for movement and it was like they were doing a performance with the light.”***

***(Staff member, Edensor)***

- Hang a white sheet and light it from behind. Invite people to go behind the sheet to experiment with shadows, dance and movement.
- People might enjoy working together to film or photograph any of these experiments. It could lead to a bigger project!

## *Natural Light*

- You could make collages with coloured cellophane and acetate sheets and try holding them up to the light or placing them in someone's window.
- Head outside and look for shadows on walls, tables, or surfaces and draw around these with chalk.
- Take pictures of the natural light and shadows you find outside (or inside), such as sunlight shining through trees.

# Experiments with Touch

***“I like anything to do with bits and pieces. You start off thinking, am I into this, then realise I’ve been doing it for a while, you just get on and do it and an hour passes!”  
(Quenby Resident)***

***“I didn’t think I’d enjoy it but I really did.”  
(Edensor Resident)***

## **Key benefits:**

- Working with clay and 3D materials can be engaging for people with a wide range of abilities.
- You can squish and remake things as many times as you like, so there is no pressure!
- Good for dexterity
- Opportunity for storytelling and sparking conversations.

## **Safety precautions:**

- Always use non-toxic clay or plasticine
- Be mindful of using smaller materials and objects that may resemble food as these can be a choking hazard
- Be mindful of using any sharp objects
- Multiple staff members are required to deliver this activity with larger groups



## **Materials:**

(some suggestions, you don't need all of this!)

- Das white air dry clay
- Coloured air dry clay (which doesn't need firing) or Plasticine
- Spices: star anise and cinnamon sticks are particularly good
- Fresh herbs such as lavender or rosemary
- Shells, rocks or any found natural materials
- Any interestingly shaped objects such as buttons or trinkets
- Rolling pins
  - Tools such as picnic cutlery, cake decorating tools, pastry cutters, end of paintbrushes and pasta shapes.

## **The Space**

- A table or work surface.
- Something to protect the surface and aprons to protect clothes.

# Possible Experiments

## *Exploring clay or plasticine*



- Move the clay in your hands and try making different shapes, a ball, sausage, or a cube.
- Flattening and squishing shapes can feel very freeing!
- Press into the clay with different objects to leave imprints. We particularly enjoyed using star anise, cinnamon sticks and making holes with bamboo skewers.
- Have a go at making themed objects such as food, animals or buildings.
- It can take people a bit of time to come up with an idea, offering ideas and prompts can help people get started.

- You could try starting with one piece of clay and passing it around a group of residents to keep adding to and changing, like a game of consequences!
- Mixing white clay with coloured clay using a rolling pin can make exciting effects!
- Make or encourage artworks which are personal to each resident as conversations come up.
- Create presents/objects that can be gifted such as incense holders or decorations.

***“Giving each resident a ball of clay meant that everyone was starting from the same point - residents then pressed shapes into the clay (something that everyone could do) rather than try to make specific objects.”***

***(Staff member, The Haven)***

***“The activity had much more uptake when it was suggested clay could be made into presents for families.”***

***(Staff member, Kingsgate)***



## Outdoors

- Go outside and collect a selection of interesting shaped objects or natural materials. We recommend collecting anything with an interesting scent!
- You could lay a big range of objects out on a surface such as buttons, cutlery, twigs and leaves and play with arranging them in different shapes and patterns.
- Try photographing or filming the artwork as you go!



## Storytelling

- Try building up a scene, adding clay models to change the story.
- Creating characters out of clay can lead to sharing imaginative ideas or stories. You could record these or write them down.
- We experimented with animating our creations using the free app 'Stop Motion Studio'.







# Credits

Magic Moments is a Magic Me project. Magic Me is a leading arts charity based in East London, bringing high quality arts and creative engagement to people in care settings for over 30 years.

## **Project Artists**

Georgia Akbar & Lily Ash Sakula

## **Magic Me Staff**

Catherine Connell (Project Manager)  
Emily Bird (Project Coordinator)

## **Care Home Network**

Edensor  
Glengariff  
The Haven  
Kingsgate  
Lime Court  
Marmora  
The Oaks  
Quenby

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Essex County Council

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