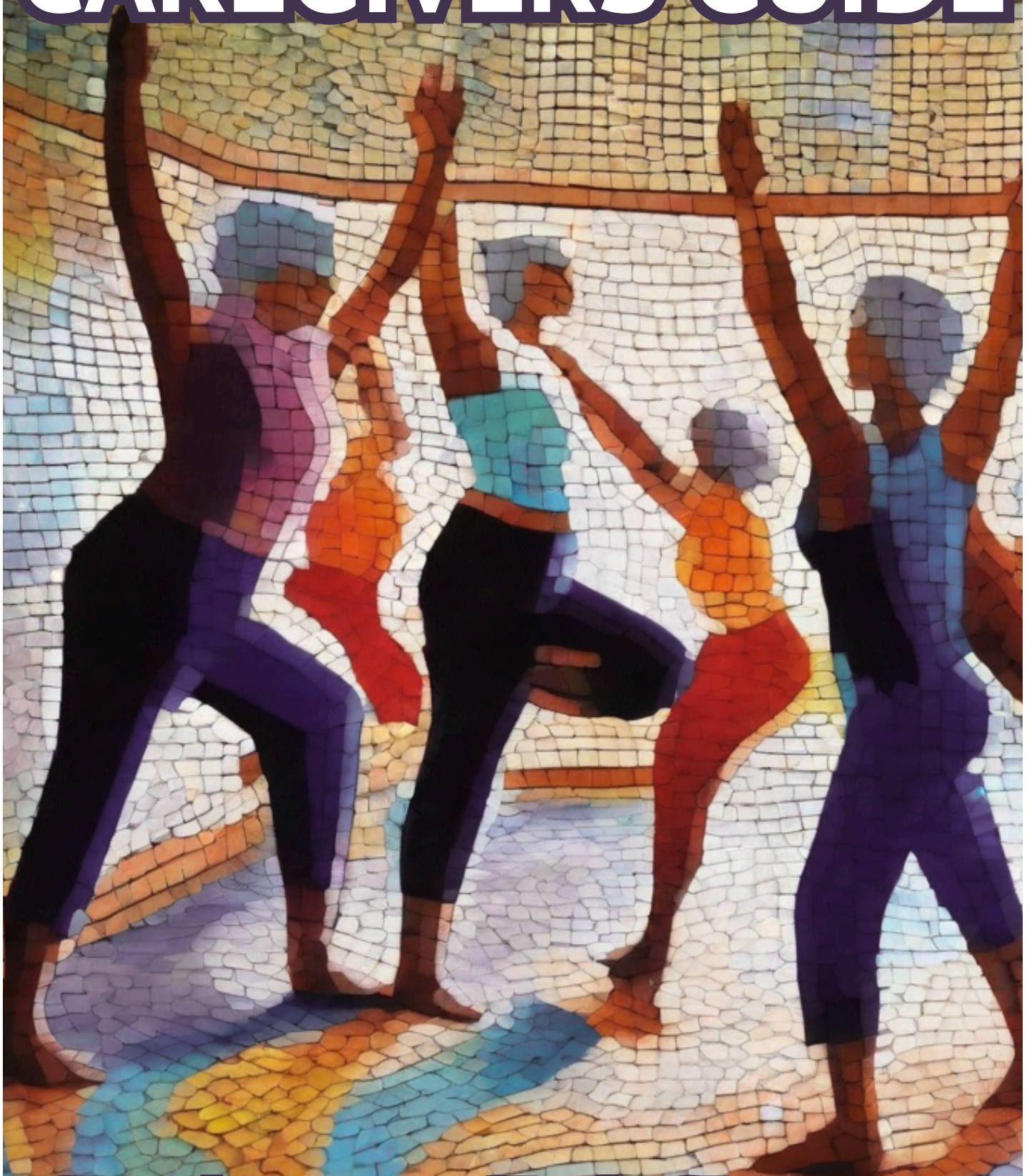




MOSAIC

MEANINGFUL OUTREACH & SUPPORT FOR AGING INDIVIDUALS & CAREGIVERS

CAREGIVERS GUIDE



STAYING ACTIVE

THE FAMILY CAREGIVER'S GUIDE TO STAYING ACTIVE

With the arrival of warmer weather and longer days, there's no better time to encourage your loved one to get moving. Staying active is essential for both physical health and emotional well-being—especially for older adults and those living with Alzheimer's or dementia. Regular activity can help maintain strength and mobility, improve mood, reduce anxiety, and even enhance cognitive function.



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about this

GUIDE

In this guide, we'll explore practical ways to incorporate movement into daily routines, offering tips that are safe, enjoyable, and tailored to your loved one's abilities.

WHY STAYING ACTIVE MATTERS

Even light activity can have profound benefits, including:

- IMPROVED CIRCULATION, BALANCE, AND FLEXIBILITY
- STRONGER MUSCLES AND BONES, REDUCING FALL RISK
- ENHANCED APPETITE AND DIGESTION
- BETTER SLEEP QUALITY
- STIMULATION OF MEMORY AND MOOD-REGULATING CHEMICALS

For individuals with cognitive challenges, activities that involve movement and sensory stimulation can provide a meaningful sense of structure and joy.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES TO EMBRACE THE SEASON

BEING OUTSIDE ADDS A BOOST OF FRESH AIR AND SUNSHINE—BOTH OF WHICH CAN LIFT SPIRITS AND PROVIDE VALUABLE VITAMIN D. HERE ARE SOME GENTLE, ENGAGING ACTIVITIES YOU CAN TRY:



WALKS WITH A PURPOSE

Short neighborhood strolls or walks in a park can be grounding and energizing. Choose flat, shaded paths and avoid peak heat. Make it more engaging by:

- Talking about the scenery.
- Naming colors or flowers.
- Bringing a pet along.

GARDENING TOGETHER

Simple tasks like watering plants or placing potted herbs on a patio can be therapeutic. For more engagement:

- Use raised beds or tabletop planters.
- Choose brightly colored, easy-to-grow flowers or vegetables.
- Discuss the colors, scents and feel of the flowers and plants.



CHAIR EXERCISES ON THE PORCH

If mobility is limited, consider gentle chair yoga, tai chi or stretching routines while seated outside. Being seated reduces the risk of falls.

- Use music to set the mood and create a calming or energizing atmosphere.
- Give simple instructions. Focus on a few key movements and a lot of repetition.
- Pay attention to your loved one's comfort level and adjust movements as needed.

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BIRD WATCHING

Bring out a bird feeder and sit together to watch the visitors. Turn it into a fun daily ritual—identifying birds or journaling what you see.

- Set up a viewing area that is easily accessible without obstacles or hazards.
- Provide a lightweight pair of binoculars for more fun.
- Listen to the bird songs. Focus on the colors. Allow the experience to fully engage the senses



OUTDOOR GAMES

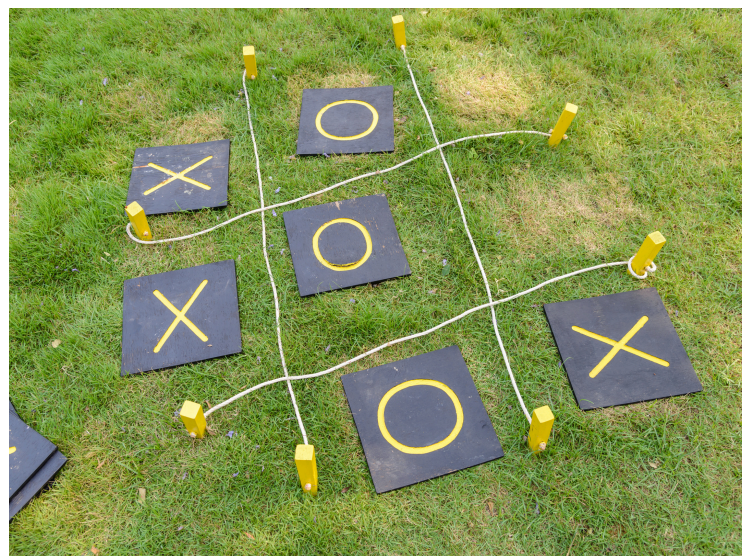
Modified versions of favorite outdoor games can promote coordination and provide moments of joy and laughter.

- Adapt a familiar game for your loved one. For example, play volleyball using a balloon rather than a ball.
- Keep the rules simple. Focus on the fun rather than winning.
- Remember to take breaks and hydrate regularly, especially on hot days.

INDOOR ALTERNATIVES FOR HOT OR RAINY DAYS

When outdoor conditions aren't ideal, you can still encourage movement indoors.

- Dance to familiar music; play tunes from their youth to encourage spontaneous movement.
- Active chores—folding laundry, sorting silverware, or dusting can keep hands busy.
- Movement videos for seniors are available online. There are many dementia friendly exercise routines from which to choose.



TIPS FOR SAFE AND ENJOYABLE ACTIVITY

- **KEEP IT SHORT AND SWEET. AIM FOR 10–15-MINUTE BURSTS OF ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE DAY.**
- **PRIORITIZE CONSISTENCY OVER INTENSITY. A DAILY ROUTINE BUILDS COMFORT AND CONFIDENCE.**
- **WATCH FOR SIGNS OF FATIGUE OR FRUSTRATION. KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HOW YOUR LOVED ONE IS RESPONDING AND ADJUST AS NEEDED.**
- **CHOOSE FAMILIAR MOVEMENTS. ACTIVITIES WITH REPETITION AND RHYTHM ARE EASIER FOR THOSE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.**
- **CELEBRATE PARTICIPATION, NOT PERFORMANCE. THE GOAL IS ENGAGEMENT, NOT PERFECTION.**

ACTIVITY AS CONNECTION

Above all, physical activity is an opportunity to connect. Whether you're reminiscing during a garden walk, swaying to a favorite tune, or sharing laughter over a game of balloon volleyball, these moments build joy and strengthen your bond.



Caregiving is demanding, and finding ways to keep your loved one engaged can be a challenge. But even the smallest movements matter—and so do the memories you're creating together. By making activity a part of the daily rhythm, you're not only supporting your loved one's health, but nurturing their spirit.

WHEN TO CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL

If your loved one has significant mobility limitations or a history of falls, speak with a physical therapist. Many specialize in geriatric care or dementia and can suggest customized exercises that are safe and effective.



Mosaic Foundation

THANK
YOU!

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Seashore Gardens Foundation DBA Mosaic is a trusted nonprofit leader in promoting and enhancing services and programs for the elderly. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life for the aged in Southern New Jersey.

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