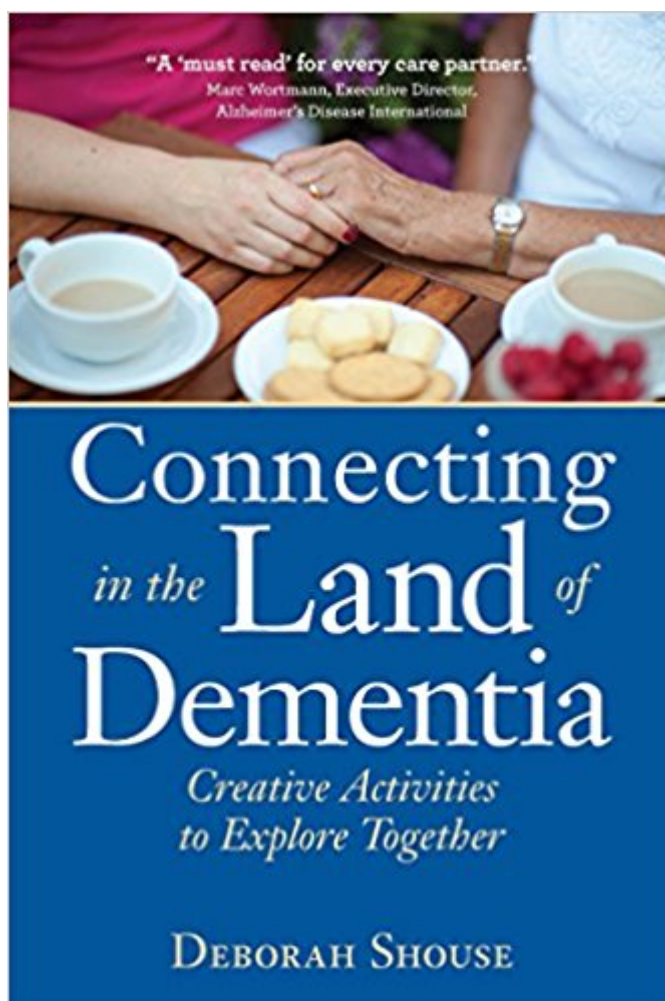


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Connecting In The Land Of Dementia: Creative Activities To Explore Together



Synopsis

Innovative ideas designed so care partners can engage and connect with people living with dementia. On the dementia journey, each quality moment of connection is priceless. Deborah Shouse and dozens of experts in the field of dementia share ideas that engage the creative spirit so you can continue to experience those meaningful moments of connecting. These easy and adaptable projects--music, art, movies, cooking, storytelling, gardening, movement, and many more--can foster stronger relationships, renew hope, and ignite a sense of purpose for people who are living with dementia and their care partners. You don't need special skills to enjoy these expressive activities. Simply incorporate them into your daily routine and you'll enrich your time together. Deborah Shouse is a writer, speaker, editor, creativity catalyst, and dementia advocate. She has an MBA but uses it only in emergencies. Her writing has appeared in a variety of publications including The Washington Post, The Huffington Post, Natural Awakenings, Reader's Digest, Newsweek, Woman's Day, Spirituality & Health, The Chicago Tribune and Unity Magazine. Deborah has been featured in many anthologies, including more than four-dozen Chicken Soup books. She has written a number of business books and for years Deborah wrote a love story column for the Kansas City Star.

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Customer Reviews

Special Praise for Connecting in the Land of Dementia: A must read for every care partner because it really helps you to look at things differently! This book is very special in the

way it provides you with hundreds of suggestions on how to be a good care partner for someone with dementia and enjoy this yourself as well. Deborah inspired me by bringing together so many positive examples of using creativity to engage with people with dementia. —Marc Wortmann, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Disease International; Making the most of the moment is the essence of Deborah Shouse's new book, *Connecting in the Land of Dementia*. Her creative and imaginative ideas on ways to engage your loved one with Alzheimer's disease are meant to channel frustration into fulfillment and lift the human spirit. —Meryl Comer, President, Geoffrey Beene Foundation Alzheimer's Initiative and Author of New York Times best seller *Slow Dancing with a Stranger: Lost and Found in the Age of Alzheimer's*; A thoughtful and positive guide to the very thing I find myself constantly advocating to doctors, caregivers, and family members; social stimulation and creative arts will limit the need for psychiatric medication and improve the quality of life for those with dementia more than anything else. —Doug Wornell, MD, Life Solutions Group for Geriatric and Neurological Psychiatry; With interesting, delightful, specific detail, the reader is shown how to keep the person living with dementia a part of life. Whether it is through art or gardening or storytelling or dancing or music, a life can go on. Bravo to Deborah Shouse for showing us how to connect in the land of dementia. —Trish Vradenburg, Cofounder, UsAgainstAlzheimer's and WomenAgainstAlzheimer's; *Connecting in the Land of Dementia* is a lively and essential guide for any dementia care partner who wants to help a loved one feel joy and purpose through simple, fun activities. It's also a rare collection of wisdom from dozens of experts worldwide who specialize in creative dementia care. Even if we know little about painting, poetry, dance, chickens, or llamas, we can turn to any chapter and be inspired. —Martha Stettinius, Author of *Inside the Dementia Epidemic: A Daughter's Memoir*; Deborah Shouse's inspiring book provides caregivers with tools from which to create meaningful, life-enhancing activities that can strengthen their connections. Buy the book, read it, highlight what inspires you. As you make notes and bend pages to personalize this guide, you are creating a family treasure. —Carol Bradley Bursack, Founder of *Minding Our Elders*; *Connecting in the Land of Dementia* is an inspiring and creative compilation of activities for dementia caregivers. Longtime healthcare professionals will find innovative new projects to add to their routines. We should thank Shouse for her lovingly prepared collection that will be indispensable to so many of us. —Sandra Stimson CADDCT CALA, AC-BC, ADC, CDP, CDCM, CFR-DT, CEO, National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners; Deborah Shouse provides a great public service

by shining light on the numerous creative activities that can meaningfully engage the minds and spirits of persons living with Dementia. From personalized music to storytelling, Shouse makes it easy for caregivers to understand the various options they have to help their loved ones navigate through their everyday lives. —Dan Cohen, MSW, Founding Executive Director, Music & Memory, Inc.; Once again, Deborah Shouse delivers a book that softens our hearts and opens our minds to find fun ways to connect to the soul. No matter what our situation in life, no matter what our ability is to communicate, we all crave and need to be connected to one another. —Lori La Bey, Founder of Alzheimersspeaks website; Connecting in the Land of Dementia simply shines as a beacon of hope for persons living with dementia and their care partners. The innovative approaches and fresh ideas Deborah has curated will help families impacted by this disease continue to connect with one another at every stage. There's at least one great idea on every page. I highly recommend it. —Mara Botonis, Author of When Caring Takes Courage; Deborah has created an assuring, light of heart and deep in wisdom weaving of the great thinkers and practitioners in the field of dementia care. Here you will find bite-sized, inspirational approaches to being in company with someone with memory loss. From music to food, from painting to storytelling, she invites family members to move past resistance (and understandable grieving) to open themselves to a world of connection through creativity. —Anne Basting Professor of Theatre, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee & President, TimeSlips Creative Storytelling; Deborah uses her experience as a caregiver and years of her own research to create a fun and imaginative guide for caregivers that draws on progress in the arts, physical exercise, and mental stimulation. At its root is the premise that life can still be rich with feeling and meaning even when living with dementia. —Jeffrey M. Burns, MD, Codirector of the University of Kansas Alzheimer's Disease Center; This uplifting book is really a 'can-do' guide that gives you permission to relax and allow a bit of room for the creative process to begin. The author has a gift for bringing light and love to her writing without minimizing or sugarcoating the realities of dementia and caregiving. Deborah understands from a first-hand perspective that a care partner has plenty of duties already, so this book doesn't give the reader the sense that there is yet more to add to my to-do list. Instead, the overall spirit of the book is about the infinite possibilities and opportunities to connect, create, and imagine together. —Carmen Mendieta, MPA, Brookdale National Group Respite Program; Connecting in the Land of Dementia is a wonderful compilation of shared experiences that remind and challenge us to think about reaching out to individuals with Alzheimer's and other cognitive challenges in new ways. Deborah's hopeful spirit

comes dancing through in every chapter, with so many wonderful projects and innovators as her partner. All I can say is this: Listen to her. —Michelle Niedens, LCSW, Director of Education, Programs and Public Policy, Alzheimer’s Association, Heart of America Chapter; This book shares stories of compassion and understanding. I found new ways to focus on ensuring quality of life at any level of cognition. It is a must read if you work in elder care settings. —Alisa Tagg, BA, ACC/EDU, AC-BC, CDP, President, National Association of Activity Professionals; Encouraging, new suggestions for merging caregivers’ activities with their loved one’s realities of living with dementia. —Leisa Easom, PhD, RN, Executive Director, Pope Eminent Scholar, Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving; This book inspires people to be creatively engaged. There are many moments to interact playfully. —Jolene Brackey, Author of Creating Moments of Joy; Connecting in the Land of Dementia allows the opportunity to see, in one comprehensive space, the numerous activities and opportunities individuals can have with their loved ones through the course of their dementia. Deborah Shouse and the experts she calls upon provide concrete steps to ensure individuals living with dementia and their caregivers will remain able to live a meaningful life. —Molly Fogel, LCSW, Director of Educational and Social Services, Alzheimer’s Foundation of America; The opportunity to connect through music, dancing, poetry, card playing, and more can lift the hopes of all who want to maintain relationships with those they love late into dementia. —Alicia Ann Clair, PhD, Music Therapist-Board Certified, Professor Emeritus, The University of Kansas, Lawrence Special Praise for Connecting in the Land of Dementia —“A must read for every care partner because it really helps you to look at things differently! This book is very special in the way it provides you with hundreds of suggestions on how to be a good care partner for someone with dementia and enjoy this yourself as well. Deborah inspired me by bringing together so many positive examples of using creativity to engage with people with dementia. —Marc Wortmann, Executive Director, Alzheimer’s Disease International —“Making the most of the moment is the essence of Deborah Shouse’s new book, Connecting in the Land of Dementia. Her creative and imaginative ideas on ways to engage your loved one with Alzheimer’s disease are meant to channel frustration into fulfillment and lift the human spirit. —Meryl Comer, President, Geoffrey Beene Foundation Alzheimer’s Initiative and Author of New York Times best seller Slow Dancing with a Stranger: Lost and Found in the Age of Alzheimer’s —“A thoughtful and positive guide to the very thing I find myself constantly advocating to doctors, caregivers, and family members — social stimulation and creative arts will limit the need for psychiatric medication

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"In its infinite capacity to affect both the sufferer and the caregiver, Alzheimer’s dementia is in every way the medical fraternity’s most profound challenge. The complete collapse of an individual’s sense of identity is an agonizing event that calls for not only therapeutic interventions but also creative endeavors that can buffer the devastating effects of Alzheimer’s reach. Deborah Shouse’s Connecting in the Land of Dementia is a venture into those very creative realms, with comprehensive insight into the various innovative modes ranging from laughter to music to arts. It is a caregiver’s wonderful companion to journey inside the heart of a troubled mind. Compassionate and authentic, the book is a great resource." -- Shuvendu Sen, MD, Director, Medical Education, Raritan Bay, Hackensack University, Author of Why Buddha Never Had Alzheimer’s: A Holistic Treatment Approach through Meditation, Yoga and the Arts

This wonderful book has so much helpful information! It has helped me understand and appreciate the facility where my mother lives. Also, I have been looking for ways to bring Mother into family gatherings. It bothers me that so often when the family gets together Mother is involved in limited conversation and then she spends so much time with us but alone. After reading Connecting in the Land of Dementia, I have a wealth of ideas for one on one time with her and fun family time that will involve her. Thank you for this treasure.

This book is an amazing road map to connect creatively to those suffering from Alzheimer’s or dementia. Not only does it provide engaging ideas to connect with those suffering from dementia, but it also can be used to connect with other family members and friends. I love the way the creative sparks provide a variety of tools that can be used to connect to your loved one! This book is a

MUST BUY for any caregiver or family member of a person with dementia. Some of the creative sparks make you smile, some make you laugh, and you can always find a suggestion that will spark a bit of nostalgia and warmth!

I bought this book for my mother, as she is caring for my 93 year old grandmother. She has really enjoyed the book and is implementing some of it's ideas weekly. It has been a very positive experience for both them. I would definitely recommend this book.

Excellent practical activities offered by some of America's top experts in creative aging. I bought two copies and am loaning one out to friends who are caregivers. I'm confident they will want to try these out so they can have better experiences as they give care to their parents. Thank you to all the contributors who shared what works so beautifully.

As I read this book, I keep seeing Aretha Franklin up on stage, belting out, "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!" because Shouse has such respect for the person in cognitive decline. She learned to navigate these waters when her mother was struggling with dementia. Now she and the many experts she's met with and interviewed (with the skill of the journalist that she is) have come up with practical gems to offer anyone who works with or loves an individual whose memory is impaired and whose happiness may be scant. Enter: Deborah Shouse and her unflagging spirit that life is good, all the time, and that we can connect with these people who seem to be elsewhere in a way that brings them joy and that brings us joy too. Her suggestions are practical, implementable, and sometimes close to magical.

Connecting in the Land of Dementia is so much more than the sum of its chapters. Deborah has managed to pair information from leaders in the Alzheimer's field and the latest research findings with easy-to-do and fun activities that will increase communication and re-build relationships. Whether it is using art, nature, music, cooking, or other creative outlets, you can just picture someone recalling a pleasant past experience that has faded from the mind until prompted by a sound, a smell, or a kinesthetic memory. It's also a great way to get grandchildren involved in connecting with someone who can no longer share a past through words. Anyone who works with dementia or has a loved one dealing with it needs to get this book. Curl up in an easy chair and learn how to cross barriers. This will be a key for opening doors you thought were closed to you. It's a great read and even greater adventure into the Land of

Dementia.

Deborah Shouse writes her second book on Dementia: a warm, anecdote-filled guide to deeply connecting, as she puts it, with persons with dementia, whom she refers to as "care partners." She draws on her experiences in caregiving of her mother and two others during their "dementia journey" and the experiences of those she has interviewed or heard about from other professionals. Shouse tells their stories and gives the reader creative activities to do with the "care partner." These activities are simple and incorporate music or movement or art materials, nature, drama, even technology; all are engaging. Engage is a key verb for Shouse as she advocates, along with numerous professionals in the dementia treatment field, whom she quotes, not entertaining the person with dementia but engaging them mentally, emotionally and often physically. I highly recommend this book for current care partners, for everyone who could be a care partner in the future, for all of us. Connecting is also fun to read. It is well-written, factual and educational, yet delightful in the portrayal of all the amazing things that can be done for those effected in our community.

I read Shouse's previous book "Love in the Land of Dementia" and was very moved by it, so I was happy to hear that she had a follow-up book. She and her partner Ron traveled within and beyond the US, talking to people with dementia and their care partners and observing various activities designed to foster or maintain human connection. This book still has the same tone of love and respect as the first, but it has many more examples since it widens its scope from beyond Shouse's mother to many people living with dementia. The first book is more like a memoir. The second book is more like a guidebook. I've read a number of books about dementia care, and Shouse distinguishes herself as one of the most hopeful and transformative care partners. More than anything, Shouse shines by conveying a remarkable tone of love and respect. She shows people how to lead with love, kindness, creativity and wisdom. The activities in this book are organized by various artistic media, such as music, art, and dance as well as more practical endeavors like gardening. Great practical ideas set in a powerful context.

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