

Art for Everyone

Hello!

In order to help artists continue their creative practices during the current shelter-in-place executive order, Arts of Life is rolling out remote programming.

When you are bored and alone because of social distancing it can feel good to do something creative and productive, like making art. Many people with disabilities already experience this degree of isolation in their everyday life and might have trauma related to loneliness and lack of stimulus. Providing this stimulus and fulfillment at home, in the absence of workshops, day programs, or employment, is a critical part of direct support during this time. Art techniques can be made accessible for anyone, regardless of their disability, through physical assistance and adaptive tools.

ART

- Gives you something to be proud of, something to focus on, and a way to grow
- Can be easily and safely shared with friends and family
- Feels good to make. Coloring is essentially a sensory activity most people take some pleasure in. Art techniques can be modified to meet some people's sensory needs.
- Can spark socialization and self-expression through alternative communication

About the supplies:

- The art supplies in the provided kits are intended for use by Arts of Life artists only.
 - Other household members might be inspired to make art as well, and that's absolutely encouraged. If an artist is interested in inviting them, roommates, friends, staff, etc are welcome to observe remote programming and participate to the extent that can be reasonably accommodated, but they **must use their own art materials**. Art materials can be purchased and delivered to homes through a variety of services including Amazon, Dick Blick (art supply store), or Target.
- When a piece is finished, it should be moved to the included folder for finished work. "Finished" work should be entirely in the artist's own hand, without hand-over-hand support.

Setting up for making art: **As Much Independence and as Little Interference as Possible**

1. Always refer to the artist first if you have any questions. Arts of Life has many volunteers, so our artists should have some experience knowing when to ask for help with their art. Facilitating art is about supporting an artist's intuitive creative choices.
2. If they need physical assistance, ask the artist for guidance on how they usually have their supplies set up. Consider securing a single sheet of paper to a hard surface using tape or using the grippy mat fabric included in the artist's kit. Artists who use adaptive

tools should have those tools and further information included. If possible, make sure the artist can independently change colors or mediums on a whim by having a variety of tools nearby.

3. If they ask for inspiration, or “what should I make?”, try responding with questions that help the artist answer for themselves. It’s easy to try to just suggest an idea (“How about a flower?”) that the artist will receive as a prompt, and then they will be making art to please you, rather than themselves. Creativity provoking questions include:
 - a. “Is there a story you want to tell?”
 - b. “Are there emotions you can only express with art?”
 - c. “What was the last thing you stared at for a long time just because you thought it was beautiful?”
4. Ask the artist if it’s ok if you look at their online art portfolio (can usually be found by searching artist name + arts of life) together. Encourage them to lead the discussion about their own art. This will help you give the artist more informed feedback if they ask for your help.
5. Ask the artist if they want to use the project plan tool included in the kit. They should be familiar with this document if they like to use it. The purpose of this tool is mostly to help artists think ahead about the steps of their process. The project plan is not required, so it’s ok if the artist isn’t interested in using it or only wants to use a certain part of it.
6. Dedicate a safe, accessible place for art materials at home. Encourage artists to adapt their own independent routine around setting up and putting away materials when they are finished.
7. If they are not able to do this themselves, ask if you can take pictures of the artist working, their work in progress, or finished work, and share those pictures with AOL staff so that we can continue to promote the artist’s practice through social media.

<https://artsoflife.org/remote/>

Our new hub for remote programming, where you can find our daily programming activity schedules, videos, tech tutorial resources, and other helpful information.