

Introduction

The sense of smell is highly evocative, it can trigger memories and also produce feelings of enjoyment and contentment. The sense of smell is very important for those in the later stages of dementia as it encourages non-verbal communication, which in turn encourages the building of relationships. The smells of Christmas are particularly memorable.

Depending on the ingredients for each 'smell', use a saucer, a small re-sealable plastic bag, or a plastic pot covered in perforated cling film in which to pass it around. The spices work best in a pot, as it can be easily handled and shaken to refresh the smell.

You Will Need

- Orange – use a grater to zest some of the orange peel or cut one in half
- Cinnamon – a couple of cinnamon sticks or ground cinnamon
- Nutmeg – freshly grated or ground nutmeg
- Cloves
- Pine needles – fresh, green needles from your Christmas tree
- Brandy
- Box of chocolates – for that wonderful chocolatey smell that only a tin of Quality Street possesses!

What To Do

This activity is ideally suited to be done one-to-one, including with residents in their own room.

In a group, pass each 'smell' round one at a time. What is it? What does the smell remind you of? What are your memories of it?

Chat and reminisce about the smells and the memories they evoke.

