

Tips for Decorating Ornaments with Those with Memory Loss

The holidays are swiftly approaching, bringing all the joy, stress and sometimes anxiety, that the holidays tend to bring. As a caregiver, it can be even harder to take the time and enjoy the season and all of the activities because of the added stress of caring for your loved one. Because of the complexities of their memory loss, they may not be able to do all of the things they used to do, but that doesn't mean that you both can't still enjoy the holiday season.

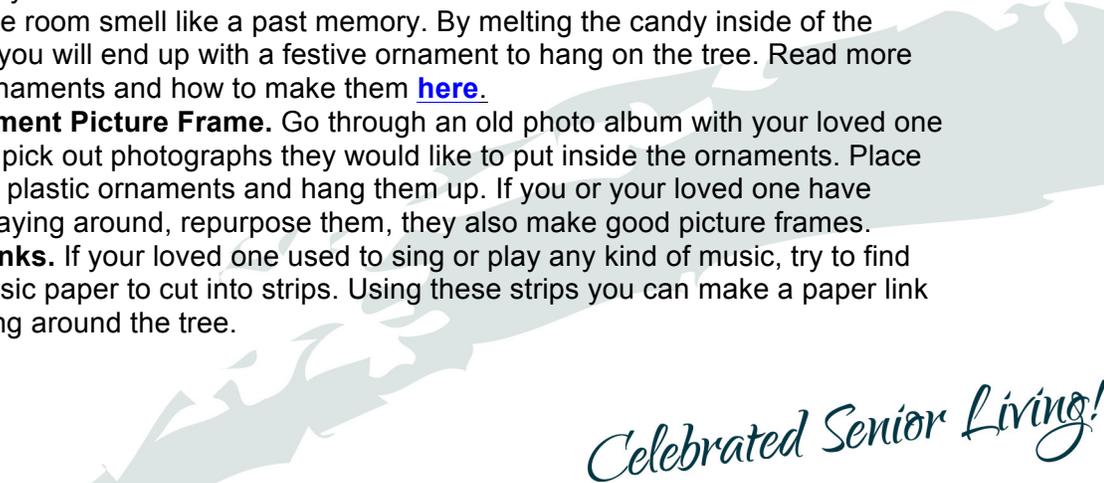
Set the Mood for Ornament Creating and Decorating

- **Play holiday music.** Create a playlist of holiday songs that your loved one used to sing and love. This as background noise can relax, soothe and lift their spirits.
- **Look at festive lights.** Drive around the neighborhood to look at all of the houses, yards and store windows that are decorated. Maybe this can provide inspiration.
- **Light some scented candles.** If your loved one with memory loss has memories associated with a certain scent, try to light a candle with that scent.
- **Watch classic holiday movies.** Old classic holiday movies can often bring up memories of the past. Watch one as you begin creating to get you both in the spirit.

Once the mood is set and the holiday spirit comes alive, it's time to begin crafting and creating the holiday decorations. There are many different ways to include your loved one in this process, depending on their level of memory loss and what they are interested in. Spread the holiday cheer with your loved one and try out some of the following ornament ideas!

5 Ways to Get Creative with Decorations

1. **Paint Ornaments.** Take advantage of art therapy by letting your loved one paint ornaments. Ornaments can be purchased at most craft stores for a decent price. Opt for plastic so that there is a lower risk of dropping and shattering an ornament. Another creative idea is to paint wood slices and string them to put on the tree.
2. **Crochet or Knit Ornaments.** If your loved one has the ability to crochet or knit, it may be possible for them to make ornaments. If your loved one can no longer crochet or knit, but they have a lot of yarn left, try wrapping the yarn around a Mason jar lid to make miniature wreath ornaments to hang on the Christmas tree. This can be a relaxing activity to do while watching a Christmas movie or listening to and singing carols.
3. **Create Ornaments from Candy.** Let your loved one pick out some cookie cutters and some hard candy at the store. Cinnamon and mint hard candies work well and can also help to make the room smell like a past memory. By melting the candy inside of the cookie cutters, you will end up with a festive ornament to hang on the tree. Read more about candy ornaments and how to make them [here](#).
4. **Make an Ornament Picture Frame.** Go through an old photo album with your loved one and have them pick out photographs they would like to put inside the ornaments. Place them inside the plastic ornaments and hang them up. If you or your loved one have Mason jar lids laying around, repurpose them, they also make good picture frames.
5. **Make Paper Links.** If your loved one used to sing or play any kind of music, try to find some sheet music paper to cut into strips. Using these strips you can make a paper link chain for layering around the tree.



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