

Crafts are Much More than "something to do"

by Patsy Lang

Seniors with hobbies seem to enjoy life and have more energy and enthusiasm. For myself, nothing is more satisfying than creating something special out of nothing. I began doing small crafts a few years ago in order to relieve stress due to a shoulder injury. Crafts helped me to center my thinking on completing a crochet pattern or a plastic canvas project, relaxing the muscles causing my pain.

Now, on Tuesday afternoons, 6 to 10 of us meet in the activity room at the park where I live. We share ideas about plastic canvas and other crafts. Last year we created 15 angels that really looked beautiful on the Christmas tree in the lobby. Recently, we have been making "welcome signs" for the new residents in our park.

Some of the gals come to visit and some come every week. Jan came to visit one week, and the next week asked if she could work on a welcome sign. She took a pattern home and came back the next week with a finished sign and told us that her headaches were much less intense.

Joan also uses crafts to keep her mind and hands busy. She is recuperating from a broken hip, and had never done plastic canvas before. She is now making canvas heart refrigerator magnets for her grandchildren. She enjoys the activity and her grandchildren love the magnets.

For many of us this is a wonderful way to create meaningful gifts for children, grandchildren and friends, which saves the budget. You know grandchildren love anything grandma creates especially for them. Also this is a marvelous way to get the focus on something besides the normal pangs of growing more mature.

So how do you get started!! Gather a few friends and neighbors. Decide on the time and place for a weekly or bi-weekly session. The tools, canvas, yarn, scissors, pattern book can be found at the usual places like mass retailers and variety stores. Also, most cities have a craft shop of some kind - look in the yellow pages. The Internet has free patterns.

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