

Keepsake Boxes

Crafts



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WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

Keepsake boxes let participants collect and preserve personal items, photos, or mementos that are meaningful to them. This activity promotes self-expression, reflection, and memory recall while supporting fine motor skills through decorating and organizing. Sharing or discussing the contents encourages social interaction and storytelling, and having a tangible, personalized box fosters pride, ownership, and a lasting sense of accomplishment.

TIME

- 45–90 minutes

MATERIALS

- Small boxes (wooden, cardboard, or sturdy craft boxes)
- Decorative materials: paint, markers, stickers, washi tape, ribbons
- Glue sticks or glue dots
- Photos, printed images, or personal keepsakes
- Optional: small trinkets, shells, pressed flowers, or charms
- Journals or tags for labeling items inside the box



Activity Title

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose a volunteer project appropriate for participants' abilities (animal shelter, hospital, food bank). Provide materials at a central table or individual stations.
2. Explain the purpose: to create a personal box that holds meaningful items or memories.
3. Encourage participants to:
 - Choose a box and decorate it with colours, designs, or stickers
 - Select items to place inside that reflect their personality, memories, or achievements
 - Label or write short notes about the significance of each item (optional)
 - Share stories about their items with the group if comfortable
4. Optional: Display boxes on a shelf or keep them in a personal space for ongoing reflection.

RESOURCES

- <https://www.makememento.com/blogs/news/10-ideas-for-items-to-put-in-your-memory-box?srsltid=AfmBOorLSzqXPWp1UTEgljWwiOlyuEMvunRm7bGGjmVG9ffhH2ZaYcDh>

SUPPORTS NEEDED

- Assistance with decorating or gluing for participants with fine motor challenges
- Guidance on selecting meaningful items and organizing the box
- Step-by-step visual instructions for layout and decoration
- Encouragement and positive reinforcement to celebrate individuality
- Help with labeling or writing notes if participants prefer dictation

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE

- Can be adapted for individual or group creation.
- Boxes can be themed (e.g., favourite memories, accomplishments, nature finds).
- Flexibility is key: some participants may focus more on decoration, others on selecting meaningful items.
- Completed boxes create lasting keepsakes that participants can revisit anytime.
- Can be incorporated into other activities, such as journaling, photos, or vision boards.