



**ASOCIACIÓN DE ALUMNOS Y EXALUMNOS DE
LA UNIVERSIDAD PERMANENTE DE ALICANTE
ALICANTE - SPAIN**



WHY NOT TRY? / IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO ...

Incorporating therapies or animal-assisted activities that stimulate users and professionals of the centre and improve residents' social, emotional and cognitive functioning, and also reduce their apathy.

The aim is to rescue the person from its isolation using the most basic means of communication, usually the only one that last: the feelings, emotions and non-verbal communication. Physical contact through stroking and perception of warmth and texture of the skin recovers the sense of touch and playing with an animal improves the psychomotor activity and posture reflexes. The presence of an animal reminds forgotten memories of childhood, also promoting personal relationships and integration in the group.

Apparently, simple activities as taking the dog for a walk, petting a cat, trying to teach a parrot to speak, feeding canaries or fish in an aquarium have considerable consequences in the improvement of health in old residents. Working with animals is a positive reinforcement to achieve the cooperation and participation of all the people involved in the different exercises focused on improving the cognitive, physical, emotional and social area.

These activities force them to go outside, to move physically, to interact with the other seniors, to feel useful and improve their self-esteem, attention and memory.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS: MATERIAL / PLACE / TIME

The contents of the sessions and its objectives will be planned together with the professionals of the centre to adapt them to the different needs of each group.

Weekly sessions will be organised in small groups of 5-6 people.

Reminding them during the session specific data about the animal, such as its name, breed and characteristics.

Weekly sessions help them to remember what day they live in, because they are looking forward to the therapy day.

It is beneficial to give them a photography of the animal, since it invites them to interact with the other residents and workers.

POSSIBLE OBSTACLES

- Senior's fear to the animal
- Finding a foundation/company that sponsor the assisted activities.
- Organization of the activities program.

ILLUSTRATION

