Snoezelen Rooms and Sensory Environments for Dementia Care

People living with dementia can benefit greatly from exposure to soothing and sensory environments. ‘Snoezlen Rooms’ were developed for this purpose in the 1970s and have become popular worldwide.

A Snoezlen Room is a room that has been setup to stimulate the senses and often includes things like coloured lights, soothing music, calming aromas, interesting textures (bean bags, soft toys) and gentle movement (lava lamps, projected images etc). The goal is to provide stimulation in a calming atmosphere.

However, based on the notion that our world is a blend of smells, tastes, sound and palpable experiences, why not endeavour to extend the sensory experience beyond the limits of a single room? The idea then would be to enhance the whole environment and make it a place where sensory care is revealed in the walls, doors, garden, bathrooms and corridors.

For the patient, an extended sensory environment could provide many benefits and a variety of meaningful activities to assist in re-directing anger and all sorts of unacceptable behaviours.

Here are a few suggestions to enhance the environment of your facility:

* Water fountains
* Scented flowers and bushes in the garden
* Brightly decorated walls and corridors
* Fragrant pot-pourris
* Classic music in bathrooms
* Fish tank

Do you have a sensory room at your facility? What has worked well for your clients & what differences in mood and behaviour have you noticed?