

## Transitional Objects

Transitional objects (a concept first introduced by Winnicott, a paediatrician and psychoanalyst) are items which bring us comfort; they help us feel safe and connected to the people most important in our world. Everyone benefits from transitional objects and most of us won't even be aware we have them! Many adults carry transitional objects with them every day; a photo of a loved one in our wallet/purse, a favourite screensaver on our phones, a scarf someone special gifted to us, a necklace given to us on a special occasion or from a special person, a picture that has been drawn for us by a child, etc.



Adults will often wear or take a special item when they have something that might be stressful or if they are going to be separated from loved ones (e.g. if working away from home). As adults, we will often look at something (e.g. a picture of family or friends) if we are feeling tired, frustrated, stressed or if we are having a bad day. They remind us of home or friends or places that make us feel relaxed and calm. We can help our bodies feel better by connecting with loved ones through a transitional object. Can you think of an item you have which might be a transitional object for you; something that brings you comfort and a sense of safety? Can you think if anything your child (or a child you work with) has as a transitional object?



For children, a transitional object might, most obviously, be a favourite toy. Talk to your child about the items that are important to them - you might be surprised! It could be a blanket, a pillow, a trinket item, something made for them or an item that belonged to someone they love. Transitional objects can be anything, it doesn't matter what they are, what matters is what they mean to us and how that makes us feel.

Suzanne Zeedyk, a Developmental Psychologist, recently posted on Twitter:

*Gifts are a transitional object. What they say is: **"I haven't forgotten you. You are still in my heart. Our connection stretches across space."** It isn't the gift object that matters most, but the love it represents.*



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Here are just a few ideas for transitional objects you can make with children. They can keep them for themselves to carry with them or pop in a pocket to help them feel safe and connected. Children might also want to gift an item they make to someone they aren't able to see just now (friends, neighbours, relatives, etc.). Spread love and keep connected .

Try to do these activities together; children will often chat during creative activities. It's a time you can connect and take time to really listen and respond to what they are saying.

## Decorated Pebbles:

Collect some stones together and take them home to decorate. You can use permanent marker pens, paints or acrylic paint pens to decorate the stones. There are lots of ideas online if you need some inspiration for what to create but they can be kept very simple; a love heart, rainbow or just wee messages for ourselves or others.

## Peg Dolls:

These can be made with pegs or small twigs. You don't need fancy craft materials for these; you can use felt-tip pens, and old scraps of ribbon, threads, fabric , etc. Children might want to create their family, friends, a favourite character from a book or superhero. Remember to let the children lead and follow their ideas .



## Pom-poms:

Children (and adults) love making pom-poms. You can now get pom-pom makers from craft shops but you can still use cardboard from an old cereal box too! Pom-poms can be made into creatures or children might just like to have them in their pockets or hanging on a bag.

## Pictures / Home-made Cards

What's lovelier than a child's picture? Let them create whatever their imaginations desire and for the people they love and want to stay connected to.



## Origami:

This is a great activity to learn together. All you need is paper and there are lots of instructions & helpful videos to follow online.

***We would love to see pictures of **your creations** - please share them with us on any of the social media platforms below. Thank you!***



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