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Expert Contributor

By **Lisa Warren**
Sunrise of Lynn Valley

Art & Aging Benefits

How Art Helps Us Live Purposeful Lives

There's something special that happens when we create.

Whether it's an afternoon of painting in the sunshine, trying a pottery class for the first time, or simply sketching what we see on a walk, those moments tend to leave us feeling lighter, more connected, and often, surprisingly more like ourselves.

And it turns out, there's real science behind that feeling.

Across Canada, organizations like the Public Health Agency of Canada continue to emphasize that staying socially and meaningfully engaged is one of the most important contributors to healthy aging. Creative activities naturally bring both together—connection and purpose—while helping to reduce isolation and lift mood.

Here in British Columbia, we're fortunate to have strong support for the arts through groups like the BC Arts Council, along with local programs that make it easy to try something new at any stage of life.

Some of the earliest long-term research, including the Seattle Longitudinal Study, showed that maintaining a flexible, creative mindset can support cognitive health well into our later years. People who stayed engaged—curious, creative, and open to learning—experienced better overall wellness and greater independence.

More recent studies continue to echo this, showing that older adults who participate in creative activities often experience improved mood, stronger memory, and a deeper sense of purpose.

And perhaps most meaningful of all, art has a way of reaching people even when words cannot. For those living with memory loss, a paintbrush, a melody, or a simple craft can spark recognition, joy, and a sense of accomplishment that feels deeply personal.



Because at its heart, creativity isn't about being "good" at something.

It's about expression. It's about feeling.

I often see that purpose come alive in the smallest ways—someone rediscovering a love of painting they hadn't touched in decades, or trying something entirely new and surprising themselves. Those moments matter more than we sometimes realize.

A Few Gentle Ways to Bring More Creativity Into Your Days

- **Stay curious**

Try something you've never done before, without worrying about the outcome.

- **Build on what you already love**

A walk can turn into photography, photography into painting, and painting into storytelling.

- **Redefine what art looks like**

Gardening, cooking, writing, and even how we decorate our homes, these are all forms of creativity.



Where Purpose Comes to Life

At Sunrise Senior Living, this belief in purposeful living is woven into everyday life.

Creativity isn't seen as an activity—it's part of how residents continue to express who they are. Whether it's an afternoon art class, music in the bistro, or simply gathering together to create something meaningful, these moments help foster connection, confidence, and joy.

Because purpose doesn't retire.

It evolves.

And when we create space for creativity—at any age—we create space for people to feel seen, engaged, and truly at home.

Learn more by contacting me, Lisa Warren, Senior Director of Sales at Sunrise of Lynn Valley. We are proud to be serving seniors on the North Shore and beyond for 25 years. Call 604-904-1226 to schedule a tour of our lovely community—or better yet, come join us for an activity and experience it firsthand.



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