

Story Sharing



Work Book

FOR NURSING HOME CARE PROVIDERS ©

Training Guide

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Caring Practices of Teaching and Learning Story Sharing in Long-Term Care

- ☺ Gathering ☺ Creating Places ☺ Caring
- ☺ Staying ☺ Interpreting ☺ Presencing
- ☺ Assembling ☺ Making visible
- ☺ Preserving the Story

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Dedicated to the Champion Guide

Introduction to the Training Guide Welcome!

You are about to embark on an exciting journey. Over the next several weeks, you will be meeting with your co-workers for about 30 minutes and guide them, with the help of this trainer's guide, to think about the stories they share with each other and the residents and their families. This training manual follows the same order as the Story Sharing sessions and Caring Practices: 1] Significance of Story and the special place of the care provider-resident relationship; 2] Understanding the meaning of possessions; 3] Listening attentively and 'reading' the resident and what matters most to each resident; 4] Toward resident-centered meaningful care.

For each session, this training guide will include the goal for the session, an explanation of the Caring Practice for the session, the materials you may need, and some questions, suggestions, and examples that will help you guide your group. Please understand that there will be times when your group wishes to focus on only one part of a session and that is fine. Perhaps they find a particular question very meaningful and one to which most can relate. Most sessions are really conversations among friends and co-workers. No one's position is more important than anyone else's. Your role in this program is that of guide and participant. You will also be asked share stories. You are asked to begin and end each session and make sure everyone understands the ground rules.

The Story Sharing Activity Program involves 4 sessions that may take place about one week apart. This program was developed and tested specifically for Long Term Care facilities in order to create a community in which everyone feels welcome, cared for, and at-home. There are 4 Caring Practices that help us learn and think about ways of being with each other as we all create a Caring Community of older adults, family, care providers, administrators, housekeepers and others who enter the world of our long-term care community.

Each session will focus on one or two of these "Best Practices" (Caring Practices) Throughout this training guide and the Story Sharing workbook there are note pages for writing, reading, and reflecting about the conversations. Participants can use the workbook as a journal and write down reminders of stories between sessions. As a Champion and Guide, you may wish to write down how the session went-- things you learned that work well and other things that did not work very well. You may wish to share this information with the next Guide.

Session One
Caring Practice
Being Called to Care: The Special Place of the Care Provider-Resident Relationship
Connecting with Our Residents

Goal: Introduce the Story Sharing program to the group.

Explain Ground Rules of each session

Begin the sharing of stories with the understanding that we must learn to value our own stories before we value the stories of others.

If possible, cookies and juice are served at each session to encourage an informal, sharing atmosphere

Ground Rules: (1) Discuss confidentiality and mutual trust. In other words, emphasize that the group's meeting room is considered a safe place. Whatever personal information is discussed stays here and is confidential. (2) Everyone needs a chance to speak and contribute. [Do not allow one person to dominate the session]

❖ **Materials**

Workbook (used throughout the sessions as a journal, notebook, drawing pad)

Perhaps the activity director can provide colored pencils for the first session.

❖ **Goal**

- ◆ Discuss how we come to know one another through story-sharing
- ◆ Practice the skills of listening, recognizing things we have in common, acceptance of differences, and tolerance of diversity

Activity: Getting to know each other in a new way-through story

Have everyone in the group draw a picture of their favorite place when they were young [6, 7,8,9,10, years of age]; explain that this place could be anywhere...don't give examples; just allow the members to reflect back. Remind the group that most of you are not artists so the quality of the drawing is not important.

Give the group about 4-5 minutes. Some will be more detailed than others.

Then ask the members of the group to pair off and each member of the pair takes a turn describing his/her picture to one another. Time the descriptions giving each partner 2 minutes.

When the participants are finished, ask if someone would like to share their favorite place with the whole group. Allow about 3 volunteers to do this unless the group is small 5-6 people; then everyone can have a chance.

When the exercise is over...Remind the group that our Stories are who we are and tell others what is important to us—our memories are who we are.

Tips for the Trainer

During the drawing activity, there may be lots of talking and laughing. That's OK. The group is starting to come together and that is good! There are no right and wrong answers or stories throughout this program. Remember that you are a participant too! So make sure you draw a picture and pair off with someone as well. If the total number in the group isn't even, join a group of 2, making it a group of 3.

Suggestion: You might wish to discuss the following with the group when the drawing exercise is over...

In one study (Heliker, 1995) in which residents in a nursing home were asked about their life stories and their lives in the nursing home, the researcher learned that those who loved to climb trees and were called 'tom-boys' as children, were most active in exercise and bowling activities in the nursing home. Those who loved to read at an early age, still found most of their enjoyment reading at 90 years of age; those who loved to color as children, loved to paint in the nursing home. Perhaps what was most meaningful then, remains meaningful now? I wonder if we all would like to spend time in our favorite places today???

After the activity----take 10 minutes to discuss:

1. What is the significance of Story?
2. What is Story Sharing?
3. How do we share stories with our residents?

To prepare for this session:

Think in advance of a story you've heard that has helped you better understand and know someone. Think about how you have come to know yourself, co-workers, residents etc. over time.

You might wish to use your story as an example.

Activity For Next Week:

Give all participants a small plastic sandwich bag with these instructions:
For the next session, please bring an object that is very meaningful to you and that fits in this little bag.

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Session Two
Caring Practices
Gathering: Welcoming and Inviting the New Resident
Understanding the Meaning of Treasured Possessions
Creating a Place

Begin this session with a brief review of the last session—5 minutes

This session introduces several Caring Practices. *Gathering* describes how we call out each other's stories and what is important or what matters to us. *Creating a place* for these conversations, for sharing stories, means that there must be a special clearing, like a clearing in a forest, in which we can all gather—a safe place where we can understand each other. This safe place opens up new possibilities where all stories can be heard and valued and where the special meanings of even small possessions can be shared. As healthcare workers, it's important that we're open to new situations or opportunities.

Goals:

Discuss story as the path to knowing what a person considers important and meaningful
Discuss how objects can be symbols of great personal meaning and importance
Describe story as a way of sharing burdens and joys
Describe ways of telling stories – photographs, storyboard, journaling, art, cooking, sewing, special possessions etc.

Activity

Have group members share their special possession/item with the group. Why is it special?

Be sure to share your item and its meaning. You may want to go first if everyone seems shy or uncertain. When all have had a chance to do this, ask how they would like this item to be handled by the care provider helping them move into the nursing home.

NOTE: Sharing is voluntary—let group members decide if they wish to share.

Be sure to share your item [*As guide and champion, you are asked to participate in every activity as well.*] and its meaning. Remind group members-

As a special and safe place is being created, there must be trust and respectful care even for the smallest items.

Ask the members of the group to notice what residents keep in their rooms. Are there pictures, books, or crafts in the room?

Suggestion: If you wish, you may share this true story with the group.

The Story of the Tattered Housecoat

During this session in another nursing home, a Nurse Aide brought a torn and faded housecoat as her most meaningful item. She told the story of how she was the primary caregiver for her mom for many many years. When her mom passed away, the only possession and remembrance she had of her mom was this tattered housecoat. The housecoat still had her mom's smell and was a symbol of those many years spent with a loving and warm parent. When this nurse aide comes home after a hard day's work, she sometimes puts on her mom's housecoat and just feels better and very loved....This tattered housecoat will hopefully always be handled with great respect.

Activity: *For next week*, ask group members to visit with a resident and notice what possessions 'stand out' for the group member in that resident's room. Often there is a story behind the item. Tell group members to think about asking a resident to tell them a story about that item. It might be a photograph, a statue, a religious article, etc. By better understanding what is meaningful to a resident we are able to know and connect with them and begin to build a relationship.

What does the item mean to the resident?

How do these items speak to the resident's meaning?

As home and family are being created, there must be trust and respectful care even for the smallest items.

Keeping a Journal

Ask the group to consider keeping a journal of their own stories. We all have special stories; some are easier to share than others. Consider writing a story about how you came to know a particular resident.

Tip: Thank the group for coming and sharing as the session ends. You may want to say something like, "Thank you for coming and sharing. It means a lot to me that we're here together. "

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Session Three
Caring Practice
Presencing: Attending, Listening, and Connecting

Begin this session with a brief review of the last session—5 minutes

This session introduces the Caring Practice of being present. *Presencing* describes “being-with” residents, families, and other staff members. By *attending* to our extended family we are better able to know and connect with them. Through these connections we find out what matters, what is meaningful to one another.

Activity

Ask group members about their visit to a resident’s room and if they noticed a special object. Ask if the resident shared a story about the item and if they might share that experience.

Goal:

Use story sharing as a tool to connect with residents and families and to give care that matters.

Inviting family members to share a resident’s story-Discuss a time about coming to know a resident who has difficulty communicating.

Share a story about a time when you spoke to a family member and discovered what was meaningful to a resident. It is through sharing stories that we learn what matters to us. We have to be open to possibilities when listening to stories. Tracie’s story gives us more to think about. It’s through listening to her story that we learn about Anna’s love of teaching and her experiences in another nursing home.

Tip: Thank the group for coming and sharing as the session ends.

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Session Four
Caring Practice
Interpreting: Reading a Person and Knowing What Matters
Resident Centered Care Planning

Begin this session with a brief review of the last session—5 minutes

This session introduces the Caring Practice of *Interpreting* or ‘reading’ the resident and describes what you do when you think about what someone’s story **means** to you and the other person. Through interpreting you learn what matters to staff, residents, and families. Our life experiences shape the way we think and interpret. This means our interpretations change over time. New ways of thinking open up possibilities and lead to new ways of caring. Taking the time to find out what really matters helps us interpret and understand how we can help a resident live a quality of life that is meaningful to him/her.

Goal:

To learn what matters to others through listening carefully to their stories

To learn *new* ways of caring by finding out what is meaningful through interpreting stories.

Ask the group if they have connected with a special resident.

“Tell me a story about connecting with a resident.”

Prepare for this session by thinking of a time you yourself connected with a resident. Describe what that was like for you and for the resident.

Remember that we all interpret situations—that’s what it means to be human. Nurse aides, for examples, are very gifted in this area.

Activity:

Ask participants to imagine themselves as residents [add 60 years to your current age and imagine you have been invited to **this** facility]; the facility is well known and recognized for its model of **Meaningful Person-Centered Care**; every resident has the right to plan his/her care based on what is important to each person. Have the group members imagine that what is important to them right now will be just as important to them 60 years from now.

In essence, you are asking them to create their own future individualized care plans, life plans, their own future story—a care plan written for them, by them. We know our likes and dislikes better than anyone else. Being able to share this information and include it as part of the care plan, we are able to provide meaningful care. What did the group member, now a resident, do before he or she entered the nursing home? Ask them what they'd like to continue doing. If possible, include this in the care plan. For example, if a group member/resident awoke at 5am every morning to read the newspaper and have a cup of coffee, this can easily be added to the care plan. If another group member/resident really enjoys crossword puzzles every evening before bed, this too can be a part of the care plan. If yet another group member/resident enjoyed a beer or 2 while watching a football game, that too can be part of a meaningful care plan.

NOTE: This activity can be lots of fun and that is fine!!! Join in with your own imagined life plan. Be assured that the next time, group members return to their units and residents, they will be reminded of how important it is to listen to a resident tell his/her story and think about what is important to the resident and how what is important might be included in the everyday care plan.

How can all care providers make what is meaningful visible?

Person-Centered Care Planning with the Resident?

Learning circles with all care providers involved?

Imagine your mother, father, or a loved one being admitted to a nursing home where stories are shared as part of the care plan. Ask the members of the group to describe what the nursing home would look like.

Tip: Thank the group for coming and sharing as the session ends.

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Voice's day

The following pages are meant to assist group member between sessions or even after they have completed the program.

Some may want to continue to meet and continue sharing stories and thinking about residents they have come to know.

Some may decide to begin to journal their own experiences. “Continuing the Journey”

Some may wish to write about an experience with a resident and then meet with others about the encounter. The “Journal Reflections” guide may help.

If care providers wish to meet as small support groups, they may find the “Guide to Reflective Thinking” helpful.

Voice's Day—Special gathering for ALL care providers including administrators, housekeepers, MDS nurses, Allied Health professionals, CNAs etc. Refreshments are served. A raffle may be held—a ticket is given to each participant --NOT bought, GIVEN. Raffle is held at the end.

This is a celebration.

All gather in a circle—the question posed is: “What is it like to be a (nurse, care partner, administrator, etc.) here at [Name of facility]? It is here that every person/voice is heard [only if they wish to share] and the work they do is shared. This is a wonderful Community-Building activity.

Continuing the Journey

Please begin to journal your own story. We all have special stories. Some are more easy to share than others. Consider writing a story about how you came to know a particular resident. What story would you tell someone if they asked you, “What do you do in the nursing home?”

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Guide to Reflective Thinking

Tell me about a time when you felt you really knew a resident.

How do you come to know your residents?

Their likes and dislikes?

What they were like before coming to the nursing home?

How did you share this information with others who cared for the resident?

Think about your experience with Story Sharing

How do you feel Story Sharing skills used with residents may affect or change the way you work with your residents?

How do you feel Story Sharing may affect or change how the nursing care plan is written?

Can you give an example?

Tell me about a time you shared a story with a resident.

How do you feel Story Sharing will help you make a difference in your everyday care?

Imagine your (mother, father, loved one) being admitted to a nursing home in which stories were shared as part of the care plan. Could you describe what that nursing home would be like?

When you visited that nursing home, what would you see? Hear?

Tell me about your (mother's, father's, loved one's) care?

What is his/her room like?

What are the nurses and nurse aides doing?

You as the resident's daughter/son have been invited to the monthly care planning conference. What is the discussion about?

Journal Reflections

Name:

Name of Resident:

Room Number:

Date of Story Sharing Event:

Story or Moment Shared (please describe the story or a moment shared with a resident and how this moment changed (improved? enriched?) your relationship with the resident):

(Example: Stories may be “never again” stories where you discovered something that was not meaningful to a resident or that hurt a resident.

Stories may be when you shared something of your day with a resident so the resident would understand you better. Stories may be a joke you shared)

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Art Work

