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Life stories and their performance in dementia care

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Life stories and their performance in dementia care

Highlights

- For people with dementia to succeed in their storytelling they require support.
- The performance of life stories in community builds bridges to communication.
- Non-verbal, interactive storytelling methods support a culture of reciprocity.

Abstract

This article describes a life story project that took place at a day program for older adults living with dementia. The project methodology is shaped by ideas and practices from both drama therapy and narrative therapy and, in this way, combines a collaborative, community approach to life story work with a creative, embodied approach to communication. Recent developments in the use of life stories and in understanding the role of non-verbal communication in dementia care research and practice are discussed. The process of recording and performing a life story with and in front of people who are dealing with a range of cognitive and communication impairments is then described in detail. Results suggest that this highly visual and interactive approach to life story work fosters opportunities for meaningful

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