

TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN ENRICHING THE LIVES OF LONG TERM CARE RESIDENTS

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Presentation Objectives

- Research Question and Rationale
- Meaning in Life
- Methodology
- Themes
- Implications

Research Question

What is the meaning in life for
LTC residents?



Rationale

- Changing demographics
- Impact of ability to find meaning on well being
- Lack of research



Meaning in Life

- An individual, unique experience
- Meaning has to be continuously redefined throughout life
- Elderly experience many losses in terms of health, relationships, and connections
- Losses may be exacerbated when admitted into long term care (LTC)

Methodology

- Hermeneutic Phenomenology
- Data Collection
- Research Ethics Board Approval
- Data Analysis

Themes

- Connectedness
- Survival Despite Declining Functional Capacity
- Engaging in “Normal” Activities
- Seeking a Place of Refuge

Connectedness

"I told my daughter that last year I wish I would go. It is time for me to go. They say you got your children, you got your grandchildren and they don't want you to go. If they didn't want me it would be a different story."

- Family, friends, and caregivers were integral to the experience of purpose and meaning



Connectedness

"So I comes in, I takes my prayer book out a couple of times a day. I will read the chapter in the bible. I am a firm believer of that stuff...I think there is something after death and I think and even though if you have something wrong with you there is always something greater. It is done for a purpose. I think something comes over you for a purpose."

- Connectedness with a spiritual being provided meaning and purpose for many residents

Survival Despite Declining Functional Capacity

“When I had one leg for that whole time, I could do anything. When I went home I baked and I don’t know. I did everything. I made my bed, washed my hair. I did everything...then when I lost my other leg, I couldn’t do that...I get up and I know I got to do it, and I try to...”

- Many residents experienced deteriorating health and functioning and this seemed to instil the need for survival

Survival Despite Declining Functional Capacity

“I needs to get back my license. See I might get them back if my hands get better. There is nothing wrong with my feet, they are not that bad. That is enough. I wish I could jump aboard and just drive. That is my goal for the summer.”



Engaging in “Normal” Activities

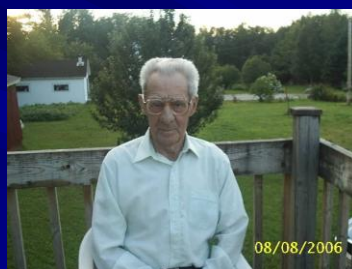
“they (staff) bakes muffins and you know cakes and I helps them out.”

“I buy wool always. I wouldn’t take nothing from nobody. I give them (dishcloths) away if somebody wants them. And to the church. You know because they need them in the kitchen.”

- Everyday activities instilled meaning, not those that simply occupied the residents’ time

Seeking a Place of Refuge

“we are all supposed to be moving to the new home. Yes. I’m looking forward to my own room and space. I think that it is too good to be true.”



- Residents craved space where privacy could be sought and autonomy achieved

Implications

■ LTC Practice

- Patient centred model of care
- Create opportunities for residents to reminisce about relationships, lives, activities, and home
- Open dialogue can provide insight into resident's individual needs
- Encourage participation in everyday activities
- Foster privacy and autonomy

Implications

■ LTC Education

■ Future Research



Ultimate Goal is to Enrich
the Lives of Current and Future
LTC Residents



Questions???