



Finding Meaning in the Experience of Dementia: The Place of Spiritual Reminiscence Work

Elizabeth MacKinlay, Corinne Trevitt

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This groundbreaking book is based on the findings of the first major study on spiritual reminiscence work with people with dementia. Carried out over a decade, the study confirmed spiritual reminiscence to be an effective means of helping people with dementia to find meaning in their own experience, and interact in meaningful ways with others.

The authors present the evidence for the efficacy of spiritual reminiscence with this group, and drawing on examples demonstrate its many benefits, as revealed by the study, including the affirmation of identity and worth whilst promoting resilience and transcendence; reducing levels of depression; and giving people with dementia a voice with which to express grief, despair, joy, wisdom, insight and humour. Specific practice issues are addressed, including how to maximise communication and nurture connections during sessions; the role of symbol, ritual and liturgy and how to design an effective spiritual reminiscence program.

Transcripts of sessions are included throughout the book as examples, providing unprecedented insight into how people with dementia experience spiritual reminiscence, and encouraging reflective practice. The book closes with a set of suggested questions and discussion topics which can be used as the basis of a six week program.

Providing theory and the latest research as well as a wealth of practical information and examples to guide practice, this book will be of interest to dementia care practitioners and activity coordinators, pastoral carers, aged care chaplains, practical theologians, students, academics and researchers.



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