

ATTITUDES & APPROACHES TO DEMENTIA CARE

GRACE O'SULLIVAN

***DELIVERING EXCELLENCE IN DEMENTIA CARE
CONFERENCE***

AUCKLAND, 28 OCTOBER, 2011

Living well

*“In order to understand a work we
have to reconstruct it by
retracing the process by which it
came to be”*

(Grenz, 1996, p. 99).

Models of care

- ① Institutional model
- ① Psychosocial model
- ① Person-centred care

Combination of approaches

- ① Relationship approach
- ① Best Friends approach

Research

To generate
information
on how to live
life more fully.

Recruitment

- ① Two years - 11 couples
- ① Negative stereotypes

Prejudice

- ① Judging people negatively
- ① Attitudes and beliefs which favour one group over another
- ① Cause unequal treatment

Social stigma

- ① A label
- ② Taken for granted
- ③ Internalized

Stereotypes

Imprison diagnosed people in ideas of who they are and what they can and cannot do.

Attitude

“Is a little thing that makes a big difference.”

Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Approaches

“They hear that word dementia and they think of someone in the very final stages.” - Greg

Assumptions

Patronizing attitudes

“If you feel you are being undermined or rubbished it is soul destroying.” - Rita

Characteristics

- Values and beliefs
- Diverse and individual

Personal attitudes

- ⦿ Positive
- ⦿ Determined
- ⦿ Optimistic
- ⦿ Nonchalant

Language

- Central to the development of social reality.
- A taken-for-granted means of relating to others.

Words and meanings

- The patient
 - a woman living in her own home in the community.
- Sufferers
 - people don't have to inevitably suffer.

Dementia

Is not an illness; it is a set of symptoms that result from a large group of disorders that cause a progressive decline in function.

Interpretation of language

- ◉ Does not define reality
- ◉ Blatant commercialisation of dementia

Pity

- ① Undignified
- ① Creates barriers
- ① Based on diagnosis

Negative stories

- ① Uphold prejudice
- ① Feed social stigma
- ① Shape attitudes
- ① Gives rise to fear

Negativity

Persistent beliefs are influenced by negative reports of Alzheimer's and similar diseases.

Approach

Ageism is a prejudice directed towards older people by the temporarily young.

Without hope people have nothing
to strive for.

Health



Practices: Social stigma

The bed and the banks of the river shape the course of the river just as social groups influence the way of life.



Conditions: Language / attitudes



The pace of the river is influenced by the lie of the land and the obstacles therein, meaning internal and external forces affect the tempo of the river.

Understandings: Prejudice

While the river naturally flows in one direction, depending on the structure of the land the water may meander slowly and leave stagnant pools in some places or it may tumble over stones, crash into rocks and boulders with an ever increasing ripple effect.



TREAD SOFTLY...

**FOR YOU TREAD ON MY
LIFE**

MICHAEL KING, (1945-2004)