



Reaching What Lives :

Activities based on Kitwood's 12 Indicators of Quality of Life


Alzheimer's Association
Heart of America Chapter

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Kitwood and Bredin's Research on residents in care facilities:

- Residents spend large amounts of time without human contact
- Even with good staff ratios, interactions are often brief and superficial, centered primarily on care demands
- 2 Key reasons for this in their research:
 1. Staff did not know how to engage residents
 2. Staff underestimate what persons with dementia can do




Philosophical Beginnings:

- Despite having Alzheimer's disease, an individual is still capable of various forms of self expression
- Despite having Alzheimer's disease, an individual can still have quality of life
- Significance of how we assist, what we do with and for individuals is not defined by memory, but is instead defined by feeling




Sometimes, the indicators can be responded to in how we provide care, sometimes it comes through in structured activity design




Addressing Engagement

- Need to respect Executive Function implications
- Must be created around the needs of individuals with the disease
- Communication skills integrates at least one of the 12 indicators, often multiple at any given time
- Must occur with the mindset of significance



Dimensions of a good activity program


- Activities are reach to a continuum of functional abilities
- Activities focus on desired affective impact
- Activities blend options for mind, body and spirit
- They include both historical pieces as well as new pieces
- They encompass a significant amount of time during the day and are sufficiently weighted at various times based on the needs of the residents.
- Requires the 3 C's (Creativity, calculation and competence)



Indicator #1 *Assertion of desire or will*

- Need to be heard
- Need to be understood
- Need to maintain some elements of choice
- Need to be recognized as human


(Examples: life review, Resident Councils, planning committees, award events)



Indicator #2 *Ability to experience and express a range of emotions*

- Paying attention to cues
- Recognizing the feelings underneath
- Structured opportunities for feelings to be given voice
- Opportunity for expression of faith


(Examples: Spiritual observances, groups that provide for Projection such as art, exploration beyond reminiscence)



Indicator #3 *Initiation of Social Contact*

- Supporting individuals in continuing interest areas in ways that are comfortable
- Respectfully engaging without prompting the automatic 'no'
- Bridging when friends/families are distancing/distanced


(Examples: Intergenerational programs, family gardens, Teas, Joy Kits, Bifocal Kits, Exercise/Walking groups)



Indicator #4
Affectional Warmth

- Physical touch
- Smiles
- Taking time
- Energy in the environment


(Examples: (dance, manicures, celebrations, Bedtime letters)



Indicator #5
Social Sensitivity

- *Matching capacity and expectation*
- *Insuring success in social settings*
- *Creating an accepting environment*
- *Offering a range of activity/social events that bridge many interests*


(Examples: Video stories, Poetry, Political Empowerment groups, Computer programs, Quilting Bees)



Indicator #6
Self Respect

- Regularly affirming strengths
- Recognizing successes/contributions of the past
- Asking advice/guidance


(Examples: Groups specifically designed around a skill set, travel discussions, "Did you know..." games, Advice collages for graduating high school students)



Indicator #7
Acceptance of others with dementia

- Feeling safe and connected with other individuals in the same boat.
- Deborah Shouse story, "The Tribe"
- Early Stage Support Groups
- Matching cognitive levels


(Examples: Music, sorting activities, "Did you know...Activities, Video Histories)



Indicator #8
Humor


- Laughing with, not at
- Laughing at self as a caregiver
- Joining with in fun

(Examples: drama groups, Time slips, Wii Games)



Indicator #9
Creativity and Self Expression


- Role of disinhibition
- Time Slips
- Memories in the Making
- Poetry
- Drama Therapy
- Drumming



Indicator #10
Showing evident pleasure

- A sense of connection with others
- Joining in pleasurable experiences
- Sense of resolution


(Examples: Bridge Activities with Families, Group projects – raising money for something specific in the facility)



Indicator #11
Helpfulness

- Volunteer work
- Support of others
- Doing something for someone as opposed to because they are told to


(Examples: Formal volunteer groups, support committees who sign get well cards/Birthday cards/May Day Baskets, Cooking groups – make dog biscuits for staff with dogs, Garden Clubs)



Indicator of #12
Relaxation


- Quiet spaces
- Music
- Use of Nature
- Soft voices

(Examples: Walks outside, Evening religious services, nature tapes, coloring adult coloring books, paint by number, model planes/cars)




Alzheimer's Research implicating activities:

- Exercise
- Social Engagement
- Cognitive Stimulation
- Power of Hope




Pragmatic tips:

- Be flexible
- Be Prepared. Have materials ready and on hand
- Keep objects out of hands reach until after demonstrating the activity
- Base timing of the activities on resident responses.
- Eliminate distractions
- Avoid Confrontation




Continued...

- Maintain a general routine
- Be an active listener
- Observe body language
- Use step by step instructions with a variety of physical, visual cues.
- Pay attention to visual spatial issues. Utilize colors and contrasts in a way that supports capacity




Continued...

- Never hurry an activity
- Provide effective seating arrangement
- Match room with activity needs
- Insure all participants are successful
- Provide closure to activity by asking
Whether they enjoyed themselves
Whether they would like to do the activity again




Resources:

- BiFolkal Kits available at public libraries (bifolkal.org)
- Creative Forecasting Journal
- Time Slips (timeslips.org)
- Aerobics of the Mind Cards by Mary Engelman
- Colorful Scarves
- Rhythmic Medicine Studio (rhythmicmedicine.com)




Books:

- Creating Moments of Joy by Jolene Brackey
- Montessori Based Dementia Programming by Cameron Camp
- A Different Visit by Cameron Camp
- Therapeutic Uses of Music with Older Adults by Alicia Clair
- Making the Moments Count: Leisure Activities for Caregiving Relationships by Joanne Ardolf Decker
- Horticulture Therapy with the Older Adult Population by Suzanne Wells
- I Can't Draw a Straight Line by Shirley Hubalek



The most significant measure of a good facility is a good activity program

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