

***“Dementia Care with Integrity:
How to Best Support People with
Dementia”***

Nancy L. Kriseman, L.C.S.W.

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“We have to help people with dementia feel less ‘dis-eased’”

Nancy L. Kriseman L.C.S.W.
The Caring Spirit Approach to
Eldercare

Understanding How to Provide Dementia Care with Integrity

- Starts with *commitment* to excellence
- The *desire* to create a “culture that cares”
- Requires a *new way of thinking* about dementia and dementia care
 - What does dementia mean to you?
 - What type of care do you want to see?
 - Are you willing to find ways to gather the resources(financial and otherwise) you need to provide good dementia care?

**“Never take a persons dignity. It’s
worth everything to them and nothing
to you”**

Author unknown

Re-thinking Dementia

- We need to **re-examine** what is more important, the head or the heart
 - In today's fast paced, knowledge obsessive culture, what we know seems to be more important than how we feel and what we enjoy
- We need to **re-consider** how to support all those *living with* and *caring for* those with dementia
 - Research and Financing of AD and other dementia's needs to not just be looking for "a cure"
 - People with dementia deserve to live in a dignified manner with programs and services that support them!

Re-thinking Dementia

- We need to ***re-visit*** standards of excellence for dementia *care*
 - We need to look at behavior challenges and resistance differently
 - We need to remind ourselves of the importance creating as much “ease” as possible for the person with dementia and for the family
 - We need to take another look at the “importance of reality” as we know it and be more aware of reality of the elder who has dementia
 - We need to be creative, “think out of the box”, inspire fun!

“We don’t remember days, we remember moments”

Cesare Pavese

Dementia's Defining Moments...

- Being more in the moment
- Less stress and worries
- Meeting new people every day
- Saying what you feel and being less guarded
- Every experience is a new experience
- Appreciating the simplicity that life can bring
- Re-establishing relationships

“The brain thinks, the heart remembers”

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Recreating a Philosophy of Care

- What does it mean to provide “person centered care” with integrity?
 - We have to commit to establishing a set of values that foster:
 - Compassion for the way we provide care
 - Connection to the spirit and heart
 - Quality relationships
 - Meaningful activities for elders with dementia
 - Hope for our families
 - Joy in the environments in which those with dementia live

“The basic need to continue being who I am, is perhaps the most important need of anyone”

Burger, Fraser, Hunt, Frank
Nursing Homes, Getting Good Care
There

Challenges We Face When Caring for Those with Dementia

- Poor attention span
- Easily overwhelmed
- Difficulty with comprehension
- Difficulty with hand/eye coordination
- Personality
- Wide range of abilities among residents
- Communication issues
- Behaviors that make it difficult and sometimes even dangerous to provide care

**“Home is not where you live but
where they understand and care
about you”**

**From a Resident who has AD
“Rethinking Alzheimer’s Care”**

Re-focusing How We Approach The Challenges of Dementia

- Reconsidering the Meaning of Home
 - Why do people with dementia ask if they can go home?
 - What is the definition of home?
 - Safety, a sense of connectedness, privacy, a place where you can be yourself, autonomy, joy
 - How do we foster a feeling of home for people with dementia?
 - What does the environment need to look like, smell like, feel like to create a sense of home for the resident?

“It is important to know what disease the person has, but it’s more important to know what person the disease has”

Dr. William Osler

Re-focusing- ADL Care

- ADL care has to be approached differently
- People with dementia, often don't understand why they need help
- Caregivers have to be flexible, patient and compassionate
- Caregivers will need the tools to provide PCC
- Circle of support- need volunteers who can support those with dementia besides the caregiver(s)

Refocusing- ADL Care con't...

- Provide ADL in a different way:
 - Sing to the person when giving him/her a bath
 - Dance the person to the bathroom
 - Pray with the person with the person when he is upset
 - Consider playing music during meal-time, bath time, while dressing or grooming
 - Talk about what really matters to the person when dressing, bathing etc.
 - Share yourself

Re-Investing

- The spirit of the environment matters!
Caregivers need to be encouraged to:
 - Be playful- Creating joy, humor and fun inspires love
 - Celebrate- Finding ways to celebrate the person who has dementia!
 - Re-Member- Finding ways to honor the persons past and remembering who they were!
 - Be creative- Encouraging new ways to relate to person with dementia

Re-Engaging

- Provide activities that are meaningful and encourage self-esteem
 - Activities need to connect to the heart and spirit of the person with dementia
 - They need to stay connected to the outside community
 - Activities need to promote “community spirit”
 - Activities need to promote accomplishment

Re-Connecting with the Families

- Let the families know that “you care”
- Think about ways to “partner” with the families
 - Starts in the admission process by asking them
 - What they are most worried about and what is most important to them
 - For their help and support, ways they could potentially recruit volunteers to provide programs, provide supplies for activities etc...
 - Continues with checking in with how the family is doing
 - Continues with providing Educational programs

Re-Investing in Ourselves

- We need to re-invest in ourselves
 - Caring for elders with dementia does take ENERGY and COMMITMENT
 - We need to find ways to enjoy working with people with dementia
 - We need to move away from always doing the same thing, the same way
 - We need to carve out time in department meetings to share our joys and blessings about our work
 - We need to celebrate ourselves!

“The Heart Remembers”

**Nancy Kriseman
“The Caring Spirit”**





For Additional Information

NANCY L. KRISEMAN L.C.S.W.

**GERIATRIC CONSULTING SERVICES INC.
404-881-0313**

Email: nancykriseman@comcast.net

Web: www.nancykriseman.com