

Some people say that life is like the theater or a drama or perhaps even a comedy! I once read this statement, "Life for me is like a play in which I was made to put on the wrinkles and confinements of old age, and then pushed out onto the stage; but I knew that it was still ME inside!"

AGING WITH DIGNITY

ACT I- AGING

Scene 1- "LABELS" Group Interaction - learning how to see, not just a label, but a person.

Scene 2- "Aging through the Generations" An Exercise class for Baby Boomers.

ACT II- DIGNITY

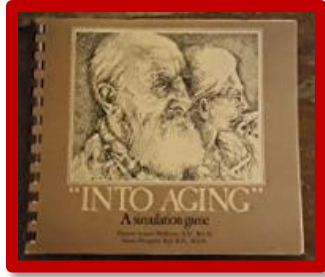
Scene 1- "Learning to have dignity & respect for each resident or client."

Role-playing to train your entire team using The Aging Game.

Scene 2- "The Story of Anne Cohen" The Pieces of My Life Puzzle.

My Mother- Played by Patty Parks Wood De Loy

Me: Played by Janice Wood Dressander



“The Aging Game”

Training your Team to be a part of the Future of Person-Directed Care

INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY: In the 1990s, I discovered an old book in the supply closet of the nursing home where I was working. I read through it and made some revisions, and thought, “Why not give this a trial run?” It ended up being such a success that I took this concept with me into dementia care training classes in assisted living where I taught the new employee orientation. To this day, I still get comments, “I will never forget that class on aging.” “I remember the aging game!” “It helped me to learn to have respect for those with memory loss and physical needs.” It was a lot of work, it was a lot of time, but it was well worth it. Now, in 2017, I have taken classes using technology. Whatever method works for your organization...I highly recommend using some approach to educate your members of the team, from each and every department. (By the way, this book is now a collector’s item☺)

Here are some ways to conduct an Aging Game:

1. **Room Set Up:**

- a. **IDENTITY TABLE:** A Title Sign and items such as old books, tool box, quilt, yarn, fabric, puzzle, hat, scarf, mittens, etc. Name Tags and Pens.
- b. **SUPPLY TABLE:** For thickened liquids, plates, spoons, cups, bibs, pull ups and depends, etc.
- c. **TABLE #1:** Independent Living is where everyone starts out, often if it is a large group, I will place tables in a U shape with the speaker table in front, and the other tables in the center.
- d. **TABLE #2:** Assisted Living is in the center with a Title Sign. A co-trainer or volunteer is there to help the participants take turns drawing cards and following instructions.
- e. **TABLE #3:** Advanced Nursing Care and/or Dementia Care is also in the center with a Title Sign. A co-trainer or volunteer is there to help the participants take turns drawing cards and following instructions.
- f. **PRESENTER TABLE:** Is where I would teach the class from, so there was room around and in the center for events and walking, etc.
- g. **R.I.P. SIGN on small table or in a Chair:** If I person draws a card that says that they passed away, they would take their chair and go to the grave sign to “Rest in Peace.” It meant that they no longer take part or speak during the game, as they were to play dead. (It sounds gross, however, it was very sobering and the staff learned that they may not have a resident with them long and that it is very difficult.)

2. **Other Props:** Index Cards with Life Situations and Where/What to Do Next, Wheel chair, Gait Belts, Walker, Labels, Name Tags, Cotton for ears, Blindfolds, Foggy Eye Glasses, etc.

3. **GAME TIME:** I would sometimes use one hour or more, however, we learned a shorter version and stopped using the two center tables to shorten the game. It can be rearranged in many different ways. (**WARNING:** The room gets very loud at times and participants may be wandering, arguing, being feed, wheeling in wheelchair, walking with walker, etc.)

-Everyone sits around the first table called INDEPENDENT LIVING. The trainer introduces the game and each person has the following items at their place at the table: 1. Name badge that says they are a Wanderer, A Hitter, Quiet, Yeller, Hard of Hearing, Blind, etc. 2. Color Tokens, 3 or more for money, and 3 Favorite Possession Cards that they write on. Winner: Whoever has the most possessions or tokens at the end of the game is the winner.

GAME RULES: (**ALWAYS**...state or have in writing a disclaimer and agreement that if anyone is uncomfortable at any time, they may either put their head down or hold one hand up, and then the trainer or trainers will not feed them or transfer them, or put on a bib or depend, etc.)

1. **When the game is started, do whatever is on your Name Badge...**wander, yell, hit, etc.

2. **Start by welcoming the group.** State the rules, and then go around and meet each and every "resident" around the independent living table. Talk to them using baby talk, and talk down to them as you sometimes hear others in communities talk to older adults.

3. **Have the participants draw a card from your hand and then do as the card states.**

-Samples of instructions on the cards: "You had eye surgery and it left you blind, other residents have to walk you around, so you move to assisted living." Have someone walk the resident with a blindfold on and sit at the assisted living table.

-"You are beginning to be so forgetful that you got lost in your own house." Move to the dementia care unit." Go to that table.

-"You had a stroke, and are unable to care for yourself." Move to the nursing home." Go to that table.

-"You passed away in the middle of the night." Go to the R.I.P. chair and do not speak to anyone.

-"You are not able to drink liquids and need to have Thickened coffee." Serve the resident coffee with thickener in it.

-"You are unable to feed yourself, and need to be fed." Feed the resident with a bib on.

-"You are becoming incontinent and need to wear a Depends or pull up." Put on a Depends or pull up over the participant's clothing.

**There is an online sample of the Aging Game being used with nursing students.
Google- The Into Aging Game: What it's like to be elderly and hospitalized.**

Caution: The room used for this Into Aging Game should be closed off and away from the residents if it is held in the resident's community nursing home, assisted living or retirement home. Always guard a person's dignity, and you would not want to feel that we are being disrespectful in any way. Let the staff in the class know that this is to teach them how they would feel if they were in the resident's situation.

4. **Debriefing:** After the time is up that you have for the game, gather up the props and have the staff go back to their original seats. Go around the room and ask how this game made them feel and how we can honor and respect the residents of all levels and abilities. Thank each participant for taking part, and remind them of the fact that this is a very important position to be in...caring for another individual through their losses.

Labels and the Stigma of DEMENTIA

Notes and Quotes

Labels: it's how we make sense of things, categories, names, titles, brands, to be a part of a group

Fans: Michigan State, Michigan, Notre Dame, Tigers Groups: Baby Boomers, Generation Y

Brands: Harley, BMW, iPad, mac, and Made in China

True or False? "The problem isn't the label itself"

"Old": It was once a treasured thing to grow old. Now, individuals would do anything to stay young.

"Dementia": a set of symptoms from some very challenging diseases.

PEOPLE with dementia and PEOPLE with cancer, why is dementia more of a stigma?

The Alzheimer's Society Report: "My Name is Not Dementia"

Just one of their findings: People with dementia, including people with more severe dementia, are able to express their views about what is important to their quality of life.

Labels for Dementia: Mildly confused, wanderer, aggressive, pleasantly confused, mild cognitive impairment, severe cognitive impairment, hitter, inappropriate, etc.

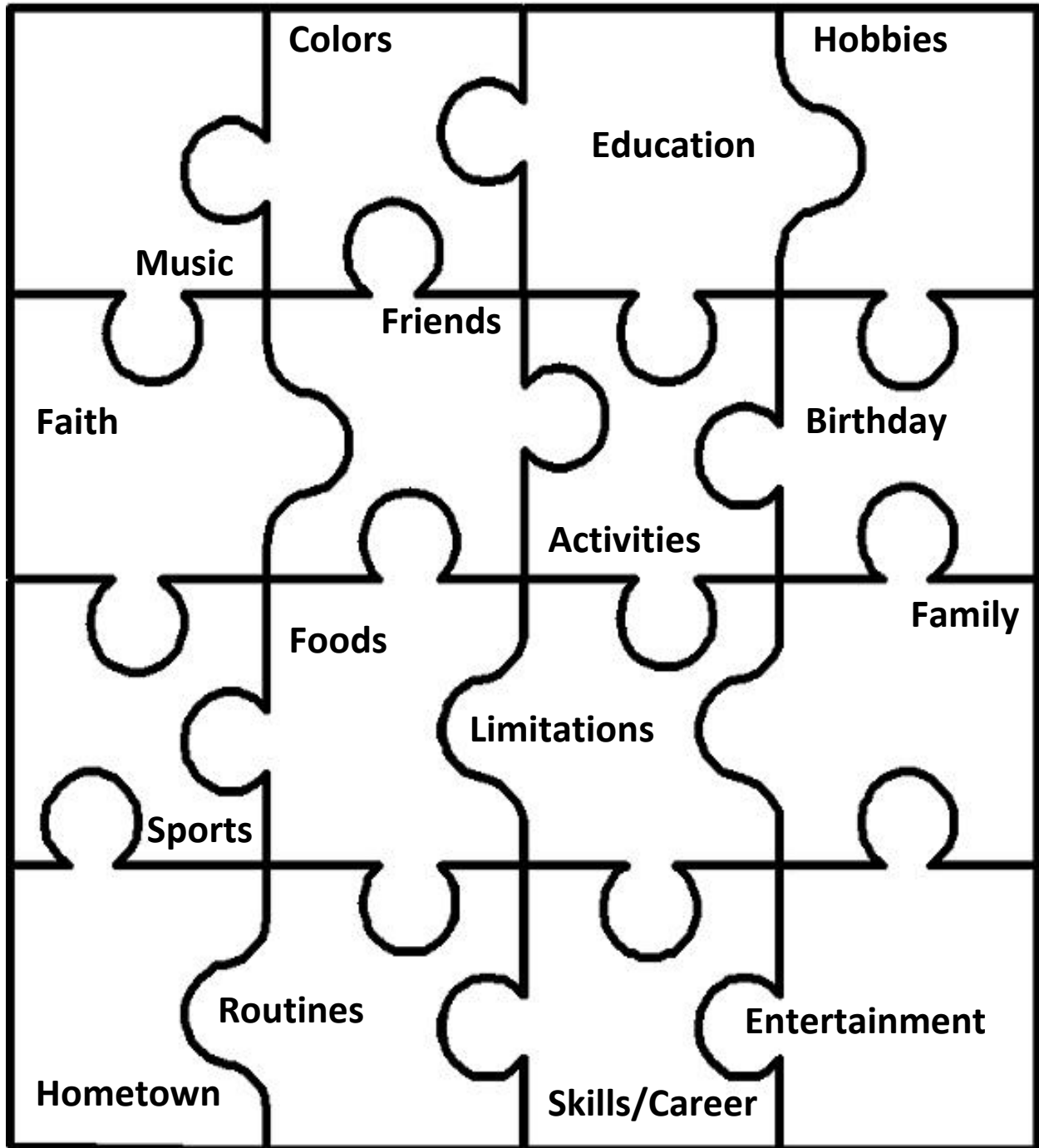
Quotes: Healthcare professionals use diagnostic labels to classify individuals for both treatment and research purposes. Despite their clear benefits, diagnostic labels also serve as cues that activate stigmas and stereotypes. Stigma associated with the diagnostic label of dementia and mild cognitive impairment can have a significant and negative impact on interpersonal relationships and attitudes.

The medical, educational and social service communities give labels to people, such as "Autism" "Cerebral Palsy" "Dementia" etc. These labels can be useful for understanding and helping people, but *a person is not his/her label*. The label is only a portion of the complex people we are.

Focus on people and relationships, and don't be overly concerned with the label.

Quote by Barbara Newman: Naming someone's disability is like telling what state her family visited on their vacation. It gives you a general idea what the vacation was about, but until you talk to the Newman family about what they did on the vacations, you don't know much about it.

“The Pieces of My Life”



AGING WITH DIGNITY: STARRING MY MOTHER & ME

Presented by: Janice Dressander, Consultant/Trainer/Storyteller

DRESSANDER Consulting, LLC jandressander@sbcglobal.net

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