



Journey Program

Sharing Our Life and Spirit

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Program Description

- 30 residents involved in the program
- 3 groups established within the program
- 2 groups general geriatric population (one older, one younger)
- 1 group persons living with Alzheimer's Disease or other form of dementia (early to middle stage)
- Sessions are held consistently on a regular basis
- Sessions are one hour in length (maximum)
- Sessions are co-facilitated by the chaplain and Activity Coordinator
- Sessions are held in a quiet area free from noise and distractions. Usually held in Grandma's Den or outside under gazebo. Memo was circulated to all staff to ensure that the program is not disturbed by unnecessary interruptions.

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Philosophy

Our philosophy recognizes that each person's life story and spirituality is valued on an individual basis. The Journey Program encourages the sharing of each participant's life and spiritual passage. All aspects of one's life including the positive and painful moments, the physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual are embraced in a caring and attentive manner. The depth of knowledge and acceptance is encompassed within the group and allows enhancement of life and continued growth. Stories, feelings and dreams are heard, valued and affirmed within the group dynamic. The use of various modalities such as music, art, storytelling, meditation, and prayer are provided within a healing and relaxed atmosphere.

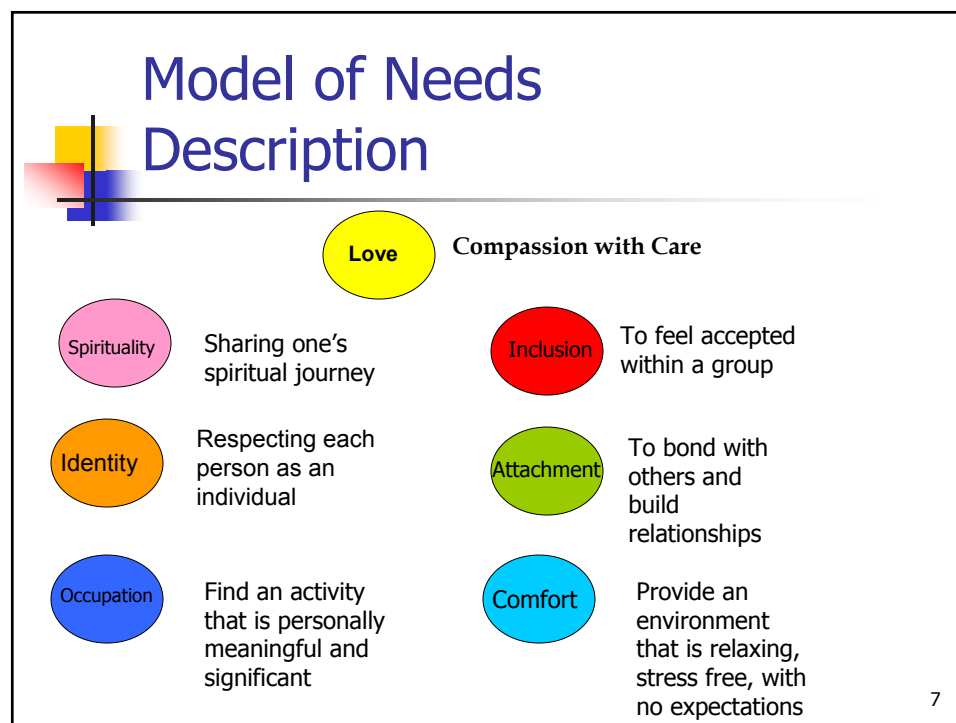
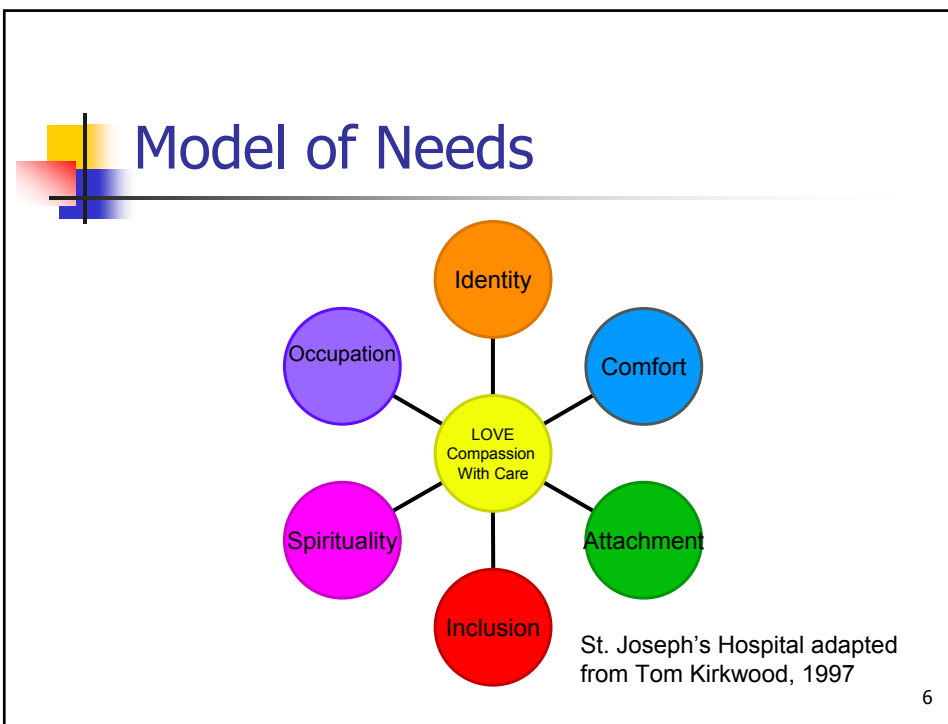
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Purpose

- Recognize each person's life story and spirituality and that this is an important value within their personal identity.
- Recognize the benefit of healing in a person sharing their life story and spiritual passage. Allow the resident to focus on who they are and their history.
- Personal growth and enhancement is achieved through the sharing and affirmation of one's stories, feelings and dreams. Within the group residents will receive support if painful and affirmation if positive.
- The use of creative modalities such as art, music, storytelling, meditation and prayer are used to assist participants within their sharing. The activities help them to focus on a certain theme or aspect of their life. The activity will assist them in expressing who they are.
- To provide a healing and relaxed environment in which participants can belong to within the group setting.

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Facilitation and Planning

Pastoral Care and Activities play equally important roles in the facilitation of the Journey Program. It is optimally beneficial to have a professional from each discipline present. The cooperative planning of the sessions is also significant, as one discipline enhances the other, and both need to be prepared for the next sessions.

Themes of the sessions are developed with the well-being of the participants foremost in mind. Inspiration may come from topics and issues they may have raised, observations of their lifestyles and abilities, and opportune encounters with resources which the facilitators believe may be of interest to them and encourage discussion and growth.

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Roles

Chaplain

1. Chaplain's presence creates a connection to the spiritual realm.
2. Chaplain is seen as the provider of spiritual and emotional support within the sharing of life stories. When emotions are painful the chaplain is present to provide support.
3. Affirms the presence of God in one's life story or spiritual journey.
4. Assists relationship building among participants in a supportive spiritual environment.
5. Invites the presence of God through prayer.



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Director of Activities

Assist in the development of meaningful activities.

An activity is introduced based on the session theme.

To assist participants to engage in a form of activity that will help them focus on a certain theme. The activity is meaningful in that it represents a certain aspect of their life/spiritual journey.

To assist participants to focus on a certain aspect of life.

The activity will assist each participant to reminisce about their past.

The Activity Coordinator assists participants to engage in an activity that is successful. Activities are modified and adapted according to cognitive and physical abilities.



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Format of Sessions

- OPENING PRAYER
- CHECK IN
- INTRODUCTION OF THEME
- REFLECTION/READING
- ACTIVITY BASED ON THEME
- CLOSING PRAYER

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Opening Prayer

“The Lord’s Prayer” may be recited as it is familiar to most people. People living with dementia can be part of the spiritual connection.



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Check In

- Invites participants to share the important aspects of their day.
- Taking ownership of who they are in that moment.
- To bear witness to their own state of being
- Evaluating one’s own “day” and feelings.
- To share their assessment within the group.
- Being affirmed in their sharing through the group.
- People are actively hearing what is being said and responding accordingly.

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Theme Reflection

- Chaplain will introduce and present a reading and/or reflection. Activities will introduce and present a program based on the theme that the participants will take part in.

Theme questions are developed to assist those residents to reflect on their feelings, thoughts and memories connected to their life. The activity assists in focussing residents to reflect upon their own life and spiritual journey. It may assist residents to focus on a certain role or phase of life. Example: Baking Bread

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Closing Prayer

- Raises up the consciousness of the ordinary to the sacred
- Affirms the presence of God/Higher Power in one's life story or spiritual journey
- Invites the presence of God through prayer
- Provides a summary of the sharing that took place within a spiritual context being offered to God through prayer.

Before the group participants and the facilitators leave, each one is thanked for coming and contributing to the group.

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Banner and Design

Each group was asked the following questions to assist them in visualizing symbols for their banners

- How would you describe the main feeling you get when you are in group?
- What words would describe these feelings.
- What does this group mean to you?
- What symbols represent these feelings and words.
- Which colours best represent your feelings about your group?

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Resident Key Wish

- Key Wishes among participants are explored within this session. What is the definition of a key wish? We ask ourselves what specifically do we want? What do we desire the most at the present time. A key wish is one specific desire that is unique to each person. Throughout this session discussions are held that address the empowerment of each individual's abilities. This allows them to achieve what is most important and meaningful to them. Every person has a right to a "key wish". Some wishes might appear unrealistic to the listeners. The facilitator's responsibility is to ensure that each person's wish is honoured and validated. This attributes to their sense of identity and hope for their future.

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Discussion Questions

- 1. What would be your key wish?
- 2. What would be one thing that you desire above everything else?
- 3. What would give you the greatest happiness?
- 4. How would you envision this wish?
- 5. What does this wish symbolize for you?
- 6. How does this wish fulfill your goal?

- *Samples of wishes could be:*
 - 1. To have a private room
 - 2. To walk again
 - 3. For my family to be healthy
 - 4. To go swimming
 - 5. To cook a turkey dinner for my family
 - 6. To go skiing
 - 7. To go home
 - 8. For my wife to come and live with me
 - 9. To be independent
 - 10. To have hot tea

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Activity

- **Activity- Key Wish Banners**
- The Key Wish Banner is a hands-on craft for individuals to display. The banner is a visual reminder to the participant, family and caregivers of what they hope to achieve. Often banners are brought to Care Conference Meetings to discuss the person's key wish. The key wish is then shared amongst family, caregivers, and interdisciplinary team. This enables the team to support the individual in achieving the key wish.
- The following is an example of what a banner may look like. The materials used within this banner include: Glue Gun, 12" wood dowel, string and felt material. The symbols on the banner are also used with felt material. The individual is encouraged to use whatever material, symbols, and colours he or she may wish.
- Facilitators may wish to invite volunteers, friends or family members to assist with this project. Throughout this process, discussion was evident surrounding each person's key wish.

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Celebration

- The purpose of holding an Anniversary Celebration is to give the opportunity for all the participants from the groups to come together and to meet the other participants who are involved in the Journey Program.
- It is also an opportunity to share the Anniversary Celebration with the larger community within the facility and to inform or educate other residents so they can experience what the Journey Program is all about. One of the most important reasons why we hold this celebration is to give the participants the opportunity to celebrate the relationships and the benefits they have received from each other by meeting in their groups on a weekly basis for a whole year.
- An Anniversary Cake is ordered; juices, coffee and tea are provided. Invitations are given out to all the participants stating the time, date and place where the party will be celebrated. The Community as a whole is invited to the celebration to join in the festivities.

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