Slide 1

**Strengthening Resident and Family Councils**  
  
Story Sharing  
  
Working Toward Relationship-Based Care  
  
Slide 2

Introduction

Goals

* Engage residents and families
* Partner with nursing homes on improvement
* Improve quality of life for residents

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**Story Sharing: Toward Relationship-Based Care  
Connecting with Residents and their Families**

Diane Heliker RN PhD

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**Story Sharing and Relationship-Based Care Practice**

Significance of Story

Story Sharing and Relationship Building

Gathering the Story—Conversations with Residents

* Asking questions that call forth Story
* Listening attentively
* Discovering what is personally meaningful to a resident

There are 4 ‘Try This’ exercises that help all care providers share stories and connect with residents

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**What is Story?**

Story is a way we come to know, connect with, and understand another person’s life and what matters most to that person.

A story is an account of an event, or situation a person experiences.

Stories make us real to each other.

Stories help us remember.

Stories convey a person’s cultural values.

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**To be Human is to be ‘Storied’**

We speak with more than our mouths; we listen with more than our ears (The World According to Mr. Rogers, Fred Rogers, 2003)

To be a person is to have a story to tell (Isak Dinesen).

Stories help us understand one another and trust one another.

We need stories to organize our thinking and make sense of things.

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**All Staff Members are “Story Catchers”**

Story Catchers are:

* Curious about human experiences, meaning, learning;
* Able to create a safe place for listening;
* Able to be present to another person in a respectful way;

Story Catchers believe that ordinary stories about ordinary lives are extraordinary gifts for the one speaking and for the one who is listening (Baldwin, 2005).

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**What is Story Sharing?**

A relationship-based caring practice

An everyday practice

A process of respectful telling and listening to what matters to a person

A give and take conversation

Story Sharing creates a *sacred space* that allows teller and listener to become aware of what they have in common and how they are different.

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**Story Sharing**

Begins a transformation in the relationship among staff, residents, and families

Begins Relationship-Based Meaningful Practice

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**Beginning Story Sharing—Reflections on your own story***“Try This” Exercise #1*

The best way to help me find my story is to tell me your story (Kurtz & Ketcham, 1992).

First Step: Reflect on your own story…

* How do YOU spend your day?
* What is important to you?
* What are your cultural values? Beliefs? Traditions?
* Describe a happy moment. A not-so-happy moment.

Your answers to these questions will highlight what is most meaningful to you.

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**Story Sharing - Reflections on Objects/Things you possess that are very important to you**

Think about the ‘things’ that have great meaning to you in your home

Think about the story behind these meaningful objects.

Bring one of these items that can fit into a small sandwich bag to the next group session.

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**Story Sharing - Reflections on Objects/Things you possess that are very important to you**  
*“Try This” Exercise #2*

Sharing stories about our items “in the bag”

Discuss: if you had to leave your home in a disaster (flooding, fire, etc.), what would you take with you? (Assume all family and friends are already safe)

* Anything you bring must fit into one medium-sized suitcase.

Now that you’ve imagined this, think about your favorite resident, and the possessions in his/her room

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**Story Sharing Tips: Remember how Important Possessions are for Each Resident**

As you help residents with their everyday care, it is OK to be curious about certain items.

* Photographs—Who is that in the photo? Can you tell me about the picture?
* Religious items—What a beautiful holy statue! Can you tell me about it?
* And so the relationship and connection with each resident continues…….

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**Sharing Stories About Residents’ Possessions**  
“*Try This” Exercise #3*

Sharing stories about residents’ possessions

* Describe the item and where it was in the resident’s room.
* How did you decide to choose that particular item?
* What story did the resident tell about the item?

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**Questions that Call Forth a Resident’s Story**

Can you tell me a story aboutwhen you were little? Tell me about your best friend.

* Most residents, even those with dementia, remember childhood stories and enjoy telling those stories. Even early childhood stories tell you about the resident many years later.
* Example - One resident tells a story about loving to color and using her crayons. You might speak with the activity person or her family who might bring in an adult coloring book and color pencils.

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**Questions that Call Forth a Resident’s Story (*continued)***

Ask residents to give me an examplewhen they are telling about what they might like or not like.

* Example - One resident was talking about his love of traditional food from his country. You might ask, “Can you give me an example.”
* You might ask for the recipe and try it when you go home and tell the resident about your experience the next day. Residents LOVE to share favorite foods.

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**Story Sharing Tips: Approaching a Resident and Asking Questions that Gather Story**

Knock on the resident’s door and wait to be invited in;

Sit down, face the resident, smile, introduce yourself, speak at a slower pace.

Remember, the person comes before the task.

You might begin by telling the resident a little about yourself….

* My name is Anita. I’m your Nurse Aide. I’ve worked here for 13 years and I enjoy meeting and talking with residents. If you need help with dressing or anything, please let me know. I’ll be checking on you throughout my shift.
* Can you tell me a bit about yourself? I’d like to get to know you a little bit so I can better help you.

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**The Conversation with a Resident Continues**  
*“Try This” Exercise #4 - Assignment*

Conversation starters….

* Where were you born?
* Can you tell me about your family?
* Then YOU might share where you were born; if you are married; have children.
* Remember to ‘check on’ the resident throughout the day.

You may only have a short time to spend with each resident; Residents are very aware of that. They appreciate the time you are spending with them. When you stand up, they know it is time for you to move on.

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**What do you do with a Resident’s Story?**  
*“Try This” Exercise #4*

Your relationship with your residents is your Caring Practice —your Best Practice

As you come to connect with a resident and understand what is important to that person, you can help that person have a better quality of life----

Here are some examples how you can change a resident’s everyday quality of living….

* Mrs. Smith has always had a cup of coffee every morning when she wakes up—it has been her ritual for over 40 years. It means a great deal to her. How nice it would be if you brought her a cup of coffee in the morning.
* Mr. Lopez misses his wife. He was married for 60 years and she passed away 6 months ago. He is lonely. It would mean a great deal to him if you visited him for 10 minutes. Let him tell you stories about his wife perhaps.

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**What do you do with a Resident’s Story? *(continued)***

Mr. George tells you a story about how he used to be an artist. He loved to paint. Perhaps you might speak with the activity person and she/he can create an activity for Mr. George involving an art project, painting, drawing.

Share ideas with the nurse as well. Relationship-based caring practice involves everyone.

Discuss ideas with family members.

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**What’s Next?**

On the website you can find the Activity Guide and slides from this session

Bring together a small group of direct care givers over a period of days or weeks, and walk through the exercises.

Begin to deepen relationships with residents through story sharing.