Module One

Understanding Dementia



ACTIVITY BOOK

Name:

Date completed:

Manager’s signature on completion:

**Welcome** and may I congratulate you on taking your first steps to Finding the Light in Dementia® training

Firstly, I’d like to ask you a question. Do you think you are creative?

Chances are, you are, and you may not know it!

Choosing to care **with** people who have dementia requires the need to be creative, to follow instinct, to be able to wax and wane, and naturally change the course of what we do, depending on the person’s thoughts, feelings and responses.

When caring **with** people who have dementia, we need to be aware of our own thoughts, feelings and responses too, so that we can work well together.

People who have dementia may not be able to communicate so easily, but they will sense a feeling.

Have you ever walked into a place and sensed an atmosphere? Maybe it wasn’t a good feeling or maybe you felt a sense of joy: you might not have been able to “put your finger on it” but it felt good. **People who have dementia rely on this sense, and even if they may not remember an event, or the words to describe people, places and experiences, they will be left with the memory of an emotion associated with it.**

This activity book is filled with a mix of dementia-related and personal development activities and some will bring out all sorts of emotions in yourself: therefore, I recommend you choose a buddy, someone you get on well and feel comfortable with and work together on these activities, where possible. Your manager will also be able to support you. Also, you have full access to the beautiful self-care resources in our **Wellbeing Hub.**

One of the aims of Finding the Light in Dementia® training is to help you find out more about yourself. By understanding yourself more closely, you will be able to understand the needs of people who have dementia. We are bundles of feelings and emotions and creators of our own lives – these all tie in, to the qualities of our human experience. Much of this means that we want to help support people who have dementia to continue to live meaningful lives, while our lives, too hold great meaning.

Within this activity book, I want you to experiment with your creativity. You may be a storyteller or write poems; you may be good with paints or clay. Just give it a go! If you print this up, pop it in a file along with your Reflective Journal and when you have completed the Module and successfully undertaken the test, access your certificate and pop it in the file too. It is a gift and an honour to care with people who are often very vulnerable and not able to express themselves and their needs easily, and we need to be proud when helping care for them, or as I’d prefer to use the term, “**care with them**”. Good luck and enjoy

**Jane**



Jane M. Mullins Dementia Nurse Consultant

Founder of Finding the Light in Dementia® training

**Module One**

**Understanding Dementia: Learning Outcomes**

In this module, we are going to start to Understand what Dementia is. We will do this by watching films, animations and presentations, and listening to podcasts and soundscapes. These films will involve people who have dementia, family members, caregivers and professionals and researchers working within the field.

After we have watched the “My Favourite Things” film, which includes some people living with dementia, and completed the activity, we will explore how our brain works and what is meant by the term “dementia”.

We will go on to examine different types of dementia, from the early stages, and how it may affect people in individual ways as their condition progresses.

We will then go on to think about the values of care including dignity and empathy. We will explore ways throughout the whole of the training in which we can deliver dignified and empathetic care.

As you go through the training, those of you who are working in residential settings and hospitals will find novel ways of helping the person settle into their new home, ward, and those of you who are caring in the person’s own home will find ways in which to approach them in their own environments respectfully.

This training will give you more confidence and spark off your own ideas to help people living with dementia and their loved ones.

**This activity book has a mixture of notes pages for you to write in when watching the films, presentations, animations and listening to the podcasts and soundscapes**.

Don’t forget the **Wellbeing Hub** will help you with many of your self-care needs during this training. However, please note that it is not a substitute for medical advice and DUETcare Ltd cannot be held responsible for your health and wellbeing. If at any time you feel overwhelmed and needing support, please speak with your manager/buddy or trusted friend and seek medical help where required.**Activities**

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**Activity One: My Favourite Things**



Before you get too comfortable, I would like you to find a small to medium sized box or case.

Then look around your home and outside, pick out ***Things*** that you like – e.g., photos, ornaments, certificates, perfumes and scents, plants, items from your hobbies, music, books: whatever makes you feel good – and put them in your **My Favourite Things** box/case.

Find things that tickle your senses! Sit with them, pick them up feel them, smell them, and if food is included, taste them.

**Activity One: My Favourite Things cont…**

**Write down a few lines below about:**

* What you have chosen?
* Who and what do these ***Things*** make you think of? (People, places, experiences)
* How do these ***Things*** make you feel and why?

**Activity One: My Favourite Things cont…**

* Do any of these ***Things*** make you want to act in any way (maybe a re-enactment of a memory)?
* What do these ***Things*** say about you?

Keep your ***My Favourite Things*** box somewhere where you can explore it on a daily basis and add to it whenever you wish. You can create new memories with this. By doing this, you will start to explore the things you love and in turn realise the importance of a ***My Favourite Things*** box for the people you care with, in helping them connect with themselves and people around them.

**Activity One: My Favourite Things cont…**

* Why do you think creating a ***My Favourite Things*** box will help the people you care with?

As an ongoing project, work together with your buddy and colleagues, the people you care with and their families and friends to help create their ***My Favourite Things*** box. Note down what you observe on the notes pages below. Remember everyone will respond in different ways, sometimes they may act positively, other times they may not respond. As you go through this training you will learn more about the people you are caring with.

Important Note: If a person has had experience of traumatic events in their lives, they may or may not have told those closest to them. Be mindful that sometimes we may be triggering negative memories or the emotions associated with them. If this is the case, seek support from your manager, it is important to let the person express their emotions and for us to show compassion.

**Activity One: My Favourite Things cont…**

Think about your ***Favourite Things*** box – what do you think the people you care with would like in theirs?

You could start off by speaking with them and involve the help of their families and friends.

This helps the person and the family know that you are interested in them as a person and is a great starting point for getting to know them.

Before a person enters a care home, is admitted to hospital or requires care at home, to continue their daily life, they will have lived a full life, filled with memories of people, places and experiences, some good, some not so good. Some of these memories may be fading, but the emotions around them may not. The aim of ***My Favourite Things*** is to help the person stay connected with those around them, and for those caring with them to know what matters most to them, when they may be unable to communicate that verbally. It is also to help them to continue to lead a meaningful life.

Later on in the training, we will be learning fun and creative ways to explore their memories (and ours and how to create positive memories for our futures too), to help us care at a deeper level.

One major event in their life may very well have been the time they were given their diagnosis of dementia and how their life has continued since then, and until now. This is important for us to consider.

When a person moves into residential care or hospital, this can be a very traumatic time for all concerned. It is so important to involve those closest to the person in their care, as they will have been caring with them for some time at home. It is our role to help them through this time and help them realise that we will do all we can to help them continue to lead a fulfilling and meaningful life, even if they may need some extra help in doing so. Encouraging them to bring in some familiar things may help the person to feel a bit more secure. Also, we need to offer their loved ones the chance to continue with some of their caring role, if they wish. The best thing to do is to ask them how you can help them.

**Notes Pages: My Favourite Things cont…**

**Notes Pages: My Favourite Things cont…**

**Activity Two: Aren’t Brains Great**

**These pages are for you to write notes in about any thoughts you have after watching the animation.**

**Activity Two: Aren’t Brains Great cont…**

**Notes Page**

**Activity Three: A Diagnosis of Dementia, Rachel’s Story**

I recommend working together with your buddy, as these activities can bring out some strong emotions. Choose someone whom you trust and who is supportive (and don’t forget to be trusting and supportive with them).

**Write down a few lines below about:**

* What are your **thoughts** after listening to Rachel’s story of her diagnosis (think about Rachel, Joe and her children)?
* What are your **feelings** after listening to Rachel’s story?

**Activity Three: A Diagnosis of Dementia, Rachel’s Story cont…**

* If you were Rachel, what might you be **thinking**?
* If you were Rachel, how do you think you might **feel**?
* If you were Rachel, how do you think you might **respond/act**?
* If you were Joe, what would you be **thinking**?

**Activity Three: A Diagnosis of Dementia, Rachel’s Story cont…**

* If you were Joe, how might you be **feeling**?
* If you were Joe, how do you think you would **respond/act**?
* Think about how Rachel may have been experiencing her life from the time of her diagnosis to now, as she requires care. Think about her role as a Mum, Wife, her role in her job. How do you think the dementia may have affected her? How do you think she may have been helped to continue her roles and life over time?

**Activity Three: A Diagnosis of Dementia, Rachel’s Story cont…**

* What do you think you can do to do to help Rachel when she will start needing care?
* If you became Rachel’s caregiver, what do you think you could do to help her, Joe and their children?

**Activity Four: Dignity**

**Look at picture A and Picture B and answer the questions below. You can use words, pictures and emojis if that helps.**

**Picture A**



**Picture B**



**Activity Four: Dignity cont…**

**Write down a few lines below about:**

* What are your **thoughts** when you see picture A? (Why does this imply indignity?)
* How do you **feel** when you see picture A?

You may want to think about clothes, environment, activities, communication when considering how to give dignified care.

**Activity Four: Dignity cont…**

* What would you be **thinking** if one of these ladies was you?
* How would you **feel** if one of these ladies was you?
* If you were caring for these ladies, what could you **do** to help them with their dignity?
* If this was you, what would you want a caregiver to **do**?

**Activity Four: Dignity cont…**

* What are your **thoughts** when you see picture B?
* How do you **fee**l when you see picture B?
* What is the caregiver **doing** that shows dignified care?

**Feelings Glossary**

**Here are some words that may help you describe feelings**

Positive

Amused

Brave

Calm

Cheerful

Cooperative

Friendly

Funny

Good

Grateful

Happy

Healthy

Hopeful

Interested

Healthy

Hopeful

Interested

Jolly

Joyful

Kind

Prod

Relieved

Satisfied

Serenity

Smiling

Successful

Negative

Angry

Afraid

Agitated

Anxious

Annoyed

Confused

Depressed

Embarrassed

Excluded

Frightened

Helpless

Hurt

Lonely

Naughty

Nervous

Panicky

Scared

Selfish

Upset

Worried

**Activity Five: What does Dignity mean to me?**



* **Write down what you think *dignity* means to you below:**
* **Watch the Dignity film in the presentation, then write down what dignity means to everyone in the film:**

It would be good to discuss your thoughts about this with your manager/buddy. You may want to discuss the question: Does dignity mean the same to everyone, including yourself?

**Notes Pages**

This page is for you to write extra notes, draw pictures, anything that you want to create around the concept of dignity and what you have learnt.

**Activity Six: Empathy**



Think about and write below what it would take for you to feel the same emotions as the people you are caring with. What would you be thinking and how might you act?

Ask yourself, what would it take or what experiences have I had that would make me feel so:

* Scared/frightened?
* Lost, (have you ever got lost or been in an unfamiliar place)?
* Anxious?
* Unable to understand someone (What situations have you been where you couldn’t understand what someone was saying to you e.g., a foreign country, a loud nightclub)?
* Unable to move from one room to another?
* Be desperate to go to the toilet but be too embarrassed to get up and walk out of a room?

**Notes Pages**

This page is for you to write extra notes, draw pictures, anything that you want to create around the concept of empathy and what you have learnt.

**Activity Seven: This is Me**

This activity will be ongoing throughout all of the modules. The aim is for you to explore all the things that matter to you and what you would want a caregiver to know about you, if you were unable to communicate. By exploring this yourself, you will start to consider the things that may be important to the people you care with. You can add to this anytime you like; about anything you feel that matters to you. This may include likes and dislikes, facts of events, experiences, and/or people. If you would rather film or tape yourself that would be great too.

Here is a start:

* The name I like to be called by:
* My date of birth:
* Where I was born:
* My school/college:
* Where I am from (where you have lived throughout your life):
* My loved ones? Partner, family, friends, neighbours, carers:
* My pets:
* What I love to have close to me/what comforts me:

**Activity Seven: This is Me cont…**

* My holiday and festival celebrations/religious/spiritual practices:
* Memories of special places?
* My specific religious/spiritual needs throughout the day, e.g., praying at specific times and rituals observed:
* My favourite clothes, jewellery, toiletries (Or smells I absolutely dislike)
* My hobbies and interests:

**Activity Seven: This is Me cont…**

* Club memberships/community groups:
* Achievements I am proud of or want to achieve:
* My favourite foods and drinks (how I like them, e.g., milk in coffee with one sugar)
* Foods and drink I don’t like:
* What time I usually get up:

**Activity Seven: This is Me cont…**

* What helps me rise in the morning? (e.g., a strong cup of coffee served in my special mug)
* My usual bedtime:
* I like the bedroom warm/cool (I sleep with the window open/shut?)
* My favourite snacks: (sweet or savoury?)
* My favourite TV programmes, films, music:

**Activity Seven: This is Me cont…**

* When I am sad, what cheers me up?
* When I feel stressed, what helps me feel calm?

Can you think of anything else you would like to tell people about yourself? Or maybe there are some things that are private that you would only want a small number of close people to know. Really think about YOU and your likes and dislikes, and about how you really want your life to be. By doing this, you will really get to know how important it is to understand the needs and wants of the people you care with. There are some blank pages you can continue to fill as you go along.

**Notes Pages**

This page is for you to write extra notes, draw pictures, anything that you want to create about you and what you would want people to know about you if you couldn’t tell them.

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This page is for you to write extra notes, draw pictures, anything that you want to create about you and what you would want people to know about you if you couldn’t tell them.

**Activity Eight: Jim at Teatime**

**Write down below what you have learnt from listening to the audio. There are no right or wrong answers. You may want to think about people you have cared with, who have responded in a similar way. Think about what may have triggered their responses. We will explore this in more depth in module 5.**

**Activity Nine: Leaving Home**

**Have you ever had to move home? If you have, can you remember back to that time? Many people moving into care or having their home modified may not have a choice, and they will feel many emotions. If you had to move home and leave your loved ones and familiar surroundings:**

* What would you be **thinking**?
* What do you think your loved ones would be **thinking**?
* How would you **feel**?
* How would your loved ones **feel**?

**Activity Nine: Leaving Home cont…**

* How do you think you might **respond/react**?
* How do you think your loved ones would **respond/react**?
* What would be most upsetting?
* What might frighten you?
* What might comfort you?

**Activity Ten: Three Things Learnt**

**Write down 3 things you have learnt from Module One.**

**Activity Eleven:** **Approaches for a Better Day**

**Here is a lovely exercise to bring you a moment of calm and it only takes a few minutes. You can do this at any time of day or night.**

* Sit still, for a moment and take a deep slow breath in, and as you breathe out slowly, **look** around you and think about three things you can see. Describe them quietly in your mind.
* Stop for a moment and **listen**: think about three things you can hear. Describe them quietly in your mind.
* Think about three things you can **feel** (you may want to keep an object in your pocket especially for this, such as a rough pebble from a beach). Describe them quietly in your mind.

By focussing on your senses, you can bring about a sense of calm, even when life around is bustling and hectic. You can do this when sitting with a person who has dementia. They may mirror your feeling of calm. We don’t always have to be “doing.”

Try “being with” the person and hold that calm space.



**Notes Page**

**You can use this page to jot down any thoughts and feelings you may have come across since starting Module One. Also, any actions you may be planning in your caregiving role.**

**Don’t forget to keep adding to your Favourite Things!**



**Well done!!**

**For completing Module One, ‘Understanding Dementia’.**

You should now be able to understand about how our brain works and what happens when people have different types of dementia.

You will also be able to understand what dignity and empathy are and how important they are when caring **with** people who have dementia.

I am proud of you and hope that you have enjoyed going through the slides, films and audios to help you fill out your Activity Book.

If you are printing this up, I hope you have managed to get a file, as you can add the others from the next modules to it or you could create an electronic file for all of your Activity Books, Reflective Journals, Presentation Notes Pages and Certificates. By keeping it all together, you will see how your knowledge and skills will have developed and it will be a great resource to refer back to when you have completed the training.

Also don’t forget to use your Reflective Journal alongside to write down any extra notes, thoughts and observations. You can also learn more from my book, Finding the Light in Dementia: A Guide for Families, Friends and Caregivers.

Don’t forget to answer the questions at the end of the Module to release your certificate and store safely in your file and visit the **Wellbeing Hub**

**Jane** 



<http://amzn.to/2ARCwDI>

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