



Volunteers with cognitive impairments engage in greeting card making for improved well-being



Current Knowledge

Health
Benefits

Supports
&
Barriers



Facilitation
for
Participation

Meaningful
Activity

Dementia & Volunteer Activity



Purpose of Study

Exploring how individuals with mild to moderate cognitive impairment may benefit from participating in a volunteer activity based on art and creativity.

Method of Approach

Population

Assisted
living at
Quaker
retirement
community

Intervention

Creative
activity of
card making



Exit Interviews

Four questions
group discussion



Passing the Torch

Effort continues

Cards for Community

Offered for people in need



Creating Success

Simplicity

Autonomy



Within Reach



Pre-Set
Scene

Enablement

Visually Intuitive

Survey Questions

1. Volunteering/helping in today's activity made me feel ...
2. What I enjoy most about volunteering/helping in today's activity is ...
3. When I help out, I feel _____ about myself.
4. I would like to continue/stop volunteering/helping

Results: Discovered Themes

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- **Community Service**
- **Social Interaction**
- **Self-Efficacy & Confidence**



Theme about Community

- *The part I enjoyed most about this is sharing and giving. I like it.*
- *It is really nice to do something helpful instead of just sitting and playing Bingo.*

Continued Community Theme

- *I think it's such a wonderful thing to make these for other people. I haven't done anything like this in such a long time.*
- *I think that the people who get these cards will be so thankful.*

Theme: Social Interaction

- *Just being able to work with you people [has been the most enjoyable part of today]. It gets lonely in my room.*
- *It is so nice of you people to come and spend time with us.*



Theme: Self-Efficacy & Confidence

- *I didn't think that I had the ability [to make a card]. This surprised me.*
- *This is interesting to me.*
- *This is something to stir up my imagination.*
- *I gave a card to my friend. She's lonely because her husband has passed and she had no children. She looked like she appreciated it. I think she was happy to have it.*



Outside Perspectives

Reviews from other Community Members

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- *Thanks so much for that group! I appreciate using the cards they make!*
- *One of my friends, his wife passed away and I was happy to find the cards because I didn't have one.*
- *I've taken numerous cards and it's so nice and helpful.*



What Did We Learn?

- With cognitive impairment helping others may add quality of life
- Success with supportive environment



- Community benefits from efforts
- Prime motivator: company of others

Limitations of Study

Small sample size

Only female participants

Qualitative data alone

No access to medical records



Age UK Survey 2014

- Age UK survey found 1 million people 65+ describe themselves as always/often feeling lonely.
- 41% say TV or pet is main form of company.
- Feel cut off from society.
- Stated volunteering may prevent loneliness.

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Future Research

- Explore how various stages of diagnosed dementia may respond and benefit from this type of intervention.
- Understand full impact of volunteer activity in lives of participants.
- Efforts to quantify quality of life, and physical /cognitive effects in individuals participating in service.
- Affects on progression of dementia.



What We Can Make Happen

ART **Connect** greetings!!!

Happy happy Birthday

Sorry for your loss

SOCIAL Get Better **Feel** **CREATE** **Purpose**

Be Well **Express** yourself

Make Someone Happy



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