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

Health Benefits

Supports & Barriers

Dementia & Volunteer Activity

Facilitation for Participation

Meaningful 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

Pre-Set Scene

Enablement

Within Reach

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

- 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

- 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 a 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.
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Sources that Informed Us
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References Continued


