Live Life to the Full

WITH DEMENTIA

FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIP - BE CREATIVE - STAY POSITIVE

Dementia Reframed

Reframing attitudes and care

Community-based research and activities focussed on positive attitudes to help anyone impacted by dementia to live well.

dementia-reframed.com.au

Charlie's Place

Living well with dementia

Where you can find practical, informative, skills-based, enjoyable training in living well with dementia.

charliesplace.com.au

Dementia Carers Australia

Our website for carers

Stories, ideas and resources from experienced carers about the ups and downs of dementia care.

dementiacarers-aust.com.au

www.dementia-reframed.com.au

What does quality care look like?

Quality care means maintaining *quality* relationships

Every one of us wants to be with people who affirm us - this is essential for every human being, from infancy to old age. This is what life is about. And this is so important in the context of dementia, when it becomes harder for a person experiencing brain change to communicate well. But they still want to communicate!

If I have dementia, my ability to care for you and communicate well with you diminishes. As I change, I need you to learn how to relate to me in new ways so that I can go on feeling valued, and you can understand what I am trying to express. You may not like the way my brain is changing! Nor do I! But if we work out how to change together, we will both cope better.

We can learn how to hold a person living with dementia in relationship, so that they live as well as possible - and that means we will be able to support and care well, with less stress.

Care can mean many things. Care tasks assist someone in need, in various ways. Care activities help a person engage in social interaction. But quality care is more than tasks, skills and activities, no matter how well these are done. Good care is based on relationships in which each person knows they are recognised and valued. Care - at home, at work, with friends, in our communities - is about enabling each one of us to live life to the full, feeling safe, wanted and valued in all the situations we find ourselves in. Good relationships have caring as a core ingredient - but not all care is relational care. Relational care starts with the understanding that we are social beings, who thrive when we are in affirming relationships with others - with people who make us feel good!

Stitched by Michele Elliot. Stitch It For Dementia, 2021

Reframing dementia to enhance care

Dementia is an umbrella term for various types of brain degeneration: our brain is dying and that will affect our abilities. Our brains are our engine room so this process will make it increasingly difficult to engage socially - to hold on to the relationships that are important to us, to engage in the activities we enjoy.

Brain change means that understanding dementia is about understanding changes in the ways we communicate. Some abilities are lost but others are retained. We need those around us to know what is retained so they can focus on strengths not losses.

That is what enables everyone impacted - including the grandkids - to live well. It means that a person living with dementia will be loved and cared for in relationships that are informed and creative. Think of dementia as a challenge of communication!

We proudly draw on the insights of Positive Approach to Care® developed by world-renowned Teepa Snow. Learn about dementia through a GEMS® lens to develop practical skills for sensitive and aware communication throughout the progressive changes that dementia brings.

Reframing-Dementia-to-Support-Carers

dementia-reframed

Activities and resources to assist you

'I'm afraid', said Rabbit.
'What are you afraid of?' asked Bear.
'I don't know', Rabbit replied. 'I just am'.
'Then, I will sit with you until you're not afraid anymore', said Bear.
'We will face it together'.

Tara Shannon, Rabbit and Bear

Our activities and resources

Carer website Our carer website is designed by people with first-hand experience of dementia care. Learn from their stories, ups and downs, and insights. Informative, supportive resources. **www.dementiacarers-aust.com.au**

Workshops Caring at home? In day care, or a residential facility? Have friends with dementia? Face-to-face or online, our relaxed workshops enable positive and creative thinking about living well with dementia. We have already offered workshops in Arabic and Vietnamese! Contact us for workshops tailored to suit you, your family, or your workplace. **www.charliesplace.com.au**

Our team We are an unfunded voluntary organisation - our volunteers are wonderful! We depend on sales and donations, and run occasional family fun fund raising days. We celebrate Dahlias for Dementia every March.

Our research Check out our website for events and the research we do to change attitudes. **www.dementia-reframed.com.au**

Our shop and our fund raising Our most valuable support comes from our 'Dogs for Dementia' project. We sell beautiful plush dogs and cats (NDIS-approved) and dog accessories. We are hosted by the Miss Olive May gift shop in Berrima, whose staff give their time free so that 100% of *'Dogs for Dementia'* proceeds can go to our support for quality dementia care. Thank you Miss Olive May! Visit the beautiful village of Berrima! Follow our Instagram. To donate, please visit **www.dementia-reframed.com.au/support**

Live well with dementia

Dementia Reframed is a NFP community organisation committed to assisting people to live well with dementia.

Our foundation:

Dementia is a social experience and impacts on the lives of many, not just the person diagnosed. With good understanding from family, care partners, and community members it is possible to live well. Good care is a relationship that enhances the life of another person.

Our vision:

To support family and other carers, especially those who care at home, to think creatively, care positively, and deal effectively with dementia's demands.

Your support:

Check out our websites, join our mailing list, become a member. Donations are tax-deductible. Support our fund raising events, promote our workshops, and see our dementia-friendly 'Dogs for Dementia' when you visit Berrima.

Find us:

In Sydney, in the Southern Highlands, and online anywhere!

Our people

Associate Professor Jane Mears,
Chair of Dementia Reframed ***Social Policy of Ageing, care work, older women, elder abuse***

My lifelong passion for community based, collaborative research and teaching informs our work in Dementia Reframed.

Issues dear to me - aged care, mental health, informal carers, care workers, violence against older women, experiences of casual workers - are so relevant in the dementia space. Gaynor and I bring our friendship and extraordinary range of skills together to change the world for people impacted by dementia.

Dr Gaynor Macdonald, CEO of Dementia Reframed
Social Anthropology,
Dementia Care Trainer and Consultant

When Charlie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's I wanted people to stop telling me I was 'losing' him!

I wanted practical understanding which I gained from other carers - their good and not so good stories helped enormously. I learnt to fight off stigma and negativity. Most excitingly, I joined with Jane in starting Dementia Reframed, while Charlie and I continued doing things we loved.

I learnt to deal with new challenges, and treasure living in the moment not the memories.

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Reflections on the work of Dementia Reframed

So good to hear an imaginative and positive approach after decades in aged care, where task-orientation persists and dementia is just about 'behaviour challenges'.

The discussions reinforced for me the fact that many of the difficulties that come with dementia are not medical or cognitive, they are social.

My own caring journey changed my life in so many ways, so these stories from other carers resonated. In particular, the carer who refused to be defined or stigmatised by the unexpected changes, and another who said 'You don't know how strong you are until strength is the only way forward'.

Too many carers say, 'I wish I'd known then what I know now' Let's change this!

How many people are victims of unnecessary medication, with distressed families politely accepting what 'health experts' tell them? It's terrifying. Congratulations for the work you do to raise awareness and improve dementia care.
I stand in awe.

As a person recently diagnosed with dementia, I felt very encouraged by what I have learnt today.

An awesome experience listening to voices of carers and those with experience of this challenging illness. Thank you for your resolute commitment to relationships between people as the key.

What a great presentation - OMG - I have been processing 'LOSS' - now getting my mind to rethink to focus on 'ABILITIES'!

What an eye-opener! Both my parents had dementia. I believed finding a cure was all important - now I know improving quality of life is even more important.

Your focus on the social side of dementia – living and engaging with, and caring about and for people with dementia – was very powerful.

People with bio-medical training are often at a loss when it comes to care. I applaud your emphasis on living life fully with whatever dementia may bring.

Reframing dementia to enhance positive community awareness and provide relationally-inspired quality care to ensure life can be lived to the fullest

In 2021 Dementia Reframed was nominated for its BRILLIANT contributions to AGED CARE. This nomination stemmed from a project funded by the SPHERE Age and Ageing Clinical Academic Group, designed to understand and promote BRILLIANT aged care.