

Creativity Dementia and Storytelling – the wider context



Background

- Equal Arts 25 years experience of delivering projects with older people
- We aim to combat the isolation of older people by developing and delivering creative opportunities
- Currently working with 24 groups across the region and partnership work with Tyne & Wear Care Alliance, Housing 21, Gateshead Housing Company, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums and individual residential care homes. We run an Activities Co-ordinators' Network and an Arts & Dementia Network with 500 members.

Knitted Lives

creating the new from old stories



Brief history of reminiscence movement

- Life Review pioneered by Robert Butler (1963)

Why Survive – Being Old in America (1975)

Looking back to review your life in order to get ready for death – not developed for people with dementia

Roots of reminiscence theatre/storytelling

- Age Exchange established in 1983 – using verbatim theatre – emphasis on quality outcomes
- International Reminiscence Network in 1993
- Has had a major influence on emphasising the importance of “lifestory”







when the tunnel was
being **dug out** you
could tell how far the
miners had got to
by the sight of
bubbles on the
surface of the **river**



Reminiscence v Imagination

- Life Story work is now widespread – and the House of Memories project is based on the reminiscence model
- Ideas about working from a more creative/imaginative/multi-sensory place particularly with people with dementia



TimeSlips



TimeSlips

- Creative storytelling method
- Devised by Anne Basting and developed at the Center on Age and Community at the University of Wisconsin
- Use imagination to create stories, triggered by a photograph
- Everything gets written down and repeated to the group

Mary F Someone like us to teach tricks to dogs
I've lost tricks
On the beach
dog is fetching sticks throw out to sea run
Mary F and brings it back / Over then dries it

Jay loud noise!
Funny noises and
Funny actions

Mary F Pain in the neck

Phil 4 or 5 years of age
Small dog, A family dog he lives in a
house

What family his with

Phil A woman, who's fond of little doggies

Mary F A little rickety
All pos
A flower on it.

Phil Surrounded by a dog gets treated
From the beach

Mary B doesn't think it's on

What around the dog

Mary B doesn't think it's on

Phil it has

Mary B it's





Other examples of storytelling

- Spare Tyre's *Once Upon a Time*

*“the here, the now and the future,
recognising people’s creative abilities
without resorting to prejudice, pity or
notions of reminiscence about the good
old days” Arti Prashar*

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