

■ Embracing Touch in Dementia Care – A Person-Centred Approach to Touch and Relationships

Luke Tanner, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, ISBN 9781785921094, £17.99.

Embracing Touch in Dementia Care challenges the reader to explore their current practice, thoughts, and feelings about the experience of touch and relationships in dementia caregiving. This book isn't just about when and where it is appropriate to offer someone receiving care a hug. Readers are encouraged and supported with practical examples and exercises they can use with their colleagues, to explore the wide variety and symbolism of the types of touch we experience daily as human beings, and its relevance and importance to our wellbeing and sense of self.

Increasingly, health and social care organisations are recognising the therapeutic benefits of defined interventions such as massage and reflexology. Tanner points out that despite this, few have

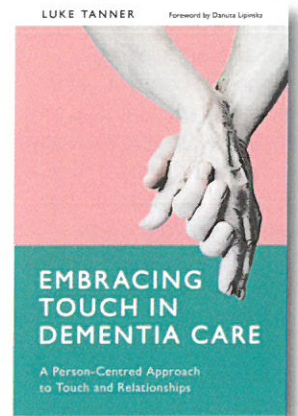
considered the importance of touch in the delivery of day-to-day interventions when engaging with people with cognitive impairment. He highlights the need for clear organisational guidance, support, and training to enable caregivers to feel confident when supporting people with dementia to build trusting relationships.

Throughout the book Tanner refers to the (limited) evidence base relating specifically to "touch", and wider research relating to behaviour and attitudes. He offers anecdotal evidence based on his own experience and practice and a series of case studies and practical tools offering solutions to common issues caregivers experience.

Tanner includes a chapter on attachment theory, exploring this in the context of his own

personal experience as a new parent. Using this approach, he has simplified the ways in which we can recognise and, more importantly, apply appropriate touch in different scenarios based on an individual's identified need for attachment. He carefully navigates the issues arising from assessed mental capacity and consent, with the sensitivity required to observe both immediate feedback and reflect on the anecdotal evidence of the impact of "touch" following an intervention.

Throughout the book Tanner is not shy of challenging traditional models of dementia care. He draws a parallel with approaches and attitudes to touch in the care settings of organisations as reflective of their understanding of the broad spectrum of



relationships within their services. He carefully navigates the boundaries between "user" and "provider" and the distinctions and implications of dividing these two groups. He sensitively explores with the reader the need to recognise an individual's need for sexual intimacy, and ways to support this need. This book will be referred to and revisited by readers as they develop their skills and understanding.

Suzanne Mumford, principal consultant, Care Prepared.

■ Person-Centred Thinking with Older People: 6 Essential Practices

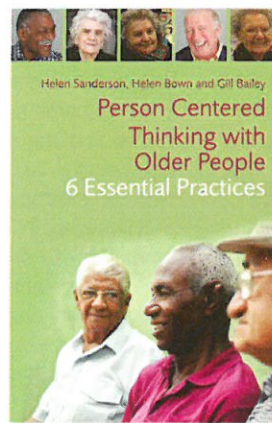
Helen Sanderson, Helen Bown and Gill Bailey, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, ISBN 9781849056120, £11.99.

In his foreword, *Guardian* journalist David Brindle quips that "the days of take it or leave it services are over". While that may be true, many services still struggle to articulate what person-centred care really means and how they can deliver it. If that sounds familiar, then this practical and accessible guide, stripped as it is of all professional jargon, is for you. With guidance that is easy to follow, and tools that are easy to implement, the authors share their own experiences of how they have created the opportunities for person-centred care to flourish.

The authors take us on an informative journey through the six essential practices for person-centred care of older people. We journey from the foundation stones of One Page

Profiles and Communication Charts, through Wishes, Histories, and Relationship Circles to "Working and Not Working". On the way we realise that changing the way a question is asked can change the nature of the conversation. Different conversations can open up the opportunity for relationships based on respect, and the reciprocity born of mutual understanding and trust.

The book is written in an easily accessible format with chapters dedicated to describing each tool in turn. Within each chapter we also share in appreciating the unique skills and gifts of Arthur, Hilda, Beatrice, Julie, Margaret, and Carolyn. Each chapter ends by showing the possibilities for the use of the tool across the four domains of



assessment, care and support planning, first contact the person makes with a new setting, and review.

A fabulous, practical resource to better understand person-centred thinking practices, this book is for everyone who works in health and social care. It is about the future, our future. In short, it is for everyone.

Tanya Clover, consultant.

Resources

Mental Health in Older People – A Practice Primer is a new guidance document produced by NHS England with support from the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the British Geriatrics Society. It covers important dementia-related topics such as delirium and distinguishing dementia from depression. Dementia specialists Alastair Burns, national clinical director for dementia, and consultant old age psychiatrist Amanda Thompsell are among the authors. The guide is aimed at GPs and other professionals who "risk attributing symptoms to 'old age' or considering the patients' situation as futile." Available at www.england.nhs.uk. There is also a new **6-minute animated video** for allied health professionals, carers and patients about depression in older people at www.rcpsych.ac.uk

A free reminiscence therapy app called **myPlayLife**, accessible to people with dementia, has ➤