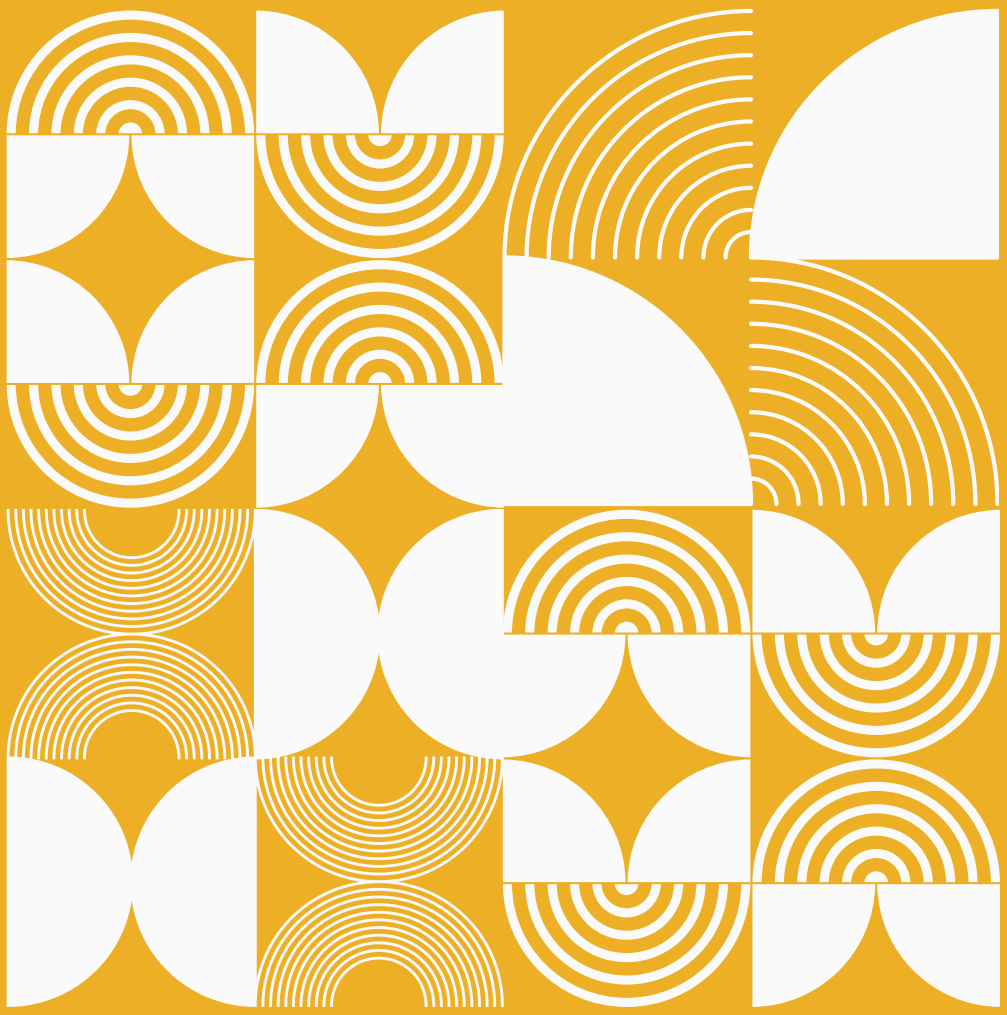


# Lingo of Connection

My home life® Charity

# The Lingo of Connection

DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE HUMAN RIGHT TO PERSONAL EXPRESSION STRAND IN RIGHTS MADE REAL IN CARE HOMES

# Introduction

Lingo of Connection resource taps into some ways of connecting with people with later stage dementia, who might no longer communicate through words or language. You most likely will have other ways that you use in your practice.

The purpose therefore of the Lingo of Connection resources is twofold:

> To share ideas for ways of connecting with people with later stage dementia
>
> To open up possibilities for staff in care homes to share stories about their own 'lingo', the particular ways they use to connect with people living with later stage dementia- for example through sharing these stories of connection at team huddles, supervision meetings etc.

The 'Lingo of Connection' Trio of resources have been developed by Rights Made Real in collaboration with Emily Bird (Project Manager) and Lily Ash Sakula (Artist), Magic Me and Suzie Ferguson
(Therapeutic Clowning Practitioner).

On the next page you can read an introduction to each of the 3 resources.

Each resource is stand-alone, and can be used independently of the other two.

They can be used by staff members on their own, or with others.

The three 'Lingo of Connection' resources are:

**Eye Spy- What hints can we find in the glint of an eye?**

**We have enough- we are enough, to create connection**

**The Present of Presence**

We invite you to have a look through them. See what interests you, and feels useful in the resources.

Adapt them to how they might work best for your setting.

## Eye Spy- What hints can we find in the glint of an eye?

We might hear or see stories of people with late stage dementia suddenly singing a full opera song on their own, or playing a whole musical piece on the piano.

More often than not, our own experience of connection with a person with later stage dementia might be of moments that are much smaller, briefer, more subtle than this- and so we really need to have our eyes, ears, hearts open to pick up on these moments.

Have a look at the 'Eye Spy' Resource Overleaf- have you an 'eye spy' story?

## We have enough- we are enough, to create connection

There might be some specialised 'kit' for people with dementia that you've seen online, or an expert, in the care home or from outside the care home, that you think is the best at connecting with people with dementia. While the 'kit' and the 'experts' can be extremely valuable, how would it be to also think that you have enough (in terms of everyday items) and you are enough (in terms of what you bring) to create connection with people with later stage dementia. Another angle on the 'we have enough- we are enough' is that we might think about it as 'being full going into our interaction' so that we are not hungry for a particular outcome or for things to go a certain way; more that we can go with the flow as we carry broad hopes for our connection without putting lots of expectation on what might happen.

Have a look at the Community Quality Cards in this pack, what are the resources you have available, what are the resources within you and your team?

## The Present of Presence

Underpinning this resource is the belief that until our last breath, regardless of what abilities and disabilities we have, that connection is possible. If we are holding onto hope that through being present, connection is possible this can then influence how we approach our interactions with people living with later stage dementia, as we continue to offer our presence . See our 'The Present of Presence' for examples of the presents we might offer.

# We Have Enough, We Are Enough To Create Connection

## Part of the 'Lingo of Connection' Range of Resources

We Have Enough, We Are Enough- To Create Connection by Roddy, Rights Made Real is licenced under Creatve Commons 4.0 BY-NC. To view a copy of this licence visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode

# We Have Enough- We Are Enough To Create Connection

## We Have Enough

Bringing some familiar or homely, bringing something new or novel, bringing something surprising or stimulating- these might all be ways in which to create a moment of connection with a person with later stage dementia.

Below is a  purposefully 'Random Assortment' of ideas of the types of things in our day-to-day environment that we might bring into our interactions to see what response we receive. By no means a full list, you will have plenty of things to add.
Even looking around the room you are in now, do other things come to mind that you might add to the list, and try out.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Musical Instruments** | **Magazines** | **Mushrooms to peel** | **Stuff from the garden** |
| **A torch** | **Assortment of fabrics** | **Fun accessories** | **DIY equipment** |
| **Baker's equipment** | **Textured paper** | **Seashells** | **A handbag of delights** |
| **Usual & unusual ornaments** | **Staff wearing brightly coloured socks** | **Scarves, Hats & Dickie-Bows** | |

**What would you add to the list above?**

**Which of these items might you introduce to a person in your care home to see how they respond ?**

# We Have Enough- We Are Enough To Create Connection

## We Are Enough

Each staff member in a care home brings their own uniqueness to how they engage with the people they support.

The qualities below are in relation to connecting with a person, people, living with later stage dementia. There is a blank space where other qualities can be added.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Making mischief | Soothing voice | Asking for help if you need it | Being calm when things get hectic |
| Being 'in-the-moment' with the person | Following the person's lead | Showing affection | Making the ordinary a little bit special |
| Finding ways to include everyone | Noticing how people respond | Being imaginative | Trying something new to see how it goes |
| Tuning into how long the person needs to respond (their processing time) | Recognising how the person might be feeling, and not rushing to make them feel 'happy' | Connecting with the person before doing something with them | |

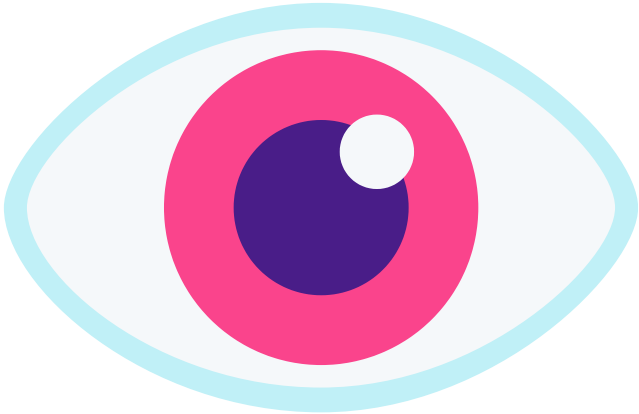
Are there qualities in the list above that you recognise in yourself?
Can you think of an example of when you showed one of these qualities, and how it helped to create a connection?

(Without feeling you're 'bigging yourself up' it can be really useful to share this example with others, for others to learn more about tailored ways to connect with people with dementia, through your story).

Are there qualities above that you recognise in others in your team?
Again, can you think of an example of when you saw them bring this quality to life, and share this story with others.

We are Enough Qualities is licineced under Creative Commons 4.0 BY NC and is a derivative of Community Qualities Cards, Kinections UWS which is licenced under Creative Commons 4.0 BY.

# Eye Spy- What hints can we find in the glint of an eye?



Part of the 'Lingo of Connection' Range of Resources

Eye Spy , What hints can we find in the glint of an eye? Roddy, Dewar & Cook is licenced under CC BY-NC-SA- 4.0.
To view a copy of this licence visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode

# Eye Spy

## What hints can we find in the glint of an eye?

**Eye Spy is a resource which encourages us to notice the eyes, facial expressions and body language of people living with dementia to see what we what we can learn about what generates interest, connection and emotion for the person.**

## Eye spy something beginning with:

### Interest

Keeping an eye out for flashes of interest in what is happening in the environment - for example if a hairstyle, someone's socks, an object or the view outside seems to catch their eye.

### Connection

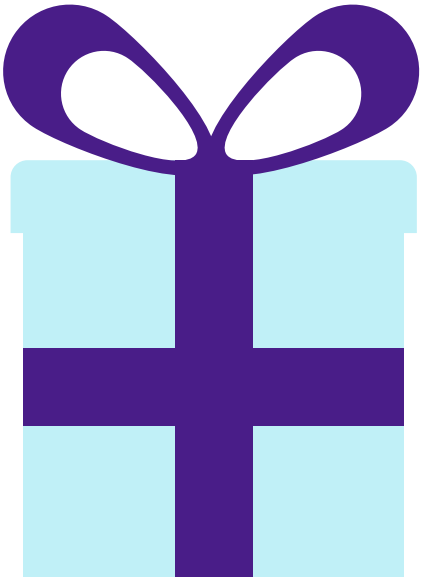
Noticing moments of connection, for example noticing the detail of what is happening when the person appears connected with another staff/ family member/ resident.

### Emotion

Looking out for signs of emotion- tuning in to the different way the person expresses emotion, and for example picking up clues as to the person expresses contentment, worry, delight or sadness.

Eye Spy , What hints can we find in the glint of an eye? Roddy, Dewar & Cook is licenced under CC BY-NC-SA- 4.0.
To view a copy of this licence visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode

# The Present of Presence



Part of the 'Lingo of Connection'
Range of Resources

Presents- To Create Connection by Roddy, Rights Made Real is licenced under Creatve Commons 4.0 BY-NC. To view a copy of this licence visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode

# The Present of Presence

Below are 3 suggestions for different  ways of spending time/ connecting/ being present with the person with later stage dementia. They were developed with people who no longer communicate using words or language, and who might also have visual or hearing impairments, in mind.

It can be useful to think of each of these as a present that you are offering, that the  other person is free to accept, or not. If it appears they haven't accepted i.e. they don't respond, or they don't wish to participate, to what you offer it may be useful to hold onto 3 things

- the act of offering the present is so valuable in itself and conveys that you see and respect the person by accepting  their 'yes' or their 'no' to your offer
- we can never really know the impact what we do might have on someone else, and so while we mightn't receive feedback, there maybe a positive impact for this person that we might never know about
- that being with the person in ways like those suggested below can also be a present to you; a chance to pause, to breathe, to be playful & imaginative

**Your Hello**

Giving some thought and attention to the way in which you say hello. Perhaps imagining that you haven't seen this person in weeks- even if you saw them in earlier in the day, or the day before.

Noticing what kind of hello's they like- do they like big hello's with lots of energy and liveliness, or quieter, maybe softer hello's.

If it feels natural and authentic, perhaps saying something about what you like about seeing them, getting to spend time with them.

# breathe

And Breathe
If the person is in bed, or in a comfy chair, pulling up a chair beside them and just letting them know that you're going to sit with them for a little while. Noticing the rate of they're breathing- maybe breathing in time with them. Maybe offering a hand rub, if this is something they enjoy, in time with their breathing. Letting out a sigh if they let out a sigh. Letting them know that you are enjoying sitting with them; that they are helping you by letting you have a rest beside them.

# Lights

Playing with Light*
Creating something new and surprising together through playing with light. Where possible, its ideal to try this out in a relatively dark room.
Gather a few items, such as a glass, a coloured cellophane sweet wrapper, fabric such as lace and a torch. Shine the torch through the different objects to see what patterns it creates on the ceililng or wall. If the person is able they might like to hold the torch themselves to direct where the light goes. Whatever shapes and paterns are created will be unique to the experience of the two of you together.

*This activity is taken from the Magic Moments Activity Pack www.magicme.co.uk, , a free creative resource designed with and for people living with later stage dementia.

# 'Lingo of Connection'

# Range of Resources

# **Space for Sparks**

Have the Lingo of Connection resources sparked an idea or curiosity for you?

Presents- To Create Connection by Roddy, Rights Made Real, My Home Life Charity is licenced under Creatve Commons 4.0 BY-NC. To view a copy of this licence visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode