

My home life

Issue 21

Promoting quality in care homes for older people



QUALITY OF LIFE: The little things that matter

RESIDENTS TELL US WHAT BRINGS LIGHT TO THEIR LIVES

ADVICE:
Making it
happen in
your
care
home

WITH CAROLE
MCNAMARA



PLACES, PEOPLE, PASSIONS:
The latest pictures
from your live events

RESEARCH: Practical
advice from the people
in the know



My home life LIFE WORLD

Dear Friends

Welcome to our new issue of 'My Home Life' Magazine. We're here to support you to deliver quality of life in your care home. In this issue we're remembering the importance of the 'little things' in life that cost nothing but make the biggest difference.

As a social movement we love hearing about all the great things that you do so please keep sending in your selfies, photos, and stories. To get the latest news from My Home Life sign up to our practice updates, visit www.myhomelife.org.uk for more details.

Best wishes

Jen

On behalf of My Home Life

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Plain sailing for Laura (89). A Norfolk day out on the Broads for Ashmore Nursing Home residents.



Words of our Worlds - Care Home Open Day 2018 in Scotland.



It's all monkey business in Wales. Having fun with Hydration Week at Woodland Lodge, Tenby.

Beastly weather... Ashmere Nursing Home braving the Beast from the East with an impromptu all ages baking session.





Professor Assumpta Ryan representing My Home Life in Japan at Kobe University



I know Arnold Schwarzenegger!

Weight lifting champion Tom (86) from Essex, who's living with dementia, visited his local gym to teach them a thing or two. Full film at www.carehomefans.org

Certified My Home Lifers in Northern Ireland: validation day for Belfast care home managers



Hello to our My Home Life friends in Germany.



Coming together to launch dementia friendly communities in East Ayrshire



May, a care home resident from Pembrokeshire and speaker at the MHLC conference 2018.



Blooming wonderful! Ladies from Sunnyside House, Northern Ireland, flower arranging.

It's the **LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Sometimes it's the little things in life that matter most. Whether it's the feel of clean sheets on your bed or the quick chat with the Postie, these magic moments are what brings light to life. In our care homes, we need to find out what these magic moments are for each of our residents, relatives and staff, write them down, remember them and see if they can happen more.

Take a peek at some of the things that you've said that makes life worth living:

Life feels good for residents when ...



MAGGIE

"Staff bring me a lovely hot water, bottle which helps me sleep."

"I have my pink and purple patchwork quilt, a family heirloom, it makes me feel snug."

JOAN



ALEX



"Staff bring me my 'Friday box of chocolates'.

It reminds me of when my wife was alive and what we used to share together."



"When Laura (a care home resident) and I have a cuppa together on my breaks in the warmth of our conservatory."

"When we are dancing together with residents and the kitchen staff on a Monday afternoon to Elvis."



When life feels good for staff...

When life feels good for families...

"When I get cuddles from granny when I visit her in the home."



"When we get an email from the care home sharing a photo of mum baking a cake."

TELL US YOUR STORIES OR 'LITTLE THINGS'. EMAIL US: mhl@city.ac.uk

MAKING IT HAPPEN

In your care homes

INSIGHT FROM *THE MOVEMENT*

"This small exercise was the start of something big!"

It really didn't take much time to get THE staff on board.

"Perhaps one of the most surprising side-effects has been that I can leave the care home knowing it's in safe hands and can attend to the 'little things' that make life feel good for me!"

Care home manager Carole introduced the notion of 'simple pleasures' in 2012 at Glendale lodge. "It was something I liked that I had picked up on the Kent 'My Home Life' leadership programme.

I began implementing the 'Simple Pleasures' ethos in our care home by listening to the 'simple things' that made a real difference to my staff's happiness. Recently staff complained of pain in their shoulders from the stress and

I want to walk across the beach again

physical hard work of caring. In response, I hired a masseur to visit our care home once a week to give 15-minute massages to staff. "I wanted staff to feel happy, listened to and supported by the management team", six months on and colleagues are still loving this useful therapy.

The next natural step was to invite staff to repeat the same exercise of talking about the tiny things that made life worth living with residents and relatives. For some, it was the first time they had been asked, "What matters most to you?"

One resident shared that they wanted to walk across the beach again; another wanted a big biscuit

A big biscuit tin for my granddaughter

tin for her granddaughter to dive into when she visited; a relative wanted a 'tea station' so she could make a cuppa without bothering staff.

"Knowing how important these 'little things' were, we wrote them down on a leaf-shaped cards and attached them on our 'conversation tree', we then invited others to add their own 'simple pleasures'."

"Hearing and responding to the 'little things' that matter to everyone is now part of our everyday culture - it's as if the branches of that conversation tree have spread across the home. We're proud that occupancy is 100%, staff retention is high and sickness is very low."

I'd like a tea station to make a cuppa without bothering staff.

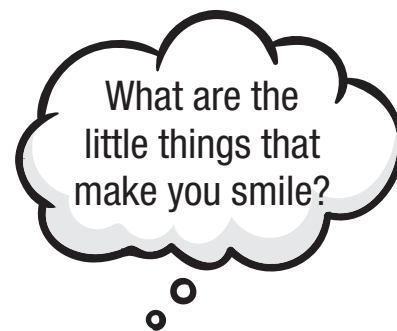
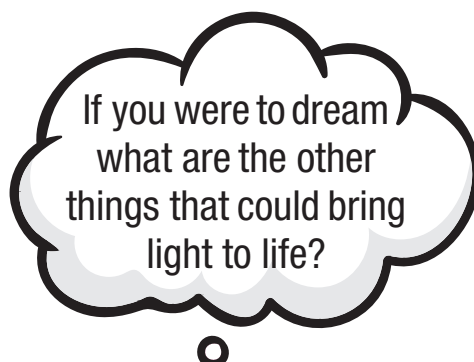


OPENING UP A CONVERSATION

The good news is you're probably already knowledgeable about the 'little things' that matter most to your residents, relatives and staff, but wouldn't it be nice to remind ourselves and perhaps even uncover new things that bring light to life for our care home community?

STEP ONE

Open up conversations with your staff about ...



STEP TWO

Ask relatives and residents the same questions.

Staff could aim to have this chat with a couple of people each day. In Bolton some care home managers hold 'flash meetings'. They bring staff together for ten minutes at ten o'clock ('10 at 10') and invite them to share one 'little thing' each that they have learnt about someone in the care home.

CHALLENGE!

How can we learn more about what matters to people who find it hard to express themselves verbally?

See Magazine #13



Why not use three different coloured sticky-notes to write down responses from residents, relatives and staff? Hold on to your responses...you'll need them for Step Three...

Ask
Questions

That looks
interesting...

How are
you today?

Encourage
conversation

Talk about
common
themes

Is that
new?

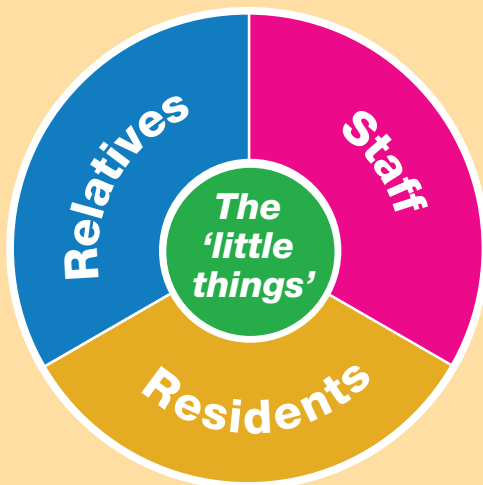
STEP THREE

Use the 'little things' you've discovered

YOU COULD...

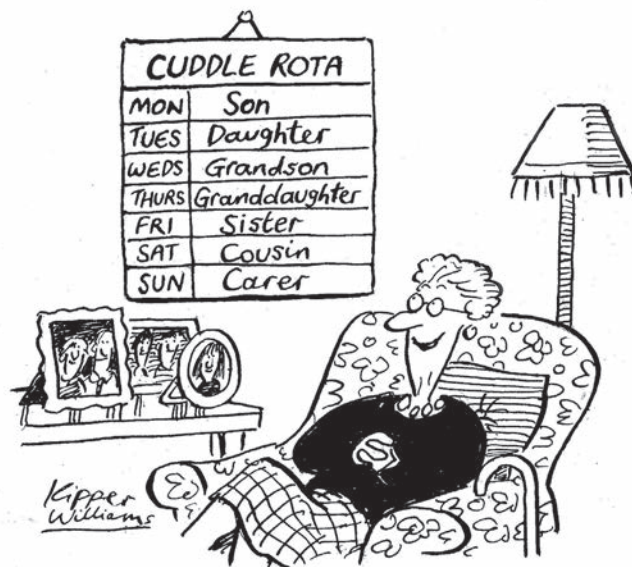
Bring your care home community together:

- Take the time to sift, read and enjoy what your team has gathered
- Perhaps, like Carole (see page 5), pop the ideas onto a 'conversation tree' or
- Simply Draw the circles pictured below onto a large piece of paper and put it up somewhere in your staff room.



QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE TOGETHER:

- What strikes you about what has been written on your sticky-notes?
- Are there any common themes?
- Do all these 'little things' currently happen?
- Could they happen more often?



DONT FORGET!

Sometimes it's OK to simply learn from one another about what matters without taking action.

Having a conversation about 'what makes us feel good' with residents can be a lovely activity by itself.






RESEARCH TELLS US...

Offering voice, choice and control to care home residents is really important. Having choice over the little things that matter can sometimes be of most importance (1).

A vibrant care home community is one where everyone feels valued, and knows a little bit about each other (2).

Relatives can feel reassured if they see that staff are attending to the little things that matter most to their loved ones (3).

Researchers at Sheffield University identified six 'senses' that are important to the wellbeing of everyone in the home (4).

A sense of...			
Security: to feel safe			
Belonging: to feel part of things			
Continuity: to make connections between the past, present and future			
Purpose: to have a goal			
Achievement: to feel progress is being made			
Significance: to feel I matter			

HOW WOULD YOUR RESIDENTS, RELATIVES AND STAFF RATE THEMSELVES ON THIS CHART?

1. Owen, T; Meyer, J et al. (2012) MY HOME LIFE: PROMOTING QUALITY OF LIFE IN CARE HOMES JRF, York
2. NSCHDRF (2007) Quality of Life in Care Homes. Help the Aged, London.
3. Ryan, A & McKenna, H (2013) 'It's the little things that count'. International Journal of Older People Nursing.
4. Nolan, M., Brown, J., Davies, S., Nolan, J. and J. Keady. (2006). *The Senses Framework: Improving care for older people through a relationship-centred approach*. University of Sheffield. ISBN 1-902411-44-7.



My Home Life is a UK-wide initiative that promotes quality of life and delivers positive change in care homes for older people. We work with care homes, statutory bodies, community organisations and others to co-create new ways of working to better meet the needs of older people, their relatives and staff. Our vision is a world where care homes are great places to live, due, visit and work; where care homes are:

- Supported to deliver to their potential
- Valued and trusted by those who work with them
- Cherished by their local communities