



National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems

Person-Centered Supports for People with Dementia Living in the Community

Summary of a webinar from November 30, 2020

Introduction

This webinar is about person-centered supports for people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. The symptoms of dementia can be different. It is important to get a correct diagnosis to get the right care. Rev. Dr. Cynthia Huling Hummel, who is a person living with early-stage Alzheimer's Disease, led the panel. She asked panel members questions. They shared their stories about living with or supporting people with dementia.

Lessons Learned

Panelists shared lessons about supporting people with dementia. Dr. Cameron Camp says it is important to know that people with dementia can learn. They can develop new habits and skills. Elias reminds people that using a person-centered approach doesn't take a lot of effort. It is a kind and loving approach. Panelist agreed that communication is key. Do not make assumptions about what people can and cannot do. Brian says that life does not end with Alzheimer's. He encourages people with dementia to find support.

Panel members talked about how things have changed because of COVID-19. Brian uses technology like Alexa for reminders for appointments and when to take medication. Cameron says that people with dementia have often lived through so many things. They are a resource and a repository of wisdom. People can ask them, "What helped you get through it?" Elias involved the community members in deciding how things would change because of COVID-19.

Words of Wisdom

Elias says to just try. Look for opportunities for success. At the end of the day person-centered is kind approach and human approach.

Cameron conveys to focus on strengths and social roles and things people with dementia CAN do. He says, "Let's focus on who the person is as opposed to what they have lost."

Brian wants people to know that life does not end with an Alzheimer's diagnosis. He says, "Living alone has its challenges, but it can be done because I'm doing it."

Toward the end of the webinar, the panelists answered questions from attendees about resources. They talked about peer support activities like "Memory Café's". They also shared examples of how faith communities can be accessible for people with dementia.

The speakers on this webinar were:

	<p>Rev. Dr. Cynthia Huling Hummel, of Elmira, NY is a fierce advocate and a voice for those living with the dementia. Cynthia served on the National Council on Alzheimer’s Research, Care and Services representing the 5.8 million Americans living with dementia. She has been an Alzheimer’s research participant for 10 years. Cynthia currently serves as an advisor to several local, national and international organizations. An artist and author, she also sings in a country band. She will be moderating the discussion.</p>
	<p>Brian Van Buren is an Alzheimer’s advocate and public speaker, a Board Member of the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, and an Advisory Council Member for the Dementia Action Alliance. After his early onset Alzheimer’s diagnosis in 2015, he reimagined himself as an advocate. Being an Afro-American man, he felt he needed to give a face to the disease. He also feels a need to address marginalized populations such as the LGBTQ community.</p>
	<p>Cameron J. Camp, Ph.D., originally developed the adaptation of the Montessori method as an intervention for persons with dementia. He is a noted psychologist specializing in applied research in gerontology, and currently serves as Director of Research and Development for the Center for Applied Research in Dementia. He gives workshops internationally on cognitive and behavioral interventions to reduce challenging behaviors and increase the level of functioning and quality of life of persons with dementia.</p>
	<p>Elias Rodriguez is a Registered Nurse of 8 years, and works as the Community Life Director at Rowntree Gardens Senior Living Community. His passion for comfort and best practice has made him an advocate for quality care. As an ambitious and motivated leader, he spends his days seeking the highest quality of life of employees and residents in the community.</p>