



Engaging Aging

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Person-centered care seeks to celebrate the elder as a complex, growing person seeking choice and dignity in one's community and lifestyle...

The care team is the heart of all person-centered care settings...

The elder is a full member of that team.

In 2004 the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) completed a Best Practices Study, ***Planning for Retirement and Mission***. The Study identifies steps taken by religious institutes successful in providing for the needs of their ministries and elder members. Funding was provided by a generous grant from the Retirement Research Foundation (RRF). (A copy of the summary report is available on the NRRO website, www.usccb.org/nrro, under the "Resources" heading.)

Since the study's completion, NRRO has devoted considerable time and energy to developing educational programs and materials based on its findings. As one part of this effort, NRRO sponsored William Keane, a leader in the person-centered care movement, as a speaker at the 2004 Conference of the National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes.

Bill was intrigued immediately by the idea that religious institutes are the perfect setting to implement a philosophy of person-centered care. He encouraged NRRO to apply for a follow-up grant from the RRF to conduct a "train the trainer" seminar for care-givers from religious institutes. With the help of Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging,[®] NRRO received a second generous grant from the RRF. Subsequently, NRRO contracted with Mather LifeWays[®] to develop and conduct the training.

For nearly two years, Bill and the staff of Mather LifeWays[®] worked tirelessly to design a training program geared to the unique needs of religious institutes. They conducted conference calls with a volunteer advisory board of care-givers from religious institutes, and they made site visits to religious institute retirement centers. They engaged a team of expert and enthusiastic presenters who developed a training manual with four one-hour staff training sessions.

On October 31-November 1, representatives from 75 religious institutes gathered in Chicago for the ***Person-Centered Care Training Conference***. The enthusiasm of presenters was contagious, and attendees went home eager to implement what they had learned. NRRO is deeply grateful to the seminar staff for sharing their expertise and fervor.

Over the next year and a half, Mather Lifeways[®] will be conducting a follow up evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the training program. Plans by NRRO to offer a similar program in the future will be determined by evaluation outcomes and sustained interest on the part of religious communities.

If you are interested and have not already given your name to NRRO, please contact Sister Janice Bader.

This issue of *Engaging Aging* is dedicated to news from the Seminar.

The Conference: Dedication and Hope

by William L. Keane, M.S., M.B.A., Conference Convener

For two years, I have been on a journey with the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) to develop a training program in person-centered care. I have come to realize that this work, often defined as “culture change”, is not new to the many institutes of the NRRO. Through my interactions with the more than 175 participants who attended the training in Chicago this past October, I have come to see that many religious communities have been pioneers on this journey of ensuring the fullness of life as commanded in the Gospel.

The person-centered care training initiative that we offered is rooted in our belief in the sacredness of relationship between the elder religious and those who are there every day to care for and support them. Person-centered care assumes that there is always a unique self to be nourished. With this in mind, it was our objective to expand a knowledge and skill base that would support a holistic approach to enhancing this sense of self.

Perhaps, the best way to unfold the heart of person centered care is to turn to the contributions of one of your own, Sister Roseann Kasayka, OSF, a Sister of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate of Joliet, Illinois. A pioneer and personal mentor in person-centered care, Sister’s life will convey to you the best of what this movement and our training program are about.

Roseann Kasayka was born the oldest of five in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1941, and entered the convent in 1959. Her illustrious career in religious life included ministering as an elementary school teacher, organist, graduate student, music instructor, Motherhouse Administrator, Director of Vocations, crisis line director, music therapist, doctoral student, Direc-



Sister Roseann Kasayka, 1941-2006

tor of Music Therapy, Director of Dementia Services, and Director of Memory and Aging Services and Integrative Therapies.

Like many colleagues in long-term care, I knew Roseann as a soul mate in person-centered dementia care. Sister was responsible for bringing Tom Kitwood and his challenges of “Dementia Reconsidered” to the United States. Building on her pioneering work at Heather Hill Hospital and the Corinne Dolan Alzheimer Center in Chardon, Ohio, Roseann became a true advocate and champion for the personhood and rights of individuals living with dementia. As her many friends have testified, Roseann danced, laughed and brought enthusiasm and dedication to everything she touched. She had a great gift for sharing life, especially with those who were challenged with dementia.

During her last years, Roseann was a strong advocate and speaker on the subject of spirituality and Alzheimer’s disease. She always ended her talks with the beautiful music of Shaina Noll and her “Songs for the Inner Child”, sharing her five famous affirmations about persons with Alzheimer’s disease. She would profess... “ I believe...

- persons with Alzheimer’s are full, living human beings with a rich past, growth filled present and evolving future.
- persons with Alzheimer’s disease have the ability to celebrate life and enjoy beauty, goodness and truth.
- persons with Alzheimer’s disease are the enlightened ones, given to us to remind us how really to live and grow.
- persons with Alzheimer’s disease challenge us to walk a common spiritual path with them.
- that we must learn the language and the space of the person with Alzheimer’s, and go to their space rather than asking them to come back to our space.

Sister Roseann Kasayka, who departed us suddenly on September 18, 2006, gave immensely to her religious community and to the broader world of aging services and long-term care. She will never be forgotten by those of us who loved her as a friend and men-

tor. Over the years, Sister came to embody a wonderful example of the great work that each of you do every day for your elder religious members who depend on you so much for their quality of life and dignity.

It was a privilege to dedicate the training conference in person-centered care in Sister Roseann's name. I hope it honored each of you and served as a testament to your own communities' missions of loving care of your elders. I count it among my many blessings to have been in your midst.



William Keane, Presenter



Presenter Maggie Calkins, Ph.D.



Presenter Joanne Rader, RN, MN



My Favorite Things

by Sister Janice Bader, CPPS,
Project Director, National Religious Retirement Office

“Turn and look deeply into the eyes of the person sitting next to you. Now imagine that you have just moved into a long-term care setting and this person will be caring for you. What do you want this person to know about you?”

This question was posed by one of the presenters at the recent Person-Centered Care Seminar. The responses were as diverse as the participants themselves. Among the things the participants wanted their “care-givers” to know were:

- I like a cup of hot coffee first thing in the morning.
- Classical music helps me to relax.
- Do not force me to play bingo.
- I like to stay up late and sleep late.
- I need privacy and quiet time for prayer every day.
- I am not afraid to die, but I am afraid of pain. Please make sure I have adequate pain control.

As I listened to the responses of the group, I became frighteningly aware of how my responses differed from theirs. The participants, all actively involved in providing care to elders, were quite specific in the preferences they named, while I had drifted to a few casual, generalized notions of care. I began to realize that I take for granted more than “a few of my favorite things,” but will they be available when I’m dependent on others for care? For example, I doubt

that my favorite morning caffeine infusion, Mountain Dew, is available as a breakfast menu choice in any retirement center.

Undoubtedly, there are more important things in life than a morning bottle of Mountain Dew. Still, like Maria in the *Sound of Music*, I know that I derive a certain sense of comfort and well-being from these “favorite things.” What happens when I am no longer able to obtain them for myself? If I become unable to express my wishes, will anyone even know my preferences?

I applaud the sensitivity of the care-givers attending the seminar. They demonstrated a keen awareness of the importance of respect for personal choices. They recognized the joy that a simple “favorite” can bring to a frail elder. Most of their wishes had little if any financial cost, but the conviction in the care-givers’ voices indicated that the simple things in life are of enormous value.

I encourage you to reflect on the question posed to us: “What do you want your future ‘care-giver’ to know about you?” Will these things be available to you in your community’s long-term care setting? Talk with an elder sister or brother from your community. Can you respond to an unmet longing that they may have?



Sr. Janice (left) with participant, Sr. Hertha Longo, CSA















Presenters Bill Keane & Anna Ortigara, RN, MS

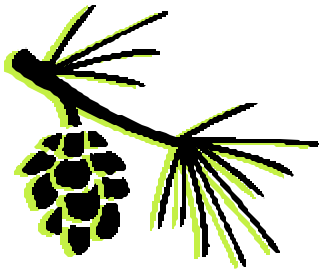


Sr. Andree Fries, CPPS, with participant

Participants had this to say...

-  Person-centered care is pretty ambitious, but I'm excited by it.
-  Finally, someone's telling me what I believed in all along! It's great!
-  We don't have to knock down walls or buy new equipment for this to work. It's all about people.
-  We could change the way nursing care is done in the whole country.
-  It's great to be with people who are facing the same things I have to deal with. I feel like I can do this now!
-  It's going to take some money, time and buy-in... I sure hope it works.
-  I'd like to stay in touch with the people I've met. How can we do that?
-  That question she asked about how much laughter we hear in our houses is haunting me. I think I need to start by taking a look at myself. I need to laugh more myself!
-  I can't wait to get home to try this out. My staff is going to love this.
-  Part of me wants to sit back and watch for awhile to see if this really works.
-  I need some time to let these days sink in. It was a lot to cover, but I can't think of anything I'd leave out.
-  This program is win, win, win... our elders, staff, management... our whole community wins!

Did you know...



In person centered care,

- Staff need to come together as a team around a common vision of person-centered, relationship-based care as well as the vision and mission of the individual religious community. Each resident needs to be a core member of the care team as well. (Presenter Anna Ortigara, RN, MS)
- Programming means that we provide activities in the context of a positive relationship in which we stimulate, encourage success, learn from and honor participants, and foster positive relationships. (Presenter Bill Keane, MS, MBA)
- Attention to the environment is important. Older people in general, and people with Alzheimer's disease in particular, experience a condition called contrast perception deficit. This means it is harder for them to see things that are similar colors. When a bathroom is done in white and pale or pastel colors, it can be difficult to see the toilet or tub from the background floor or wall. (Presenter Maggie Calkins, PhD)
- An important concept for understanding persons with dementia is "excess disability," i.e. a person can look "sicker" than is necessary based on the amount of brain damage present. Care givers need to establish meaningful relationships with residents to better understand behaviors that are expressing unmet needs. (Presenter Joanne Rader, RN, MN)

Suggestions for your Christmas list of giving...

What are Old People For? How Elders Will Save the World, by William H. Thomas, M.D.

This book is a delightful read that examines and challenges the dominant cultural views of aging. Dr. Thomas' central thesis that elders teach us compassion is surrounded by a wealth of helpful insights on aging.

Culture Change in Long-Term Care, Audrey S. Weiner, DSW, MPH and Judah L. Ronch, PhD, Editors. This anthology includes a wide variety of articles on culture change including articles by Sisters Pauline Brecanier, OCarm and Patricia Brancaccio, OCarm of Tersian House in Albany, NY and Monsignor Charles J. Fahey, MSW, MDiv, Professor Emeritus at Fordham University.

Where River Turns to Sky, by Gregg Kleiner.

This novel, notes the *Chicago Tribune*, is "a lovingly told story of aging... an insightful story about reconciliation – finding peace with our mistakes and each other... capturing the essence of aging in these endearing, cantankerous, and very human characters."

Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life, by Philip Simmons.

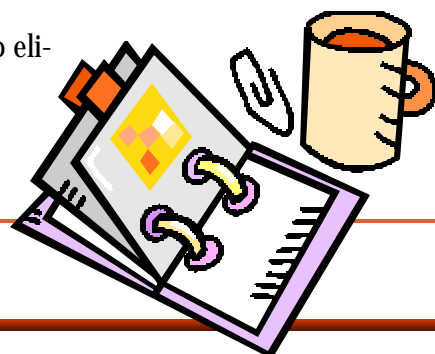
The book jacket notes read, "Set amid the rugged New Hampshire mountains... and filled with the bustle of family life against the quiet progression of illness, Simmons illuminates the journey we all must take— 'the work of learning to live richly in the face of loss.'"



NRRO Happenings...

2006 Retirement Fund for Religious Collection.	December 9-10, 2006
Basic Grant Eligibility Forms mailed to religious institutes.....	December 31, 2006
Special Assistance Grant applications due for June cycle (<i>forms on website</i>)	March 31, 2007
Basic Grant Eligibility Forms due for 2007	March 31, 2007
Special Assistance Grant applications due for December cycle (<i>forms on website</i>)	April 15, 2007

Supplemental Identified Need Grants (up to \$5,000) are available to eligible religious institutes at any time during the year.
Contact Sister Janice Bader for an application form.



From the editor's desk...

Sister Sherryl White, CSJ, Ph.D., Psychologist, Pittsburgh, PA (and Mom)
engagingaging@verizon.net

Editor's notes usually come at the beginning of a publication, but this time I've saved the last words for myself. I want to share with you a simple Advent story.

Each year as this holy season rolls around, I find myself returning to a conversation that I had with Bette Moslander, CSJ, when I was ministering with her at Manna House of Prayer in Kansas. It was about the third week of Advent and we had just finished hosting a large group, our days busy with decorating and catering to the needs of our guests. This one evening, Bette and I were sitting in the community room, sagging a bit with the rush of the season. "I feel like I've missed Advent," I said. "It's almost over and I hardly even know it has begun."

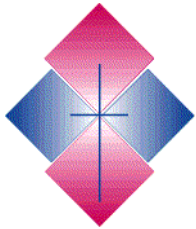
Bette, in her wise and gentle way, just

smiled, paused, then said, "My dear one, Advent isn't a train that waits until you are ready to board before leaving the station. Advent is a holy season, a holy time. It moves in and around you, regardless of what you do. Advent doesn't need us. We need Advent. You haven't missed it. You just haven't noticed it. Take time to notice. Take time to listen."

As we move into these final days of Advent, I join with all the staff of the National Religious Retirement Office in wishing you a holy season blessed with the time to listen. May we come to hear more deeply the Divine who is within and amongst us all. May we grow in the invitation of the Incarnate Word, the invitation of love.



Merry Christmas!



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The National Religious Retirement Office coordinates the national collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes these monies in grants to eligible religious institutes for their retirement needs.

The National Religious Retirement Office supports, educates and assists religious institutes in the U.S. to embrace their current retirement reality and to plan for the future.

National Religious Retirement Office Staff

Sister Andrée Fries, CPPS, Executive Director

Brother Henry Sammon, Associate Director

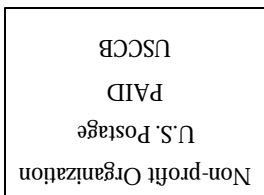
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Monica Glover, Database Manager

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*Merry Christmas and
Blessed New Year!*



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