

Making Time for Culture Change: Art Therapy as Method for
Cultivating Lived Time in Dementia Care

by
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Abstract

This paper presents a qualitative, arts-based exploration of art therapy as a method for advancing the goals of culture change in dementia care through the cultivation of interpersonal connection and emphasis on art-making in the present moment. Two conflicting paradigms in dementia care were identified - a biomedical emphasis on cognitive decline and the task-orientation of *clock time*, versus a person-centered approach emphasizing present moment experience and relational interactions in *lived time*. This study begins with an extensive scholarship review, examining the biomedical model, culture change, person-centered care, and concepts of *clock time* and *lived time*. Art directives were introduced to individuals living with dementia within a memory care facility during individual and group art therapy sessions, and facility staff during in-services and collaborative sessions with residents. Results of these interventions are presented through creative non-fiction narratives, followed by art-based analysis in the form of two stop-motion animations. Research findings suggest that personhood does not depend on orientation to *clock time*, as *clock time* is a culturally-bound concept; addressing the role of *clock time* within dementia care and introducing opportunities for *lived time* are significant components of the process of culture change. Art therapy can cultivate *lived time* in dementia care through nurturing relationships throughout the entire community, emphasizing exploration of materials and temporality over task-orientation, and using art materials as relational tools. Art therapy is uniquely suited to advance the goals of culture change as identified by Kitwood (1997). The study ultimately serves as a call to art therapists to utilize a person-centered approach and act as agents of change within biomedical institutions.

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DVD-R: Only Time will Tell and A Bird in Hand

The accompanying DVD-R can be obtained by inquiring at the Flaxman library reference desk. Please ask library staff for assistance by referring to the call number at the back of this document.

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