Non Pharmacological Interventions: one patient’s journey

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NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BPsych, BA, Chef, Grad Dip Counselling, Nurse
Chair, Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Advisory Committee
Co-Founder/Board member, Dementia Alliance International
Poet, Author, Speaker, Blogger, Wife, Mother, Daughter, Friend
My life was interesting, busy and very fulfilling.
Nothing about us without us.
“But mum... isn’t that a funny old persons’ disease”
My unseen disappearing world
Experience at diagnosis

• No medication available
• Prescribed disengagement
• No referral to Alzheimer’s Australia
• No support to remain employed
• No counselling
• Not told it is a terminal illness
Supporting myself

• Educate myself about dementia
• Remain engaged with pre diagnosis life
• Accessing support from providers
• disAbility counselling and support
• Updating will, medical directives, etc
What to do after work?

• Advocacy and activism
• Speaker invitations started appearing
• Writing a blog which now has over 13,000 followers
• Continuing with university studies
• Poetry and other writing
Attending ADI 2012

- First experience of support through meeting other people with dementia
- Stigma still present e.g. labelling
- Presentation about non-pharmacological interventions not received well – even the Chair of the session was derogatory
Attending ADI 2013

• Final session, “Will there be a cure in 2025” – both researchers said no, then the second one said, **but**;

• “We must offer our patients non pharmacological and positive psychosocial interventions to improve their quality of life”
disAbility model: Rehabilitation and remaining engaged in pre-diagnosis lives
Non pharmacological Interventions for dementia

- Studying
- Speech pathology
- Autoethnography
- Exercise 6 days/pw
- “Authentic” BIR
- Neuroplasticity brain and body training
- Blogging
- Creative writing
- Music therapy
- Hydrotherapy
- Mind Mapping
- Supplements
- Nutrition
- OT
Positive Psychosocial Interventions

- Advocacy
- Studying
- Volunteering
- Laughter
- Spiritual
- Love
- Reading
- Belief
- Transcendental Meditation
- Self Hypnosis
- Family time
- Nurturing friendships
- Creative writing
- Poetry
In the **shoes** of a person with dementia
I am a person living with dementia, with the emphasis on LIVING.
Thank you

My life continues to be interesting, busy and very fulfilling.

http:kateswaffer.com/daily-blog