

Can Yoga Create Calm in People with Dementia?



Objectives

- To undertake a small scale qualitative study with people with dementia
- To run a 10 week seated yoga class, each yoga session being 40 minutes long incorporating movement, breathing exercises and visualisation.
- To create a CD – a recording of the routine including the music and verbal instructions for the participants to use at home
- To explore how participants found the experience through discussion groups, interviews, observations, questionnaires, emotional touch points and visual illustrations.

Emotional Touch Points

Accepted

Happy

Encouraged

Agitated

Hopeful

Brave

Alone

Irritated

Calm

Angry

Judged

Cared for

Appreciated

Jumpy

Chattering mind

Ashamed

Labelled

Peaceful

At Ease

Light headed

Powerless

Belittled

Lost

Safe

Belonging

Misunderstood

Refreshed

Bewildered

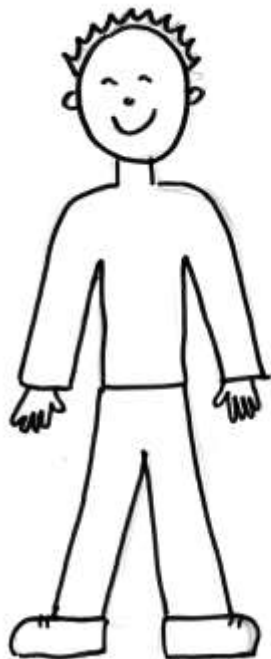
On top of the world

Relaxed

Creative Feedback



before yoga class - how do you feel?



after yoga class - how do you feel?











Findings

The four key findings were:

- The experience of dementia
- The feeling of calm and wellbeing created from participating in the class
- The positive role of peer support
- The mixed benefits of the CD, those that used it found it worked well, others were not able to use it at home.

Week 2	Card chosen before session	Card chosen after session
Anna	Light headed	Refreshed and at ease
Jenny	Fed up	Refreshed
Alan	Lost and powerless	Relaxed and encouraged
Trevor	Frustrated and sad (sometimes)	On top of the world
Jane	Empty and exhausted	Valued and happy
Margaret	Stressed and jumpy	Relaxed, comfortable

Week 4	Card chosen before session	Card chosen after session
Anna	Tired	Thankful and happy
Jenny	Fortunate, “ I don’t come here to be negative I come to be stretchy and bendy”	Very very relaxed
Alan	Worried	Refreshed and thankful
Trevor	Calm	On top of the world
Jane	Fortunate	Totally at ease
Margaret	Pressured	Belonging and at ease

Conclusion

People with dementia face an uncertain journey, often underpinned by stress, worry and fear. They deserve every chance they can get to find ways of relieving tension and anxiety and yoga may be one way to achieve this.