



Royal Star & Garter

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dementia Action Week: Royal Star & Garter share dementia learning tools for relatives

A podcast and video exploring the skills of storytelling and listening, and how it can be used to connect with older people who have memory loss or are living with dementia, has been published by Royal Star & Garter.

The charity teamed up with Narativ London to produce the learning tools, which were made following workshops and one-to-ones with staff and relatives.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, and has Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe.

The podcast and video have been published as part of Dementia Action Week, which runs from 15-21 May.



Looking at old family photos can trigger memory and lead to conversation

Royal Star & Garter is nationally renowned for the dementia care it provides, and in 2020 won the Alzheimer Society's prestigious Dementia Hero Award for Professional Excellence.

In the workshops, relatives were given innovative tips and skills on how to reconnect with their loved ones, and learned inventive ways of bonding with residents, using new skills which can also be used in their personal lives. This included the importance of using sensory details to promote conversation. Reminiscing, which is an important tool in dementia care and can help with conversation, can also be triggered by old objects and photographs.

The workshops were led by Jane Nash and Dan Milne, from storytelling and listening organisation Narativ London. They said the skills and techniques they passed on were aimed at connecting with people living with dementia or showing signs of age-related memory loss. Dan said: "By picking up new skills, we hope that people will discover how listening and storytelling has the power to reawaken memories, and to



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help keep family stories alive, shared and remembered.” Jane said: “We looked to see what we can do with someone who is older and may have some memory loss or living with dementia, and how we can help them to share stories.”

The video, which was first made available to Royal Star & Garter relatives, looks at techniques and tips on initiating discussions and conversations that can trigger reminiscence and memories. The podcast sees Dan and Jane reflect on the workshops, and features extracts from relatives and staff.

Sarah’s father Michael lives with dementia at Royal Star & Garter. She attended the Narativ workshops and said: “I found the workshops very helpful, and I’m still putting to use things that I learned from it. We’re currently going through Dad’s belongings in order to sell his flat, and there are some items which I think can provide good starting points for conversations. The means of communication diminishes as memory recedes, so finding ways of making connections is really helpful. I’m impressed with Royal Star & Garter’s holistic approach. The workshops were very useful and beneficial, and it was good to share it with other relatives and friends who are having similar experiences with their loved ones.”



Jane and Dan from Narativ London ran storytelling and listening workshops with Royal Star & Garter staff and relatives

The charity’s Director of Care Pauline Shaw said: “We are always looking at innovative ways in which we can improve our care, and the lives of our residents. These workshops allowed us to do just that, so I’m delighted the video and podcast has been more widely released. Royal Star & Garter is passionate about sharing its knowledge and expertise and I hope these learning tools will help people beyond our organisation to connect and enjoy conversations with their loved ones.”

The video is available to view here: <https://vimeo.com/783631009>

The podcast can be listened to here: <https://www.spreaker.com/episode/53818842>

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents in each of its Homes. For more information on this, or working for the charity, go to www.starandgarter.org/solihull, www.starandgarter.org/surbiton, or www.starandgarter.org/hw



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For more information on Narativ, go to www.narativ.uk

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For further information please contact:

Goolistan Cooper

Communications Officer

goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org

0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden

Marketing & Communications Manager

cally.madden@starandgarter.org

020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299

About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

Twitter: @starandgarter

Facebook: facebook.com/starandgarter

Website: www.starandgarter.org



Royal Star & Garter
is a member of the
National Care Forum