“A New Life!”
Residents helping Residents Live Purposeful Lives

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What field do you represent?
What percentage of those living in residential care do you think report feeling lonely?

- Up to 10%
- Up to 20%
- Up to 30%
- Up to 40%
- Over 50%
Loneliness and Depression in Residential Senior Care

- Long term care—55% experience loneliness¹
- Loneliness and depression are linked⁵
- Assisted living—higher depressive symptoms (58%) than community (19%)²
- Retirement—21% depression and 19% loneliness³⁴
“No one should suffer alone.”
POLL: What do you think would have the most effect on reducing loneliness?

- Attend a social with 80 other people
- Attend a class and learn about medieval art
- Help a stranger
- Receive a visit from a relative
A social revolution

peer support

give more

live more
Members use the power of their own experience and of their own wounds to lighten the burden of others, and heal themselves in the process.

— Stephen Post (2011)
Java Music Club

Standardized Peer Support Group

- themes
- photos
- readings
- music
- talking stick
Java Memory Care

“I am amazed at how residents with dementia have responded... short, simple, yet profound answers.”

Hilary Lipsett, Staff
The Java Mentorship Program
The Purpose

1. To help residents be able to reach out to those that are lonely or isolated

2. To improve quality of life through building a sense of purpose and meaningful relationships
Program Structure

Hour 1
Team Meeting

Mentors

Facilitators
(Staff)
6 Education Modules

(4-5 weekly sessions in each)

1. Introductory module
2. Keys to happiness
3. Marvelous mentors
4. Beyond dementia
5. Worry busters
6. Purpose in life
Program Structure

Hour 2
The Visits

Mentors

Those being visited
Java Mentorship Research Study
WHO?

Care Homes (n=10)
Staff (n = 27)

Mentors
(n = 114)

Visitees
(n = 75)
WHO

- Care Homes (n=10)
  - Staff (n = 27)
- Mentors (n = 114)
- Visitees (n = 75)

WHAT?

- Impact of program
- Depression
- Loneliness
- Social identity
- Belonging/Purpose
WHEN?

Introduction
- Sept 2015
- Oct 2015
- Nov 2015
- Dec 2015

Getting started
- Baseline questionnaires
- Visitee interviews

Learn from each other
- Jan 2016
- Feb 2016
- Mar 2016
- Check-in phone call
- Observations

3-month celebration
- Apr 2016
- May 2016
- Has anything changed?
- 3 month questionnaire
- Qualitative interviews

6 month celebration
- June 2016
- Has anything changed?
- 6 month questionnaires
- Mentor focus groups
- Final evaluation
Internal Mentors

Internal mentors enjoy meeting and helping others

“I enjoy ... instead of pulling them out of themselves, ... you know, they’re sometimes mentally in a small place. When somebody goes in to visit, it pulls them out of that little small place.”

They find visits to be mutually beneficial

“Jack is happy for what I’m doing. Jack is the guy I look after. It’s making me feel good. I enjoy the program since I started. It makes me feel like I’m a different person.”
External Mentors

External mentors find visits mutually beneficial too

“I’m not just helping, I’m also learning…. I feel like I have a group of friends.”

Having resources to help guide the visits is important

“I’m actually really excited about it. It really helped because instead of just coming here blindly, and saying ‘Ok, just go and be with them’... they give you lots of tips and tricks.”
The pairing up for visits helps to make the visits a positive experience

“I’ve never had one resident that really didn’t want to say hello or respond. I would say that’s because we work as a team.”

“I like seeing a smile on their faces when you are there, and they talk like they’ve never talked before.”
Preliminary Results

Visitees – Quantitative Data

- Reduced symptoms of depression ($p = 0.02$)
- Reduced loneliness ($p = 0.02$)
- 60% increased numbers of programs attended
Java Mentorship at Aspen Lake
Challenges

- Mentors are busy
- Scheduling challenges
- Need to create a back-up visitee list
- Visiting a highlight of the program
“I’m 95—it gives me a new lease on life.

It makes my life worthwhile.”
A Team Meeting in Action
Our Guidelines

• The primary purpose of the Java Mentorship Program is to build a warm inclusive community and to support those who are lonely or isolated.
• In our community, everyone matters, everyone counts.
• We build trust by sharing openly and keeping what is shared confidential.
• We value each person on our mentorship team.
• We are also here to learn and to have fun.
• We have one guiding principle, and that is—loving kindness.
The Mentor’s Pledge

As a mentor in the Java Mentorship Program, I pledge:

• to attend meetings as often as I can
• to help with set-up and clean-up as much as I’m able
• to encourage and support new team members
• to do my best to help others and practice gratitude daily
• to listen to other’s sharing with an open mind and give them my attention
• to invite others to attend the Java Mentorship or Java Music Club programs
• to share my experience and optimism
• to express kindness and appreciation
Check in and the Gratitude Practice

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our pat, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.

—Melodie Beattie
What Is A Mentor?

• A mentor is someone who is willing to reach out and support others on a regular basis.

• Through sharing their own experience, mentors help those they visit help themselves.
Education – The Role of a Mentor

• What a mentor does

• What a mentor doesn’t do
Closing Affirmation

• Together we can really make a difference!

• Need an ear, need a hug? … see me.
Tips for Helping Residents Build a Culture of Peer Support

1. Express kindness
2. Express sincere appreciation
3. Take time to listen
4. Check on someone who is struggling
5. Volunteer in some way
6. Nurture talent to give
7. Find a quote and offer it
Discussion and Reflection

• What stood out for you about this program?

• What is different about peer mentoring as a program from traditional programs in residential care?
We’d love to hear from you!

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References


