Spirituality and Personhood in Dementia.

**Albert Jewell Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London
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Those of us working with older people and dementia will be all too familiar with fears of loss, worthlessness and disintegration: becoming a non-person. Building on the work of Tom Kitwood, Albert Jewell brought together leading authors in person centred care from across the UK and Australia. They explore the place of spirituality in those disabled by dementia and how it relates to the concept of personhood. They write mostly, but not exclusively, from a Christian perspective, open to other faith traditions, and for a secular world.

The focus of person centred care is away from disease and care tasks. It challenges traditional views that define persons in terms of rationality and function, where weakness and dependency represents meaninglessness and failure. Personhood is described as fluid and dependent on relationships for meaning and value. In this context spirituality is viewed as an essential part of personhood, a universal need regardless of religion.

Each of the eighteen chapters could stand in its own right and are easy to read. Structured to reflect the philosophy of care, it draws together different perspectives, starting with the personal view of someone with dementia. It then moves to a carer, spiritual mentor, poet, psychologists, nurses, chaplain, and physician. The theorists and philosopher are kept to last, underscoring the idea that empathy and imagination (rather than theory) are key requirements for a personal response in care. The reader is given some idea of how connection with people with even severe dementia is possible. It is rich in illustrative case examples, and the moving description of a carer's experience is a worthwhile read in itself. The book promotes an attitude rather than attempt structured practical guidance or theoretical and conceptual clarity. Potential practical, spiritual and theological questions are not explored or answered.

Different languages and frameworks in this field like the psychological approach or the resilience model are left unintegrated. It does point towards tools and resources, and ideas can be explored through the substantial list of references.

This book is a welcome addition in the quest to improve care for those living with dementia and shows some of the heights that can be achieved with spiritual care. I expect anybody caring for or ministering to someone with dementia will find it a stimulating and valuable read, and health professionals and service managers will be well served by having it in their libraries.

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