



My Story

The purpose of “My Story” is to help caregivers and visitors see the person behind the dementia. It allows them to get to know the interests of the person and be better prepared to engage them in activities and conversation. By having the information available, caregivers can talk about the person’s experiences and accomplishments.



IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

Please take the time to read these Quick Start instructions. While the activity may seem easy enough to present, these instructions outline some simple steps that can make a big difference in the results. It only takes a minute and can really help.

Completing the Booklet

“My Story” is divided into sections, with the most significant information on the front cover. The back cover offers more information about likes and dislikes to help quickly provide topics of conversation and guide a caregiver in choosing activities that are of interest. Inside the book are the details that complete the picture.

All of the section headings are listed below, along with some ideas for the type of information that you may find relevant to put in each section. Here are some helpful hints:

- Do not use all of these topics, just use them as a guideline.
- Only include things that are significant to the person and will help caregivers and visitors know them better.
- Do not provide a full and complete life history - distill out those things that are still meaningful to the person and help define who they currently are.
- Include things that will bring a smile to their face, remind them of a pleasant memory or draw out interesting conversation.

- Only include things that are important to the person right now.
- Use the space from one section to complete the previous, if necessary.
- Use the shorter lines on the left to highlight headings with the details filled in on the right.

A sample completed form is included in the package for reference.

Front and Back Covers

The information on the front and back covers is intended to give someone a quick insight into the person in as easy a way as possible. Use the “Return this book to” spot on the front cover to indicate where the book is kept. Paste a photograph of the person over the image on the page to make it even more personal.

Important Events

This section should list (in points) the events that the person defines themselves by. Examples might be graduating from a certain university, attaining a certain job, or even catching a big fish.

Who I am...

State in simple points or phrases how the person sees themselves. “I love to be surrounded by family”, “I enjoy going to church”, “I am shy”, “I love to watch birds at the feeder” are some examples.

Other Sections

Include only the things that are most significant, with a little bit of information about each. For example, if grandchildren are important, give their names, where they are living, their occupation and other significant details. In each section, we have listed examples of things that may be considered significant. Use point form where possible.

Here are some examples of the sorts of information that might be appropriate for each section. You can also refer to the sample completed form for more ideas.

Early Years

- had lots of siblings
- parents names
- father died young
- had to go to work young
- siblings names and ages
- childhood friends
- where they lived growing up
- was raised by grandparents

School/Education

- special school attended
- special degree
- didn't go to school and regrets it
- had to quit school
- special teachers

Adult Years

- where they lived
- work career
- volunteering
- marriage - when, to whom
- raising children
- memorable travels
- special awards
- special friends
- clubs and organizations
- place of worship

Older Adult Years

- where they lived
- special friends
- pastimes
- grandchildren

Hobbies and Interests

- Favourite hobbies
- Favourite Music
- Play an instrument
- Favourite food/meal
- Memorable pets
- Favourite famous people
- Like to read - what?
- Significant travel
- Sports - play, watch
- Favourite sports teams/
player

Significant People

- Spouse
- Siblings
- Children
- Teacher
- Boss
- Friend

I Don't Like

- Brussel Sprouts
- Fiddle music
- Getting rained on
- Winter
- Mathematics
- My husband watching
football on television

Once the book is complete, caregivers and visitors need to be able to find it easily for it to be helpful. Find a place to keep the book that is plainly visible, easy to access and convenient to return the booklet to - in a pouch on the wall behind the bed; near the door; next to their recliner or attached to the side of their night table. People won't know it's there if it's stored in a drawer, but if it's just left out on a table it could easily be misplaced. Look around and be creative. Label the spot and fill it in on the cover so that everyone knows where to put it.

In a facility, an added benefit to using these booklets is that all of the caregivers and volunteers will recognize the familiar design and know that they have been provided to assist them in doing their job. As they read about their clients, they might sing that favourite song together, discover they are both fans of the same team, or have a shared interest in stamps. It will help them bond.

Questions?

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would love to hear from you.

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My Story

My name is:

I like to be called:



 **Important Events**

Birth Date _____

Place _____

Who I am...

Return this book to _____

Date Completed _____

