



# Dignity in Care: A Virtual Workshop Sept 14, 21, 28, 2023

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Bruno's Story  
*Australia*



## Dignity Therapy as Homework

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# Editing Dignity Therapy Documents

“The role of the (dignity) therapist is to enable the participant to accomplish something that could not be done without therapeutic assistance and guidance.”

“Together we can do this, and we can do this right.”

*(Dignity Therapy: Final Words for Final Days)*

# Dignity Therapy Transcripts: By the Numbers

Typical length of the raw transcript for a one-hour interview: 15-20 pages

Typical length of a final edited Dignity Therapy document: 8-12 pages

Typical Ratio:

**In the beginning... 3-4 hours of editing per 1 hour of interview**

**After more practice... 2 hours of editing per 1 hour of interview**



A purple lotus flower is in full bloom, sitting on a large, dark green lily pad. The flower's petals are a vibrant purple, and its center is a lighter, yellowish hue. The lily pad is floating on a body of water, and the flower and lily pad are reflected in the calm surface below. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue, suggesting a clear sky or a distant shore.

Editing Dignity Therapy Documents

# Core Components of Editing

## *Goal:*

Let the patient's voice be heard *and* make it clear for the reader

- Correcting transcription errors
- Minimizing the voice of the therapist
- Streamlining content (may condense by question)
  - \* You have some editing license here to bold, italicize
- Consider an “appropriate” ending

# BEFORE

**So Irma would you like to just start by telling me some about your life history in general, some of the parts that you remember most.**

Like when I was a child, when I was a child, I, I can remember my father was a great storyteller. He was known to tell us stories in \_\_\_ my, my brother and me, we were the furthest one down in the country from the schoolhouse so he drove the school bus \_\_\_ horses. In the wintertime, we rode on a sled. In the summertime, we rode on a wagon.

**Oh my gosh.**

And he would tell my, my brother and me stories of \_\_\_\_. I have made memories of that when I was a child. I never, never, never forget my father telling us, telling us \_\_\_\_. That was one thing about, about my childhood that I remember. And I also remember moving out in a new country with \_\_\_ woods forever and go playing out in the, in the woods was a great thing for my brother and I. We \_\_\_ my brother and I.

**And what's your brother's name?**

My, my brother, brother was one year and nine months older than me. His name was Carol.



# AFTER

**Interviewer:** Irma, can you begin by telling me about your life history; particularly those parts you remember most, or think are the most important?

**Irma:** Well, when I was a child, I can remember how my father, George Arthur Malone was a great storyteller, and he was known for his stories. My brother Carl and me, we were the furthest kids from the schoolhouse so dad drove the school “bus.” But the bus was made of a large wagon that was pulled by horses, not an engine. It was made so that the kids could use it as a school “bus” drawn by horses. In the wintertime, there was a fastener so the wagon could be attached to a sled, and that is how we rode to school.

We lived about a mile or so to the schoolhouse. Being a young child, that seemed like a long way! My family lived out in the country, and it was a country schoolhouse. There were about seven or eight students who attended. We had one teacher that covered all the grades in that school.

There is one time during that period that I deeply remember. It was one day when my brother and I rode horseback to school and we got caught in a snow storm. We

# BEFORE

**What advice or words of guidance would you wish to pass along to your loved ones?**

Well, they just, I think my, when you said \_\_\_ just appreciate each other, appreciate family, yeah. So many people just, I know \_\_\_ that I lived for six years so many of the, the elderly people, didn't know their family well, didn't know their families, didn't know what happened to a lot of their family. I think family should be closer together.

**Okay. Good.**

Staying in contact more. I think family is very important.

**And some of the younger generations may be losing some of \_\_\_.**

Maybe, yeah.

**You see that? Uh-huh.**

I see that. I didn't see it in our family but I heard there, \_\_\_.

**In other...**

Yeah, from other people, how they have, they didn't know why they were there. A lot of them say \_\_\_ here I am. Someone would say...

**It's heartbreaking.**

# AFTER

## **What advice or words of guidance would you wish to pass along to your loved ones?**

Just appreciate each other and stay connected to family. There were so many people in the nursing home who didn't know their family well, didn't know what had happened to a lot of their family. I believe family should be closer together.

I remember there was this one lady in the nursing home who was called to her son's deathbed. They hadn't seen him for five years. He had walked out of the house angry at some little thing and then five years later, she heard he was dying. It's not a good thing. That will never leave my mind, it was heartbreaking.

So love one another, and be forgiving. There are things that are bound to hurt you, but they can *always* be fixed. Just say "I'm sorry." We forget to say "I'm sorry, please forgive me..."

There is nothing more important than love. I love my family, even the ones I haven't met.

# Your Turn to Edit



# JOAN BEFORE

**Harvey: As a typical starting point... just giving you the chance to think back on your life, Joan, and um to think about, um, if there are specific moments or memories that come to mind that you think are important, or, that you would in fact want to remember...**

Joan: I just know that I had a happy, um, upbringing, childhood, and ah, just an incredibly strong family. That we all stay together, truly together (laughs), probably too much. All the time. It's the funniest thing that um, for probably most of my life I remember when I was a little girl and we had a dog, and we had a bay in front of our house, a community bay, that um \_\_\_\_\_ and I would go up there on my own in the wintertime and the snowplows would gather the snow all around the edge of the bay.

**Harvey: How old, by the way, would you be in this memory you are sharing?**

Joan: I would probably be 8, 9, 10. I think I did it for a couple of years when I am describing it. I was probably too old to even do it. But I...

**Harvey: I'll hear about what it is, and then I can tell you what I think (laughs).**

Joan: Yeah, but I remember this. I think, it was like, it just brought me such joy when I did it and I always reflected back on it. And I don't, I don't know why. And I do really strongly now.

# JOAN AFTER

**Interviewer: Joan, as you think back on your life, are there important moments or memories that you would like to remember?**


*Joan:* I had a happy childhood, and an incredibly strong family that always stayed together, *truly* together – probably too much. (laughs)

It is the funniest thing, but for most of my life I remember when I was a little girl and we had a community bay in front of our house. In the wintertime the snowplows would gather the snow all around the edge of the bay, and I would go up there on my own when I was around 8, 9, or 10 years old.

I would run on those mounds of snow - they weren't really that high - but I pretended they were mountains. I would jump from mountain to mountain and my dog Pokey would be following right behind me. It brought me such joy, peace, and happiness when I did it, and I have always reflected back on that. I have been thinking about that time a lot now... maybe because every once in a while, when you are feeling down, you just remember how you will have bright times.

# Editing Q&A





The gift of *all*  
types of stories

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# Breakout Room Discussions

## Implementation in your home setting

1. Share any plans/ ideas for bringing this practice home
2. Discuss possible barriers
3. Share possible opportunities

*Please designate a spokesperson who will enter the primary themes from your group in the chat once we return*

# Implementation

## Potential

### *Individual Challenges*

- Cognitive status of patients
- Family members' needs/wishes
- Self-care
- Relinquishing prior therapeutic mindset
- Perfectionism
- Cultural adaptations

## Potential

### *Systemic Challenges*

- Funding/ Billing options
- Transcription services
- Generalist vs. Specialist practice
- Can volunteers provide it?



Moving forward

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Adaptations of  
Dignity Therapy



# Workshop Synopsis



**Will you join our Dignity in Care “Band?”**



**Dignity** IN CARE

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