



# The Need for a Social Revolution in Residential Care

BC Care Providers Association  
39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Presented by  
Kristine Theurer, MA (Gerontology)  
*Founder, Java Group Programs*  
Michele Reid, Regional Manager Life Enrichment  
*Chartwell Retirement Residences*

# What are the Challenges?

---



# Loneliness and Depression in Residential Care



- prevalence of depressive symptoms of newly admitted LTC
- 54% residents initially and 60% by follow-up (Neufeld, 2014)
- assisted living—significantly higher depressive symptoms (58%) than community (19%) (McLaren et al. 2013)
- Retirement—21% depression and 19% loneliness (Adams, 2004)



“It’s hard to get to know anybody...”

---



“No one has time...”



“People here – they are always in a hurry....., they pass you by and say ‘How are you’ and then keep going.

No one has time – to look, to talk.”

“My room is at the end of the world.”

---



# The Need for a Social Revolution

---

- **A Social Revolution**

- Troubling underpinnings of the social environment fostered in residential care
- Stereotype—residents as passive recipients of care

- **The 'REAP' Model**

- A new psychosocial model of care
- REAP - Resident Engagement And Peer Support
- An overturning of activities focused on entertainment and distraction



# Mutual/Peer Support

---

“We recognize peer support as an integral component of a mental health program for older adults”

*US Institute of Medicine (2012)*



INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE  
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES





# Research and Development

---

## The Study

- 6-year pilot: residents chose components
- 2-year study: staff manual developed
  - 65 residents, 7 staff
  - Senior Living: Memory care, complex care and an adult day centre

## Research and funding

- Simon Fraser University
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
- Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research

# What is the *Java Music Club*?



The first standardized peer support program for senior living—themes, music, photos, readings, a *Talking Stick*.

## Why is it unique?

1. Peers helping peers—fosters residents reaching out to others
2. A safe place to share
3. Talking stick ↑ courage
4. Something for everyone
5. Increases emotional engagement
6. Targets loneliness and depression

# The Java Music Club and Memory Care



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

*Hilary Lipsett, Staff*



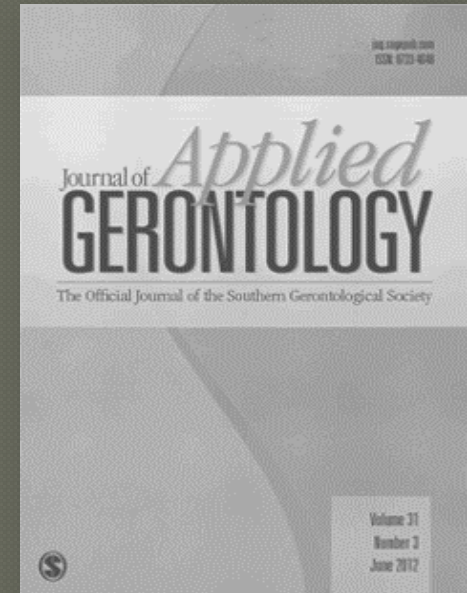
# The Science behind Java

---

Resident reports indicate:

- a decrease in loneliness
- feelings of empowerment
- the development of new friendships

*Journal of Applied Gerontology*  
The Development and Evaluation  
of Mutual Support Groups  
in Long-Term Care (Theurer, 2012)





This is different, something special. It takes the loneliness away.

*Resident*

A smashing success—everyone is loving the program!

*Schlegel Waterloo Research Institute for Aging*

I have been doing the Java Music Club have felt honoured to hear the stories and feelings. I also personally feel grateful, I listen and they listen. Thank you for taking the time to train me and for developing such an innovative and needed program.

*Jackie Kramer, Retirement Recreation, Village of Winston Park*



UNIVERSITY of  
ALASKA ANCHORAGE



The Serendipity Adult Day Services  
The Salvation Army



# References

---

- Neufeld, E., Freeman, S., Joling, K., & Hirdes, J. P. (2014). "When the golden years are blue": Changes in depressive symptoms over time among new admitted to long term care facilities. *Clinical Gerontologist*, *In press*. doi: 10.1080/07317115.2014.885919
- McLaren, S., Turner, J., Gomez, R., McLachlan, A. J., & Biggs, P. M. (2013). Housing type and depressive symptoms among older adults: A test of sense of belonging as a mediating and moderating variable. *Aging & Mental Health*, *18*(8), 1023-1029. doi: 10.1080/13607863.2013.805402
- Adams, K. B., Sanders, S., & Auth, E. A. (2004). Loneliness and depression in independent living retirement communities: Risk and resilience factors. *Aging & Mental Health*, *8*(6), 475-485. doi: 10.1080/13607860410001725054
- Institute for Health Information (2010). *Depression Among Seniors in Residential Care*.
- Kitwood, T. (1997). *Dementia reconsidered: The person comes first*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Gardner, W., Pickett, C. L., & Knowles, M. (2005). Social snacking and shielding: Using social symbols, selves, and surrogates in the service of belonging needs. In K. D. Williams, J. P. Forgas & W. v. Hippel (Eds.), *The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Theurer, K., Wister, A., Sixsmith, A., Chaudhury, H., & Lovegreen, L. (2012). The development and evaluation of mutual support groups in long-term care homes. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, *33*(4), 387-415. doi: 10.1177/0733464812446866

# Who is Chartwell?

- largest operator in the Canadian senior living sector
- over 180 locations across four provinces in Canada
- Wide spectrum of services:
  - independent retirement residences
  - assisted living services
  - long term care



# Keeping Socially Engaged



“At Chartwell, we believe that keeping active and socially engaged is the key to a happy, healthy and fulfilled life.”



# Java Music Club

---

- Social intervention to relieve isolation and depression
- An opportunity for residents to become actively engaged in peer support
- **In the program, residents are encouraged to reach out to their isolated peers**
- Changes the culture of the community

# Piloting and Implementation

---

- Fall 2013: Initial pilot of the Java Music Club at 3 sites in British Columbia
- Spring 2014: Success of this pilot led to implementation across Canada
- French translation: Club de musique Java
- 3 centralized trainings:
  - Western Canada
  - Eastern Canada
  - Quebec

# The Evaluations

---

What did we do?

Structured evaluations used to explore three perspectives:

1. Participant Evaluation
2. Observations of the Program
3. Staff Evaluation

Content analyzed by themes





# Evaluation Components

## Group Participant Evaluation - Java Music Club

*Note to staff member conducting the interview:* thank you for interviewing a minimum of 3 group participants if possible.

Please have the Java Music Club group manual, talking stick, guidelines etc. with you so you can show them these things as a reminder when you are asking about them. Encourage them to elaborate on their answers...e.g. "Tell me more about that".

Site:

Start Date of Program:

Date of Evaluation:

About how many sessions has this group participant attended?

*Please read this to the group participant:*

Thank you for helping us to complete this survey. It will help us to evaluate and make improvements to the program.

All information is confidential in this survey - we will not use your name unless you like to share this information.

There are no right or wrong answers – we value all your thoughts and opinions just as they are.

### A. General Comments

1. What has it been like for you to be in the Java Music Club?

*(what has been your experience?...please elaborate...tell me more, what is different about this program from others you go to?)*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### B. The Group Facilitator

2. What do you like most about how I am facilitating the groups?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. Do you have any helpful suggestions for me?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# What's it been like for you?

- “I like sharing stories and realizing you are not alone with your life experiences.”
- “I like helping others here – it makes you feel worthwhile.”
- “I often get lonely... the program allows a comfortable place to share, not be judged and express emotions.”
- “It's a place of encouragement – I feel great after!”



# On Peer Support



- “Its always good to be somewhere where you can just be yourself not have to worry. I feel I can say things to them that I wouldn’t feel comfortable saying to others.”
- “It helps me to get to know people, which is good because I’ve had to leave many good friends before I came to Chartwell.”
- “I love Java!...when I’m there I’m the most relaxed I’ve ever been.”

# On the Program Components

- “The talking stick makes me feel empowered and keeps the focus.”
- “The guidelines are great and should be done no matter how many times we go as it sets the tone of the group.”





# Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve the program?



- “I wish that folks that don’t come could experience the same togetherness.”
- “Re-arrange the tables ... in a circle so we’re closer together.”
- “Suggestion... add additional hymns.”



# Observations of the Program

- “All residents seemed engaged, participating fully.”
- “Respectful, very open minded,... relaxed, friendly and fun.”
- “The layout makes for an easy program guideline to follow.”
- “[Shows a] variety of ways to connect conversations for those with cognitive challenges.”



# About the Program Facilitators



- “The facilitator did a fantastic job of making everyone feel like they matter,.. and encouraged those who couldn’t find the words to express themselves.”

# Challenges

- “Not everyone can visually see the songbooks.”
- “Challenging when working with varying cognitive levels. Dementia residents caused impatience of others.”
- “The program is great!! It just needs interest from residents consistently.”
- “Those with dementia forget to come.”





# Staff Evaluations

- “An incredible tool to encourage residents to share and feel supported...and build deep friendships.”
- “I enjoy the program... connecting with residents. It is meaningful, purposeful and peaceful.”
- “I have been in the recreation field for 20 years and I have to say this is one of the most well thought out and interactive programs I have used.”



A photograph showing the hands of several people reaching towards the center of a light-colored wooden table. The hands are of various ages and are adorned with rings and watches. The background is a dark, textured grey.

# 7 Ways to Re-Inspire Your Java Music Club

**A Java Webinar**  
Java Group Programs, Inc.



# How is this program different?

---



“It’s social, deep sharing, loving and bonding.  
Voices are heard.”

# Questions

---

**Kristine Theurer, MA (Gerontology)**

*Founder, Java Group Programs, Inc.*

Toll Free: 1-866-523-2411

kristine@JavaGP.com

**Michele Reid**

Chartwell Retirement Residences

*Regional Manager of Life Enrichment*

647-473-4280

mreid@chartwell.com