Abstract Template

Title: One Day at a Time: lived experience of loving and caring for my Mother from diagnosis of vascular dementia to end of life, at home in rural Newfoundland.

Keywords: vascular dementia, client centred, patient centred, communication, community care, care partner, community palliative care, home first, end of life, love, thriving with dementia, role of family, Positive Approach to care™

I. Abstract Body (up to 250 words)

While recovering from a stroke, Isabel was diagnosed with vascular dementia in 2009. A mere two months before, Isabel was living independently and extremely active in her community. Scared of what this would mean for her family, she spoke openly and courageously about her diagnosis and what was happening in her body. She lived each day at home with her family, surrounded by laughter, love and her growing grandchildren.

One Day at a Time is the story of love. It's the story of the Kelly family and their journey in supporting their Mother, Isabel, from diagnosis through to end of life. How they met the challenges of geography, energy, ignorance and how, together, they created a beautiful space for Isabel to remain whole and connected with her family. This journey intersected with multiple health care systems – three Canadian provinces in both urban and rural centres. Catherine will share insights on isolation, stigma, community care, of infusing life in the dying process and the power of love. Unflinching, One Day at a Time is a raw account of one families lived experience.

II. Media:

https://www.theguardian.pe.ca/news/provincial/caregivers-voices-families-can-find-themselves-frustrated-alone-in-dealing-with-dementia-180876/

https://ilivewithdementia.ca/catherine-ann/

https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/dementia-caregivers-1.4721671

https://www.cihi.ca/en/dementia-in-canada/unpaid-caregiver-challenges-and-supports

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/sounding-the-alarm-on-the-growing-dementia-crisis-1.3083572

III. Biography:

Catherine Ann Kelly had the privilege of living with and caring for her Mother, Isabel, during her 10-year journey with vascular dementia. Catherine took a leave from her career in conflict resolution, criminal justice and restorative justice to care for her mother, while raising her children. She is certified as a Third Party Neutral and trained/certified in community engagement, facilitation, and peace circles. These skills have helped Catherine advocate for her Mother, others living with dementia and their caregivers.

Catherine recently founded 'Got the Dementia', inspired by her experience as a caregiver for her mother. The mission for her business is working with people with dementia and their families to create a loving, caring, supportive, nurturing environment from diagnosis to end of life. To help families identify and create the circles of support, so people with dementia can stay at home as long as possible. Catherine's commitment to community, nature and connectedness is grounded in her small-town Newfoundland upbringing, and greatly influenced by her experience with Indigenous Cultures.

Catherine holds a BA (Hons) from Carleton University, is a certified Dementia Care Practitioner, a certified Positive Approach to Care™ trainer and a certified End of Life Doula. She lives in a red house on a hill, by the ocean, with her husband Wayne and their two curious kids – Xavier and Sibéal.

IV. Presenting author details

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