

# Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today (RYCT)



Reminiscing with people with dementia and their family carers: a project created by the European Reminiscence Network, refined and developed over 17 years by many others

# A Pilot Project 1997-9

- Austria
- Belgium
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Sweden
- U.K.



# REMINISCING WITH PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA



## A Handbook for Carers

written by Errollyn Bruce, Sarah Hodgson & Pam Schweitzer

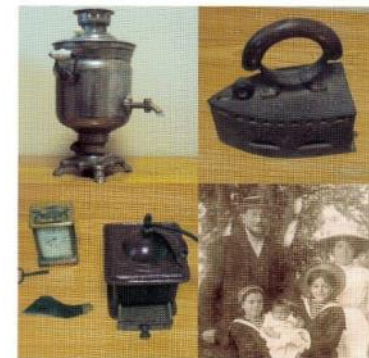
Published by Age Exchange for the European Reminiscence Network

*A manual of best practice from across all European RYCT projects, published 1999, now translated into six languages*

## Animer un atelier de réminiscence

*avec des personnes âgées*

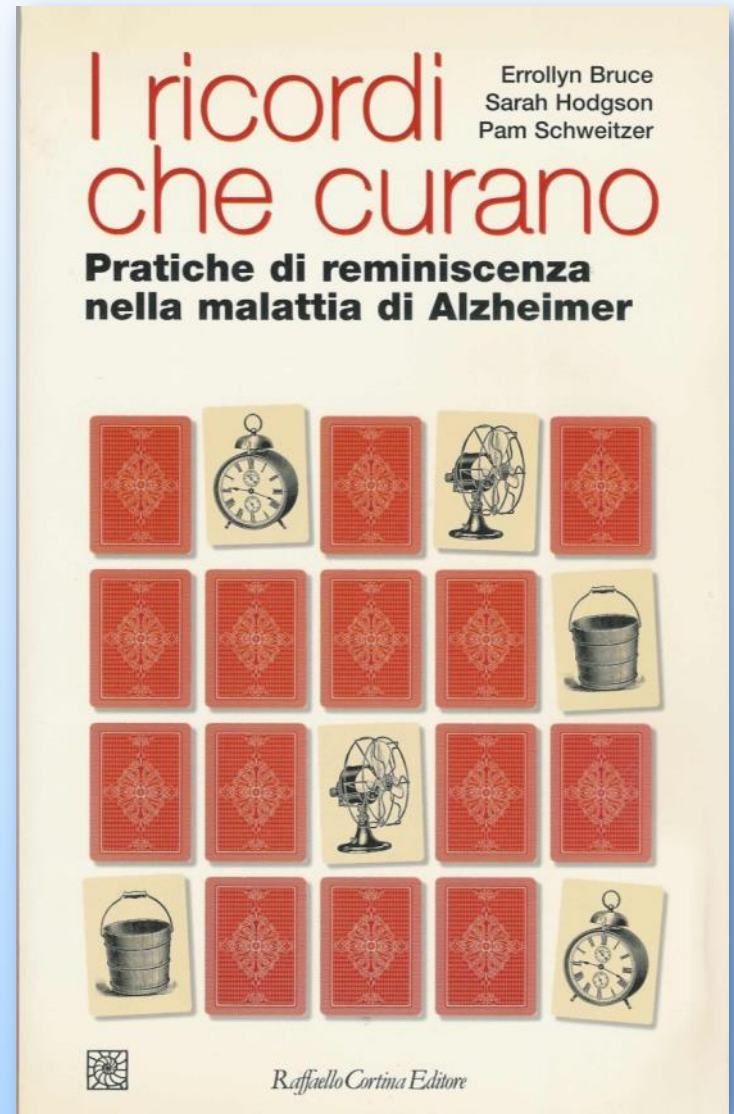
Arlette Goldberg



Comprendre les personnes

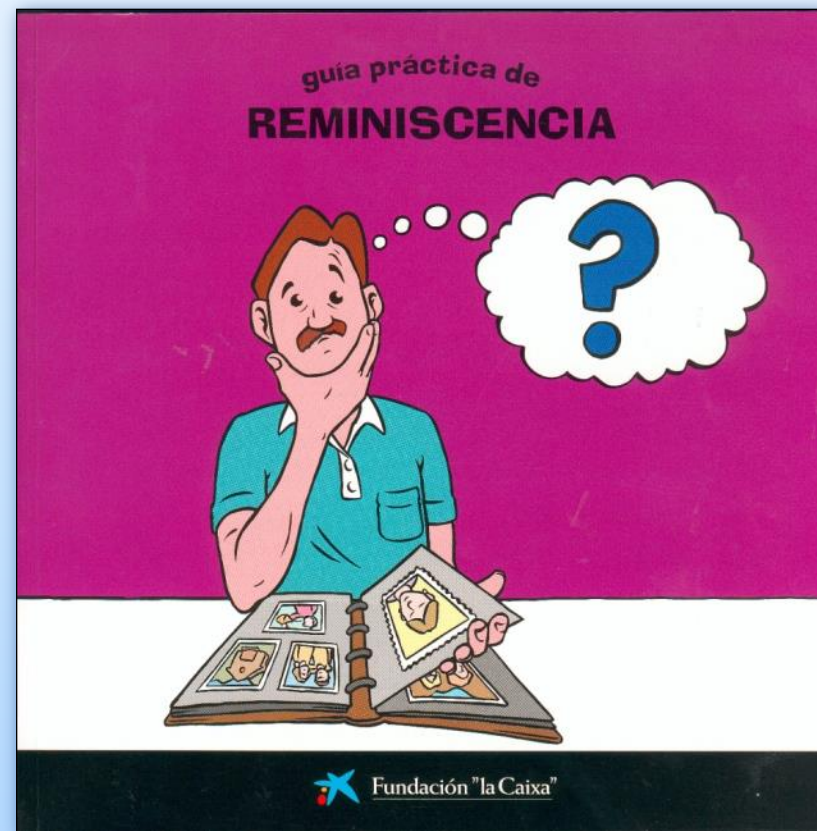
 Chronique  
Sociale

# German and Italian translations





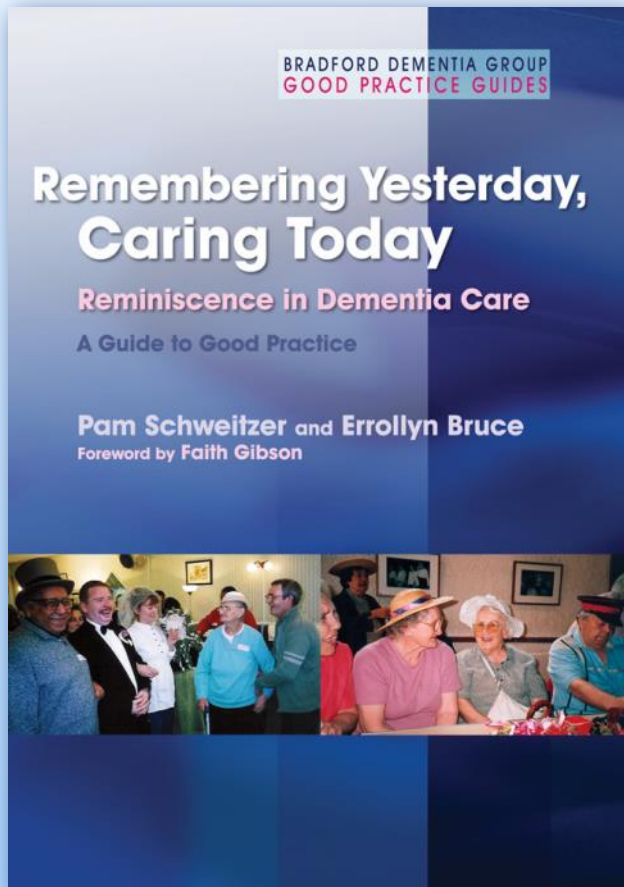
*Danish, Dutch.  
Spanish & Catalan  
editions have also  
been produced*



# On-going research & evaluation 2000-2010

- Studies in many EU countries
- UK randomised control trials over many years with varying results, mainly positive
- Massive support from anecdotal evidence
- Research and evaluation in the UK supported by Medical Research Council, Department of Health, charities, companies

# Best Practice Manual published for 'Remembering Yesterday Caring Today' groups



Manual by Pam Schweitzer &  
Errollyn Bruce:

**Remembering Yesterday,  
Caring Today:  
Reminiscence in Dementia  
Care: a guide to good practice**

Published by Jessica Kingsley  
Publishers 2008 with support from  
the Medical Research Council

# Remembering Together (RTRT)

## 2010-2012

- A new project based on RYCT for families living with dementia
- An arts element to be added and tested in each country including an end-product
- Supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the EU

# **Partners agree to share common principles and methods**

- We hold a series of sessions following the life course of people with dementia and their carers
- We use reminiscence and creative approaches to help everyone express themselves

# Creative reminiscence methods

- Use of objects
- Use of photographs
- Improvised drama
- Music and dance
- Singing together
- Cooking
- Drawing / painting
- Writing
- Dressing up
- Memory Boxes
- Practical activities

# Meetings to share our findings

[www.rememberingtogether.eu](http://www.rememberingtogether.eu)



# Some Findings of the Remembering Together (RTRT) project 2010-12

“Art was used in every session. Music, objects, pictures, drama, drawing... This helped people remember more and more vividly, made the memories visible and stimulated conversation and communication.”

Finland

“Creative activity gives a space for individual expression, for communication of immediate feelings in the ‘here and now’. It does not require strict intellectual and logical thinking”

“Capturing emotions, attitudes, feelings, bringing facts and knowledge to the surface, using emotional memory and expressing the values of the individual person”

“It is very touching that we can remember our childhood and families”

Slovakia

“The family carers discovered old photos, diaries, pictures, documents and other things and how useful these things could be in improving the quality of the care they could give to their relatives.”

“They felt joy when they discovered that something they had seen working in the group situation of the sessions could also work at home.”

Czech Republic

“Volunteers realized that people with dementia could be active – at least in certain situations – much more active than they had thought”

“Volunteers became more creative and more daring in how they interacted with persons with dementia”

Germany

“I felt great that I have laughed so much with my wife. She doesn't laugh at home anymore”

“Taking care of my husband has become less burdensome. I am less afraid for the future”

“It is inspiring and it is a way to keep memories alive. It is a good way to work together (the carer and the person with dementia).

“The best way to reminisce is doing things instead of only talking”

Netherlands

# Overall project statistics of RTRT: Reminiscence arts in dementia care

- Number of reminiscence arts sessions **256**
- Number of families attending sessions **226**
- Number of workers delivering sessions **73**
- Number of volunteers supporting sessions **82**



# Remembering Yesterday, Caring Today Training (RYCTT) 2012-14

- A 2-year project with 8 EU partners and 4 associate partners introducing a common training and apprenticeship scheme
- 362 people have taken the 2-day training course
- 146 people have undertaken extended apprenticeships
- 250 families have been involved in the project

# Apprentices build skills on the project



# They build relationships too



# Drawing memories: apprentices bring their own arts skills into reminiscence work



They enjoy having fun and being creative with the families and volunteers



They help to create a party-like relaxed atmosphere



# Significant photos remind couples of the centrality of their relationship





We celebrate together these long-term relationships through re-enactment of key family events such as weddings and christenings

# Group Enactments and celebrations



# Plenty of spontaneity



# Handling familiar objects from the past





Past competence revisited and demonstrated with the help of props

# Music and dancing

- Dance gives hand and eye contact, familiar rhythms and tunes and remembered steps
- People regain a sense of rhythm and movement and enjoy dancing together



# Singing familiar songs together



# Singing and playing old favourites



# Re-enacting familiar rituals



Asian Elders in London try reminiscence drama

# Making a joint art-work





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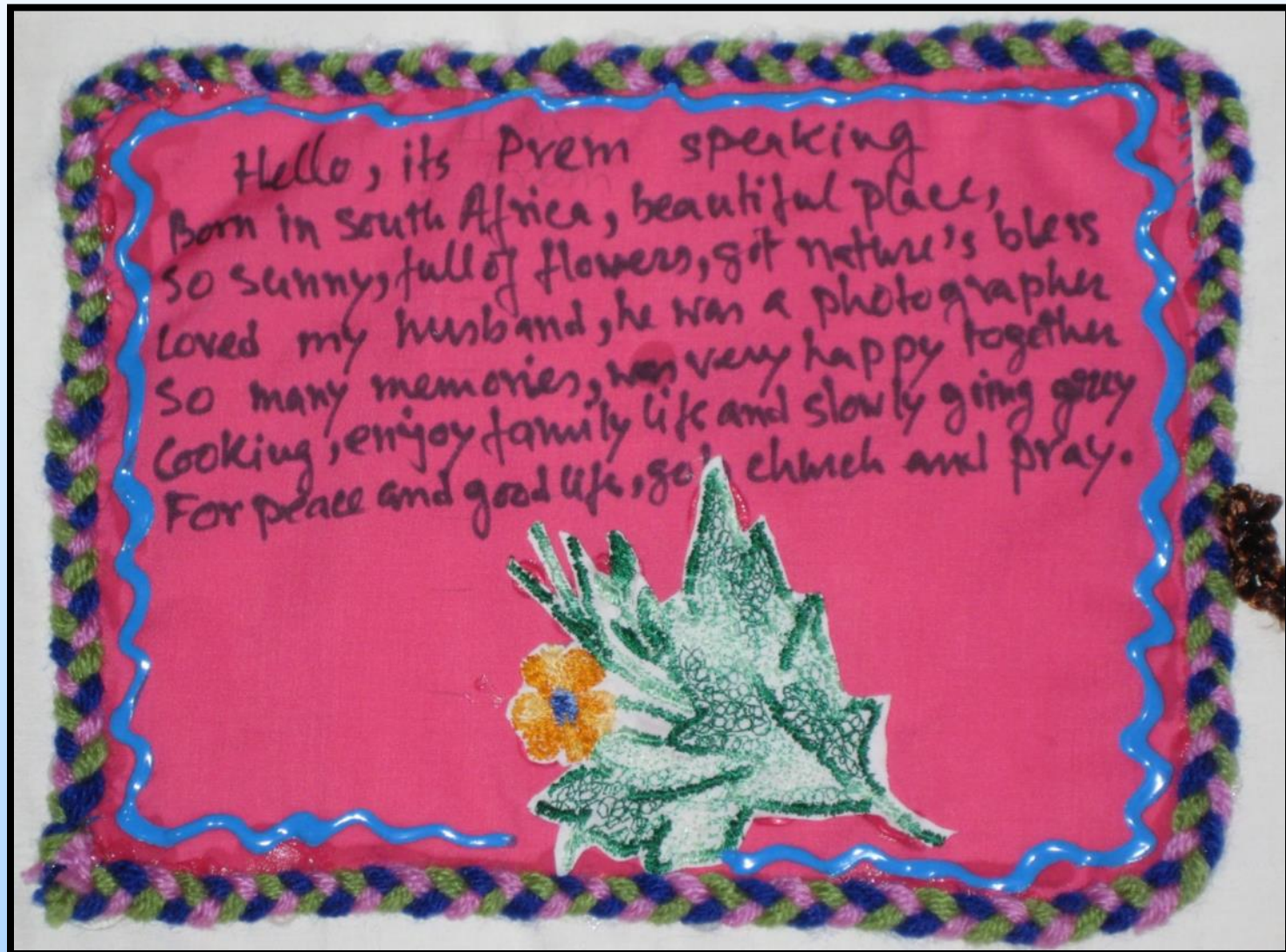
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# Featuring memories and life stories



# Making a Memory Box together



# Overall statistics of RYCTT 2012-14

- Number of families attending reminiscence sessions **250**
- Number of people attending our 2-day training course **362**
- Number of apprentices completing 4-6 month course **146**
- Number of international meetings and conferences: Perpignan, Prague, Poznan and London **4**

# RYCT essentials

- Explore non-verbal forms of communication
- Allow more time, listen well and “reflect back” what people have said to encourage and support them
- Wherever possible include one-to-one and small group working, as well as work with the whole group



# The big themes

- Choose themes of common interest where everyone can contribute stories
- Explore the theme through a variety of approaches & stimuli
- Have plenty of thematically related reminiscence objects to handle
- Use drama, music, dance, drawing, painting, writing, cooking, anything in fact, so there are opportunities to try new things in each session



SESSION 2 14<sup>th</sup> OCT 08

# CHILDHOOD & ORIGINS



# reminiscence themes

Session 7  
HOMES, GARDENS & ANIMALS

# HOME & GARDENS

# HOLIDAYS

SESSION 9 →

Dear Maitha,  
I'm having a super  
time in Malaysia. It's  
really warm here. Most  
days are spent sipping  
on the sea and sipping  
the love tea - a local  
favorite. Hope you're  
enjoying your holiday too!  
Tell me about it.  
Love  
Renee!

POSTCODE

# The future of reminiscence in dementia care

- Further applications will be lodged with the European Commission and with Partners' national bodies
- We wish to extend the pilot Training and Apprenticeship scheme and expand the take-up across Europe and beyond.

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**[www.europeanremiscencenetwork.org](http://www.europeanremiscencenetwork.org)**

**[www.rememberingtogether.eu](http://www.rememberingtogether.eu)**

**[www.pamschweitzer.com](http://www.pamschweitzer.com)**