



Author: Dr Robyn Dowlen

I am a researcher who looks to understand 'in the moment' experiences of people living with dementia, particularly during music-making or other creative arts activities.

My first experience of care was through my granddad or 'Poppa' who lived with Multiple Sclerosis. While I had no care responsibilities, I found great joy in rolling Poppa's cigarettes for him, fascinated by the metal cigarette roller machine he would allow me to operate. As I got older, I observed the challenges of care that my dad experienced as my gran and poppa aged at home which eventually led to them both moving into a care home. I think these experiences had an impact on my decision to pursue a PhD in dementia studies many years later.

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What is the meaning of a moment?

Tales of musical care

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Music can bring out playfulness, humour, and joy for people living with dementia, most importantly, these creative experiences are reciprocal – they bring people together in a shared meaningful experience!



Care Lab Librarian Dr Fox says: This book comes highly recommended. Robyn combines authentic, relatable passion for the subject of care, interwoven with her own personal experiences and a wealth of knowledge on how music and creativity can bring people together to create moments of joyous shared connection.





Author: Sarah Potter

As a conservator the way I use care is through preventive and interventive means. It revolves around looking after materiality to preserve objects, which frequently carry the history of an artist, holding their values,

histories, and beliefs. It is through this care I can keep the history of the artists alive through their sculptural creations for the future.

The media used to create some sculptures are particularly unusual, but these sing to the history and story of an artist, be it through the use of bread, found materials, hair or mud. Figuring out how to care for these items is the real challenge.

Conservation is a truly unique discipline which marries both science and art seamlessly.

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Unusual objects and their care



Conservators need to understand the artists and their intent as much as the inherent degradation process of the materiality to truly care for an object



Care Lab Librarian Dr Kate Maguire-Rosier says: This book comes highly recommended. Sarah Potter gestures to the Japanese practice of Kintsugi (repairing broken objects with gold to honour their breakage) but also provides a fantastical glimpse into the world of conservation inseparable from the practical science of object care writ large. Pragmatic and titillating.





Author: Karen Thakuria

I didn't realise it at the time, but my first experience of care was supporting my nan as she lost her eyesight and became frailer. I have many happy memories of helping her with her shopping and wrapping Christmas presents when she could no longer see

Since then, I've worked as a support worker with adults in mental health crisis and then with older adults as an Occupational Therapist. Now I work in a strategic role as part of Dementia United, the Greater Manchester NHS programme for dementia, with the overarching goal to make Greater Manchester the best place to live with dementia.

I believe in the importance of occupation in giving a sense of meaning and well-being, so am always looking for creative ways to support a person to do what is important to them.

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Care and the City



Everyone is unique and has a story to tell, it is our job to find out what that story is and what brings meaning for them.



Care Lab Librarian Dr Sarah Fox: This book comes highly recommended. Karen has a broad spectrum of experience when it comes to care, from the personal and practical to developing city-wide initiatives. With her broad knowledge-base and creative approach, you won't want to put this one down.





Author: James Thompson

I started life as a theatre practitioner - running workshops in prisons, youth centres and then in places of armed conflict. I was always interested in how artists cared for and helped their participants feel safe in this work.

In caring and witnessing the care of others, I have become interested in how it is a practice that uses our bodies, timing, rhythm, touch and so forth - and how it therefore has connections to arts practice. Seeing expert carers I noticed how there was a certain craft to their care. We know that care can be poor, badly executed, even cruel, but it also has an amazing capacity to show the best of how we can look after, and look out, for each other.

I'm interested in discussing how we can improve the aesthetics of our care

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Artful care and careful art



I think community arts - at their best - can care for people as part of the art-work itself.



Care Lab Librarian Dr Réka Polonyi says: What a page turner! This book is jam-packed with moving stories, humour, and an unusual perspective into how art and care can merge vocabularies. How does someone working in war zones suddenly get interested in care and health practices? Ask away!



Author: Sarah Pini

I am associate professor in dance and movement practices at the University of Southern Denmark. Personally, my relationship to care traces back to a decade long illness experience as cancer patient

and the care I was provided throughout my illness journey.

Professionally it involves collaborating with disability studies and care scholars, medical anthropologists, cancer survivors, dance educators, in researching and developing co-creative dance interventions to support healing processes for young cancer survivors in Denmark.

Dance helped me manage difficult times: dance as deep awareness to one's body, as a creative practice that supports processes of meaning making

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Resisting the patient body: Transforming illness through dance



The more I could trust my caregivers (including doctors, treatments, care practices, myself, etc.), the better the outcome of the treatments



Care Lab Librarian Dr Kate Maguire-Rosier says: Deep and thought provoking, this book touches your soul and moves your mind to a tune of hope and transformation. If you read one book this autumn, this should be it.





Author: Russ Cowper

Russ Cowper is a Psoriatic Arthritis Patient Advocate, Charity Trustee and Poet. He also cared for his late mum for almost 20 years. He received care in hospital which was life enhancing

Russ writes poetry about his lived experience and most recently a poem about my mum's hospital experiences during COVID.

“Psoriatic arthritis was becoming my existence, I was no longer Russ, I was devoid of hope, ambition and wracked with pain. I hid away and slipped further down. But, the unstinting devotion of the care staff carried me through, taught me so much and kept my spirits high. They made me smile and laugh, confirming I was a human being and not just a walking, talking human condition”

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Don't look at my ears



I have been pink, purple, full of tar and covered in grease. I've taken tablets by the bucketful, but I've maintained my sense of humour in the dark days.

Patience is indeed a virtue.



Care Lab Librarian Dr Réka Polonyi says: Kind, creative, tenacious and laugh out loud funny. This book is a rollercoaster, with so many interesting twists and turns you'll be asking for a sequel.