

‘Every Picture Tells A Story’ Project Evaluation Report



This innovative project, entitled ‘Every picture tells a story’, was a six session photographic course for people with a diagnosis of dementia, running from Oct-Dec 2018 in Canterbury.

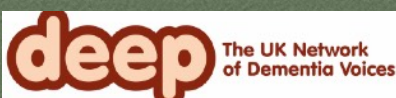
Aims of the project:

- To enable people to engage their creative juices and use photography as a relaxing hobby.
- To gain a sense of individual achievement.
- To gain a sense of corporate achievement and bring people together in community.
- To feel confident in handling one’s camera and getting more out of it (whether it be iPad/tablet, phone, compact camera or other type of camera).
- To be able to portray one's life with dementia through the medium of self composed photographic images in a realistically positive manner.
- To produce clear, enlightening images for publication in dementia journals (Journal of Dementia Care, Dementia

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Also with thanks to Keith Oliver;
DEEP; and Innovations in
Dementia.





Above are photos taken by the participants during the course programme. Above: Rabbit in Headlights by Carol. Top left: Reculver by Anne Marie. Middle left: Reflections by Chris. Bottom left: What's on my mind - a photo a day by Keith

Together magazine), newsletters (DEEP), websites (DEEP, Innovations in Dementia, IDEAL, Comic Relief) and conferences (UKDC/IDEAL).

- To create a unique, innovative project which will provide the opportunity to bring together members of 2 or 3 East Kent DEEP groups.

Outline of the sessions:

- Each session was 90 mins long, with a coffee break.
- The sessions ran fortnightly.
- Homework was set to be done between sessions, although there was no pressure to complete this if it was a struggle.
- Participants had an active role in shaping the course as it went, suggesting what would help them, what they were interested in learning, whether or not they wanted homework, etc.

Intergenerational work and volunteers

A key feature of making the workshops 'work' for its participants was the support of young volunteers. The volunteers played a valuable role; reminding participants before the day, putting them

Session One	Introducing each other, Getting to know our Cameras	Homework: Take a photo a day for a week
Session Two	Composition Techniques and Photography Genres	Homework: Take THREE photos of the same subject, each with very different compositions
Session Three	Using Light Creative and Abstract Photos	Homework: TBC
Session Four	Photowalk in Dane John Gardens (bring warm clothing)	Homework: Bring a treasured photo to discuss at the next session
Session Five	Editing - making adjustments to photos such as brightness, colour and contrast	Homework: TBC
Session Six	Printing and Reviewing our Images	Homework: Go out and practice and keep enjoying photography!



Above: The course in action.

at ease, helping prompt ideas during the practical components of the course, providing physical assistance where necessary and helping with refreshments. They were also an integral part of the community we formed as we all shared stories and jokes with one another.

“Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older have to offer each other and those around them” (Beth Johnson Foundation, 2009)

Outcomes of the project

- Each person received a photo book of the collective works of the group.
- Each person had the opportunity to make prints of their images.
- A follow up series will take place in June, of three further sessions focusing on portraiture.
- Each group member noted how they were feeling about the course at several stages throughout. This was recorded using the ‘blob tree’ (pictured left; for more info <https://www.blobtree.com/pages/frontpage>)
- Some group members struggled at some points, in their confidence level or due to the inevitable ‘foggy’ days. This was addressed by checking in with members regularly, offering catch up 1:1 sessions, and peer support from other group members.



"The course was very well presented and a lot of fun and laughter was shared!"

"I take my camera everywhere now!"

"It made me think about taking photos. I don't just 'point and shoot' anymore."

"I feel my life has changed in so much as I understand how to use my camera and how to use light. I can now record my life so later I will use these photos to help me remember."

A surprising result... "so much more"

"Whilst the main aim of the project from my perspective was to inspire - so that folk came away with a sense of having been enriched creatively - there were many more positive reactions than I anticipated. I wasn't expecting people to remember the learning, given their diagnoses, but surprisingly, there was retention of what was taught. The group members themselves commented on this

"I was hoping for at least learning what button does what but it's been so much more. It's been a game changer."

"I'm so excited about the outcome. Amazed at what I have learnt. If you do any more I'd love to come!"

"After the first lesson explaining what buttons do what on my camera I feel empowered."



Above: before editing



Above: after editing

and how they were surprised by it!" - Jen Holland

People independently and confidently reported back about being up-skilled on the use of their camera/iPad.

On the left is an example of how Keith applied what he had learnt, after the course had finished. Whilst on holiday in Australia, he took a group photo. It came out quite dark and so he was about to discard it, when he remembered what he'd learnt about editing photos and brightening them up. He did that on his iPad, and was really pleased with what came out from the photo after he edited it.

Aspirations for taking the project forward

- A possible exhibition locally in the Kent area (e.g. at The Beaney / local churches / Marlowe Theatre as a follow ups to Dreams and Visions project) and nationally of the groups' photographic work.
- Blog posts, promotional film and news articles to share the achievements of the project and its participants.
- To raise awareness of the benefits of the arts for the wellbeing of those living with and adjusting to a diagnosis of dementia.