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Talking Past Dementia: Communication, Creative Aging, and TimeSlips.

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Background: The world as it is in 2019 offers no cures for dementia, a disease that is uniquely terrifying. Today, 5.5 million people live with Alzheimer's disease, a specific type of dementia; that figure is expected to grow to 14 million by the year 2050. When a disease is common, but has no known causes or treatments, stigma grows. TimeSlips is an improvisational storytelling method founded by Dr. Anne Basting to push back against the stigmas encircling dementia and to give people with dementia and their loved ones a medium for connection and expression. People with dementia often struggle with communication and this project highlights TimeSlips' methods for how to improve the lives of people with dementia.

Methods: People with dementia, caregivers, physicians, and dementia care advocates were interviewed to assess common mistakes and grievances in dementia care. TimeSlips was identified as an organization that supported patients and caregivers in a unique way with strong preliminary research showing that it could significantly improve patient quality of life. Fourteen interviews were conducted and eight were filmed. One TimeSlips session was organized and filmed. Video excerpts were edited using Adobe Premiere. Subjects signed release waivers. Music was released by Jack + Eliza.

Results: One fifteen-minute video was produced and published preliminarily on YouTube. This educational video promotes the values of TimeSlips while including voices of patients, caregivers, researchers, teachers, and advocates all calling for better dementia care.

Discussion: This video guides students, physicians, patients, and caregivers to provide meaningful care to people with dementia. Rather than focusing on what is lost in dementia, TimeSlips encourages participants to make new memories with their loved ones. While information about TimeSlips can be found on their website, this video provides a new way to view and understand the value of creative approaches to dementia care.