

# Psych**AGE** News

Information and commentary about older adult and carer wellbeing

Issue 9, 14th January 2019: Falling in Love

Do you remember when you first fell in love—with aged care? Given that it's Valentine's Day today I thought it could be a good reminder of why we love what we do.

Yesterday I was reminded of my first love when I recounted to a group of 4th year social work students that it was working as a care attendant in an aged care facility back when I was a teenager that first drew me in to a passionate orbit of engagement with advanced seniors. But, as I explained, it was a fraught romance because I was forever frustrated with the machine of physical care when all I wanted to do was to stop, sit and listen to these stories rich in longevity and meaning. Well, now I can!! :)

It truly was an honour speaking to these students yesterday because it was the first time I have presented at the University of South Australia—the very same one where I got my social work degree over 20 years ago—and also to an undergraduate audience. The title of my lecture was Holding the Space for Age: social work, therapy and work with advanced seniors. But the best bit of all was that there was a whole subject available to them on Social Work with Older Adults.

What would my response have been if that same subject was available when I went through back in 1997—a few years after first falling in love? I would like to think that I would have engaged fully in it although the marrying together of social work and psychotherapy and work with advanced seniors probably would not have sounded very plausible to me back then. And, let's face it, back in 1997 the reality of an ageing population was hardly 'a thing' at all. Even now it feels as though it is only just starting to register on the Richter scale of public awareness.

So today when you are with your beloved or think of those whom you love in your life—also bring to mind your passion for aged care. And when you first fell in love.



Felicity Chapman

Accredited Mental Health Social Worker

Author of *Counselling and Psychotherapy with Older People in Care* (JKP, 2018)

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