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## Caregiver burden of older adults using a narrative approach

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**Background:** Caregiver burden often results in psychological and physical health compromise for caregivers. The burden on the families in caring for institutionalized, older adults may seem lessened physically but not psychologically because the families usually keep bearing the primary responsibility in the care. Research studies have reported, there is a lack of evidence-based nursing interventions aimed at assuaging caregiver burden of older adults.

**Aim:** The aim of this study is to describe the experience in providing narrative therapy to a family caregiver, a depressive, old woman who cared for the husband with chronic disorders in a nursing home.

**Method:** In applying narrative therapy on the woman, the therapist aimed at promoting assertiveness through enhancing positive view of self, facilitating emotional expression, and re-gaining hope through loss. It was achieved using externalizing conversations and re-authoring conversations.

**Results:** The externalization was important to encourage the woman to identify times when she had participated in an alternative story. Her resourcefulness and capability were linked to a description of herself, enhancing appreciation of her own competence. The attention to her experiences and relationship with the husband invited her to find meaning in the present aspects of her experience and to take note of a context where restoring could occur.

**Conclusion:** A narrative approach had shown to enlist hope in an elderly female caregiver through losses in taking care of her chronically ill husband. When reviewing cost-effective family interventions, narrative therapy may be considered as a possible option.

### Biography

Elizabeth W H Hui-Choi has her expertise in "improving health and wellbeing". With a passion for deprived families of older adults, she uses family therapies to provide counselling service to many of these families with chronic illnesses in community settings. Considering family therapy as an approach that is possible for wider use, she suggests that family therapy can be used by any trained professionals who recognize the importance of the family context that influences illness and the health of individual clients, and acknowledges that a family approach to the symptoms presented by the clients can be more helpful than focusing efforts on working with the symptoms.

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