

Dear Fellow Program Directors,

We all struggle with finding good speakers for our conferences. In February 2008 at the South Carolina Activity Professionals conference we engaged a speaker who made a very positive impression on our audiences. Joyce Simard MSW has been in long-term care profession for 30 years, specializing in activities for people with dementia. She is a well known speaker in this country and internationally. Last year she published two books, both of which she spoke about at the conference.

Her first presentation was about Namaste Care, a program for nursing home residents who are in the advanced stage of dementia. The book is titled, "The End-of-Life Namaste Care Program for People with Advanced Dementia: and her 90 minute "how to" implement this program was very well received. The evaluations were extremely positive. Here are a few of the comments made by some of the attendees. " Joyce's presentation was great!! I have had some problems getting staff involved in dementia activity programming and this presentation has empowered me to continue to strive!! Thanks!" "Great ideas- for loving care, for end stages, dignity at Death and after care of residents, family and staff."

The second presentation was on a program she developed for assisted living communities for residents with early memory loss. Her "Memory Enhanced Program" was offered to a packed room and again was greeted with excellent evaluations and comments like "This class was excellent. I loved everything about it." "This is going to be the solution to my assisted living issues."

For the last part of the day, her last 90 minute presentation was on "The Club" a program for residents with moderate dementia. Great evaluations and comments such as "Very organized. Relative ideas for Dementia units as well" and "Joyce was a great speaker, very knowledgeable. Very informative." Three 90 minute programs and she had the energy to attend our awards dinner and dance!

The following day, Joyce was the last keynote speaker; her topic was educating children about aging and dementia. Based on her visits to elementary schools and her book "The Magic Tape Recorder", we had 20 children on stage with her and they, as well as the audience (packed to the point people were sitting on the floor) had a ball. The children's parents were even present. One of these parents stood up and said to Joyce you have helped me and my children, as my children are afraid to go to the retirement facility and visit their grandparents because the grandparents act weird. This precious parent, with tears flowing down her face said, Grandma Joyce, I know you have helped my children to not be afraid of their own grandparents. We ended by everyone, children and the

audience, playing kazoos because as we all know you cans till have fun with people who have dementia.

Joyce has two websites www.joycesimard.com and www.grandmajoyce.com. She can also be reached at joycesimard@earthlink.net

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Amy Jackson, ADC
South Carolina Activity Professionals Association
Professional Development Chair