

Memory Cafés as a mechanism to support social connectedness for individuals living with dementia and care partners during COVID-19: A qualitative study

Sara Masoud, MPH; Lauryn Sweet, BS; Kylie Meyer, PhD; Carole White, PhD, RN, FAAN.

UT Health San Antonio, School of Nursing

BACKGROUND

- Loneliness and low social support can be detrimental to health
- COVID-19 restrictions create greater risk for social isolation for families living with dementia
- Memory Cafés provide individuals living with dementia and their care partners a chance to socialize in a supportive environment
- Virtual Memory Cafés may offer the same benefits for social connectedness during COVID-19



RESULTS

- Family care partners (n=10)
 - Spousal care partners (n=7)
 - Adult children care partners (n=3)
- Individuals living with ADRD (n=3)
- Four key themes identified:
 - Relieve
 - Sense of community
 - Inclusivity
 - Greater purpose & benefit

"It's been a good experience and it's been an outlet... It gives us something to look forward to than the ordinary, daily things that you have to do on a daily basis." CG

"I feel family. I feel like I'm part of it." CG

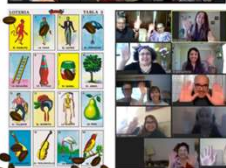
"Being with people that are like me. Just being around people like me. That's always nice... It's nice to be around people that have the same problem." PLWD

"It's just the camaraderie of bein' there and doin' somethin' out of the ordinary making your brain cells work." PLWD

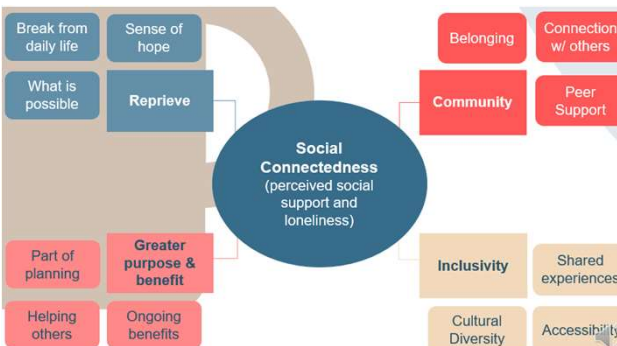
CONCLUSIONS

- Virtual Memory Cafés address important aspects of social connectedness including perceived social support and loneliness
- May be a beneficial model for social engagement to address the effects of social isolation related to living with dementia
- May not address needs of all families experiencing dementia due to technology access, limited engagement for later stage dementia
- A social engagement opportunity to address increasing experiences of isolation during COVID-19 restrictions.

METHODS



- Data:** Semi-structured Zoom videoconference interviews
- Participants:** Family care partners and individuals living with dementia who regularly attended Memory Cafés
- Analysis:** Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis



CONTACT INFORMATION

Sara Masoud, MPH
Community Outreach Coordinator
Caring for the Caregiver, School of Nursing
UT Health San Antonio

✉ masoud@uthscsa.edu
☎ 210-450-8487
🐦 sarasmasoud
🌐 sarasmasoud

Funding by IIMS-CTSA Community Engagement Small Projects Grant and the Conklin Endowment

