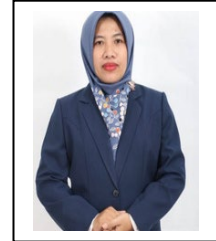


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## COUNSELING ON "THE IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING TO THE CLOSEST PEOPLE FOR THE ELDERLY" IN BANDARHARJO VILLAGE, NORTH SEMARANG DISTRICT, SEMARANG CITY

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**Abstract:** *This research aims to explore the importance of telling stories to the people closest to the elderly in Bandarharjo Village, North Semarang District. Using a qualitative approach which includes in-depth interviews and observations, this research focuses on elderly people aged 60-82 years who are active in Posyandu Lansia. Data was collected to explore older adults' experiences of sharing stories and the impact on their emotional well-being. The research results show that sharing stories not only helps elderly people express feelings and reminisce about memories, but also serves as a means of reducing feelings of loneliness and increasing a sense of connectedness with those closest to them. This research emphasizes the importance of social support and good communication in improving the quality of life of older people, and provides insight into how simple activities such as telling stories can contribute to their mental and emotional health.*

**Keywords:** Storytelling, devotion, psychology, elderly, counseling

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### INTRODUCTION

Elderly people often experience decreased social interaction and loss of role in society, and can feel lonely and isolated. This can have a negative impact on their mental and physical health. Therefore, it is important to create space for seniors to share their stories and life experiences, which can not only improve their emotional well-being, but also strengthen relationships with those closest to them.

Telling stories to those closest to you can be a means for the elderly to express feelings, reminisce about memories, and share the wisdom they have gained throughout their lives. These activities can help reduce feelings of loneliness and increase feelings of connectedness with family and friends. Research shows that good communication and strong social support can improve the quality of life of seniors, as well as reduce the risk of depression and anxiety.

This counseling aims to increase awareness of the importance of communication and social interaction for the elderly, as well as encouraging families to listen more actively and interact with them. Apart from that, this counseling also functions to provide information to the public about the psychological benefits of telling stories, such as increasing self-confidence and strengthening self-identity. Seniors who feel heard and appreciated tend to have a more positive outlook on life and are better able to face the challenges that come with age. By involving those closest to you in the storytelling process, it is hoped that a supportive environment can be created for the elderly to share experiences and strengthen social ties, which in turn can improve their overall quality of life.

## **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interview and observation methods. The population in this study were elderly people aged 60-82 years who lived in Bandarharjo Subdistrict, with samples selected by purposive sampling from the group of elderly people who were active in Posyandu for the Elderly. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews to explore the elderly's experiences in telling stories, direct observation of activities at the Elderly Posyandu, as well as evaluation sessions in the form of short questions and answers which aimed to measure the subject's level of satisfaction before and after the counseling.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Telling stories to those closest to you can be a means for the elderly to express feelings, reminisce about memories, and share the wisdom they have gained throughout their lives. This activity can help reduce feelings of loneliness and increase closeness to other people, especially family. This research shows that good communication and strong

social support can improve the quality of life of elderly people and reduce the risk of depression and anxiety.

Social interaction is an important aspect of the lives of the elderly. According to the disengagement theory put forward by Cumming and Henry, as people get older, individuals tend to experience a decline in social and emotional interactions. This can cause feelings of loneliness and isolation, which have a negative impact on the mental and physical health of the elderly (Cumming & Henry, 1961; Suardiman, 2011).

Based on the results of observations and in-depth interviews, it was found that storytelling activities significantly helped improve the mental health of the elderly. Most participants reported that they felt more relieved after sharing stories about their life experiences. This helps reduce the stress and anxiety they often feel, while increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem. Seniors feel that sharing stories is an effective way to express themselves without fear of being judged. But there are also elderly people who feel they can solve their problems themselves without telling anyone about how they feel.

Apart from that, this counseling also shows that sharing stories strengthens the social relationships of elderly people with family and peers. Elderly people who initially tended to be quiet began to be more actively involved in group discussions, creating interactions that were warmer and full of emotional support. Most elderly people admit that they feel closer to their families and certain communities after practicing what has been conveyed in counseling, this proves the great benefits of social interaction through storytelling.

From a quality of life perspective, the evaluation results show that sharing stories provides a sense of purpose and meaning in the lives of older adults. Many participants felt valued because their stories and experiences were heard and acknowledged. This activity provides new motivation for them to continue sharing and being involved in other social activities. This counseling proves that storytelling is not only a simple activity, but also an effective strategy for improving the mental, social and emotional well-being of the elderly.

The family plays a very important role in supporting the elderly to engage in storytelling activities. By creating an open and supportive environment, family members can encourage older adults to share their experiences and life stories. The family's active involvement in listening and responding to the elderly's stories not only strengthens emotional bonds, but also provides a sense of security and respect for the elderly. In

addition, families can help overcome obstacles that older adults may face, such as embarrassment or uncertainty in sharing.

Counseling conducted in Bandarharjo Village showed that many elderly people were previously unaware of the importance of sharing stories. After attending the counseling, they began to understand that telling stories is not just a social activity, but is also a way to maintain mental and emotional health. Many seniors report that they feel happier and more connected after starting to share stories with those closest to them.



Source: Research images.

**Figure 1. QnA Session with Subjects**

## **CONCLUSION**

Storytelling not only helps seniors express feelings and recall memories, but also strengthens social relationships that are important for their mental health. This research shows that good social interactions can reduce the risk of depression and anxiety, and increase life satisfaction in older adults. Thus, creating a space for the elderly to share their stories is very important in improving their quality of life, especially amidst the social challenges often faced by this age group.

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