

THERAPEUTIC REMINISCENCE: USING THE PAST TO IMPROVE WELL-BEING IN THE PRESENT

For professionals supporting elderly individuals in all types of establishments and services

Master reminiscence therapy to strengthen identity, reduce apathy, and reconnect residents with their life story

Duration : 4 hours	Modules : 4 modules
Lessons : 16 lessons	Audience : Healthcare professionals, caregivers, activity coordinators working with elderly individuals
Format : 100% online, asynchronous	Provider : N° 11757351875
Certification : Qualiopi	Price : On request

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Course description

This 4-hour training enables professionals supporting elderly individuals to understand and implement therapeutic reminiscence in their daily practice. Participants will learn the theoretical foundations of reminiscence, distinguish its different forms, and master techniques for conducting individual and group sessions. Special attention is given to adapting approaches for individuals with cognitive disorders. The final module focuses entirely on practical application using DYNSEO's E-SOUVENIRS and EDITH tools, allowing immediate implementation upon return to the workplace. By the end of training, each participant will be able to facilitate reminiscence sessions and integrate this approach into personalized care projects.

Module summary

MODULE 1	Understanding therapeutic reminiscence — foundations and effects	4 lessons
MODULE 2	Prepare and facilitate a reminiscence session	4 lessons
MODULE 3	Reminiscence and cognitive disorders — adapting one's approach	4 lessons
MODULE 4	Put into practice with DYNSEO tools	4 lessons

Learning objectives

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- Understand the theoretical foundations and documented therapeutic effects of reminiscence
- Distinguish between different forms of reminiscence and identify appropriate indications
- Prepare and facilitate individual and group reminiscence sessions with the appropriate professional posture
- Adapt reminiscence approaches for individuals with cognitive disorders and dementia
- Master DYNSEO's E-SOUVENIRS and EDITH tools to implement reminiscence sessions
- Integrate reminiscence into personalized support projects and multidisciplinary care

General information

Duration	4 hours
Target audience	Healthcare professionals, caregivers, psychologists, activity coordinators, and all professionals supporting elderly individuals in medicalized residences, day care centers, or home assistance services
Prerequisites	None, training accessible to all adult professionals
Pricing	Upon request - VAT not applicable (article 261-4-4° of the French General Tax Code)
Certification	Qualiopi - Certificate of completion provided

Lesson 1 - What is reminiscence? Definition and origins

- Reminiscence as a natural process for making sense of one's life
- Robert Butler's foundational work (1963) on life review as a universal developmental need
- Distinction between spontaneous and structured reminiscence
- Differences between simple reminiscence, therapeutic reminiscence, and life review therapy

Lesson 2 - Documented therapeutic effects

- Effects on identity and self-esteem through narrative coherence
- Reduction of depression and apathy via emotional re-engagement
- Cognitive stimulation through autobiographical and semantic memory activation
- Enhanced social connection by sharing memories with others

Lesson 3 - The different forms of reminiscence

- Simple reminiscence: freely recounting memories without structured objectives
- Evocative reminiscence: using supports (photos, objects, music) to stimulate memory
- Life review: structured work on the entire life journey
- Integrative reminiscence: accepting painful parts to find inner peace

Lesson 4 - For whom? Indications, contraindications, and ethical precautions

- Beneficial profiles: depressed, isolated, identity-loss, and end-of-life individuals
- Adaptation for cognitive disorders: possible but requires significant modifications
- Relative contraindications: unresolved traumas, acute psychotic states, recent bereavements
- Ethical principles: never force memory, respect silences, never correct narratives

Lesson 1 - Prepare the session — get to know the person and choose the materials

- Collect life story information from the person, family, and existing records
- Select meaningful themes: childhood, profession, loves, celebrations, travels, traditions
- Choose appropriate materials: photographs, objects, music, scents, familiar textures
- Adjust stimulation level to cognitive profile to avoid overload or under-stimulation

Lesson 2 - The professional posture during the session

- Practice active listening with open questions and supportive reformulations
- Never correct inaccurate memories; prioritize emotion over factual accuracy
- Manage strong emotions (tears, anger, shame) with compassionate presence
- Conclude positively: summarize, validate contributions, thank, announce next meeting

Lesson 3 - The individual session — format, duration, and frequency

- Recommended format: 20-40 minutes in a quiet, familiar, uninterrupted space
- Weekly or biweekly frequency depending on goals and tolerance
- Create a life journal or reminiscence album as lasting personal support
- Adapt in real-time if the person shows fatigue, restlessness, or sadness

Lesson 4 - The collective session — leading a reminiscence group

- Group formation: 4-8 people with similar cognitive abilities
- Session structure: welcome, daily theme, open exchanges, closure (45-60 minutes)
- Manage group dynamics: balance talkative and quiet participants, resolve memory conflicts
- Value each contribution to enrich the entire group experience

Lesson 1 - Autobiographical memory in dementia

- Why old memories are often preserved despite dementia progression
- Emotional memory remains accessible when specific facts fade
- Seize moments of lucidity as windows of opportunity for reminiscence

- Avoid confronting losses or imposing potentially painful memories

Lesson 2 - Adapting materials and format to cognitive disorders

- Favor sensory supports: simple photos, concrete objects, familiar music and smells
- Shorten sessions to 15-20 minutes maximum for moderate to advanced dementia
- Simplify questions: one at a time, positive phrasing, no requirement for exact dates
- Validate emotional reality even when memory content is confused or inaccurate

Lesson 3 - Document and integrate reminiscence into the personalized project

- Document sessions in care records: topics, reactions, themes to embrace or avoid
- Share observations with the multidisciplinary team about what reminiscence reveals
- Incorporate life history data into personalized support plans
- Involve families: invite them to bring objects, photos, and share life stories

Lesson 4 - Reminiscence and end of life – supporting the existential assessment

- Life review at end of life as a fundamental need (Erikson's integrity vs despair)
- Integrative reminiscence to accept regrets and find inner peace
- Accompany painful life stories without fleeing or forcing positivity
- The caregiver's role as compassionate and dignified witness to the person's life

MODULE 4

Put into practice with DYNSEO tools

4 lessons

Lesson 1 - E-SOUVENIRS – presentation and handling of the tool

- E-SOUVENIRS: a library of illustrated thematic sheets covering 1930s to present
- Available themes: school, professions, leisure, celebrations, food, transportation, events
- Navigation: select decade and sheet, launch session on tablet or screen
- Accessibility settings: adjust image size, scrolling speed, and sound to user profile

Lesson 2 - E-SOUVENIRS – conducting an individual and collective session

- Individual use: choose cards based on life story, observe reactions, prompt with words
- Collective use: project on large screen, invite everyone to share related memories
- Triggering questions for each card: 'Do you recognize this?', 'Did you have one?'
- Adapt in real-time: change cards if theme evokes nothing or provokes strong emotion

Lesson 3 - EDITH – the games of reminiscence and autobiographical memory

- EDITH reminiscence games: recognition of old objects, faces, familiar places, scenes
- Use games as conversation starters about the person's past experiences
- Categorization and association games stimulate semantic memory while evoking memories
- Calibrate difficulty in EDITH to maintain enjoyment without generating frustration

Lesson 4 - Build a session protocol combining E-SOUVENIRS and EDITH

- Complete 30-minute session: welcome (5 min) + EDITH game (10 min) + E-SOUVENIRS (10 min) + closure (5 min)
- Alternate cognitive stimulation (EDITH) and emotional evocation (E-SOUVENIRS)
- Track sessions: note games/sheets used, reactions, key themes for future sessions
- Share protocol with families so they can replicate enriching sessions during visits

Teaching methods

- Online training accessible 24/7 on a dedicated learning platform
- Self-paced learning with video presentations, practical demonstrations, and real case studies
- Interactive exercises and quizzes to validate knowledge throughout the training
- Downloadable resources: session guides, preparation templates, and observation grids
- Access to E-SOUVENIRS and EDITH demonstration tools for hands-on practice
- Certificate of completion issued upon successful completion of final assessment
- Post-training support: access to resource library and updates for 12 months