Working On Christmas Day

For some people Christmas Day is just another working day - nurses, carers, farmers, power station workers, police, armed forces and firemen are just some of the people who will be spending the day at work.

Questions To Ask

Did you ever have to work on Christmas Day?
What did you do?
Did you enjoy it?
How was it different from a normal day?
What about other members of your family?
Why do many people have to work over Christmas?
How does this change the routine of Christmas Day?
Some people actually like to be working over Christmas - why do you think this is?
Did you have a large family gathering at Christmas?
Who worked to provide the food all day? Is Christmas a lot of work?

Christmas Day

If some of your residents have been used to working on Christmas Day, find out in advance the tasks they used to do and replicate that for half an hour of the day.

- Peel spuds
- Handing out Christmas presents
- Setting tables
- Pouring the drinks
- Delivering Christmas cards

Numerous residents will like to be waited on hand and foot on Christmas Day, but many may have spent their time looking after a big family or working. So, a small task will give that resident a little purpose.

Introduction

An effective way to open a reminiscence session is to play a piece of music or song, and then use the same piece to close the session. The music will set the tone and convey the message that this time is something special. It also creates an exciting and welcoming atmosphere. Continue this welcome by greeting each person by name. Making this personal contact will also help you to gauge how people are feeling and how best to run the session.

Environment

It can be noisy and busy at this time of year, so make sure you have a nice quiet area, which is free of distractions.

Time

Each group discussion activity lasts around 20 minutes, but don’t run them by the clock, run them by how people are feeling and responding.