From Snapshots to Stories

Capturing Resident Engagement
How to Take Photos That Tell a Story

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Why This Matters

Photos capture moments. Stories reveal why those moments matter. When we bring the two together, we build trust, preserve dignity, and create meaningful connection. The stories within each image draw viewers in and, when captured well, make them feel as if they were right there with us.

Tips for Better Storytelling Photos

- **Plan Your** Shot - Think about the story you want to tell.
- **Capture Candid** – Try to take natural moments when the subject isn't posed.
- **Try Different Angles and Perspectives** – Use overhead angles to photograph hands at work, whether mixing dough, crafting, or journaling, particularly when the activity is the main narrative
- **Capture Action** – Focus on hands busy, faces expressive, real moments happening.
- **Shoot at Eye-Level** – Meet residents where they are to show dignity and connection. Get close to your subject.
- **Look for Interaction** – Resident-to-resident or staff-to-resident moments tell stronger stories.
- **Use Natural Light** – Warm, natural lighting feels authentic and inviting.
- **Background** – When the background provides context, capture it. When it doesn't, switch to portrait mode to create a shaded, blurred backdrop.

- You don't need a better camera — just better moments.
- You don't need more photos
- You need better stories
- Start with one photo and one sentence

The Snapshot-to-Story Method

Elements of a Storytelling Photo

Ask these simple questions:

- WHO is in the photo? – Name or describe the resident(s). Only include residents' names with permission.
- WHAT are they doing? – Describe the activity clearly and simply.
- WHY does it matter? – Highlight joy, purpose, comfort, connection, or accomplishment. What emotions are shown.
- WHERE is it happening? – Is the event in a specific neighborhood/location in your community/facility or is it an outside community event
- DETAILS – What small touches add depth?

Caption Example

Instead of: "Residents baking cookies."

Try: "Assisted Living residents are baking cookies with friends, enjoying a familiar activity that brings comfort, connection, and purpose."

Where You Can Share Stories

- Family updates
- Newsletters
- Community boards
- Social media
- Care conferences
- Staff recognition moments

Your Takeaway

Snap the action. Add the emotion. Share the story. Start with one photo. Add one meaningful sentence. Watch the connection grow.

Remember: ***Every photo has a story – look for it, capture it and share it!***