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Culture Change in Practice



Home for the Holidays



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posted by Steph Kilen

"Culture Change in Practice" is our own weblog where people can become involved in a conversation about Culture Change as it is practiced by professionals in real nursing homes. Feel free to join the conversation, or post a comment about something you have learned on your journey.

<http://www.culturechangenow.com/weblog/index.html>

Around Christmas, when I was a little girl, we used to turn off the lights at night, turn on the tree lights and Christmas music and just watch the tree and the snow falling past the window behind it. All of us sat on the couch just relaxing and taking it all in. Well, our tree is up and it is snowing great big Hollywood flakes outside (stunning if you don't have to drive in it) and I can tell you what I'll be doing tonight after the shoveling. I've brought a tradition from my parents' house to my house. Later in the week we'll make Sandbakkles, a Christmas tradition from my husband's Norwegian heritage taught to him by his grandmother. What will you do?

Living in the Midwest, we have a culture built around winter, not just Christmas and I think the dark days and cold have us looking for Christmas joy for most of December. Honestly, I think I love all the little things leading up to Christmas at least as much as the holiday itself. December is a time for rituals and comfort. I bet your residents have all sorts of ideas as to what that means to them.

Activities for the month of December can be sort of a no-brainer: Christmas concert from a local choir, putting up a tree and decorations, making cookies, religious services, etc. Most of us partake in all those things to some degree, but it is the specifics about the way we do those things that make them our personal traditions. Talk to the residents about their own personal spin on the holidays and personalize the holiday activities in your organization. And then, for Santa's sake, tell us about it! Leave a comment on how you went about getting input from residents and how you incorporated that input into your festivities. Sharing traditions is a great topic for a learning circle or breaking the ice (pun intended) to get to know someone better.

