



SEEKING HARMONY

Having a parent in care

The background

- Mum in Caswell for some years
- Family is myself and one brother in Auckland, a sister in Hastings, a brother in Wellington and a brother in Paris
- Mum intelligent, gifted in many ways, a lifetime of community work and a solid Anglican
- Previously living alone in a small unit in Mt Albert
- My father died 1988

- These reflections are mine – where I refer to my siblings it is from conversations and observations

Constantly seeking harmony

- Between 2 positions
- Each position has many elements
- The work is the reconciling of 2 positions that are different, sometimes in a small way and sometimes in a major way

Working on the middle ground

It's the work that we do in recognising the issues that are concerning us, and then the work we do in the space between that allows harmony to appear

We do this by getting to know each position and what it means to us

As we journey between the two, we get to know them and the ground between, and in doing so find a place (or places) that fit for us

Before admission

- Duty to care

Ability to care

- Recognition of need for change

Maintaining the status quo

- Autonomy

Loss of autonomy

- Safety

Potential for being unsafe

Moving in

- Ambivalence

Confidence

- Loss

Gain

- Narrative A

Narrative B

- Regret

Acceptance

- Guilt

Relief

Being kin of a resident

- When to speak
- Staff as co-carers
- Holding on
- Negotiating relationships

When not to speak

Staff as gatekeeper

Handing over

Remembering
boundaries

Reaching the end

- Keeping in the loop
- Sharing the care
- Enriching the partnership kindness
- A peaceful death
- Remembering mum

Hovering over the care process

Keeping out of it

Trespassing on staff

Seeking harmony

- It's an ongoing work
 - It may be different every day
 - We may accept a different harmony one day from another
 - We are also seeking harmony with others
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- It's not achieving harmony that is our goal, but the sincere work of seeking, believing and acknowledging an environment where harmony is present.