

Worksheet 8:

Emotional needs

Tom Kitwood proposes a ‘cluster of needs’ in dementia care which are very closely connected and function like a ‘co-operative’. Kitwood states that ‘there is only one all-encompassing need – for love’. Kitwood refers to Frena Gray-Davidson, who described love (in her context as a carer for a person with dementia), as a ‘generous, forgiving and unconditional acceptance, a wholehearted emotional giving, without any expectation of direct reward’.

Kitwood created the emotional needs model as ‘five great needs which overlap, coming together in the central need for love’.

Attachment needs: A highly social species, humans flourish in the forming of bonds. This need is cross-cultural and instinct-like in nature. Those to whom we are attached create our safety net in times of uncertainty.

My attachment needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Inclusion needs: To be part of a group is essential for survival. Temporary or permanent exclusion from the group can be experienced as punishment. A sense of belonging enables us to flourish; where our sense of individuality is not experienced as isolation.

My inclusion needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Occupation needs: To be involved in the process of life in a way that is personally significant. Meaningful activity increases one’s sense of agency, maintains one’s abilities and powers, increases self-esteem and opportunities for playfulness. A lack of meaningful activity creates boredom, apathy and a sense of futility.

My occupation needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Identity needs: To know who one is in cognition and feeling. Having our own narrative, involving role identity and consistency. It is conferred on us by others but uniquely constructed by ourselves.

My identity needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Comfort needs: Tenderness, closeness, soothing of pain and sorrow, calming of anxiety, feeling of security from being close to another.

My comfort needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Sexuality needs: The whole way a person goes about expressing himself or herself as a sexual being. It describes how important sexual expression is in a person's life, how one chooses to express that sexuality, and any preference one may have towards the type of sexual partner one chooses. Understanding sexuality, and not just sex, fosters and encourages the development of good relationships throughout our lives.

My sexuality needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Cultural needs: A culture is a way of life of a group of people: the behaviours, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next. Culture is symbolic communication.

My cultural needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel:

Spiritual needs: A sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and typically involving a search for meaning in life. As such, spirituality is a universal human experience – something that touches us all. People may describe a spiritual experience as sacred or transcendent or simply as a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness.

My spiritual needs are met by:	If these needs are not met I feel: