

Social Connections and Living with Dementia (2021-2024)

People living with dementia and their partners continue to have a wide range of connections. Using eco-mapping, they were able to reflect on the nature of these connections in terms of their strength and reciprocity and connections to people, nature and oneself. During virtual interviews with 13 participants (6 of whom were couples), they visualized their connections using eco-maps, which highlighted often unrecognized connections or the strength of these connections. Participants reflected on old, new and continuous connections in relation to their strength and reciprocity. Connections to nature and environment emphasized the importance of 'blue-green-white' spaces to their sense of well-being, particularly when connections to people were disrupted and stressful, with the dementia diagnosis often perceived as a reason for this. Solitary activities such as reading, writing a journal or listening to music all seemed to allow people to connect to themselves and their sense of who they were and are.

The research team includes:

- Dr Mary Pat Sullivan and Dr Veronika Williams, Nipissing University (CA)
- Dr Christina Victor, Brunel University (UK)

Funder: RTOERO – Retired Teachers of Ontario

