

Examples of Bibliotherapy A Potpourri gathered by Ted Bowman

Here is but a sample of projects of bibliotherapy practices in a wide range of settings in various parts of the world. Where contact information or sources are known, they are added. More important to the toolkit user is the inspiration that can be found by awareness of the vitality and breadth of bibliotherapy being done across the globe.

Seven Doctors Project – University of Nebraska Medical Center
Seven doctors are paired with a local writer who serves as his/her mentor and guide. Through literature and the lyric poem, one hears the “inner voice”. Go to: <http://medhum.med.nyu.edu/blog/?p=150>

Narrative Medicine – first coined by Rita Charon at Columbia University.
Medical practitioners are urged to not only keep a medical record but also to capture a patient’s story for inclusion in the medical record see *Narrative Medicine* (2006) by Charon.

Children’s Psychological Well-being – Portuguese project in schools, using bibliotherapy to help children cope with changes or emotional and mental health issues. Psychologists and educators work together to find short stories, poems and books that match with a child’s needs. see “Bibliotherapy: A tool to promote children’s psychological well-being” by Lucas and Soares in *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, vol.26, no.3, 2013

Annie Stories – a story telling method developed by Australian mother and psychologist, Doris Brett, in response to the developmental fears of her daughter. The stories told are similar stories to fears, but in which resiliency is found and shown. See *Annie Stories* (1988) by Doris Brett.

Poem Pal – A collection of poems placed in patient rooms and other areas as part of Grampian Hospital’s Poem Post Project. Contact Colin Macduff at Robert Gordon University

Lombardi Cancer Center, Washington, DC – a bibliotherapist announces in the chemo therapy center to all receiving chemo that morning that she will be leading a writing group at a certain time: come and join me. Patients do, rolling their chemotherapy bags with them.

The Caregiver’s Tale: Loss and Renewal in Memoirs of Family Life (2006) by Ann Burack-Weiss. What started out to be a “professional” book about the stress of caregiving morphed into a volume using memoirs written by

caregivers because the quantitative research that dominated the field did not do justice to the complexities and emotional weight of the reality

Poetry in Prison – see *Disguised as a Poem: My Years Teaching Poetry at San Quentin* (2000) by Judith Tannenbaum. For four years, Tannenbaum was poet in residence at San Quentin.

John Killick's work with persons living with dementia is widely used. See his many books of using writing, story-telling and other methods with those living with dementia. *Creativity and Communication in Persons With Dementia* (2011). see also John's piece in the Contributor section of the toolkit.

Broken hearts...healing – divorce and children. An evocative book of poems collected by educator Tom Worthen. See *Broken Hearts...Healing: Young People Speak Out on Divorce* (2001) edited by Tom Worthen.

Writing for the Bereaved – An Australian study that showed self-care practices were reinforced or improved in a writing program. See the *Journal Of Palliative Medicine* 6, 2, 2003 "Writing Therapy for the Bereaved: Evaluation of an Intervention" by O'Connor, Nikoletti, Kristjanson, Loh, and Willcock.

A Way With Words: Poems, Stories and Artwork from Women Who Have Lived With and Left Abusers (2010) edited by Lesley O'Brien, Alison Ryan and Kate Arnot. Published by Scottish Women's Aid. The title describes the project. See also O'Brien's piece in the Contributor section of the toolkit.

Writing from an urban ministry soup kitchen – a writing group was started in a soup kitchen (homeless people). The result was *Waiting for Soup* (2004), a Charlotte, North Carolina program.

Integrative Medicine Packet – Download the packet that details how poetry therapy is used with various populations. Go to www.poetrytherapy.org (The National Association for Poetry Therapy).

ACTION

If you know of other examples of Bibliotherapy please send us a reference along with a few words describing the practice.