



Rituals

Healing Through Rituals

John McGee often spoke about the importance of developing rituals with the people that we support. He spoke about them from the context of caregiving, establishing relationships, community building, and emotional connection

Establishing rituals with people can foster belonging, healing, and identity, especially for individuals with traumatic histories and memories. Rituals can play a key role in creating safe, loving relationships and environments.

John spoke about rituals through these 3 main lenses:

- **Celebration as ritual:** John viewed celebrations such as birthdays, milestones, and daily greetings as sacred rituals that affirm a person's worth and dignity.
- **Rituals of connection:** Simple, repeated acts like morning hellos, shared meals, a personalized 'handshake' or bedtime routines help people feel safe & loved and build trust.
- **Community rituals:** caregivers create shared rituals that promote inclusion, such as group singing or games, storytelling, or symbolic gestures of welcome.

Rituals are seen as tools to mend emotional wounds and reinforce a sense of belonging, especially for those who have experienced trauma or neglect. John didn't view rituals as rigid or religious practices, but as intentional, meaningful actions that communicate love, safety, and presence. This invites caregivers and communities to be creative and consistent in how they use rituals to build relationships.

What Did John Say?

“Each member of the caring community should find his or her own rituals to remind (the person) that they are safe and loved. Throughout the day and within activities and out of the blue, flood (the person) with constant praise, nurturing words, smiles, thumbs up, loving words, hugs, our established rituals...”



Q1

What rituals have you developed with the person that you support?

What impact do you see these rituals having?



Q2



Q3

What rituals could you, or the team, work to developing with the people you support?

Connecting to Our Purpose

Our central purpose is to nurture, teach, and sustain experiences of connectedness, companionship, and community, comes to life through the rituals we help create. These intentional practices, big or small, give shape and meaning to everyday life. They remind people of who they are, what grounds them, and how and where they belong.

Author Meg Cox writes, “Rituals are the patterns that connect us, giving us identity, purpose, and a place in the world.” Rituals anchor people in familiarity and comfort, provide moments of celebration and recognition, and strengthen the sense of community we strive to uphold. Through them, we honour each person’s story and affirm their value in the world around them.