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| Supplementary Table 2. Narrative analysis process and findings table |
| Participants  | ‘Small’ stories(Personal stories) | Underlying narrative | ‘Big’ StoryNarrative threads over time  | Overarching narrative |
| 01**Patrick** and Sue  | Getting a diagnosisMaintaining a social lifeDrivingWorking lifeFriends and familyPills and potionsInteractions with health and social careMusicBowels and bladderMistaken identity Being a collector (life story work) | Piecing togetherStruggling to maintain, tiringGiving up, constrictingBeing organisedSupportive ‘back up’Balancing act/frustratedSearching for right support, frustrationReconnecting, copingQuality of life restrictedDistressing, loss of personLink to the past, reminiscing  | Maintaining social connectionsDeveloping new connections togetherSocial disconnectionsSupport from adult childrenMarital disconnection Connecting to health and social care‘Separated’ but living together | Social connectedness and loss |
| 02**Kathleen** and Ken  | Getting a diagnosisGetting out and about (life story work)Hospital admissionsFamilyMedicationsInteractions with professionalsMobilitySwallowingToilets/Bathing and showeringGardeningHallucinations | Battle, FrighteningNot giving in, delight when goes for a walk alone, denialExhausting, frighteningSupportive, feeling indebted‘Wonder drugs’, controlsocial carer, companionship Frustrating, keeps pushing, tiring‘own worst enemy’Wary of meals out/socialisingWorry about accessLoss of independenceRetreat from tensions, sanctuaryLearning to manage |
| 03**Joan** and Peter  | Getting a diagnosis/prognosisDrivingHospital admissionsEquipmentGrandchildren (life story work)Voice changesDreams and delusionsBecoming a carerMedicationsHobbies and interestsInteractions with community servicesRelationship changesKeeping mobileNHS Continuing CareEating and drinkingPalliative care  | Uncertainty, stasisTraumatic, eventual resignationSpeaking out Confliction, disruptionMiss playing with them, tiringDifficulty being heardUnreal conversations, distressingLearning through experienceLooking things up, responsibilityBecoming dependent, motivation v introjectionConnecting and communicating with rigid systemsMarital disconnection, loss of companionshipFear of falling, vigilanceLearning the ‘system’ Learning by experienceSupportive services, Decision making responsibility |
| 04**Jack** and Linda  | Living with a diagnosisWalkingFamilyGroups and interestsPlanning and organisingHallucinationsMedicationsCommunity servicesDrivingWorking and retirement | Worrying, disconcertingImportant for independence Providing care, support for carerSelf-sufficiency, companionshipReduced motivation, tiringLearning to live with Struggling with side effectsDiscordResigned, dependency on spouseStruggle to adjust |
| 05**Doug** and Gayle  | DogsMusic/singingGroups and activitiesDrivingRural life (Life story work)Respite careTherapy supportFriends and familyEating and drinkingCaring rolesToiletingDiagnosis/ Prognosis | Companionship, socialisingVoice strengtheningMaintain social interactionsCarers relief when stopped, worrying, frighteningMaintaining links, socialisingChallenging, lack of resources, Impressed with lateral thinkingTeamwork, sense of humour Difficult to manage, saliva, cough, embarrassmentConstraining, constricting, strainHolding on to self-respect. Uncertain ‘bumpy ride’ |