

From a Distance: A Grounded Theory Study of Incarcerated Filipino Elderly's Separation Anxiety

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Abstract : Background: While in prison, the elderly, like the younger prisoners, face specific problems and deprivations arising directly from their imprisonment, one of which is forced separation from family and loved ones. Despite the numerous studies that examined the impact of separation and separation anxiety on the emotions and behavior of young individuals, little is known about separation anxiety in the elderly population. Objective: This grounded theory study purports to describe the process of separation anxiety among incarcerated Filipino elderly men. Method: Individual interviews and participant observations were conducted with 25 incarcerated elderly Filipino men who are first-time prisoners, sentenced to lifetime imprisonment and were analyzed using constant comparative method. Results: Following Strauss and Corbin's protocol, a four-part process emerged to describe the studied layer of human experience. The Tectonic Model of Separation Anxiety among incarcerated Filipino elderly men comprises of four phases: Winkling, Wilting, Weeding, and Weaving. Conclusion: This study has inductively and creatively explored the process of separation anxiety among the Filipino incarcerated elderly men. Findings of this study invite nurses and other clinicians to identify developmentally appropriate strategies and interventions for this vulnerable and neglected sector of society.

Keywords : elderly, grounded theory, separation anxiety, Filipino, incarcerated

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